

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th October, 1894.

Insect Pests Bill: first reading—Railways Act Further Amendment Bill: first reading—Extension of Savings Banks' operations—Purchase of Perth Water Works—Complaints against Surveyors licensed under the Transfer of Land Act—Hospitals Bill: third reading—Constitution Act Further Amendment Bill: consideration of committee's report—Elementary Education Act Amendment Bill: adjourned debate: second reading—Pharmacy and Poisons Bill: in committee—Roads Act Amendment Bill: Message from the Legislative Council—Estimates, 1894-5: further considered in committee—Loan Bill (£1,500,000): Message from Legislative Council—Municipal Institutions Bill: Message from Legislative Council—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

## PRAYERS.

## INSECT PESTS BILL.

Introduced by MR. BURT, and read a first time.

## RAILWAYS ACT, 1878, FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by MR. BURT, and read a first time.

## EXTENSION OF SAVINGS BANKS' OPERATIONS.

MR. JAMES: Sir—I rise to move the motion of which I have given notice:—"That, in the opinion of this House, the usefulness of the Savings Banks could, and should, be increased by (1) establishing branches at all post offices; (2) abolishing the maximum limit of deposits; (3) allowing depositors to operate upon their accounts by cheque; and that provision should be made to effect these objects." In bringing this matter before the House I have been guided by a desire to extend, as far as possible, the sphere of usefulness of these institutions, by having branches of them established at all available post offices in the colony, and by extending the operations of these Banks in the direction indicated in the resolution. I think I am justified in saying that the success that has attended the introduction of the Savings Bank system has been marvellous. Five years hence will be the centenary of the first establishment of this scheme, and its operations and sphere of usefulness have gradually extended until the

principle is generally recognised now that we can have no more important duty than to encourage thrifty habits amongst those who, without such encouragement, would remain thriftless. When the system was first introduced, it was established mainly for the purpose of assisting the labouring classes to save a little of their money, and I believe efforts were made to restrict the operation of these institutions to the working classes, or, at any rate, that no encouragement was given to other sections of the community to avail themselves of these Banks. But, in later years, as the usefulness and beneficial influences of these institutions became recognised, the tendency of legislation from time to time has been to extend the sphere of their operations, and not to confine them to the working classes. It would be difficult on any other ground to understand why the maximum amount of the deposits allowed to be made in these Banks has from time to time been increased. In these colonies, of course, this maximum is much larger than it is in England. I believe the maximum in England now is very much the same as it was here before the new Act came into force, increasing the maximum and also the limit of the deposit. What I desire to emphasise is this, that the tendency of all legislation connected with these institutions is to liberalise and extend their scope, and to render them more useful, not only to the labouring classes, but to all who may desire to avail themselves of the advantages which these institutions offer. It is an interesting fact, and one that goes to support me in my desire to extend the operations of these Banks in this colony, that since the introduction of the new Act increasing the maximum of deposits, these Banks have been more largely availed of than they ever were before. The balance to the credit of depositors in June last year was £73,000, while on the 30th June, this year, this balance had increased to £141,000, so that within one year the deposits have been nearly doubled, showing that the amended Act—which increased the annual maximum from £30 to £150, and the gross maximum from £150 to £600—has been largely availed of by the general public. I submit that the experience gained since the introduction of the new Act fully justifies the Government

in abolishing the maximum altogether, as proposed in this resolution. Why should there be a maximum? If any individual likes to deposit his money in these Banks, why should he not be allowed to do so, to any extent? If the Government chose to reduce the interest on deposits they could do so; but I see no good reason for limiting the amount of deposits allowed to be made by individual depositors. I think we have already recognised the principle that these Banks should be available to all classes of the community; and, that being so, why should we limit their deposits to £600, or to any other amount, if they choose to place their money in these institutions? And why should they be restricted to depositing no more than £150 in one year? Why not allow people to pay in as much as they like, and when they like, and also to draw out what they like and when they like? With regard to the establishment of local branches throughout the colony, I recognise that there may be some difficulty in the way; but I think some provision might be made to overcome this difficulty. I think we might have what I may call half-time post offices and half-time savings banks on the same principle as half-time schools. These banks need not be open daily, or every hour of the day, in small country places; and as to the difficulty of dealing with the money, I should imagine that a travelling officer might be attached to the department, whose duty it would be to collect the deposits from the various branch Banks once a week, or once a month, as the case might be. Take, for instance, the Canning Timber Mills, where the men employed are paid every fortnight. In the absence of a Savings Bank no encouragement or opportunity whatever is afforded these men to become thrifty with their earnings. They must either spend their money as they get it or put it away in a stocking. We all know what temptation it is to many men to spend all they earn, unless some facilities are offered to enable them to save a portion of it. The Government provide facilities in these little country places for postal communication; why not also increase the value of these post offices by establishing branch Savings Banks wherever there is a likelihood of any business being done? At present very little effort is made to

extend the number of these Savings Banks throughout the colony. During the last five years, although the population of the colony has increased enormously, we have only had an increase of six branches of the Savings Bank. I believe there is no branch established yet even at that great mining centre, Coolgardie. Although we have 105 post offices scattered about the colony where stamps may be bought, and where letters may be registered, I find there are only 24 branches of the Savings Bank established. Surely we have a right to ask the Government to make some better provision than this to encourage thrifty habits in the community, by increasing the number of these Banks, and extending their operations in other directions. I think we should carry the benefits of thrift, as far as possible, to every man's door, and certainly we might do a great deal more in this direction than we are doing at present. In connection with the third proposal contained in my resolution—allowing depositors to operate upon their accounts by cheque—I recognise that opens up a matter of some difficulty, treading as it does upon the corns of other financial institutions. But there is no justification in placing unnecessary barriers between a depositor and his money, and interposing unnecessary obstacles in his way to get at his money. If a man has a balance to his credit, why should he not have the use of it? Why should he not have the right to draw upon it when he likes, and as promptly as he likes? Why should we only allow him to draw his money on two days of the week only, and insist upon his giving notice beforehand? I am convinced that if such a provision as I suggest were made, not only would the amount deposited in these Banks be doubled, it would be quadrupled, because you would then make these institutions practically something more than a mere Savings Bank to the individual who had a credit balance. Although there may be some objection to this proposal to allow depositors to operate upon their accounts by cheque, still I cannot help thinking that the advantages more than counterbalance the objections. At any rate, I hope I shall carry this House with me as regards my other two propositions—(1) the establishment of additional branches,

and (2) the abolition of the maximum limit of deposits. I should like to see the Government showing a livelier interest in the advantages offered by these institutions, and extending their usefulness in every possible way, wherever there is an opportunity of doing so. Until they do so, I do not think it can be said that they are discharging their duty to the public in this direction. I should like to see them adopting this principle: that, so far as practicable, they should extend the operation of these Savings Banks to every place in the colony where there is a regularly established post office,—that is, where there is a paid officer entrusted with the issuing of money orders, the selling of stamps, and the registering of letters. I have brought forward this motion because I think that if we had a little more energy thrown into the working of these institutions, and we recognised the fact more fully than we now do that people in the country have equal rights to be regarded in this respect as people who live in towns, the benefits that would accrue to the community from these institutions would be largely enhanced. I beg to move the resolution.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I am not prepared to say there may not be one or two places in the colony where it would be possible to establish Savings Banks where they are not already established; but there would be considerable difficulty in establishing them everywhere where there is a post office. Post offices are now so numerous, scattered as they are all over the colony, and many of the postmasters only receive a small fee of £10 a year for receiving and despatching a mail bag occasionally, that it would never do to establish a Savings Bank at all of these out-of-the-way little places. There would be a difficulty, too, in arranging for the custody and transport of money at these places, unless there should be already a Bank in the town where the money could be deposited. Members will see at once, wherever these branch Savings Banks were established, those in charge would require to have a certain amount of money always on hand to pay the depositors when they wished to withdraw their money, which brings us face to face with another difficulty: how are you going to

keep this money in any safety at these small country places? Of course where there are Banks established, there would be no difficulty in arranging for the establishment of a Post Office Savings Bank; but the hon. member wants us to go a great deal further than that. Of course it would be very convenient to have these Savings Banks established in country places, but, after all, I do not know that people suffer very much from the want of them, where there are other banking facilities, and we know that the Banks are now vying with each other in establishing branches at all our more important goldfields centres, or where there is any likelihood of any business being done. In places where there are no Banks, you have to meet the difficulties I have already pointed out with regard to the custody and the transport of the money required for the carrying out these Savings Banks in remote country places, where the postmasters only receive about £10 a year, and where the machinery of the office is very primitive indeed, the work in some cases being carried on at people's private residences. With regard to the hon. member's desire to abolish the limit of deposits, that is a question that requires a great deal more consideration than the hon. member could have given the subject. We discussed the matter when we brought in the amending Bill a session or two ago, when we extended the yearly maximum from £30 to £150, and the gross amount to £600 in the name of one and the same depositor. If you allowed people to deposit money in these Banks *ad libitum*, the question might arise whether the Government required all this money, which they would have to pay interest on, to the depositors; and they would have to have it available at call. The Government are not bankers, and we are not in the same position as the Banks whose business it is to provide accommodation for their clients, and to deal with their money. I do not see, myself, unless we revolutionised the whole system, how we could carry out these proposals of the hon. member. We would simply have to convert the Savings Bank into a State Bank, because that is what his proposals amount to, and be prepared to receive money and pay it out, on demand, the same as any other banking institution.

As to permitting depositors to operate on their accounts by drawing cheques, we are not prepared at all to agree to that. The object of a Savings Bank is to provide an opportunity for people to put away their small savings in some secure place, where they can get a little interest upon it, and the consolidated revenue of the colony as a security. To encourage them to take their money out as they liked—to put it in to-day and take it out to-morrow—would be to defeat the very object for which these Savings Banks are established. I do not think such a thing is allowed in any other country, and, as I say, it is altogether opposed to the very principle of these institutions. I do not think the hon. member could have given these proposals much thought, and I do not suppose they will meet with much support in this House, when we bear in mind that if carried out it would revolutionise the whole system of Savings Banks, and that it is only a short time ago that we consolidated and liberalised the Savings Bank Ordinance, and that the new Act is only just getting into working order.

MR. RICHARDSON: While I recognise that the principle of extending the usefulness of these institutions is a very good one, I think it is a pity the hon. member who brought forward this resolution did not seek to attain his object in a more practical form. It seems to me that the resolution in its present form would be unworkable. The machinery required to carry it out would be out of all proportion to the advantages likely to be derived. For instance, he suggests that every post office should be a Savings Bank, and at the same time that people who put money in this Bank should be allowed to draw it out as they pleased by cheque. I think a moment's reflection would have shown him the absurdity of such a proposition. You would want a staff of clerks and accountants, and you would want to keep a large reserve of money always on hand, and you would want a strong room to keep it in, until at any rate you had an opportunity of transmitting some of it to the head office. We know that, as a matter of fact, a great many of the postmasters at these little country offices are not qualified, either by education or training, to carry on a system of banking such as the hon. member suggests. In fact, the whole

scheme is impracticable in its present shape. At the same time, I recognise the desirability of increasing the usefulness of the Savings Bank as far as possible. I think it would be a very good thing for those who desire to avail themselves of these Savings Banks if greater facilities were afforded for depositing their money, but not to offer them too great facilities for drawing it out again. I do not think we should encourage these people to withdraw their money; that would be contrary to the principle upon which these institutions are established. Their object is to encourage thrift, and to induce people to save and put away their little savings for a rainy day. The hon. member's proposals, as the Premier pointed out, aim at converting the post office into a State Bank. This is rather a sweeping revolution, and it requires a little more consideration than I think members are disposed to give a resolution like the one now before us.

MR. LOTON: I am not prepared to deal with the motion in any exhaustive manner, but I would like to say a few words on the principle involved. In the first place, it is proposed to increase the usefulness of the Savings Bank. That, in itself, is a very legitimate object; but when we come to consider the proposals made for increasing the usefulness of these institutions, we are met at once with very serious, and, to my mind, insuperable difficulties. What are these Banks established for? Their very name implies what their object is. It is to enable people to save their money—to enable them to invest their small savings, and to allow them to accumulate by degrees, and to bear a little interest, which they can rely upon. But this resolution proposes to subvert that principle altogether, and suggests that those who save their money in this way should be allowed to withdraw it when they pleased, by simply writing out a cheque. I do not think that is a sound principle at all in connection with an institution of this kind. The question arises, how far is the Government of any country justified in going, in carrying on this Post Office Savings Bank system? How far is any Government justified in extending its responsibilities in this direction? If the hon. member had moved in the direction of increasing the usefulness

of the post office in providing further postal facilities in country places I would have been prepared to go with him. But I cannot see the necessity for establishing these Savings Banks all over the place as is here proposed. If you do, you must have the money there to pay your customers whenever they want it; and if you increase the maximum of deposits, you will want a still larger sum of money to meet these demands. Suppose this money were stolen, how is it to be recouped? The State would have to bear the loss. It is said there is no Savings Bank yet established at Coolgardie or Cue. But they have got two or three other Banks established in those places, and carrying on the ordinary business of such institutions; and we may take it that the people are satisfied with the conveniences those Banks afford, or we should have had an outcry long ago for the establishment of a Savings Bank there. The Banks of the colony at the present moment are actually chasing settlement—that is what they are doing—in order to attract business; and, if people in these outlying districts have any money to spare, they can place it in one of these Banks, and, if they want to draw upon it, they can do so by cheque if they like; or, if they want it to accumulate at interest, they can put it on fixed deposit. It may be said, possibly, that I am putting these views forward because I am connected with one of these Banks—["No, no!"]; I say it may possibly be said so. I do not care whether it is or not. But I maintain that the public generally do not want these Savings Banks established in such localities as the hon. member for East Perth is asking for them; and there is no necessity for them, nor is it desirable that the Government should undertake a risk of this kind. As to increasing the present maximum of deposit allowed in these Banks, people can now put as much as £600 in them; and my experience of working men and others of that class who amass £600 is that they like to invest it in something that is likely to bring them in a better return than the Savings Bank. They want something that will return them more than  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., and they will try to get it too. This resolution, to my mind, goes another step in the direction of leading people to look to the Government to do everything

for them, instead of trusting to their own resources. I should be very glad, myself, if the people of this colony would forget that they had a Government, and try to shift a little more for themselves.

MR. A. FORREST: I would suggest to the hon. member that he should withdraw his motion. I am sure he never could have considered the subject, or he would not have asked this House to discuss such a resolution. In the first place, to allow people who put money in these Savings Banks to operate upon their accounts by cheque would mean that the Government would have to keep a lot of gold at every little post office in the colony; and we would have a large amount of gold lying idle in this way, and producing nothing. The Banks in this colony now have over a million of money locked up in this way, bringing them in nothing at all. It is there locked up, and they must keep it available, in case there is a run on the Bank. I do not think this House or the country consider it necessary that our Savings Banks should carry on a business of that kind. The whole resolution is, in my opinion, perfectly absurd. I do not think it would be possible to work the scheme, unless the Government are going to turn bankers, and compete with the ordinary Banks of issue. If they did that, they would want a large and expensive staff. I do not think the time has arrived for converting the Savings Bank into a Bank of issue.

MR. TRAYLEN: I think the hon. member who brought forward this motion is to be congratulated upon having suggested a proposition which, if carried out, would at any rate bring about a sensation, in the shape of a financial crisis. I wonder if he has reflected how many depositors there would be in the ordinary Banks of the country if this resolution were adopted and acted upon. Who would ever dream of putting what money they might have, in the present Banks on current account, receiving no interest upon it, when they could put it in the Government Savings Bank and receive daily interest upon it, and operate upon their accounts by cheque, at any time? What would be the result? Every unfortunate who wanted to borrow money would have nowhere to go to but the Government, for the present Banks must

utterly go to the wall. I say I congratulate the hon. member upon his good sound sense in bringing such a motion forward.

MR. JAMES: If I thought for one moment that the hon. member who has just sat down was right in suggesting that by liberalising the present conditions attached to the Savings Bank system I should be bringing ruin upon the ordinary banking institutions of the country, I could have no more convincing argument in favour of the adoption of this resolution. I think every member will agree with me that at any rate there must be some justification for it, if people have so little faith in the existing banking institutions that the mere extension of the Savings Bank system in this direction would compel them to close their doors. I think it is a foolish and unworthy insult levelled against these institutions to suggest for a moment that, if this resolution were carried, people have such little faith in these institutions that they would rush at once with all their money into the Savings Bank. If that is true, if people have so little faith in those with whom they now entrust their capital, I think it demands very serious consideration from this House whether it is wise or right to leave capital in such an insecure position. An argument has been put forward that the very object of these Savings Banks would be defeated by the adoption of this resolution, it being taken for granted that the sole object of these institutions is to encourage thrift amongst the working classes, and the working classes only. If the object is simply to encourage saving amongst the labouring classes only, then you have departed most materially from the principle involved when you increased the maximum of yearly deposits from £30 to £150; because it is very evident that no working man can hope to save £150 in a year. I think the average working man would also have some difficulty in accumulating savings to the extent of £600, which is the sum now fixed as the maximum of deposit in these savings banks. In all the other colonies, and I think in America, they have departed altogether from the principles upon which these institutions were originally founded. They have recognised that if the principle is a good one it ought to be extended to all sections of the com-

munity who may desire to avail themselves of the advantages it offers. Another objection urged against the proposal to extend these Savings Banks into country places is that it would necessitate the keeping of a considerable sum of money at these post offices. I never suggested that there should be a strong room at every little post office, and a gentleman always present with a bag of sovereigns to pay depositors. I presume all these matters could be arranged without the necessity for all these elaborate preparations. These branch Banks need only be opened once a week or once a fortnight, and only for an hour or two; and I suppose it is not beyond the powers of the Government to frame necessary regulations for the payment and withdrawal of deposits, which regulations would overcome many of the difficulties which have suggested themselves to the minds of some members. The Premier is afraid that if we increase the amount of money allowed to be paid in, the Government may find themselves with too much money. I do not think that is a contingency that is likely to happen soon; certainly not whilst the present Ministry is in power. I have no doubt the present Government will find no difficulty in disposing of all the money that is likely to be rushed upon them. As for the danger of depositors clamouring for their money back, that has not been the experience of these Banks in other countries, nor has it been the experience here since the provisions of the Act were liberalised in this direction. As to the suggestion that the proposals I have put forward contemplate the establishment by the State of a Bank of issue, all I can say is that no one who makes such a ridiculous suggestion can have any idea what a Bank of issue means.

Motion put and negatived on the voices.

#### LEGISLATION FOR THE PURCHASE OF PERTH WATER WORKS.

MR. TRAYLEN: Sir,—I rise to move "That in the opinion of this House the present is an opportune time to arrange for the purchase of the Perth Water Works, and the Government is requested to take such legislative steps as may be necessary to secure that end." If I seem to be singularly pertinacious upon this subject, it is because I have been behind

the scenes and have somewhat deep-rooted convictions on the subject. It will be seen that the resolution does not deal in details; it simply expresses a principle—that this is an opportune time to buy these water works.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I ask whether the hon. member is in order? I do not wish to stop him in any way; on the contrary, I wish to have the benefit of anything he has to say. At the same time, I think we had better proceed in order. Does not this resolution involve the expenditure of public money?

**THE SPEAKER**: I cannot say whether it does or not until I know what the hon. member's object is.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): His motion contemplates the purchase of the water works, and that the Government should take the necessary steps to secure that end.

**THE SPEAKER**: I am unable yet to say what his object is—whether he proposes that the Municipality should purchase, and that the Government should bring in the necessary Bill to enable them to do so. I cannot say until I hear his arguments whether he is in order or not.

**MR. TRAYLEN**: I designedly, sir, put my proposition in this form so as not to leave it open to the objection raised; I have been careful in so wording it as not to commit the House to any expenditure of public money, so far as the present resolution is concerned. However, I know the Colonial Treasurer is quite willing, apart from maintaining the Standing Orders and the rights of the Government on the subject, to listen to anything I have to say on the subject. It seems to me, sir, that to put the whole matter before the House I ought to endeavour to answer three questions: one is, why we should buy these works at all; another is, is this an opportune time for buying; and, thirdly, who should buy? In order to answer the first question, why we should buy, I must ask the patience of the House whilst I relate the history of these water works.

**SEVERAL MEMBERS**: No, no!

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We know all about it.

**MR. TRAYLEN**: I do not wish to weary the House. It shall be an epitome

only; but I must refer to the outlines of its history from its inception. A few years ago a feeling existed in the city that we ought to have a proper system of water supply, and at that time there were some gentlemen about who had available means, and who also had friends to assist them by other means, to carry out what seemed, on the face of it, a very favourable scheme. They obtained plans and specifications from a local engineering firm (Messrs. Saunders & Barratt) who had previously spent a great deal of money and time in searching the Darling Hills for the most suitable and convenient spot for the purpose. The result of the negotiations was a most unfortunate agreement between the then City Council and a syndicate. I must call them a syndicate, because they only subsequently described themselves as a company, and I have reason to think that that company has never been formed in exact accordance with the law in force in this or any other colony, so that I must refer to them, in the past at any rate, as a syndicate. This injudicious agreement contained these provisions, amongst others: that it shall last 25 years, that it shall be subject to a water rate of 1s. in the £ being paid to the syndicate by the Municipality throughout the whole of that term—unless in the meantime the total amount of the rate paid should exceed 10 per cent. on the capital of the undertaking. Now, sir, that means that if there be any extension of these works beyond their present bounds, the persons in the more central and thickly populated part of Perth will have to pay £15,000 per annum to this company before they can get any relief from this 10 per cent. rate; that is to say, the few ratepayers residing in those portions of the city where the water works now extend will have to pay more money to this syndicate every year than the whole of the present available income of the Municipality amounts to. The capital of the undertaking was an indefinite sum, and that was another feature of the agreement which leads me to say it was a most injudicious one. Nearly everyone at that time thought it meant the exact sum of money expended in the construction of the works. There certainly was some debate as to whether there should be a limit fixed, but, unfortunately, there did not happen to be any limit fixed; and,

when the works were completed, no one was willing to ask how much the works had really cost; so the capital was set down at an arbitrary sum, which, to the best of my recollection, was £165,000. Fortunately, whilst the syndicate had this very long pull against the city, the city on its part also had the benefit of some vagueness in other portions of the agreement, and the question arose which side had the strongest pull. That resulted in a conference between representatives of the syndicate and representatives of the City Council. I have before said, and I must say it on this occasion again, that unstinted praise is due to Councillor Molloy for having put his finger upon this very weak or very strong spot—from whichever point of view we regard it—in the agreement, and for having called public attention to it, which led to the conference I have referred to, and which resulted in the fixing of a sum which was mutually accepted as the capital of the undertaking. At that time the conference was also very greatly assisted by the present Attorney General, and I think also by the present Colonial Secretary; I have a very distinct recollection that the Attorney General rendered excellent service to the city in connection with that conference.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I acted for the company.

MR. TRAYLEN: I know you acted for the company, but you served the city admirably, and secured for us very much better terms than we could otherwise have obtained. The result of that conference was that £150,000 was the sum defined as the capital of the undertaking; the original claim put forward by the syndicate being £160,000 or £165,000 (I forget which). Then it was pointed out to the representatives of the syndicate that there were certain streets in the city that were not then supplied with water which were supposed to be included in the original agreement; and it was further arranged that the syndicate should spend another £4,000 before they had a right to claim £150,000 as the capital of the undertaking. I now come to another extremely weak spot in the original agreement; I refer to the price to be paid for the works in the event of the Council desiring to purchase them. I cannot imagine how any body of repre-

sentative persons could have consented to pay this syndicate one-third more than the cost of the works, or the capital of the undertaking, as profit to the promoters. But so it was; and, instead of having to pay £150,000 (the sum fixed as the capital of the undertaking), they were told it would require £200,000 if they wanted to buy these works. If the purchase price were based on the amount which the syndicate originally claimed as the capital of the undertaking (£165,000), these works could not, under this agreement, have been bought for less than £220,000; and I have always regarded that conference in the light of having saved the city possibly £20,000. This one-third percentage of profit is to go on for all the years the works remain in the hands of the present owners, or rather under the present arrangement, and to be added to the capital of the undertaking as the price to be paid for the works. During the past twelve months the company has spent £3,600 on extensions, and, if we wanted to buy these works to-day, according to the original agreement we would have to pay an additional £4,800; in other words we would positively have to pay the company £1,200 for expending £3,600, besides paying them the £3,600 itself. And this is to go on as long as they choose to extend the works, even to the outside boundaries of the city. I ask members to put to themselves this question—what will be the sum of money, if this agreement goes on for 25 years, at which the city or anyone else will be able to acquire these works? It will be simply ruinous, and put it almost absolutely beyond the power of the city or anybody else to buy the works. One object I have in view in recommending the purchase is to reduce the annual rate which the owners of property have to pay under this agreement. If these works could be taken over, either through the Government or by the issue of City Council debentures guaranteed by the Government, or by City Council debentures without such guarantee, the rate of interest would be reduced by one-half. Instead of having to pay 10 per cent. before any reduction is obtained under the existing agreement, 5 per cent. would be about all it would be necessary to pay; so that instead of paying £20,000 or £25,000



per annum, the whole of the advantages could be had for one-half that sum. That is one object, sir, I have in view. Another object is that we could now buy these works below the agreed price, and that brings me to the second question—whether this is an opportune time to buy? In answering that, I would say that I believe the promoters of the undertaking were very greatly disappointed as regards the cost of the works. I have reason to believe that their estimate was based upon their being able to occupy a site which, when they came to sink and examine it, was found to be very unsuitable, and they had to spend some thousands of pounds in taking up another site, which made the works more costly than was at first estimated. So that what they thought would be a source of income in a very short time has not proved so, in consequence of the extra cost of the works. Then, again, everyone knows that some of the members of this syndicate are residents in the colony of Victoria, and that Victoria has unfortunately gone down in the world very considerably of late years, and that such is the financial straits in that colony that persons who a few years ago were wealthy and could afford to embark in these kind of undertakings and to await the issue in years to come, can no longer do anything of the kind. It must be a matter of notoriety to nearly all members that the daily papers a few days ago contained the statement that one member of this syndicate had become bankrupt.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I don't suppose that will affect the case. The scrip is all mortgaged to some institution, I expect.

MR. TRAYLEN: I prefer not to say all I know. I do not venture to say all I know; but, being somewhat behind the scenes, I think I would have been very negligent if I did not bring these matters before the House. Apart from these considerations, we have the fact that the syndicate themselves admit that they are in such a position just now that they would be glad to sell these works at much below the agreed price. In other words, instead of demanding from us £200,000 or £204,800—being £150,000 as the capital of the undertaking, with one-third added for promoters' profit, which makes £200,000, and the £3,600

since spent on extensions (or £4,800, including the one-third profit to the promoters)—instead of demanding from us £200,000 or £204,800, the syndicate some months ago were willing to accept £185,000, and I understand that to-day they are willing to take up very much the same stand, if we should be prepared to purchase at the present time, so that there would be a saving of £15,000. I have a very strong conviction they would only be too glad to see the cash for a much less sum than £185,000; that is, if they can get it now. Of course, if they manage to tide over their present financial difficulties, and be in a position to benefit from the large income which they must derive from this city in a short time, they will be able to smile very complacently at our position and their own position. They will be deriving an ample income, and we shall be in the unpleasant position of having to pay it, and to grin and bear it. Now I come to the question of who is to buy? One of the possible purchasers is the Municipal Council, and the Bill now before Parliament empowers these bodies to buy or to construct water works. But, practically, this power is of no avail, either for the City Council or any other municipal council, for this reason: that the sum required for such a purpose is so considerable that the power cannot be availed of. I might go very much further than that, and say that in my opinion it is wholly inexpedient for this House to give to the municipality of Perth a statutory power to raise this money. First of all, my reason for saying that is, that the water now used in Perth, obtained from this company, is derived from a natural source of supply in the Canning Hills, many miles distant from the confines of the Perth municipality; and I cannot bring myself to believe it would be right for this House to give the exclusive benefits of that far-away and natural source of supply to the people who are confined within the bounds of the municipality of Perth. If there were never going to be but one municipality for Perth and the whole of the surrounding country, it would be a different thing; but we know that suburbs are growing up rapidly beyond the bounds of the present municipality, and that the day is not far distant when these suburban places will

also want a water supply, and nothing can persuade me that it would be right to put out of their reach the opportunity of obtaining their water supply from this source. It may be said, of course, that if the City Council owned these works, they could grant these suburban municipalities the right to obtain their supply from the same source; but is it right to put the residents of suburbs in the position of beggars or suppliants to the metropolitan municipality? I cannot think so. I am afraid it would be found that the representatives of the city would endeavour to relieve the burdens of their own taxpayers by making these others pay for their privileges; and I do not think this House should put suburban residents in that position. I come to a somewhat delicate question now—the qualification of town councils to control works of this kind. For instance: I would ask members to look at an advertisement now appearing in the daily papers. A gentleman, who may, in his private character, be a very good citizen—I really do not know anything about his personal qualifications, but, I believe, he follows the humble calling of a baker—is a candidate for the representation of the North Ward of the municipality. This gentleman may, for some purposes, make a very good representative for the North Ward in the City Council; but can it be said for a moment that this candidate, for instance, who has had little or no experience of the world, and who, probably, has seldom been outside Perth in his life, is quite fit to be entrusted, with others, with the control of expensive works costing £200,000 or £300,000. For my part, I cannot persuade myself that these are the proper persons to control expensive works of this character. I might point to another gentleman, who, I think, owes his election to the City Council to a liberal distribution of beer and other baits to catch the popular vote. Is that a suitable person to have a share in the control of such valuable works as these? I maintain not; and, so long as persons of this description can get on the City Council, simply because they have some little local influence of one kind or another, it is not right to put valuable works of this character under their control. Then there arises the, perhaps, even more important question,—if the City Council

is not to purchase and control these works, who is to be authorised to buy them? I do not know whether I am now treading upon somewhat dangerous ground; but I know that you, sir, will stop me if I transgress the bounds which our Standing Orders place upon the discussion of questions involving the expenditure of public money. I only wish to touch upon the point. There is possibly a prospect that the Government would guarantee the bonds of the municipality, if the City Council purchased these works. If there is any such prospect, I would ask whether it would be right for us to authorise the Government to do that, for a body which they could not control—whether it would be safe for the Government to guarantee municipal bonds to be manipulated by a body of persons over whom it could exercise no control, in order to enable that body to purchase these works? So long as there is no control on the part of the Government, I am not prepared to give my voice in favour of a Government guarantee for this purpose. If such a guarantee were given, I presume the advantage would not extend beyond about one per cent.; in other words the Municipal Council, in order to raise the money by means of bonds, would have to give about one per cent. more than would be the case if the Government could see their way to guarantee those bonds. Then another possible purchaser is the Government itself; and there is certainly very much to recommend that course. There is the example of South Australia, where the Government (as I understand the position) supplies the water to the city of Adelaide and its various suburbs. In doing so the Government has been able, after the initiation of the scheme, to pay off some of the original cost of the works, year by year, and so reduce the water rate. There is no such thing as a fixture of a shilling rate for years and years to come in Adelaide. The rate has gradually come down from 1s. to about 8d. If the Government here were to buy these water works, I expect it would not be more than two or three years before it would be possible to lower the water rate in Perth from 1s. in the pound to perhaps 9d. The purchase of these works by the Government, however, is open to the objection that if the Government once

undertakes to supply Perth with water, every town experiencing any difficulty in providing a local water supply will probably ask the same favour; and we have to face the general question, whether the Government is willing to supply "all and sundry" the towns of the colony with such supplies of water as they may think they need. As bearing upon this point, it is singular, sir, that in Victoria and in New South Wales the Government, after attempting to deal with the water supply of the towns, surrendered the works to the charge of Boards. The Board in Victoria is created by one statute, and the Board in New South Wales is created by another on somewhat different lines. In Victoria the Board is wholly representative, wholly elective; in New South Wales the Board is partially elective and partially nominated; and it represents two parties, the Government and the municipalities. My own predilections are in favour of the creation of a Board, by statutory authority, and that the Government should be willing to guarantee the bonds issued by that Board. We would thus be enabled to have a Board of management composed of persons appointed by the Government and persons chosen by the corporation, and we would at one and the same time have experts and representatives; for I am quite sure that, if the Government had a right to appoint some of the members of this Board, they would be extremely careful as to the character and qualifications of the persons whom they appointed; and I am equally sure that the Municipal Council, if they had the same right, would choose infinitely better men than if the whole body of ratepayers had the opportunity of choosing. Be that as it may be, I hope, sooner or later—at a very early day I trust; at some day or other, at any rate—to gain the approval of this House to the adoption of some legislation dealing with this subject. I have drafted a Bill, and, as members are aware, I obtained permission to lay it on the table, dealing with this subject of water supply, and the allied subject of sewerage. I hope I may be pardoned if I refer to two or three of the main features of that Bill. It is based on the assumption that the Government would guarantee the debentures for acquiring these works, and that the pro-

perty would be held and controlled by a Board. As to the creation of the Board, in the first instance, that would be a matter for the Executive Government to decide. Various representations would probably be made to them, from time to time, by other municipalities than Perth—Fremantle, Northam, Coolgardie, and other towns—to have a Board of water supply and sewerage created, and they would decide in each case whether the time was opportune for the creation of such a Board. If they decided that it was, they would appoint three members representing the Government on the Board, and give the municipality the power of electing a certain number of members, according to the number of the population of the town. I may say at once that the Bill contemplates that the Government should always have a majority on the Board, having guaranteed the debentures. The members of the Board, whether appointed by the Government, or elected by the people, would retire periodically. The Board would be made a body corporate with perpetual succession, and clothed with authority to construct or purchase and manage the works, raise the necessary funds, to levy rates (not exceeding a specified sum), and to make by-laws, and so on. I have also provided in the Bill, which I hope will some day meet the approval of Parliament, provisions to include under the same management all questions relating to sewerage, so that at the expense of one and the same Board there can be water supply and sewerage management for Perth and any other towns that may from time to time desire it. The Board, I have provided, shall submit certain of its actions and accounts for the approval of the Government—which I think is only right, if the Government guarantees the bonds—and shall also submit an annual report to Parliament. These are the main features of what I have had in my mind in reference to this, to my mind, very important question; and I hold that in view of the very heavy penalties we shall have to pay for delay, if we do not purchase these Perth water works at present, the sooner this is done the better, because next year I do not anticipate these works can be purchased at anything like the same low price as they can now. The rates of the

city are increasing, and the income of the so-called company is likewise increasing, and, very shortly, a point will be passed beyond which the holders of the contract will be able to smile complacently at the position they occupy, and we may wince under ours. I beg to move the resolution standing in my name.

MR. SPEAKER: When I was asked to give my ruling as to this resolution before the hon. member commenced to elucidate it, I stated I wished to know first what his intentions were with regard to the nature of the legislation he desired the Government to adopt, to secure the object he had in view. Having heard the hon. member's speech, explaining that point, I have no hesitation now in saying that the resolution is not in order. He says he proposes that a Board shall be created, who should have power to purchase and control these works, and that the purchase money should be guaranteed by the Government. Therefore, there is no doubt whatever that such a resolution as that is not in accordance with the provisions of our Constitution Act, which says that no resolution for the appropriation of public funds to any purpose shall be lawful unless it has been first recommended to the House by a message from the Governor. That has not been done here; therefore this resolution is out of order.

MR. A. FORREST: Then I presume we are not allowed to discuss it?

MR. SPEAKER: No.

#### COMPLAINTS AGAINST SURVEYORS UNDER THE TRANSFER OF LAND ACT.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, moved for a return showing—

1. The number of surveyors licensed under the Transfer of Land Act.
2. The number of complaints lodged against any such surveyors:
  - (a.) For delay in completion of plans.
  - (b.) Incorrectness of work done.
  - (c.) Any information regarding overcharges for work done for private individuals.

The hon. member said it had come to his knowledge that there had been a great many complaints made by the public generally as to the inefficiency of some of these surveyors, and the delays in

obtaining transfers. He also learned from legal practitioners who were interested in conveyancing work, that there was great difficulty and delay in getting transfer business done through the Land Titles Office. The officers of that department, he understood, stated that the delay was not caused in any way through any neglect on their part, in the office, but owing to the difficulty of getting the surveyors to send in their plans. Seeing also that there was a feeling prevalent that some of these surveyors were not always quite up to the mark, he thought it was desirable that this information be asked for should be furnished to the House, so that some steps might be taken, if possible, to allay the feeling of irritation and dissatisfaction now felt by the public. On the receipt of the return asked for, he would be prepared, if it seemed to him it was necessary to do so, to move some definite resolution on the subject.

Motion put and passed.

#### CONSTITUTION ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Order of the Day for the consideration of the committee's report,

Clause 4.—Security for costs:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the words "or if commenced shall be maintained or continued," in the fourth line, be struck out. This was a consequential amendment following upon the alterations already made in the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 5 and 6:

Amendments made by the committee read and agreed to.

Clause 7.—Commencement of Act:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the clause be struck out, as it was not necessary, in view of the amendments agreed to.

Question put and passed.

New clause inserted by committee read and agreed to.

Report of committee adopted.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. SIMPSON: Following, as it does, upon the debate that recently took

place in this House on the question of the further extension of State aid to Assisted schools, I suppose no more drastic measure than this was ever submitted to any Australian Legislature. Only a few days ago a motion was debated in this House, deprecating the extension of the present system of State aid to Voluntary schools, and that motion was only rejected by a small majority—a majority secured solely by the action and votes of the Government themselves; yet within forty-eight hours of the temporary rejection of that motion, we find the Government introducing into this House, in defiance of the strong feeling expressed on that occasion against the extension of this principle, a measure which distinctly provides for its extension—a measure which introduces one of the most drastic alterations, which perpetuates one of the gravest principles—a measure which not only perpetuates, but extends, one of the gravest principles—if it is a principle—that was ever introduced in any Legislature in the world.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): In the name of goodness, what is it?

**MR. SIMPSON:** The increasing of State aid to Assisted schools. Within forty-eight hours of the rejection, perilous rejection, I say, of that resolution—

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest)—*(sotto voce)*: Bosh!

**MR. SIMPSON:** I think I heard an interjection. As a rule, there is a great deal of bosh comes from that bench, and, perhaps, if the hon. gentleman, himself, refrained a little more from that particular kind of talk, his opinion on this question would have a little more weight. I say, within forty-eight hours of the perilous rejection of a resolution, a rejection brought about by the vigorous application of the Government whip, we have a Bill brought in, within forty-eight hours—

**MR. MORAN:** Nonsense! It was drafted long before.

**MR. R. F. SHOLL:** I rise to order. I ask your ruling, sir, whether it is in order to have these continual interruptions, when members are speaking upon subjects upon which they probably hold strong views? They are always occurring, and particularly from members on the cross-benches opposite.

**MR. CONNOR:** Name them, please.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is very improper to interrupt any speaker in the course of a debate. It is contrary to our Standing Orders for members to interrupt whilst any member is addressing the House, and I must ask members to desist from making these interruptions.

**MR. CONNOR:** I asked him to name them.

**THE SPEAKER:** It is not necessary to name them unless the interruption is continued.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Are we to sit here quietly when a member makes a statement which we know is not true? He says this Bill was brought in within forty-eight hours after a certain resolution was discussed in this House. If my memory serves me, that is about a fortnight ago.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Multiply 48 hours by 6 and you have a fortnight. I will make a present to the Premier of a few days. I believe that in the near future this question of State aid to Assisted schools will come to a question not of a few days, but of a few hours and a few minutes. Within a very short time of the perilous rejection, by a narrow squeak, of a motion dealing with this particular question, the Government introduced a Bill deliberately granting further monetary assistance to these schools without a single word from the Premier, who introduced the Bill, in defence of the action of the Government, except a minute from the Minister in charge of this particular department. That minute, so far as I can understand it, while giving a fair exposition of the subject, displays a very tender regard for the rights of the Assisted schools—a regard which, perhaps, rather than erring on the side of justice, throws a little weight into the scale on the side of what we might call mercy. It is suggested in this Bill—and I wish to deal only with one particular clause—that the *per capita* grant to Assisted schools shall be increased from £1 15s. to £2 5s., although it was only eight days ago since this motion of mine opposing any extension of the system was before the House.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I find it is ten days.

**MR. SIMPSON:** I may point out that the number ten is a bit ominous. It is

final. I have never yet heard of an eleventh commandment.

MR. CONNOR: It is time you did then.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Is not the eleventh commandment "Man, mind thyself?" I should have thought the hon. member understood that commandment pretty well.

MR. SIMPSON: I suppose I shall be able to proceed presently. To-day, sir, we have in this Bill a proposal submitted by the Forrest Ministry, in the face of a very close division that took place in this House within the last week or so, and in the face of a very narrow majority, and a majority to secure which the Government used all their power as a Government, and coerced members whose private opinions on the subject were known to us —

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I rise to order. The hon. member says that members were coerced by the Government.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think he ought to say that members were coerced.

MR. SIMPSON: Then I apologise. I would be sorry to suggest that even the followers of the Forrest Ministry could be coerced. We know that sometimes when coercion will not work, treacle has a very soothing effect, occasionally. The great contention in favour of these Assisted schools is, and always has been, that they supply the State with a better article than the Government schools, and for half the money,—that for 30s. they supply the country with a better article than the Government does for £3.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Thirty-five shillings.

MR. SIMPSON: That is the maximum grant; it has never gone up to that yet. I am, perhaps, a little better informed on this question than the hon. member for Bunbury. The contention in support of these denominational schools is, as I say, that they turn out as good or a better article than the State schools, at half the cost to the State. My contention right through has been that so long as we continue to endow these Assisted schools we are impairing the efficiency of our State schools. The question resolves itself into this: shall we have all denominational schools, or shall we have all State schools? The supporters of the denominational

system base their claim to this grant on the ground that they produce a better system of education at half the cost,—

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): No. They base their claim on their statutory rights under the law of the land.

MR. SIMPSON: Ah! Then you abandon every other principle, and take your stand on your statutory rights; is that how I am to understand it?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): You will understand all about it by-and-by.

MR. SIMPSON: I am sorry the hon. gentleman will not rise and answer my question. To-night we are asked to agree to an extra grant of 10s. per child to these Assisted schools, which we are told are already turning out a better article than the State schools, at half the price. If they can do that with the present grant, what will they do when they get this extra grant? If they can beat the Government schools now—that is their contention; I do not admit it myself—if they can beat the Government schools out of the field now, what will they do when they get this extra 10s. for every child attending their schools?

MR. A. FORREST: Let us have all Assisted schools, if they can do the same work with half the money.

MR. SIMPSON: For once in his life the hon. member for West Kimberley has put himself in a logical position. He says "Let us have all Assisted schools." If that is his argument, he is in this position: if he wants to have only Assisted schools, he cannot support the present dual system, and he cannot vote to-night for the extension of the dual system, as provided in this Bill. I do not know whether the present Ministry take any note of the feeling of the country on this question, or keep their eyes open to what is going on in our midst at the present moment, and see that there is a distinct spirit of rebellion, a spirit of downright mutiny, on the part of the leaders of these Assisted schools against carrying out what has been prescribed by the Administration of the country. The Government, through their accredited Minister, say: "You shall use certain books, and no others, if you want State aid." They say: "No; we demand the grant as our right, and shall use our

own books in our own schools." I say there is a distinct spirit of rebellion abroad.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I never heard of it myself.

MR. SIMPSON: The hon. gentleman says he has never heard about it. That is a singular thing when we know that the correspondence on the subject has appeared in the public press, in which the leaders of these schools claim the right to use in their schools books that are not recognised by the State or the Education Department.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): They simply claim what was granted to them when they sacrificed one-half the grant rather than sacrifice their principles.

MR. SIMPSON: Oh, is that it? They sacrificed their grant. They are prepared to sacrifice their grant rather than sacrifice their books. That is the position. I presume we may accept that as a Ministerial statement?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): No, but you can accept it from me as a positive fact that they sacrificed one-half the Government grant for the sake of upholding their principles. The hon. member ought to know that, if he knows anything about the history of this question.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What he referred to never came before the Cabinet.

MR. SIMPSON: I am sorry to have to contradict the Premier, but the question *did* come before the Cabinet. That is shown in the published correspondence, where it is stated by the Secretary to the Central Board in his letter to Bishop Gibney, that the whole question had been referred to the Cabinet, and that the decision of the Cabinet was that the books must not be used.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is not what I meant at all. You referred to some "rebellion" against the Administration. I have heard of no rebellion.

MR. SIMPSON: This Bill, sir, as I have said, proposes to increase the grant to denominational schools. This grant, to my mind, simply resolves itself into an ecclesiastical grant under another name. It is not a question of State aid to education, but a question of State aid to religion. Within the last three weeks

this House I may say unanimously agreed (having due regard to existing contracts and life interests) to abolish the Ecclesiastical Grant; yet, here, in this innocent little measure, the Government come down with a proposal to continue the grant in another form to one particular denomination.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): No.

MR. SIMPSON: A larger grant, too, than their share of the Ecclesiastical Grant. It has been clearly shown by the tenour of recent debates and controversies on this question that, with this particular denomination, it is not a question of education, but a question of religion. One of the most eloquent, most able, and most cultured authorities on the subject, the Bishop of Port Augusta (Dr. O'Reilly), who has written, I suppose, the ablest defence that ever appeared on the subject, barring perhaps Archbishop Vaughan's pamphlet, says (speaking of his own communion): "We prefer religion first, and education after." I say this House has no right to deal with this question of religion. As statesmen we have no business to touch the question of sectarianism. We are not in a position to deal with the question of religion, but we have a right to deal with the question of education. But once you begin to mix the two together, or to mix religion with politics, you are travelling beyond the functions of the State. I know I am speaking the views of the Ministry, if they were left to their own private feelings in this matter. But we know they deal with this question as a matter of expediency. But the day has gone by in these colonies when either Parliament or the State can enter into the question of the truth or untruth of the dogmas of any particular sect or denomination. We all realise the fact that it is the duty of the State to educate its children, and that the more intelligent the citizens of any country are, the more likely are they to succeed in life. The educated man, whether he is an artisan or a farmer, or is engaged in any other industry, is more likely to contribute to the development of the country more than the uneducated boor relying on his own main strength and ignorance. We know that the statistical records of the past twenty-five years go to show that with the increase of education there is a

reduction of crime. History points to the fact that the spread of education in all countries tends to turn out a better class of citizens, and that, as a rule, the better they are educated the more respect they have for law and order.

MR. MORAN: And the greater scoundrels they become, sometimes.

MR. SIMPSON: I presume the hon. member is speaking from his own knowledge.

MR. MORAN: Yes, from my own knowledge of others.

MR. SIMPSON: I will not pursue that argument. This Bill, as I have said, by increasing the grant to the Assisted schools of the colony is simply increasing the Ecclesiastical Grant to the extent of 10s. per head for every child attending these schools; and this House, having already expressed itself in favour of the discontinuance of that grant, will, if it agrees to this Bill, simply stultify its action with regard to the grant for ecclesiastical purposes. As to the returns from these schools indicating that they produce as good an article as the State schools, there is one point which those who put forward that argument are careful to conceal, and that is that these Assisted schools confine their operations to the larger centres of population, and do not go into the back-block country like the State schools do. If they find their efforts in this direction do not meet with a satisfactory pecuniary result they gracefully retire. We find from the report before us that they went to Australind, to Dardanup, to Victoria Plains; but, because they found they lost money, they retired from the field. Therefore it is easy to see how the average cost of these schools—taking the average—is below that of the State schools. I find it is the same in South Australia: the cost of the schools in the big towns is about 26s. per child, but in the far-away country it costs as much as £6 per head in some places. It is simply a question of the number of children attending; and these denominational schools are careful to confine their operations to those centres of population where there is a large aggregation of children. Here they enter into competition with the State, but they leave the field open to the State schools where there are only few children and no profitable field for their enterprise.

At 6-30 p.m. the SPEAKER left the chair.

At 7-30 p.m. the SPEAKER resumed the chair.

MR. SIMPSON (resuming his remarks): I would like to say that I should be sorry to assume any attitude that might be construed as one of antagonism to any religious denomination. I want to assist in the development of our education, or to lend my slight aid to the system that will establish our State schools as the most efficient and the best in the world. As I said before, I have no wish to say—it never occurred to me, nor have I ever said—anything to decry the efforts made in the interest of the various denominations in the past. It would be a stigma on my intelligence, and even on my integrity, to do so. I know they have done splendid work. I have endeavoured to point out that I have no wish in any way to decry their efforts in the past; and what I do wish to say is that this Bill puts plainly before us the question that an advance is now required—an extension of the financial details in connection with our education system, by which it is probable that the cost of educating the children under the State school system will be £4 10s. per head; although later on, I am perfectly satisfied, the cost will be a great deal more, in view of the developments of this immense colony. I have before me the printed returns of South Australia, a country which has paid much attention to education, and I recently had an opportunity of going through some of the principal State schools in that colony. There are architectural provisions for school buildings of several grades, ranging from class five down to class one, this uniform system being a means of saving money to the State, because there are no opportunities for the imagination of architects to try and build something different to suit local requirements. From my observation of that system, and of the system in New South Wales, I think those systems secure very fair value for the money expended. In other colonies there may have been, and I think have been, experiments in the way of school buildings; but what we wish to establish here is the greatness of the power of the Education staff—not



the building. Our great strength is the teachers, in the provisions of this Bill, and I have not the faintest notion of opposing the second reading. I am open to support it, because it provides that further aid shall be given to the Education Department of the Ministry, for enabling them to bring our State system up to a really efficient platform. In committee, on the question of granting a further endowment to the ecclesiastical bodies who govern our Assisted schools, there is no doubt decisive action will be taken. I have no intention of opposing the second reading of the Bill, and I do not think any member of this House has any other than the one desire to secure the highest educational advantages we can to all the children in the community, and hon. members are prepared to be liberal in their expenditure of public money for this purpose. Whilst being liberal, they desire, at the same time, to secure the utmost value for the money they expend. I believe that on this question there is no unanimity in the Ministry.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Oh, leave them alone.

MR. SIMPSON: So far as I know the Ministry, I believe the particular Minister in connection with this question would like to be left alone; but, so far as I know this Ministry, there is grave division on this question.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): You know nothing about it, and have no right to say that.

MR. SIMPSON: Notwithstanding those rude interjections which come from the Treasury bench, whose occupants will not bow even to the ruling of the Chair, I have reason to believe there is a grave want of unity in the Cabinet on this question. I believe there is one particular member of it inclined to take a leap in the dark, and not care whom he ruins in his fall, over this question. The question has developed into a matter of prejudice; as instance, "I have said it" in the past, and "I will stick to it" in the future. You may bring reason or bring public opinion to bear, but the reply is still the same: "I have got the power, and I will use that power ruthlessly." I look round this House and I see members as strongly interested in this question as I am. I believe there is only one opinion, one

wish, one hope in this House, and that is to turn out the highest-class citizen we can, and that is by educating the children of the country. But when I go further and say I believe a particular member of the Cabinet wishes to retain this power in his hands as a political factor in the elections, and, if I speak what is in my mind, I believe a particular member of the Cabinet wishes to hold in the hollow of his hand a power that will control and direct the electioneering forces of the future; then I resent it, and say it is not statesmanship. I hope that when this grave question comes before us in committee, hon. members will realise the fact that, if they carry out the provisions of this Bill, they will be further inducing the system that is inimical to our State schools, by granting State money to establish institutions that must and will ruin our State system of education. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but I speak thus early in order to intimate that there will be a certain opposition in committee; and I hope the country will realise the position, and that the Government will give to the country an opportunity of expressing its opinion on this new provision. Therefore, before the Bill goes into committee, a week at least should be allowed to elapse. I am perfectly prepared to accept public opinion, and I believe the public opinion in this country says distinctly that the Assisted school system will ruin our State schools. I shall oppose, in committee, the granting of this further 10s. *per annum per capita* for children attending the Assisted schools.

MR. CONNOR: I have not much to say on this Bill, but there is a particular clause which I shall try to have altered in committee. As to the personality which has been introduced into the debate by the hon. member for Geraldton, I will not refer to that. As to the justice of the proposed increase of pay to the State schools, I do not think any hon. member will object, because if we are to increase our State schools, and are to have the efficiency which is necessary, the grant ought to be increased. As to whether or not the amount that is granted to Assisted schools should also be increased, that is a matter which can be threshed out in committee, when the hon. member (Mr. Simpson), who has spoken so eloquently, will have his opportunity of objecting to

the particular style of education which he opposes. It is not now necessary to go into the question of the efficiency of the schools which that hon. member has been attacking. At a time when this colony was not in a position to educate its children as well as they ought to be educated, the institutions which the hon. member is attacking did, in that emergency, step in and endeavour to educate the children of the colony; and, because they did so, and have brought their system to a high standard which cannot be excelled, is that any reason why the schools which were then instituted should now be crushed out? As to those people being a particular community, their schools are open to all children, and are attended by children of various denominations, as the hon. member knows; therefore, why should this particular form of education be attacked by the hon. member? I believe hon. members of this House can judge why, and I will not make any suggestion. I shall support the second reading of the Bill; and, in committee, I shall oppose a certain clause which interferes with the principal Act.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest):** The Government have no desire to hurry this Bill. The committee stage can be fixed, nominally, for the next sitting.

Ordered—that the consideration of the Bill in committee be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

#### REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE— INQUIRY INTO AMENDMENTS OF MINING ACT AND GOLDFIELDS REGULATIONS.

Report received, and ordered to be printed.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

##### ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The following Message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

*Mr. Speaker,*

"The Legislative Council acquaints the Legislative Assembly that it has agreed to a Bill intituled 'An Act to amend "The Roads Act, 1888," subject "to the amendment contained in the "Schedule annexed; in which amendment

"the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"GEO. SHENTON,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber, Perth,  
"18th October, 1894."

*Schedule showing the Amendment made by the Legislative Council in "The Roads Act, 1888, Amendment Bill."*

On page 4—Add the following new clause, to stand as No. 11:—

"Section 9 of 'The Roads Act, 1888,' is hereby amended by omitting the words 'within the district,' in the first line thereof."

C. LEE STEERE,

Clerk of the Council.

Ordered—That the consideration, in committee, of the foregoing Message be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

#### PHARMACY AND POISONS BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 5, inclusive:

Agreed to.

Clause 6.—Constitution of Society:

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt)** moved, as an amendment, that all the words up to and inclusive of the word "by," in line 2, be struck out, and the following words be inserted in lieu thereof:—"The Pharmaceutical Society already established in the colony shall be the Pharmaceutical Society of Western Australia, and may retain."

Put and passed, and the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 7 to 20, inclusive:

Put and passed.

Clause 21.—Qualification to be registered as pharmaceutical chemist:

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt)** moved, as an amendment, that the following sub-clause be added to the clause:—" (a.) Is a member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Western Australia "at the time of the passing of this Act, "or."

Put and passed.

**MR. JAMES** moved, as a further amendment, that the word "immediately" be inserted after the word "years,"

in line 1 of sub-clauses (a), (b), and (c).

Put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 22.—Manner of application under qualifications (a), (b), or (c), &c.:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved, as an amendment, that the following sub-clause be added to the clause:—

“(4.) No application under qualifications (b), (c), or (d) shall be made except within six months of the coming into operation of this Act.”

Put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 23 to 35, inclusive:

Agreed to.

Clause 36.—Act not to extend to certain sales of poison:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), having pointed out certain clerical errors, which were accordingly corrected, moved, as an amendment, that the following words be inserted after the word “papers,” in line 10: “nor to the sale of poisonous mixtures and fluids for the eradication of insect pests, or disease in fruit trees, grape vines, or other vegetation.”

Put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 37 to 43, inclusive:

Agreed to.

Schedules, first to eighth, inclusive:

Agreed to.

Preamble and title:

Agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

# ESTIMATES, 1894-95.

## IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration in committee resumed.

Customs, £12,361:

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this department was growing rapidly, for he noticed that another officer, the Chief Landing Surveyor, was placed on the permanent staff.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the officer referred to was Mr. Goodsir, who had been recommended by the Collector of Customs in Victoria as being thoroughly acquainted with Customs duties. It had been found necessary to have a man of experience in

this position, and, in response to a request from this Government, Mr. Goodsir was highly recommended by the Collector in Victoria.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said if the new officer got a pension from Victoria as a retrenched officer, what necessity was there to put him on the permanent staff in this colony?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, as a new officer in this colony, Mr. Goodsir could not get a pension here for less than ten years' service.

MR. RANDELL said there were delays and annoyances to consignees and agents in obtaining delivery of goods at the Custom House in Fremantle. There appeared to be a dual control, causing continual loss of time and loss of goods, these annoyances having become almost unbearable. He understood, however, that some fresh arrangement had been recently made. He knew of instances of goods cleared for Perth being sent to Northam or to Guildford, showing there was a want of proper system. Claims sent in for lost goods were not attended to with reasonable promptitude. The other day he received two packages from the Custom House which must have been there since May last. There was a case of ornaments sent from Fremantle to Guildford, then traced back to Fremantle, and supposed afterwards to have been sent to Geraldton; but a month later the same case was found in one of the stores at the Custom House in Fremantle. This was a sample of the want of system. He thought the control over goods should not have been handed over to the Railway Department, but should have remained with the Customs authorities.

MR. SOLOMON said he could bear out much of what had fallen from the hon. member. Complaints with regard to the shipping of chaff were numerous. If chaff bearing specific marks was landed, that consignment would be taken possession of by the Railway Department, and when the consignees applied for it they could not get it, and, failing to recover from the ship, they ultimately had to be satisfied with chaff bearing different marks, and evidently consigned to other persons, but mixed somehow in the goods sheds. The dual system had worked very badly at Fremantle, but he under-

stood a different system was being inaugurated.

MR. RANDELL said a short time ago 72 bundles of piping were sent from the Customs House into the Railway stores, he presumed. Not till a week afterwards could his agent discover their whereabouts, and three more weeks elapsed before he could get the balance of the piping.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he was sorry to hear the complaints made; but any hon. member could best realise the increased amount of the business done in the handling of imported goods at Fremantle, by comparing the present volume of imports with what had to be dealt with at the Customs House a few years ago. In the returns of every carrying company throughout the world the same kind of thing occurred, and it was not possible to provide against all such mistakes. During the last few months there had been a large importation of chaff, which blocked up the available space, and he wondered how the men had been able to cope with the business at all, and was not surprised at a few mistakes occurring. He did not think the fault was that of the officers so much as the administration, in not having been able to foresee the growth of requirements by building larger sheds. Many thousands of pounds had had to be expended in providing more and more storage accommodation, and the Government did not like to expend large sums without being sure of the necessity. He hoped that such misadventures as had been mentioned would be reduced to a minimum. He disagreed with those hon. members who said the dual control had much to do with the trouble, because if the control were with the Customs Department, at present, the business of the country would be blocked, because the Customs Department would require to have all the conveniences which the Railway Department had at present, and could not work the business separately. An improvement was visible every day, and he felt sure that, before long, the trouble lately experienced by importers and agents would be reduced to a minimum.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this department appeared to be under a wrong head, for the vote was nominally under the

direction of the Treasurer, whereas the committee had to depend on the Commissioner of Railways for explanation with regard to the Customs Department. There were large receipts from wharfage dues which went to swell, fictitiously, the railway revenue.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Customs Department could not be expected to do the carrying of goods, as this department had no trucks, or engines, or drivers. The most economical plan was to let the Railway Department do this work, having all the necessary appliances. The two things were perfectly distinct. The security of the goods, the collection of the tariff charges, and the protection of the revenue, were entirely different from the carrying of the goods. The importations had latterly been in excess of the accommodation at Fremantle; but that deficiency was being rectified by the erection of tremendous sheds, so that the difficulty would soon be minimised. The principal reason why there had been complaints recently was the largeness of the imports and the smallness of the accommodation. As to mixing up the Customs and Railway Departments, that would be ridiculous.

MR. SOLOMON said the fault was not so much in the dual control over goods imported, as it was in the arrangement which required the railway station master at Fremantle to run from one place to the other for answering questions. That arrangement was now being altered, and he believed the system had been working better during the last week.

MR. KEEP said he must testify to the very satisfactory working of the dual system at present. Formerly the pier-master and the station master were one and the same person, but now a pier-master had been appointed separately, and things were going on better. When the new sheds got finished, he thought there would be no grievances. The appointment of a pier master had certainly had a good effect.

MR. R. F. SHOLL noticed two fresh appointments of clerks, Items 9 and 10.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said these were new appointments.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said these clerks, although new, were put on the permanent staff. In the event of their services being dispensed with, under retrench-

ment, would these clerks be entitled to pensions?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, up to ten years, if service were dispensed with, an officer on the permanent staff would get some gratuity—he thought it was one month's pay for every year of service. No officer became entitled to a pension until after ten years of service; then the officer became entitled to one-sixtieth of his salary, but he could not leave the service until he reached 60 years of age. If allowed to go at 60, or if the officer became incapable of performing the duties, he would receive a pension according to his length of service.

MR. A. FORREST said he formerly had the honour of serving twelve months on the permanent staff, and his office being then abolished he received one month's pay, £12 10s., as a gratuity.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked if any check was kept over the calculations of the Statistical Clerk, as to the accuracy of the duties levied on imported goods.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Auditor General checked the amounts of duty levied, to see they were correct.

MR. WOOD, referring to Item 15, "Jerquer, £220," said this was an old officer, one of the best in the service, and he deserved an increase to £300.

MR. SOLOMON said he had known this person, Mr. O'Connor, many years, as a very good officer.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said this instance showed the general practice. An old servant was kept down, and men lately entering the service had their salaries raised.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said several persons had spoken to him favourably with regard to this officer, and last year the salary was increased, but this year no increase in this salary had been recommended by the Collector of Customs. He (the Premier) had broken the rule last year by putting an increase to this salary, because recommendations reached him from so many persons.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the Collector of Customs had not been long in that position, and no doubt he did not yet appreciate the position and merits of old and efficient servants. Referring to Item 75, "Temporary clerical assistance, £225,"

he asked why this was necessary in addition to all the clerks on the list?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there had been a tremendous increase of business, and this vote was for special requirements.

MR. A. FORREST, referring to Item 76, "Special protection to Northern revenue, £250," said the amount received through the Customs in the North had doubled in one year, and the increased expenditure was not large in proportion.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the intention was to pay the expenses of persons employed to detect smuggling along the coast.

MR. KEEP hoped the detectives employed on the North-West coast would be more active than in the past. His experience was that tobacco and cigars were being put over the side of the ship when the gentleman appointed to detect smuggling was in the saloon drinking whiskey.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to Item 77, "House allowance, Collector of Customs, (temporary), £100," said he understood the Collector of Customs resided in Perth, and had a free pass by railway, arriving at his office at half-past nine in the morning, and reaching home again at half-past three in the afternoon. No doubt the Collector was an excellent officer, but this item was increasing the salary by £100 a year by a side-wind. The Collector was a friend of his, and he (Mr. Sholl) did not see why he should move to strike out the item, but if any other member would move, he would support the striking out. The argument might be used that if the present Collector retired on a pension he might be able to claim for this extra £100.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that what the hon. member suggested was the very thing the Collector had wanted the Government to do. The reason that actuated the Government in putting this item on the Estimates this year was the fact that when the appointment was made, it was at £600 a year and a house at Fremantle, occupied by the former Collector. Mr. Clayton Mason then obtained permission to live in Perth, at his own house, and the Government let the house in Fremantle to a tenant for £100 a year; and although the Collector had not received that amount

during two years, the Government were now proposing to give him the £100 a year which was being received for the rent of the house in Fremantle. The only fee received by the Collector was £25 a year for carrying out the duties of passenger officer, under the Passenger Act. The total payments would thus be £725 a year.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not see that the Collector was entitled to a house allowance, while preferring to reside in Perth.

MR. A. FORREST said the Government had promised the Collector a house, when he was appointed, and he ought now to receive the rent, in the way proposed. The Collector was a most deserving officer.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked if the Collector would also receive a free pass on the railway? It would be better if the Collector were to reside in Fremantle.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that would be arranged by-and-by, he hoped.

MR. LOTON said it would be better to show, in one item, the salary each officer was receiving. As the duties of an office increased, the heads of departments did not think they were sufficiently paid in comparison with officers holding similar positions in other colonies. This officer had done good service, and was very energetic, and doubtless had saved to the country more than the amount of his salary. It would be better if the Collector resided in Fremantle, instead of in Perth.

Vote put and passed.

*Postal and Telegraph, £86,413 0s. 6d.:*

MR. WOOD said the increases in this department were not in accordance with the increases in other departments; and although he believed the postal and telegraph officers worked harder than those in any other department, the increases seemed to be less. Referring to Item 4, "Managing Clerk, Savings Bank, £310," he said the present increase of £20 was not enough for an old officer in charge of so important a department.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to Item 3, "Accountant, £350," said this officer had been working assiduously, and was acknowledged to be one of the best in the service. He joined in 1861, and after having spent his life in the service, he had the magnificent salary of £350. No. 5, "Assistant Inspector of Post and

Telegraphs, £280," joined the service in 1873, and now received the magnificent salary of £280, being an increase of £20 this year. No. 6, "Clerk, Registered Letter Branch, £280," entered in 1864, and now received the magnificent salary of £280, being an increase of £20 this year. These instances showed that the old and valued officers, who had served the country a life-time, were kept back while new officers were placed over their heads. He must persistently protest against that.

MR. A. FORREST said a man might get too old to do good work. There must be a time when increases should go no further. Increases should be given for merit, and not merely for age. The best men could not be kept back. They must come to the front.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he had been alluding to officers who were not only old, but efficient, such as the Chief Clerk and Cashier, the Assistant Inspector of Post and Telegraphs, and the Clerk Registered Letter Branch. If the head of the Post Office had a weakness, it was on the side of meanness, for he studied too much the expenditure instead of looking after his valuable officers. It was unfair to the service that the Postmaster General did not look better after the old officers.

MR. COOKWORTHY said the heads of departments were better judges of the value of servants than members of Parliament could be. It was a great mistake for members to interfere with the departments. If a department was not properly managed, members should find fault with the Ministerial head. As to servants being underpaid, members of this House, and others, were pestered with applications from persons outside who wanted to get into the public service.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it was the duty of members of this House to see that old servants were not overlooked.

MR. RANDELL said the Post Office servants had been receiving small salaries because a large number of persons had to be employed in that department. The total expenditure for this department would be very large this year on account of the extensions of the service. A professional man must, of necessity, receive a larger salary than one who was only a clerk. When an officer reached a salary of £350 a year he had not much to com-

plain of, and increases in such cases could not go on. There might be cases of hardship, here and there, and especially in the Post Office Department; but, at the same time, there were numerous applicants anxious to enter the service, and he was sorry to see there were so many. He would like to see openings in other employments, that would prevent men from seeking appointments which carried with them, in many cases, very small salaries.

MR. CLARKSON said hon. members would not object to pay a good salary to a good servant. Many of the heads of departments and chief officers had too many assistants under them. He believed in paying good men well, and making them work well for it.

MR. LEAKE said the telegraph operators especially were underpaid, the average salary being about £120 a year. The Postmaster General should direct his attention to improving the condition of these officers. Comparing the salaries in this department, the money was dealt out with a very niggard hand, as compared with the Audit Department, and one or two others.

MR. CLARKSON said he would improve the salaries by putting two or three into one, and making fewer men do the work.

MR. SIMPSON said that, without supporting the proposition for knocking three into one, yet the country could expend its funds in no wiser way than in supplying telegraph and postal conveniences to the back blocks. He would prefer to err on the side of liberality in carrying on and extending these services. The Postmaster General might wisely take the tone of this House as to extending these services to people in country districts. A rather more liberal policy might well be adopted, and he hoped to see more liberal payment in the next year's Estimates, especially in the case of men who had to go into inconvenient and expensive places to live. The positions should be remunerated in such a way as to secure the highest talent and integrity, by keeping the men satisfied with their positions.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said hon. members could hardly have much fault to find with the Government in

reference to affording postal and telegraphic facilities to the back settlements of the country. As to salaries in this department, there was a substantial increase in almost every item—an increase of £10 to £20 a year, all down the column—and these increases continued year after year. There was no desire on the part of the Government or the head of the department to be illiberal; but the desire rather was to pay a fair salary to men who understood their work and did it properly.

MR. A. FORREST said the opinion of the House had taken a turn in favour of increasing salaries, whereas that was different from the tendency previously. About one-third of the officers in this department were new, in consequence of the extension of the service, and if the new officers were satisfied to accept the salaries, there was not much to complain about. He did not see why persons should expect to get increases as soon as they were appointed. Life was made almost unbearable by the number of applications made to members of this House, by persons who wanted to get into the public service; yet when persons had once got in, they were then all on for increases of salary. If officers performed their duties well, no doubt they would get increases according to their worth. He believed in seeing people well paid for everything they did, but he did not like to see too many engaged in an office on small pay. The question was one of supply and demand, and if there were too many applicants, the pay would be low. He was sorry to find that the tenor of the remarks, especially on the Opposition benches, was for increasing salaries. They might be sure, however, that the increases which were recommended in this department were well deserved.

MR. RICHARDSON said it was easy at any time to urge the Government to increase salaries; but when the Government did bring down increases, the tendency would be to find fault with the increases.

MR. SOLOMON, referring to Item 50, "Inspector of Post and Telegraphs, £330," said he was given to understand that this officer, Mr. Hancock, had incurred expenses for things that were not required.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this inspector was Mr. Snook—a very good officer, and in every way suitable to the position.

MR. WOOD, referring to Item 148, "Postmaster, Boorabin, £150," said he did not see how an officer at a place like Boorabin could carry out the duties on so small a salary, as cost of living must be quite £150 a year.

MR. MORAN, referring to Item 184, "Post and Telegraph Master, Coolgardie, £190," asked if there had been any change in this officer.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he believed there had been a change, but no report had reached him concerning it. The officers in this department being so many, the Government had to trust implicitly to the Postmaster General. In only very few instances had complaints come before Ministers in reference to the post office. He believed the officers were fairly treated. As to Mr. Sinclair, who was moved from Coolgardie, that officer was now in Perth, but his case had never come officially before him (the Premier), so that if Mr. Sinclair had complained to members of this House, they had not forwarded the complaint to him as the Ministerial head of the department. The Postmaster General had reported that Mr. Sinclair was a very good operator. He was formerly at Derby, and was transferred to Coolgardie; but, while he was there, the complaints from Coolgardie were so numerous that the Postmaster General and the Inspector of Mails went together to see for themselves. So thoroughly dissatisfied were they with Mr. Sinclair's management of the office that another officer was put in his place, and Mr. Sinclair was removed to Perth. Since the change was made, the work had gone on satisfactorily, so he was informed. The change was necessary and reasonable, in the interest of the service, and should not be made a matter of complaint. Were hon. members of this House to be judges in such a matter, or should they trust to the Postmaster General?

MR. MORAN said that for several weeks past he had been urged by the Mayor of Coolgardie and others, and even blamed, for not doing his duty by bringing the matter before this House. He had always found the Postmaster

General most civil, obliging, and attentive to the wants of the great constituency he (Mr. Moran) had the honour to represent. But in this case the Postmaster General, through not knowing the conditions under which the postal work had been carried on at Coolgardie, had inflicted an injury and injustice on one of the best officers. Mr. Sinclair was spoken of by the Postmaster General in the highest terms of praise. While in the North, Mr. Sinclair had risked his life repeatedly in restoring the telegraph line during times of flood. When the Postmaster General and the Inspector of Mails went to Coolgardie, they found things confused. The building was small, and there was a rush of people at mail time, greater than occurred even in Perth. Mr. Sinclair had repeatedly asked for assistance, but it was not sent until the day on which the Postmaster General arrived there, and on the same day Mr. Sinclair was removed. Knowing the clamour there had been against the whole department, he (Mr. Moran) was afraid the postmaster at Coolgardie was made the scapegoat; but the people there, knowing the circumstances, had perceived the injustice of the removal, and were demanding, through himself as their representative, that justice should be done to this officer. Mr. Sinclair had informed him (Mr. Moran) that the first words the Inspector of Mails said at Coolgardie were these:—"Mr. Sinclair, I am astonished you have done so well." After they came back to Perth, the same officer said:—"Mr. Sinclair, you have been very ill-treated." That being the case, how could it be said the Inspector of Mails was thoroughly dissatisfied with the work of the Coolgardie office, unless that officer was actuated with a desire to agree with his chief? An injustice had been done to a most deserving officer, who was, perhaps, the best operator in the colony, and who had also had a good training in the postal department. Had Mr. Sinclair been left in charge of the Coolgardie office, with the additional assistance, no doubt he would have done the work satisfactorily. He had been working in the office 16 and 17 hours a day, with hardly time to take food. Mr. Sinclair said now that the ambition was taken out of him, because he felt he had been unjustly treated. He had spoken to him (Mr.



Moran) several times, suggesting an inquiry, and saying that if he had done ill he would abide by it. There had been a tremendous run of business at the Coolgardie post office, and the head of the office had been made a victim to the unhappy circumstances. He hoped the Premier would see his way clear to reinstate Mr. Sinclair.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that if this officer thought he had not been well treated, his better course would have been to come and see him (the Premier), as the Minister in charge of the department, rather than go to the member representing the district. Parliament was a last resort, when a man could not get justice in the ordinary course. If a man in the public service went to a member of Parliament about his grievance, and did not go to the Minister whom he ought to look to, such a course was very reprehensible. The course taken in this case was a wrong one, and could not benefit the officer concerned. He (the Premier) did not know anything about Mr. Sinclair personally, except that he had been favourably impressed by Mr. Sinclair's civility when he (the Premier) visited Coolgardie.

MR. MORAN said the officer had left the matter entirely in his hands; but he (Mr. Moran) could see now that Mr. Sinclair should have gone to the Premier. He (Mr. Moran) did speak to the Postmaster General, who had the idea that Mr. Sinclair had not attended to his duty, because there had been complaints in the public Press. Mr. Sinclair had not in any way desired to bring the matter before the public. He had told him (Mr. Moran) that if this course did him an injury, still he could not allow his character to be taken away. He (Mr. Moran) hoped the Premier would take no offence, because Mr. Sinclair had not gone to him first.

MR. LEAKE hoped that what had been stated in the House would not prejudice Mr. Sinclair in having justice done to him; although, from the tenor of the Premier's remarks, it would seem that this might be so. When the Premier did become aware of the circumstances, would it not have been well to send for that officer?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have something else to do besides that.

MR. LEAKE said that was why this young man could not get near him. Mr. Sinclair might think he would offend his official chief by appealing to the Minister. When at Coolgardie, he (Mr. Leake) heard this officer spoken of in the most laudatory terms. Through this removal, Mr. Sinclair was subjected to the indignity of a reduction, by being reduced from the position of postmaster in an important country town to that of a mere operator in the Perth office; and this might militate against his chance of future promotion. If that were so, it was right that Mr. Sinclair should be reinstated in his former position. When the telegraph line was completed to Coolgardie, he (Mr. Leake) was there, and the office was rushed by people. Mr. Sinclair had to do nearly all the operating, his assistant not being sufficiently skilful, and he had also to attend to the postal work. The accommodation in the office was of the most meagre description, and after the mail arrived there was a tremendous rush at the window for letters. He hoped the Minister would inquire and satisfy himself as to whether this officer had been unfairly dealt with. He resented the suggestion that members of this House were not privileged to bring these matters before Parliament.

MR. A. FORREST said he had known this officer many years. While at Derby, Mr. Sinclair did good work, and last year he was the means of giving valuable information about the floods. At Coolgardie great complaints were made by the public about the small office being continually crowded, and Mr. Sinclair must have worked at that time 18 hours out of the 24, the office being considerably undermanned, and the building totally inadequate. After Mr. Sinclair was removed, he came to him (Mr. A. Forrest) about it, and the advice given to the aggrieved officer was that if he could not get redress from the Postmaster General, he should ask members to interest themselves in the case. Mr. Sinclair felt that he had been made the scapegoat for all the troubles at Coolgardie. He (Mr. Forrest) did not think the Postmaster General had any idea of the importance of a mining town. The Government should inquire into the case.

MR. SIMPSON said the hon. member for Yilgarn had trespassed on no right or privilege in bringing this matter before the House. The great fault lay at the door of the Minister who had told them this officer should not have gone to the member representing his district. This raised the question as to the right of every member to represent the wrong done to any of his constituents, and he (Mr. Simpson) did not think there was ever a more improper statement made by a Prime Minister than that which the Premier had made in saying the hon. member had no right to bring this matter before Parliament.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) : I said nothing of the sort. Misrepresent me, as you generally do.

MR. SIMPSON said he might have failed to grasp the Premier's meaning. It was a grave Ministerial error that this young man should be made the scapegoat of troubles caused by a want of proper administration.

MR. MORAN hoped the Premier would not feel aggrieved at anything that had been said on this occasion. Mr. Sinclair had spoken to him and two other members; and although he (Mr. Moran) did not advise him to take the right course, why did not the other two members advise him to take the right course? The Premier was about the most approachable Minister. There was, at Coolgardie, a certain system of delivering letters. The Postmaster General told Mr. Sinclair he must discontinue the system and must revert to the pigeon-hole system. Mr. Sinclair tried it, but had he persisted in it while there were a crowd of impatient men at the window calling for their letters, and not able to get them delivered quick enough, the small office would have been pulled down by the impatient crowd. He had to give up the pigeon-hole system and use the readier system which he had been forbidden to use. He wrote to that effect to the head office at Perth, and was censured for not having followed the instruction. The Postmaster General had not had the experience of a crowd of impatient diggers at a goldfields post office, and so he could not realise Mr. Sinclair's predicament. This young man should be given a trial with a more competent staff.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the Postmaster General and one of his experienced

assistants went to the Coolgardie office, and, after observing the system, they thought that, in the interest of the service, it was better to remove the postmaster, and he was removed. Soon after that, some one who was correspondent for the *West Australian* newspaper wrote about the indignation which he said was caused by the removal of the postmaster. When a correspondent of a newspaper took so much interest in a certain official occupying the position of postmaster, it was better for the service that the official should be removed, because the correspondent might obtain information which it was not desirable he should know. When a postmaster or a telegraph operator began to converse with a newspaper correspondent, that officer became dangerous and should be removed. Also, when any officer went complaining to a member of Parliament, instead of to the Ministerial head of the department, that officer should be removed from the service. Every head of a department was responsible for the proper working of it, and if every twopenny-halfpenny clerk that was sent into the interior could not be removed, without members coming to this House and attacking the head of the department —

MR. MORAN : I did not speak of the head of any department except in the highest terms. The hon. member is the brother of the Postmaster General.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said any officer who ventilated his grievances to a member of this House, without first going to the head of the department, should be discharged from the service, and the Government would be neglecting their duty if they did not do it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he was sorry to hear such immoderate remarks. The remarkable increase of business at the Coolgardie Post and Telegraph office showed that a capable officer had been trying to do about six times as much work as he ought to do, and while he was struggling through the work in these difficult circumstances, the head office could not be made to understand that more assistance was needed, until the Postmaster General and a second in command went to see the place, and then an increase was attempted, for the Estimates showed a sum of £1,000 for additional assistants.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): He did not want the assistants before the telegraph was opened.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he knew that personal friends of his had stood seven hours at the post office in Coolgardie, waiting to get their letters delivered at the window. He believed that Mr. Sinclair had been striving to do his best, and had appealed to the head office for more help, but could not get it. This officer had been moved from his position, and reduced; and because he could not get redress from the head of his department, it was said he should not have communicated his grievance to a member of Parliament, but must be censured for taking an improper course. And, to make the matter worse, the hon. member for the Gascoyne now said the officer should be dismissed from the service. All this was carrying things a great deal too far. This officer had a right to bring his grievances before Parliament. Possibly it might have been more agreeable to the department if the officer had waited on the Treasurer; but the experience of most persons who went through that routine, not necessarily in this colony, was that the head of the department sustained the decision of the head officer, and so on lower down. His own practice, in dealing with the grievances of individuals, was to try and see the head of the department first; but, while that was the best course, there was still the right to bring the matter before this House.

MR. JAMES said he also took exception to the remarks of the Premier, who had intimated that it would not be to the interest of this officer to have brought his grievance before this House. If it was to be laid down that, when an official brought his grievance before this House, the majority which supported the Government would be brought into play, he must protest against that course. This officer appeared to have given complete satisfaction to those most concerned, namely the people in the place whom he had to serve. It did seem as if Mr. Sinclair had been used as a scapegoat. For himself, he must claim the right, as a member, to bring any particular case before this House, for consideration on its merits.

MR. MORAN said he did not wish it to be stated that he had made an attack

on the head of the department. If there was blame, it rested on the inspecting officer who went to Coolgardie with the Postmaster General, and who spoke in one way to the Postmaster General, and yet told Mr. Sinclair, as a private opinion, that he wondered at Mr. Sinclair in having done so well under the circumstances. As to the advice which the member for the Gascoyne had given to the Government, that they should shunt this officer at once, if the Government did anything like that, he (Mr. Moran) would immediately move his seat alongside the member for Albany, for it would be quite enough to know that any Government violated the first principle of justice. But, from what he knew of the Premier, no one in this House would be less likely to inflict an injustice on anybody. He believed this might be said also of the other members of the Cabinet.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that, in the remark which had been referred to, he did not allude to any member in particular; but if the Government wanted to remove the opposition of the member for Albany, the most effectual way would be to induce the member for Yilgarn to shift his seat alongside the member for Albany, when the latter would remove to the other side of the House.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said this was a case of "save me from my friends." This was not the first case of the kind. Some hon. members should not be so anxious to misunderstand the Premier, who had not said, and did not wish it to be inferred, that members had no right to bring personal grievances before this House. The Premier had said it was an improper course for an official to take his grievance to a member of this House, before he had tried to get redress from the head of the department, and before he had appealed to the Minister. The Premier did not wish to reflect upon members in bringing this case before the House. The member for Yilgarn, while generally eulogising the Postmaster General, blamed him for having removed Mr. Sinclair from his position. If it was admitted that the Postmaster General was possessed of great acumen, the inference might be drawn that this great

business acumen, and the practical knowledge of his assistant officer, justified him in making the change which he did. He (the Director of Public Works) could not understand that a man could be so wise in his general actions and yet make so grievous a blunder in this action. If it were so, the Postmaster General must, for once in his life, have made a very great blunder.

MR. LOTON said the argument amounted to this, that the officer at Coolgardie had been very much over-worked. The Estimates showed that the money paid to assistants in June last was very small indeed in comparison with the amount now required for a much larger staff. As to the system of delivering letters, the Postmaster General naturally saw that the Government were undertaking a great responsibility, and he gave instructions that the letters must be properly sorted and pigeon-holed. It appeared that, after this order was issued, this competent and trustworthy officer, when the next mail arrived, pursued the system of sorting the letters before delivering any, and the people who were waiting for letters declared they would not wait, and that unless the postmaster handed out their letters in the quickest way he could, they would come inside and take the letters. The officer found himself compelled to disobey the official instruction, and he informed his superior officer that he had done so. Probably, if an investigation were made, it would be found that the officer had been removed mainly because he disobeyed the official instruction under those circumstances.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No, no. The Postmaster General told me Mr. Sinclair was not fit for the work.

MR. LOTON said it was desirable that a full, reasonable, and fair inquiry should be made by the Government into the matter; and, unless there was some other charge, if the officer was not to be reinstated in the same place, he ought to be reinstated in a similar position elsewhere. What the Premier had stated, with reference to the bringing of grievances before this House, was right and just. The Premier did not say that an hon. member was not entitled to bring any complaint of the kind before the House, but that it would be better, and would have been

the proper procedure in this case, if the aggrieved officer had endeavoured to reach the head of the department—the Ministerial head—in the first instance. Still the hon. member for Yilgarn was right in bringing the matter before this House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, excepting what he saw in the newspapers, and excepting one conversation he had with the Postmaster General, this matter was never before brought under his notice, either by the Postmaster General or any one else. If it had been, it would have been looked into, the same as any other case. The Postmaster General told him (the Premier) that this officer, although an excellent operator, had not sufficient head for the duties of the office at Coolgardie; that this fact was manifest as soon as the Postmaster General looked into the office, and that before coming away from the place he was convinced that Mr. Sinclair was not equal to the work; also, that Mr. Howlett, who was experienced in mail work, agreed entirely in this opinion, remarking that it would never do, and that Mr. Sinclair had not enough head for the work. Being asked how the work was being done after the change of officers, the Postmaster General said everything was going on right. As to the idea of doing injustice to this officer, that was as far from his mind as the poles were asunder. Being told in this House now that Mr. Sinclair was a splendid officer, and quite equal to the duties, what was he (the Premier) to do? He could only hold the Postmaster General responsible. It was very easy for irresponsible babblers to talk.

MR. LEAKE: Is the hon. gentleman in order in pointing to this (the Opposition) side, and speaking of us as irresponsible babblers?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Premier did not refer to anyone in particular, that I could see.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that when those members came to occupy the position of Ministers, they would find themselves in a great difficulty if they acted contrary to the advice of the head of the department in such a case. The course to take was that, if the Government had not confidence in the man who had charge of a department, they

should get rid of him; but, so long as he was in charge, he should be trusted. The Postmaster General had not made this change carelessly, for he went up to Coolgardie with his Chief Inspector of Mails, and they both agreed that the officer was not fit for the position. He (the Premier) denied that Mr. Sinclair had suffered any harm by removal to Perth. A great deal too much had been made out of this case, and he very much questioned whether, when the matter was sifted to the bottom, as it would be, it would be found that any injustice had been done.

Mr. MORAN said Mr. Howlett had admitted to other persons that Mr. Sinclair had been badly treated. When speaking together in the post office at Coolgardie, Mr. Howlett said to Mr. Sinclair, "I am astounded how well you have done." Just when four additional assistants were added to the staff, Mr. Sinclair was withdrawn, and the work had not increased at that time. If the Premier was going to make an inquiry through his own officers alone, it would not be a just one.

Mr. CLARKSON said that if the Postmaster General was not to be trusted with the management of his department, he should be removed. The member for Yilgarn had taken a wrong course by bringing this matter before the House in the way he had done, and occupying much time.

Mr. JAMES, referring to Item 461, "Beaconsfield letter carrier, forage, £30," asked whether any provision was made in the Estimates for a letter carrier on the South Perth side and the Victoria Park Estate. Perhaps one of the assistant carriers at Perth might do duty on the South side. A letter-box had been lately placed in Victoria Park, on the Albany Road, but he noticed that the box was broken already, so that any letters placed in it for collection would not be secure. There should be a daily delivery on that side.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he would make a note of the matter, and no doubt an arrangement could be made. He did not see any item in the Estimates for that purpose.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

## MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

### LOAN BILL.

The following Message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

"Mr. Speaker,

"The Legislative Council having received a Message from the Legislative Assembly returning the Loan Bill, with the suggestions of the Legislative Council, requests to be informed of the reasons which led the Legislative Assembly to decline to accede to the suggestions of the Legislative Council.

"GEO. SHENTON,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber, Perth, 18th October, 1894."

Ordered—That the consideration in committee of the foregoing Message be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

### MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

The following Message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

"Mr. Speaker,

"The Legislative Council acquaints the Legislative Assembly that it has agreed to a Bill intituled 'An Act to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Municipalities,' subject to the amendments contained in the Schedule annexed; in which amendments the Legislative Council desires the concurrence of the Legislative Assembly.

"GEO. SHENTON,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber, Perth, 18th October, 1894."

*Schedule of Amendments made by the Legislative Council in the "Municipal Institutions Bill."*

No. 1.—Page 3, Clause 3.—Add to the end of the Clause:—"Town Clerk shall include the clerk of the municipality or any officer appointed to act as such for the time being."

No. 2.—Page 3, Clause 5, line 2.—Strike out "and appointed" and insert "or appointed by or."

No. 3.—Page 5, Clause 9, sub-clause (2), paragraph (b), line 1.—After "and" insert "either declare such portion to be a new municipality or."

- No. 4.—Page 11, Clause 39, paragraph 2, line 5.—Between “is” and “entitled” insert “under this Act.”
- No. 5.—Page 12, Clause 40, line 17.—Strike out “and shall have and exercise,” and insert “and such person or persons shall have and exercise all the powers of valuers under this Act.”
- No. 6.—Page 15, Clause 51, line 4.—After “same” add “not exceeding the sum of five shillings for each copy.”
- No. 7.—Page 16, Clause 54, line 12.—Between “shall” and “vote” insert “take part in any discussion or.”
- No. 8.—Page 16, Clause 55, last line.—Strike out “and Fremantle” and insert “Fremantle and Albany.”
- No. 9.—Page 16, Clause 56, lines 2 and 3.—Strike out “and Fremantle” and insert “Fremantle and Albany.”
- No. 10.—Page 17, Clause 59, lines 4 and 5.—Strike out “if he be ill, absent, or incapacitated by law from being the returning officer.”
- No. 11.—Page 17, Clause 59, line 15.—Between “mayor” and “of” insert “or clerk.”
- No. 12.—Page 17, Clause 60, line 4.—Between “mayor” and “at” insert “or clerk of the council.”
- No. 13.—Page 17, Clause 60, line 8.—Strike out “immediately.”
- No. 14.—Page 17, Clause 60, line 8.—Between “the” and “door” insert “outer.”
- No. 15.—Page 17, Clause 60, line 10.—Between “municipality” and “and” insert “at least five days before the day of such election.”
- No. 16.—Page 19, Clause 68, line 3.—After “officer” insert “or his deputies.”
- No. 17.—Page 20, Clause 69, line 12.—After “blind” insert “or unable to read or write.”
- No. 18.—Page 25, Clause 82, sub-clause (1), paragraph (d), lines 2 and 3.—Strike out “or horse or carriage hire or conveyance by steam or otherwise.”
- No. 19.—Page 31, Clause 99, sub-clause (5), line 4.—After “municipality” insert “or within the limits of any catchment, water supply, or other area under the control or jurisdiction of the Council, or the Local Board of Health of the municipality.”
- No. 20.—Page 32, Clause 99, sub-clause (11).—After paragraph 2 insert “for authorising firemen to enter upon premises for the purpose of extinguishing fires.”
- No. 21.—Page 34, Clause 99, sub-clause (20).—After paragraph 1 insert “regulating the width of tires on wagons, drays, carts, and other vehicles used for carrying goods or merchandise.”
- No. 22.—Page 34, Clause 99, sub-clause (20), paragraph 4, line 1.—Strike out “passenger,” and insert “all or any of the above-named.”
- No. 23.—Page 35, Clause 99, sub-clause (20), paragraph 11, line 2.—After “years” insert “or any child who dies of an infectious disease.”
- No. 24.—Page 35, Clause 99, sub-clause (20), paragraph 14, line 1.—After “lamp” insert “or lighted lamps.”
- No. 25.—Page 37, Clause 99, sub-clause (25), line 3.—Strike out “over or near any footway.”
- No. 26.—Page 37, Clause 99, sub-clause (25), line 4.—After “things” insert “over or near any footway or roadway.”
- No. 27.—Page 38, Clause 99, sub-clause (27), paragraph 18, line 2.—After “velocipedes” insert “or perambulators.”
- No. 28.—Page 38, Clause 99, sub-clause (27).—Add the following new paragraph:—“Prohibiting any impure water, or any liquid matter of whatever description, being drained or allowed to flow from any house, land, or premises into or upon any street, footway, or gutter in the municipality, or being thrown or placed thereon or therein.”
- No. 29.—Page 39, Clause 99, sub-clause (30), line 2.—After “street” insert “and to regulate the riding or driving of camels through any street.”
- No. 30.—Page 39, Clause 99, last line.—After “municipality” insert “or to any catchment, water supply, or other area under the control or jurisdiction of the Council as Local Board of Health, or otherwise.”
- No. 31.—Page 39, Clause 100, line 6.—After “municipality” insert “or any

area under the control or jurisdiction of the Council as aforesaid."

No. 32.—Page 42, Clause 109, line 1.—After "level" insert "grade."

No. 33.—Page 47, Clause 137, lines 5 and 6.—Strike out "and having two entrances, each of the full width of the alley or court."

No. 34.—Page 51, Clause 149.—Add the following new sub-clause, to stand as sub-clause (2):—

(2.) "Notwithstanding anything contained in this part of this Act, the council of any proclaimed municipality may exercise the powers and carry out the duties and obligations granted to and imposed upon a council as soon after their election as may be practicable, having regard to the intervals of time respectively assigned for the doing of any act under the provisions of this part of this Act; and for the purposes of this section, the council of any such newly proclaimed municipality may prepare the statement and estimate therein mentioned in respect of the remaining period of the then current year, and any rate struck by such council by virtue of the provisions of this section shall be payable only in proportion to the unexpired period of such year."

No. 35.—Page 52, Clause 152, sub-clauses (1) to (8).—After each sub-clause insert "or."

No. 36.—Page 53, Clause 155, sub-clause (3), lines 2 and 3.—Strike out "Two pounds ten shillings" and insert "Three pounds."

No. 37.—Page 56, Clause 165, line 1.—Strike out "clerk of the municipality" and insert "council."

No. 38.—Page 56, Clause 165, line 4.—Strike out "and to the effect" and insert "or to the effect of the form."

No. 39.—Page 56, Clause 165.—Add to the end of the Clause:—"Two or more properties may be included in one notice."

No. 40.—Page 57, Clause 169, sub-clause (1).—Strike out the whole sub-clause and insert the following in lieu:—

"Subject to the right of appeal hereinbefore mentioned, in case any person liable to pay the amount due in respect of any rate, who has been served with the notice mentioned in

the 165th Section of this Act, does not pay the whole amount of the rate due in respect of any property mentioned in the said notice or (if payable by instalments) any instalment thereof then due at the time, in the manner, and at the place required by the said notice, and if such default continues for 14 days, the Mayor may at any time thereafter, and as often as occasion may arise, by warrant under his hand, distrain the goods and chattels found upon the land in respect of which the rate is payable."

No. 41.—Page 57, Clause 169, sub-clause (2), line 5.—After "amount" insert "or the instalment thereof then."

No. 42.—Page 57, Clause 169, sub-clause (6).—Add to the end of the sub-clause:—"Provided, however, that the goods and chattels exempted from distress or sale shall in no case exceed ten pounds in value."

No. 43.—Page 59, Clause 178, line 9.—Strike out "two newspapers" and insert "one newspaper."

No. 44.—Page 61, Clause 181, line 3.—After "treasurer" insert "or any other officer."

No. 45.—Page 66, Clause 200, line 2.—After "purchase" insert "debentures."

No. 46.—Page 66, Clause 201, line 1.—After "any" insert "debentures."

No. 47.—Page 66, Clause 201, line 3.—After "of" insert "debentures."

No. 48.—Page 66, Clause 204, line 3.—After "any" insert "debentures."

No. 49.—Page 85, Schedule 7, line 2.—After "property" insert "or properties, as the case may be."

No. 50.—Page 85, Schedule 7, line 7.—After "costs" insert—

"If the rate be payable by instalments, in pursuance of any by-law of the council, alter the form in the manner or to the effect following:—You are hereby required to pay the above amount of £                      to the office of the council by two equal instalments of £                      each, on the                      day of                      next, and the                      day of                      next. And if either of the said instalments be not paid within fourteen days after the day herein named for payment of the same, a warrant will be forthwith issued by

the Mayor for the recovery of the same with costs."

No. 51.—Page 85, Schedule 7, line 14.—Strike out "the property" and insert "any property."

No. 52.—Page 87, Schedule 10, last line.—Strike out "Chairman of the council of the municipality of" and insert "Mayor."

C. LEE STEERE,

Clerk of the Council.

October 18, 1894.

Ordered—that the consideration of the foregoing message be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the House, on its rising, adjourn until Monday, 29th October, 1894.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 11:15 o'clock, p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 29th October, 1894.

Fencing Bill—Auditor General's Annual Report—Supply Bill (£100,000): first reading; second reading; in committee: third reading—Goldfields Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Resolutions of (New Zealand) Postal Conference—Constitution Act Further Amendment Bill: third reading—Loan Bill (£1,500,000): consideration of Legislative Council's Message—Railways Act Further Amendment Bill: second reading—Insect Pests Bill: second reading—Roads Act Amendment Bill: consideration of Legislative Council's amendment—Municipal Institutions Bill: Speaker's Ruling upon Point of Order—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### FENCING BILL.

MR. PIESSE, with leave, without notice, asked the Premier whether it was

the intention of the Government to proceed, this session, with the Fencing Bill, which had passed its second reading, some weeks ago?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was not able to give the hon. member a definite answer, but he was afraid they would not be able to have the Bill passed this session.

#### AUDITOR GENERAL'S ANNUAL REPORT.

MR. RANDELL, with leave, without notice, asked the Premier whether before the session closed he would be able to lay on the table the annual report of the Auditor General on the public accounts of the colony, and the annual statement prepared by the Treasury, which, according to the Audit Act should be made up not later than three months after the end of the financial year (June 30)?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) regretted to say that the annual statement, through some inadvertence or oversight, had not been furnished in time for the Auditor General to make his report in time to be presented to Parliament this session. The fault did not lie with the Auditor General; he regretted to say it was owing to an oversight on the part of the Treasury department. He would promise the hon. member it should not occur again, and that the Treasury accounts in future would be furnished to the Auditor General in time for him to make his report within the time required by the Audit Act, after the close of the financial year. He saw no reason why these accounts should not be transmitted to the Auditor General within three months after the financial year closed.

#### SUPPLY (£100,000).

A message having been received from His Excellency the Governor, recommending that provision be made to the extent of £100,000 towards defraying the expenses of the public service during the year ending 30th June, 1895,

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), by leave, without notice, moved that the House resolve itself into a Committee of Supply and of Ways and Means, and that the Standing Orders be suspended so as to permit of the reporting and adopting of resolutions therefrom on the