

Act for a period not exceeding six months, and I am happy to say that the same *Gazette* in which is published the Registrar's certificate also contains a proclamation postponing the coming into operation of this part of the Act for a further period of three months, so that on the 18th of October next this Council shall cease to exist.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Does the three months exhaust the powers under the section.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Yes, there is only one power.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 2:50 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 20th July, at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 18th July, 1893.

Amendment of Fencing Laws—Supply Bill (£100,000): first reading—Leave of Absence for Mr. Traylen—Post and Telegraph Bill: in committee—Post Office Savings Bank Consolidation Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

AMENDMENT OF THE FENCING LAWS.

MR. CLARKSON (on behalf of Mr. THROSELL), in accordance with notice, asked the Attorney General whether it was the intention of the Government to introduce, this session, a Bill to amend the Fencing Laws in such a manner as to assimilate the laws of this colony with the Fencing Laws of the other Australian colonies.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) replied that the Government had received no representations what-

ever upon the subject, and at present did not intend to introduce legislation in the matter.

SUPPLY BILL (£100,000).

Introduced by Sir JOHN FORREST, and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR MR. TRAYLEN.

On the motion of MR. CLARKSON, leave of absence for three weeks was granted to the hon. member for Greenough.

POST AND TELEGRAPH BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The House went into committee on this Bill.

Clause 1.—Short title and commencement:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the blanks having reference to the date when the Bill should come into operation, be filled in by the insertion of the words "first day of September."

Agreed to.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3:

Put and passed.

Clause 4.—Interpretation:

MR. SIMPSON asked whether the interpretation of the word "stamp," as given, would admit of the stamps referred to being also used as revenue or receipt stamps, in the event of its being decided to make postage and revenue stamps interchangeable?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said his opinion was that "a stamp available for denoting fees or dues payable under this Act" (using the words of the interpretation clause) would not cease to be a stamp within the meaning of the Bill, if it were also made to denote fees payable for revenue purposes. He did not think it would interfere in any way with this Bill if the Government hereafter arranged that postage stamps should also be made available under the Stamp Act.

MR. SIMPSON: Can we do it in this Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I think it would be foreign to this Bill. I have never seen such a provision in a Post Office Bill. I think it is

generally done through the Treasury. I will look into the matter further before we go through the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 21:

Put and passed.

Clause 22: "When a postmaster has not postage stamps of the requisite value for sale, the postage and fees, if any, upon a letter, etc., may be prepaid in coin."

MR. SIMPSON asked whether this clause and other clauses dealing with postmasters also applied to postmistresses, or whether it would be necessary to provide in the interpretation clause that "postmaster" also meant "postmistress?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that under one of the general Acts all matters in the singular included the plural, and male included female, or *vice versa*. This was provided for under the Shortening Ordinance; therefore "postmaster" would include "postmistress."

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 23 to 27:

Put and passed.

Clause 28—Unclaimed letters, etc., how to be dealt with:

MR. SIMPSON said there were many letters that went out to our goldfields, and we had a great many prospectors spread over the back parts of the country, who were frequently away from the local post office for more than two months, which, he believed, was the time that letters were kept in the post office at present before being returned to the General Post Office. He knew that great inconvenience had occurred in consequence of this regulation, and he thought perhaps that some arrangement might be made by which the convenience of these men might be met. They generally went away the beginning of winter and returned when summer set in; and were absent more than two months, and when they came back they found that their letters had been returned to Perth.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Bill proposed to leave all these matters to be dealt with by regulations, and he thought it would be much better to do so than to deal with them in the Act itself. In the cases referred to, a mere representation to the Postmaster General on the subject would,

no doubt, result in an extension of time being provided for under a new regulation.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 29:

Put and passed.

Clause 30.—Letters, etc., addressed to persons at hotels, if undelivered for two months, to be returned to nearest post office:

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether any regulation would override this section of the Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said it would not.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this clause specially mentioned two months as the time during which an unclaimed letter should be kept.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said this only applied to letters left at a hotel. He thought, after a letter had been knocking about the public room of a hotel for a couple of months, it was about time it went back to the post office. If a miner or a prospector were staying at a hotel, he would probably leave some directions with the landlord about keeping any letters sent there for him.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 31 to 34:

Put and passed.

Clause 35.—“(1.) The Minister, if he has reasonable ground to suppose a person, whether in or out of Western Australia, to be engaged—

(a.) In receiving money or any valuable thing as consideration for an assurance or agreement, express or implied, to pay or give, or as consideration for securing the paying or giving by some other person of any money or valuable thing on an event or contingency of or relating to any horse race or other race, or any fight, game, sport, or exercise; or

(b.) In promoting or carrying out a scheme connected with any such assurance, agreement, or security, or a lottery or scheme of chance or an unlawful game; or

(c.) In receiving money under pretence of foretelling future events; or

(d.) In any fraudulent business or undertaking;

may, by order under his hand, published

in the *Government Gazette*, direct that any letter, packet, newspaper, or parcel received at a post office, addressed to such person either by his own or a fictitious or assumed name, or to any address without a name, shall not be either registered, transmitted, or delivered to such person.

(2.) The order shall specify such name or names, or address; and shall, upon publication be of full force and effect, notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or the Regulations, until cancelled by the Minister."

MR. SOLOMON thought this clause would cause a large amount of public dissatisfaction, the same as some clauses in the Police Bill did a few sessions ago, which aimed at the same object—the suppression of lotteries and race consultations. He could scarcely see why the Government should think it necessary to enact such stringent laws in this colony. To his mind it was infringing greatly and unnecessarily upon the private concerns of every individual in the colony, to give this power to the Postmaster General to open their letters and refuse to send them to their destination. He trusted that, before this clause was agreed to, other members would give expression to their opinions on the subject. For his own part, he thought the sub-section dealing with this matter should be expunged. He would move that sub-clauses (a), (b), and (c) be struck out.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he quite agreed that these sub-sections should not be allowed to remain in the Bill. They were inserted, no doubt, with the view of preventing people from subscribing to sweeps on horse-racing, and principally sweeps got up in the other colonies. He knew there were many people in Perth, and in other parts of the colony, who liked to send their spare £1 or £5-note for investment in these sweeps; and he thought, if these people wished to spend their money in this way, they had a perfect right to do so. He did not think we should legislate in a matter of this kind to interfere with people spending their own money. It seemed to him to be an unnecessary interference with a man's right of action. He did not think these sections would do any good, and he was sure they would cause a great deal of dissatisfaction; therefore, he intended to support the proposal to strike them out.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) was very sorry to see the hon. member for the Gascoyne supporting such a proposal. This section was designed to put an end to subscriptions to so-called "grand consultations." He should have thought the hon. member might have learnt some wisdom by now, since the time they had attacked another Bill on this same principle. It had been charged against the Government, by the Press, in consequence of some recent prosecutions, that while newspapers were to be harrassed for publishing advertisements from the promoters of these consultations, the Government themselves, through the Post Office, were aiding these people, by conveying the letters addressed to them, and delivering those that came from them. The Government, having already passed an Act to prevent the publication of these advertisements in the newspapers, were now seeking to put the Postmaster General under the same restriction. It was also proposed, by another clause, to prevent money orders being transmitted to these people who got up these consultations. He did not think that we in Western Australia ought to look for examples of morality outside our borders,—not even in such places as Sydney and Melbourne, places that, until recently, were steeped to the lips in iniquities of this sort. Public opinion, of late, had put a stopper upon this particular species of gambling in most of the colonies; and, within the last two or three weeks, the Legislature of New South Wales—which colony, of late, seemed to have had the monopoly of these consultations—had enacted this very same clause, and the days of sweeps in Sydney were over. Were we going to be the only colony that was going to perpetuate this system of gambling? Was Western Australia going to remain the only happy hunting-ground of the promoters of these sweeps? The other colonies had set their faces against these gambling schemes. The hon. member for the Gascoyne could gamble no more with Mr. Adams or Mr. Anybody Else. That had been put a stop to. He did not want to go into any discourse as to the iniquity of gambling, or to say any more about it than this section did. It had been found, by experience, in the other colonies where this system had obtained, that it was a bad

system to encourage. It had been found to be an iniquitous system in many ways, and the Legislatures—even in a radical country like Victoria, and latterly in New South Wales, where their Legislatures were elected on a far more liberal franchise than ours were elected upon—had been driven to put a stop to this thing. We were not leading in this matter, but following in the footsteps of the other colonies. In Victoria, there had been a law of this kind in force for some years, and this section was now on their Statute-book, in their Post Office Act; and New South Wales had quite recently enacted the same law. He thought we also could not do better than follow the lines already laid down, and put a stop to it. It was all very well to say, in a jocular, perfunctory way, "Why shouldn't a man be allowed to put his spare £1 in a sweep if he likes?" But, surely, members looked to something higher than speculating £1 for the sake, or in the hope, of winning £50,000. That was a spirit that really demolished every good feeling, and every principle of morality, and encouraged many of our young people to send perhaps the only pound they had in the world to these sweeps, in the vain hope of winning some large sum of money by a mere fluke. They often heard a great deal about "sending money out of the colony" for this thing and for that; but, as a rule, we did get something back in return. But with these sweeps, although large sums of money were sent out of the colony for investment in them, he had never seen any of it come back. One half of these consultations, they knew, were swindles, positive swindles, and this clause was introduced in the interests of those who lived in the colony, by preventing them from foolishly throwing their money away. Besides that, it inculcated and spread amongst the youth of the colony a spirit we ought to encourage. They did a great many things in that House every year for promoting and protecting their temporal interests, and surely they could do one little thing, and stand up for one moment, in the interests of morality, and to discourage that which they knew and felt was wrong. They could not all gamble. If they did, where would be the incentive to work? Why should he or other members work?

Why not all meet together every morning, and put their money in a hat? One morning it might be himself who would come off the winner, and another morning it might be the hon. member for the Gascoyne. Was that the kind of spirit they wanted to inculcate amongst the youth of the colony? He thought we could not do better than follow the examples set to us by the sister colonies in this respect; and he did hope that the Government would receive support on this subject, for there was a great deal in it more than members thought, who ran away with the idea that it was only interfering with the right of every man to spend his money as he liked. He asked members to look a little deeper into the subject than that, and let us do something, once in a while, if it was only a little, in the interest of morality, and with the view of correcting those desires for indulging in this spirit of gambling which, he was sorry to say, was shown so much by the youth of Australia at the present day.

MR. R. F. SHOLL did not think that we in this colony could aspire to the lofty standard of morality set up by the other colonies. The lecture they had just received from the Attorney General was one which might have taken very well had he been addressing a number of school children. So far as he personally was concerned, he might at once relieve the hon. and learned gentleman's mind by informing him that he had never yet had a £1 to spare to invest in these sweeps. At the same time he thought that those who wished to indulge in this mild form of excitement, recreation, or speculation (whatever they liked to call it), with the expectation of getting £10,000 or £20,000, might be allowed to do so. He thought the Attorney General, himself, if he thought he was going to win, might be tempted to sink his morality. [THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.] He thought there was a great deal of inconsistency about this matter. That House had passed a law legalising the totalisator, which was only another species of gambling.

THE PREMIER (HON. SIR J. FORREST): That is only for one day in the year.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that was no argument against the principle. Since they passed the Totalisator Bill they had

also legalised the use of other gambling machines on our racecourses—though he would give the Attorney General credit for having resisted it with all his might. He really did think, if the public wished to go into these sweeps or consultations, we had no right to interfere with them in this way. It appeared to him to be an interference with the liberty of the people.

MR. DEHAMEL said he should certainly support the striking out of these sub-sections, for he did not think they had any right to interfere with people who chose this means of investment for their money. What was it, after all? Merely a small matter of speculation in a very mild form. He ventured to say that every man who invested and speculated in gold mines in this colony indulged in a great deal more speculation; and, if they were to calculate the amount of money lost by people in this colony, they would find that a great deal more was lost through gold-mining speculations than there was through the few pounds that were sent out of the colony for these consultations. There was at any rate one man he knew of, in Perth—he was not going to mention names—who had won £1,000 in these consultations, though he was sorry to say he ran through it all in about six months. But he brought £1,000 into the colony; so that it could not be said that the money sent out of the country for these sweeps was all thrown away. Even if none of it came back, he failed to see, if people wished to spend their money in this way, why that House should act the grandmotherly part which this clause proposed they should do. There were some minds, no doubt,—we were not all constituted alike—who looked with horror upon these things, and who would not throw away a penny upon such schemes. He himself would not; the chances were so very much against you. But there were others who liked to do it; and why should we interfere with them, so long as they did no harm? If we passed a clause like this, we should make the Postmaster General play the part of a spy, and put him in the position of the head of the secret police in France; and he was sure the Postmaster General himself would not care to take upon himself the burden of exercising a power of this kind. He

thought the good sense of the House would be against introducing such a power into the Bill.

MR. COOKWORTHY said that before he entered the House he had been rather inclined, from what he had heard outside, to support the striking out of these sections; but, after consideration, and after hearing the remarks he had about interfering with the liberty of the subject, it had struck him that the same objection might be urged against the Ten Commandments, every one of which was to some extent an interference with the liberty of the subject. He thought the object of this clause was a good one. He saw in one of the Sydney papers that upwards of £2,000,000 had been subscribed for these consultations, and that only ten per cent. was supposed to be deducted by the promoters; but that paper distinctly stated that, out of the £2,000,000 subscribed, only £800,000 went back to the public. Therefore, it seemed to him they were a swindle, and a snare to many people who could not well afford to spare this money. They simply did so in the hope of getting some large amount in return, and, if they got it, it seemed to do them more harm than good. He once asked a person who had subscribed for many years to these consultations, if he had ever drawn a prize, and he replied that he had not. He then asked him if he had ever heard of anyone else who had won one. He said he had heard of one man who won £1,000. He asked him what the man did with it, and was told that he went to Melbourne, went on the spree, was taken very ill, and was thrown out of work for many months. That was the result of these consultations in that instance.

MR. MOLLOY would certainly vote for the striking out of the clause. He considered it was an undue interference with the liberty of a person doing what he chose with his own money. They might as well come there and legislate that the Premier should wear a pair of moleskin trousers costing 6s., and not allow the hon. gentleman, if he chose, to spend 25s. for a pair of cloth ones. He thought it was ridiculous that they should try to restrain people from doing anything but what they (hon. members) thought was proper for them to do, in the management of their own affairs. If people chose to

risk 10s. in speculations of this kind, and got nothing out of it, that was *their* business, not ours. It was those who invested the money who had to bear the loss, and it was not for them to take people's private affairs out of their own control. Moreover, he thought it was casting a very unpleasant duty upon the Postmaster General to open people's letters. It might be that some of these letters might be private letters to persons in this colony, having no relation whatever to the particular matter of these consultations; yet if any suspicion arose in the mind of the Postmaster General on the subject, he would open people's letters and become informed of their private affairs, although they had no reference whatever to these lotteries. He saw no harm in allowing any person to invest his 10s. as he pleased, and if he was inclined to speculate with it in this particular direction that was his concern, and he had a right to do what he liked with his own money. The Attorney General hinted that it was a temptation to young people to obtain money for these purposes by improper means; but if anyone did that there was a law to punish them for it.

Mr. LEFROY said the sub-sections which it was proposed to strike out did not appear to him to say, as some members seemed to think, that a man shall not do such and such a thing with his own money. They simply said that the Post Office should not be made the vehicle for investments of this particular kind. They did not lay down a hard and fast rule that the Minister was always to proceed under these sections; if they did that he might have been inclined to oppose them; but it appeared to him that the sections were entirely permissive. They did not say that the Minister shall do so and so, but that he may do so under certain circumstances—that was to say, if he knew that certain fraudulent attempts were being made to victimise the public, and that public opinion was against those fraudulent acts being carried out. In that case the Minister—not the Postmaster General, as some members appeared to think, but the Minister for the time being; which meant the Government of the colony—would be permitted to exercise this power to prevent the consummation of these frauds. To his

mind, this appeared a very useful provision, that the Government should have this power to step in, and, if they found that fraudulent attempts were being made to impose upon the public, to prevent them. Therefore, he should certainly support the clause as it stood.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he should like to point out, with reference to what some members had said, that this was not an interference with the liberty of the subject in the way they supposed. This clause did not prevent persons from spending their own money as they chose; it simply prevented them from using one of the institutions of the country, the Post Office, for this particular purpose.

MR. SOLOMON: It would bring revenue to the Post Office.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Of course this was not a new idea. The same provision found place in the statutes of all the other colonies, and it seemed to him it really was but reasonable and right that some provision of this sort should find place in this Bill, giving the Government of the day power to interfere where an improper and fraudulent business was being carried on through the instrumentality of the Post Office. One hon. member had referred to the totalisator, and the law of the colony sanctioning the use of it. For his own part, he was rather in favour of the totalisator, because it could only be used on certain occasions, and at certain places, and under the auspices and control of certain institutions. In this way the totalisator, it seemed to him, operated as a check upon wholesale and indiscriminate gambling. It kept it within certain limits, and, in that sense, it had a beneficial effect rather than otherwise. But he thought they should do all in their power to prevent people—the young, at any rate—from getting into their minds the idea that they can get through this world without working, and that by some chance stroke, or fluke, or the investment of a pound in a lottery, they may any day make a fortune. He thought that was a pernicious idea to get into the minds of our young people, and one which should be discouraged. There was too much of that idea in these Australian colonies,—too much of the idea that you could do without work, if by some chance stroke

or lucky investment in a mine or in a lottery, you might draw a prize that would enable you to live all the rest of your days in idleness. But this particular species of speculation was, to his mind, worse than anything in the way of investing your money in mines. If a man invested his money in mines, he was, at any rate, doing some good; he was aiding in developing the mineral resources of the country. Therefore he did not look upon mining investments in the same light as he did upon investing money in a bogus and fraudulent speculation, such as most of these sweeps were. He did not think it was part of the duty of the Government of the country to legislate in the direction of encouraging this gambling spirit, or to provide facilities for extending this spirit. He knew there was a feeling in favour of allowing everyone to do as he liked in these matters, and that the State should not interfere, and that you cannot make people honest or sober by Act of Parliament, and all that kind of talk. He knew that was the general cry; but he believed himself that a great deal could be done by legislation to prevent people from doing what was neither to their advantage nor right. He did not believe at all in the cry that you could not do this and that by means of legislation. He believed if you provided facilities for people to spend their money and lose it in this way, it would be spent; whereas, if you removed those facilities, and put obstacles in every way you could in their way, the probability was that the evil at any rate would be lessened. He hoped members would support the Bill as it stood.

MR. CLARKSON said it was not quite clear to him how the Postmaster General was going to detect these suspicious letters having this money in them. How was he to know, without first opening it, whether a letter was one that he was empowered to open under this section of the Bill? Or how could he say whether a letter coming, say, from Sydney contained a ticket in one of these consultations? He thought it was placing rather a dangerous power in the hands of the Post Office authorities. As to attempting to prevent men from gambling by laws of this sort, he did not think it would ever be done; if a man felt inclined to speculate his £1 in a sweep or on the totalisa-

tor, and was debarred from doing so, he would find some other means of investing it in a similar way. Therefore it seemed to him it was a matter of very little importance whether the clause was struck out or not. It certainly appeared to him a remarkable attempt to interfere with a man doing what he liked with his own.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said, as to preventing a man from doing what he liked with his own, they were doing that in that House every day in the week they were sitting there. What was our Police Act, what was our Licensing Act, what was our Public Health Act, and what was our Act for the protection of children of tender years—what was all that class of legislation but an effort to prevent some people from doing what they liked? If everyone were entitled to do what he liked with his own, they might as well do away with legislation altogether. It had been asked, how could these letters be detected? That was very easily answered. The Minister, if he had reasonable ground to suppose any person, whether in the colony or out of it, was engaged in getting up these gambling consultations or lotteries, or in any other fraudulent business or undertaking, was empowered, by order under his hand, to publish in the *Government Gazette* an order directing that no letter addressed to such person should be transmitted through the Post Office. There was no great difficulty in finding out those who were engaged in this sort of work. They were generally well known, and there would be no great difficulty in finding them out, even if they went to work under an assumed name, and changed their address. The Government simply asked for the power to do it, if they found it necessary to interfere with these persons. They simply wanted to try to put the evil down. It was simply a question of principle, whether they should encourage these things, or put them down. If they were going to permit them, they would be going backwards some hundreds of years with their legislation. Why was the system of State lotteries done away with in England years ago? The reports of the Commissions that sat upon those lotteries, in the days of the Georges, before they were stopped, disclosed a most lamentable state of things. The preamble of one of the Acts

that did away with them expressed the unmitigated horror they created in the minds of all right-thinking people. But it appeared to him that some members would have these lotteries encouraged as far as people liked to indulge in them. It was not for him to preach to members, nor was he going to do it. He simply wished to do his humble part, as far as he could, to point out that in other places legislation had gone in the direction which this Bill went, and that we should be making a retrograde step by striking these clauses out of the Bill.

Amendment put—That the sub-clauses be struck out.

A division being called for, the numbers were :—

Ayes	8
Noes	15

Majority against 7

AYES.
Mr. Clarkson
Mr. De Hamel
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Molloy
Mr. Phillips
Mr. E. F. Sholl
Mr. H. W. Sholl
Mr. Solomon (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Sir John Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Loton
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Paterson
Mr. Pearce
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Simpson
Sir J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Venn
Mr. Cookworthy (Teller).

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 36 to 51 :

Put and passed.

Clause 52.—Arrangements for issue and transmission of Money Orders and Postal Notes :

MR. PIESSE asked the Attorney General whether the Government proposed making any arrangements with regard to the transmission of money, by means of the telegraph, within the colony? Arrangements already existed, he believed, for telegraphing money between this colony and any of the other colonies, but no arrangement existed for providing the same facilities between different places within the colony, which would often be a great advantage, especially when time was an object.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) did not know whether the Postmaster General was prepared to transmit money by telegraph or not, in the way suggested, but he would speak to him on

the subject. Of course it could be provided for under the Regulations.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 53 to 65 :

Put and passed.

Clause 66.—Power to make Regulations : “Such Regulations, not being contrary to the provisions of this Act shall, “when published in the *Gazette*, have the “force of law ; and the production of the “*Gazette* containing a Regulation shall “be sufficient evidence of the due making of the Regulation, and that it is “still in force.”

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved, as amendments, that the word “*Government*” be inserted before the word “*Gazette*” in the fourth line of the above, and that the words “*prima facie* evidence” between the words “and” and “that” in the last line.

Amendments agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 67 to 69 inclusive :

Put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK CONSOLIDATION BILL.

The House went into committee on this Bill.

Clauses 1 to 7 :

Put and passed.

Clause 8.—Withdrawal of deposits, after due notice being given :

MR. PIESSE said that, under sub-section (a), one calendar month's notice was required to be given by a depositor before he could withdraw any sum less than £50. Although it was provided, later on, that the Postmaster General might, if he thought fit, pay the money before the expiration of a month, still, that would only be an act of grace, and he thought the notice required was too long, for small withdrawals. He believed that in the other colonies the custom was to give ten days' notice, which he thought was quite long enough. He moved that, in sub-section (a), the words “one calendar month” be struck out, and that the words “ten days” be inserted in lieu thereof.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the object of this provision, as was explained by the Premier the other evening, was in order that it might

operate as a check, in the event of there happening to be a run upon the Savings Bank, as was the case upon other institutions during the late banking crisis. It was the same provision as had existed in South Australia for many years, and which he was advised had been found, during the late financial scare, of very great assistance to the Government in that colony, as it gave them power to withstand what might otherwise have been a run upon the Post Office Savings Bank. Of course, as a rule, in normal times, the Savings Bank would go on, in the ordinary way, paying withdrawals without this long notice, but, in the event of there being a run upon it, and every depositor demanding his money without notice, it was well that there should be this power in reserve—well, in the interests of the depositors themselves. Ten days' notice might not be sufficient if a panic occurred. The law required the Government to invest the Savings Bank funds in a certain manner, and they could not get them back again at a few days' notice. He thought we could not do better than follow the South Australian Act, which he understood had worked well. Of course, as he had said, under ordinary circumstances, the Post Office Savings Bank would go on paying, on demand, as at present; but, in the event of a crisis, it was able to have this power requiring a month's notice.

MR. MOLLOY thought this was a very necessary precaution, to prevent runs being made upon the Savings Bank. The money deposited in this Bank was invested by the Government, and if the depositors expected it to be invested wisely, there must be some power to check any sudden rush on the Bank's funds, otherwise it might end in serious complications. He thought it a very useful precaution, and that it was not asking too much that fair notice should be given, in the event of there being a necessity for it.

MR. SOLOMON said that further on, in the same clause, it was provided that the Postmaster General might pay at any time before the expiration of the month's notice if he thought fit; and this seemed to him to meet the difficulty.

MR. PIESSE said no doubt it might be necessary for the protection of the department that notice should be given; still a month's notice when a depositor

wanted to withdraw £1 or £2, appeared rather hard. He only intended the short notice to apply to sums under £50. Over that amount, he did not think that three months' notice, was too long, but, for small sums, he should have thought that ten days' notice would have been ample protection in the event of a run upon the Bank. However, as the Postmaster General was at liberty to exercise his judgment, and pay before the notice expired if he thought proper, and as it might possibly lead to complications if the notice were curtailed, he begged to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 28 inclusive:

Put and passed.

Schedule, preamble, and title:

Agreed to.

Bill reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at nine minutes past 4 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 19th July, 1893.

Petition of Majir Logue—Purchase of Saddlery by the Government without Tenders being called for—Delay in Construction of Printing Department, and Printing executed outside the Department—Appointment of Engineer-in-Charge of Lines in course of construction—Construction of Bridge over Avon River, and Railway Station for Newcastle—Recommendations of Fruitgrowers' Conference—Supply Bill: second reading; in committee—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Post Office Savings Bank Consolidation Bill: third reading—Returns showing Appointments in Works and Railways Department, also Expenditure on Fremantle Harbour Works and Number of Men Employed—Limit of Charges levied by Mail Contractors for conveyance of Passengers and Parcels—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

PETITION OF MAJIR LOGUE.

MR. SIMPSON presented a petition from Majir Logue, praying that measures