

pany under guarantee from the Government, and has got a receipt for the principal and interest, in full discharge in regard to the guarantee which had been given by the Government for that advance. I hope that is the last we shall hear, in this House, concerning that guarantee of £60,000. There is no doubt that on the 1st of September the balance of the subscriptions for the half-million loan to the Company will, for a certainty, be duly paid to our credit.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5:35 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 9th August, 1893.

Breaksea Light: Renewal of—Stamp Duty charged on Treasury Bill Coupons—Post Office Savings Bank Consolidation Bill: recommittal—Post and Telegraph Bill: first reading—Excess Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

BREAKSEA LIGHT—RENEWAL OF.

THE HON. J. F. T. HASSELL, for the Hon. J. A. Wright: I have to ask the Colonial Secretary whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum on the Estimates to renew the light on Breaksea Island, in the same manner as is now being done at Rottnest?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I regret to say that the Government have found it impossible to place a sum on the current year's Estimates for the work in question.

STAMP DUTY CHARGED ON TREASURY BILL COUPONS—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: I beg, sir, to move that the House do now adjourn. I do so for the purpose of drawing attention to what, I feel certain, is an unintentional injustice now being done to the holders of Treasury bills of the May, 1893, issue. These bills were issued in the early part of May, and it was stated that the Government would pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, which was to be paid quarterly. It has come to my knowledge that, on the presentation of the 1st of August coupons, the holders were requested to affix a penny stamp to each before receiving the interest. Such a proceeding as this needs only to be mentioned, I am sure, for the Government to have it altered. The desire of the Government in issuing these bills was to get people interested in the finances of the colony and to lend their money at a certain rate of interest; but if they have to disburse a penny on each coupon, especially when the amounts are small, they are not receiving the interest promised by the Government. If hon. members knew what some of these amounts were they would be surprised. Take, for instance, a £10 coupon: the interest on such on 1st August would only have been 2s. 2d., and in order to get this a penny stamp had to be affixed. Thus the holder would not receive the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. promised by the Government. I am aware that clause 71 of the Stamp Act says:—"The stamp upon a receipt or coupon or warrant for interest shall be cancelled by the person by whom the receipt is given or the coupon or warrant is presented for payment before he delivers it out of his hands;" but this Act was passed, it must be remembered, before Treasury bills were thought of, and even now they are a novelty in colonial finance. Although, perhaps, on the strict wording of the Act the claim made by the Treasury may be a good one, but if it be so, it seems to me that the Stamp Act should be amended so as to exempt the coupons on Treasury bills and place them in Schedule A, among other Government exemptions. I notice that the schedule states that the receipt given for the payment of any money to or for the use of or from Her Majesty shall be exempt, and I

cannot see why these coupons could not come under this provision. If I may express a layman's opinion, I should say that these bills are like promissory notes given by the Government. I have one here, and it is a promise to pay the interest on the 1st of August, 1893, at the Treasury, Perth, and if that does not come under the head of a promissory note, I do not know what does. Therefore, instead of asking the holder to pay 1d. when the coupon is presented, the Government should put on a 3d. stamp. Of course the Government would be exempt, but, that being so, they have no right to demand the holder to affix the stamp. I need, I think, say no more. I move that the House do now adjourn.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I am very glad that the hon. gentleman has drawn the attention of the Government to this matter, but I may add that the Crown Law officers have advised that these coupons must bear a penny stamp. Section 71 of the Stamp Act, to which the hon. member has referred, states that the stamp is to be affixed and cancelled by the holder of the coupon. The Government quite recognise that persons who draw small amounts should not be called upon to pay the duty referred to, and as it is proposed to amend the Stamp Act shortly, for other reasons, and it is contemplated to make this amendment also whereby holders of coupons of a lesser value than £2 will be exempted from affixing a stamp. In other words they will be placed in the same position as persons who have to give receipts. I trust that this explanation will meet the wishes of the hon. member.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: I would point out that even then the Government will not be giving the $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. they promise. The money has been lent by the settlers, and the Government should not try to make anything more out of it than they can from the use of it. I think all Treasury bill coupons should be exempt.

Question—That the House do now adjourn—put and negatived.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK CONSOLIDATION BILL.

RECOMMITTAL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the Bill be re-committed.

Question—put and passed.

Clause 2.—“Postmaster-General may direct officers in post offices to receive deposits:”

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I have gone through the amendments the Hon. the Colonial Secretary has given notice of, carefully, and I may congratulate the hon. gentleman on the changes he proposes, for they will introduce very great improvements in the Bill. I observe from these amendments the hon. gentleman proposes to strike out words which are identical to those contained in this clause, and perhaps he may see fit to alter these.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Yes, I did not notice the clause. I move to strike out the words “he, with the approval of the Governor-in-Executive,” and insert the words “the Governor in” in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed, and the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5.—“Money to be paid to Colonial Treasurer and repaid to depositors through Post Office:”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I move to strike out the whole of the clause, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—“All moneys so deposited with the Postmaster General shall forthwith be paid by him to the Colonial Treasurer, who shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, hold the same, together with all interest, dividends, and income to become payable on any investments thereof made under the powers of investment hereinafter contained, in trust to repay to depositors the principal and interest moneys to become payable to them respectively.” This makes it clear that, although the Postmaster General is to receive money, he is only to hold it as trustee for the depositors.

Question—put and passed.

Clause 6.—“Postmaster General not to receive from any depositor more than £150 in any one year, nor more than £600 in the whole:”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I move to strike out the words “or sums of money.” The object of the amendment is—

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: To make the clause grammatical.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Yes. Nearly all these clauses are transcripts from the old Post

Office Savings Bank Act, and all the errors have evidently been copied.

Question—put and passed.

Clause 11.—“Where the effects of a person dying intestate shall not exceed £50 the same may be divided according to the Statutes of Distribution :”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) : I move to strike out the words “one month” and insert “two months.” I do this at the instance of the Hon. Mr. Morrison, who suggested this the other day. I referred the matter to the Attorney General, and I may say that we both agree that the amendment is desirable.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the word “two,” in the eleventh line, be struck out, and that the word “four” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “such postmaster,” in the fourteenth line, be struck out, and that the words “the Attorney” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed. Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 14.—Savings of minors may be invested :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the word “him,” in the last line, be struck out, and that the word “himself” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed. Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15.—Deposits by married women :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the word “may,” in the first line, be struck out, and that the word “shall” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed. Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18.—Settlement of disputes :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) : I move that this clause be struck out altogether. It was taken from the present Post Office Savings Bank Act; but it seems to me to be a very unfair clause. Hon. members will see that it provides that if any dispute should arise between the Postmaster General and any depositor, the Postmaster General may appoint any two justices to decide

the matter, and their decision is to be final. It is virtually the same as in the case of an arbitration, one of the parties being allowed to appoint the arbitrators. In the event of a dispute it is better, I think, to leave the parties to their legal remedy. If a depositor takes one view and the Postmaster General another, a petition of right would never be denied. And, again, the clause provides that the arbitrators may proceed on notice being given to the Postmaster General. No notice is to be given to the depositor, which is also very unfair. I move that the clause be struck out.

Question—put and passed.

Clause 19.—General revenue pledged for repayment of deposits, &c. Deficiency and repayment of deposits to be made good out the revenue :

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “acting with the advice of the Executive,” in the sixth and seventh lines, be struck out, and that the word “in” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 21.—“Securities for investments :”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “by and with the written authority of the Governor with the advice of the Executive Council may,” in the first three lines, be struck out, and that the following words be inserted in lieu thereof:—“With the authority of the Governor in Council may invest the said Post Office Savings Bank Funds in the manner following.”

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “of money out of the funds of the Post Office Savings Bank in any,” in the first and second lines of sub-clause *a*, be struck out, and that the words “in any joint stock” be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “or manager” be inserted between the words “directors” and “of,” in the fourth line of sub-clause *a*.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words “portion of such funds,” in the first line

of sub-clause *b*, be struck out, and that the words "sums or sums" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that sub-clause *c* be struck out, and that the following new sub-clause be inserted in lieu thereof:—

"Lend at interest any sum or sums not in the aggregate exceeding one-third of the said Post Office Savings Bank funds upon first mortgage of any lands in the said colony held for an estate of inheritance in fee simple, and free from encumbrances, but subject to the following conditions, namely:—

1. A valuation of the land proposed to be mortgaged, and of all buildings thereon, shall be made by some person appointed by the Colonial Treasurer, but at the cost of the applicant for the loan.
2. No more than three-fifths of the amount of such valuation shall be advanced.
3. The rate of interest shall not be less than Five pounds per centum per annum.
4. The deed or instrument of mortgage shall be in such form and contain such covenants, powers, and provisions, including a power of sale and covenant for insuring all buildings against loss by fire, as the Attorney General shall from time to time direct."

He said: The Government propose not to lend more than three-fifths of the valuation, and the reason of that is that property is liable to fluctuation in price, and at a forced sale it is often difficult to get anything like the valuation, besides which there is considerable cost for commission, plans, and advertising attending these sales. It may also be said that, as the Government lend the money at a lower rate than that usually prevailing in the market, the security should be better. At the present time the Government lend at six per cent., while the ordinary market rate is from seven to nine per cent. The next provision is that the rate of interest shall not be less than £5 per cent., and this is to prevent money being lent for political purposes. The fourth provision is necessary to prevent

two forms of mortgage being placed in the schedule of the Bill—one applicable to land under the Transfer of Land Act, and the other to land not under the Act.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: In the clause you propose to strike out you limit the amount to be lent to £3,000. You now omit that provision.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I thank the hon. member. I will add to clause 2 of this sub-section the words "and no more than £3,000 shall be lent on any one security."

THE HON. J. MORRISON: I think this should stand over until we find out whether the Government are going to give the land away. There should be some provision to prevent money being lent on land given away under the Home-steads Bill.

Question—put and passed, and the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 24.—Postmaster General, with consent of Government, may make regulations:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words "Postmaster General, with the approval of the Governor in Executive" be struck out, and that the words "Governor in" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the words "in his department," in the seventh line, be struck out.

Question—put and passed. Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 26.—Accounts to be submitted monthly for audit:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the word "that," in the first line, be struck out.

Question—put and passed. Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported.

POST AND TELEGRAPH BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

EXCESS BILL, 1892.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 5.25 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 10th August, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 9th August, 1893.

Report of select committee on Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill—Stock Tax Bill: second reading; in committee—Destructive Birds and Animals Bill: first reading—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: re-committal—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON ENGINE SPARKS FIRE PREVENTION BILL.

MR. PIESSE brought up the Report of the select committee on the Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill, and stated that the committee had taken evidence and made recommendations. He moved that the report be printed and lie on the table.

Question put and passed.

STOCK TAX BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said: There is very little for me to say with regard to this Bill, which is short and clear. In regard to the schedule, both cattle and horses are included in the present Tariff Act, and the reason why the Government have introduced this Bill is really to remove all doubt as to the application of the tax on imported live stock. The Government are satisfied that the present Act includes store cattle, though it is an arguable point, and some persons may not hold the same opinion. It is generally admitted that the

country should receive a revenue from cattle and sheep imported into the colony for slaughtering purposes, and from imported horses. This may be regarded by some as a protective tax, but all I can say is that it has existed a long time, and we are not proposing any material alteration from what was the intention of the Legislature in passing the present Tariff Act some years ago. Clause 3 of the Bill is an important one, because it gives to the Governor-in-Council power to remit the duty on any animals imported for breeding purposes. The duty will be remitted in these cases, as a matter of course, and the Government wish to encourage people to bring in stock for breeding purposes, in order that the breeds may be improved, and for the stocking of land. It is thought better to place cows and ewes in the schedule, so as to prevent the law being evaded by cows and ewes being brought in for slaughtering purposes; and in cases where the Government are satisfied that these animals are intended for breeding purposes, of course the duty will be remitted.

MR. LOTON: I do not intend to offer any opposition to the second reading. The tariff rates in the Bill are the same as in the present Act. No doubt, if we are to go in the direction of protection, I should say the time has come for putting an extra duty on horses and cattle imported. If anyone takes notice of the class of imported animals we are getting, under our present tariff, it will be found that during the past twelve months there have been imported a number of horses which one may fairly term scrubbers—very second and third rate animals—while we have plenty of better ones in the colony that cannot be disposed of. These horses are imported, and have to be sold. Then, as to cattle, it seems to me that self-preservation is one of the first laws of nature, and we have now such facilities of communication by land and sea, that we are fully able to supply ourselves with stock for slaughtering purposes. This Bill will allow stock for breeding purposes to be admitted free, the duty being remitted after collection; and I hope that, while we are dealing with the subject, we shall move in the direction of somewhat higher duties on horses and cattle.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to ask the Premier whether this schedule