

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 17th March, 1892.

King George's Sound Garrison Discipline Bill: Report of Select Committee—Suspension of Standing Orders: committee: third reading—Railways Act, 1878, Further Amendment Bill: recomittal: third reading—Midland Railway: further assistance to—Hansard reporting: recommendations of Joint Committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir T. Cockburn-Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 8 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

KING GEORGE'S SOUND GARRISON DISCIPLINE BILL.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) brought up the report of the Select Committee on this bill, and moved that it be received.

Question—put and passed.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved that so much of the Standing Orders as relate to the different stages of bills be suspended during the present sitting.

Question—put and passed.

KING GEORGE'S SOUND GARRISON DISCIPLINE BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton), the clauses of the bill as originally proposed were struck out.

The clauses of the bill as proposed by the Select Committee were then put.

Clause 1—Garrison to be subject to the Mutiny Act and Regulations:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Hon. members have now before them the King George's Sound Garrison Discipline Bill as amended in select committee. The committee have gone carefully into the bill, and have removed all the objections raised at the previous sitting of the Council. The Hon. Mr. Hackett, especially, has taken a great deal of trouble over it, and I think if we now pass it as it stands, it will meet both the requirements of this

and the other colonies. Hon. members will notice that there is a provision by which the bill can only remain in force until the next session of Parliament.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Perhaps the committee will be good enough to allow me to make one or two remarks on this bill. It will be remembered that the bill, as originally drawn, met with extreme disfavor at the hands of a majority of hon. members; although, undoubtedly, all the test divisions showed a majority in favor of it. Nevertheless the principles the minority were fighting for were upheld by a distinct majority. I, for my part, objected to the appointment of a select committee, but the committee considered it desirable to appoint one, and they were good enough to elect me one of its members. I objected to a select committee because I had no hope for it; the changes required being so fundamental that it required an amount of self-abnegation to make them we had no right to expect. The committee met to-day, and I have been most pleasantly disappointed. There was, perhaps, at first, a little struggle, but after awhile we all settled down to perfect peace and harmony, and I was astonished to find that the views which most of us held were found to be acceptable in other quarters, and that these changes which we suggested had the entire concurrence of the Attorney General. Practically, a new bill was framed, by which all the difficulties that were raised in this House have been satisfied. The troops forming the garrison will be under West Australian law; they will be under a West Australian Commandant; and they will be under a West Australian Commander-in-Chief—the Governor of Western Australia. The law by which they will be tried will not be the South Australian military law, but a law which is applicable to all British possessions—the English Mutiny Act. We have not adopted the South Australian Military Force Act, but we have adopted provisions somewhat similar to those contained in it. Lastly, we have inserted three special clauses by which the punishment of deserters is placed in the hands of our own people; but, at the same time, as it is only proper that we should consider the feelings of the other colonies, especially of South

Australia, it is arranged that the regulations outside the Mutiny Act should be such as might be agreed upon concurrently by the Governor of Western Australia and the Governor of South Australia. That is, the Governor of Western Australia will take the Governor of South Australia into his counsels on the subject. We did not, however, stop here, for we insisted that this Act should have a strictly limited tenure; that is, that it should not remain in force beyond next session. In the meantime, the matter can be looked into by the Government, with a view to bringing in a proper measure by next session. I have only now to express my gratification at the conclusion which has been arrived at in this matter, and I now give my heartiest assent to the hon. the Colonial Secretary's motion to pass this bill through all its stages at once.

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST: Having moved that this matter be referred to a select committee, I can only now re-echo what the Hon. Mr. Hackett has said. I must, however, offer my thanks to him for the time and patience he has bestowed on working out the provisions of this bill. If hon. members will turn to the bill they will see that all the difficulties that were raised at the time have been removed. I have also to thank the Attorney General for the way he acted with us, so as to produce a bill such as we have now before us, and which, I hope, will now pass through all its stages in this House.

The clause was then agreed to.

The remaining clauses were agreed to, and the bill reported.

THIRD READING.

The bill was then read a third time, and *passed*.

RAILWAYS ACT, 1878, FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved that the report of the committee be adopted.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I move to recommit the bill, with a view to amending the second sub-section of clause 1.

Question—put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT moved, in sub-clause 2 of clause 1, to strike out the words "regard may be had," and to insert in lieu thereof the words "such owner shall be entitled." He said that the clause as it stood was somewhat ambiguous. It did not say "owner" of the ground, but it was clear that the owner was intended.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) said that on behalf of the Government he would accept this amendment, as it would make the clause clearer.

Question—put and passed, and the bill reported.

THIRD READING.

The bill was then read a third time, and *passed*.

MIDLAND RAILWAY: FURTHER ASSISTANCE TO.

The House resolved itself into committee for the purpose of considering Message No. 51 from the Legislative Assembly, as follows:—

"That in consideration of the security offered by the Midland Railway Company, to be shared jointly by the Government and the National Bank of Australasia—that is to say, £300,000 1st Mortgage Debentures (carrying 4 per cent. interest in the completed Railway and works) and 800,000 acres of land, to be selected by the Government and held by them for sale to meet the guaranteed interest—the Government shall give a guarantee, in conjunction with the National Bank of Australasia, for the interest at 4 per cent. per annum for 10 years on the sum of £500,000 of the Midland Railway Company's Debentures to be floated in London for the purpose of completing the Midland Railway, on the following conditions:—

"(1.) That the Company float the said £500,000 of debentures, and out of the proceeds lodge in the said Bank to the credit of the Government the sum of £300,000 to complete and equip the Railway, this amount to be under the Government's sole control for payment to the Contractor on a revised Schedule to his present contract approved by the

"Government, and only to be paid on certificates passed by the Government.

"(2.) That two years' interest at four per cent. per annum on the £500,000 be lodged with the said Bank to the credit of the Government, to provide for the first two years' interest guaranteed by the Government and the Bank.

"(3.) That the existing advance of £78,200 made by the said Bank on the Company's account for the construction of the Railway be repaid out of the proceeds of the said £500,000 Debentures, the Bank thereupon relinquishing certain securities they hold for this advance, estimated at £26,500.

"(4.) That the £60,000 guaranteed by the Government (by agreement of the 4th November, 1891) be at once paid out of the proceeds of the said £500,000 Debentures.

"(5.) That all interest accruing on moneys deposited in the said Bank be available for the payment of the guaranteed interest.

"(6.) That the deposit of £10,000 now held by the Government, together with all interest accrued and accruing be available at the option of the Government at any time for the payment of any interest to be provided by the Government. The said Company shall not be entitled to claim any refund of the said deposit and accrued interest under clause 64 of the Contract dated 27th February, 1886, so long as any liability of the Government under the said guarantee shall continue, or so long as any moneys paid in respect of such guarantee shall remain owing to the Government.

"(7.) That the Government shall have the right of purchasing the Railway, and the works connected therewith, at any time, on giving 12 months' notice of their intention to exercise such right; the price to be fixed by arbitration."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): This important subject, sir, has been so prominently before the public for the last fortnight, and all the circumstances connected with it have been so fully reported in the Press, that it will be unnecessary for me to dwell at any great length in placing these proposals before the committee. I may state that the resolutions have been proposed by the Government in order to get

over the great difficulty which exists in connection with the Midland Railway. They have been passed by the Legislative Assembly by a very large majority, thus showing that the representatives of the country coincide with the view taken by the Government. A great deal has been stated about the formation of this Company, and as to the way the debentures were issued; but we have only heard one side of the story, and there may be another side. One of the directors is a gentleman who was well known in this colony years back, and who is now holding a very high position at Home—I refer to Sir William Crossman. I think the name of that gentleman alone is a sufficient guarantee that matters in connection with this Company have not been carried on in such a manner as has been stated, for I am sure that gentleman would not associate himself with the practices alleged. But whatever has been the nature of this Company the Government have had nothing to do with it. A certain proposal was made to us, and we had to decide upon that. When the original offer of the Company came before us we could not entertain it; but subsequently an amended suggestion was put before us under which the Government, in conjunction with the National Bank, were asked to guarantee the interest at 4 per cent. on £500,000 for a term of ten years. The Government felt that this offer placed them in a better position to make a proposal to the Legislative Assembly, with a view of having the work carried out and completed, than did the original offer. The Engineer-in-Chief was asked how much money would be required, not only to complete the railway but to equip it. Mr. O'Connor made some careful calculations, and he told us that he thought £309,000 would do all that was required. That sum, he said, would finish the line and equip it equal to our Government railways. According to the offer of the Company this £309,000 is to be placed in the bank—not to the credit of the Company or to the credit of the National Bank, but to the credit of the Government—and it can only be drawn upon by the Government as the work is completed, under the certificate from the Engineer-in-Chief—a certificate which will be given only on a revised schedule

of prices. Furthermore, the Government will get back the £60,000 they have already guaranteed to the bank, and the sum of £40,000, or two years' interest, will be deposited in the bank to the credit of the Government. In addition to this, the £10,000 deposited by the Company, together with its accrued interest, will be held by the Government—not only until the line is finished, but until the expiration of the guarantee. This deposit will thus provide for two years' interest, so that really all the Government will be responsible for will be six years' interest, which will only place us £5,000 worse off than now under the guarantee of £60,000. The Government also will obtain as security three-tenths of the completed railway and 800,000 acres of land. We shall also, by this arrangement, secure the right of purchase of the line at a price to be fixed by arbitration. This was one of the omissions in the original contract, and now that we have an opportunity it is as well that we should obtain this right. These are the whole of the conditions, and they are the conditions which the Legislative Assembly has accepted by a large majority. We have not to consider the past history of the Company in any way; we have to look at the state of affairs as it exists to-day. Suppose the Government had not acceded to these proposals, what position should we find ourselves in? We should have an unfinished line standing out as a monument to which the attention of the British investing public would be drawn. It may be said, why not let the present Company finish it? Under the conditions of the old contract they probably could finish it in time; they could keep it alive for three years; but what use would that be to us? Whereas by the proposition that is now made, this unfinished line will be completed, and through communication will be established between Perth and Geraldton in a very short time. With the line unfinished the country cannot be developed, and it is to the development of the country that we must look for the progress of the colony. We have only to look at the Great Southern Railway to see the amount of development that has taken place through the opening up of that railway, and there will, we have a right to expect, be a similar amount of development when this line is completed.

The small responsibility the colony is asked to take is a mere nothing compared with the great advantages that will accrue in consequence of it. It is unnecessary for me to dwell at any greater length on this matter, because it has been before us for so long. It has been thoroughly discussed in the public prints of the colony and in conversation. If, however, there are any explanations required by hon. members, I shall be prepared to give them. I now move that this committee concurs in these resolutions.

THE HON. G. W. LEAKE: As it is only within the last few minutes that this message has been laid on the table, and as there are no papers with it—or at any rate I am certainly right in saying that no papers have been perused by hon. members of this House—and as we are left, as the hon. Colonial Secretary says, to the newspapers and conversation for our information, I think it is at least decent that we should have time to consider the proposal which has been made and to peruse the documents which have been placed on the table elsewhere. In the discussion which took place in the Lower House, strong words were used; some hon. members used the word “fraud.” Papers were laid on the table there, and those words have been used after a careful perusal of them. That being so I think we ought to have some opportunity of carefully considering the matter, and we should not be led by the *ad misericordiam* appeal of the hon. the Colonial Secretary in favor of—God knows what. It has been stated that attacks have been made on the directors, and that the directors may have something to say in reply. God forbid they should not! I do not think any charge was made against any director, but, so serious a matter is this, that I think it would be at least decent on the part of the Government if they allowed us further time to consider it. This is supposed to be essentially a deliberative assembly, and how can we deliberate on a matter like this without the papers before us? Then we were told that we have had conversations, and that we have had opportunities of perusing the public Press, and all that sort of thing, but I think at the risk of prolonging this session of Parliament we should take time to discuss the

matter calmly and temperately, and to come to a careful conclusion on the subject. I think, sir, it is due to the dignity of this House that we should take some little time to carefully consider the matter, and I would suggest that we consider it again on Monday next. I move to that effect. I am sorry that, with so important a matter as this undecided, it is proposed to prorogue Parliament tomorrow, or the next day. It really does not matter when we prorogue so long as we have time to examine into the proposals and to read the documents, and thus enable us to have that complete discussion on the subject which the Lower House has had. I move that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again on Monday.

THE PRESIDENT: It is not for the hon. member now to determine the date. The question will be that I do now report progress.

THE HON. G. W. LEAKE: Then I move that you report progress.

THE HON. R. E. BUSH seconded the motion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): In the first place I deny that I made any *ad misericordiam* appeal.

THE HON. G. W. LEAKE: I thought you did.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): I did not.

THE HON. G. W. LEAKE: I understand language, sir.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Very well. I think all hon. members have made up their minds as to the line they are going to take on this subject, and therefore I see no reason whatever to report progress. Hon. members have the proposals before them, and it is a question whether they will support the Government or not.

THE HON. R. E. BUSH: I think hon. members who wish to uphold the privileges of this House are bound to support the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Leake. I think it is an impertinent thing to expect this House to go into these resolutions and pass them in a single sitting. The hon. the Colonial Secretary has said we have every information before us; but we have nothing before us except the "Votes and Proceedings" of the Legislative Assembly, and I trust this House will assert its undoubted rights and

take time to look into these proposals, which have only been laid before us during the last ten minutes. It is not for us to go to the Lower House for our information; nor is it our duty to take it from the newspapers, however good their reports may be. Therefore I strongly support the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Leake, and I think that any hon. member who has any consideration whatever for the dignity and privileges of this House must also support it.

THE HON. T. BURGESS: I must go with the last speaker in supporting the adjournment of this debate. The matter before us is one of considerable importance. It has been fully explained by the hon. the Colonial Secretary, but it is for us to look into it for ourselves. We know the matter has been before the Assembly for some time, and it is only this evening that it has come to us. Even this morning I made inquiries, and could not find out whether this message was coming to us or not. We know there are a number of documents connected with these resolutions which we have had no opportunity of perusing. Although I have seen them, I have not perused them as carefully as I would had I been sure that this message was coming before us. I hardly think that the Government are treating this House with the courtesy it deserves, in endeavoring to hasten these resolutions through when the prorogation may take place tomorrow. There may not be very much in the matter to object to, but it is one of those subjects which this House should have time to consider, and I hope, therefore, that we shall postpone the discussion until Monday.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I must say that I hope the Colonial Secretary will not yield to this amendment, and for the reason which I will explain. There is no doubt that it is a little unfortunate that this matter comes to us at the end of the session, but I would point out that we have got it before us as soon as it has been found practicable, and there has been no unnecessary delay in another place. They have had the resolutions before them, accompanied by some papers, and it was perfectly impossible for them to make themselves acquainted with the whole of them in the time afforded; but

they nevertheless made no objection on that score to the action of the Government. As one who has read these papers, I feel constrained to vote against the amendment, for I cannot see anything in them which can in the least affect these proposals. These proposals ask us to allow the Government to take certain steps to bring about a completion of the line. They do not go into the past, and if I could I would move that in this debate we do not refer to the past, for I can conceive no good that can arise from doing so. I have carefully read the newspapers during the last few days, and have seen a great deal of eloquent speaking as to what had taken place in the past, and after all I formed such an opinion that I am prepared to take these resolutions as a basis for discussion without any reference whatever to the past. The main reason why I ask that no adjournment shall take place is one which is in the best interests of this House. Another place has sent up this measure and asked our concurrence in it. Now, what would be the effect of our postponing the consideration of it until Monday? It would be that the prorogation would take place in spite of it, and that we should have no discussion on the proposals, and this House would, in consequence, be placed in an exceptionally humiliating position. It would be within our power of course to set ourselves right; but we should have to postpone it until next session, for it is entirely in the power of the Government to prorogue, and the prorogation is fixed for to-morrow. Now, I ask, is it fair to deprive us of the opportunity of debating these resolutions, and is it fair to this House to put it in a position of having a slight forced upon it? If I thought for one moment that any of our rights or privileges were being infringed I should resent it as much as any hon. member; but can we have a worse case to take such a stand upon than this?

THE HON. T. BURGESS: I am sorry that I cannot agree with my hon. friend opposite. I was not aware that we were so completely in the hands of the Assembly—that we are to be told that we cannot have time—

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I said nothing about the Assembly.

THE HON. T. BURGESS: I understood you to say that the Government had determined to prorogue this House to-morrow.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: But that has nothing to do with the Assembly.

THE HON. T. BURGESS: It means that the gentleman representing the Government in this House is to come here and say that we must come to a decision without having an opportunity of considering the important papers that are before us. I do not hold my seat on these terms.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Then the hon. member had better leave the dominions of the Queen and go to a republic. The right of dissolving Parliament is, and always has been, one of the sacred prerogatives of the Crown.

THE HON. T. BURGESS: I think we should have an opportunity of discussing this matter.

THE HON. R. E. BUSH: I regret that the Hon. Mr. Hackett should have made a threat to the House (I do not know whether it emanates from the Government or not) that unless we go into the question to-night, Parliament will be prorogued to-morrow notwithstanding. For my part I do not think that if a majority of this House supported the Hon. Mr. Leake's motion any Government, however strong they might be—not even this Government, with its brutal majority behind it, would prorogue and leave this important matter unsettled.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: It would not leave it unsettled.

THE HON. R. E. BUSH: This House has yet to vote the Loan Estimates, and if we do not pass them the Government will not prorogue. Last year there were reasons why we should hasten on the business at the end of the session, but these reasons do not exist now. I cannot see any reason why we should prorogue to-morrow, and I trust hon. members will at once assert their privileges and rights by voting with the Hon. Mr. Leake.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: I see no reason to report progress. I know that most of us have considered these resolutions, and have formed our own opinion as to the course we intend to take. I do not think, even if we were to postpone the consideration of them

for a week, it would affect one single vote, and therefore I shall oppose progress being reported.

Question—That progress be reported—put and negatived on the voices.

The House divided, with the following result:—

AYES—5.

The Hon. T. Burges
The Hon. R. E. Bush
The Hon. R. W. Hardey
The Hon. J. Morrison
The Hon. G. W. Leake
(Teller.)

NOES—7.

The Hon. J. G. H. Amherst
The Hon. D. K. Congdon
The Hon. G. Glyde
The Hon. J. W. Hackett
The Hon. E. Hamersley
The Hon. E. T. Hooley
The Hon. G. Shenton
(Teller.)

Majority of 2 for the Noes.

[The Hons. G. W. Leake, R. E. Bush, and T. Burges then left the Chamber.]

THE HON. J. MORRISON: We have lately heard and read a great deal about these proposals of the Government. When we were discussing the Governor's speech at the opening of this session I plainly said that I thought the Government had made a great mistake in connection with the advance of £60,000 to this Company, and I said that they had gone into a bad speculation. The very thing I prognosticated has taken place, and now to save the payment of this £60,000 it is proposed to go still deeper and guarantee the interest on £500,000. I have not since altered the opinions I formed, and I must say that if the resolutions which are now put before us are passed we shall only sink deeper into the mire.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Can you propose anything better?

THE HON. J. MORRISON: If the Government had not advanced the £60,000 I should say it would be better to throw these proposals out at once.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: They have the security for the £60,000 still.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: That is the £10,000 deposit.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: And 200,000 acres of land.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: Which the Company got at 5s. an acre and gave the Government as security at 6s. 8d. per acre. Of course I know that these resolutions have been passed in the Lower House by a large majority, and it may therefore be taken that the whole thing is fixed up. The Government have a majority, and we cannot

blame them for taking advantage of it. I am one of those in the minority, and I can only say that I do not agree with this action. Knowing what I do about this Midland Railway, I think the 7th clause of these proposals is one which, if properly carried out, will be worth a large amount of money to the colony.

THE HON. E. HAMERSLEY: Then why oppose it.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: Because I do not agree with the whole thing. There is another matter about the three-tenths of the railway. What representation is there to be for the colony on the Board of Directors? Are we going to stipulate that we shall have directors?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): What for?

THE HON. J. MORRISON: We shall want a representative.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Our representative is to be found here in the shape of the Engineer-in-Chief and the £309,000.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: But you want a representative on the Board as well. At any rate, perhaps the Government may think over this matter now that I have called attention to it. There is another clause which I think should be embodied in this agreement, and that is one for the absolute forfeiture of the railway, for I can see how the whole thing is going to work out as soon as the line is completed and the Company have to work it. They will have no money to work it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Then they will be fined if they do not.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: £100 a day. We shall have to use our rolling stock and keep the line in order. We shall go on fining them £100 a day, but, in the meantime, we shall have to work the line, and then, at any time the Company likes to come in and pay the fine, they can take back the line. As for going into the past history of the Company, I must say that I see no use in it. It is now simply a question of what is the best thing we can do for the country. I do not approve of these resolutions as they stand, but I should be prepared, if some alterations were made, to agree to them. An absolute forfeiture clause should be put in for one thing, and

something more than appears should be put in the arbitration clause. It is a good thing to get the right of purchase, but we should have some proper basis to purchase upon. The hon. the Colonial Secretary in speaking of the directors mentioned the name of Sir William Crossman, and I agree with him that not one word can be said against that gentleman, or in fact against any of the directors, who are all men of undoubted standing. I myself have had to meet Sir William Crossman in certain business transactions, and a better or straighter man you could not wish for. Although I do not think that the directors have had anything to do with the past history of the Company, it is of no use for us to say that the whole thing is above suspicion after we have read the Crown Agents' letters, and it is a great pity that the Government had not perused this correspondence before guaranteeing the £60,000. I never could understand, with these letters in existence, how the Government, with the present Premier at its head, who was a member of the old Executive, could have entered into that arrangement. I asked point blank how it was that this correspondence was not taken into consideration, and it is gratifying to me to know that the present Premier knew nothing of it, because, at the time it was dealt with, he was travelling out at Yilgarn. Therefore, it could not be said that this Government entered upon the guarantee with a knowledge of this correspondence. As to the Company, I do not think that many of the directors know what has taken place. One of the reasons why I should like to see this debate adjourned for a week is that a call of 30s. a share has been made on the shareholders. It was said to have been withdrawn, but in reply to a cable message on the subject an answer was received stating that the cable sent was unintelligible. I have very grave doubts about this call having been made. I understand that any two directors in this Company can act and make a call, and I think it is a great pity we have not the correspondence before us on this subject which will be due next week. Of course I know that directors usually have power to make a call when they think it necessary; but after it is once made I have not heard of them having power to with-

draw it. I do not agree with these resolutions, and therefore I shall vote against them, although I am aware that there is a majority in favor of them. In what I have said there is nothing that maligns anyone's character, nor do I intend to say anything in that direction, but I do trust that the Government when making this contract will try to drive as hard a bargain as possible. There are three clauses to which they should give special attention. One is to put the right of purchase on a proper basis; the second is to secure representation on the board; and the third is to provide a forfeiture clause in the event of the Company not completing the line.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I am not going to say more than a couple of sentences, for it is not my intention to revive a collapsed debate. It has collapsed because it deserved to. I can only say that the proposals are so satisfactory that opposition has closed with the exception of my hon. friend Mr. Morrison, and I would appeal to him, in order to strengthen the hands of the Government in the step they contemplate taking, to cross over and vote with the rest of the House. The proposition will then be carried unanimously. The other hon. members have shown a wise discretion; they cannot say anything in answer to the proposals and therefore they have run away, and if my hon. friend, Mr. Morrison, will now only cross over to the other side he will be received with open arms.

Question—That this House concurs in the resolutions forwarded by the Legislative Assembly—put and passed.

HANSARD REPORTS.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved, "That the Council concur with the Joint Standing Orders Committee in their recommendations for the control and management of the *Hansard* Reporting Staff, and of the issue of the printed reports of the Debates."

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST said that as he had moved in this matter in the earlier part of the session, he had now much pleasure in seconding the motion, agreeing, as he did, with what the select committee proposed.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT said that this matter had been considered pretty

fully, and certain recommendations had been made, but for his part he thought they should only be adopted as a sort of experiment. They were going on lines which were not familiar to the other colonies, although each carried out a system of its own. In this colony they now proposed a system by which the reporting of the Council should be vested in the President, and that of the Assembly in the Speaker. He did not know how it would work, but they could try it.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON asked what the recommendations of the standing committee were.

THE PRESIDENT said there had been some little discussion as to the working of *Hansard*. At the present time the reporter of the Council assisted in the reporting of the other House, but that was not considered advisable. In the next place, there was now no control over the *Hansard* reports. The reporting was in the hands of the Government, and if hon. members had any complaints to make, they did not know to whom to make them. This was unfair to the *Hansard* staff, and also unfair to members of both Houses. Therefore it was proposed that the reporting of the Legislative Council should be under the direction of the President, and that the reporting of the Legislative Assembly should be under the direction of the Speaker. Of course this arrangement could be revoked at any time the House pleased. There was only one point upon which he had heard any disagreement with the recommendation of the Committee. It was proposed to do away with the weekly *Hansard*. The Committee proposed this because it was found that the Printing Department was not equal to keeping it up. The reporters had supplied their matter, but the Printing Department was not strong enough to overtake it week by week. However if they found it could be done in future, and it was advisable to have it done, they could easily arrange it.

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST said he was given to understand that quotations could not be made from these weekly editions because they were not authentic.

THE PRESIDENT said they were issued as official and correct reports, but they could not be quoted from during

the session they were issued, by virtue of the Standing Orders.

Question—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council at 10.10 p.m. adjourned until Friday, 18th March, at 11 a.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 17th March, 1892.

Resolution re Further Assistance to Midland Railway—Ownership of Minerals discovered on Lands of W.A. Land Company—Subscription to last Instalment of Loan by London and Westminster Bank—Motion for Adjournment—Pollution of Perth Water Supply—Municipal Water Supply Preservation Bill, 1892: Suspension of Standing Orders—Hawkers and Pedlars Bill: Legislative Council's Amendment—Loan Estimates, 1892: in Committee of Supply.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

FURTHER ASSISTANCE TO MIDLAND RAILWAY.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House ordered that the resolution passed on the previous evening, authorising the Government to enter into an agreement with the Midland Railway Company for guaranteeing the payment of interest on further capital to be raised by the Company for completing the construction of the Midland Railway, upon the terms and conditions stated therein, be transmitted to the Legislative Council, with all the documents relating thereto which had been laid on the table of this House, and that the concurrence of the Council be desired therein.

OWNERSHIP OF MINERALS DISCOVERED ON LANDS OF W.A. LAND COMPANY.

MR. DE HAMEL, in accordance with notice, asked:

- (1.) To whom do any minerals that may be found in or upon the lands granted to the W.A. Land Company belong?