

Greenough having carried the Committee with him to that extent.

Clause 22.—Penalty on hawkers for selling smuggled or stolen goods:

Agreed to without discussion.

Clause 23.—Penalty for hiring or lending license:

Agreed to *sub silentio*.

The remaining clauses were also agreed to without comment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said it had been pointed out to him that the powers granted under this Bill in respect of issuing licenses to hawk might interfere with the rights of Municipal Councils, under the 9th section of the 44th Vict., No. 11, which authorises these bodies to grant licenses for hawking fish, fruit, or vegetables and to charge such fees for the same as their by-laws may provide. In order to meet this difficulty, he would move the following additional clause to the Bill, to stand as clause 24:—"No thing contained in this Act shall be taken to be in derogation of the powers conferred upon the council of any municipality to grant licenses and to charge fees therefor under the provisions of the 'ninth section of 'The Municipal Institutions Further Amendment Act, 1880;' and every such council may exercise any such powers thereby conferred in the same manner as if this Act had not been passed."

The clause was agreed to without opposition.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said occasion might arise when it would be expedient to issue temporary licenses, merely for a temporary purpose, when it would be hardly worth while going to the expense of taking out an annual license. In order to meet this requirement, he would move the addition of the following new clause to the Bill, to stand as clause 25:—"Temporary licenses may be granted by any Resident or Police Magistrate at his discretion within the district within which the license is to be used; such licenses shall be valid and available for the space of three days only, and for the same the following fees shall be payable: for a hawker trading on foot, the sum of 5s.; for a hawker trading with a pack or with a cart and animal, 10s. Upon the payment of the fee as

"aforesaid it shall be lawful for the Magistrate to give his certificate in writing to the effect that he has granted such license to the person paying such fee, and such certificate shall serve and be available to such person instead of a license for all intents and purposes during such period."

The clause was agreed to *sub silentio*.

MR. CROWTHER then moved, That the following new clause be added to the Bill, in pursuance of the intimation he had already given, at an earlier stage of the Bill:—"Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, no license granted under the provisions of this Act shall authorise any person to carry on the business of a hawker in any boat or other vessel upon any of the seas, waters, or rivers of the Colony."

The clause was agreed to without opposition.

Schedules agreed to.

Bill reported.

The House adjourned at half-past nine o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 7th August, 1882.

Increased Representation, North District—Disparaging Statements in the *Australasian* and the *Adelaide Observer*—Expenses, Superintendent of Roads—Proposed Works on Bunbury Jetty—Bills of Sale Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Petition re Railway Platform at West Perth—Customs Ordinance, 1860, Amendment Bill: first reading—Jury Act, 1871, Amendment Bill: first reading—Imported Labor Registry Bill: first reading—Masters and Servants Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Stamp Act, 1881, Amendment Bill: referred to Select Committee—Statutes (Errors) Amendment Bill: second reading—Appropriation Bill (Supplementary), 1882—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

INCREASED REPRESENTATION, NORTH DISTRICT.

MR. GRANT, in accordance with notice, moved "That an Humble Address

"be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to bring in a Bill to increase the representation of the North District, by the addition of two members, and that the North District be divided into two electoral districts: the one to be called the Gascoyne District, bounded on the South by the northern boundary of the Geraldton District and on the North by a line drawn from Point Cloates to the Capricorn Range, thence South-east,—this district to return one member; the other electorate to include all lands north of the proposed Gascoyne District, and to be called the North District, to be represented by two members, or one in addition to its present representative."

The hon. member said it would be necessary for him to enter into some details with reference to the material progress and importance of the districts whose claims he advocated, in view of the increased representation which he sought for them. He would commence with the value of the exports, which afforded some indication of the prosperity of these districts. Commencing with their chief article of export, wool, he reckoned, at the lowest estimation, that the annual shipment of wool from this part of the Colony (the North-West) amounted to 3,000 bales, which, at the very low value of £20 per bale, represented £60,000 a year. He did not think he was beyond the mark when he estimated their annual exports of pearl shells at 260 tons, which, at £150 per ton, gave £39,000. Sharks Bay and the North-West pearls he put down at £15,000 a year—the shells from Sharks Bay he left out of his calculation altogether, as he did not know what their annual value might be. They also exported, on an average, 300 horses every year—which was a low estimate considering what was done in this line last season; and he put down the value of these horses at £1,000. He thought they might fairly reckon the same for cattle, which were already being exported largely to the islands of the Eastern archipelago. In addition to these principal items of export, there were several others of less importance and value, such as tallow, bêche-de-mer, tortoise-shell, hides, skins, etc., which helped to swell up their exports, to the tune of £2,000 or £3,000 more. So that, taken altogether,

he might safely say that the value of the exportations made from these Northern districts was not less than £130,000 a year. What was more, the value of their exports was steadily increasing, and there could be very little doubt that ten years hence they would be doubled. He would ask hon. members to compare the material prosperity of these districts, as shown by these figures, with the prosperity of other parts of the Colony, which were largely represented in that House, but which, as regards the extent of their resources and the value of their exports, cut a very sorry figure indeed in comparison with these magnificent districts, which he might say were almost wholly unrepresented in that House. Surely this was not right or proper; surely this could not be called fair play, and he hoped the majority of hon. members would agree with him that the time had arrived when justice ought to be done to this important portion of Western Australian territory. The Government at present had the appointment of seven members of that House,—three executive members and four nominees: and it was not his intention to say anything derogatory of these seven hon. gentlemen. But they knew little or nothing of the distant settlements whose claims he advocated; they could not be expected to know much about them, for they never had an opportunity of judging of their capabilities and resources by personal inspection. Indeed, he might apply the same remarks to the other members of that House, with three exceptions—Messrs. Brown, Higham, and Venn. Beyond these three gentlemen, he did not suppose there was another hon. member in that House who had any idea of the importance of these Northern districts, from personal observation. Yet it might be said that these districts, if represented at all, were represented by hon. gentlemen who reside in the vicinity of Perth, and who are utter strangers to the Northern territory. A good many other outside districts were represented by hon. members whose homes were in the metropolis; in fact, nearly the whole of the representation of the Colony was in the hands of town members, and it was unreasonable to suppose that these hon. gentlemen could have much sympathy with the wants of outlying districts. They could not be

expected to feel that kindly and intelligent interest in them which they naturally felt in localities nearer home, with the requirements of which they were personally acquainted, much less to realise the great and growing importance of the remote districts whose claims to increased representation he was now endeavoring, to the best of his humble abilities, to bring under the consideration of the House. With regard to the population of these districts, possibly some hon. members might take exception to the number of the residents, and say they were so few and scattered that it was not worth giving them increased representation. But he would remind hon. members that a great many people who ought to count as belonging to the North District actually resided out of it, such as tradesmen, artisans, boat-builders, and others, who did the work of the district, and who derived a great part of their income from the district, but who lived in the centres of population at this (the Southern) end of the Colony. If all those who made their living out of the local requirements of our Northern territory resided there, they would considerably swell the number of its population; and in addition to these, they had a numerous black population, who were a source of wealth to the district, in aiding the development of its resources. He did not mean to say he wished to see these blacks exercising the franchise, but they had a right to have their interests protected. As to the area and capabilities of the district, there were millions upon millions of acres of the finest land in the Colony; in fact, the extent of territory was so great that he might venture to predict that, before another decade went over us, there would be a further subdivision of the district. Even in its present state of development, it contributed, as he had already shown, about one-fourth of the whole export trade of the Colony; and was it fair, was it just, was it right, that such an important part of the Colony should have no direct voice in public affairs, and have no share in the work of legislation beyond one solitary representative in that House? He need not say any more, he thought, to enlist the support of hon. members to the proposal to give the district its due, in this respect, beyond commending

his resolution to the favorable consideration of his fellow members.

MR. BROWN said the hon. member for the North nodded at him, expecting, no doubt, that he would second his motion, and he felt bound to do so, for he thought the time had arrived when the North District should have increased representation,—not merely the North District, but the outlying settlements of the Colony—and for this reason: that portion of Western Australia could not be said to be fairly represented in the Legislature of the Colony at the present time, upon the grounds so ably stated by the hon. member for the North-West. The importance of this part of our territory was certainly such that it ought to be in a position to command some weight in that House, and, being represented by one voice only, it could not be said to command much weight, at any rate. He also considered it was entitled to further representation, for another reason, mentioned, in other words, by the hon. member who had submitted this motion, namely, that representation in that House at present preponderated in favor of the towns, in this Southern portion of the Colony. He did not think it could be controverted that representatives, being human, were very much influenced by their more immediate surroundings, and he would ask what did the representation of the whole Colony in that House consist of? First of all, there were the representatives of the Government, who all lived in the city, and who were bound to be influenced by those who surrounded them. Even the Governor himself might be said to be more or less influenced by his surroundings, at the seat of Government. In addition to the Executive members, there were the four nominees, three of whom were residents of the city of Perth. No doubt these gentlemen were honorable men—were they not told the other day by the hon. member for Wellington that they were all honorable men in that House—but they were also human. The claims of the electorate of Perth, and of the neighboring electorate of Fremantle, had been recognised by giving them two representatives of their own, and he did not mean to say for a moment that this was too large a number to give those electorates. At any rate, Perth and

Fremantle were directly represented in that House by four members, in addition to the indirect representation which was afforded them by reason of the members of the Government, and the majority of the nominees also being residents of the metropolis. More than that, several country districts were represented by members living in Perth, such as the Swan District, the Toodyay District (represented by the Mayor of the city himself), Pinjarrah and Williams, and the Plantagenet District. With its own two members proper, this galaxy of representatives gave the metropolis of the Colony no less than six resident members in that House; and though no doubt these representatives regarded themselves, and properly regarded themselves, as the representatives of the Colony at large rather than as the delegates of any particular district, still, as he had already said, they were but human, and, being human, they were bound to be influenced by their immediate surroundings. In the face of all this, he would ask hon. members to say whether the towns at this, the Southern end of the Colony, did not monopolise the greater portion of the representation of the country in that House. He did not suppose there was a solitary member who would venture to repudiate that assertion, or to controvert the statement that this great preponderance of representation ought not to exist, to the extent that it now does. The question was a very important one, he admitted, and perhaps it would be advisable to defer its final settlement until members had a further opportunity of considering it, in all its bearings, and whether not only the North but also other districts of the Colony were not entitled to increased representation.

MR. SHENTON had no intention whatever of opposing the motion before the House, but there were one or two statements made by the mover and seconder of the address which he thought called for some reply on the part of the representatives of this part of the Colony. Although it might be true that the bulk of these representatives resided in Perth and Fremantle, it should be borne in mind that one third the whole population of the Colony were centred in those two towns; therefore, if the claims of representation were to be calculated by the

ratio of the population, Perth and Fremantle would be entitled to return double the number of representatives which they now returned. He thought, however, putting this on one side, that in the interests of the North part of the Colony that portion of our territory ought to be more strongly represented in that House than it was at present. He could not, however, support the proposed electoral division of the district as contemplated in the motion before the House. He thought a fairer arrangement would be to give the Gascoyne one representative, Nicol Bay another, and let Kimberley have the third. There was one reason why he thought it was desirable our Northern territory should have increased representation, which had not yet been touched upon, namely, that it would give the Government the right to appoint another member to a seat in the House; and, looking at the extent of public works now going on, and in contemplation, and the large sums of money expended thereon, he thought it was very desirable indeed that the head of the department entrusted with the expenditure of this money, and the control of these public works, and who was already a member of the Executive, should also have a seat in that House.

MR. STEERE said he also intended to support the motion of the hon. member for the North, although he thought it would be advisable to defer the final consideration of the subject until a later stage of the Session, so as to enable hon. members to give it a little further consideration. While prepared to support the proposal for giving additional representation to the North, he could not agree entirely with the reasons assigned by the mover and the seconder of the motion in favoring the proposal. The hon. member for Geraldton referred to the fact that certain members of that House, representing country constituencies, resided in town, and that consequently their influence was given in support of measures affecting town interests rather than country interests. [MR. BROWN: No, no.] He did not think that could fairly be said of any hon. members occupying seats in that House. He thought none of these representatives regarded themselves as returned to advocate or support the

interests of any particular part of the Colony to the prejudice or detriment of other parts, but that their duty was rather to watch over the interests of the Colony at large, irrespective of whether they might happen to reside in town or in the country. He supposed that for six months of the year, nearly every member of the House of Commons resided in London, but surely it could not be said that, for that reason, their interests were bound up with metropolitan interests. Again: the hon. member for the North laid much stress upon the immense value of the exports from that district, and urged this as a reason why the district was entitled to additional representation. He did not think that was a principle which had ever been admitted,—that representation should be given in proportion to the material wealth of an electorate. If so, the city of London, he supposed, would be entitled to one-fourth of the whole representation of the mother country in the House of Commons. Therefore, although he acknowledged the claims of the North District of this Colony to additional representation, he did so for other reasons than those put forward by the mover and seconder of the resolution before the House. He also thought it would be very desirable to consider whether there were not other districts, in the Southern part of the Colony—country districts, not towns—which were entitled to equal consideration in this respect. He entertained a very strong opinion that there were, and he thought that, while the subject of increased representation and of a redistribution of electorates was under discussion, the claims of these other districts might as well be considered at the same time as those of the North.

MR. CROWTHER said if the hon. member for Perth (Mr. S. H. Parker) carried out his benevolent intention of hastening the political millenium, by introducing a Bill to establish Responsible Government, there would soon be a complete revolution as regards the rights of representation, and every district in the Colony would want half a dozen highly respectable and well-paid members to look after its own particular interests; but should the hon. member, in his wisdom, think fit to postpone the advent

of that happy day, and to defer the introduction of his favourite measure, he (Mr. Crowther) would meantime support the more modest proposal of the hon. member for the North, to give that important district a couple more representatives. He agreed very much with what had fallen on this subject from the hon. member for Geraldton as to the preponderance of representation being found in the towns, for, whatever might be said to the contrary, it could not be denied that fifteen out of the twenty-one honorable men entrusted with ruling the political destinies of this vast territory resided in Perth and its vicinity. He thought it was with representation as with relationship—blood was thicker than water; and in the event of two conflicting interests putting in their claims, he was afraid very few hon. members would be found philanthropic enough to abandon local interests in favor of more remote claims. He was quite in accord with the necessity for increased representation as regards country districts, and, if he could have his own way, he would be inclined to render it incumbent upon these country districts to return country members. It was perfectly true that three-fourths of the members of the House of Commons resided in London during six months of the year, but these gentlemen when they left London went home to the country; whereas, when hon. members here left Perth for the country, they went away from home. That made all the difference. The interests of members must naturally lie nearer their own homes than away from them. He should support the motion, not only as regards the claims of the North districts alone, but also of other districts, and if they could see their way to a practical recognition of those claims, he thought we would do very well, until the hon. member for Perth obtained for us that panacea for all our ills,—that perfect form of Government under whose benignant sway every part of the Colony will be able to have as many representatives as it likes to pay for and to have whom it likes to represent it,—the hon. Tom, the hon. Dick, or the hon. Harry.

MR. S. H. PARKER said, that at the request of the hon. member for the Swan, he moved the adjournment of the debate until that day week, August 14th.

In doing so he would simply say, on behalf of the citizens of Perth, that he thought they were to be congratulated indeed upon being so strongly represented in that House, as it appeared from the remarks of the hon. member for Geraldton they were. After all, he supposed country districts must be credited with knowing who are the best men to represent them, and, if they find these men resident in the city rather than in the country, all he could say was so much the better for all concerned. He would support the motion before the House, because in all probability it meant two, if not three, additional members for the city which he had the honor to serve, as one of the dozen representatives which they were told it already possessed.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate until Monday, August 14th, was then agreed to.

DISPARAGING STATEMENTS IN THE AUSTRALASIAN AND IN THE ADELAIDE OBSERVER.

MR. BROWN, in accordance with notice, drew the attention of the House to certain telegrams and correspondence which appear in the *Australasian* and in the *Adelaide Observer*, and moved the following Resolution:—"That this Council notices with regret that journals of the high character and influence of the *Adelaide Observer* and *Australasian* have, in a manner calculated to prove prejudicial to the interests of Western Australia, been made vehicles for the dissemination of such malicious libels as are contained in the following telegrams and correspondence which appear therein, viz. :—

"(a).—*Adelaide Observer*, Telegram dated Perth, July 6th:—"The native question at Gascoyne and Murchison is still agitating the public mind. A Government Resident is to be appointed immediately at Gascoyne at a salary of £300 per annum. The Press condemns the attitude which the settlers hold towards the natives where their conduct is only a moderate retaliation for past treatment.

"(b).—Correspondence dated Perth, 30th June:—"The treatment and management of natives at the Upper Murchison and Gascoyne continue to engage public attention, and the Government have decided to appoint a Resident Magistrate at the Gascoyne, in whom powers will be vested to deal with offenders on the

"spot. In the course of a short time the report of Mr. Fairbairn, a local Magistrate, who has been specially selected to visit the settlers in those parts with reference to alleged severe depredations on the part of the natives, is expected to hand, and which, it is believed, will be the means of making public particulars of offences of a serious character committed by the settlers towards the natives, which, for their own purposes and interests, have been previously withheld."

"(c).—Correspondence dated Perth, 30th June:—"It is conjectured that the Council has been thus somewhat suddenly called together owing to certain suggestions having been made by Messrs. Wright & Riseley, contractors for the construction of the second section of the Eastern Railway, with reference to the alteration of a gradient of one in thirty at Green Mount, about seven miles from Guildford. Concerning this gradient a good deal has been said in public circles, and a great deal written in the public Press, owing chiefly to the contractors entertaining the members of the Legislative and Executive Councils at a camp champagne lunch in order to more assuredly impress upon their minds how desirable it is that the gradient should be reduced to one in forty for the modest sum of £26,000, just fifty per cent. of the amount of the entire contract. To the champagne lunch the Governor was invited, but for reasons which are obvious his official prudence directed his steps otherwise, so he can now act independently and entirely irrespective of 'sop' influence, the result of which, from time to time, this Colony has so severely suffered. The Commissioner of Railways, who is at present on his way to the Colony from England, distinctly pointed out in his report to the Council last year that he was prepared to contend with a gradient of one in thirty at the commencement as well as at the termination of the line to York, a gradient which, although steep, is by no means beyond lines Mr. Thomas has superintended in New South Wales, and which, with the present obtainable machinery, is a matter of but little difficulty or moment. With reference to this proceeding on the part of the contractors a number of suggestions have been made, and the haste upon their part, knowing that Mr. Thomas, under whose direction the preliminary survey was made, was afloat en route to King George's Sound when the champagne bait was thrown out, has been severely commented upon."

"(d).—*Australasian* of 15th July:—"His Excellency the Governor is opposed to any alteration in the land regulations, and as many leases fall in during the next three years, and the present lease-

“holders will have no precedence given
 “them for renewing their leases, consider-
 “able changes in the landed proprietary
 “are anticipated. Mortgagees with leases
 “as security are expected to foreclose in
 “all directions, and proposals for advances
 “of loans for improvements on leased pro-
 “perty are not entertained.”

“The success of the Governor in rapidly
 “placing the finances of the Colony in a
 “satisfactory position, and his action in
 “obtaining a loan of £260,000, without the
 “consent of the Legislature, is warmly
 “complimented by the Press. After this
 “loan no further money is to be borrowed
 “until the works proposed to be constructed
 “have proved reproductive.”

The hon. member said a considerable amount of pressure had been brought to bear upon him with a view to dissuade him from calling the attention of the House to these telegrams and correspondence, on the ground that anything emanating from the Press of this Colony—and these communications were supposed to have emanated from a certain newspaper office here—was beneath notice, and that the libellous statements contained in these telegrams and letters carried their own refutation on the face of them. And possibly had these statements appeared in some obscure print, instead of in leading newspapers of two of the sister colonies, he might have been induced to treat them with the silent contempt which they deserved. But published as they were in papers of such respectability and influence as the *Australasian* in Melbourne and the *Observer* in Adelaide, and regard being had to their damaging tendency, when disseminated through the medium of such influential journals, he thought it was the duty of that House, as the guardian of the Colony's interests and good name, to take some steps to show the world that these statements were as unfounded as they were malicious. The first statement he would refer to was that embodied in a telegram, dated Perth, July 6, which appeared in the *Adelaide Observer*, relative to the native question at the North, and which contained the following assertion: “The Press” (meaning the local press) “condemns the attitude which the settlers hold towards the natives, where their conduct is only a moderate retaliation for past treatment.” That was a malicious libel upon the settlers of the Gascoyne and

Murchison Districts, as anyone who was at all conversant with the history of this so-called “native question” must be aware. What was really the case with regard to the conduct and attitude of the natives on the Gascoyne? Was it not well known that, so far back as the year 1858, the district was visited by Mr. Frank Gregory and his party, some of the members of which expedition are still amongst us,—and Mr. Gregory and the members of his expedition were well known to be humane men, who would not willingly do a native any wrong; was it not a well-known fact that this party was attacked on more than one occasion by the natives of the Upper Gascoyne, without any provocation; but if the natives attack the settlers now it is only by way of a “moderate retaliation” for past treatment—according to the concoctor of these telegrams. Passing over several instances of native outrages between 1858 and the murder of poor Clarkson—and hon. members were all aware of that sad episode, how, while the unfortunate fellow was engaged in carrying water, he was brutally, cruelly, and ruthlessly murdered, without the slightest provocation. Was that “only a moderate retaliation?” Perhaps, in the mind of the author of these telegrams it was; but it was a notorious fact that the natives who committed that savage and cold-blooded murder were still at large, and that poor Clarkson's death was still unavenged. Was it not a fact that ever since the first settlement of the Gascoyne District the natives had assumed an attitude of uncompromising hostility, even from the very earliest days of exploration, when there was no “past treatment” calling for “moderate retaliation?” Was it not a fact that from that day to this these savages had been thirsting for the blood of the settlers? He had been amongst them himself, twenty years ago, and his own life had frequently been in danger from their treachery and their murderous proclivities. Other settlers had been less fortunate than himself, and paid with their lives the penalty of their plucky efforts to settle the district. Nor did they confine their attentions to the whites, many a native shepherd had been the victim of their savagery, simply because they had entered the service of the white settlers. In addition to these

personal assaults, was it not notorious that these natives had committed serious depredations on the property of the settlers, stealing their sheep and robbing them of their rations—not merely petty delinquencies, but depredations of such a serious character as to induce many of the settlers to think seriously of abandoning the district altogether, unless the Government and the Legislature are prepared to grant them some protection. The Superintendent of Police, in his annual report presented to the House this Session, acknowledged that from the information he had received from time to time there was but little doubt that the depredations committed by the natives in the Gascoyne and Upper Murchison Districts were of a very serious nature, and, “very naturally,” the Superintendent added, “the cry for “police protection is raised.” There could be no doubt that the time had come, as pointed out in that House as long ago as last Session, when this protection ought to be extended to the settlers of these districts, and when the Government should come forward and put the law in force, as regards these hostile natives. He resented with indignation the aspersions which had been cast by the author of these telegrams upon the settlers of the districts in question, and he defied this correspondent, or anyone else, to prove that they had acted towards the natives in anything but a humane and honorable manner. The next statement to which he would refer was that contained in some correspondence which appeared in the same paper (the *Observer*), dated Perth, 30th June, to the following effect: “The treatment “and management of natives at the “Upper Murchison and Gascoyne continue to engage public attention, and “the Government have decided to appoint “a Resident Magistrate at the Gascoyne, “in whom powers will be vested to deal “with offenders on the spot. In the “course of a short time the report of “Mr. Fairbairn, a local Magistrate, who “has been specially selected to visit the “settlers in those parts with reference to “alleged severe depredations on the part “of the natives, is expected to hand, and “which, it is believed, will be the means “of making public particulars of offences “of a serious character committed by the

“settlers towards the natives, which, for “their own purposes and interests, have “been previously withheld.” He had no hesitation in characterising that statement as a scandalous libel, having no foundation whatever in fact. Who but the writer of this precious paragraph ever heard of offences of a serious character committed by settlers towards the natives, which, for their own purposes and interests, the settlers had previously withheld? Was that House going to stand by, and allow the settlers of the Colony to be so foully maligned as they were in this correspondence, without raising a voice against it, and without expressing its regret, on behalf of the people of the Colony, that a journal of such known respectability and commanding influence should have been made the medium of disseminating such aspersions upon the settlers of a neighboring Colony? He hoped not. He hoped the resolution which he was about to submit would meet with the cordial and unanimous approval of the Legislature. So much for our much maligned settlers. He now came to the members of that House, who were as grossly libelled as their brother settlers were, by this same scribe. “It is conjectured,” he said, alluding to the meeting of Council, “that “the Council has been thus somewhat “suddenly called together”—as a matter of fact, the Council, so far from being suddenly summoned, was called together somewhat later than the usual time which had been suggested by resolution of the House—“owing to certain suggestions having been made by Messrs. “Wright and Riseley, contractors for the “construction of the Eastern Railway, “with reference to the alteration of a “gradient of one in thirty at Green “Mount, about seven miles from Guildford. Concerning this gradient a good “deal has been said in public circles, “and a great deal written in the public “Press, owing chiefly to the contractors “entertaining the members of the Legislative and Executive Councils at a “camp champagne lunch, in order to “more assuredly impress upon their “minds how desirable it is that the “gradient should be reduced to one in “forty, for the modest sum of £26,000, “just fifty per cent. of the amount of the “entire contract.” Hon. members were

as well aware of the facts as he was, connected with this subject. It was currently rumoured, at one time, that the contractors would be prepared to reduce the gradient for £6,000, but upon inquiry it was found that they wanted not £6,000 but £26,000 for the work, and, when that was ascertained to be the case, from that very moment the proposal was absolutely abandoned, by every member of the Legislature, by the outside public, and by the Government. The whole thing was entirely thrown on one side, and the idea abandoned both by the contractors and the Legislature long before this precious "camp champagne lunch" took place; and this fact was, of itself, a most complete answer to this gross libel upon the representatives of the people, who were held up to their neighbors in the other colonies as men who, for the sake of a champagne lunch, would have sacrificed £26,000 of the people's money, and placed it in the pockets of contractors. "The Commissioner of Railways," the correspondent went on to say, "who is at present on his way to the Colony from England, distinctly pointed out in his report to the Council last year that he was prepared to contend with a gradient of one in thirty at the commencement as well as at the termination of the line to York, a gradient which, although steep, is by no means beyond lines Mr. Thomas has superintended in New South Wales, and which, with the present obtainable machinery, is a matter of little difficulty or moment. With reference to this proceeding on the part of the contractors a number of suggestions have been made, and the haste upon their part, knowing that Mr. Thomas, under whose direction the preliminary survey was made, was afloat *en route* to King George's Sound when the champagne bait was thrown out, has been severely commented upon." So far as he (Mr. Brown) was aware, the only newspaper that had commented upon it was the *Inquirer*, and, from what appeared in that paper, read in the light of this correspondence, and in connection with a certain amusing incident which happened in connection with this champagne lunch, he was very much inclined to think—he should be sorry indeed if he was doing an injustice

to the paper in question—he would not willingly do such an act of injustice to any man or any newspaper: but from what he had seen and from what he had heard, he thought he was justified in saying that he believed these telegrams and this correspondence emanated either from the *Inquirer* office or from some member of its staff. He trusted, if he was wrong, the *Inquirer* would give a complete and emphatic refutation of the statement. He should be very pleased indeed to acknowledge that he was wrong as to the source whence these calumnious paragraphs emanated. But at present, and until the statement was refuted by the *Inquirer* itself, he was bound to attribute them to that paper, or to one of its staff. And the same remark applied to the telegrams which appeared in the *Australasian*, and to which he would now refer. The first was as follows: "His Excellency the Governor is opposed to any alteration in the land regulations, and as many leases fall in during the next three years, and the present lease-holders will have no precedence given them for renewing their leases, considerable changes in the landed proprietary are anticipated. Mortgages, with leases as security, are expected to foreclose in all directions, and proposals for advances of loans for improvements on leased property are not entertained." He should like to know where the sender of this telegram got his information that His Excellency the Governor was opposed to any alteration in the land regulations. It was possible that His Excellency might be opposed to a change, but he was not aware that His Excellency had publicly stated that he was, and he was sure the Governor had not been in private communication with the writer of this telegram on the subject. On the contrary, His Excellency had publicly stated that in his opinion existing lessees had a moral right to a renewal of their leases. And as to mortgagees being expected to foreclose in all directions, and the Banks refusing to entertain proposals for advances for improvements on leased property,—the person who concocted this precious telegram might be aware of these things, but certainly the public of the Colony never heard of them before.

Such statements, which were as unfounded as they were silly, had nevertheless a tendency to damage the Colony in the eyes of the outside world, and could not fail to prejudice intending settlers against casting their lot amongst us. Another telegram, which appeared in the *Australasian* of the 15th July, was as follows: "The success of the Governor in rapidly placing the finances of the Colony in a satisfactory position, and his action in obtaining a loan of £260,000, without the consent of the Legislature, is warmly complimented (*sic*) by the Press." Was ever such rubbish heard of? Why, the Governor could not obtain a loan of two hundred and sixty pence "without the consent of the Legislature," as anybody who knew anything at all about the constitution of the Colony must have known. As a matter of fact, we had not even yet obtained this loan, though steps would no doubt be taken during the present Session of Council to enable the Colony to do so,—not, however, "without the consent of the Legislature." As to the action of the Governor in the matter being the subject of complimentary remarks in the Press, that was all of a piece with that sycophantic adulation which had been going on for some time past in the columns of a section of the Press, as regards His Excellency and the Government, and with the efforts made to pit them against the Legislature,—adulation which must be as offensive to His Excellency and to the members of the Government as it must be to the feelings of any honest man. The resolution he had to submit for the affirmation of the House was as follows: "That this Council notices with regret that journals of the high character and influence of the *Adelaide Observer* and *Australasian* have, in a manner calculated to prove prejudicial to the interests of Western Australia, been made vehicles for the dissemination of such malicious libels as are contained in the telegrams and correspondence alluded to."

MR. SHENTON, in seconding the motion, said he had been pained and surprised when he first read these telegrams and the correspondence—pained because they were calculated to do much injury to the Colony, and surprised that

any man, who had a spark of patriotism in him, could have been found mean enough to have penned such slanderous and unfounded libels upon the Colony and upon its settlers. Were it not for the commanding influence of the two journals which this person had made tools of for the purposes of venting his spleen or displaying his ignorance, he should have thought such glaring and monstrous misstatements were beneath the notice of that House.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) thought that, so far as it concerned individual members of the Legislature and of the Executive, it would have been quite right, as the hon. member for Toodyay suggested, that these lying and malicious communications should have been treated with contemptuous silence, but he did not think it would be right so far as it concerned that Council, sitting in its parliamentary capacity, to do so. Therefore, he thought the hon. member for Geraldton had acted very properly in moving this resolution, and he for one would give it a most cordial support. He did not know, however, whether any good could come out of this action on the part of the House, but he was very sorry indeed to find that there was in Perth, or in the Colony, a person capable of writing such malicious rubbish as that to which their attention had been called; and he only regretted there was no means of inflicting condign punishment upon this sort of nefarious reptile—he could call him by no other name. He should be very glad if the local newspaper which had been so pointedly alluded to as the source whence these productions emanated, was in a position to deny the impeachment, and to state publicly that neither the paper itself nor any member of its staff had been guilty of such an offence. But unless that paper could do so, he was afraid they could hardly do otherwise than think that the Press of this Colony was represented by a very dishonorable as well as an honorable side.

MR. STEERE would most cordially support the motion, which he sincerely trusted would be unanimously agreed to. The hon. member for Geraldton, he was sure, was actuated solely by patriotic motives in bringing it forward, his object

being to clear the character of the Legislature and of the respectable settlers of the Colony from such malicious aspersions as had been cast upon them in these communications. The hon. and learned gentleman who had just sat down said he did not exactly know what good might accrue from the motion; but he (Mr. Steere) thought it would be productive of one good result—it would show the influential and respectable journals which had been made the tools of this unscrupulous writer how shamefully they had been imposed upon, and would put them on their guard against any future imposition in the same quarter. Presuming, as he did, that these statements were furnished by somebody connected with the Press of this Colony, he thought nothing could be so self-condemnatory of the local Press as was one of these telegrams, in which it is stated that the Governor's action, in obtaining a loan of £300,000 without the consent of the Legislature, was applauded by the Press. He had always been under the impression that, in every English-speaking community, the Press prided itself upon being the champion of free institutions, and opposed to the arbitrary exercise of authority on the part of the "powers that be"; and he hoped the greater portion of the independent Press of this Colony was prepared to do the same. But this correspondent stood, self-confessed, as favoring an unconstitutional act on the part of the Governor, and complimented His Excellency upon having obtained a public loan without the consent of the Legislature. Apart from the absurdity of such a statement, the enunciation of such sentiments was an insult to the Press of the country. Nothing more self-condemnatory of the local Press was ever penned, and he could not help thinking the compiler of these precious telegrams must by this time feel that, in his eagerness to hold up the Government and to traduce the settlers, he had overshot the mark, and demeaned the Press with which, there could be little or no doubt, the writer was connected.

MR. CROWTHER said the motion would have his hearty support. The communications referred to had been mildly characterised as malicious libels: he did not know whether he should

be using unparliamentary language if he went a little further than that, and characterised the writer of them as a malicious and a lying scoundrel. If the expression was unparliamentary he would withdraw it. He believed he would not be far wrong in identifying this same individual with another individual who told him (the hon. member), not so very long ago, that he—this "nefarious reptile" as he had been called—could be got rid of for £30, and enough to pay the passage of himself and family out of the Colony. And he was not sure now whether it would not have been better had he done so. He hoped the Government would take some steps to bring the motion before the House under the notice of the two respectable journals which had been so grossly imposed upon.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said the telegrams and correspondence referred to had caused him considerable pain. It pained him, in the first place, to observe that some person was mean enough, and whose mind was putrid enough, to imagine that the members of the Executive Government and the members of that House were open to sop influence, in the shape of a champagne lunch, and that under such influence they would not be averse to sacrifice the interests of the public to the extent of several thousands of pounds. And it pained him in the next place to find such a scandalous aspersion disseminated through the columns of such influential journals as the *Australasian* and the *Observer*, both of which had been grossly imposed upon. With regard to the statements relating to His Excellency the Governor, the statement, namely, that His Excellency is "opposed to any alteration in the land regulations," he might say that there was no truth in such a statement, and he did not know upon what grounds it had been made. At any rate, he was in a position to deny the statement, and, on the part of His Excellency the Governor, he availed himself of this opportunity of giving a distinct denial to it. Although His Excellency might consider it premature to alter the land regulations at the present time, he had expressed no opinion on the subject whatever, which would in any way support this statement, and he wished to state that the Governor was in no way

responsible for it. He said so, in all sincerity; while as regards the correspondence marked "C," it was a most deliberate falsehood.

MR. RANDELL did not think any language that would be permitted in that House could be too strong to characterise the writer of these atrocious libels, and the meanness and baseness displayed in palming them off upon the unsuspecting conductors of influential newspapers outside the Colony. He could scarcely have thought there was anyone in the Colony who would have thus descended to traduce its settlers and its public men, and it was much to be regretted that such statements had been disseminated through the columns of such widely-circulating papers as the *Australasian*. He was glad to hear the noble lord the leader of the Government say he did not think there was a member of that House who would demean himself by accepting "sop" influence, in the shape of a champagne lunch, or in any other form, or who would betray the interests of the Colony for the sake of a bribe.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) was sorry to think that the communications referred to were quite in keeping with other contributions which had been foisted upon some of the leading journals of the sister colonies, from time to time; and if the action of the House in this matter resulted in putting an end to such contributions in future, a good turn would be done to the Colony.

MR. MARMION hoped the publication of these libels would induce persons of known respectability and influence in the Colony to act as occasional contributors to the leading newspapers of the neighboring colonies.

The motion was then put and agreed to unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT OF ROADS: EXPENSES RELATIVE TO.

MR. CAREY, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary for a return showing—"1. The amount expended out of 'Roads Loan' on roads and bridges in Vasse District, during the year 1881; the amount expended this year to date; and the works on which such monies have been

expended. 2. The dates of the various official visits paid by Superintendent of Roads, and the time spent in visiting and superintending the works carried out in the same district; also all expenses thereby incurred in salary, allowances, &c. 3. The total amount paid for, to, and due to Superintendent of Roads on account of salary, allowances, expenses from Sydney, cost of carriage and horses supplied by the Government to Superintendent, hire of ditto, and all expenses paid by the Government for steamer and coach fares, from date of engagement to 30th June last. 4. Details of item 'Expenses, £887 12s. 1d.,' as shown in Statement of Expenditure. (Superintendent of Roads' Report, 1882). 5. A return of the cost of preliminary expenses incurred by the Superintendent of Roads in relation to a proposed new bridge over the Avon at York; and whether such expenditure was authorised by the Central Roads Committee; and, if not, by whom. 6. For what period the Superintendent of Roads was engaged by this Government, and if it is the intention of the Government to dispense with his services at the end of that period." The hon. member said he moved for these returns in order hereafter to base a resolution with regard to the manner in which the £50,000 Road Loan had been expended. With reference to the first return asked for, he believed that a sum of £55 only had been expended on roads and bridges in the Vasse District during the period named, but he fancied it would be found that a very large sum had been spent in looking after the expenditure of this trifling amount. With regard to the third return, he believed it would be found that the total amount paid for superintending the expenditure of the Road Loan had been far in excess of what it was estimated by Governor Ord when the scheme was approved by the House, namely, £1,000. The fifth return had reference to a proposed bridge which he was informed was not at all required. As to the sixth return asked for, he believed he was right in saying that the sooner this gentleman's services were dispensed with the better would it be for our roads, for there could be no doubt they were in a far worse condition now

than they were before a penny of this £50,000 was expended upon them under the supervision of the gentleman appointed for that purpose.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) laid the returns asked for on the Table.

BUNBURY JETTY.

MR. VENN, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, (1.) "Whether it is the intention of the Government to start the proposed works on the Bunbury Jetty, of which £500 has already been voted by the Council, and whether the Government intend to carry out fully the extension and accommodation as recommended, by asking the Council to vote a further sum for that purpose?" (2.) "Whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum of money on the Estimates to defray cost of laying down efficient moorings in the Port of Bunbury?"

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) replied: (1.) "The works could not have been commenced sooner, inasmuch as Her Majesty's assent to the Re-appropriation Loan Act had to be awaited. It is the intention of the Government to proceed with certain works at once, and orders have been issued to this effect. The Government are making inquiries to learn how far the £500 will carry the extension, and if found necessary a further sum will be asked for. Communications on the subject of the extension are also passing between the Government and the Managers of the Timber Companies, as it is thought that the Companies should in some way contribute, inasmuch as the jetty is mainly used by them." (2.) "It is unnecessary to ask the Council for a sum to defray the cost of laying down efficient moorings, the Government having a sufficient amount at command to carry out the work."

BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. S. H. PARKER, in accordance with notice, moved the first reading of a Bill to amend the Bills of Sale Act.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

PLATFORM AT WEST PERTH.

MR. S. H. PARKER, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the Table the petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor by Mr. Joseph Wylde and others, asking for the erection of a railway platform in Dyer Street, Perth.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) laid the petition on the Table, together with the Commissioner of Railways' minutes thereon.

CUSTOMS ORDINANCE, 1860, AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved the first reading of a Bill to amend "The Customs Ordinance, 1860."

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

JURY ACT, 1871, AMENDMENT BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) moved the first reading of a Bill to amend "The Jury Act, 1871."

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

IMPORTED LABOR REGISTRY BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow), in accordance with notice, moved the first reading of a Bill to provide for the registration of certain persons who shall be imported into Western Australia, or employed in any manner within the territorial dominion thereof.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) moved the first reading of a Bill to amend an Act passed in the 6th year of Her Majesty, No. 5, intituled an Act to provide a summary remedy in certain cases of breach of contract.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

STAMP ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in moving the second reading of a Bill to amend the Stamp Act, said the

Act had been barely a year in operation, but he might state that it had worked far better than most people had anticipated. The amendments now proposed were such as the experience which they had already gained in working the Act had disclosed the necessity of, by showing where the shoe pinched; and he trusted that as the result of these amendments it would be found that the measure would operate still more satisfactorily. Complaints had been made to the Government with reference to some of the items comprised in the schedules pressing unduly upon the community, and, in all cases where it appeared to the Government that these complaints were well founded, the Government had listened to them, and sought to remedy them in the present Bill. Of course, in the case of some of these complaints, it was perfectly impossible for Government to have removed them, without interfering detrimentally with the operation of the Act; but to any reasonable amendments the Government would be prepared to listen, so long as they tended to improve the usefulness of the measure. The first clause of the Bill authorised the stamping of unstamped bills of exchange or promissory notes by a *bonâ fide* holder, and, so far as such holder was concerned, the bill or note so stamped would be deemed a good document. Another alteration proposed was with regard to the cancellation of stamps. The present Act required that, where any document or instrument creates reciprocal rights between two or more persons, all those concerned shall cancel the stamp, but the present Bill provided that it will be sufficient if one of the parties to such document cancelled the stamp. The third section provided that all orders for the payment of money (other than bank notes) must be stamped upon every fresh issue thereof. This clause had been found necessary because it had been discovered that certain notes which were afloat at the North-West had been paid in, and re-issued, without being again stamped, thus defeating the object of the Act. These were the main provisions of the new Bill, so far as it affected the clauses of the Act; but several reductions were proposed to be made in the scale of duties charged under the schedules to the Act, which it

had been pointed out to the Government were, in some instances, excessively high. There were exemptions, too, in the present Bill which were not provided for in the Act now in operation. As regards agreements, it was proposed to exempt all agreements the matter whereof is not of the value of £5, also agreements for the hire of laborers and menial servants; and any memorandum relating to the sale of any goods or merchandise, as well as agreements entered into between the masters of coasting vessels and their crews. For the purpose of the present Bill, liens on wool,—which were now treated as a mortgage, and subject to a pretty heavy duty—would be regarded as agreements, and would only be chargeable with a fixed duty of 2s. 6d. per £100. The same would apply to letters of hypothecation of bills of lading, and to deposits of title deeds to secure payment of bills of exchange or promissory notes,—that is to say, they would now come under the head of agreements. With reference to the duty on bills of exchange, a somewhat singular anomaly in the present Act would be remedied by the Bill before the House. At present, if a man gave a bill of exchange for (say) £200 he had to put a 3s. stamp on it, but if he gave twenty £10 bills (equivalent to the £200) he would only have to stamp each of those £10 bills with a 2d. stamp, so that the stamping of the whole would only cost him 1s. 8d., whereas if he gave one bill for the whole amount he would have to pay 3s., and so on in proportion to the value of the bill. This anomaly would now be removed. A considerable reduction was also proposed in the duties connected with mortgages, the present scale being at the rate of 5s. for every £50, or fractional part of £50. The Bill now before the House contemplated that a mortgage representing in value any sum not exceeding £50 shall only be liable to a stamp duty of 1s. 3d.; not exceeding £100, 2s. 6d.; not exceeding £150, 3s. 9d.; and so on proportionally up to £300, for which the duty will be 7s. 6d., instead of £1 10s. as at present. Exceeding £300, it was proposed to charge at the rate of 2s. 6d. for every £100, or a fractional part thereof. It would thus be seen that very considerable reductions were proposed in this direction, which could not fail to make

the Act less oppressive. The duty on transfer and reconveyance of mortgages had also been reduced, and it was proposed to exempt life assurance policies from the operations of the Act. Hon. members would thus see that the Government proposed to abandon a considerable amount of revenue now derived under the Stamp Act, and, although they would be prepared to listen to any further amendments of a reasonable character, he hoped the House would bear in mind that revenue must be derived from some source or other. The Government had to acknowledge having received much valuable assistance from bankers and others in connection with the proposed amendments, which he hoped would commend themselves to the favorable consideration of the House.

The Bill was read a second time, and, upon the motion to go into Committee upon it on Friday,—

MR. BURT moved, as an amendment, that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Messrs. Shenton, Onslow, Randell, Marmion, Steere, Crowther, Brown, and the mover. He thought every member would be inclined to thank the Government for introducing a Bill to amend the Stamp Act, and he believed the duties had been lowered in every possible way where the shoe had been found to pinch unduly. With the duties as modified in the present Bill he had no fault to find whatever, but at the same time he thought a great deal yet remained to be done to render the Act more workable, and although he gave the Government every credit for endeavoring to obtain information with a view to make the Act as suitable as possible to our local requirements—which he considered a very wise course to pursue—still he thought there were one or two matters which had not been referred to by the noble lord in moving the second reading of the Bill, and which it would be as well he (Mr. Burt) should mention. He did not think that, when the Act first came into operation, the Government had endeavored to work it as well and as conveniently to the public as they might have done. For instance, it might be remembered that there was a large number of bank cheque books in use or on hand at the time the Act came into operation, and the Government absolutely refused to stamp

them at the Treasury for any private individual, though there could not be the slightest excuse for harassing the public in that way. One or two persons, he believed, were fortunate enough to have their cheque books stamped, but the privilege was soon withdrawn. He thought that, in future, it would be the desire of the House that every facility should be afforded the public by the Treasury in meeting their requirements in this respect. Then, again, there were a great number of merchant's "order" books, which might have been stamped with an embossed stamp by the Treasury, but which they refused to do, though no valid reason could or had been given for their refusal. He had heard, within the last day or two, but not before, that the Government had some idea of putting a check upon what was usually called the truck system of doing business, and that this was the reason why they refused to stamp these "order" books; but how on earth that was going to bring about the desired result, he, for his part, could not conceive. He did not think the system had received any great blow by the action of the Government in this matter,—at any rate, it had survived the shock, and the only result was that the public were put to a great deal of unnecessary inconvenience and unnecessary expense. These were two instances in which the working of the Act had been needlessly hampered. Another instance was the way in which the Government had the stamps sold. The 19th section of the Act provided that the Governor may, in writing under his hand, license vendors of stamps, and may direct how and under what conditions stamps may be issued for sale. Elsewhere, he believed licensed vendors of stamps usually entered into a security for their disposal and for rendering a due account of the proceeds of the sales effected, without having to pay for the stamps as they got them from the Treasury, which in some instances would involve the outlay of a considerable amount of capital, which might be lying idle for a long time. But, here, licensed vendors, instead of being required to find a security, had to pay cash down for their stock of stamps, and the result was people could very seldom be supplied with stamps of any high value by these vendors, but had to go to the Treasury

for them, and the vendors lost the percentage which they were allowed on the sale of stamps. He saw no reason why the Government should not be satisfied if the vendors entered into a bond to be answerable for the proceeds of the stamps which they sold, without requiring them to invest a large amount of capital in stamps of a high value, which they might have to keep in their drawers for months, without a customer requiring one. There was another blot upon the system under which the Act had been worked, namely, in connection with the cancellation of stamps. He understood the noble lord to say that the Government were anxious to have the Act worked as conveniently as possible, but there could be no doubt that the system of cancellation was fraught with very great inconvenience. Under the 10th clause, in the event of more than one person having to sign a stamped document, each of the signatories had to sign his name across the stamp before it could be regarded as having been duly cancelled. For his own part, he failed to see the necessity of more than one person doing this, so long as the stamp was defaced, and rendered unfit for use again. All that was required to guard against was that the revenue shall not be defrauded, and surely one signature across a stamp would answer every purpose of cancellation as well as a dozen signatures would. There were many other small matters of detail in connection with the working of the Act which required looking into, in order to make it as popular and as little oppressive as possible, and which a Select Committee could deal with more effectually than a Committee of the whole.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) was sorry the hon. member for Pinjarrah should have considered it necessary to have brought forward his amendment. He was in hopes that they should have had a full discussion, in Committee of the whole House, upon this Bill, and that the hon. member, with his usual perspicacity, would have pointed out its defects. He ventured to say that three-fourths of the hon. member's speech had been directed against defects which were in no way inherent, either as regards the original Act or the present Bill. His strictures

were directed, not against the Act itself, but against the machinery employed to put the Act in motion. He was sure the hon. member would agree with him, that it was quite possible for the Government to meet the hon. member's views in respect of the vending of stamps without in any way altering the provisions of the present Bill, or of the original Act: in fact, as regards the greater portion of the hon. member's speech, there was nothing in it calling for legislation on the subject. With regard to one remark which fell from the hon. member—and the only remark which had pointed to any defect requiring the intervention of the Legislature—namely, that relating to the cancellation of stamps by more than one party to a document, the hon. member had already been informed that the Government were prepared to accept any amendment, of a reasonable character, in order to get rid of the defect referred to. He failed to see any reason whatever for deferring the consideration of the Bill, or for creating any delay, by referring it to a Select Committee. There was one amendment which the hon. member himself had overlooked, and which would no longer exist as a defect if the Bill now before the House became law. He alluded to the first clause, which provided that a bill of exchange bearing sufficient stamps, in the hands of any *bonâ fide* holder, shall be deemed to be duly stamped. A great deal of pressure had been brought to bear upon the Government to make this amendment in another form, so that in the event of a bill of exchange bearing no stamp whatever coming into the hands of a *bonâ fide* holder, it might be competent for the holder to affix, as well as to cancel, the stamps. He, for one, could not accept that proposition. He thought the requirements of the mercantile community would be met by the amendment introduced in the Bill now before the House.

The amendment was then put.

MR. S. H. PARKER required that the Select Committee be elected by ballot.

MR. BROWN said he wished particularly to be on the Committee, as his constituents had asked him to use his influence to get rid of the Stamp Act altogether, but, as there was no likelihood of that being done, and as he had a

great deal to say with reference to the Act, he thought, in order to economise the time of the House, it would be as well his arguments should be addressed to the Select Committee.

Members having delivered to the Clerk the list of such members to serve on such Committee, the Clerk reported to the Speaker the following names as having the greatest number of votes:—The Honorable A. C. Onslow, Mr. Brown, Mr. Burt, Mr. Crowther, Mr. S. H. Parker, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Randell, and Mr. Steere.

STATUTES (ERRORS) AMENDMENT BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow): I think I am right in saying that the consideration of this Bill was postponed in order to afford hon. members time to discover further errors than the Revision Committee were able to discover. I hope, if any have been discovered, they will be forthcoming, and they will instantly find place in the schedule. I do not know that I need say much more in again moving the second reading of the Bill. The Commission has completed its work, and, in order to put their work into print, it is necessary that these clerical errors should be made. Without it, the Commission would be taking upon itself the right of legislating instead of revising, and would be usurping the proper functions of this House. If the Bill is not passed, the Statutes will have to be printed with these errors in them; that is all.

MR. STEERE saw no objection to the Bill being read a second time, so long as its committal was not hurried. As there were other Acts which it was proposed to consolidate during the Session, he thought it would be just as well that the Bill should not be proceeded with beyond its second reading until a later part of the Session.

MR. BURT said there could be no particular hurry for the Bill becoming law, and until the work of the Commission—who, by the bye, call themselves a Revision Committee, though in the first instance they were a Consolidating Committee—was printed, he thought it would be premature to pass this Bill. It did not disclose a great many errors, and on a very cursory perusal of the Statutes he

had found quite as many more. The Government, at any rate, could have no objection to postpone the committal of the Bill.

The motion for the second reading was then agreed to.

APPROPRIATION BILL (SUPPLEMENTARY), 1882.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved the second reading of this Bill without comment.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at half-past ten o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 8th August, 1882.

Barristers: Rules for Admission of—Refreshment Room, Perth Railway Station—Expenses of Assistant Superintendent of Roads—Alteration of Telegraph Hours—Balance of Road Loan: How expended—Hawkers Bill: recommitted—Customs Ordinance, 1860, Amendment Bill: second reading—Messages Nos. 1 and 2—Tariff Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

RULES FOR ADMISSION OF BARRISTERS.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow): I rise for the purpose of trespassing on the indulgence of the House while I offer a few words of supplementary explanation with reference to the constitution of the Board for the approval of qualified persons to act as Barristers and Practitioners of the Supreme Court. The Colonial Secretary, in answer to the question put by the hon. member for the Swan (*vide p. 59*