

The Annual Estimates having been completed, the resolutions passed in Committee of Supply were reported.

OFFICIAL RECEIVER IN BANKRUPTCY.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION.

Message from the Legislative Council, requesting concurrence in the following resolution, was considered:—

Resolved, that the report of the Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament appointed to inquire into the administration of the Bankruptcy Act, 1892, by the Senior Official Receiver (Mr. H. Wainscot), and the administration of the affairs of companies whereof he has acted as liquidator, be adopted; and that a copy of the report and evidence be sent on to the Crown Law Department, with instructions to take such steps in the matter before the Bankruptcy Court, or Criminal Court, or before the Barristers' Board, as may be considered expedient or necessary.

IN COMMITTEE.

The PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the Council's resolution be agreed to.

Question put and passed, without debate.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

GOLDFIELDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

Schedule of four amendments made by the Legislative Council was considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

The MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. H. B. Lefroy) moved that the Council's amendments be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until the next Tuesday (a public holiday intervening).

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 11.30 p.m. until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 25th October, 1898.

Papers presented—Bankruptcy Act Amendment Bill, clerical error—Motion: Federal Convention Delegates, Mode of Election (negative)—Motion: Municipal Rating on Land Value (negative)—Metropolitan Waterworks Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Police Act Amendment Bill, Legislative Assembly's Amendment—Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment Bill, second reading, in Committee, third reading—Coolgardie Mining Exhibition Bill, Recommendation, reported—Metropolitan Waterworks Act Amendment Bill (No. 2), all stages—Land Bill, Legislative Council's Amendments—Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment Bill, third reading—Mining on Private Property Bill, Legislative Council's Amendment—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Eastern Goldfields Wage-earners, Return as ordered. Agricultural Railways, light narrow gauge in Belgium, Report by the Engineer-in-Chief.

Ordered to lie on the table.

BANKRUPTCY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

CLERICAL ERROR.

The PRESIDENT said he had been informed by the Clerk that in the Bankruptcy Act Amendment Bill there was apparently a clerical error, clause 55 having been struck out, whereas, according to the Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly, the intention was to strike out clause 51.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that a message be sent to the Legislative Assembly, informing them of the discovery of what appeared to be a clerical error, and desiring the assurance of the Assembly that their intention was in accordance with the record of their Votes and Proceedings.

Question put and passed, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

MOTION : FEDERAL CONVENTION DELEGATES, MODE OF ELECTION.

HON. H. G. PARSONS moved. —

That, in the event of another Convention being summoned to discuss any Federal Constitution proposals, this colony should, if at all, be represented by delegates chosen by the electors, instead of by delegates appointed by Parliament.

He said : The feeling of the colony and of the two Houses will, I think, be with this motion, if it be only because we have learnt our lesson from experience. It is possible we have not done so badly by having our representatives elected as they were for the last Convention ; but, at the same time, we can see that the delegates thus sent had nothing to say.

HON. A. B. KIDSON : And said it very well.

HON. H. G. PARSONS : And they said it very well. The delegates had nothing to say, except what they were allowed to, by their spokesman, who himself, in his usual manner, confined himself chiefly to continual interruptions and comments.

HON. J. W. HACKETT : Is this motion to give you an opportunity for saying all this?

HON. H. G. PARSONS : It would be better that federal delegates should go representing the colony as a whole, with the prestige of the colony at their back, and should feel that when they spoke they were commissioned by the colony.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : How would you elect them?

HON. H. G. PARSONS : In the same manner as in the eastern colonies. It is impossible for members nominated by Parliament to go with any heart, or feeling that they represent the colony. I am not in favour of federation ; but, if we do send delegates to any such Convention, they should be sent in good faith. Delegates are useless unless they are properly commissioned ; and it would be wiser and more consonant with our dignity and our interests, if they went as representatives of the colony. I have some reason to believe, from advices received from the other side, that there will be some such Convention before we meet again. That, of course, is only a possibility ; but, in view of the possibility, it is better that this House, having the interests of the colony at

heart, should commit itself to the opinion that if, before we meet again, such a convention is held, the delegates sent be representative of the colony, and not mere nominees as previously.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : Is that Federal Convention still alive?

HON. H. G. PARSONS : I am talking of a fresh Convention.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : But is the Federal Convention still alive?

HON. H. G. PARSONS : As I say, I am talking about another Convention.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER : I do not think we want another Convention.

HON. H. G. PARSONS : I do not think we do.

HON. D. K. CONGDON : Like the previous speaker, I am not in favour of federation ; but, at the same time, it would be far better if the representatives of this colony to any Convention were elected by the voters of the colony, and not by the two Houses of Parliament as on the last occasion. I confess I felt disappointed by the mode adopted for the last Convention, and my disappointment does not arise from the fact that I was not elected, because I was not in the colony at the time. It would have been far better if the delegates had been elected by the people, because they would then have represented the interests of the colony with greater heart.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (**Hon. G. Randell**) : While, as a general rule, I am distinctly in favour of popular election, I think there are sometimes circumstances when other means are better to obtain desired ends. Notwithstanding what has fallen from Mr. Parsons, we have every reason to be satisfied with the representatives sent from this colony to the Federal Convention. I do not know that it is a serious charge against those delegates that they did not talk a great deal ; indeed, the fact is rather to their credit. I believe they had made up their minds as to the course they would pursue, and, with the object of saving time, and for other reasons, it was considered desirable that one or two should be spokesmen so far as this colony was concerned. In the peculiar circumstances of the colony, I do not know whether Mr. Parsons means this House to take the motion seriously.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: Indeed I do, sir.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I was rather inclined to think the hon. member did not intend the motion to be taken seriously. The motion is submitted very late in the session, and it involves questions requiring very careful and grave consideration, which it is impossible to give at the eleventh hour in the life of the present session. If the motion of the hon. member were adopted and carried into effect, it would involve very considerable expense, because I presume the hon. member means the people of the colony should vote as one constituency.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: Hear, hear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That would give an overwhelming preponderance to certain interests in the colony, and possibly be the means of sending a most one-sided representation to any Convention that might be held. It would be undesirable for us to pass the motion of the hon. member at the present time. I do not know what steps would be taken, if an invitation were to be given by the New South Wales Government for another Convention, and the various colonies were to accept that invitation. Personally, I do not know whether the Convention as last elected is still in existence, or whether it has ceased to be, and must be called together by the same methods as before adopted. Perhaps Mr. Hackett, who has been a federal representative, and is well acquainted with the subject, having taken three journeys for the purpose of attending Conventions, may be willing and able to enlighten us, because I, certainly, desire to hear him speak on this matter. I have never taken a great interest in this subject myself. Federation, in some respects, would be desirable, and I have decided, taking all things into consideration, that the constitution arrived at by the last Convention was as good as it is possible to get in the interests of this colony, and that probably, later on, we might not obtain federation on the same conditions; and that opinion is justified by results. It seems to me that New South Wales has dealt very unfairly in this matter, and that at the present moment, with the prospects of the alterations which will be made in the Federal Bill through the

action of the people of New South Wales, it would be impossible for us to accept the constitution. We certainly could not enter into a federation in which the States were not equally represented. It is, perhaps, unlikely we shall be able to get that equal representation, and if so we could not possibly enter into federation in our present circumstances. Certainly I am entirely opposed to handing over the interests of this colony to the tender mercies of the inhabitants of the eastern colonies. I think we can work out our own destiny ourselves. The interests we have at stake are so great and so important that they require the greatest deliberation before taking any step towards federation. I am speaking now as an individual member; I do not put forward the views of the Government on this point. Only two members of the present Ministry have so far expressed themselves favourably to federation, and that on the lines of the Bill adopted at the last Convention. I believe the other members of the Ministry are opposed to it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Only one member of the Government is in favour of it, and he is only lukewarm about it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: All the old settlers, as well as a great number of new-comers, are not in favour of federation for this colony at the present time, especially on the lines offered to us by the other colonies, at any rate by New South Wales. To pass an abstract motion of this kind at the close of the session will probably do some amount of mischief, or it will remain inoperative.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I may say at the outset, I take the line that my hon. friends Mr. Parsons and Mr. Congdon have taken in regard to the superiority of a popular election over a Parliamentary election. At the same time I am bound to admit that not only has a Parliamentary election something to say for itself, but it was solely due to the fact that a Parliamentary election was adopted by this colony that we were represented at the last Convention at all. If hon. members will look back into the history of the colony, they will find that a popular election was impossible, owing to want of time and the notices that had to be given, and we had to fall back upon a Parliamen-

tary election. I think Mr. Parsons has brought up this question for the purpose of having a gibe or two at the hon. members who were the representatives of this colony at the last Convention for having been silent spectators, and for the purpose of having a kick at the Premier. For my part I must confess that during the third Convention—that is the main Convention which was held in Melbourne—I remained absolutely silent. I did not open my lips at that Convention, and I am not ashamed to confess it. I have been a warm and ardent federationist, and those who may look back to my utterances and my writings during the first Convention in Sydney in 1891, and afterwards, will bear me out in that statement. I continued so during the Convention held in Adelaide in 1897. But from certain indications which I observed during the progress of the late Convention in Sydney, I came to the conclusion that the interests of Western Australia would not be safe in case a Federal Constitution was adopted by the other colonies. I am not going to enlarge on that matter at present, but I may say that I left Sydney with the full conviction that it would be a wise thing for this colony not to enter into a federal union unless the temper of those colonies in certain directions had altered very much indeed from the temper which existed during the Sydney Convention. I have said that I will not enlarge on that point at present, but I do say that until that tone changes—that tone which was expressed, not in the Convention, but in certain quarters outside the Convention, and which more accurately represented the feelings of Eastern Australia than the admirable statements made in the Convention—we would not be wise in joining that Federal Constitution, and I warn the House that until that time comes it will be unsafe for Western Australia to join in the Commonwealth. With regard to the matter which has been brought forward by Mr. Parsons, that hon. member altogether forgot that the triple Convention has fulfilled its labours. It has discharged its office, and having fulfilled the commission it has ceased to exist. That Convention is no longer a part of our constitution, and before another Convention can be summoned this House will have ample opportunity of saying how the

representatives should be elected, whether by the people—

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The motion says that in the event of another Convention being called together.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: But surely the hon. member does not wish to tie the hands of this House. When the Bill is brought forward we shall be able to discuss the pros and cons, and the advantages of a popular or Parliamentary election, or possibly a better form than either. If the question of another Convention comes up, I do not bind myself to say that I shall vote for it; I shall require a good deal of enlightenment on the question before I shall accept a Bill of any sort. I am not prepared to say that such a Bill should be carried, if this colony were to vote as a whole. To my mind the colony voting as a whole would not produce delegates who would be quite representative of the colony, but I will not go into that question. All I desire to say is that the entire colony would have to submit to the choice of the electors of four centres, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Fremantle, and Perth, and I would point out that the people in these centres have not all decided to make this colony their permanent settling place yet. A great proportion of those who have decided to become permanent settlers are not included in these four towns. The hon. member (Mr. Parsons) will not contradict me when I say that in the province from which he comes, not even a majority of the people there have resolved to remain in Western Australia and share its destinies for good or evil. There is another question on which the hon. member did not touch. In committing this House to a popular election as against a Parliamentary election, I doubt whether the hon. member studied the composition of the members composing the last Convention. In Victoria a more representative delegation would have been obtained through a Parliamentary election than through a popular election. One newspaper put forward a list of candidates, and all the men on this list of candidates were returned, owing to the superior organisation which a newspaper can always command through its body of readers. Those persons blindly accepted the list of candidates put forward

by that newspaper, and some of the best men in Victoria were excluded from the list, and the Convention was immensely poorer in consequence. Many of the questions brought before the Convention would have been differently decided if the delegation from Victoria had had a better mode of election than was adopted. There is another point to which I would draw the attention of the hon. member, and that is the cost of an election of this kind. Does the hon. member even think of that? In the other colonies it was calculated that the cost was about £10,000 a piece. The election here perhaps did not cost ten pounds; probably a ten-pound note would cover the expenses of the returning officer and the little printing that was done. In Victoria and New South Wales, which are smaller colonies than ours, the cost came to about £10,000 a piece. I do not say that we should not spend £10,000 or £20,000 to be properly represented; that is a matter which requires very grave consideration before the House should be committed to it. As to the abstract question of the popular election against a Parliamentary election, I am in favour of that, but an abstract doctrine is not always a safe doctrine in practice. We have to go below the surface sometimes to decide what is the best mode for this colony to adopt, whether the direct voice of the people—which may not mean the people at all, but one or two interests aggregated in three or four centres of population—or a Parliamentary election, or, as I have said, some other method by which the advantages of both can be secured without the disadvantages of either. I hope the hon. member will not press his motion to a division.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I do not know whether Mr. Parsons intends to press this motion to a division or not. In case he does, I should like to give a few reasons why I intend to vote against the motion. Before Mr. Hackett had spoken I had quite made up my mind that I could not support Mr. Parsons, for the simple reason that if his motion was passed it would be absolutely inoperative. What is the reason for passing a motion of this kind? When a Bill came down at a later stage, we might have all changed or altered our opinion. At present, suppos-

ing this motion was passed, can Mr. Parsons inform the House what use it is going to be this session? It is utterly impossible to pass a Bill to carry out the view expressed in the motion, and I am not going to pledge myself to what I am going to do next session. I am in favour of the popular vote, but circumstances may arise, and circumstances may be such that it may be necessary to a certain extent to meet the best interests of the colony. At the same time I think this is not the time, although several members have expressed their opinion upon federation, to say whether hon. members are in favour or against federation. This is hardly an occasion on which we are called upon to express our opinions in respect to that. I do not intend to express my opinion either one way or the other. This is purely an abstract motion before the House, and if it is passed it can be of no benefit at all, because I am quite certain of this, that if we are called on to consider the matter in a concrete form, very considerable modification may be required.

HON. D. MCKAY: I am inclined to think this is a question, first of all, more for the Government of the day than this House, and if the Government of the day are not fit to be trusted in this matter, they are not fit to be trusted with the destinies of the colony.

HON. C. DEMPSTER: I think this motion is premature and undesirable in the interests of the colony. Already we have had enough of the federation question. It has cost the colony a lot of money, and it has taken away some of the principal men of this colony at a very important time, for which the colony has had to suffer to a large extent. I therefore consider the motion before the House very undesirable, and I shall vote against it.

HON. A. G. JENKINS: Although I feel quite in accord with the principle laid down in the motion, I think the motion is a little bit premature. I am entirely in favour of the delegates being chosen by the popular vote, no matter where the populace are. If they are on the electoral roll they are entitled to have a voice in the representation of the colony at the Convention, no matter what centre they may be settled in. I hope Mr. Parsons, in deference to the wishes of the majority

of this House, will withdraw the motion. If he presses it to a division, although no good will come from it at the present time, I shall have to support it.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: I am sorry my motion has not met with the approval, so far as I can gather, of a majority of the members of this House. I quite sympathise with Mr. Hackett when he says that the late representatives at the Convention were not altogether an inarticulate lot. I feel we had delegates who fairly represented the opinion of this colony at the Convention. At the same time I cannot understand why any members who have spoken should be so very distrustful of the voice of the people of the colony. Most of the people living here intend to remain here.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Some people are trying to get separation.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: There is no movement for separation worthy of consideration at the hands of practical politicians. It is only supported by those who have no interests in the colony.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Not the mayor of Kalgoorlie?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: He has left the colony.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: For good?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: Yes; sold up. We ought to be able to trust the people who live in this colony. I do not propose to withdraw the motion, but intend to allow it to go to a vote.

Question put and negatived.

MOTION: MUNICIPAL RATING ON LAND VALUE.

HON. H. G. PARSONS moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, municipal taxation should, as far as possible, be based upon land values, irrespective of improvements. He said he did not intend to delay the House, but he had been asked by the municipal council of Kalgoorlie to move this motion, and he believed a similar motion was being moved in another place to-night. As a buyer of land in this colony himself, he should at first sight have been inclined to regard taxation of this kind as harassing; but he had been told by many persons interested in investments in land that it would not be harassing. As ex-mayor of a prominent town—and he understood most mayors

and councillors were of the same opinion—he would prefer to see a motion of this kind carried. At the last Municipal Conference, the opinions of the municipalities were practically unanimous in favour of such an innovation as this. He saw the force of the general principle that a man who built a house adjoining a vacant block should not be taxed because of his enterprise, and the man who held land for the unearned increment should not profit unduly from the enterprise of his neighbour. He was told by business persons that things would be averaged; that the owner of the land unbuilt on would not be injured; and we knew that the municipalities in the whole of the colony were practically unanimous in favour of a tax on the unimproved land values for municipal purposes.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would the hon. member explain what he has just stated, as it seems all a paradox?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: It was not a paradox.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would the hon. member explain it?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The rates would become higher on the land without the buildings, and that would make it very little worse for the unimproved land-owner.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That was what he could not see.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: It was sufficiently obvious. That was the position we were confronted with.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Why not introduce a Bill?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The municipalities had asked for that to be done, but time had not been found this session. This was the best substitute for a Bill, and would commit the House to an opinion.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Without discussion.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: As an ex-representative of a municipality, and he hoped to be the representative of that municipality again, he felt bound to be committed. All the mayors and councillors of the colony were in favour of this form of taxation; and he asked the House to commit itself to what would be in the general interest, and in conformity

with the general opinion of the majority of the ratepayers of the colony.

HON. A. P. MATHESON, in seconding the motion, said he agreed with the apparent opinion of hon. members that this motion was not a very desirable way of bringing the subject before this House, for it should have been brought before hon. members in the shape of a Bill. Still, he intended to support Mr. Parsons, as there was a great deal in what the hon. member had said. The present system of taxation worked out in this way. A man put up a building containing a certain number of rooms, each of which he desired to let; the owner succeeded in letting 50 per cent. of the rooms during the year, for which he obtained a fair rental; and the result was that the municipal council came along and assessed the rates as if the whole of the rooms in the house had been let at the maximum rental, which was unjust. Still, the councils were entitled to do so under the existing Act. The result was that a man would not spend any money in improving his block of land, and a number of blocks of land remained unimproved, whereas the land would be improved if there was not the risk of having to pay heavy rates on buildings.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would not people build if it paid them to do so?

HON. A. P. MATHESON said he would have built more than he had done, if it had not been for the rating question. Hon. members had no idea what the heavy rating came to on the goldfields. The population there was so migratory that a person could never depend on having tenants throughout the year. In one case, his rating came to two months' rents. He could not agree with what Mr. Parsons said about unimproved land not suffering. It was perfectly clear that the unimproved land would suffer, because the owner would have to pay a heavier rate.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: What was the use of building when the houses were mostly empty?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The houses were not necessarily empty. If the rents were reduced there were plenty of tenants to be got. The fact remained that, owing to the present system of assessment, no encouragement was given to

a person to improve property. He would vote for the motion, although he had no expectation of its being carried.

HON. D. MCKAY: There could be no good result from carrying the motion. If the house was not rated, the land would be rated, so it would come to the same thing in the end.

HON. H. J. SAUNDERS said it was his intention to oppose the motion. Hon. members should not commit themselves on a question of this kind without having a Bill before us, and without knowing what the municipalities thought about the question. This matter was altogether premature and out of place. A motion of this sort practically bound the House to what the hon. member proposed, and it was not the duty of the House or members to bind themselves before a Bill was introduced and thoroughly discussed.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: If Mr. Parsons would accept an amendment to the motion to strike out the word "municipalities" and insert "all," so that the motion would read "all taxation should as far as possible, be based upon land values, irrespective of improvements," he would move an amendment to that effect. So much more could be said on the abstract question generally in favour of the single tax, making the land pay all the cost of governing the country, which he was sure would be a most valuable improvement in our constitution.

HON. H. G. PARSONS said he was most happy to think that the hon. member was a disciple of Henry George. He never expected to hear from the hon. member any advocacy of the principle of the single tax, but he could not accept the amendment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT said he would not move the amendment then.

Question put and negatived.

METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS ACT AMENDMENT BILL (No. 1).

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, read a first time.

POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY'S AMENDMENT.

The amendment made by the Assembly was now considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

HON. A. G. JENKINS moved that the Council agree to the amendment, the object of which was to give the police the power to prosecute for breaches of by-laws.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill is introduced simply to bring the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act of 1896 into line with the general Land Bill now passing through Parliament. It had not been intended to take the second reading of this Bill until the Land Bill had become law, but there is no reason in Parliamentary practice why two Bills, one hanging on the other, should not be concurrently passed through Parliament. This Bill is necessary in order to bring the law dealing with the purchase of estates into line with the land regulations. Clause 2 provides that no person holding upwards of 1,000 acres is eligible to select land under the principal Act. Under clause 3, land held under the principal Act may be transferred or mortgaged in accordance with the provisions of the Land Act, 1898. Clause 4 provides that the annual instalments, to be paid by the lessee under the provisions of the principal Act, must be paid at the time and in the manner prescribed by the Land Act. Power to resume, under certain circumstances, is given to the Governor by clause 6, and by clause 7 the Governor may prescribe the forms of leases and other instruments for carrying the principal Act and its amendments into effect. Clause 8 provides for a license being granted for the quarter preceding the date of application, instead of for the half-year, as under the principal Act, so as to bring the law into line with the general Land Bill now before Parliament. Then clause 9 provides that the principal Act and its amendments shall be read and construed with the Land Act of 1898, so far as the provisions of the Land Act

are applicable. I must go back to clause 5, which provides for the amendment of section 11, sub-section 5, of the principal Act, by adding the following words: "Provided that where the land at the time of selection had improvements upon it, and the value thereof has been added to the selling price, the amount required to be expended by the lessee shall be proportionately reduced." Sub-section 5 of section 11 of the Act of 1896 reads as follows:—

The lessee shall, within two years from the commencement of his lease, fence in at least one-fourth of the quantity contained in his lease, and within five years from the said date fence in the whole of the land on the surveyed boundaries, and shall clear and crop at least one-tenth of the land, and within ten years from the said date shall expend on the land, in improvements prescribed by the Act, an amount equal to the full purchase money, which shall include the cost of the exterior fencing, which shall be of the description prescribed by the regulations.

To this clause will be added the proviso, which I think will commend itself to the judgment of hon. members as equitable under the circumstances. I need say no more than this Bill is absolutely necessary in order to carry out the legislation of the general Land Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and report adopted.

COOLGARDIE MINING EXHIBITION
BILL.

RECOMMITTAL.

Amendments made by the Legislative Assembly, consequent on a message from the Governor, were now considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the amendments made by the Legislative Assembly be agreed to.

Put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

At 5.45 p.m. the PRESIDENT left the chair.

At 7.45 the PRESIDENT resumed the chair.

METROPOLITAN WATERWORKS ACT
AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2).

ALL STAGES.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In moving the second reading of this short Bill, I think I should mention what most hon. members no doubt are aware of. It is necessary that the borrowing powers of the Waterworks Board shall be increased, and it is proposed to do so in this Bill from £350,000 to £400,000. The object to be accomplished by this addition to the capital at the disposal of the board is to provide a new service reservoir at Mount Eliza, the present one being utterly inadequate; in fact it has been inadequate all through. If some serious accident happens to the pipe between this reservoir and the reservoir in the hills, it will be a serious matter to Perth, inasmuch as the reservoir at Mount Eliza does not contain a full supply of water for the city. It only contains 750,000 gallons, and I believe the consumption of the city at times amounts to one million gallons per day. In addition to that, the money is to provide for extending the water service to some of the suburbs, for further reticulation, and for carrying out some repairs. I am sure hon. members will give their support to the Bill in the interests of the citizens of Perth and the suburbs.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and report adopted.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

LAND BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

The Legislative Assembly having disagreed to certain amendments made by the Council, the same were further considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

Nos. 26 and 27—Clauses 96 and 98, strike out "ten shillings," and insert "seven shillings and sixpence":

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Council do not insist on the amendments. He did not know that he

could add to the reasons given by the Legislative Assembly for disagreeing to the amendments, and he could only appeal to hon. members representing northern constituencies or who were interested in those constituencies, to support the motion. If insisted on, the amendments would make a considerable difference to the revenue, and revenue was absolutely needed at the present time. I regard to the Kimberley division, the clause provided that where leases were fully stocked the rental was reduced to 5s., and if the amendment were insisted on, the rent would be virtually reduced to 3s. 9d., because all the lands affected in this district were fully stocked. I must be borne in mind that the term of the lease had been extended, and this virtually gave the freehold of the runs to the leaseholders; and taking these two facts together, it would be seen that the Government were liberally treating settlers in the North-West and Kimberley divisions. The reduction in the rental made by the amendments did not apply to the Western Division, which was originally the Gascoyne district, and which certainly suffered much more than any other pastoral district in the country. The rains there were more uncertain with longer intervals between, and sometimes there was no rainfall for a considerable period. For these reasons he confidently appealed to hon. members to support the motion.

HON. E. McLARTY: As one who supported the amendments he must say he was not aware, nor did he think it was the intention of the mover, that the amendments should apply to Kimberley at all. As one largely interested in the Kimberley district, he thought he was speaking for the pastoralists there when he said they were perfectly satisfied with the terms on which they obtained the leasehold. As to the North-West, however, there should be some small concession; but seeing the Legislative Assembly had assented to all the other amendments, some of which were most important, the Committee might well support the motion of the Colonial Secretary.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

MINING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY BILL.
LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

The Legislative Assembly having disagreed to an amendment made by the Council, the same was further considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

No. 1.—Clause 22, line 3, strike out "or adjoining or abutting on":

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the amendment be not insisted on. The Bill had received very short consideration, and members were not quite sure as to the objects proposed to be accomplished, or of the ultimate operation of the clause. He omitted to notice, or he should have pointed it out at the time, that the clause referred to municipalities and townsites, and he believed, if that had been known, the objection of Mr. Matheson, who moved that amendment, would have disappeared. There might be a number of grants in a township of not more than an acre, or half an acre in extent, and a miner might have the land on which he wished to mine, at one end of three or four allotments. In such a case he would not have room to sink a shaft 200 feet in order to get under the buildings or streets, and, therefore, he would not be able to mine at all, and the words struck out by the amendment were put in so that he might be able to acquire blocks "adjoining or abutting on" and "within any municipality or townsite, etc."

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It was not his intention to suggest that the House insist on the amendment, but he was not in the least convinced that the amendment was not a proper one. Neither House of Parliament, in his opinion, understood this Bill in the slightest, and the measure had not received proper consideration, so that members were practically working in the dark. He had studied the Bill very closely since it passed through the Council, and it was almost unintelligible in many clauses, the clause under consideration amongst the number. His objection to this clause remained as strong as when the matter was previously discussed in Committee. If the holder of a claim or lease was entitled to get from

the surface-owner the whole of the surface of that lease, that was all he had a right to claim, whether in a municipality or otherwise. It was perfectly clear from the other parts of the Bill that the owner of a claim was able to get the surface of his lease from the freeholder, and if he got that in any municipality he got every scrap of the freehold he was entitled to. This clause distinctly gave the owner of the lease power to get adjoining surface outside his lease, and for that reason he (Mr. Matheson) was just as strongly opposed to the words "adjoining or abutting" as he was before; but seeing that the matter had received consideration in another place for a second time, the Council would not be justified in insisting on the amendment.

Question put and passed, and the amendment not insisted upon.

Resolution reported, and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until 7.30 p.m. on the next day.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 8.30 p.m. until 7.30 p.m. the next day.