reduce its capital, but if such be done the company must add the words "and reduced" to its name for a certain time. Power is also given to the Registrar to strike defunct companies off the register. Certain companies we know have exhausted their capital and ceased work, but their names still remain on the register, and this Bill provides that the Registrar, after giving certain notices, may strike the company off.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Who puts the Registrar in motion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Section 195 refers to this, but it does not provide who shall put him in motion. He may move himself on any information he may gain by hearsay, or at the express request of a shareholder or other person. It will be observed also that this Bill contains provisions for winding up what are called unregistered companies. I do not know, sir, that at this stage it is advisable for me to enter more fully into details. Perhaps I should have confined myself more to the principle of the Bill than to the details, but at the same time it is a lengthy Bill, and an important one, and hence I have thought it better to allude to some of the principal alterations contemplated; and having done so, I ask hon. members, if they are satisfied with my explanation, to affirm the second reading, although, as I said before, I shall have no objection to the adjournment of the debate, if hon. members wish it. In fact I shall be glad to see hon. members take an interest in this Bill, and discuss it, because I have no doubt the more we look into the matter the better we shall be able to make the law, and any suggestion for alterations hon. members will find I will most heartily receive. I now move the second reading.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I move, sir, that the debate be adjourned. The Bill is a lengthy one, and it would have been almost impossible to digest it within a reasonable space of time without the information which has been afforded by my hon. friend. It must be remembered, too, that this is the only Bill of any importance that will come before us in the first instance, and hence, as there is a certain amount of honor involved, we should certainly do our best with it. I therefore move the adjournment of the debate until the next sitting of the House.

Question—that the debate be adjourned—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 4·15 p.m. adjourned until Tuesday, 22nd November, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 21st November, 1892.

Report of Select Committee: Perth Gas Company's Act Amendment (Private) Bill—Running of Engines, &c., upon completed Sections of Yilgarn Railway—Obtaining and Carrying out Judgments in the Warden's Court, Kimberley—Land Regulations Amendment Bill: committee—Public Health Act Further Amendment Bill: second reading—Message from the Governor: Resignation of Sir James G. Lee Steere as Member of Federal Council—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7·30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE—PERTH GAS COMPANY'S ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE) BILL.

MR. CANNING brought up the report of the select committee on this Bill.

Report received, and ordered to be printed.

RUNNING OF ENGINES, &c., UPON COMPLETED SECTIONS OF YILGARN RAILWAY.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways whether the contractor for the Northam-Yilgarn Railway would be allowed to run his engines, trucks, material, water-tanks, and all necessaries from Northam free of charge over completed sections of the line? If not, what would be the schedule of charges? And

what provision was being made for obtaining a supply of water for the engine tanks?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied:—1. No. 2. The lowest tariff rates, known as the special class, will be charged. This has already been announced, for general information, to all contractors. 3. Special and exceptional provision has been made for the storage and supply of water for the use of locomotives along the route, as will be seen by a reference to the contract, and it is the intention of the department to carry out as a special work, through Mr. Raeside, the making of certain reservoirs for water, which have already been marked out in conjunction with these.

OBTAINING AND CARRYING OUT OF JUDGMENTS IN THE WARDEN'S COURT, KIMBERLEY.

MR. MONGER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether any representation had been made to the Government—on behalf of foreign capitalists having interests in mines in the Kimberley district—relative to the present mode of obtaining judgments in the Warden's Court, and effecting sales of mining properties, without due notice to the proprietors? If so, did the Government intend taking any steps in the matter?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) replied: A representation has been made on behalf of the proprietors of the Lady Hopetoun mine, which had been seized under a warrant of execution on a judgment of the Warden's Court, and was advertised for sale on 15th December. It is not the intention of the Government to take any steps in the matter at present, as the Warden has complied with the regulations, and the proprietors, through their agents here, have stated that the amount of the judgment will be paid before the date fixed for the sale.

LAND REGULATIONS (RENTS) AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Adjourned debate upon Mr. Monger's motion, That the following new clause stand as part of the Bill: "The rent to "be paid for pastoral leases in the Eastern Division shall be, for each thou"sand or part of a thousand acres, two "shillings and sixpence for each of the "first seven years, and five shillings for "each of the remaining years of the "lease; and clause 70 of the Land Regu"lations proclaimed on the 2nd March, "1887, is hereby amended accordingly."

MR. COOKWORTHY said that as no relief had been proposed for the leaseholders in the South-Western District, he supposed the omission had been made on the principle that "to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." The leaseholders in the South-Western Division had also experienced the effects of the recent drought, and it was very seldom that they were able to visit Perth and live at the rate of £30,000 a year for 30 minutes, as was so happily said of the Northern squatters by the hon. member for Geraldton. It had fallen to himself, unfortunately, to bring their wants before the House, because the hon. member for Nelson, being the Speaker of this House, although also one of the largest leaseholders in the South-Western District, presumably did not care to ask for any pecuniary consideration for these leaseholders, knowing that, like Cæsar's wife, the Speaker should be above suspicion. As to his own position, he did not wish to oppose the proposals for granting relief to other leaseholders, but he hoped that the same consideration would be shown to the leaseholders in the South-Western Division.

MR. A. FORREST said that when he asked for the adjournment of this debate, he did so because there was not sufficient information before the House; but since then he had seen the plan of the Eastern division, and would now support the amendment of the hon. member for York. He had come to the conclusion that a very few leaseholders would benefit by the proposal of the hon. member. The country to the eastward was very patchy, and the Regulations only allowed a man to take up a large block in order to secure a small portion of good land; therefore, if the Eastern leaseholders paid 5s. a year for each 1,000 acres during the remaining period of their leases, they would be paying a fair amount to the revenue of the country.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government were quite prepared to accept the clause proposed by the hon. member for York, in regard to the Eastern division of the colony. Since the Land Regulations were under consideration, those persons who were engaged in pastoral pursuits had experienced some very unfavorable seasons; and he thought it would now be wise to make the payments 2s. 6d. per 1,000 acres for the first period of seven years, and 5s. for the remaining periods to the end of the 21 years for which leases had been granted. Nearly seven years of the first period had elapsed since the leases were granted in 1887, and those persons taking leases now would have them only for the remaining portion of the 21 years, which would terminate in the year 1907. The only objection he had felt at first to the extending of this provision to leaseholders in the Eastern division was the position of those holders who were contiguous to the railway that was about to be made to Yilgarn. It was extraordinary that the persons most eager for this reduction of the rents were those who would be benefited by this railway, but these holders were so very few, and the Eastern division was so sparsely settled, that if the Government were to give away the land for nothing, on condition of improving it by stocking, this method of dealing with it might ultimately be more in the interests of the colony than to have the land so largely unoccupied. In his own opinion, this course would be in the interests of the colony; and, holding these views, he accepted the new clause proposed by the hon. member for York.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that every inducement should be given to the pastoral interests of the colony, but in looking through the list of lessees in the Eastern division, he saw that the total amount received for rents in that division was only a few hundred pounds a year. It should be observed that a large portion of those lands was now being tapped by the Yilgarn railway, and the time had come when the Government should try to develop those lands by endeavoring to discover artesian water by deep boring; therefore he thought that, instead of reducing the rents of the Eastern division, it would be better to spend £10,000 in endeavoring to discover water on those Eastern areas. The House had been told, over and over again, that the reason why the Eastern division had not been stocked was the absence of the necessary water supply, and he thought the time had arrived when the Government should seriously consider the introduction of boring machinery for discovering artesian water, if possible, in the Eastern and Eucla divisions. This would settle the question once for all as to whether an artesian supply could be obtained. It was generally believed that the formation was not favorable to an artesian supply, but the trial was worth making on a proper scale. Under present conditions, however, he did not oppose this proposed reduction of rent in the Eastern division.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it would cost a great deal of money to bore for water all over that territory.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said that one reason why the Yilgarn railway would not greatly benefit the pastoral lessees in that locality was the fact that a large amount of agricultural land existed along the railway route, and provision had been made in another Bill before Parliament, by which the Government could declare agricultural areas in the vicinity of a railway. It was the intention to declare such areas near the Yilgarn railway, and in this way the pastoral lessees might lose some of the best of their lands, which would be, he hoped, settled by an agricultural population. As to the remarks concerning the boring for artesian water, it was the intention to test the possibility of finding an artesian supply, and especially along the Yilgarn railway. Some thousands of pounds had been expended already upon boring machinery, which had not yielded satisfactory results. His experience in this matter, up to the present, had not been pleasant or satisfactory, for in no single instance had the boring resulted in success. He hoped that before long the Government might see their way to spending money for testing the existence of artesian water in the interior, but at present they were not in a position to do it, as this work could not be undertaken on a large scale out of current revenue, and would have to be done by means of loan money to be

raised in the future. They could not talk of thousands of pounds in this connection, but probably hundreds of thousands might be needed to bore for water over this extensive territory. These large works had to be done by degrees, for we were not in a position to change the whole country into a paradise in a year or two. As time went on he hoped the means would be forthcoming, and when the means and the will were put into action, he hoped the result would be more satisfactory than the experiments had been in the past.

MR. LOTON supported the new clause. As to the Yilgarn railway being a benefit to the majority of the pastoral lessees who were asking for this concession, the future benefit would be very little, for the railway would only give them a market for fat stock, and this could assist them only in seasons that were exceptionally favorable for fattening. As to the intention to declare agricultural areas along the Yilgarn railway, and having regard also to the Government scheme of giving away land to induce settlement, possibly the intention was to locate those people on agricultural areas along this railway; and, if so, he trusted that the fact would be borne in mind that, to a certain extent, the declaring of an agricultural area was really holding out a guarantee that the land so declared was fit for occupation by agriculturists. He hoped the Government would also be able to declare that a sufficient rainfall in these agricultural areas might be depended on. He had some personal knowledge of what could be done in the Eastern Division; he also knew settlers who had been there during 15 or 20 years; and he regretted to say that, though practical and hard-working men, they had dry seasons to contend with, and now the majority of them were in no better position than they were in 10 years ago.

Question—That the proposed clause be inserted in the Bill—put and passed.

MR. MONGER moved, as a consequential amendment, in Clause 4 (renumbered) to insert the words "and three" between the words "two" and "of," in line 1.

Question—put and passed.

The Bill was reported with amendments.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. TRAYLEN: In rising to move the second reading of this Bill, I am sure there is abundant matter for congratulation in the fact that the population of the city of Perth and of most of the other towns in this colony is increasing very considerably; and that, as a result of the prosperity attending the administration of Responsible Government in this colony, the denser population that has resulted from this very satisfactory influx of immigrants has made necessary further sanitary measures, and has made it possible for us to take some sanitary precautions that previously, on account of the thinly populated municipalities, we have been unable to apply. But those who have the working of the sanitary laws in the city of Perth and other municipal areas have found that when they tried to move into the newer tracks and to adopt better measures, the insufficient statutory powers did not enable them to do so efficiently; that, should they move, they found themselves face to face with the risk of having their authority questioned, giving rise to expensive and unsatisfactory litigation, and so in a measure defeating their own ends. The object of the present Bill is to meet this requirement—to supply the necessary statutory power to Local Boards of Health for enabling them to come up to date with the various sanitary measures that they think well to enforce. I desire to point out that its main characteristic is that of a permissive Bill. I do not know that it imposes anything upon Perth or any other Municipality. It gives permission to the local bodies in those Municipalities to apply certain sanitary measures, if they think such application will be beneficial to their respective municipal areas. It has the further characteristic of being an elastic measure, and is not a hard and fast one that must apply to every portion of a Municipality. If it be applied at all, it can be applied to just those densely populated parts where it is necessary, and the less populated parts can be left out until they also become more densely populated. It imposes no burthen, except by the choice of those who have been elected by the ratepayers; and it

can be applied to any portion of a Municipal area where it may be deemed advisable. It has been suggested that this Bill is somewhat of piecemeal legislation, and that a better course would be to give further consideration to the Public Health Act by amending it sufficiently in particulars at a later date. For my own part, I respectfully submit that this measure is up to present date. I am aware it does not provide for the drainage of subsoil water, neither does it provide for sewerage; but time must elapse before any of our Municipalities can be ripe for these large measures, and when they are ripe it will be possible to provide statutory powers suitable to the requirements of each Municipality. I, therefore, urge hon. members to allow this Bill to pass the second reading; to improve it in committee, if possible and so far as may be deemed necessary; and, instead of rejecting it as unnecessary, let us have the choice, in Perth and elsewhere, of applying these measures of sanitation. The great object sought is to make it right, proper, and legal to enforce the cleanly system of removing nightsoil, known as the double-pail system; and it is also intended to secure the better sanitation of Municipal water supply areas. These are the leading features of the Bill. It will be observed that, in order to save misconception in the future, there is some little definition of the construction to be placed on the terms that are used. In the past we have found some difficulty, inasmuch as the officiating magistrates have placed one construction on certain terms used, while the Local Board of Health has placed on them another. There are already very large powers conferred on Local Boards of Health for working the by-laws, but we have found that, in reference to the special system I have referred to, those powers are insufficient; and so there is a clause here conferring on Local Boards of Health power to make by-laws for various purposes here specified. With reference to sub-section 1 of clause 3, it is very desirable that a Local Board should have power to enforce uniformity, for, if not, the expense must be very great indeed. If diverse systems are working together in a town, they must cause a very expensive method, and in order to keep down expenses as much as possible, power is given here to enforce uniformity. Then it is necessary that there should be a power, an unquestioned power, in the hands of the Local Board of Health to fix a price that may be charged by the licensed person for removing nightsoil, and already, in the existing by-laws, that is done; but I am not able to see that the principal Act unmistakably gives the power to do this. Sub-section 5 has been somewhat adversely commented on for what is said to be its drastic nature. It will be seen, however, that the sub-section allows of a considerable variety of ways for disposing of dirty water from our houses. Some persons have suggested that the dirty water should be carried away, as was done in Melbourne formerly, and may be to some extent yet, along the street gutters; but this method involves such a very large supply of water for sluicing the channels that I do not think we have that amount of water to spare for such purpose. Still, if any Municipality can obtain a large supply of water, the street drains may be used in this way. Another method provided is for the absolute removal of the dirty water, and I am told that this method is enforced in some of the towns in other colonies, and has proved a very expensive method indeed. A third method is that of filtering the dirty water in tanks of approved construction, and this method is suggested by our health officer, and recommended as one of the best that we can adopt until we get the much larger scheme of deep sewerage. Sub-section 6 provides that conditions may be attached to the issuing of licenses, wherever there is a necessity for doing so. Sub-section 7 allows a Health Board to impose penalties on licensees if they do not keep to the conditions attached to their licenses, whilst sub-section 8 is an attempt to deal with the question of keeping pigs within municipal areas. Clause 4 deals with somewhat isolated premises; and it will be seen in the earlier clause that it is open to a Local Board to mark out an area within which certain things are to be done, yet it may happen that there are several isolated premises within that area which should have the same by-laws applied to them, although to mark them off by means of streets might include many other premises

concerning which such stringency is not necessary; consequently there is provision made for the issuing of orders by Local Boards of Health, and against these orders there is to be a power of appeal to the Central Board of Health, to be exercisable by all occupiers against whom such orders are directed. Clause 5 provides for the issue of licenses for the removal of nightsoil; and already there are by-laws in existence which demand the payment of a certain fee and require all the nightmen to have licenses, but I cannot find in the principal Act, in explicit terms, any authority conferring this power on Local Boards of Health, and I cannot help thinking that if the power now exercised were resisted, as it has been to some extent, a person attempting to carry on the business without a license might find he had a good case in the Local Court. Clause seven provides for what are called in the margin "exclusive licenses." The object is that if any Municipality adopts the double-pail system, the right of removal will have to be granted to some person for a term of years, under some sort of agreement, otherwise the contractor will be unprepared to enter into the large expenditure involved in the first instance, and he will be likely to charge such a very high price for his services as to make it impracticable to carry out such a scheme. Clause 8 is intended to meet an omission in the principal Act, which says that in the event of an occupier being unable or unwilling to remove offensive matter from his premises, the Local Board may step in and do it; but no power is there given against the owner, although he may be well able to pay for the service rendered, and if he will not pay the expense the Local Board has to bear it. Clause 9 is an important one, as it affects the double-pail system. It is absolutely necessary that the receptacles should be uniform in construction, in size, in material, in every particular; therefore the clause provides for that uniformity, and the only way of ensuring uniformity that I can see is to make it lawful for the Local Board to obtain a number of these receptacles and to have the exclusive right to sell them to the owners or occupiers of premises. The last section provides that the penalties for any breach of this Act or of any by-laws made in conformity with it shall be any sum not exceeding £10, and in that respect it agrees with section 25 of the principal Act.

MR. DEHAMEL: I find that this Bill meets with the approval of the Health Board at Albany, except that the word "piggery" should be defined. With that exception the Albany Local Board have asked me to support this Bill.

MR. SOLOMON: I rise to support the Bill, but I would have been pleased if the Government had brought forward a Municipalities Acts Consolidation Bill. Already there are three or four amendments of the Health Act and five or six amendments of the Municipalities Act; and from my past experience as Mayor of Fremantle and Chairman of the Local Board of Health, I can say that the effect of these frequent amendments of the law is very conflicting; and I would much rather see a Bill brought forward for consolidating the whole of them. However, as we have the summer before us, and as this Bill gives certain powers which the municipalities do not possess at present, I have pleasure in supporting it, because for the time being it would do good. I therefore support the second reading.

MR CANNING: The object of this Bill is very laudable, and, as a whole, it deserves support; but certain portions of the measure are open to question. One that strikes me as calling for consideration is sub-section 5 of section 3, determining how refuse water is to be disposed of. It seems to me that this would cast on every householder a very serious duty indeed, and one that he would find it difficult to comply with. In fact, I am afraid the effect would be, in some cases, the very reverse of that intended, for instead of encouraging the use of the bath, which is a most excellent thing, it would discourage it; and though I do not grasp the whole meaning of the sub-section, yet it would be difficult for a householder to provide himself with approved tanks for filtering dirty water and all the appliances which this provision seems to call for. I think that the only way in which the object of the sub-section can be accomplished will be by a system of drainage; and that is a question which, although of very great importance, has not yet been firmly approached in this House. That is a question with which the Government will

have to deal, sooner or later, and, when dealt with, no doubt the object of this sub-section will be kept in view. At present I see serious difficulties in the way of complying with it. I think it is very undesirable that the statute book of the colony should be encumbered with Acts or provisions which, practically, cannot be complied with; but possibly this will be amended in committee. With regard to clause 9, I think that as it stands it will fail in its object, for by insisting that the Health Board shall supply certain things that will be necessary under this Bill, householders will often be relieved of the duty of providing these things, and will be able to relieve themselves from all responsibility in the matter by saying that they have applied for these things and the Board has not provided them. I think the public should be allowed to obtain these things wherever they like. I believe that, substantially, the provision in this clause is already in existence, the people providing the things as they think proper, and I do not know that any serious complaints have arisen in consequence—I have not heard any complaints. Possibly this section is capable of amendment in committee, and it would be much better to leave people to do as they are doing at present.

MR. QUINLAN: I have but very few words to say in respect of this Bill. From a knowledge acquired while acting on the Perth Board of Health, I may add, with respect to the clause that the hon. member for East Perth has taken exception to, that it has been found necessary to adopt some particular class of receptacle which can be covered tightly with interchangeable lids; and if some such provision were not made as is done in this clause, probably the double-pail system would not work so perfectly as if the Health Board provided the pails made entirely to one pattern. The Perth Board have called for tenders for a particular class of receptacle, and in order to carry out the system in a more cleanly manner than previously, this provision in the clause was considered by the board to be necessary. It will be better for all concerned that the Board of Health should provide these receptacles in a uniform manner.

MR. TRAYLEN: In reply to the hon. member for East Perth, if he had had a little more time at his disposal and had acquainted himself more completely with all the provisions of the Bill, and still more if he had come and sat with us in meetings of the Local Board of Health, he would not have taken the exception he has done to the respective clauses. He thinks it will be utterly impossible to impose on householders the duty of getting rid of dirty water, and that the Bill will positively interfere with personal cleanliness. What is done to-day in the more thickly populated portions of Perth is to throw every kind of dirty water on the surface of back yards, in nearly all cases, the result being that there is on the surface of the ground an accumulation of dry matter left by the slops, the whole of the summer, containing the germs of disease; in its dry state the matter is blown about by the wind, into houses and elsewhere; and to this may probably be traced the cause of many diseases, and perhaps the fruitful cause of some infectious diseases. If the hon. member thinks that dirty water can be carried away from premises along the street gutter, I would ask him to look at William Street, and to hear, as we have done until we are weary of complaints, the grievance caused by the stench from the gutter, and complained of by persons living in William Street. Then I would ask if there be not some method of purifying this waste water before turning it into the street to be an offence and an eyesore. Drainage is a work that we cannot undertake at present, and therefore this is adopted as a temporary expedient until we can have a very much larger system of sewerage for removing this offensive matter. The hon. member has drawn a picture of householders relieving themselves of certain pecuniary burdens or obligations, but if he would only look again he would see that the very object of this clause is to put it out of their power to do so, because the Bill gives to the Local Board of Health not only the sole power of supplying these receptacles, but it gives them power also to say to householders, "You must have one, two, or three of these receptacles, as we think proper, according to the requirements of each premises, and you must pay the Board for supplying them to you." How, therefore, can it be said that householders

would be freeing themselves from liability through this clause? Suppose that the householders supply these things of their own free will, does the hon. member not know that the very essence of the scheme we are advocating is that all these receptacles shall be interchangeable—that the lids shall be air-tight—and if we have them supplied in different sizes and shapes, we cannot have uniformity in the system of removal, because a difference in size of only 1/16th of an inch would prevent these receptacles from being used interchangeably, and the system we contemplate cannot be carried into effect. I hope the observations made by the hon. member will not weigh with anybody; and as to no complaints having been made to him, it is not likely that they would be, but complaints have been made to the Perth Board of Health in a very unmistakable manner. We are seeking to remove from the thickly occupied portions of a Municipality those unsightly sights and those offensive odors which become manifest in the very early hours of the morning.

Question—That this Bill be read a second time—put and passed.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR—RESIGNATION OF SIR J. G. LEE STEERE, AS MEMBER OF FEDERAL COUNCIL.

The following message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

In accordance with Section 5 of the 49 Vic. No. 24, the Governor informs the Legislative Assembly that the Honorable Sir James Lee Steere, M.L.A., has resigned his office of representative of this colony in the Federal Council of Australasia.

Government House, Perth,
21st November, 1892.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, I have much pleasure in rising to move the second reading of this Bill. As hon. members are aware, this Bill proposes to abolish the qualification for members of both Houses of Parliament, and also proposes to liberalise, to a very large extent, the qualification for voters of the Lower House. I can assure this House that the Government have given the matter their most careful consideration, before bringing down the measure that is now before you. Last session the Government promised that they would deal with the question of the amendment of the Constitution during the recess; and that promise was accepted by the House in all good faith. The Government in no way promised in what shape they would introduce to this House the alteration of the Constitution Act—that was left entirely in the hands of the Government—and of course we were in no way pledged to introduce any particular alteration of the Constitution; nor had we any idea at that time—at any rate to any definite extent—as to what would be acceptable to hon. members. After carefully considering the subject, the Bill now before the House is the result of the deliberations of the Government. When it was first placed before hon. members, I am quite sure it must have been a surprise to them, at any rate as regards its length, inasmuch as it only contains 23 clauses; but I venture to say it is, at the same time, an excellently drawn and most concise Bill, and one for which not only my thanks, but the thanks of the House and country, are due to the Attorney General, who has given so much care and attention to it, and who has compressed into so small a compass as 23 clauses all that is really necessary. For my own part, I could not have imagined that so much matter could have been compressed into so small a space, but the more we look into it the more we shall find that it contains all that we require at the present time. Instead of omitting or amending the law as it at present stands, the object of this Bill is to engraft on to the Constitution Act all that is required at the present time, as far as the Government are able to judge. I propose to deal with the clauses of the Bill *seriatim*, or almost all of them, in order to give hon. members an outline of its provisions, and then I will conclude with a few remarks generally on the question. Section 4 of the Bill relates to the new Legislative Council, and hon. members will notice that the Council is not to be interfered with until the present Legislature has been in existence six years, this clause being in keeping with the provisions of

the Constitution Act; and, as you are all aware, it will not be very long before the colony reaches a population of 60,000 persons, and when that time arrives, or within six months of it, the Legislative Council will be changed under the law existing at the present time—and which it is not proposed to alter—from a nominative to an elective House. By section 5, you will notice, it is proposed to give two additional members to the Legislative Council as soon as it becomes an elective Chamber; and in section 6 you will see that it is proposed to have seven electoral divisions of the colony instead of five, as at present; that, instead of having five divisions of three members each, we propose to have three electoral divisions returning three members each, and four electoral divisions returning two members each, making in all 17 members to be elected to the Council. Hon. members will notice, in looking through the names of the divisions, that three new districts have been added, namely, Yilgarn, Pilbarra, and Nannine; these names having been chosen by the Government, because they were the first and most suitable new divisions to obtain separate representation. If, however, any hon. member has an ambition to change any of these names, we will consider his proposal. You will notice also that the divisions of Perth and Fremantle, instead of continuing to be called the Metropolitan Division as originally named (including both Perth and Fremantle), and instead of having three members for the one division, will be divided into two electoral districts, one to be called the Metropolitan Division, returning two members, and the other to be called the West Division (including Fremantle), returning two members; that is to say, the one district now returning three members will then be divided into two districts, returning four members altogether. The same may be said of the South-Western Division of the colony, that instead of including the Murray, the Wellington, Bunbury, Nelson, Sussex, Williams, Plantagenet, and Albany districts, returning three members, it is proposed to make two divisions, the South-West Division, to comprise the Murray, Wellington, Bunbury, Nelson, and Sussex districts, to return two members; and the South-East Division, comprising the Williams, Plantagenet, and Albany districts, to return two members. These districts will return four members instead of three, if the Bill passes, and I think this is a reasonable division to make, because those persons residing on the sea-coast to the westward of the Darling Range have not a great deal of association with those residing in the eastward districts—in what I may call the raspberry jam and sandalwood country, which really is the fertile valley of the Avon, and extending all the way to Etticup, and also including the Albany district. These divisions are matters of detail, which can be dealt with in committee—I mean a select committee—as on a former occasion, and they are matters on which all the representatives of the colony should have an opportunity of expressing their views. These details do not affect the principles of the Bill. Section 7 is the first clause in which we come to the substance of the Bill, and it deals with the qualification for members of the Upper House. You will notice that the qualification for members of the Upper House, the qualification for members of the Lower House, and the qualification for electors of the Upper House, and for electors of the Lower House, really form the substance of this Bill; and this section 7 is the first one dealing with the principal matter of the Bill. If you look closely into this section, you will notice that it is framed upon a liberal basis; that any man who has resided in Western Australia for twelve months shall be capable of being elected a member of the Legislative Council, if he be of the full age of 21 years. The other part of this clause refers to persons who are aliens or have been naturalised in the colony. I should like to compare this clause with the corresponding provisions in the law of other parts of Australia—not places beyond Australia—because we are in closer communication with neighboring colonies, and our ideas are more in common with those of other Australians than with the ideas of people in any other part of the world. In Victoria no man can be a member of the Upper House unless he is at least 30 years of age, and unless he has held for one year a freehold property worth £100 sterling. In South Australia no one can be a member of the Upper House unless he is at least 30

years of age and has resided in the colony three years. Comparing the electoral law in those two great colonies with the proposal we have placed before you, it will be seen that our proposal is more liberal than that of either of those colonies.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: . You should explain why you have made it more liberal.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Section 8 and its sub-sections merely deal with the way in which members of the Council are to retire and vacancies are to be filled up; and I may mention, in passing, that when this Bill has got into full flow, each member of the Upper House will have a tenure of six years, and after the first two members for any division have retired, the third and every subsequent representative of each division will have a tenure of six years. I do not think I need to describe every item of these sub-sections, but I wish to explain this provision, because it has been pointed out to me that members would have only a two-years tenure, whereas you will see that after the Bill has got into full swing, as it were, the tenure of each member in ordinary course will be six years. Section 9 merely provides the way in which a member of the Council who is tired of his position may resign; and section 10 provides for the issue of a writ in the case of a vacancy caused otherwise than by effluxion of time. Sub-section 2 of section 10 is an important one, as it is introduced here and provides for the case of absence of the President of the Council from the colony, or for the case of there not being any President; and it is important, because in that case the Governor will issue the writ, and already in this colony we have felt the inconvenience of the want of this provision. Section 11 also is an important one, because it is remarkable that this provision was left out of our Constitution Act, and was not provided for, that is, that a person elected to fill a vacancy will hold the seat only for the unexpired term of the member whose place he fills. Section 12 deals with the qualification for electors of the Upper House. I have already shown that our proposed franchise is more liberal than that of either South Australia or Victoria; and I now proceed to compare section 12, dealing with the qualification for electors, with the provision in the other colonies. We propose that every man of the age of 21 years, who is a British subject, and has resided in Western Australia over 12 months, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and shall have a vote for the election of members to both Houses of Parliament, in the electoral division for which he is so qualified. The qualification for voting as an elector of the Upper House is that he shall have held a freehold estate of the clear value of £100 sterling for 12 months next before the time of making his claim to be registered, or is the occupier of a house of the clear annual value of £25 sterling, and has occupied the same for 12 months, or has a leasehold estate within the division of the clear annual value of £25, or holds a mining or pastoral lease or license of the rental of not less than £10 per annum, or is on the electoral roll of a Municipality or Road Board District as a property-holder of not less than £25 annual value. The qualification of a freehold estate is the same, in the very words, as in the Victorian Act. In South Australia the age of the voter is 21 years; he is to have a freehold estate of £50 or a leasehold of £20, or other occupancy of £25 annual value; and if you compare that with the franchise proposed in this Bill you will find it is almost the same. In Victoria, a voter has to be 21 years of age; he is to have a freehold which produces £10 a year, which is certainly equivalent to a freehold of the value of £100; or he is to have a £25 leasehold, which is almost exactly the same as we propose. Sub-section 1 is exactly the same as in Victoria. Sub-section 2 is the same as in South Australia and Victoria. Sub-section 3: in South Australia the leasehold is to be worth £20 a year, in Victoria it is £25, and in this colony we propose to make it £25. As to sub-section 5, hon. members will notice that we propose that the rental for a lease or license of Crown land shall be at least £10 a year, and the reason that this has been introduced is that many special occupiers and persons who hold land on conditional purchase have to pay £10 a year; but as their homesteads are valued at considerably more, they can easily qualify under the other provisions; although, to simplify matters, we left

it open to them to qualify under the leasehold estate provision or as paying £10 a year to the Crown. I think that any man who pays £10 a year to the Crown would be holding 400 acres, under the present conditional purchase; if he were under clause 49 he would only hold 200 acres; and in order to simplify matters we have provided, in sub-section 5, that any person who pays £10 a year to the Crown as a leaseholder should be entitled to vote for the Upper House. Sub-sections 6 and 7 provide that any person who is on the electoral list for a Municipality or Road Board District, and is rated on an annual value of not less than £25 a year, shall be allowed to vote for the Upper House. Then, in order to simplify the preparation of the rolls, we think that in Municipalities and in Road Board Districts the names of persons who are on those rolls should be sent to the registrar of Parliamentary voters without any trouble to the persons themselves. I think this is a good provision, and it finds a place in the Victorian Act, the rolls there being made up by the Municipalities and the Shire councils, and also furnished to the electoral registrar at regular times, without the persons applying at all; and I think this is a good procedure, and will very much facilitate the compiling of the electoral rolls. Therefore, taking the electoral laws of Victoria as our guide, we have for that reason inserted this clause in the Bill. The additional provisos 1, 2, and 3 relate to those who are denied the franchise, and I do not think anyone will object to them. Section 13 deals with disqualifications. I now come to section 14, dealing with the Legislative Assembly; and hon. members will notice that the Bill proposes to add three new districts, and instead of thirty members there will in future be thirty-three. The three new districts will be Yilgarn, Pilbarra, and Nannine, and the proposed boundaries of these districts hon. members will see on the map before them. The Government do not in any way bind themselves to the boundaries of these districts, and it will be for the House to carefully consider them, and see whether the boundaries proposed will meet with their approval. There is no principle involved in this; it is merely a matter of arrangement, and I shall be glad to consult hon. members, in committee, as to the boundaries these districts should have. Section 16 deals with the qualification of members for this House, and here again I think that no one can complain that any undue restrictions have been placed on any person desirous of becoming a member of this House. Any man who has resided in Western Australia for 12 months shall be capable of being elected a member of the Legislative Assembly, if he be 21 years of age, a British subject, and not under any legal incapacity. Surely this is as liberal as any one should desire. There is no restriction whatever, no money qualification, the sole qualification being that the person seeking the suffrages of the people shall be 21 years of age, subject to no legal incapacity, and shall be a British subject. This provision is more liberal than prevails in most countries. It is certainly more liberal than exists in the most liberal Constitution of Australia—that of South Australia—for in that colony a person, before he can be elected, has to be six months on the electoral roll, whereas there is no provision of the kind in this Bill. All we say is that as soon as you have been in the colony for 12 months you shall be eligible for election, and we don't provide that you must be on any roll at all. We propose to be more liberal even than the colony of Queensland, because there a person has to be qualified and registered as a voter before being eligible. Our proposal is exactly the same as prevails in Victoria and, I think, Tasmania, in both of which colonies no other qualification is necessary than that a person shall be a British subject, subject to no legal incapacity, and shall have resided in the colony for 12 months. Therefore, I do not think that anyone in this House will complain that the Government has not been liberal enough, at any rate in this part of the Bill, because we have been more liberal than most of the colonies of Australia.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Why?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We have been as liberal as the great colony of Victoria. Clauses 17 and 18 deal with the resignation of members, and provide for the issue of writs in the case of vacancies. They are very important clauses, but they are the same as

I have already referred to as applying to the Legislative Council. I now come to clause 19, which contains probably the most important provision in the Bill, as it deals with the qualification of voters for members of this House. It is provided that every man of the age of 21 years, who is a British subject, not subject to any legal incapacity, and who has resided in Western Australia for 12 months, shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and, when registered, to vote for a member to be elected to the Assembly for the electoral district in respect of which he is so qualified. Sub-sections 1 to 8 provide the qualifications, any one of which will entitle a man to become registered and to vote. It has been said, and probably there are some members here to-night who will urge it, that twelve months residence is too great. I will, however, deal with that question further on, and I will now compare shortly the provisions of this Bill with those existing in other parts of Australia. In Queensland, six months residence in one electoral district is sufficient, but in Victoria a man must have been 12 months in the colony and three months in the electoral district before he is eligible to vote. I may say that sub-sections 1 to 5 are exactly word for word with the provisions of the Queensland Act at the present time. The amounts as to the value of properties may not be exactly the same, but practically I may say that all these sub-sections are exactly in accordance with the Queensland Act. Hon. members will notice that in sub-sections 7 and 8 we apply the same principle as I referred to in regard to the Legislative Council, that is, that any person who is a ratepayer and on the roll of any Municipality—no matter what he pays, even if it be only 1s. a year—or on the roll for a Roads Board, in respect of property within the electoral district, will be allowed to vote. The reason we have placed these two sub-sections in the Bill is to facilitate the making up of the rolls, and in order that as many qualified persons as possible shall be placed on the lists. Clause 20 is exactly in the terms of the law as it is in Queensland. I have now gone through all the sections of this Bill, and I have dealt with them as far as I consider it desirable in order to explain the features of each. As I said in the beginning, the object of the Government in bringing forward this Bill is to liberalise, as far as we think it desirable, the Constitution under which we live. We desire to abolish the qualification for members, and to liberalise, to a large extent, the franchise under which members for both Houses are to be elected. In doing this we have not sought to please ourselves individually, but because we believe it is desired by the people of the colony. [Mr. R. F. SHOLL: No, no.] I have had opportunities of judging as well as other people, and I am confident that the desire of the people of the colony, taking them as a whole, is that the property qualification for members of both Houses shall be entirely swept away, and that the qualification for electors should be very materially liberalised, in order that as many persons as possible should take part in the government of the colony. Of course it is a very important question. There is plenty of room for diversity of opinion, and I am not at all surprised to find some of my friends, even on the cross benches opposite, not altogether in accord with the views I have expressed. However, I may say that in addition to this Bill being in accord with my own views —and I would not have brought it in if I did not believe in it—I feel sure it is in accord with the general wishes of the community. What the present Government desire is to be moderate in all things. We do not wish to go in for radical or revolutionary measures, especially in these days when we are only beginning to manage our own business. We have tried our best to push this colony ahead, and to further its interests, and we intend to continue trying to maintain the credit of the colony both at home and abroad. I hope hon. members will consider this Bill to be a moderate measure. [Mr. R. F. SHOLL: What? moderate?] If they will look into it they will see that it has not for its object the taking away of anything from anybody. No one will be injured by it, but it gives to others a very great deal. This is something which should commend it to the House, and to the people of the colony, for the result of it will be that it will enfranchise the mass of the people, the whole people of the colony. [MR. R. F. SHOLL: Women included?] The only objection I have heard from those

who are liberal-minded, and who wish to see the people take part in the government of the colony, is that we are not liberal enough. They say that instead of making the necessary residence in the colony 12 months, the shorter term of six months would be ample. For my own part, I am not prepared to agree with that at the present time, and I will give you the reason. In Victoria, where for upwards of a quarter of a century they have had Responsible Government, they have not as liberal a Constitution at the present moment as we propose to give to you. As I told you before, Victoria has a qualification for members that we intend to abolish, and in no single instance can it be pointed out that we propose anything which is more than prevails in the great colony of Victoria. There a man has to have 12 months' residence; in Tasmania 12 months' residence is also necessary, and if we look at other parts of the world we shall find nothing more liberal. I do not intend to speak of countries outside of Australia, because in the first place I am not prepared with sufficient authority on the subject, and secondly because I think the Australian colonies are more analogous to our own for the purpose of comparison. I did, however, a day or two ago look into the conditions which prevail in one of the most recent and most flourishing of the Western States of America—the great state of California — to see how long citizens had to reside there before being entitled to a vote, and I found that they had to be there twelve months, and four months in the district, county, or parish, as it is called. Hence it will be seen that no one can fairly say that, in these our early days of Responsible Government, we are not endeavoring to give the colony a liberal Constitution. I would ask those who argue to the contrary if it is any hardship that any British subject who comes here should remain for 12 months before being allowed to vote?

Mr. Simpson: That is not so in New South Wales.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): But take Victoria, which has been the premier colony for many years; it will be seen that what we propose is not less liberal than prevails there. However, I ask hon. members to be reasonable in this matter. Members of Parliament have immense powers. We have the governing of this country; we have the making of laws which all must obey; we have also the custody of the lives and properties of the people; and is it too much to ask that when a man comes here and wishes to be a member of Parliament, and take part in the government of the country, he should remain here a little while to see into our circumstances, and know something of them before rushing red-hot into politics and helping to manage our affairs? I ask, would anyone in his private life allow a new-comer to interfere with his private business, without some experience of the colony in which he lives? I think not, and I do not think he would be very unreasonable. And, besides, the great colony of Victoria has been content to say that persons who come there shall remain 12 months before having the right to vote, and surely we in this colony, who are just entering upon self-government, will not be very far behind or very retrograde or illiberal when we adopt a similar provision. There is another class of persons other than those I have referred to—those who consider this Bill too liberal and too dangerous. [Mr. R. F. Sholl: Hear, hear.] My reply to them is that it is better to give freely what is certainly, in my opinion, sure to be a source of agitation, rather than give grudgingly and little by little. I am convinced that this Bill will become the law of this colony, even if it is not passed at the present moment, and therefore I would advise those who think we are going too fast to give freely now what they will have to give in the end, and which will not redound much to their credit if they give it grudgingly. To those who think we are giving too much, and who are in a position and have the power to withhold it at the present moment, I say they cannot withhold it for ever; and to those who think we have not been liberal enough, I say if you get a Constitution more liberal than the people of the mother country, from which we or our fathers came—a more liberal Constitution than that of the great colony of Victoria—I say accept it in the same spirit in which it is offered. Do not go striving after what you cannot get—after what I tell you you cannot get. Whatever you do, you cannot get anything more now. You may in time,

but I say accept now what the Government offers, and have a Constitution more liberal than that of the mother country, and more liberal than that of Victoria, and do not ask for more, because when you are offered what is just and liberal it does not look well to ask for more, especially when you cannot get it. I contend that this Bill is liberal enough for anyone — at any rate in our present circumstances. We shall no doubt change our views as time goes on, and Mr. Sholl, I dare say, will get even more liberal than we are now; but I say it is not wise to rush away, and try to be more liberal than any other colony in Australia. I say that any man who comes to this colony with the intention of founding his home here will not complain if you tell him that, after he has been here twelve months he will have the full privileges of citizenship, and be able to take part, as freely as those who have been here all their lives, in the management of the affairs of the colony.

MR. MOLLOY: He has to be in the district six months as well.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No; that is included in the twelve months. Some people are under the impression that a man will have to be in the colony for six months in addition to the twelve months, but that is not so. All a man will have to do is, on arriving in the colony, to come to Perth, for instance, and remain there for twelve months, and then he will be entitled to his vote. I would also point out that all the provisions of this Bill will not be complete unless we have also an amending Electoral Act, and that has been promised in the Governor's Speech. It will be found that the Electoral Bill will provide for many things. It will deal with the revision of electoral rolls, and with the manner of placing the people on the rolls. I cannot speak with authority, because our minds are not made up on the subject, but I hope and believe that we shall be able to provide in that Bill that persons registered in one district may be transferred to another. Such a provision exists in some of the other colonies, and it was only to-day that I telegraphed to the Premiers of the other colonies asking for full particulars as to how the provision works. I see no reason why persons registered for one district should not be able to be transferred to another, but of course there will have to be some safeguard, else a number of voters might be transferred from one district to another before an election takes place, for some object, although we may depend upon it that this difficulty has been met by legislation where such a provision prevails, and I hope we shall be able to provide for it too. Hon. members should give the Government credit for having brought this Bill in willingly and freely. We were not forced to it. Some hon. members will, no doubt, say to the contrary, but I deny that we were in any way forced to it. It would have been very easy for the Government to come here and have said: We are engaged in large public works and we have a large business in hand, and we do not, therefore, during the present Parliament, intend to interfere with the franchise. I believe we could have made out such a case as would have gained for us the support of a majority of hon. members. But, instead of that, what have we done? We felt that the desire of the colony has been that a larger share of the right of sending members to this House should be given to the people of this colony, and without any pressure, notwithstanding what the hon. member for Albany may tell you—or at any rate what he has told his constituents. We could easily have thrown out his amendment last session, if we had wished to, but it was in accordance with our own views. We said we would consider the matter during the recess, and we have done so, the result being this Bill. We have acted from no personal motives, nor because we had any particular wishes, but because we believed that the people desired a change. This was the reason which actuated us, and we believe that the people are fair and reasonable, and quite able to look after their affairs. But we want more; we want to bring our institutions into harmony with those of our neighbors. I do not think it a good thing for the colonies in this continent of Australia to have opposing lines in regard to their constitutions. When this Bill passes, we may say that the whole of the continent is under the same law; for, whatever minor differences may exist in regard to the Constitutions, they will be all framed

on the one principle, and the franchise will be as liberal in one colony as in another. I may tell hon. members that my desire is that this Bill may pass without a division.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: It will not.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I should like it to pass without any division whatever, because it has also to pass in another place, and if we pass it here with the unanimous consent of the elected portion of the Parliament, it may have an influence upon those who sit in another place. I appeal to those who oppose the Bill because it is too liberal, and to those who do not think it liberal enough, to accept what they are offered and pass it unanimously, because I tell them that they will not succeed in their object; and I ask them to reserve what they have to say until some other occasion. The provisions of this Bill are more liberal than was expected, not only by those who are opposed to such a change, but also more liberal than those who had favored the widening of the Constitution could have anticipated. I have now said all I intend to say in moving the second reading of this Bill. I feel that I have not adequately expressed all I should like to have said, but I hope the hon. members who are in real earnest in reference to this measure will weigh carefully how they oppose it. As to getting anything more liberal, it is simply impossible; and if we are able to carry this Bill through this House and in another place, surely those who desire a liberal and free Constitution for this colony should be satisfied. No one could have expected that within two years after the introduction of Responsible Government such a liberal Bill as this would be presented, and have every chance of being carried through Parliament; and if it fails to pass now, it will be through those who do not think it liberal enough, although it is quite as liberal as the Constitution of Victoria, and more liberal than that which is enjoyed in the mother country. After all, there is not much difference between twelve months and six months. I know the term is six months in South Australia, but there they have been striving for that for the past quarter of a century; while in Victoria, after a similar period of Responsible Government, they have not come nearer to that goal than is provided by this Bill. I ask hon. members who are in earnest to consider this Bill as it stands, and endeavor to bring themselves to the position which I have indicated. I do not wish to stop comment, nor interfere with the expression of hon. members' views, but I ask the House to accept freely that which I believe to be as good and liberal a measure as it is possible to obtain, and as good and liberal a measure as we have any right to expect under present circumstances.

MR. DEHAMEL: I am sorry to find that whenever the hon. the Premier rises to propose the second reading of any measure, he seems to go out of his way to attack persons who would otherwise support the proposal he makes to the House. It was my intention, on this occasion, to give him my cordial, my most hearty, support to that which he has proposed; but he suddenly throws down the gage, and says I was going to tell the House that he had intended to oppose the amendment which I moved last session, until he found that the House was in favor of it, and then he accepted it. But the fact remains, notwithstanding, that he did intend to oppose that amendment which I carried in this House last session.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No! No!

MR. DEHAMEL: I say that the hon. the Premier told me so himself.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I deny it; I rise to say that I never told him anything of the kind.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member for Albany ought to accept the hon. the Premier's statement. He says he did not say so.

MR. DEHAMEL: I cannot accept that statement, because he did say it. I say, sir, more than that, that it was not until the hon. the Premier found there was a majority in favor of the amendment I had moved, that he decided to support it. But, sir, I never intended to refer one bit to that or anything of the kind. It was not my intention, on this occasion, to refer at all to what has gone past, but my intention was to support the Premier and the Government in trying to carry this Bill through this House. I am one of those who regard this Bill as not going far enough; but I know also, as one hon.

member has suggested, when it is desirable to accept half-a-loaf as being better than no bread; and I quite agree with the Premier's remark that if we, in this House, pass this Bill with the amendments which we can make in committee, and pass it with practical unanimity, then the members of that other House will be bound also to pass it, for they dare not reject it. The members of the Upper House——

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is out of order in referring to the Upper House.

MR. DEHAMEL: Then, sir, if I cannot refer in that way, I can say that when this Bill is sent to another place, unless we first pass it through this House with a good majority, it will run some risk of not receiving the Governor's assent during this session. I certainly endorse every word the Premier says, as to its being the wish and the feeling of the people of this colony, that a Bill of this character should be passed; and it is idle and useless for any hon. members to say that the people of this colony do not want the franchise extended, for 99 out of every 100 are determined upon having it extended. I say that if this Bill were to be refused now, there would be such an agitation in the country that a Bill very much more liberal would be passed within the next 12 months. All the arguments for or against an extension of the franchise are so well known that it would be a waste of time to occupy the attention of the House with a review of them on this occasion. We know quite well that in these Australian colonies we are bound to have a more liberal franchise than obtains in the old country, for it must be remembered that we here take a different position, that we bring with us on entering this colony the rights that we enjoyed in the old country, that we come here knowing what we had there; and it cannot be expected that we should be satisfied to have here merely that which the people have in the old country, because here we have a large country and new institutions, as compared with a small country, thickly populated, and having old institutions. It stands to reason that, under these different conditions, we are entitled to freer and more liberal institutions than those existing in the old country, from which most of us came. It is not my intention to-night to take this measure clause by clause because I understand from the hon. the Premier that this Bill is likely to go to a select committee.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No; I said the schedule of the electoral districts might be referred to a select committee for revision.

MR. DEHAMEL: I understood that the hon. the Premier would propose that the Bill should go to a select committee. Anyway, we shall be able to deal with the various clauses, and the objections to those clauses, in committee, after we have simply accepted the principle of the Bill as it is put before us to-night. One of the great objections I see—and I know the Premier will say I am very original in this respect—is that I would like to have seen every man in this colony made free to vote for members of the Upper House without any qualification at all. The use of the Upper House is that it is to be selected for a different term altogether, being elected for a period of six years instead of only four years, as in the case of the Lower House; and as the members of the Upper House are never to be thrown out when a dissolution of Parliament takes place, they will change every three years by retirement in rotation, and, therefore, public feeling cannot run away, as it were, with the Upper House. That is the difference in the working of the two Houses.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): They do not change with a dissolution anywhere else yet.

MR. DEHAMEL: The Hon. the Premier is quite correct; but we have it in the history of Victoria that there were no less than four serious conflicts in one short period between the Upper House and Lower House; and when we are fixing the number of members that the Upper House shall consist of and the electoral franchise by which they shall be elected, one effect will be that no additional members can be put into the Upper House when a deadlock occurs, as has been done lately in New Zealand under the nominee system; and therefore the Upper House will be in a position to act diametrically opposite to the wishes of the electoral majority in the country, and can in that way bring about a serious deadlock. It

seems to me that instead of removing the qualification for members of the Upper House, if we had proposed to remove the qualification for electors of the Upper House, we should have been doing what is nearer to the mark. But it is not my intention to oppose the second reading of this Bill on any of these grounds. When the Bill comes before us in committee, we must do our best then to deal with the details. I cannot resume my seat without referring to that vexed clause, I mean clause 19. I do consider that six months' residence for a voter is sufficient, but I do agree with the Premier that before a man should be allowed to enter this House as a member, he ought to have been a resident in the colony at least twelve months. I do think that on the question of the electorate—and I hope that when the Bill is in committee this alteration may be made—this residence of twelve months as proposed in clause 19 may be reduced to six months, for I feel that, if this be done, the Bill will give greater satisfaction to the great majority of the people in this colony. It is a fact that they have cried out for it, and it is for us, now that the Premier and his Government have introduced this Bill, to assist them in carrying it into law. It is my intention to support this Bill, and to vote most cordially with the Government on the second reading.

MR. SIMPSON: I am happy to-night to be able to offer my most cordial congratulations to the Ministry on their apt and graceful recognition of the distinct wish of the mass of people in the colony. The Bill laid before the House, I must certainly say—and my views on this question are fairly well known—is a lot more liberal than I anticipated. So liberal is it that I am little inclined to carp at mere minor details; but with the hope of getting not merely what was described by an hon. member as half a loaf, but fifteen-sixteenths of a whole loaf, I am glad to offer my support to the passage of this Bill. The Premier was good enough to point out the advantages of this Bill as compared with the constitutions of neighboring colonies. In the main he was correct, but at the same time he lost sight of the grave fact that in each of those colonies a triennial Parliament exists; and I do think that if, in the measure that is now proposed, we were to shorten the term of our Parliament to three years, it would be an advantage to the colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is four years now.

MR. SIMPSON: The rapid changes in these colonies point very emphatically to the necessity of reasonable appeals to the people to ascertain their views as to the form that legislation should take; and I would very much sooner have seen that the residential qualification should be six months. The whole tendency of opinion in this colony, so far as I can see, is in favor of inducing more people to come here; and, so far as I have noticed from the opinions expressed by men coming here from the other colonies—and emigration to this colony has generally not been from places having a less liberal franchise than prevails in the other colonies—it is a distinct grievance with them to find when they get here that they cannot exercise a vote on the same terms as in the other colonies. It is just as well to bear in mind that under triennial Parliaments a man has an opportunity of exercising a vote about once in two years and nine months. Our term of a Parliament is four years, and the consequence is that, practically, it will rarely occur that any man coming here will use a vote more than once in three years, according to the average duration of Parliaments; so that this great big bogie that has been spoken of, about a man exercising a vote as soon as he has been six months in the colony, is an absurdity to any one who is conversant with electoral matters. In South Australia the average life of a Parliament is two years and nine months, while in this colony the period during which a man would have the opportunity of exercising a vote would be something over three years.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That cuts both ways, surely.

MR. SIMPSON: The practical effect would be that a man here would exercise one vote in three years. Otherwise, and with the suggestion that was so wisely put forward by the Premier, namely, to refer the schedule of the electoral divisions to a select committee, I think this Bill is entirely worthy the support of this House, and will give satisfaction to the country at large.

MR. MOLLOY: I rise to move the adjournment of the debate until Monday next.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Will not Thursday next suit you?

MR. MOLLOY: There is a public meeting to be held in Perth on Thursday evening.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Monday is too long an adjournment. I will accept Thursday.

MR. PIESSE: I propose to amend the motion by making the date Thursday next.

Question — That the debate be adjourned until Thursday—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 22nd November, 1892.

Federal Council: resignation of Sir J. G. Lee Steere as delegate to—Safety of Defences Bill: second reading—Treasury Bills Bill: second reading—Companies Bill, 1892: second reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. G. Shenton) took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

FEDERAL COUNCIL—RESIGNATION OF SIR J. G. LEE STEERE.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. G. Shenton) announced the receipt of the following message from the Governor:—

In accordance with Section 5 of the 49 Vic., No. 24, the Governor informs the Honorable the Legislative Council that the Honorable Sir James Lee Steere, M.L.A., has resigned his office of Representative of this colony in the Federal Council of Australasia.

Government House, Perth,
21st November, 1892.

SAFETY OF DEFENCES BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): In consequence, sir, of Western Australia having now embarked upon a system of fortifications at Albany and Fremantle, it is necessary we should pass a Bill to prevent the unauthorised disclosure of information in reference to them. By this Bill the sketching, drawing, or photographing, or the making of any picture of any defence work is made an offence. It is also an offence for any person to be at or near any defence work with drawing material. The Bill also provides a penalty on persons trespassing on the works. I do not know that there is any necessity for me to explain the measure at any length, because it is very short, and no hon. member can read it without seeing at once what is its object and scope.

Question—That the Bill be now read a second time—put and passed.

TREASURY BILLS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I now rise, sir, to move the second reading of a Bill intituled "An Act to provide for the raising of a sum not exceeding £836,000 by the issue of Treasury bills." I may say, sir, that since this Bill was introduced into and was passed by the Legislative Assembly, the Government have received information that their agents at Home—the London and Westminster Bank—propose to place £400,000 of the money authorised to be raised by the Loan Act of 1891, on the market, and I have no doubt but that the issue will be successful. In these circumstances I propose to ask hon. members to affirm the second reading of this Bill, and then, when we get into committee, I shall suggest the reduction of the amount from £836,000 to £436,000, that is, by the £400,000 which will be raised to-day in London. It will be observed that it is proposed by this Bill to give power to the Government to raise the larger sum I have named by means of Treasury bills, which will run for a period not greater than three years, and which will bear such rate of interest as may be fixed by the Treasurer, but not exceeding 5 per cent. It is also provided