

Legislative Assembly.*Tuesday, 29th August, 1899.*

Death of a Member; North Murchison Vacancy—
 Papers Presented—Question: Railway Truck
 Weights, Variation—Question: Railway Uniforms,
 Tendering—Question: Justices of the Peace,
 Liability—Question: Stamp Duty and Land Trans-
 fers—Question: Cattle Tick at Nannine—Question:
 Alluvial Trouble at Kalgoorlie—Return ordered:
 Northern Districts, Revenue and Expenditure—Ex-
 cess Bill, third reading—Constitution Acts Amend-
 ment Bill, second reading moved—Roads and Streets
 Closure Bill, second reading—Insect Pests Act
 Amendment Bill, second reading, in Committee,
 reported—Electoral Bill, second reading, resumed
 and concluded—Industrial Conciliation and Arbit-
 ration Bill, second reading (moved)—Evidence Bill,
 Legislative Council's Amendment—Weights and
 Measures Bill, Legislative Council's Amendment—
 Municipal Institutions Bill, in Committee, Chances
 106 to 169, Divisions, progress—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.**DEATH OF A MEMBER.****NORTH MURCHISON, VACANCY.**

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrester): Before we proceed to the business of the day, I have the painful and sorrowful duty of asking leave of the House, without notice, to make a motion. Hon. members are aware that, since we last met, one of our members has been called to his last long home; and it is found necessary that a motion should be made declaring his seat in this House vacant, in order that another election may take place. I am sure every member will join with me in expressing great regret at the death of our old and esteemed friend, Mr. Kenny. He has had a seat in this House for about three years; and although he was little known to the older members of the House when he entered it, I feel sure every one of us is conscious that we have lost a friend in Mr. Kenny. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] He always took a very independent and impartial view of public matters that came under the notice of this House; and I am sure every one of us must have often admired the independent manner in which he dealt with those public questions in which he took a particular interest. I feel sure there is no other feeling than that of great regret in the minds of all of us, that Mr. Kenny should have died so unexpectedly; for although we knew he was suffering

from a painful illness, and that his health had not been for a long time as good as we desired, yet none of us expected he would have been taken away so quickly. In submitting this motion to the House, I desire to express, on behalf of members of the House, our great regret and our esteem for the late member for North Murchison. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I beg to move

That, in consequence of the decease of the late Mr. Henry Edward Kenny, the seat in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral district of North Murchison be declared vacant.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): In the absence of the leader of the Opposition, it becomes my sorrowful duty to rise and second this motion. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Kenny for the first time when I was seeking election to this House in 1894, and I have had the pleasure of looking on him as an esteemed friend ever since. We know his work in this House; we know he has been assiduous in his duties and has been constantly present, and that he has worked hard for his electorate and for the interests of the colony at large. Every one of us had learned to esteem him; and we can only say now that, at the age of 45 years, it is a matter of deep regret to us to part with a comrade who has worked side by side with us in the general interests of this colony. It is with great regret I have to second this motion. I am sure every member of the House is prepared to support, in the strongest way, the kindly words which have been uttered by the Premier in reference to our deceased comrade.

Question put and passed, and the seat for North Murchison declared vacant accordingly.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the SPEAKER: Auditor General's Supplementary Report.

By the PREMIER: 1, Report by the Government Actuary on Land Taxes in Australasian Colonies; 2, Addendum Report by Government Actuary on Financial Provisions of Commonwealth Bill.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TRUCK WEIGHTS, VARIATION.

MR. HARPER asked the Commissioner of Railways: What provision was made

by his department to protect buyers and sellers of produce against losses occasioned by the variation of weight in trucks caused by wet and dry weather.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS replied: Every truck is weighed and tare corrected each time it is undergoing repair, and every effort will be made to ensure the accuracy of such weight; but the Commissioner is not responsible for the variation in the weight of trucks caused by climatic influences, and by Act the consignor of goods is bound to show the actual weight thereof. The department only weighs for the purpose of checking weights supplied.

QUESTION—RAILWAY UNIFORMS, TENDERING.

MR. HALL asked the Commissioner of Railways: 1, Whether the lowest tender for the supply of railway employees' uniforms from the 1st of July was accepted, and what was the amount of the tender; 2, What was the amount mentioned in the subsequent contract; 3, Whether there was any difference between the amount mentioned in the tender and the amount of the contract, and what was the reason for such difference; 4, Who was the contractor; 5, Whether the contractor, after his tender was accepted, applied for any extra or additional allowances; 6, If extras were allowed, whether the other tenderers had an opportunity of amending their tenders; 7, Who was the next lowest tenderer, and what was the amount of his tender.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS, replied:—1, Yes; £3,191 0s. 10d.; 2, £3,287 0s. 10d.; 3, Yes; the difference was £96. The tender having been accepted, and as there was some doubt as to the interpretation of the specification as regards the lining of the sleeves of the vests, the matter was submitted to arbitration, the arbitrators being two good tradesmen and an umpire mutually agreed upon, who decided that the contractor had undoubtedly interpreted the item "silesia" to mean "single material only," and awarded him the sum of 2s. additional on each vest to make up for extra expense. 4, The contractor is Mr. S. L. Horowitz. 5, Answer will be found in No. 3; 6, Other tenderers were not asked to amend their tenders, as the matter was only a difference of interpretation; 7, The

next tender was £3,264 17s., being that of Mr. R. E. Davis.

QUESTION—JUSTICES OF THE PEACE, LIABILITY.

MR. HALL asked the Attorney General: 1, Whether a justice of the peace who exceeded his jurisdiction, or, thinking he had jurisdiction, acted without jurisdiction, was liable to an action for such acts. 2, Whether a justice who issued a warrant without reasonable and probable cause was liable to an action.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, Yes. 2, No, if within his jurisdiction, unless he acts maliciously; if not within his jurisdiction, yes.

QUESTION—STAMP DUTY AND LAND TRANSFERS.

MR. HALL asked the Attorney General: Whether the Registrar of Titles has power to charge ten times the stamp duty on all land transfers not registered by a certain date after signature; and, if so, whether he will introduce legislation with a view of altering the law in relation to land transfers.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied in the negative.

QUESTION—CATTLE TICK AT NANNINE.

MR. WALLACE asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands: 1, Whether he is aware of a report to the effect that cattle tick has been discovered at Nannine on some imported bulls which were recently conveyed by steamer and train from Fremantle to Cne. 2, Whether he is taking steps to ascertain the truth of the report. 3, If the bulls are infected, what steps the Government intend taking in the matter. 4, Whether it is a fact that trucks used for conveying infected cattle from Fremantle to Coolgardie are sent on to other lines, or used again on the goldfields lines without being disinfected or cleansed by steam, as provided by the regulations.

THE PREMIER, for the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, replied: 1, I am aware that a report was in circulation to the effect that cattle tick had been found on some imported bulls at Nannine; 2, Immediate steps were taken by the Stock Department to ascertain the accuracy of the report, and the Chief Inspector left

for Nannine as speedily as possible. He reports having examined the bulls, and found them infested with lice, which were mistaken for cattle tick in the larval stage of development. 3. There is no necessity for further action in the face of the Chief Inspector of Stock's report. 4. All trucks conveying tick-infested cattle to the goldfields are disinfected in accordance with the regulations.

QUESTION—ALLUVIAL TROUBLE AT KALGOORLIE.

MR. VOSPER, without notice, asked the Premier: Had he received official information in regard to alluvial trouble at Kalgoorlie? If so, would he place the information at the disposal of the House?

THE PREMIER replied: I am not aware that information has been received, but I will communicate with the Minister of Mines. Information has not come under my notice.

RETURN—NORTHERN DISTRICTS, REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

On motion by MR. VOSPER, ordered that there be laid on the table of the House a return, showing: 1. The total amount of revenue from all sources derived from the territory and ports north of the Murchison River, from 1891 to the end of the last financial year; 2. The cost of administering the said territory for the same period; 3. Total amount spent on public works during the period mentioned in the said territory.

EXCESS BILL.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

TRIENNIAL PARLIAMENTS, REDISTRIBUTION, ETC.

SECOND READING (MOVED).

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest), in moving the second reading, said: Although there are important clauses in the Bill, there are not many provisions which alter the existing law. The Bill is presented as a consolidation of the Constitution Acts in force, with some slight amendments. I propose in Committee, if we get that far, and no doubt we shall, to recommit the Bill *pro forma* with the object of presenting it to

hon. members in a slightly different shape, though without any material alterations. I have come to the conclusion, since the Bill was laid on the table, that it is not wise nor in accord with precedent to altogether consolidate the Constitution Acts, because that would remove from the statute book the landmarks of the original constitution. It is far better, and also more in accordance with usage, that the original Constitution Act should, so long as any portion of it remains—and I expect some of it will remain so long as we are a constitutional country—be on the statute book, and that we should amend the Act from time to time, and also from time to time consolidate the amendments. That is the course I propose to take with the present Bill, and this will not in any way affect the clauses of the Bill, but will put the measure in better shape, while the fundamental provisions of the Constitution Act 1889 will remain. We will then all be able to look back and see in the statute book what remains, at any rate, of the original Constitution under which self-government was granted to this colony. The Bill, as it will then be presented to hon. members, will be the same or nearly the same Bill as that now on the table; and the whole of the amending Acts since 1889 will be consolidated, with one or two small alterations to which I have referred. The first important amendment in the Bill is in Clause 25, where provision is made for triennial Parliaments, as distinguished from the existing procedure of four-years Parliaments. That alteration has been made in order to bring our practice into accord with the practice in all the other colonies of Australia. Indeed, it is also in accord with our practice, because there seems to be more likelihood of people being satisfied to allow a Parliament to run a course of three years than there is to allow a Parliament to exist four years. As soon as a general election is over, under existing conditions, some sort of a commotion is got up, especially by those who have been unsuccessful in the election, or perhaps by a section of the Press which may have been advocating the claim of an unsuccessful candidate, in favour of a redistribution of seats or of some change which will cause another election. There have been two occasions, just before

the last general election and now, when hon. members have been asked to forego a year of their period of office in order to meet wishes expressed with a good deal of vigour outside. The Press, and afterwards the people, seem to be unwilling that Parliament should run for four years. In fact, I am quite certain that, after the coming general election, those who have been fortunate enough to get elected will not have been in Parliament 12 months before there will be the same demand for another general election, in order that some unsuccessful candidates may have an opportunity of contesting seats.

MR. MORGANS: But when payment of members comes in, the position will be altered.

MR. VOSPER: The clamour outside will be greater then.

THE PREMIER: But I think members will "stand to their guns" better then, and will not be so willing to yield to pressure outside. Members will then say: "We were elected for three years, and we intend to have three years' pay." The next important alteration in this consolidating and amending measure is in regard to qualifications of electors. At the present time a person desiring to become an elector has to be in the colony for 12 months, and has to reside in a district for six months, before he can apply to be put on the electoral roll. If one came to the colony for the express purpose of getting on the electoral roll, as so many persons now here seem to have done, that being one of their great objects in coming to this country according to some statements made, and I suppose they also want a general election provided for them as soon as possible, I say that under existing conditions it would take 15 or 16 months before the most expert person could get on the roll.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Nearly five years.

THE PREMIER: No; the hon. member is absolutely wrong there, as he often is when he makes interjections. If a person comes here and remains six months in the colony, he can apply to be placed on the electoral roll, providing he has been during the last six months in one electoral district; and about three months afterwards or a little more, under the quarterly revision system in operation, he can get on the roll. There is no provision in the

existing law for transfers; and especially amongst the working class has this been found an objection, for many of them move from place to place, and may perhaps not remain six months in one electorate so as to qualify for getting on the roll under existing conditions: that has been a cause of complaint against the existing system. We propose to do away with that grievance, by providing that any man who has been six months in the colony, no matter in what part of it he may have been nor how often he may have moved, can make a claim to be registered as a voter; and he can make this claim by himself or with the assistance of others, and it can be witnessed by any one of his friends who is aware of the facts therein stated, namely that he is 21 years of age, that he is a British subject, and that he has been six months in the colony. As soon as he gets on the roll, which is to happen immediately the claim is presented, a further residence in the colony of six months will entitle him to exercise a vote; and if he changes his abode any time during the six months, he can get his name transferred from the list on which he was first registered to the list in the new district to which he has moved, and he can change again to any other district within the six months as often as he likes; and, provided he has been in the new district one month, he can have his name transferred from the list in the district where he was previously residing. I explained this provision when introducing the Electoral Bill recently; and as this provision appears in both the Bills, and is an important one, I have thought it right to explain the provision again. This is the system adopted in South Australia, and it has won golden opinions from all classes of persons as being simple and sufficiently liberal. But in South Australia it is not necessary to have resided six months in the colony before a person can get on the electoral roll. We know, however, that the conditions of South Australia are not like the conditions existing here; that the people there do not move so much, that the country is more settled, and is not so progressive; and, therefore, I have thought the provision in South Australia should not be adopted in this colony, seeing that such a provision does

not obtain in any other colony of Australia. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear.] That being so, I think we may fairly ask that the people who come to this colony shall have been six months in it before they apply to be placed on the electoral roll; and they may be assured that, if they do apply, they will be able to exercise the right of voting six months after the application is made. These are the principal alterations which this Bill proposes to make in the existing law, except that the number of seats in this House is to be increased from 44 to 48, and there is to be a redistribution. That, of course, is the important part of the whole Bill; and all the rest of it is in the existing law, except the power to get on the roll more quickly; also the power to transfer a vote, which of course is not provided in this Bill, but is in the Electoral Bill which I previously introduced, and is very important and greatly desired, and I think will meet all the requirements of those who have found a difficulty in getting on the roll hitherto, and also in not being able to keep on the roll when they get there. The most important part of the Bill is the redistribution. We propose to have 48 members instead of 44; and I am sorry to say that the task of redistributing or rearranging these electorates has not been an agreeable one, so that I shall not be at all surprised if the plan I have adopted in this Bill does not find favour with everyone in this House. I do not suppose it would be possible for anyone to make this rearrangement of places in such a manner as will please everyone, or perhaps please myself; and, therefore, I cannot be surprised if some hon. members are not satisfied with the rearrangement in the Bill. I have had the very unpleasant duty of obliterating from the list of electoral districts places that have been a long time in existence, and have for many years sent members to this House; and I am sorry to say also they sent members to support the present Government.

MR. VOSPER: You cannot be as sorry as we are.

THE PREMIER: I am very sorry, and I think we ought not to have done it; and if we were looking to our personal interests, I do not suppose we would have done it. East Kimberley is to be merged in West Kimberley.

MR. A. FORREST: And they object strongly.

THE PREMIER: I know they do, and I have received telegrams which show that those who are amalgamated protest against it, that others who are to have one member instead of two protest against that, while others who think they ought to have more members protest that the Bill does not give them enough. I suppose that will always be the case, for whenever you touch anyone's interests, depend on it you get into trouble. East Kimberley is to be merged in West Kimberley as one electoral district, and to return one member to this House. Pilbarra and the DeGrey, which have returned two members, are to be merged into one, and to return one member instead of two. I think Pilbarra is the larger district of the two in regard to population, but I have adhered to the older name of the "DeGrey," because that is the old name of that part of the country.

MR. CONNOR: You do not want to disfranchise your first goldfield, surely?

THE PREMIER: You should get more people up there. The reason for this proposal in the Bill is that the number of people there are not sufficient to entitle them to be separately represented. I tried my best to make the population as large as possible, but I found there were only 235 men, women, and children in the district altogether.

MR. CONNOR: Four hundred.

THE PREMIER: That is according to the return I have obtained, though I expect there are many blacks, too. The Ashburton and the Gascoyne districts are merged into one electorate in the Bill, the reason being that the population is small, especially in the Ashburton district. I think hon. members will themselves find a difficulty in rearranging the districts, so that each one may continue to have at least the same representation as at present. There are only 42 persons on the electoral roll for the Ashburton, and although I am sure there are more persons in the district, yet that is the number on the roll. I shall be sorry also to obliterate an important place like Yalgoo; but by the rearrangement made in the Bill, the existing district of Yalgoo is apportioned among several others. My friend, the member

for the Murchison (Mr. Mitchell), is to get part of Yalgoo; my friend, the member for the Irwin (Mr. Phillips), is to get another part of it; and my friend, the member for South Murchison (Mr. Rason), is to get the remainder. Hon. members will see that, according to the Bill, four of the existing electoral districts have been obliterated, and these four seats have been apportioned amongst electoral districts in the Eastern goldfields. Coolgardie is to have one additional seat; East Coolgardie, to be known as Kalgoorlie electorate, is to get two; and a new electoral district, to be called "Mount Margaret," is to get another, making four seats altogether. The Mount Margaret electorate is carved out of the North Coolgardie district, and takes in East Murchison and Lake Way.

MR. VOSPER: What have you done with Bulong?

THE PREMIER: We have left Bulong, and Kanowna, and North-East Coolgardie as at present. My hon. friend will have the pleasure of representing the whole North-East Coolgardie district, and if the numbers there are larger than in some other districts, still the hon. member will be well able to represent the larger number. The other four new seats have been given to the metropolitan districts. One is the Canning district, and the southern part of it has been amalgamated with the southern part of South Fremantle, that about Rockingham.

MR. SOLOMON: That should be "Clarence."

THE PREMIER: "Canning" is a good old name, and we do not wish to obliterate a name which has been so long in existence. The Canning district, as rearranged in the Bill, will take in nearly one-half of the former Canning district; and I thought it well to leave that name alone, although it will not include all that part which is northward of the Canning, and which has been the more important part of the Canning electorate. Then we propose a new district for Claremont, which includes all the country north of Fremantle outside of Subiaco. We propose another new district to be called "Subiaco," and it will take in Leederville and some portion of West Perth, as West Perth is rather too large a constituency at present. We propose also to make a

new district to be called "Guildford," taking in the more thickly populated parts of Guildford with Helena Vale, and all the surrounding country. These are the new divisions, which will increase the representation in this House to 48 members in all. I have had sent to me a number of complaints, and I have read others from the East Coolgardie goldfields, as to some people not receiving sufficient representation in this redistribution of seats; and seeing they were most clamorous for redistribution, I expect it would be very difficult to satisfy the public Press in the Eastern goldfields by any scheme of redistribution we might propose, and if we had given them double the number they would still be dissatisfied.

MR. MORGANS: They wanted 12 members for Kalgoorlie.

MR. VOSPER: You might try them, anyway.

MR. MORGANS: The Kalgoorlie people wanted 12 members.

THE PREMIER: The desire seems to be that the Eastern goldfields should have more representation than at present, but that the thickly populated parts of what I may call the metropolitan district, including all places within 10 or 15 miles of Perth, should have no more representation—on what ground it would be difficult to ascertain. I am not admitting for a moment that population should be the basis of redistribution, because I do not consider it would be possible, under existing conditions in this colony, to divide the country and do justice to each electorate on a population basis only. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] But, for the purpose of my argument, I am willing to meet those who, in this House or anywhere else, say that the redistribution of seats is not fair in regard to population. If population is to be the basis of redistribution, then let us take the metropolitan area 10 or 15 miles around Perth, and compare it with the Eastern goldfields. As far as I can make out, there are certainly not more than 40,000 people at the present time on the Coolgardie goldfields, including Yilgarn and Dundas, and that is a liberal estimate; and there are 70,000 people at least in the Perth or metropolitan area. On the basis of population, therefore, the metropolitan area will not have as much representation, in proportion, as the Coolgardie

goldfields, not by a considerable amount ; for whereas every member elected for a Coolgardie goldfields constituency will represent less than 4,000 people, that being a high estimate, every member for a metropolitan electorate will represent over 5,000 ; so that, even on the basis of population, if any one wishes to take his stand on that, the metropolitan area, in which I include the Fremantle, the Perth, and the Guildford constituencies, South Perth, Claremont, Subiaco, and those places within twelve miles radius from Perth, but not including the Swan district, contains 70,000 people, I believe, whereas there are certainly not 40,000 on the Eastern goldfields.

MR. VOSPER : That is not the discrepancy of which we complain.

THE PREMIER : What is the discrepancy ?

MR. VOSPER : We complain of North-East Coolgardie having only one member, notwithstanding its large population, as compared with other goldfield electorates.

THE PREMIER : But we cannot distribute the seats strictly on a population basis. I do not see how it is possible to do that in the existing conditions of this colony. In the few instances to which I have referred, that is where the numbers have been very small indeed, I have amalgamated some electorates with others ; but I have not set about this work on the basis of population. To some extent, where the number of electors was too great, I have tried to reduce the area of the electorate ; but, generally speaking, I have not taken that as the only basis in deciding this matter ; and with regard to population, even in the electorate mentioned by the hon. member (Mr. Vosper), we know that the population of Broad Arrow, a year ago or more, was three times greater than it is now.

MR. A. FORREST : The same with Kanowna.

THE PREMIER : And with Broad Arrow too. I do not know what the difference is with regard to Kanowna, but I think the population there must have been five times as great at one time as it is now. On the goldfields we have to deal with a moving population, and it is impossible to distribute the electorates on the basis of population when things are changing so quickly ; and, besides, the

circumstances of the people on the goldfields do not, in my opinion, warrant their receiving the same representation as is given to electors in the older and more settled parts of the country. A moving population, not fixed to the soil in the same way as the older farming population of the colony is fixed, cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be said to have the same permanent interest in the country as is possessed by people engaged in agricultural, horticultural, and other pursuits, who live on the land themselves, and whose fathers have lived there before them. At all events, whatever may be the objections to this redistribution, I can assure the House that I am glad the Bill is now on the table and out of my hands for a time, for undoubtedly the measure has given me an immense amount of trouble and a lot of anxiety. The redistribution has been a most difficult undertaking to me, knowing full well that whatever was done could not, by any possibility, give satisfaction to everyone. I may say I have desired to interfere as little as possible with the existing electorates ; and wherever it has been possible to leave an electorate alone, I have done so.

MR. CONNOR : You do not illustrate that principle in the Bill.

THE PREMIER : That has been my desire.

MR. A. FORREST : You have "wiped out" the North.

THE PREMIER : Will the hon. member give some reason why those electorates should not be "wiped out" ? That reason, if given, would not be based on population.

MR. CONNOR : On native population.

THE PREMIER : It has been generally admitted that the Bill cannot satisfy everybody. That has been my trouble, and it is no use finding fault with me or with the Government because some of these electorates will have to go. Everyone knew that : and all I can say is that no one regrets it so much as I do, because all the electors in those northern districts are my personal friends ; the members representing those districts have always given me most loyal and hearty support ; and any alterations I have made have been altogether against both my personal and my public interests. I am sorry indeed for the action I have had to take.

MR. CONNOR: It is a question of justice.

THE PREMIER: Well, I believe in justice; and I hope the hon. member will be able to make out a case, and to induce the House to reinstate any electorate by the striking out of which an injustice may have been done. Probably there may be some such cases; and, if that can be shown, I am sure nobody will be more ready than I to try and remedy the defects of the Bill. But I certainly do not wish to increase the number of members, if that course can be avoided.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Let the hon. member (Mr. Connor) stand for the new seat in his district.

THE PREMIER: I beg to move the second reading.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I think most hon. members will now find themselves in much the same position as I occupy. We have hardly had time to fully examine this Bill. I hope the Government will consent to adjourn this debate, and I move that the debate be now adjourned till this day week.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I shall merely explain that it is a formal measure for the closing of certain roads and streets which it is necessary to close; and I suppose no further explanation is required in regard to the measure. If any question be asked, I shall be happy to answer it. I therefore beg to move the second reading of this Bill.

MR. EWING (Swan): I notice on looking at this Bill that there is no provision whatever, in the event of the closure of a road causing real damage to an individual, for the payment of any compensation to him for the damage he has suffered. I think that in these Bills for the closing of streets, if the frontage be taken from a man's land, in ordinary justice and right that man should be compensated. It is not at all necessary to urge this aspect of the question, which I am sure will commend itself to the Government. When they

consider the matter calmly and fairly, they will perceive that the closure of a street very often deprives land of the whole of its value, and the consequence is that, if no compensation whatever be provided in a Bill of this kind, a street can be closed, and an individual may have the whole of the value of his property taken away. I therefore trust that, when the Bill is in Committee, the Government will see their way to insert some clause providing that in any case where a real and substantial damage is suffered by any individual through the closure of a street, some reasonable amount of compensation, to be estimated in a manner to be provided in the Bill, shall be paid to the sufferer.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I hope there is no desire, by these Bills for closing streets, to take advantage of individuals through an Act of Parliament. As a rule, the streets so dealt with are no longer required; and I think that in nearly every case, or in all cases, the local roads board or municipal council is consulted. I do not know the details of this Bill, but the Minister has asked me to watch it for him; and I certainly would not be in accord with any action which would bring a drastic proposal before this House, without fully explaining the circumstances. Before the Bill goes into Committee I shall make inquiries. I take it, however, that these cases of streets it is proposed to close have all been submitted to the local authorities, where there are such authorities, and that those authorities are acting in concert with the Government. The only department of the State which is an exception to that rule—and perhaps it is not an exception—is the Railway Department; for sometimes the department wishes to close a street which is a nuisance. But I do not think that a case in which there was any controversy would be included in a Bill placed before hon. members, unless the controverted point were fully explained to the House; and when the local roads board or municipal council is in accord with the proposal to close a street, or, as in most cases, where such bodies desire that a street should be closed, I think there ought to be a closure. The insertion of clauses to the effect that anyone feeling himself aggrieved is to have compensation

would seem to me rather dangerous, because anyone living anywhere near the locality, who was in any way inconvenienced, would be sure to make out that his pocket had been very much injured, and the poor roads board, which, as a rule, has very little money in hand, would be considerably harassed. We had better be careful about encouraging people to go to law with the local authorities; and I am afraid I cannot agree to the proposal of the hon. member. We had a case discussed in the House the other night, where some street had been closed in Perth, and people had made tremendous claims. In that instance I might have made a claim, for I have some land there, and could no doubt have shown a good case, but I was not so imaginative.

MR. VOSPER: You were not so smart.

THE PREMIER: However, this matter can be thought over and dealt with in Committee. While I commend the hon. member for wishing to protect everyone from injury, still we must look after the local authorities a little, and not allow them to be the sport of any enterprising individual who fancies he has suffered some injury, when he has suffered no injury at all, or to such a small extent that he, as a citizen, ought not to say anything about it.

MR. EWING: The clause could be made to apply only in case of substantial damage.

THE PREMIER: I will make some inquiry, and may be able to give some information when the Bill is in Committee; but I expect the local authorities have all approved of the proposals in the Bill.

MR. SOLOMON (South Fremantle): I agree with the Premier on the question of paying compensation; but I would like to know whether there has been any communication with the Fremantle Council in regard to the two streets proposed to be closed there. I fancy one street is through the Oval and into Norfolk street, and if the Premier could get any information on the point I should be obliged. I do not think the local authorities know anything about the matter, because when I asked them, I could get no information.

THE PREMIER: Who has been moving in the matter, if not the municipality?

MR. SOLOMON: I do not know.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

INSECT PESTS AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell), in moving the second reading, said: This is a short Bill which merely proposes to amend 62 Victoria No. 27, Sections 6 and 7, by substituting for the words "Secretary for Agriculture," the words "Secretary to the Department of Agriculture, or such other officer as the Governor may appoint"; and the amendment is necessary in order to make the present Act perfectly legal. Hon. members will hardly require any further information from me, but if they do so I shall be happy to supply it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and report adopted.

ELECTORAL BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed on the motion for second reading, moved by the PREMIER on the 22nd August.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I have to congratulate the Government on the introduction of this Bill, which carries out almost precisely the ideas which have been suggested time and again on this important question. There has been very great difficulty experienced in the past in getting on the roll. That may have arisen to some extent because people did not understand the working of our Act, and perhaps there was some indifference or some trusting to the Government, as people are apt to trust in the other colonies, to put them on the roll, instead of taking the necessary steps themselves. But, whatever has been the cause, there are undoubtedly a large number who ought to be on the electoral rolls, but whose names are not found there; and the serious phase of the question has been that a good many people, who have in the proper manner made application to get on the rolls, have, for some reasons which

cannot be explained, not been found there at the proper time. That may have arisen through supposed or real informalities in the filling up of the various papers ; but the whole of these difficulties, I take it, are swept away by the Bill. The Bill carries out my ideas and is completely satisfactory to myself, and will, I think, be completely satisfactory to a large number of people in the colony. There is, however, one little point to which I would like to call the attention of the Premier, and it is a point I hope he will be prepared to deal with in Committee. In Clause 111, Sub-clause 8, there is the usual provision dealing with informal voting. In Clause 95 a provision is made which is new to the colony, namely that a square shall be printed opposite the name of each candidate on the voting paper ; and in Clause 104 it is set forth that the voter shall retire to some unoccupied apartment in the booth, and there, in private, vote by making a cross, having its centre within the square opposite the name of the candidate or candidates for whom he votes. If hon. members will look at the form of voting paper at the end of the Bill, they will see that the square is a very small one, and it may be, to carry out the principle of the Bill, that the vote of a man who does not make the centre of the cross inside the four lines of the square, must be declared informal. That, I am afraid, would cause much difficulty ; and, apart from that argument, custom goes a long way, people having been accustomed to strike out the names of persons for whom they do not intend to vote.

THE PREMIER : Not for very long ; it used to be the other way.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : That is the practice, as I have said, at all municipal elections now, though it was not so originally, and it is the practice in all the colonies with the exception of South Australia. A great many people who have come from the other colonies have been accustomed to the kind of voting I have described ; and to alter the system would, I think, lead to a great deal of confusion and informal voting. It would be much better for us to keep in line with the majority of the colonies in reference to the mode of voting ; and I hope that in Committee the Government will see their way to make the amendment I have

suggested. It is not a very important point ; it involves no principle, and is simply a question of convenience in obtaining the views of the people in the choice of their representatives. I hail with great satisfaction the introduction of this Bill. As already explained by the Premier, it is largely on South Australian lines, and I hope and fully expect the measure will remove the friction which has existed in this colony in reference to the Electoral Act. We might safely pass this Bill almost without alteration, except in details such as I have suggested, and I congratulate the Government on the introduction of the liberal measure.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay) : I desire to say a word or two on this Bill, and to express my agreement with the remarks made by the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) in reference to the proposed change in the method of voting. The present system is very much the better, being more simple, and what the people have been accustomed to in the past in this colony. The method of making a cross was in vogue years ago in municipal elections, but the present plan of recording votes has been found to answer very well indeed, especially in the case of illiterate voters ; and I hope no new departure will be made in this respect. The provision as to objections should be made the same as in the present Act, and a fee paid by the person who objects, in order to prevent unnecessary and unreasonable annoyance. The provisions for enabling persons to get on the roll are decidedly an advance on the present complicated arrangement ; indeed, the present Act is so complicated that people have even had to submit to a term of imprisonment through the absurdity of the law. It is ridiculous to endeavour to put people on the roll with one hand and to pull them off with the other. One difficulty which I hope to see dealt with in the Bill is in respect to absentee voting, the present method being to go to the resident magistrate or a deputy. The difficulty of getting at those persons who are so much engaged otherwise has been felt on many occasions, and I think it should be provided in the Bill that a postmaster, a schoolmaster, or other suitable person, in addition to the resident magistrate of a district, should be appointed for the purpose ; and that

persons who desire to get on the roll should not, as at present, continue to depend on the services of public officers who are often so difficult to get at when wanted. In other respects, I think the Bill is a good one.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest): I find, after looking into the matter very closely, that both this Bill and the Constitution Amendment Bill will have to be reserved for Her Majesty's assent; and of course the sooner we can get them through Parliament, the sooner we can send them away for that assent. It is not likely, as far as I can see, that this Electoral Bill will be of any use whatever to persons who desire to vote at the next general election. Hon. members will notice that after this Bill becomes law, and it cannot possibly come into operation before Christmas or January, no one can get on the roll under the new provisions until six months after they apply to be placed on the roll; so that persons who desire to vote at the next general election must not rely on being able to do so under the new provisions of this Bill.

MR. VOSPER: You might postpone the general election to meet that.

THE PREMIER: We might do so, and that would mean that we would have another sitting of this Parliament next year; but if this is to be the last ordinary session of this Parliament, it will not be possible for this Bill to come into operation in time for the next general election, if it takes place about May next. If it is desired that the general election shall take place about that time, this Bill cannot be available for placing new electors on the roll for the purpose. It will certainly take three months after the Bill leaves this colony before the royal assent can be telegraphed from London, and some little time will be required to investigate the circumstances before that assent is given. I have never admitted, and never will admit, that there is any real difficulty in getting on the roll under the present Electoral Act; though a man who moves from one electorate to another, and desires to get on the roll, cannot do so because of the condition of residence in one electoral district. I have filled up many forms for persons who were claiming to be put on the electoral roll, and I have found no difficulty whatever, for it

is a very simple process, and I have never heard that one of those claims was rejected. It is only necessary that the claim shall be presented to the registrar, and the thing is done.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): I did not rise to speak on the principles of the Bill, because, like other members on this (Opposition) side of the House, I approve of the provisions which are in it. The announcement just made by the Premier will put the electors in an awkward dilemma, for we are all anxious to get on the roll and to exercise a vote, and we are all desirous to have a redistribution of seats; yet it appears we cannot get them all, and that being so, if we are to have a general election next year on the old rolls, the demand for electoral reform will not have been satisfied. It practically means that if we have a general election next year, those persons whom this Bill is to benefit will have to remain as they are for three years longer. All those persons who have been hoping to get on these wide and extended electoral rolls which this Bill provides, will continue to be disfranchised. If any real benefit is to be obtained by this Bill, we must get this Bill and the Redistribution Bill into operation at the same time.

THE PREMIER: This Bill cannot come into effect without the Constitution Amendment Bill.

MR. VOSPER: As far as I can see, the only way out of the present difficulty is that the existing Parliament should live out the term of its natural life.

THE PREMIER: We shall have to consider that, and I think that is the only way out of it, or nearly so.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest): In rising to move the second reading of this Bill, I will say I feel in somewhat of a difficulty. It is a very important Bill, and its provisions are so novel in this colony or in any part of the world, except New Zealand and to some extent South Australia, that I feel I am scarcely equal to the task of placing the provisions of the Bill sufficiently clearly

before hon. members; but I will do what I can to give an outline of the Bill. The Bill as presented is a consolidation of four Acts passed in New Zealand for dealing with industrial disputes. The principal Act was passed in 1894, and an amending Act was passed in 1895, another in 1896, and another in 1898; so hon. members will see that this measure has had a life of five years in New Zealand, and that during those years it has been amended every year except in 1897. The Bill operates only on those parties who voluntarily submit themselves to the jurisdiction created under it. Those parties may be either individual employers, or a partnership of employers, or societies of employers, or societies of workmen. In the case of individual employers or partnerships, they are brought under the Bill when they are parties to an industrial agreement; but the collective bodies, whether employers or workers, are brought under the Bill either by becoming parties to an industrial agreement, or by being registered as an industrial union. It is also provided, in the case of an industrial association, that it may be registered; and this expression means a body consisting of the council of representatives of an industrial union, as provided in Clause 12. When these societies are registered, they become incorporated; they remain incorporated as long as they are registered; and they are amenable to the tribunal created by this Bill. For the purposes of this Bill, the colony is divided into industrial districts, and each industrial district is to have its board of conciliation. The board is to consist of four or six persons, to be elected by the industrial unions of the district; one-half to be elected by the employers' unions, and the other half by the workers' unions. This board acts only when industrial disputes are referred to it; and this reference can be made either by industrial agreement provided beforehand for reference, or by the consent of the parties to the dispute which has arisen. The first object the board has is to try and conciliate; and, failing that, it may express its decision on the merits in a report which has to be filed. This board which tries to conciliate, and which if it fails to conciliate has to express a decision on the merits of the case, has no power to enforce obedience to its decisions. That,

of course, is a somewhat weak spot, hon. members may think: but, as we proceed further, we shall see there is a tribunal which has power to enforce its decisions. If the Bill went no farther than this, it would be a great good. I do not look so much for the good working of a Bill of this sort on account of the tribunal being able to enforce its decisions, but I think the great value will be that the Bill provides a statutory means of bringing disputing persons together. The present system, everyone must admit, is somewhat barbarous. An employer carrying on a large business, and employing perhaps hundreds of men, may have a dispute, caused either on his side or on the other side; and, unless some friend comes between them, there are no means provided by which those parties in a dispute can be brought together. The result of the present system is that high words pass between them; then one or other side is determined not to be coerced, and the parties are kept apart instead of being brought together. Consequently, if the matter proceeds further, one party or the other is coerced: either the workmen are coerced by reason of their poverty, or the employer is coerced by reason of losing his business, or perhaps a fear of being ruined; and when that does result, when these two parties who have had a dispute come together again and "make it up" as the phrase is, there is generally some feeling of bitterness, probably on both sides, and the result does not tend to harmony in the future. If the employer get the best of it, probably the employees think that the time will come when they will give him a *quid pro quo*, or *vice versa*: so that under the present system, unless some intermediary, some friend of both parties, endeavour to bring the disputants together, the quarrel goes on and the difference becomes more acute. I think that any legislation which will have the effect of bringing those parties together, even if only by the establishment of this board of conciliation, must have a good effect. The moral effect of the board's decision must be productive of great good; for a board of independent persons sitting upon the case in dispute, investigating and giving a decision in regard to it, must have a great moral influence upon both parties, and the general opinion of

the public will be influenced by the board's decision. However, this Bill goes a good deal further. If this board be unable to conciliate, fails to conciliate, it can express an opinion on the merits of the case, in a report which is to be filed; but the board will have no power to enforce obedience to its decision. If the board be unsuccessful, and the parties are neither reconciled nor obedient to the suggestions contained in the report, though in many cases I think they will be, but if they are not, the board may refer the matter to a court of arbitration, or any party to the dispute may do so. Hon. members will notice those provisions are in Clauses 47 and 48. This court is the only tribunal created by the Bill which has power to enforce its decisions. Its jurisdiction may arise, "either as above-named, or by express submission under an industrial agreement, or at the instance of a party to an industrial dispute which has arisen in a district where there is no board." The Court consists of three persons, of whom one is elected by the representatives of the employers, another is elected by the workmen, and the third is a Judge of the Supreme Court, who is appointed by the Government. Here is an independent tribunal erected, both parties being represented, with a Supreme Court Judge sitting with their representatives. Every party to the dispute may appear before the Court, either personally or by agent, or, with the consent of all parties, by counsel or solicitor; but no costs can be allowed in respect to counsel or solicitor. This follows out the principle of the Bill. The desire is to bring these persons together; either party can be represented by an agent, or, with the consent of all parties and not otherwise, by counsel or solicitor; and I have no doubt that in most cases counsel or solicitors would not be allowed: I expect the parties would have to manage their business themselves; but if all parties were agreed that they should have counsel or solicitors, then they could be legally represented; though, so as to keep down expenses, no costs are to be allowed. The procedure as regards evidence and adjournments, adding and striking out parties, as regards all that is required for a trial, is very complete; and the award is to be drawn up, as far as possible, without the use of technical

language. Hon. members will notice that the limits of the penalty, costs included—that is, both the penalty and the costs—which this Court has the power to inflict, is £500. In this matter we follow the example of New Zealand, where the limit is the same, and where the costs are included in the penalty. This amount is to be paid by the employers if there be more than one, or by the workmen in case of the decision being against the latter. The award is not to be enforced directly by the Court, but is to be filed on record in any Court of competent jurisdiction, and is to be enforceable in the same way as any ordinary judgment of that Court. The property of an industrial union may be seized under the judgment, and if that be not enough to satisfy the claim, each member of the union is liable for a sum not exceeding £10. The procedure for enforcing the penalties imposed by the award is quite perfect, but the settlement of a dispute by these means is confessedly almost impossible. Hon. members will be able to appreciate this difficulty as I come towards the end of my explanation: they will see, and I shall be able to tell them, that although these proceedings are provided with the desired object, still no law that we can pass will make a man work for another if he does not want to, or will make a man keep open a business and employ workmen if it does not pay him to do so. It is provided by Clause 29 that neither party, after the dispute has been referred, is to do anything in the nature of a strike or lock-out, or to discontinue employment or work on account of an industrial dispute. The clause requires the respective parties to continue to employ and to be employed until the decision, and ends by saying that nothing shall prevent the work being discontinued from any other good cause. There we come to the difficulty which no law we may make can possibly overcome. There is nothing to prevent an employer who anticipates trouble with his men from saying, "I am going to shut down my works; I am not going to continue this industry any longer; I am going to sell off"; and he has a perfect right to do that so long as there is no dispute going on between him and his men. So long as the employer can give a good excuse, reason, or cause,

for what he is doing, then this Bill will not help the workmen. If masters or men choose to find some excuse for locking out or for striking, they can do so, even pending the reference, without incurring any penalty; whilst after a decision they will be at least equally free. It is quite clear, too, that either party may discontinue work, even pending a decision, for any just cause other than that of the dispute which is referred—other than that; and we all know that, when people choose to quarrel, it will not be very difficult to find some other good cause. On the employer's side, for instance, it may be a just cause that he cannot afford to pay the wages demanded, or to submit to the hours of working or conditions of work proposed by the workmen; for it is the duty of an employer to stop any work which would result in his insolvency. I think everyone will admit that if a man can really show that he is losing money by carrying on his business, there is no law which can make him do so, for if we try to do so we only make him insolvent. It comes to this: while I very much approve of this Bill in so far as it provides legislation which may have the effect of preventing strikes, and of bringing the employers and employees together, providing in certain cases a tribunal presided over by a Supreme Court Judge for the decision of disputes; I look very much more for the good this Bill will do to the earlier provision in the measure—the Conciliation Board—rather than to the Supreme Court Judge and the two representatives of the parties; because, if the Conciliation Board cannot bring these people together, I think we may depend upon it that a fine of £500 by the Court of Arbitration presided over by the Judge, whether the fine be imposed on the employers or on the employees, will not have the desired effect. This legislation, I believe, has worked fairly well in New Zealand; and I have heard it said that even the employers in that colony, though they do not like the Act, would not be prepared to recommend its abolition. Feeling as I do that this law has done good elsewhere, and that it will probably do good here, though it will not do everything which some people expect from it, I have much pleasure in proposing the second reading. I do not believe that either this or any other kind of legis-

lation will succeed in solving the problem of how to make the master pay money which he is not receiving, or how to make the workman take less than he demands, or work at all if he chooses to take a holiday. These are the provisions of the Bill: I commend them to hon. members. I believe they will do a great deal more good than harm. I hope they will not be too often availed of, for we do not want these industrial disputes to occur frequently; but industrial disputes have occurred in this colony, and it is quite possible that they may occur again; and if they do, there will at all events be some legislative machinery to which the disputants may have recourse. I beg to move the second reading.

MR. VOSPER: I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned to the next sitting.

EVIDENCE BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

Amendment made by the Legislative Council considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

New Clause—What documents may be given in evidence:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The new clause inserted by the Legislative Council was one to which no objection could be offered. It provided that certain notice should be given of evidence it was proposed to tender, in order that the parties against whom it was proposed to tender the evidence, should not be taken by surprise. He moved that the new clause be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

Amendment made by the Legislative Council considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 9, line 2: Strike out all the words after "inch" and insert "provided that nothing contained in this Act shall affect the measurement of land":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

At 6.22, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from the 22nd August.

Clause 106—Voting by proxy in certain cases:

An amendment having been previously moved by Mr. Quinlan, for the purpose of continuing the existing method of voting by proxy with a modification to prevent abuse, the clause was further discussed.

MR. QUINLAN said his amendment provided that proxy forms should be issued in the same manner as at present, but with more stringency; and, in order to meet what he understood to be the feeling of hon. members, he would now go farther and provide that the signing of the proxy should be witnessed by a justice of the peace. The provision so amended would make the conditions of proxy voting in municipal elections similar to the conditions of proxy voting in Parliamentary elections, and there would be provision in a schedule to prevent proxy forms from being kept in hand and used at some future election, for which those forms had not been intended, and a further provision was that a person dealing with a proxy form should make a declaration.

MR. A. FORREST (in charge of the Bill): The amendment was not desirable, for reasons he had stated when the matter came up at a previous sitting. The opinion of delegates at the municipal conference was unanimous against the present system of proxy voting, and in favour of the new provision in the Bill. It was a fair proposal that proxy voting should be subject to restriction, in order to check the practice of soliciting for proxy votes, and to check the practice of giving, without sufficient inquiry or knowledge of the circumstances, a proxy vote to almost any person who might apply for it. It was a common thing for canvassers to solicit proxy votes in favour of some particular candidate, the can-

vasser receiving so much for each proxy obtained in favour of that candidate; and this loose way of giving and using proxy votes might upset an election, by bringing in a great number of votes from persons outside, who had little or no knowledge of local circumstances, and who might seriously interfere with the proper course of an election. It was found desirable that there should be restrictions, especially in the case of new municipalities on the goldfields, for there the building sections were held largely, perhaps to the extent of one half or more, by persons living outside the district and having very little knowledge of what was going on.

MR. SOLOMON supported the arguments of the previous speaker, and said proxy votes had often been used to the detriment of deserving candidates, because persons who gave those votes had not sufficient local knowledge, or were too far away to understand the circumstances. The existing law was not really a system of voting by ballot, in the case of proxy voting, because an open declaration was made by signing the proxy.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: A strong feeling had been expressed by delegates attending the municipal conference, that the old system of proxy voting should be abolished, and that a system in uniformity with that used at Parliamentary elections should be substituted for it. The provision in the Bill would have that effect, and it ought to be supported, if only for the reason that it would secure uniformity of practice in cases of municipal and Parliamentary elections.

THE PREMIER: Proxy voting at elections was, in his opinion, very objectionable. The system of absentee voting was in force in Parliamentary elections, and he did not object to it so far as plural voting was concerned, for to give a man the right of voting and not to provide a means of exercising the vote was really a farce. Therefore, he had always supported the system by which an absent voter might record his vote; but that should be done as a deliberate action on his part, by going through the same form as would be necessary if he were voting in a polling booth. Such a vote was quite as satisfactory as if the voter attended the polling place and put his ballot-paper in the box; in

fact, as much or more trouble must be taken to vote in this manner. But proxy voting was very different. Numbers of people sent out requests to voters to nominate proxies to vote for candidates who, in many cases, the voter did not know.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Frequently the voter did not even know the proxy.

THE PREMIER: True: there was no deliberate act, as in the case of an absentee voter at a Parliamentary election going before a magistrate, and secretly recording a vote which the returning officer would afterwards place in the ballot-box. The sooner proxy voting was abolished the better. People frequently confused proxy voting with absent voting, but the two were very different. The latter was the deliberate act of the voter; the former was the act of some one deputed by the voter, the voter in many cases knowing neither the proxy nor the candidate for whom the vote was cast. It was pleasant to note that the Bill provided that those who wished to exercise their votes must do so personally.

MR. ILLINGWORTH hoped the amendment would not be pressed, as it was opposed to the expressed opinion of the municipal delegates who had given the question as much consideration as, if not more than, the Committee could afford. Personally, he was strongly opposed to proxy voting, and almost as strongly to absent voting.

THE PREMIER: The two were very different.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Frequently he had received proxy forms with requests to fill them up in cases where he neither knew the candidate nor the proxy. If he had not sufficient interest in a municipality to vote personally at an election, why should he have the power to disturb the choice of the local electors who were in a better position to understand their necessities? It was time the proxy system was abolished.

MR. QUINLAN: In view of the opposition to the amendment, he would ask leave to withdraw it. At the same time, he hoped his doing so would not influence the fate of other amendments of which he had given notice.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 107 to 128, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 129—Collectors to make returns to the council:

MR. GEORGE moved that the word "ten" in the last line be struck out, and "fifty" inserted in lieu thereof. A penalty of £10 for the offence of neglecting to make returns was too low. Municipal officers should be persons fully seized of their responsibilities; and nothing but a severe penalty would prevent the recurrence of troubles experienced in the past. The clause provided that every officer should deliver to the council true and perfect accounts in writing. Why should there be any delay in delivering the accounts? And if there were delay, there must be a penalty sufficient to enforce the rights of the council, if the council were defied by its officer, as might happen, and as he believed had happened in Perth.

MR. A. FORREST opposed the amendment. The furnishing of accounts was not the only duty imposed by the clause. Officers had to furnish lists of names of persons who had refused to pay rates. A ratepayer might promise to pay to-morrow, and come in late next day, the furnishing of the accounts being thus delayed. For such a default a £10 penalty was sufficient. Any irregularity would be punished, not by a fine, but by instant dismissal. Besides, in most municipalities, and in Perth especially, rates were paid to the council direct.

MR. GEORGE: The fact that the presentation of accounts might be delayed because of ratepayers promising to pay to-morrow was an argument for the increase of the penalty imposed on collectors. "Paying to-morrow" had been the curse of the municipality of Perth, and had resulted in large arrears of rates.

MR. A. FORREST: The hon. member was speaking "without the book."

MR. GEORGE: Did the hon. member wish to monopolise the attention of the Committee? By the Bill the hon. member (Mr. A. Forrest) was described as "The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Perth": surely that title should teach him courtesy. Though the maximum penalty might be £50, the council could impose a lighter fine for a small offence.

MR. A. FORREST: Was the hon. member in order in addressing him as the Mayor of Perth?

MR. GEORGE apologised. He had been a member of the Perth City Council till about two years ago, and at that time the arrears of rates amounted to nearly £5,000, and principally arose from the fact that so many ratepayers promised to "pay to-morrow," thus penalising citizens who had paid their rates—defaulters who would like to give promissory notes for everything they owed, with the understanding that they would be allowed to "pay to-morrow" if the notes were dishonoured.

MR. A. FORREST: When the member for the Murray (Mr. George) was a member of the City Council, the rates were to a large extent in arrear; but to-day 90 per cent. of the rates had been collected in Perth, with back rates as well. It would be seen, therefore, there was nothing very wrong in the way in which the rates had been collected in the two years since the hon. member had left the council, the system now being to have the money paid over the counter instead of to collectors. It was to be hoped the amendment would not be accepted, because, if there was anything in the least suspicious, action could be taken, and the class of people employed as collectors were not those who could afford, as a rule, to pay £50. The provision in the Bill had been adopted by three municipal conferences, who perhaps knew more about the subject than either the member for the Murray or himself.

MR. GEORGE: The system of paying rates over the counter was made in consequence of the labours of the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) and himself, who, as members of the Perth City Council, formed a special committee to inquire into this matter at a time when the member for West Kimberley was not the mayor of Perth; and if the rates had been collected within 90 per cent., it was not likely that the penalty he suggested would have to be enforced on any man. Until the recommendations of the special committee to which he had referred, the collector for the City Council had such an opinion about his office that he said not even the mayor, the councillors, or the ratepayers could discharge him, but that it would require the mayor, the council, and the ratepayers acting as one body to dismiss him, and that he would do what he

liked in the way of collecting rates. The member for West Kimberley deserved credit for the way he had worked as a member of the City Council, and he was perhaps the best mayor Perth had had for some years; but, nevertheless, some of the reforms found in the Perth municipality were the result of the labours of other members, including himself (Mr. George). Cases had occurred where a large penalty should be required; and as to collectors not being able to pay, if men were placed in charge of money they ought to be able to give security. In his opinion, these municipal conferences were simply guzzling expeditions, and were certainly not what they pretended to be. The municipality of Claremont and the municipality of Bunbury declined to take any part, because they considered that no good came of such conferences, which really appeared to consist of the mayor of Perth and his coadjutor, the town clerk. As to having faith in municipal conferences, in every municipality it had been found necessary to establish ratepayers' associations to see that mayors and councillors did their duty.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 130—agreed to.

Clause 131—Officers failing to render accounts or to pay balance, etc.:

MR. GEORGE asked why a money penalty was not provided, instead of giving power to send an officer to gaol for six months.

MR. A. FORREST: It was a great pity the hon. member did not give notice of his amendments in a long Bill of this character. There was nothing in the clause to which the Committee could not agree; indeed, the provision was the law at the present time.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 132—agreed to.

Clause 133—Remuneration on resignation or abolition of office:

MR. QUINLAN said he had an amendment to this clause on the Notice Paper, because he was afraid the clause, as drawn, would open the door to great abuses. A town council should not have power to grant an officer a month's salary for each year of service in the event of his resigning. The amendment he intended to submit was in the very words

of the present Act, and why these words had been omitted in the Bill he could not understand.

MR. GEORGE moved that in the first line the word "resignation" be struck out, and "death" inserted in lieu thereof. Resignations might be brought about by various causes. For instance, an officer might find that his experience did not meet present-day requirements, and in such a case it was scarcely fair that ratepayers' money should be paid to an officer as a sort of reward for not keeping himself abreast of the times. There were several officers against whose private character or personal honour nothing could be said, who had resigned employment under the City Council, and there had been considerable dissatisfaction at the retiring gratuities awarded them. The ratepayers could not see why municipal officers should, in this respect, be treated differently from the servants of private firms, and Perth was getting into an unenviable position, so far as heavy rates were concerned. It might be, however, that an officer worked so hard that his health failed and he died, leaving a widow or other dependents very poorly off; and the amendment would permit of an allowance being made under such circumstances. The remuneration of municipal officers in Perth was not too much; in fact, the city would be better served if salaries were made so high that no officer would run any risk of losing his position.

MR. A. FORREST said he must oppose the amendment, to discuss which would be only a waste of time.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. QUINLAN moved that the following proviso be added to the clause: "Provided always that the payment of any such gratuity shall be disallowed by the auditors, unless such expenditure is confirmed and allowed by a vote taken at the next meeting of the ratepayers." The amendment was nothing new, and only represented what had been the practice, not only under the present Act, but under previous Acts. He was not one who would trust the municipal councils with such expenditure, and the amendment would, he thought, meet the views of the member for the Murray, in that any such gratuity would have to be confirmed at a meeting of ratepayers. He

hoped the Committee would adopt the amendment, which would have the effect of stopping some of that extravagance for which the Perth Council was noted.

MR. A. FORREST: It should be remembered that the City Council was not the only municipal council in the country. At the recent conference the delegates were unanimous in supporting this clause, and it would apply especially to the recent case of an officer of the Perth Council who had become in some way so obnoxious to a majority of the councillors that he could not get on with them. The trouble was ended amicably by an arrangement made by him (Mr. Forrest) as mayor, for a grant of a month's pay for each year of service he had rendered to the council; and in that way the officer was enabled to retire, with a good recommendation from himself as mayor, and he succeeded in obtaining a better appointment elsewhere. It was better for all parties concerned that this arrangement should have been made; but if the grant of money was to be subject to the approval of a meeting of ratepayers, the opposition was such that there was no chance of its being approved. When ratepayers elected representatives to act for them, those representatives should be allowed some discretion, and should be supported in using it. A municipal council had power to settle disputes involving claims for hundreds of pounds, and in this connection he referred particularly to a serious dispute, involving claims for a large sum, which had been recently settled amicably in Perth. Therefore, having power to pay money in that way for the benefit of a municipality in getting rid of troublesome claims, surely it was reasonable that a council should have power also to make a payment to an officer when the council found it necessary to remove the officer or induce him to retire amicably. He hoped the amendment would not be supported.

THE PREMIER: After hearing what had been said, he must take the part of municipal councils in this matter. If ratepayers elected representatives to sit on a council and manage their business, those ratepayers were bound by the actions of their representatives; and if the actions were not approved, the ratepayers should at the next opportunity remove representatives whose actions

were not acceptable. It might as well be said that the Government of this colony, responsible to Parliament, should not have power to expend a sum of money when such was deemed to be necessary in the interests of the country; and in like manner a discretionary power should be given to municipal councils, to be used in such cases as were contemplated by the clause under discussion. An officer might get old in the service, and a majority of councillors might agree that it was better to ask the officer to resign and give him a gratuity by way of inducement. The Legislative Assembly voted away the money contributed by taxpayers in the country, and did it according to the best judgment of the representatives here, and these things were done without demur. Why should not a council act in a similar way, within reasonable limits? He supported the clause.

MR. OLDHAM, in supporting the clause, illustrated the working of it by the case of an officer of the Perth Council who had recently been given a bonus to leave the service, because it was found impossible for him to work amicably with the hostile majority in the council. If ratepayers were to be asked in public meeting to approve of what was done in that case, it would be practically asking the approval of persons who would go to the meeting for the very purpose of finding fault with almost everything the council had done. If ratepayers could not trust their representatives, they should not elect them; or, having elected them, and not approving of their actions, the ratepayers should try to remove them at the next opportunity.

MR. MORGANS: The position of the member for the Murray (Mr. George), as shown by his action on the Bill this evening, and especially on this clause, was incongruous, for it was understood the hon. member, when formerly one of the City Council, had proposed that a sum of £150 should be paid to a retiring officer.

MR. GEORGE: Not to a retiring officer, but payment for work done.

MR. MORGANS: Yes; perhaps that was it. But it was a payment to be made at the discretion of members of the Council, and there should be power in the Bill enabling them to do so without having to seek the approval of ratepayers

in public meetings. The whole 70 delegates attending the recent conference were unanimous in supporting this clause; and was it to be supposed they were all fools, and that the member for the Murray, as the solitary opponent of this clause, was the only wise man? The united opinion of so many delegates was entitled to the respect of this Committee, and the member for the Murray might reasonably be asked to retire from the position of opposition he had taken on this occasion.

MR. WOOD: The amendment was unnecessary, and would place the members of a municipal council in a false position in cases where such council had found it necessary to expend money in the way contemplated by the clause, and had done it in the interests of the municipality. Members elected to a municipal council were entitled to consideration, and their actions should be supported in matters of this kind. After all, what did it amount to?

MR. GEORGE: To £550, not long ago.

MR. WOOD: If so, perhaps thousands of pounds were thus saved.

MR. GEORGE: No doubt.

MR. WOOD: The mover (Mr. Quinlan) had great influence in the Perth Council, and could gain his point by exercising that influence. The debate on this Bill had strongly resembled the discussions reported in the Press of meetings of the City Council, especially those at which the member for the Murray (Mr. George) had been present.

MR. MORGANS said he hoped not.

MR. GEORGE: The experience of the hon. member (Mr. Wood) in City Council work had been gained purely as valuer for the city of Perth. When he (Mr. George) was a member of the Perth Council, he had voted for £150 allowance to the city engineer, in payment for work done. That officer had an agreement with the council, and could not have been got rid of unless the sum in question had been paid. The Premier, who knew nothing of municipal matters, had said the City Council had expended their money wisely. If so, why did not the councillors agree among themselves? Why was a recent meeting so unreportable that it had to be condensed into a satirical descriptive article? He assured the member for West Kimberley

(Mr. A. Forrest) that he had studied the Bill, and if that statement were again challenged he would reply in strong language. The mover of the amendment should "stick to his guns."

Amendment (Mr. Quinlan's) put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 134—Auditors to be elected:

MR. GEORGE moved that all the words after "elected," in line 1, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof: "for each municipality for two years, but one auditor shall retire annually alternately. The auditors elected must not be partners, or connected with each other in business in the municipality."

MR. A. FORREST: The hon. member could hardly be serious in proposing that one of the two auditors annually elected should remain in office for an additional period of twelve months. What could be gained by the alteration?

MR. GEORGE: It would be better if the auditors held office for three years.

MR. A. FORREST: Auditors should, if practicable, be changed every year, so that new men might ascertain that everything was right. The amendment would, without reason, alter the method of electing auditors which had been in use for the last 30 years; nor had the ratepayers of Perth ever found fault with the manner in which the accounts had been kept.

MR. GEORGE: It was admitted that councillors should not all retire at the same time; and being elected for three years, they retired by rotation, so that there were always in office some men accustomed to the routine of the council. The principle should be equally advantageous when applied to auditors. The accounts of a City Council were complex; the auditors' remuneration was not large; and the amendment would give to every new auditor a colleague familiar with the accounts. Further, it was essential that an auditor should be practically independent of the officials, on whom, for the first month or so, new auditors must rely. The concluding words of the amendment provided that auditors must not be partners or connected in business. If two accountants in partnership were elected, one might easily delegate his duties to a clerk, whereas two independent

auditors would represent the best skill procurable.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	...	...	5
Noes ...	...	...	15

Majority against ... 10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Holmes	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Oldham	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Wilson	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Wood	Mr. Hooley
Mr. George (Teller).	Mr. Hubble
	Mr. Morgans
	Mr. Pennefather
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Robson
	Mr. Solomon
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Wallace
	Mr. Rason (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 135 to 141, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 142—General and special meetings of ratepayers:

MR. GEORGE moved that in line 3 of Sub-clause 2 the words "circulating in the municipality" be inserted after the word "newspaper."

MR. A. FORREST: Suppose there were no newspaper in the municipality?

MR. GEORGE: It was hard to imagine a municipality without a newspaper, and unless the words were inserted, the Bunbury municipality might be found advertising in the Perth newspapers. If the hon. member in charge of the Bill thought it would be better, the words might be altered to "circulating in the municipality or in the neighbourhood."

MR. A. FORREST: Surely a municipality could be trusted in a matter of this kind.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE: It seemed that the member for West Kimberley had determined that no alteration should be made in the Bill, but he (Mr. George) was just as determined that alterations should be made. He moved that in line 3 of Sub-clause 2, after the word "notice," the words "or advertisement" be inserted. In submitting this amendment he desired to draw attention to the attitude of the member in charge of the Bill, an attitude which was the exercise of actual brute force.

MR. A. FORREST: Resisting these amendments was simply carrying out the wishes of the municipal conference.

MR. GEORGE: The attitude of the hon. member was one of uncompromising opposition to amendments which were offered in perfect faith. He (Mr. George) had given, he believed, as much study to the Bill as had the hon. member for West Kimberley, who had come there simply crammed with the ideas of the secretary to the municipal conferences. In his natural impatience the hon. member regarded anyone who criticised the measure—which had been got up solely in the interests of the officials of the councils, and not in the interests of ratepayers—as one who was wasting the time of the Committee; but he (Mr. George) would not relinquish his right to criticise the Bill. The object of municipal government was that the ratepayers should have as representatives men in whom they had confidence, and if the ratepayers found these representatives were not so good and fit as they had been thought to be, the ratepayers had a perfect right to form associations and take what action they liked, within the law of the colony. It came with ill-grace from the member for West Kimberley to speak in terms of contempt of the Ratepayers' Association of Perth. The amendments which had been submitted were the outcome of meetings of the committees of the Ratepayers' Association, and the members of these committees were as well qualified to judge on matters which affected themselves as any member of the City Council. If an independent body of men decided that amendments were necessary in this Bill, why should their voice not be represented in the House without efforts being made to put down their representatives with an exhibition of such bullying brute force as had been seen this evening? Amendments necessary to make the Bill intelligible had been refused by the member for West Kimberley, but if this Bill had to be passed *en bloc*, why not every other Bill which was introduced in the House? Hon. members would not abrogate their right to guard the liberties of those whom they represented in the Legislative Assembly; otherwise, the best thing would be to do away with representative government, and go back to the dark days of autocracy.

He was a ratepayer of the city of Perth, and the fact that he was a member of the Legislative Assembly was no reason why he should abrogate his rights as a ratepayer. Hon. members had been told that the rates of the city of Perth were paid within 90 per cent., and the member for West Kimberley asked them to infer that the other 10 per cent. would also be paid. It was necessary that notice should be given of the important meetings contemplated in the clause, and therefore the amendment he had moved was very necessary. He would be quite willing to allow the clause to be suspended in order to give the hon. member in charge of the measure an opportunity of reconsidering this point.

MR. A. FORREST: It was not necessary to reply to the rabid statements of the member for the Murray. If that hon. member looked at Clause 7, he would see that all advertising must be done through a newspaper generally circulating in the municipality; and surely that ought to be sufficient. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to refuse necessary amendments in the Bill; indeed, a number of amendments, of which notice had been given by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon), would practically be accepted as a whole. He (Mr. Forrest) was in charge of this Bill as the representative of the whole of the municipalities of the colony, and he was fighting for the Bill under instructions from those municipalities. He was empowered to carry the Bill through as drawn; and what would the municipalities think of him if he allowed the measure to be knocked about by the member for the Murray, who had evidently never seen Clause 7, to which attention had just been drawn? The member for the Murray had made statements about him (Mr. Forrest) that were wholly untrue. He (Mr. Forrest) had neither the will nor the power to use brute force in connection with this measure; indeed, he had never spoken to any members in regard to their votes on the various clauses. The remark of the member for Murray, that the municipal association were "guzzlers," was an insult to the municipalities of the colony. The representatives at the conferences gave three weeks of their time in various parts of the colony, without payment; and the

statement of the hon. member could only be regarded as one of those rabid utterances in which he indulged on some occasions; and to-night, because some little amendment of his had been negatived, he seemed disposed to block the Bill clause by clause. The measure was the outcome of the ability of the whole of the municipalities, an ability greater than the hon. member had, or ever would have.

Amendment (Mr. George's) put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 143 to 168, inclusive — agreed to.

Clause 169—Purposes for which by-laws may be drawn (51 sub-clauses):

MR. GEORGE: What was the necessity for making by-laws and joint regulations for fixing gratuities? Such a procedure was surely unnecessary.

MR. A. FORREST: If an officer of a council were to die, the council would not be able to pay a gratuity to the family without this provision.

MR. GEORGE: The explanation showed that the provision was unnecessary, and he moved that in Sub-clause 13, the first line, the words "on the resignation or" be struck out. Municipal officers were in most instances engaged on a specific agreement, and this cumbersome process of making regulations was unnecessary.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. SOLOMON moved that in Sub-clause 19, line 3, the word "other" be struck out as unnecessary.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON further moved that in Sub-clause 26, line 11, there be inserted after "fires" the words "for empowering members of fire brigades to call assistance for the suppression or extinguishment of fires." The amendment would enable a brigade to call for and obtain the use of any cab horses.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON further moved that in Sub-clause 26, line 16, after "straw," there be inserted the word "timber." There was no provision in the clause for stacking timber.

MR. GEORGE: The effect of the amendment would be to prevent the stacking of timber.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did the hon. member move any amendment?

MR. GEORGE: Not the slightest use, or he would do so.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON further moved that in Sub-clause 34 the word "public" be inserted before "reserve," wherever that word occurred in the clause.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON further moved that in line 10 of the same sub-clause, after "games," there be inserted the words "betting or gambling of any description."

MR. GEORGE: Did the hon. member seriously propose to legalise betting and gambling? That would be the effect of his amendment.

MR. A. FORREST agreed with the member for the Murray, this time, and opposed the amendment.

MR. GEORGE: The amendment was contrary to the spirit of the Bill.

MR. SOLOMON: A municipal council should have power to prescribe regulations in regard to public parks.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE moved that all the words after "plantations," in line 31, be struck out. To permit municipal councils to charge fees for admission to public reserves, and to exclude men who, through poverty, could not pay, would be most dastardly. Parliament should exercise considerable supervision over reserves granted to municipalities, for some such reserves had been attempted to be mortgaged.

MR. A. FORREST: Not by the Perth Council.

MR. GEORGE: No; but by the Boulder municipality, which was offering a reserve as security for a loan.

THE PREMIER: Such a security could not be given.

MR. GEORGE: But the point was that the council were trying to do so. What right had a council to exclude the public from a reserve, or to charge for admission, making a distinction between the poor man and the man of wealth?

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

Ayes	...	...	...	5
Noes	...	...	...	16
				—
Majority against			...	11

AYES.

Mr. Hooley
Mr. Quinlan
Sir J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Wood
Mr. George (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Conolly
Mr. Ewing
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hubble
Mr. Morgans
Mr. Oldham
Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Reason
Mr. Robson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Throssell
Hon. H. W. Venn
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Hassell (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

MR. SOLOMON moved that the following words be inserted after "vehicles" in Sub-clause 35, line 10: "Regulating the licensing, driving, cancellation or suspension of licenses of passenger vehicles and vehicles used for the conveyance of goods or merchandise for hire."

MR. GEORGE: Did not the preceding words cover that ground?

MR. SOLOMON: The sub-clause did not provide for vehicles used for the conveyance of goods or merchandise for hire, but merely for passenger vehicles.

MR. MORGANS: But the sub-clause read, "or other vehicles." The amendment was unnecessary.

MR. SOLOMON asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. SOLOMON moved that after the word "demand," in line 19, the following be inserted: "Enforcing the obligation of owners and drivers of vehicles licensed for the conveyance of goods and merchandise for hire, to carry merchandise and goods on demand."

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON moved that after the word "passenger," in line 24, the words "or other" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON moved that after the word "council," in Sub-clause 37, line 5, the following be inserted: "Regulating the conduct of persons using such public reserves and commons."

MR. A. FORREST asked whether the amendment included private reserves, of which there were many.

MR. SOLOMON: In order to meet the point raised, private reserves could be included in the amendment,

Amendment, in its altered form, put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON further moved that in Sub-clause 37, line 5, after "commons" the following be inserted: "Regulating the cutting, collecting, or removing of timber, firewood, stone, or other material from or on any public reserve or common."

THE PREMIER: There were Government reserves over which municipalities had no power, but which were solely under the control of the Government.

MR. A. FORREST: The clause only applied to reserves under the care, control, or management of municipalities.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON moved that in Sub-clause 42, line 32, after "premises" the following words be added: "Regulating or prohibiting bill-posting."

MR. GEORGE: A style of advertising quite as obnoxious as that of bill-posting was the painting of offensive announcements on galvanised and other fences, and he suggested that the words "or painting" should be included in the amendment.

MR. MORGANS: Painted advertisements were most offensive in some public places. The attractive rocks at the entrance to the splendid harbour of Albany bore huge painted advertisements referring to tobacco, liquor, and all sorts of things. Some of the letters of these advertisements were quite seven feet long, and there ought to be some control over the men who committed these acts of vandalism.

MR. SOLOMON: There was no objection to including painted advertisements in the amendment.

MR. MORGANS: It would be desirable to have a provision absolutely prohibiting this class of advertisement.

MR. A. FORREST: This was a municipal Bill, and to prohibit the class of advertisements objected to, it would be necessary for the Government to bring in another measure.

MR. MORGANS suggested that the rocks in Albany harbour were within the municipality.

MR. GEORGE: It was not many years since some vandal attempted to advertise somebody's mustard on the rocks at Crawley, and there were numbers of people who suffered from advertisements of various kinds being smeared on their fences.

Amendment, in its altered form, put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

On the motion of MR. A. FORREST, progress was reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:11 o'clock p.m., until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 30th August, 1899.

Petitions: Companies Duty Bill—Question: Court-houses, Perth and Fremantle—Public Education Bill, third reading—Companies Duty Bill, second reading; adjourned—Sale of Liquors Amendment Bill, in Committee; Recommittal, reported—Dog Act Amendment Bill, Legislative Assembly's Message, Division—Insects Pests Amendment Bill, first reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITIONS—COMPANIES DUTY BILL.

HON. A. B. KIDSON presented a petition from representatives of incorporated companies carrying on business in Western Australia; also a petition from banks carrying on business in Western Australia, referring to the proposed tax in the Companies Duty Bill.

Petitions received, read, and ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—COURT-HOUSES, PERTH AND FREMANTLE.

HON. R. S. HAYNES asked the Colonial Secretary: 1. Whether the attention of the Government has been called to the inconvenience felt by the magistrates and solicitors in the Perth and Fremantle courts, in consequence of

the acoustic properties of the courts being defective. 2. Whether any steps will be taken to remedy the defect.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—1. The attention of the Government had not been drawn to the matter. 2. The Architectural division had been directed to investigate it, and remedy any defect which might be found.

PUBLIC EDUCATION BILL.

THIRD READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Bill be read a third time.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: With reference to Clause 19, did it apply exclusively to boys?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There were, he believed, bursaries for girls.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That would be dealt with by regulations?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

COMPANIES DUTY BILL.

SECOND READING (MOVED).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): It is with diffidence I rise to move the second reading of this important Bill. That feeling is caused, in a great measure, by the objections that have been urged against the Bill, and because I think the contents of such an important measure require more exhaustive treatment, perhaps, than I am able this afternoon to give it. I shall be bound to state reasons why the Bill has been introduced, and why it is the earnest desire of the Government that the Bill should be carried into effect. It is well known that we are hopefully anticipating a considerable increase in the agricultural and horticultural products of the colony, which will enable us to supply the wants of this community without having recourse to outside help. This will, to a considerable extent, affect the revenue through the customs of this colony. That is a reason which will commend itself to all hon. members, and it is necessary if such be the case, and all hope that it will be, and expect that such will be the case in the near future, therefore we must have something to