

I now move that the Bill be read a second time.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: I am sure, sir, it will be most gratifying to the colonists of Western Australia, especially those residing in the country where there are no banks except those in connection with the Post Office, to learn that the Government have introduced this Bill. The facilities given by this Bill will encourage the people to save, and thus give the working classes an opportunity of starting in business on their own account, where otherwise they might spend and waste the money they get. I notice that in clause 7 the rate of interest is fixed. I should have thought that before long it might be possible that the Government would not be able to allow £3 15s. per cent., and therefore, perhaps, it would be as well if a saving clause were inserted, by which the rate could be altered. I should also like to see provision made by which the banks could be opened at hours to suit the working classes, such as pertains under the present Act on Saturday nights. I doubt, in view of the enormous territory which is comprised in this colony, whether the period of one month provided by clause 11 is sufficient. A great many miners use the Bank, and if one were to die, say at Kimberley, it would take more than a month to hear of his death. When in committee I think it will be advisable to alter this to three months. As to the investment of the moneys, I notice that the clause says that the securities may be Government debentures, Treasury bills, or other forms of security issued and secured on the Consolidated Revenue Fund. I should like to know how this clause affects the recent transaction of the Government in taking up £10,000 or £12,000 worth of City debentures out of the Savings Bank funds? By this clause they could not be taken up.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Better ask in committee.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: At any rate I have now much pleasure in supporting the Bill, for I feel sure it will do much good to many in whom there exists the spirit of saving, and will be, for them, the commencement of their progress.

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

## SUPPLY BILL.

### SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I beg to move the second reading of a Bill to appropriate the sum of £100,000 towards the Supply for the year 1894. Hon. members are aware of the object of this Bill. It is to enable the Government to pay the current expenses of the colony until the formal Estimates for the year are passed by the Lower House and approved of by this House. There is no need for me to say more than to ask hon. members to agree to the second reading, which I now move.

Question—put and passed.

### IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was taken through committee, and agreed to without amendment.

The Standing Orders were suspended.

### THIRD READING.

The Bill was then read a third time, and passed.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 3 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 27th July, at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 26th July, 1893.

Working Expenses and Traffic Receipts of Government Railways—Carriage Charges made by Great Southern Railway Company—Tenders for Construction of Geraldton-Murchison Telegraph Line—Post and Telegraph Bill: in committee—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Return of Correspondence re Pastoral Lease, Harvey Agricultural Area—Return showing Number of Electors on Rolls at last Revision—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### WORKING EXPENSES AND TRAFFIC RECEIPTS OF GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS.

MR. MONGER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways whether he had observed a public statement that the traffic receipts on

the Government Railways had increased during the past year, and whether, in view of the fact that commercial men found business considerably restricted, he would inform the tax-paying public as follows:—

1. Had the total working expenses of the Government Railways, both in regard to their traffic and maintenance branches, increased, and to what extent.

2. Had the working staff been increased. If so, by how many men, and at what annual cost to the country.

3. Had the actual working cost per train mile increased; and if so, in what proportion.

4. How much of the traffic receipts was due to the carriage of rails, sleepers, fastenings, and other railway material for the contractors for the South-Western and Yilgarn Railways, and what proportion was derived from the actual and ordinary trade of the colony.

5. How much of the traffic returns might be traced to the laying on of special trains for the personal convenience of Ministers. Under what head was this charged, and in what manner.

6. Did he consider the increased traffic returns would prove to have been obtained at such an increased cost as to verify the statement,—the more the traffic the greater the loss to the State.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied:—

1. Yes; to the extent shown in the Table of Revenue and Expenditure herewith.

2. Yes; to the extent shown in Items 6, 7, and 8.

3. No; it has decreased, as shown in Item 9.

4. Reference to Items 10 and 11 will give the information.

5. Special trains used by Ministers have been utilised for traffic, and a revenue has been derived therefrom, which has been treated as ordinary traffic.

6. No; the revenue has increased at a greater percentage than the expenditure. Reference to Item 5 shows—

Expenditure per cent. of Revenue in 1891 was 99·22.

Expenditure per cent. of Revenue in 1892 was 96·12.

Expenditure per cent. of Revenue in 1893 was 90·38.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN RAILWAYS.  
*Statement showing Cost of Traffic and Maintenance Branches for the years 1891, 1892, and 1893.*

	1891.	1892.	1893.
TRAFFIC BRANCHES.			
1. Expenditure ... ..	12614	*23839	†24896
2. Revenue ... ..	64034	94201	104095
3. Increase in Expenditure per cent. ... ..	...	88·98	4·43
4. Increase in Revenue per cent. ... ..	...	47·11	10·50
5. Expenditure per cent. of Revenue ... ..	99·22	96·12	90·38
6. Number of men employed ... ..	97	150	157
7. Increase in hands ... ..	...	53	7
8. Cost of new hands ... ..	...	5830	770
9. Expenditure per train mile ... ..	45·65	53·52	44·64
10. Revenue derived from Loan Works ... ..	...	4252	6098
11. Percentage on total Revenue ... ..	...	4·51	11·70
MAINTENANCE BRANCHES.			
1. Expenditure ... ..	11898	†12746	§15664
2. Revenue ... ..	64034	94201	104095
3. Increase in Expenditure per cent. ... ..	...	7·11	22·89
4. Increase in Revenue per cent. ... ..	...	47·11	10·50
5. Expenditure per cent. of Revenue ... ..	99·22	96·12	90·38
6. Number of men employed ... ..	114	124	144
7. Increase in hands ... ..	...	10	20
8. Cost of new hands ... ..	...	1124	2495
9. Expenditure per train mile ... ..	45·65	53·52	44·64
10. Revenue derived from Loan Works ... ..	...	4252	6098
11. Percentage on total Revenue ... ..	...	4·51	11·70

\* Increase principally on account of taking over Fremantle, Geraldton, and Bunbury Jetties.

† Increase principally on account of opening of the South-Western Railway, and increased traffic. Cause of decrease in *Cost per Train Mile*: Expenditure increased by 4·43 only; Train Miles by 24·42 per cent.

‡ Increase principally due to increased traffic, and taking over of Customs and Jetty Bonds at Fremantle, Geraldton, and Bunbury, and the taking over of the Telephone System from the Telephone Department.

§ Increase due to increased traffic, and the opening of 1st section of the S. W. Railway.

NOTE.—To have parallel lines of comparison, the revenue and expenditure for the half-year closing 30th June, 1893, has been doubled.

The expenditure per cent. of revenue, shown in Item 5, has been gradually decreased since 1889, as follows:—1889, 118·60; 1890, 113·87; 1891, 99·22; 1892, 96·12; 1893, 90·38.

CARRIAGE CHARGES MADE BY GREAT SOUTHERN RAILWAY COMPANY.

MR. MONGER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways,—

1. Whether he was aware that the charges made by the Great Southern

Railway Company for the carriage of goods and merchandise over their Railway were very much in excess of the charges made by the Government for similar distances.

2. Whether the Government intended entering into negotiations with the Company, with a view of fixing an uniform scale of charges.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied:—

1. Yes. They are now slightly in excess of the Government rates.

2. The rates now charged were approved by the Government, but since then the Government rates have been re-arranged on a mileage basis. There is no intention to interfere with the Classification Sheet of the Great Southern Railway.

#### TENDERS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF GERALDTON - MURCHISON TELEGRAPH LINE.

MR. MONGER, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when the Government intended to call for tenders for the construction of the Geraldton-Murchison Telegraph Line.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that the Government hoped shortly to be in a position to carry out the work.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

This Bill having been re-committed,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following sub-clause be added to Clause 3 (Acts repealed):—

(4.) "Where by any statute, regulation, by-law, order, instrument or other document, reference is made to any Act hereby repealed, or any of the provisions thereof, the statute, regulation, by-law, order, instrument or other document shall be construed and have effect as if reference were made therein to this Act or the corresponding provisions hereof."

Question put and passed, and the sub-clause added accordingly.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 34.—"Except where herein otherwise provided, a letter, packet, or

"newspaper shall not be destroyed or returned to the writer or sender without the consent in writing of the person to whom the same is addressed, or the direction of the Minister in writing; and a letter, packet, or newspaper shall not, except as herein mentioned, be delivered to a person not named in the address without such consent or direction: Provided that a letter or packet of an official character sent from a department of the Public Service may be returned by the authority of the Postmaster General."

MR. PIESSE moved, as an amendment, to add the words "or Justice of the Peace" after the word "Minister," in the seventh line. He said that in country districts there would be a great delay in obtaining the return of a letter which might have been posted by mistake or might contain some error needing correction, unless the necessary permission could be obtained by referring to a justice of the peace residing in the district.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) warned the committee that it would be dangerous to provide too easy a facility for obtaining the return of letters; that the provision in the clause was in accordance with the usual practice in other countries; that a letter once posted was usually regarded as done with, and to make the return of letters easy would do away with the sanctity with which the secrecy of the Post Office was regarded by the people; and that any dishonest person might make a pretence of having posted a letter by mistake, and, by simply going to a justice of the peace with a concocted story, might thus obtain a letter which had been posted by some other person, of whose affairs he might have some knowledge, which he could thus use to his own advantage and to the injury of the other person who had really posted the letter. Business persons usually kept copies of letters sent away, and if a mistake was found to have been made in a letter, the mistake being found after the letter had been posted, it was practicable to correct the error by sending another letter or by sending a telegram. It was better to leave the power of returning letters in the hands of the Minister of the Department, who might direct the local postmaster how to

deal with a particular case when application was made, or might direct that all the circumstances should be referred to himself.

MR. PIESSE then withdrew his amendment, by leave, and moved in lieu thereof to insert the words "or Resident Magistrate." He further argued that there should be a readier facility for obtaining the return of letters posted by mistake in country districts far removed from the seat of Government, and that a reference of the circumstances to the Resident Magistrate in a district would be a sufficient protection against the abuse of this facility.

MR. LEFROY would have preferred the first form of the amendment, as Justices of the Peace were not fit to hold their positions if they could not be entrusted with a duty of this kind, and they should be as able to discharge it as a Resident Magistrate.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) again urged that this most serious innovation in the established practice should not be lightly adopted. He believed the law in England was that a letter once posted could not be got back by the sender, except with the consent of the Secretary of State. The same practice prevailed in other countries, and in the British colonies. In this colony the consent to be obtained was that of a Minister, as in most other colonies. If, in a country district where people knew much of each other's affairs, a man were to find out that his friend or neighbour had posted a letter containing a £5 note, or knew that he had posted a tender for a contract job at a price which the man was interested in finding out, the man might go to the Resident Magistrate, represent that a certain letter of his had been posted with a mistake in it which he wanted to correct, get the letter delivered to him, and a serious wrong be done by making this facility too easy. If it became known that this could be done so easily, there could be little doubt that such a practice would arise. The present power in the Act, for returning letters to the senders when applied for, had very rarely been used. Probably it had not been used once in five years, thus showing how little necessity there could be for making the return more easy. In fact, he had never heard of a Resident Magistrate

being called on to deliver a letter up, on instruction from the Minister. This amendment might result in very great evil, and in the absence of any call for the change on the part of the public, it would be dangerous to introduce this innovation.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed as printed.

Clause 35. — Power in certain cases to refuse to register or deliver letters, &c. :

MR. MONGER moved that sub-clauses (a), (b), and (c) be struck out. His reason for moving the amendment at this stage was that he had been absent from the House through illness, when the Bill was discussed on the second reading, and when the clauses relating to betting, sweeps, and consultations were passed in committee. This part of the Bill appeared to have been very imperfectly discussed. He congratulated the Government on having for their legal adviser a very virtuous Attorney-General, who knew they were all liable to stumble and fall—even Ministers of State—and that some of them had their little weaknesses. Some hon. members, like the hon. member for Sussex (Mr. Cookworthy), inclined towards a partiality for the ladies; others of them, like the Commissioner for Railways (Hon. H. W. Venn), liked to organise a private shilling or half-crown sweep on a racecourse; and even the Attorney General (Hon. S. Burt) had his little weakness, and that was in favour of a prize fight. The hon. and learned gentleman recognised the weaknesses of their poor human nature, and tried to make them all moral by Act of Parliament; and no doubt he would seek to introduce a new clause into the Police Act, dealing with these particular lapses from the path of virtue. This particular interference with the liberty of the subject, in the present Bill, which they were asked to copy from the legislation of other colonies, at the instigation of the Attorney General, was monstrous and tyrannical; and he must protest against the way in which the Attorney General wasted his time, and that of the House, by bringing forward such absurd provisions against betting as were contained in the Police Bill and its amending Bill during the last two sessions, and the clauses in this Bill to which exception was now taken. There

was good legislation and there was bad legislation, in other countries; but he was astonished at the inconsistency of the Government of this colony in having absolutely legalised the use of the totalisator, a mere gambling machine, while on the other hand attempting, in Bills like this, to prevent the investment of a pound or two in a sweepstake, even when conducted on the fairest of principles. He was surprised at their effrontery in attempting to introduce such legislation, in these days of personal and political freedom. This was a gross and unfair dealing with the liberty of the subject, for this clause gave to the Minister such absurd and ridiculous powers. The present Postmaster General was a man in whom they had every possible confidence, and certainly he was a man who would scorn to avail himself of the privileges provided in this clause; but there might be, at some future time, a Postmaster General not as honest or as capable, and such an officer might use the privileges of this clause in a very objectionable manner. There was too much of this practice, on the part of the Attorney General, of copying from the legislation of other colonies; but because those moral colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and sanctimonious South Australia objected to these pound sweeps, and were having rather a bad time themselves, and trying to become somewhat more moral than they had been, he could not see any necessity why this colony should copy from them. He asked hon. members to reconsider the decision they had previously arrived at, on this part of the Bill. He would allow that an hon. member was conscientious in his vote on these clauses, if he could honestly say he had never made a betting investment; but he asked other members who had made such investments to support him in striking out these tyrannical provisions in the Bill. The Press of the colony had taken exception to these clauses, and he would only refer hon. members to the leader in a certain Perth newspaper, of last Friday, headed, "The Moral Ministry." That paper deserved every credit for having expressed itself so strongly. (AN HON. MEMBER: Name?) The paper was the *Daily News*. He hoped some of those members who had voted for the retention of these clauses

would reconsider their decision, and, at all events, give an honest vote.

MR. A. FORREST said that he, like the hon. member for York, owing to illness, was not present when the division on these clauses took place. His hon. friend had placed the matter before the committee in a way which must commend itself to the good sense of hon. members. He failed to see what reason the Government had for interfering in any way with the rights of individuals in dealing with their own money. He claimed as much right to stake a pound in a betting sweep, and send his money to Sydney or Adelaide, as he had to put a pound into a mining share. Besides, this practice of sending money through the post, for investment in betting sweeps in other colonies, was a great source of revenue to the Post Office, and in the future this revenue would grow. Personally, he never spent a pound on a sweep in his life, but he would not prevent others from doing so; and if they were not allowed to send their money through the Post Office, they would send it through a bank; so that the Government would not stop the practice by this Bill, and the only effect would be to divert the revenue to the banks instead of the Post Office—all through having what was called a "Moral Ministry." If, instead of introducing this sort of legislation, the Government would only introduce something for the benefit of the country, they might then be deserving of thanks.

THE PREMIER (HON. SIR J. FORREST): What sort of legislation do you want?

MR. A. FORREST: They wanted the Government to bring in a Bill that would help the people. The Premier always professed his anxiety to increase the revenue, yet here the Government were throwing away thousands a year, in a vain attempt to stop gambling. The thanks of the country were due to the hon. member for York, for again bringing this matter before hon. members. The Attorney General had gone out of his way in this Bill, the same as he did previously in the Police Bill, to try and stop betting, but it could not be stopped. He had been on a racecourse and seen the Attorney General many times put his pound in the totalisator, and he had seen the Premier and the Commis-

sioner of Railways getting up sweeps, at the York races, and he had also seen the Commissioner of Lands betting at races. These were the actions of the so-called "Moral Ministry"; yet now they wanted to stop the people from having the right to spend their money in their own way. He never heard of such a piece of impudence in his life.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that, though he did not agree with these provisions in the Bill, yet the Attorney General deserved credit for trying by Act of Parliament to make people moral. He only hoped that in the next session the Attorney General would introduce a Bill for making his own profession moral, by specifying the charges which lawyers were entitled to make; because now the legal profession—he did not say they all did it—had a way of charging for the same service over and over again, in a variety of curious items which were devised for swelling the bill. If the Attorney General's morality would only extend that far, he would confer a wide benefit on the whole community.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said he did not flatter himself that any legislation he could devise would make hon. members on the other side of the House moral.

MR. LOTON said they were so already.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) hoped that those who were still susceptible to any good influence would support this Bill. He might tell the hon. member for the Gascoyne (Mr. R. F. Sholl) that he had in preparation a Legal Practitioners Bill, which he then held in his hand, for the purpose mentioned by that hon. member as so desirable, namely, for regulating the conduct of solicitors.

MR. A. FORREST: Their charges, we say.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Yes, and their charges too; to regulate their conduct and remuneration. Having said so much to prove that he was alive to other matters than gambling, perhaps some hon. members would be inclined to attach a little more weight to the proposals of the Government in this Bill. This was a serious question, and hon. members could not get away from it by calling the Attorney General "moral." The majority of hon. members

would vote for this provision, as they did before, for the reason that they knew these things ought not to be permitted. They were not now permitted in other places, for every one of those places had found, from experience, that these State facilities for betting and gambling ought not to be permitted, because they undermined morality in more directions than one. It was an evil with which the State was bound to grapple. Personally, he did not care what the hon. member for West Kimberley did with his £1 or £5; but it was a different thing to take money from the poor people, who mainly subscribed to these betting sweeps, who got nothing back for their investments, and who could ill afford to send away small sums which were needed by their families or by themselves. He despised the gaining of any money that a man did not work for, and he despised a gambler. No man ought to covet his neighbour's goods; he ought to work for what he got. If they allowed this gambling evil to grow in this colony as it had grown elsewhere, they would find sooner or later that it would have to be put down. It was growing here now; and the Government thought that the Post Office ought not to be used as a means of promoting this gambling. The necessity for stopping this sort of thing was felt in all the colonies. In New South Wales the Legislature was attempting to put an end to betting consultations, and it was now made unlawful to use the Post Office for this purpose. If hon. members, or if any body of men, liked to go to some place and gamble among themselves, they could do so. This clause in the Bill only said the Post Office must not be used for transmitting money for purposes of gambling. If persons were determined to send their money out of the colony, to the promoters of some betting sweep elsewhere, they could send it through a bank, and all that this clause provided was that the money should not be sent through the Post Office for gambling purposes. As for interfering with the liberty of the subject, that argument was not worth meeting. There was no such thing as liberty for a man to do as he liked with his own, for he was surrounded with legislation which restricted his actions in many ways. It was not right that a man should do as he liked

with his own, when he wanted to use it for an improper purpose, and his liberty ought to be restricted. The Post Office was not set up as a means of conveying money and letters for carrying on betting, and circulars offering odds about a horse race at Sydney or Melbourne. The Post Office was set up for carrying on the affairs of legitimate trade; and the clause now objected to only suggested that, in the interest of Western Australia, the Post Office should not be used for betting purposes. Hon. members knew that, for himself, he did not claim any more virtue than anyone else had got, but, holding the position of legal adviser to the Government, his colleagues agreed with him and he with them, in making this provision in the Bill, with a good object in view, and one on which they were called upon to legislate. Members of the Government did not claim to have more virtue than other members of the House. If any hon. member thought gambling was a good thing, he could vote for the amendment which had been proposed.

MR. PIESSE said those hon. members who took a sound view on this question would agree with the clause introduced by the Government. A spirit of gambling had been engendered, and he noticed it particularly in country districts, where persons were tempted by betting circulars and advertisements to rake up their pounds and send them through the post to promoters of sweeps. He never knew of any man receiving any return for his investment. Recent telegrams stated that this subject was receiving attention in the Parliament of New South Wales and Queensland; and if, with the greater population of those colonies, it was found necessary to legislate in this direction, there must have been good cause for doing so. It had even been suggested, on the other side, that the promoters of betting sweeps, who were being driven out of the Eastern colonies, should emigrate to Western Australia and continue their betting consultations on this side.

MR. MONGER: A splendid advertisement for this colony.

MR. PIESSE hoped this House would prevent, as far as possible, the continuance of this pernicious practice.

MR. DEHAMEL said he had hoped that the Attorney General would have given some good reason why this clause

should be retained, but not one single reason had been given. He could not see why this colony should everlastingly follow the action of other colonies, but it should rather strike out a line of its own. No evil or pernicious consequences had been shown—only flimsy nonsense intended to make hon. members believe that betting was immoral. The people would not be stopped from betting, and if they were not allowed to send their money for sweeps through the Post Office, they would send it through an agent, who would charge a commission for remitting it through one of the banks. That would actually be putting the people in a worse position than before, and this impediment would not stop the gambling, but actually increase it. He knew many persons who were smokers because their parents would not allow them to smoke when young, and so, in a spirit of opposition, they became smokers. The same would apply to this paternal interference with betting. Leave the people free to send their money to the other colonies, if they liked to send it. He would vote for the amendment.

MR. PATERSON said that, as to not copying the legislation of other colonies, Mr. DeHamel made a trip to the other side, last year, and brought back a deal of information as to how they did things over there; yet now that hon. member objected to be guided by anything done in the other colonies. The spirit of gambling had spread in this colony, and he knew that in the district he represented, even youths were constantly scraping up a few shillings, and sending them for investment in these sweeps.

MR. QUINLAN would again support the clause in the Bill, because he knew that a great deal of money was sent out of this colony for betting sweeps, and very little of it came back. The cases of lucky winners were very few. He suggested that the sending of money by telegraph, for betting purposes, might also be considered with a view to checking it. They wanted to stop money from going out of the colony for betting purposes.

MR. SOLOMON said he had moved previously that this clause should be expunged, and would vote for the amendment. If it was true that a great deal of money was sent out of the colony for betting purposes, the Government might have shown

this by presenting a return to the House, as a reason for this restrictive legislation. They had heard of a great deal of money being sent away from Fremantle, but no proof was furnished, and the Government could have prepared, without difficulty, a return showing the amount of money which had been sent out of the colony for betting sweeps. This clause would not prevent gambling, but it would induce a system of secrecy which would be pernicious. This colony should not follow too closely what was done on the other side, for they knew some things had been done there which hon. members would be sorry to imitate.

MR. MOLLOY said he failed to see the consistency of the Government in subsidising gambling by a special enactment, and yet trying to stop gambling by introducing this clause. Horse racing in this colony, which was subsidised out of State funds, afforded more facility to gamble than was offered by these lottery sweeps. The Government had also legalised the totalisator as an instrument of gambling; and, after pressure put on them, they also allowed the spinning wheel to be used on racecourses. Why should not an individual have access to the Post Office for sending his ten shillings to a sweep outside the colony, the same as if he were sending it on any other business; and why should he not be allowed to do this the same as he was allowed to bet ten shillings at a race meeting in the colony? It was not within the province of Parliament to control the affairs of individuals. Only last week or so, it was reported that a lighthouse keeper who had invested ten shillings in a sweep received in return a prize of about £8,000. Another instance was that of a carpenter, whom he knew, who invested thirty shillings in a sweep and received a prize of £300. If those persons thought it wise to speculate in this direction, the Government should not stop them, for so long as the money was procured by lawful means, the men had a right to speculate with it as they liked. Such interference with the liberty of the subject should not be tolerated. There was a legal permission to gamble in lotteries for religious purposes, and it seemed strange that the law made it moral to gamble in the interest of religion, but immoral to put ten shillings into a betting sweep. Surely

if it was immoral in the one case, it must be so in the other.

MR. THROSSELL said the betting sweeps were eating into the life of the young men in the colony; and he had noticed that almost every clerk, or boy, or even servant girl was investing money in sweeps. He had seen it stated in a newspaper that two millions of money had been invested in betting sweeps in Australia, and that out of this sum only £800,000 was returned to the investors in prizes, while the promoters of the sweeps were residing in princely mansions. He agreed entirely with the Attorney General in his objections to this amendment. The gambling spirit was infecting young men in the cricket and football fields to a deplorable extent.

The committee divided on the amendment, with the following result:—

Ayes ...	...	...	9
Noes ...	...	...	16

Majority against ... 7

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Clarkson	Mr. Burt
Mr. DeHamel	Mr. Cookworthy
Mr. A. Forrest	Sir J. Forrest
Mr. Hassell	Mr. Harper
Mr. Molloy	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. R. F. Sholl	Mr. Lorton
Mr. H. W. Sholl	Mr. Marnion
Mr. Solomon	Mr. Paterson
Mr. Monger (Teller).	Mr. Pearse
	Mr. Quinlan
	Mr. Richardson
	Mr. Simpson
	Sir J. G. Lee Steere
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Piesse (Teller).

Amendment negatived, and the clause agreed to.

MR. MONGER said he had intended also to move that the whole of Clause 36, relating to the same subject, be struck out, but in view of the division which had just taken place he would not proceed further.

Clause 66.—“Regulations to be laid before Parliament.”

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following words be added to the end of the clause: “Copies of all Regulations made under this Act shall be laid before Parliament within fourteen days from the making thereof, if Parliament is then sitting, and, if not, then within fourteen days after the commencement of the next session thereof.”

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



New Clause (23).—"Certain adhesive stamps interchangeable for stamp duties and postage dues":

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the following new clause be added to the Bill, to stand as Clause 23:—

(1.)—"Any stamp duties chargeable under 'The Stamp Act, 1882,' of an amount 'not exceeding one shilling, which may 'legally be denoted by adhesive stamps, 'and any postage fees or dues to the like 'amount, may be denoted by the same 'adhesive stamps."

"(2.) With a view to exhaust any adhesive postage stamps denoting an amount 'not exceeding one shilling which may 'have been unissued or unused, such 'stamps to a proper amount may be used 'to denote any stamp duties chargeable 'as aforesaid, of an amount not exceeding one shilling, which may legally be 'denoted by adhesive stamps."

He said the largest postage stamp now used was for 1s., and was not likely to be increased in the future, the tendency being rather to decrease the cost of postage beyond the colony; and by making all postage stamps up to one shilling in value interchangeable as revenue stamps to that amount, the Government could ascertain more readily the amount of revenue received from stamps. Therefore all postage stamps would be useable as revenue stamps, for convenience, up to the value of 1s. Revenue stamps over 1s. in value would be required only in large transactions, and would be procurable in towns. Any person would readily know that all stamps over 1s. in value were revenue stamps only, and not postage stamps.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that by making postage stamps interchangeable as revenue stamps up to 1s., the desired convenience in the country districts would be met.

Question put and passed, and the clause added to the Bill.

New Clause (63).—"Free access to be permitted for the repair of line of telegraph":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following new clause be added, to stand as Clause 63:—

"(1.) Where subsequently to the erection 'of a line of telegraph, whether erected 'before or after the passing of this Act, 'a fence is erected crossing the line of

"direction of such line of telegraph, the 'owner of such fence shall, at his own 'expense, on the demand of the Postmaster General in writing, cause a gate 'or slip-rails to be put up in such fence 'at the point of intersection, to admit 'the passage at all times of any vehicle 'used in the repair of such line of telegraph.

"(2.) Any person being employed in 'the repair of a line of telegraph, if such 'demand as aforesaid has not been complied with within fourteen days after 'such demand, may remove, cut down, 'or otherwise break through such fence 'as aforesaid.

"(3.) Where previously to the erection 'of a line of telegraph a fence has been 'erected, which is subsequently crossed 'by a line of telegraph, the person causing the erection of such line of telegraph 'may, if authorised by the Postmaster General in writing, cause such gate or 'slip-rails as aforesaid to be put up in 'the manner aforesaid, and shall give to 'the owner of such fence notice in writing of his having done so.

"(4.) The owner, within the meaning 'of this section, shall include the person 'in occupation of the lands on which the 'fence is erected."

MR. LEFROY said the Attorney General was to be commended for having introduced this clause; but where a gate or slip-rails had to be put into a fence, the owner of the fence should have some say in the matter. This might be provided by requiring seven days' notice to be given to the owner of such intention, so that the rights of property might be protected.

MR. R. F. SHOLL wanted first to speak to sub-section 1, and said that after a telegraph line was erected, if the owner or lessee of land through which it passed wanted to erect a fence, it would be hard to require him to erect a gate or slip rails at his own expense for the convenience of workmen passing along the route of the telegraph. The gate or slip rails would be useless to the owner of the paddock, and would be a source of danger, as his stock might get out there or be let out. He moved to strike out the words "at his own expense," in line 3, and to insert in lieu thereof the words "and at the expense of the Postmaster General."

MR. PATERSON said the description of gate to be erected should be defined, and it should be a proper gate, subject to the approval of the owner or lessee of the land. Owners liked as few gates as possible in a paddock, as they were liable to be left open and the stock might get out. The telegraph authorities should keep the key of each gate, so that it might be kept locked except when the linesmen required to go through.

MR. RICHARDSON said that in some districts the fences had to be dog-proof, and any gate erected in such a fence should correspond.

MR. HASSELL said the description of the gate to be put up should include one that was dog-proof.

Amendment put and passed.

At 6.30 the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

At 7.30 the CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved to amend sub-section 3 by striking out the words "slip rails as aforesaid," also by inserting the words "seven days" before the word "notice," and by substituting the words "having done" for the words "intention to do."

Amendment put and passed, and the clause, as amended, added to the Bill.

New clause (90).—"Wilfully opening mails, etc., without authority."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following new clause be added to the Bill, to stand as Clause 90:—

"Any master of a ship, any driver of a vehicle being used for the conveyance of mails, and any guard or other person in charge of a mail, however conveyed, who, without the authority of a post-master, wilfully opens or attempts to open, or procures or suffers to be opened, any mail-bag, mail-box, or mail-parcel, or any letter, packet, newspaper, parcel, or telegram shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and be liable to imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding twelve months."

Question put and passed, and the clause added to the Bill.

Ordered—That clauses 23 to 120, inclusive, be re-numbered consecutively.

Bill reported with further amendments.

## CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

### IN COMMITTEE.

#### Clause 12.—"Qualification of electors."

The adjourned debate upon Mr. COOKWORTHY'S amendment, That the words "spinster, widow, or *feme sole*" be inserted between the words "man" and "of," in the first line, was resumed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that since the discussion which took place at the last sitting upon the amendment of the hon. member for Sussex, the Government had considered the new principle which was thus sought to be introduced. No previous notice of the intention to propose this alteration in the Constitution had been given; and, without expressing any strong opinion as to the wisdom or otherwise of introducing it, he regarded it as a matter requiring the gravest consideration of the House and the country. Indeed the country had not in any way expressed an opinion on the question of admitting women to the political franchise, in the manner proposed by the hon. member. Some hon. members thought that by adopting this principle in regard to the election of members for the Upper House, and confining it to single women or widows who had property, they would be acting in a conservative manner, and that only good could result. But he asked hon. members to consider that this principle, if once adopted, would not be allowed to remain for long in the position in which those hon. members desired to leave it. He thought that those who thus became electors would also feel that they had a right to become elected; and, in the next place, those who obtained a vote by reason of possessing property would be followed by those who wished to have a vote, not by reason of property, but by the qualification of residence. Those hon. members who said that no reasons had been offered against the amendment would find it difficult to give reasons why one class of women should be admitted to the franchise and other women be excluded. Another part of this Bill affirmed that property should not form any qualification for electors of the Lower House, and that the only qualification for men should be residence; therefore, if the amendment were once adopted, the principle of admitting women to vote on the same quali-

fication as men would have to be extended in the same direction for the Lower House. Another consideration was that the persons to whom this amendment would give the franchise had not been consulted, for the women of the colony had never expressed, as far as he knew, any strong opinion, nor any opinion at all, as to desiring a vote for Parliament; and although it might be very gallant and very generous on the part of hon. members to give to an important section of the community what they had never asked for, and what, as far as he knew, they did not desire, still hon. members did not usually act in that manner. He ventured to say that if the people of the colony had not desired an extension of the franchise, and had not stated their wishes in an unmistakeable manner, the present Bill would not now be before the House for its consideration. In submitting this Bill, the Government were trying to carry out the views and wishes of the people of the country; and in like manner, when the women of the country had shown, in any way, that they were desirous of having votes, then it would be time for their wishes to be considered with a view to further amending the Constitution. There should, at least, be the opportunity for consulting them, in order to ascertain whether the women were desirous to have the franchise. However, after looking at the question all round, he thought there was no particular hurry in the direction proposed; for those to whom it was proposed to give the franchise had never asked for it and had not been consulted upon it; the constituents of hon. members had not been consulted in regard to it; hon. members were entirely ignorant of the views of the constituencies on this question; and no one had been urging it forward. The hon. member had proposed the amendment without consulting members upon it and without giving notice; the question had been raised suddenly, and might fairly be allowed to wait before action was taken upon it, in order that opinions upon it might be matured, both in this House and the country, and before the House committed itself to a great principle. It remained to be considered how the principle would operate in the Constitutional machinery, this being an aspect of the ques-

tion which he had not had time to consider; but he knew it had not been adopted in any British colony nor in the mother country, which fact alone should be sufficient to make hon. members pause before adopting it here without careful consideration. He suggested that the proper course would be to give notice, by way of calling attention to the subject, that the hon. member intended in the next session to move that a Bill be introduced for extending the franchise to women, in the manner provided in this amendment. That course would give plenty of time for hon. members and the constituencies to consider the question, and the same course had been adopted before on several occasions, and notably in regard to the introduction of Responsible Government. He suggested this course now, to the hon. member.

MR. LEFROY said he was not present at the last sitting, when the amendment was proposed, but he entirely concurred in the course now suggested by the Premier. If the House adopted this novelty so suddenly, before any other British community had tried it, the outside world might point at them the finger of scorn for having accepted such an innovation in one single evening, before it had been considered by hon. members or the country. He felt certain that the women in this colony did not want the franchise, and if it were forced on them in this way they would not thank the House for doing so. Women preferred to allow the men to do the fighting, and they would not like to be solicited and pressed to go to the poll in an election contest. He knew there were ladies in Perth who objected to have to record their votes as rate-payers, in municipal elections; and, if they were compelled by pressure to undertake this political duty, they would be much less likely to perform it readily than in the other case. It would be almost indecent on the part of hon. members to thrust the political franchise on the other sex.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said he was strongly in favour of the franchise being extended to women who had the management of property, and he regretted that the hon. member did not go further, by proposing in the amendment to give the vote also to married women who had the necessary qualification by owning

property in their own right, because these women were as much entitled as single women to exercise the right of voting as property holders. He was of the opinion that no new principle was involved, because the principle of admitting women to vote as ratepayers had been in force in municipal elections for some years past; and why women who could vote in municipal matters should not also be allowed to vote in the election of members to represent them in Parliament, he could not understand. He maintained, on the contrary, that women who held property might have their interests very seriously affected by the action of the Legislature, and therefore they ought to have the right of voting for those members whom they preferred to represent them in the Legislature. It had been said that the questions which came before municipal councils were not important ones; but he considered that such questions were as important to the property interests or the comfort and convenience of the inhabitants of a town, as any question that came before this Legislature was important in its effect on the inhabitants of the country. No questions could be more important to individuals than their social comfort and convenience and good health; and if women were qualified, as property holders, to vote for representatives who were to manage these matters, they ought to be admitted equally to a share in the political franchise. It was said, also, that such legislation as was now proposed had never been put in force elsewhere. If other countries said, in the same way, "We won't pass a law for a particular purpose because no other country has passed it," there would be no advance in legislation at all. That argument was a *non sequitur*. As to the novelty of the proposal, the question of admitting women to the franchise was not a new one. It had been considered and discussed for years past, and some of the most eminent statesmen in England, living at the present time, and others who had departed this life, had been in favour of admitting women to the suffrage. He believed that throughout the world, eventually, women would be given a vote; at any rate those who had property independent of their husbands or relatives, should have their claims allowed. He

could not see any reason why this amendment should not be carried at present. It was no argument to him to say this principle should not be adopted because the country had not been consulted upon it, because hon. members were not sent to that House as delegates, but as representatives entrusted with the duty of legislating for the best interests of the country. If there could be no legislation until their constituents had been consulted, there would be very little legislation. He quite agreed that when any new principle was involved, the country should have an opportunity of being consulted before it was passed into law; but he said this was not a new principle, as it had been in operation in municipal elections, and they were familiar with its working. He intended to support the amendment.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said he had listened with respectful regard to Mr. Speaker's remarks, but was sorry to find that the hon. gentleman had not appreciated the difficulties surrounding the position. It was all very well to say they would give a vote to women possessing property, but were they prepared to make a distinction between women possessing property and women who possessed none? For when they came to Clause 19, those hon. members who were in favour of manhood suffrage would want to extend the same right to women; and, if it were so extended, the position would be that every domestic servant who had been six months in the service of her master would have the right to vote equally with her master or mistress; and every man who had grown-up daughters would find they had a right to vote for members of Parliament. Hon. members were not prepared for womanhood suffrage, in the same way as they would give manhood suffrage; and unless they were, they had no right to give the proposed franchise to women holding property. They had no right to make this distinction between one class of women and all other classes, by saying they would give women the right to vote for members of the Upper House, but refuse to give the same privilege to women, under Clause 19, as they proposed to give to men. The argument, in future, would be that if they gave men who had no property a

vote, they must treat women in the same way. Where was the distinction? It was ridiculous. He asked hon. members to consider the consequences of adopting this principle, and the agitation which must follow upon the invidious distinction thus made in favour of property. The women themselves did not want to be canvassed and worried into voting at elections for Tom, Dick, or Harry.

MR. DEHAMEL said he did not agree with the argument of the Minister for Lands, as to the consequential necessity of extending to all women the right of voting in the same way as it was extended to men. Personally, he knew that a large number of women did want a vote, and he believed they would exercise it with the same prudence as in the case of any men. Hon. members would be perfectly free, when they came to clause 19, to grant manhood suffrage to every male of the age of 21 years, without also granting the same right to women, unless they possessed property.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): That is very funny.

MR. DEHAMEL said that there was nothing funny about it. Women could stand in the same position as men had stood in during the last fifty years. However, he had come to the conclusion that it would be wiser to allow the matter to be considered by the country, rather than that the House should act hurriedly on the present occasion. The discussion had shown that a majority in the House were in favour of extending the suffrage to women, and he would like to see the amendment carried on the second reading of the Bill in order to affirm the principle, though he had no hope of the amendment passing in another place. Being in favour of the principle, if the amendment were pressed to a division he would vote for it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL hoped the amendment would be pressed to a division. To obtain the substantial support which the hon. member would get in a division would do good in forming public opinion outside. Not a single good argument had been advanced by the opponents of the amendment. He was also in favour of married women having votes when holding property independently, as suggested by the hon. the Speaker, but it

would not be expedient to add this to the amendment at present. If the amendment did not secure an actual majority on this occasion, another try might be made later on.

MR. MONGER would yield to no one in his respect for the ladies, but considered there were places where they should be, and places where they should not be—things which they should do, and things which they should not do. With regard to the amendment of the hon. and gallant member for Sussex, when he first heard of the intention to make the proposal he thought it was a joke, and he believed that most hon. members regarded it in the same light. A number of hon. members had supported the amendment, and he rather thought their object was to make the Constitution Bill appear somewhat ridiculous in the eyes of the outside public. He was certain this was the reason for the support given by certain hon. members, who went on to a platform and professed to be in favour of manhood suffrage, and all sorts of things, but when an opportunity occurred for proving the absurdity of a Bill of this kind, they gave their support to a proposal such as that of the hon. member for Sussex. Personally, he agreed with the arguments of the Premier and the Commissioner of Crown Lands; and before such an important matter as this was dealt with, the public should be allowed an opportunity of expressing their wishes on it. He knew that some ladies in his electorate, who would be privileged to vote under the amendment, had no desire for it. If the amendment were carried it would only be the forerunner of ladies in the House. Personally, he would like to have one honourable lady on his right and another on his left; but when he was in the company of ladies he was not inclined to talk politics. He hoped all hon. members who had the best interests of the country at heart would vote against the amendment.

MR. COOKWORTHY said it had been stated the amendment was introduced as a joke. It was not introduced from any such motive, but purely for a conservative reason—to counteract the votes of the young men of the country whom it was proposed to enfranchise in the Bill. The reason he had only included widows,

spinsters, and *femes sole* was because they maintained themselves. All other women were maintained by their husbands.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): What about domestic servants?

MR. COOKWORTHY admitted there were some exceptions. He thought he had given good and sufficient reasons why women should not be included in sub-section (1) of Clause 19.

MR. RICHARDSON said it would be prudent to proceed cautiously, and see how the women of property comported themselves as electors; and if the experiment proved a success, it might be extended. They had gone cautiously to work in extending the franchise to the men, and why should they not adopt the same course with the women? They might then have a little more morality, which some members on the opposite side seemed so much afraid that they could have too much of.

MR. PATERSON agreed with Mr. Speaker in wishing that the privilege should also be extended to married women who had property. He would not mind the finger of scorn being pointed at the colony for taking the lead in admitting some women to the franchise.

MR. HASSELL said the ladies had not asked for the vote, and therefore he did not believe they wanted it.

MR. PEARSE said that if the franchise were extended to women, they would use it wisely and well; but until hon. members knew that the women wanted a vote, they should not give it. He would vote against the amendment.

MR. SIMPSON said again that this amendment was no introduction of a new principle, for Clause 12 provided that every elector for the Upper House should have a property qualification; so in suggesting that females having property should be enrolled as electors, there was no departure from the principle in the clause, so long as the property qualification was insisted on. Why should the vote be refused to women? Was it because their intelligence was not equal to that of men? Was it because their influence for good in the world was less than that of men? Woman's influence in political matters would be good and pure. So far from the question being new, it was as

old as the hills, and if it were new to some hon. members, the fault was theirs. It had been urged that woman's proper place was at home; but the same might be said of man. When standing for election two years ago, he was asked by a merchant whether he was in favour of giving women a vote, and he replied then that he was, and he said the same now. The Premier had said that, in establishing a Constitution, they should frame one that would not require frequent alteration; and believing that to be a wise remark, he hoped this question of giving votes to women would be settled in the present Bill.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the hon. member who had just spoken could not claim the championship of womankind. He had referred to their influence, and a good many hon. members knew how great that influence was; for which reason it would be well if women were left to exercise it upon politics, in the manner in which they could do at present, in a right direction, through their husbands, fathers, brothers, or friends. Most of the intelligent women, if asked, would say they did not want to be bothered with the right of voting at political elections. This proposal was new in the sense that it had not been adopted in any other part of the world; and they, as legislators, might be well satisfied to wait awhile, content to follow in the footsteps of those who had longer experience in politics, and who had not yet found it desirable to give votes to women. Hon. members should consider that if they extended the right of voting to women who possessed property, they must be prepared to extend it to women who had no property, and who might claim the right on the same basis as men who had no property.

MR. A. FORREST admitted that, as stated by the hon. member for Northam when referring to the recent election of a Mayor for Perth, nearly all the lady ratepayers did vote for himself, and no doubt he owed his election as Mayor in some degree to them. But there was the greatest difficulty in getting them to go to the poll, and several ladies informed him they had never voted before. Not more than twenty lady ratepayers voted in that contest, and this small number showed clearly that women did not take

part in the turmoil of contested elections.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it depended on the candidates.

MR. A. FORREST said he liked women best when in their proper places. It was true he had moved, last session, that the ladies should be provided with a more comfortable gallery in that Chamber, for listening to the debates, but although the Director of Public Works promised to provide a better gallery, it had not yet been done, because on going into the estimate of cost, it was found to be very large. If the mover of this amendment wished to enfranchise the women, he should first propose to give votes to married women, who understood politics better than single women. Suppose the hon. member for Sussex were to carry the present amendment, what a nice fix he would be in! For on going home he would have to tell his wife that he had obtained votes for single women who had property, but that she was not to have a vote. A married woman had more sense than a spinster, and would vote in a more rational manner. Unless married women were included, the amendment should be withdrawn.

MR. PIESSE said that in domestic arrangements woman was paramount, but it would not be well to introduce women into political contests. The country should be consulted before adopting this principle.

MR. SOLOMON said the mover had professed that this was a Conservative amendment, but when hon. members were seeking election to this House they professed to their constituents that they were Liberal. The object of the amendment appeared to be, on the mover's own showing, that the extended franchise which the House was offering to the country in this Bill should be counter-balanced or checked in such a way as to make the boon almost useless. He did not say that women were mentally inferior to men, but he did insist that before this new principle was introduced into the Constitution it should be put before the electors, as it required grave consideration.

MR. CLARKSON said great stress was laid on the fact that there had been no agitation on the part of women who wanted votes; but the natural modesty of the sex would alone prevent them from coming forward to claim this boon by

holding public meetings. But, as to agitation, he maintained there had been none among the men of the country in the direction of manhood suffrage, or, at any rate, there had been quite as much agitation in favour of the one as of the other. If this property amendment were carried, the franchise need not be equally extended to women as to men, in the case of elections for the Lower House, when that part of the Bill came to be considered.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said it was competent for the House to be illogical, and make itself ridiculous.

MR. CLARKSON said he would vote for the amendment; and the argument as to its novelty had no weight with him, this colony being competent to strike out a line for itself.

MR. MOLLOY supported the amendment, maintaining that one part of the Bill was intended to give representation to property, in the Upper House, and the other part to give representation to the manhood of the colony in the Lower House. Therefore, if it was necessary that property should have a vote, he saw no difference between a man and a woman holding property as a separate right, and each should be equally represented in the propertied House. He said this, without admitting that there was any necessity for this imitation of the House of Lords, by having a Chamber representing property.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the mover proposed to give a vote to any spinster, widow, or *feme sole*; but he asked the hon. member to say what meaning he attached to the words *feme sole* in this connection.

MR. COOKWORTHY replied that he used the words in his amendment in the same sense as they were used in the Married Woman's Property Act.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Married Woman's Property Act did not lay down any definition of *feme sole*. He quite expected the hon. member did not know the meaning of these words in this connection. The words meant simply a single woman, which term was also in the amendment, in the word "spinster."

MR. DEHAMEL said a divorced woman would be a *feme sole*.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said he doubted that. Did the mover introduce the words to mean a divorced woman? He could not think the amendment was meant to apply to divorced women. If the mover intended to mean a single woman only, then what was a spinster?

MR. SIMPSON: Ask us in English.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said it was evident the mover had not well considered the meaning and effect of the words which he proposed to insert in the Bill as an amendment. New and important principles were usually considered with more care, before being embodied in the Constitution; and in altering the Constitution now, they should do it in such a way as would be lasting. As neither the mover nor any of his supporters had informed the House what they really meant or understood by the confusing words in the amendment, it was not surprising that the discussion had become rather mystified, and that some members had been stating their intention to vote for the amendment on different grounds. The principle stated by the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Molloy) was one he could understand; but this amendment would exclude the married woman who held property in her own right, and she was the one for whom the Married Woman's Property Act was passed. Was it not notorious that, among women holding property, the married women possessed the larger share? Yet, under this amendment, they were not to have a vote; therefore the hon. member for Perth was supporting the amendment under a misapprehension, and he believed other hon. members were doing the same. The women owning property, and coming within the definition of the amendment, would be so few that the effect of carrying the amendment would be next to nothing. When a spinster or widow owning property had her name entered on the electoral roll, she might become a married woman before the day of election, and there would be a difficulty in differentiating the cases of female voters who had ceased to be single. If it were proposed to give votes to married women having property in their own right, a good deal might be said in favour of that; but the amendment would keep them off, and confine the vote to spinsters

and widows. Was that intended? If not, some members had been speaking, and might vote, under a misapprehension. The proposal to give the vote to some women, while excluding others equally if not better entitled to it, had been ill-considered. The whole scheme was hatched and came out of its shell within a day. It was born as a joke, and he did not think it would get much beyond a joke at present. He was not speaking against the female franchise as a principle; but even if spinsters and widows were put on the roll—leaving out the *feme sole* as a creature he did not understand—how many female voters owning property would they get on the roll for the Upper House? To be consistent they should have woman's suffrage in its entirety, by also putting every woman on the electors' roll of the Lower House for her womanhood; and would those who supported this amendment dare to vote for the entire principle of female suffrage? If the amendment was to enfranchise only widows and spinsters owning property, how many would it put on the electoral roll?

MR. SIMPSON: There are a thousand widows in the colony.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that, taking the fifteen electoral districts, there was not one widow or spinster who would be entitled to a vote in the DeGrey district [MR. RICHARDSON: No harm done, then]; not one in the Gascoyne district; not one in the Murchison district; and in the Geraldton electoral district also the genus did not exist. Coming southward to the Irwin, there were none in that district; in the Moore, there was one; in the Swan, there were three; in Toodyay, three; in Northam and York, he supposed there must be some; in Beverley, none; in the Williams, none; in the Plantagenet, two; and so on through the list. If there were a thousand widows in the colony, as stated by one hon. member, 99 per cent. of them had not got the property qualification: he wished they had. Of course there were spinsters and widows, but they were maintained in other ways than through incomes from their private property. Probably not more than 50 women having the property qualification would be put on the electoral roll by this amendment; and was it worth while to introduce this



principle, for such a small result? Therefore, it was only reasonable that the Government should ask further time for the consideration of the subject. A great deal was to be said in favour of giving the franchise to women for both the Upper and Lower Houses; but although the principle was good, in his opinion, he must set his face against any hurried adoption of it. He hoped the House would defer the consideration of the matter to a future time.

MR. COOKWORTHY said he had bestowed considerable thought on the framing of the amendment, and it was certainly not brought forward as a joke. He had put in the words *feme sole* because he found them in the Married Woman's Property Act, and understood the sense in which they were used in that Act. He did not include married women in his amendment, because he and those he consulted did not think this House would extend a vote to them in present circumstances, as it would, in most cases, be an additional vote to the husband. In the case of the *feme sole*, certain women had been separated from their husbands and were maintaining themselves; and if they had the property qualification, they ought to have the vote.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (HON. S. BURT): That is offering a premium on divorce.

MR. COOKWORTHY said he did not know about that. The separation might be the fault of the husband, and it would be an anomaly if these women were not included in the franchise, when they had the property qualification. The Attorney General had been practising the arts of the pleader by trying to throw dust in their eyes. As to requiring time to consider this question, he had considered it for years; and if this amendment were passed now, this colony would not be the first in Australasia to adopt the principle, because it had been adopted by the Lower House in New Zealand.

MR. SIMPSON: And without any property qualification.

MR. COOKWORTHY said he agreed with the remark of the hon. the Speaker, that if this colony waited until some other country had tried the principle, they might wait for ever. He could not see the use of waiting. The most respectable portion of the community were not

agitators; therefore the women had not agitated for it, but he knew that many of them regarded it as an anomaly that they should not have votes when qualified as property owners. Even the Attorney General confessed that he believed in the principle, and the House could not go far wrong in following out a principle which their able Attorney General acknowledged to be right. If it was deemed expedient that young men just arrived at the age of 21 years should have a vote, he considered that women owning property in their own right should certainly have a vote.

Amendment put, and on a division the numbers were as follow:—

Ayes ... .. 12

Noes ... .. 13

Majority against ... 1

#### AYES.

Mr. Clarkson  
Mr. DeHamel  
Mr. Harper  
Mr. Molloy  
Mr. Patterson  
Mr. Richardson  
Mr. R. F. Sholl  
Mr. H. W. Sholl  
Mr. Simpson  
Sir J. G. Lee Steere  
Mr. Throssell  
Mr. Cookworthy (Teller).

#### NOES.

Mr. Burt  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. A. Forrest  
Mr. Hassell  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Loton  
Mr. Marmion  
Mr. Pearse  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Solomon  
Mr. Venn  
Mr. Monger (Teller).

Amendment negatived.

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved, as an amendment, that the words "twelve months" be struck out of line 3 of sub-clause (3) of the proviso, and that the words "two years" be inserted in lieu thereof. He said the period of twelve months was too short a time for qualifying a naturalised foreigner to vote in elections, and he proposed to increase it to two years. The naturalised foreigner might be a Chinaman. Time should be allowed for the foreigner to throw off his old associations and become accustomed to the ways of this country.

THE PREMIER (HON. Sir J. Forrest) opposed the amendment as not necessary. He knew that care was taken before allowing a foreigner to become naturalised, by first ascertaining that he bore a good character. Asiatic aliens were not naturalised here at all. A foreigner must be in the country long enough to acquire a good reputation before being naturalised; and, after being naturalised, the Bill said he must wait twelve months

for a vote. Some European foreigners came here and proved to be good settlers.

MR. LEFROY said it would be necessary also that the naturalised foreigner must have acquired property in the country, before he could vote for the Upper House.

MR. PATERSON said that the Germans and other European foreigners made good settlers.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn, and the clause passed.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### HARVEY AGRICULTURAL AREA: PURCHASE OF PORTION OF PASTORAL LEASE.

MR. DEHAMEL, in accordance with notice, moved, "That all correspondence relating to the applications for the conditional purchase of portion of the lands comprised within Pastoral Lease  $\frac{a}{6} \frac{a}{2} \frac{a}{6}$ , in the Harvey Agricultural Area, be laid upon the table of the House."

Question put and passed.

#### RETURN SHOWING NUMBER OF ELECTORS ON ROLL.

MR. SOLOMON, in accordance with notice, moved, "That there be laid upon the table of the House a return showing the numbers of electors on the electoral roll for each district of the colony at the last revision."

Question put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 27th July, 1893.*

Probate and Legacy Duty: imposition of—Erection of Forts at Fremantle—Post Office Savings Bank Consolidation Bill: committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PROBATE AND LEGACY DUTY—IMPOSITION OF.

THE HON. J. MORRISON asked the Colonial Secretary whether it is the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill, during the present session, having for its object the imposition of a probate and legacy duty.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied—No. The Government regret that it has been found impossible to prepare a Bill on this subject in time for this session.

#### ERECTION OF FORTS AT FREMANTLE.

THE HON. J. MORRISON asked the Colonial Secretary if it is still the intention of the Government to have a fort or forts erected at Fremantle, and when such works will be commenced.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied:—The Government propose to erect a fort at Fremantle so soon as the necessary funds are available.

#### POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK CONSOLIDATION BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 9 agreed to.

Clause 10.—"Depositor dying leaving any sum exceeding £50 the same not to be paid until after administration or probate."

THE HON. G. RANDELL: If this Bill had originated in this House, I should have been inclined to move an amendment to this clause, but inasmuch as it comes from another place, I shall only call attention to what appears to me might have been a more liberal provision. If £100 were substituted for £50 it would be better, for there is a