

a limited number of years to provide the small amount of six per cent. on the capital expended, for twenty-one years, it would be more advantageous—regard being had to the smallness of our revenue—if it adopted this guarantee system rather than undertake the work itself. They would then be in a better position to raise the money for the construction of the remainder of the line. He regretted thus to have to differ on so many points in the vice-regal speech; but, while he did not doubt that His Excellency was actuated by an earnest desire to promote the best interests of the Colony, still he could not allow the motion before the House to pass without giving expression to his sentiments. He should feel bound to vote against the adoption of the address in reply, principally because of the paragraph thanking His Excellency for holding over, from last session, the question of land regulations, simply at the request of certain members of that House after the session was over.

Mr. CROWTHER moved, The adjournment of the debate until the following day.

Agreed to.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.]

*Tuesday, 8th August, 1876.*

“Game Act, 1874,” amendment Bill: Second Reading—  
Address in Reply: resumed debate.

### “GAME ACT, 1874,” AMENDMENT BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY said this Bill had been introduced by the Government at the request of several hon. members, and of other persons outside the House, who were of opinion that the preservation of game would be more effectual if the close season were altered, and in some instances extended.

The close season at present commenced on the 1st June. A large number of ducks at that date, and for a month afterwards, were to be found on our waters, not having gone up the country to pair. It appeared to him useless to prohibit the destruction of game before the time for pairing arrived; and it was therefore now proposed that the close season should commence a month later. It was for the House to consider whether it might be still further extended. There was a clause in the Bill providing a penalty for the destruction of magpies at any season of the year, it being deemed better to afford such protection to this bird which was of great service in destroying worms and slugs.

MR. SHENTON moved, as an amendment, that the Bill be referred to a select committee, who might make inquiries from sportsmen and others acquainted with the habits of wild birds as to the best dates for the closing season.

MR. STEERE said no doubt an alteration in the present Game Act was called for, and he was very glad indeed that the Government had brought forward the Bill. He saw no objection to its being referred to a select committee. He thought some provision ought to be made as to what should be done with game unlawfully destroyed—how it should be disposed of. There was a feeling abroad, also, in favor of licensing persons using a gun, so as to prevent the indiscriminate destruction of birds by little boys. Perhaps such a provision could not be inserted in the present Bill, but it appeared to him to be a desirable one.

MR. RANDELL supported the amendment motion for referring the Bill to a select committee, for the reason assigned by the hon. member for Toodyay.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL had no great objection to the Bill being referred to a select committee, though he did not think, if such a committee were appointed, it would gather any very important information on the subject.

MR. CROWTHER imagined that the object of moving for a select committee was to enable those appointed on it to institute inquiries, among persons conversant with the habits of wild fowl, as to the proper period for fixing the close season. Then arose another question:—the period that might be considered

proper in Perth and the neighborhood might not suit other districts of the Colony; and it was a question whether the select committee might not be able to make the Bill so comprehensive in its application as to meet the requirements of the whole Colony.

SIR THOMAS CAMPBELL said this was another exemplification of the disadvantages under which hon. members labored through not being aware beforehand of the nature of the Bills to be brought under their consideration. Had it been known that such a Bill as this was to have been introduced, hon. members might have instituted inquiries in their respective districts, and be in a position to throw some light as to the most suitable period for fixing the close season in those districts. He knew that the district which he represented differed as to the close season from Perth. If time were afforded the select committee to make inquiries, the Bill might be rendered adaptable to the various districts of the Colony.

MR. SHENTON then moved that a select committee be appointed to report on the Bill; such committee to consist of Mr. Brown, Mr. Hardey, Mr. Monger, Mr. Padbury, and the Mover.

Agreed to.

MR. RANDELL proposed that the committee should bring up their report on that day week.

SIR THOMAS CAMPBELL proposed, as an amendment, that the time be extended to three weeks, so as to enable the committee to communicate with the outlying districts.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY: Surely, in a simple matter of this kind no such delay can be necessary. The question, "What is the close season in your district?" might be sent by telegraph, and an answer received through the same medium in the course of the day.

SIR THOMAS CAMPBELL then withdrew his proposition.

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY.

#### RESUMED DEBATE.

MR. CROWTHER resumed the debate on the address in reply, and expressed his concurrence with nearly all that had fallen from the lips of the hon. member for

Geraldton when commenting upon His Excellency's speech the previous day. He was afraid that some paragraphs of the speech did not exactly represent the actual state of affairs, and especially was this the case with regard to the prospects of the season for agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Speaking of the district which he represented, he might safely say that during a residence of many years he never knew a season when the farming prospects were so gloomy and disheartening. Not a brook or rivulet was yet running between Champion Bay and the Mines, and the same dismal prospect stared the Greenough settlers in the face. Although the address in reply to the vice-regal speech was usually looked upon as a mere *resumé* of the speech itself, and was to some extent mere formality, still he did not think it wise that the real condition and prospects of the country should be represented in a light which the settlers themselves must feel to be altogether too roseate. With regard to the High School Act of last session, although now, as then, opposed to the principle of the measure, he would nevertheless support the hon. member for Geraldton should he again introduce the Bill; and he would do so for this reason: he would do so to show the Secretary of State that the people of this Colony were better acquainted with the requirements of the country, and more capable of dealing with those requirements, than any noble lord 16,000 miles away. Reverting to the paragraph in the vice-regal speech dealing with the staple industries of the Colony, he was afraid that, with regard to the pearling industry, His Excellency had been as much misled as he had been with respect to the agricultural and pastoral industries. He had spoken to many pearl-ers on the question, and he was credibly informed that hardly a boat paid its expenses last year, and he knew of many who had no intention of resuming operations any more. No doubt the few who remained to prosecute the industry would derive a larger share of profit than if the returns were divided among a larger number; but still the fact remained that the industry was much depressed and that there was no immediate prospect of its again reviving. With respect to the recommendations of the Tariff Commission, as sketched out in His Excellency's

speech, the hon. member was understood to say that he was in accord with them. With regard to the proposed agreement with intending emigrants, binding them to remain in the Colony for a term of years after their arrival, no doubt that was a very desirable thing, but he would like to know how such an agreement could be enforced,—how we could prevent a man going to the other colonies who had earned enough money to pay his passage. Reference was made in His Excellency's speech to the Elementary Education Act, which in his (Mr. Crowther's) opinion was not at all applicable to the requirements of the Colony. The system might be working very well in centres of population such as Perth and Fremantle, but there were other places in the Colony besides Perth and Fremantle which must be considered in connection with any general system of education. Of the 59 schools in operation throughout the Colony at the date of the Inspector's report for 1875, forty-eight of these were out of the Perth and Fremantle districts; yet he found that out of the whole grant-in-aid for educational purposes about one-third was allotted to the eleven remaining schools, which appeared to him a very large, not to say unfair, proportion of the grant. In the district which he represented there were teachers in receipt of stipends which were not equal to the pay of a cow-boy. He disagreed also with that paragraph of the vice-regal speech in which His Excellency congratulated the House on the working of the section of "The Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act," of last session, which prohibits the sale of liquor to persons in a state of intoxication, and the harboring of such persons on licensed premises. In the district which he represented nothing could have proved a more utter failure than the working of that section. Whether this result was owing to the police not carrying out the provisions of the Act in their integrity, or whether to the fact that those provisions were altogether unfit to meet the evil sought to be remedied, he could not say; but certain it was, the clause as enforced led to acts of oppression which would not be tolerated in any other free country. The day before he left Champion Bay for Perth, the police were making enquiries whether a publican actually could not be

finned for a man being found drunk in a field adjacent to the public house. This Bill, like the Education Act, was all very well in a place like Perth, but it was not adaptable for the country districts, where landlords of the respectable class were subjected to annoyance in every way. On one occasion, not long ago, two or three gentlemen were sitting quietly in a billiard room, in a respectable hotel, in Champion Bay, when a policeman, without any notice whatever, coolly opened the door, stared at them—"took their likenesses," in vulgar parlance—and walked away. Then again there was Mr. Woodman's case, of the hardship of which hon. members were, no doubt, aware. On a subsequent occasion, Mr. Woodman appealed to the police whether a man who was drinking on his premises was to be considered in a state of intoxication or not; but receiving no satisfactory reply, and believing that possibly the man might be considered to be intoxicated, he bundled him out of doors, and the next day the publican was summoned. The very day previously he had been fined for allowing a drunken man to remain on his premises. The reply to the vice-regal address confirmed, to a very great measure, all that was embodied in the address itself; and, without putting himself in direct opposition to the reply, he would move two amendments, which, he thought, could not be regarded as objectionable.

THE SPEAKER suggested that the paragraphs of the address be taken *seriatim*, and considered clause by clause, which suggestion was adopted.

Paragraphs 1 and 2 were adopted *sub silentio*. In paragraph 3,

MR. CROWTHER moved, That the following words be struck out:—"agree "with your Excellency in hoping that the "depression which might be expected "from the fall in the prices of wool and "sandalwood may be somewhat counter- "balanced by the favorable season which "most of the districts have enjoyed to "the present time for pastoral and agri- "cultural purposes;" and that the following words be substituted in lieu thereof,—“although not concurring with your Excellency's estimate of the nature of the season for agricultural and pastoral pursuits.”

MR. PADBURY seconded the amend-

ment. He had been in the Colony as long as any hon. member present, and, so far as his knowledge and recollection went, the present season, so far, was the worst he had known for the past thirty-eight years. He did not mean to say that the present aspect of affairs might not improve as the season advanced—God send that it might; but up to the present time agricultural and pastoral prospects were very gloomy indeed.

MR. STEERE said, that as one of the members appointed to frame the address in reply, he had objected to the paragraph in question as it appeared in the original draft reply, and at his suggestion it was modified so as to limit its application to "most of the districts" and not to the Colony at large. When he seconded the motion for the adoption of the reply he had understood that the Government were fortified in the favorable opinion entertained of the prospects of the season by the hon. member Mr. Parker stating that in the Eastern districts they had, so far, had a very favorable season. He had since then been informed that, the Sunday before last, prayers for rain were actually offered up in the Church at York, which at any rate did not denote that the season was all that could be desired. Within twelve miles of York, he was informed that the settlers were obliged to cart water to their stations, and in other districts, he had gathered, since seconding the adoption of the address in reply, the aspect of affairs was equally disheartening. He therefore could not now conscientiously agree in the motion for the adoption of that paragraph of the reply. He had also been somewhat astonished at the paragraph relating to the pearling industry, and could not conceive how it could be said that there was no occasion for gloomy forebodings with regard to an industry lately yielding export returns to the extent of £60,000 or £70,000 annually, but which did not now yield anything like that sum. He could not imagine how the Resident Magistrate at Roebourne could have reported of the pearling industry as he had done. He could understand how some pearlers, who had the control of all the best native labor, might possibly make a fortune; but the Colony in general, and the majority of the pearlers themselves, would undoubtedly be great losers by the

present depression of this industry. Nor was there any immediate prospect of its reviving. The hon. member for Geraldton had, on the previous day, expressed some surprise that he (Mr. Steere) had not, as on former occasions, moved the adjournment of the debate on the address in reply until the following day. It was true that he had been in the habit of doing so; but he had become so convinced of the utter futility of such a course, under the existing form of Government, that he had no intention of pursuing it any longer. Had we a system of ministerial responsibility there might be some practical utility in doing so, and the address in reply might become a test question. The speech delivered by His Excellency at the opening of the session disclosed no programme, enunciated no policy. On all sides there were cries for a scheme of public works and for immigration being carried out concurrently, but there was not a word about any proposed public works in His Excellency's speech. That was, apparently, left to the House to decide upon; the Government would not initiate any scheme. Under a system of ministerial responsibility, no ministry would remain in office a single day with such a programme; and the debate upon the address in reply would, in that case, assume a significant importance. But, here, after several years' experience, he saw no practical utility in moving the adjournment of the debate, and he had made up his mind that he would not do so this session.

MR. PARKER said there appeared to be an impression on the mind of some hon. members that he, in a great measure, was responsible for the paragraph in the vice-regal speech relating to the favorable season said now to be enjoyed. That, he emphatically disclaimed. He had never uttered a syllable to His Excellency on the subject. This, however, he might say,—so far as regarded the York District, the crops there looked remarkably well, and they had had a better lambing this year than for the past three years.

MR. T. BURGESS would support the amendment before the House, for he could fully endorse the sentiments expressed by the hon. member for Greenough, and by the hon. member for Geraldton, as to the gloomy prospects of the season in the Northern Districts.

Although these addresses in reply were regarded as a mere matter of form, and although it might be considered ungracious to carp at the Governor's speech, still he thought that, as these documents went before the public, hon. members should not hesitate to express their sentiments with respect to them.

MR. MARMION said he, also, would support the amendment. At the same time, he thought the House should not allow itself to be carried into the other extreme. No doubt His Excellency, in his anxiety to make things look at their best, had somewhat overstepped the mark. But he (Mr. Marmion) did not think that the state of the Colony was such as to cause any alarm as to the immediate future. Of course, one or two of the interests of the Colony were likely to suffer, provided there came no rain; but, regard being had to other portions of His Excellency's speech—and especially to the paragraphs disclosing the state of the general revenue, and of the steady progress of settlement and consequent increase of receipts from Land Sales—he thought there was but little cause for entertaining any fear for the immediate future of the Colony. They might do harm by taking a too gloomy view of the prospect of affairs. Before the Council adjourned, hon. members might possibly resolve to request the Governor to inaugurate public works, and if they went to the money market to borrow they must put the best possible face upon the appearance of things. Whilst saying this, however, he felt bound to disagree with some portion of what had fallen from His Excellency The Governor, more especially with regard to the pearling industry, with which he (Mr. Marmion) was intimately connected. He knew that the Colony must and would suffer from the falling off in this item. Within his own knowledge, no less than twenty vessels had ceased operations, and were not likely to renew them this season, and probably for some years to come,—at any rate, until an alteration was made in the regulation relating to the engagement of Malays, and a rise took place in the price of pearl shells. The vessels he alluded to were the largest that had been employed in the industry, and the fact of their ceasing operations would cause a diminution in the take of pearl shells of

from 120,000 to 150,000 tons, and a corresponding loss of labor to a large number of Europeans connected with the industry. He thought His Excellency had been somewhat misled by the report of the Government Resident at Roebourne. He could quite understand that officer stating that the pearlers were not disheartened; he, no doubt, meant the pearlers in his own immediate neighborhood, who had a large number of natives under their control, and would continue so for many years to come. These persons were of course more pleased than otherwise at the withdrawal of competition, for they might thereby be enabled to secure an increased quantity of shells for themselves, which, notwithstanding the reduction in the price, would bring them in a good return.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY said a great deal too much importance, it seemed to him, had been attached to this paragraph in the vice-regal speech; certainly far more importance than His Excellency himself ever thought would have been attached to it. After all, it was a mere question of opinion, this regarding the prospects of the season: and probably His Excellency had been mis-informed to some extent. Representations, however, had been made which had led His Excellency to the hopeful conclusions set forth in the paragraph under review; indeed he (the speaker) himself had made such representations, and he was prepared to prove that, consequent upon the early rains of the season, a much larger area of land had been brought under cultivation than in previous years, and should the country be yet blessed—which, please God, he hoped it would—with later rains, there would be good grounds for believing that the depression which might be expected to result from the fall in the prices of wool and sandalwood would, as His Excellency trusted, be to some extent counterbalanced by favorable pastoral and agricultural returns. Surely hon. members would not desire His Excellency to paint the condition of the Colony in the darkest possible colors, and to take the most desponding view of the future, instead of regarding it with a hopeful eye. However, as he had already said, too much importance altogether had been attached to the expression in His Excellency's speech

which had led to the present discussion, and he was quite prepared to adopt the amendment before the House. (Hear, hear.)

The amendment was then put and carried.

Paragraph 4 evoked no remark. On paragraph 5 being read,

MR. BURGESS said he looked upon the proposal to bind intending emigrants to remain in the Colony for a number of years after their arrival, or otherwise repay the cost of their passage, as a proposition calculated to have a very injurious tendency indeed in checking immigration. If when we introduced immigrants into the Colony we also found them ready employment on public works, there would be no necessity for any such agreement as was here contemplated. For his own part, he certainly objected to it, particularly in the face of the liberal inducements offered to immigrants in the neighboring colonies. If we placed such a stumbling-block in the way of immigrants, it was a question whether we would get any at all.

MR. PADBURY believed that it was to some extent at his suggestion that His Excellency had decided to make this new arrangement, which appeared to him one much called for. What earthly use was it for the Colony to spend £7,000 or £10,000 a year for immigration, when one-half of the persons who came out here at the public expense merely did so with the view of making the Colony a stepping-stone to reach the neighboring provinces? He questioned if one-fourth of the immigrants who recently arrived in the Colony by the *Daylight* were in the Colony now. Better save our £10,000, and add it to the salaries of our underpaid and over-worked officials. If the immigrants refunded the amount of their passage money, well and good—let them go away. He had known several immigrants coming here with the expressed intention of going to the other colonies as soon as they could; aye, and some who came here actually with money in their pockets to take them away.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS regarded such an arrangement as that proposed as utterly futile in its results. A similar system had been tried in most of the other colonies, and found to be of no practical value, for the immigrants went whither they chose, notwith-

standing their having signed agreements to remain. He regarded the proposition as an interference with the liberty of the subject.

MR. BROWN would support the paragraph as it stood in the address in reply. Although we might get a less number of immigrants under this arrangement than otherwise we should, yet he thought it very desirable that some such steps should be taken to keep them in the Colony when they did come. It would be extremely hard for them to leave the country without the knowledge of the authorities, and he did not apprehend any difficulty on that point. Some such provision as that relating to absconding debtors might be enacted, in order to empower the Government to detain them; this would sufficiently meet the object in view. He did not consider that the proposed arrangement could be regarded as an interference with the liberty of the subject; the emigrants would enter into the agreement, before embarking, with their eyes open.

MR. SHENTON thought it highly desirable that such a proposition as the one put forward by the Government should be adopted. The captains of vessels consigned to him, and which had lately brought out immigrants, had informed him that a large proportion of these persons had frankly admitted, soon after leaving England, that they were coming out here simply in order to get to Victoria, to which Colony there were no free passages granted. They merely remained here just long enough to save enough money to take them away.

MR. RANDELL said it appeared to him that the arrangement alluded to would be purely a matter of business between the two contracting parties—the Government on the one hand, and the immigrants on the other. He thought the Colony had a right to expect something in return for the money expended in immigration, and he believed that the result of the proposed arrangement would be that, under it, we would be far more likely to get a class of immigrants suitable to our requirements than we do now. He was very pleased to find that His Excellency had exercised so wise a judgment in this matter.

MR. MONGER was quite in favor of the proposed arrangement. No doubt

something ought to be done to prevent men leaving the Colony as soon as they came into it, after the public paying their passage out. It was not because they could not get work that they went away; he had known skilled mechanics who might have had permanent employment at York leave the country, simply because they wanted to see what the other Colonies were like.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Surely any discussion of this kind is altogether out of order. No amendment has been moved upon the paragraph under consideration, and it is laid down in *May* (page 468) that a member is not at liberty to speak generally upon a clause, upon its being called by the chairman, there being no question before the committee until an amendment has been moved.

**MR. STEERE** did not think that the discussion was out of order.

**MR. MARMION** said he was in favor of the clause. There might be some difficulty in carrying out the arrangement; at the same time he saw no other chance of our retaining immigrants in the Colony. He thought, however, there should be a graduated scale of refund, according to the number of years an immigrant, desirous of leaving, had remained in the Colony before taking his departure. There was also another point to look at;—if we made these agreements with our immigrants, we must be prepared to find work for them. It would be well for the Colony to weigh well the responsibility involved in the arrangement before entering upon it. The only way was to inaugurate public works, so as to ensure immediate employment to new comers on their arrival. He thought it would be a very harsh measure indeed to compel these persons to remain here, unless we also provided them with employment.

**MR. HAMERSLEY** said, if he thought there was the slightest chance of the proposed arrangement being ever carried into effect, he would move an amendment. No doubt it was very desirable, and extremely necessary, that immigrants brought out at public expense should be retained in the Colony; but he did not think they would ever get any reasonable man to sign any such agreement as was here proposed—to remain for three years

in a Colony of which he knows nothing. If they wished to retain immigrants in the country, every inducement must be offered them to remain, at the same time leaving them free and unfettered in the matter. He would propose that the following words be struck out, from the paragraph under consideration:—“ We consider that the proposed agreement to be entered into by emigrants before embarkation, binding them to remain for three years in the Colony, or otherwise defray the full cost of their passage money, is a proper and wholesome measure.”

The amendment, not being seconded, lapsed.

**MR. HARDEY** said he quite agreed with His Excellency on this point. He thought it was altogether useless to expend money in getting people out here unless we had some hold upon them when they came. We might then get a better class of immigrants than we have had hitherto. He believed that five out of every six of those who came out were not agricultural laborers at all; the majority of them were from amongst the miserable scum of London.

Paragraph 6: “The report of the Surveyor General will be read with much interest, and the proposed land regulations will be carefully considered; and we have to thank Your Excellency for holding them over for our further consideration at the request of certain members of this House.”

**MR. CROWTHER** disapproved of the principle involved in the action of His Excellency with regard to land regulations, which had already been the subject of an expression of opinion on the part of the House. For this, and for no other reason, he would move an amendment which, he thought, would be equally acceptable to His Excellency;—instead of the words “we have to thank Your Excellency for holding them over,” he would move the substitution of the words, “we note Your Excellency’s courtesy in holding them over.”

**MR. STEERE** did not think the paragraph could be better worded than it was. The land of the Colony was not in their hands; they had no control over it at all. It was only through the courtesy of the Governor that any proposed alteration in the land regulations was submitted

to the House before being forwarded for the approval of the Secretary of State. He did not know who the hon. members alluded to were, but he himself had written to His Excellency, expressing an opinion that, if His Excellency thought it proper to do so, it would be desirable that the House should have another opportunity of discussing the proposed amended land regulations; especially those referring to grazing rights. He thought the hon. member for Geraldton ought to be extremely obliged to His Excellency for giving him another field-day in connection with the land regulations, especially as his wishes had not been carried out with respect to them last session. He thought it very ungrateful to blame His Excellency for his courtesy in giving hon. members another opportunity of considering this matter.

MR. BROWN seconded the amendment. He was perfectly aware that had His Excellency adopted the recommendation of the Council last session with reference to the proposed alterations in the land regulations, and the Secretary of State had affirmed them, it would have been in direct opposition to his (Mr. Brown's) own conclusions. Therefore, personally, he was glad that the House had been, or rather would be, afforded another opportunity to reconsider the matter. Nevertheless, as a matter of principle, he thought that no question referred to that House, and there discussed and disposed of, should afterwards be set aside altogether, simply at the request of some hon. members in their private capacity outside. If the Governor did not consider the recommendations of the Council wise, then he thought it would have been well if His Excellency had said so. He thought the amendment would meet the case. He did not "thank" the Governor, but he "noted his courtesy," for, no doubt, it was a matter of courtesy on His Excellency's part to have acted in the manner he had done. Having said so much, he cared very little whether the amendment was adopted or the original paragraph. He was merely opposed to the principle involved.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL pointed out that the hon. member who had proposed the amendment, and the hon. member who had seconded it, were wholly in error in thinking, with regard

to the regulations in question, that any resolution thereon was adopted by the Council. In point of fact, nothing was enacted relating thereto, and it was absurd to talk of His Excellency upsetting any decision arrived at by that House, for no decision was arrived at. Had the House adopted a resolution, and His Excellency had acted contrary to the letter and spirit of that resolution, no one would be more ready to condemn such an action than he (the Attorney General) himself. But what were the facts of the case? A select committee was appointed to consider certain regulations relating to the disposal of Crown Lands submitted by His Excellency the Governor, simply as a matter of courtesy, for the opinion of the House, prior to forwarding them for the approval of the Secretary of State. The report of the select committee was adopted by the House, after a desultory debate, by a majority of one only. No doubt that, to some extent, afforded His Excellency some idea as to the opinion of the House with regard to the proposed regulations; but His Excellency was in no way called to carry out that expression of opinion. He was not even asked to forward the recommendations of the select committee for the consideration of the Secretary of State. In the ordinary course of things, no doubt His Excellency would have done so; but he (the Attorney General) thought the Governor was perfectly right in looking around him to see how the decision of the House had been arrived at. His Excellency would see, in the first place, that the report of the select committee was adopted by a bare majority of one. In the second place, His Excellency would be fully informed of the circumstances under which the report was actually adopted. He (the Attorney General) did not wish to go into that point now; the hon. member for Geraldton would agree with him that those circumstances were not altogether satisfactory. His Excellency was fully aware of these facts, and, not being at all called upon to give effect to the opinion of the House on the question, His Excellency was, he (the Attorney General) contended, perfectly justified in acting as he had done in the matter; and it was a gracious act of courtesy on his part to afford the House another opportunity to consider the regulations.



THE SPEAKER then put the question—"That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the paragraph"—and the House divided with the following result:—Ayes 16; Noes 2.

The amendment was therefore negatived.

The remaining paragraphs were agreed to without discussion, and the address, as amended, adopted.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

*Wednesday, 9th August, 1876.*

Pensions Bill—Printing Bills—Confirmation of Expenditure Bill: second reading—Chairman of Committees—Confirmation of Expenditure Bill: in committee.

### PENSIONS BILL—PRINTING BILLS.

MR. STEERE, with leave, introduced a Bill to regulate and abolish pensions in certain cases, and the Bill having been read a first time the hon. member moved, That it be printed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said he could hardly conceive that the House had the power to order the printing of Bills, introduced by private members, at the Government Printing Office.

MR. STEERE said that the office had been established mainly for the purpose of printing documents connected with the Legislative Council, and he was surprised that any hon. member should think of objecting to a Bill, of a public character, being printed at the Government Office.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL was fully aware that, in the House of Commons, Bills were ordered to be printed; but there they had the necessary appliances and machinery for doing so. If the hon. member for Wellington requested that his Bill be printed at the Government Office, there was not the slightest doubt that his request would be complied with; but he could hardly conceive that the Government was under an obligation to print a Bill simply because the House ordered it to be printed.

MR. STEERE had never heard such an absurd objection in his life.

MR. BROWN said that ever since he had been a member of the House, Bills brought forward by private members had invariably been treated in precisely the same way as Government measures, and the right to have them printed at the Government Printing Office had never been questioned before. He thought it a most unreasonable objection. It was not at all fair towards hon. members that they should be obliged to go to private firms to have public Bills printed at their own private expense, when there was an exceedingly costly establishment maintained at public expense for the purpose of printing all papers connected with the public service which it might be deemed desirable to print. If the objection raised by the hon. The Attorney General went so far as to say that it should not be done, he (Mr. Brown) thought the House would very soon find a way to compel it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL thought the hon. member for Geraldton had not understood what he had said. He had never asserted for a moment that if the House expressed a desire that any document should be printed, the Government would not at once accede to the wishes of hon. members. What he had said was, that he thought it was really not within the competence of the House to order the Government Printer to print Bills introduced by private members.

MR. STEERE: I contend that it is.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the Government Printer were to refuse to do so, I apprehend the House would be at a loss to know how to compel him.

MR. STEERE: We would not vote the necessary supplies; that's all.

MR. BURGESS was very much surprised indeed to hear the expression of opinion which had emanated from the Attorney General with regard to the matter before the House. He (Mr. Burgess) maintained that every member of that Council had a right to bring forward such Bills as he might think proper, and it was not more than they should expect that those Bills should be printed by the Government Printer. If not, then they had no business in that House at all, and were he refused permission to print a Bill at the Government Office he would resign at once.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY said, so far as the Government