

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 8th November, 1900.

Papers presented—Question: Rabbit Pest, Prevention—Notice of Motion: Payment of Members, to be uniform (withdrawn)—Motion: Public Servants, to grade and classify (resumed), amended—Payment of Members Bill, first reading—Noxious Weeds Bill, in Committee—Land Act Amendment Bill, in Committee, Clause 7 to end, reported—Kalgoorlie Tramways Bill, second reading, in Committee, third reading—Leederville Tramways Bill, second reading, in Committee, third reading—Fremantle Tramways Bill, second reading, in Committee, Recommittal (progress)—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill: Postponement (re Printing of Report)—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1. Monthly Statistical Abstract for October, 1900. 2. Annual Report Acclimatisation Committee.

QUESTION—RABBIT PEST, PREVENTION.

HON. R. G. BURGESS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1. What steps the Government are taking to stop the known invasion of rabbits. 2. If the Government intend taking any steps to estimate the cost of a rabbit-proof fence from the coast northwards.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—1. Lightly equipped parties are being organised to scour the known infested areas, and destroy all colonies of rabbits that may be discovered. 2. The Government estimates the cost of constructing a fence from the South to the North Coast, as recommended by the Chief Inspector of Stock, at about eighty thousand pounds.

NOTICE OF MOTION—PAYMENT OF MEMBERS.

Notice of motion read: Hon. R. S. Haynes to move "That, in the opinion of this House, any remuneration made to members should be uniform in each House of Parliament."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A Bill for payment of members having been passed by the other Chamber and being now on its way to the Council, would Mr. Haynes be in order in sub-

mitting this motion? Every opportunity would be given for dealing with the question when the Bill arrived, which he hoped would be in a few minutes.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: It would perhaps be as well if the motion were carried, and then the Bill could be returned to the Legislative Assembly without discussion. Should that course not be approved, however, the motion could be withdrawn.

THE PRESIDENT: The Payment of Members Bill was, he was informed, now on its way from the Assembly; and it would hardly be advisable to go on with the Notice of Motion, because every opportunity would be afforded of discussing the question in Committee on the Bill.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Notice of motion had been given with the expectation that there would be time to discuss the question before it had been decided elsewhere; but, under the circumstances, he asked leave to withdraw the notice.

Notice by leave withdrawn.

MOTION: PUBLIC SERVANTS, TO GRADE AND CLASSIFY.

Debate resumed from 31st October, on the motion by Hon. A. Jameson "That a Royal Commission be appointed to grade and classify members of the civil service, and to fix their status and remuneration in the various classes."

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): It was more as a formal matter that I moved the adjournment of the debate, in order to allow an opportunity for reconsidering the proposal, and if necessary amending it. So far as the appointment of a Royal Commission is concerned, I am wholly with Dr. Jameson, because it is advisable to get all the information possible on the subject. No doubt there will have to be an alteration in the constitution and personnel of the civil service, and we are very insufficiently provided with material for arriving at a proper decision on the matter. A Royal Commission or some other means would afford that information; but I trust the motion will be altered, because it would be inexpedient and not quite constitutional to pass it in its present form.

THE PRESIDENT: What does the hon. member propose?

HON. A. JAMESON: Am I in order in speaking now?

THE PRESIDENT: The Notice of Motion before the House now has been ruled out of order, or at any rate that portion of it which deals with a matter already decided by the House; therefore I suggest that the hon. member should by some means alter the Notice of Motion.

HON. A. JAMESON: I have the alteration here ready.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Would not the better course be to withdraw the motion and substitute another?

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member can withdraw the motion and give notice for another day; but the difficulty can be got over by getting someone to move an amendment, when the debate can be proceeded with at once.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE (Central): I move that the words "to grade and classify" be struck out, and "to consider and report on the grading and classification of the" inserted in lieu thereof; further, that all words after "service" be struck out. It is hardly necessary to say that a report from such a commission would be useful, and indeed is necessary in order to make the Public Service Bill effective.

Amendments put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would be better if, instead of a Royal Commission, it was proposed to have a board; but if the House is not willing to accept that suggestion, the motion can be left as at present.

Question as amended put, and passed.

Message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

PAYMENT OF MEMBERS BILL.

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

NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from the previous day.

Clause 4—Minister, on recommendation of local authority, to advise Governor as to noxious weeds:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A notice had been circulated in reference to

this clause, and as the clause was not absolutely necessary to the working of the Bill, he moved that it be struck out.

HON. H. LUKIN: If Clause 4 were struck out, he would vote for striking out the whole Bill. The Bill was very much needed, and he would be sorry if it were not carried into effect. The power of making recommendations to the Minister as to what should be considered noxious weeds should be vested in local bodies in the districts, and what better local bodies could there be for the purpose than the roads boards and municipal councils?

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Or some other boards.

HON. H. LUKIN: Not some other boards. These boards were elected annually by the ratepayers, and if they made any mistakes of commission or omission, the ratepayers had the power to kick them out and put others in their place. If this clause were struck out, he should do his best to wreck the Bill.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The clause as it stood would be nonsensical from its constitutional aspect. It provided twice over that the Minister should advise the Governor. No Minister could advise the Governor, but it was the Ministry as a whole which advised the Governor. If the hon. member brought up a new clause, he could do what he liked.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause could not remain, and it was impossible to amend it to make it useful. The hon. member (Mr. Lukin) could move a new clause in a few words, to the effect that the Governor might, on the recommendation of the municipal council or roads board, do certain things. He would give the hon. member every opportunity of moving a short new clause like that either to-day or on Tuesday next.

HON. E. McLARTY: The suggestion of the Colonial Secretary might be accepted. Clause 4 was an important one. If the decision were left in the hands of the local authorities, the roads boards or the municipal councils, that would remove the greatest objection to the Bill throughout the country districts. People had great objection to inspectors going upon their land just at perhaps the busiest season of the year. There were no bodies more capable than the local bodies of judging what should be

regarded as noxious weeds, and whether those weeds should be eradicated. There were many weeds which perhaps in some parts were noxious, but were not objectionable in other parts. For instance, where a person cultivated one year and grazed the next, most of these weeds would be destroyed by pasturing sheep on them. There might be exceptions, but that would be the rule.

HON. R. G. BURGESS said he was not in accord with the last two speakers. Placing the decision in the hands of the municipal councils or roads boards would not altogether meet the case, as one roads board or municipal council might declare a weed to be noxious, whilst another might take a different view. This was a matter he was going to fight out, and he hoped the Committee would support him. He had a good deal of experience in regard to this.

HON. E. McLARTY: Where did the hon. member suggest the recommendation should come from?

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The advisory board we now had, and if that suggestion were adopted, people would not have to depend upon these roads boards.

Amendment put and passed, and the clause struck out.

Clauses 5 and 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Penalty for not destroying noxious weeds after notice:

HON. H. LUKIN moved that the Chairman do leave the Chair.

Motion put and negatived.

HON. R. G. BURGESS moved that the first six words, "if an inspector or other person," be struck out, with a view of inserting "if a municipal council, roads board, or other board appointed by the Governor."

HON. C. SOMMERS: One understood the Bill was to be recommitted for the purpose of reintroducing Clause 4

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: An amended clause.

HON. C. SOMMERS: In that case Clause 7 would want very little alteration, because he thought members would insist upon an inspector at least being appointed in conjunction with other bodies. To abolish inspectors would be a great error, because, while one roads board might declare a certain weed obnoxious, another roads board might not take the same course.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This clause was the very pith of the Bill, and Mr. Burgess was correct when he said that if this carrying out were left to roads boards or municipalities the measure would be a dead letter. If these words were struck out as proposed, the Bill might as well be dropped altogether. He had no objection to the words proposed by Mr. Burgess, but this point could be dealt with in the new clause. An advisory board was already in existence, and would be able to assist the Minister in this direction.

HON. E. McLARTY: Would inspectors be given power to go on a man's land and determine what were noxious weeds? He asked the question, because some inspectors were very officious and would be placed in such a position that they might absolutely ruin settlers.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The inspector would only report to the Minister.

HON. E. McLARTY: But the Minister would probably act on the advice of the inspector.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not without proper inquiry from the local authority.

HON. E. McLARTY: The Bill might do more harm than good, and some local body should have the right to determine whether a certain plant was a noxious weed. The Bill had been demanded over and over again by the Producers' Conference, which might be regarded as the most representative body on the subject, and he would like to see the Bill passed, but he objected to too much power being left in the hands of the inspectors without the local bodies having a voice in the matter.

HON. C. SOMMERS suggested that after the word "other" in line one, the word "body or bodies" should be inserted. He was in favour of the inspector having full power, but the danger was that while one local body declared a certain weed noxious, an adjoining authority might not take the same view, and thus the object of the measure would be defeated. The Minister would no doubt be a reasonable man, and on a petition would hear both sides before coming to a decision, and unless there were inspectors, the Bill might as well be dropped altogether.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY said he would endeavour to get a clause framed to take the place of Clause 4, and to meet the views which had been advanced by hon. members.

HON. C. SOMMERS suggested that it would be better under the circumstances to report progress.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that progress be reported.

Put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from 6th November.

Clause 7—Amendment of 62 Vict., No. 37, sec. 134:

HON. R. G. BURGESS moved that the word "register" be struck out. It was right that notice should be given in the same way as in any other business. He had cognisance of cases which occurred last year, of men who knew nothing about what was intended having their land forfeited. These men had come from the other colonies, where they had been engaged in farming for some years; and the system there was that before land was forfeited notice was given to the holder, and the matter was taken into consideration by the Land Board. He (Mr. Burgess) moved that the clause be struck out. A man's land should not be forfeited without all due precaution being taken to let that man know what it was proposed to do. A man might be ill, or something might happen, and he might not be able to find out what was intended. Surely it was very little trouble to register a letter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Doubtless this clause had been inserted owing to great difficulty experienced in the delivery of registered letters. Registered letters could not be sent everywhere. The person to whom they were addressed had sometimes to travel 20 or 30 miles to get them. A notice was sent that a registered letter was at the office, and the person had either to authorise some person to get that letter or to make a journey to the post office where the registered letter lay. That occurred all over the colony, and the object of this amendment was to obviate this diffi-

culty; because the letters not registered would be delivered direct by the first mail which went. As Minister controlling posts and telegraphs, he had become acquainted with that fact. He had received serious complaints, and had endeavoured to meet the difficulty to the best of his power, but it was impossible to thoroughly surmount it under the present regulations. The fact that these registered letters did not reach the owner in time for him to obtain the information wanted had, one believed, forced itself on the Lands Department.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The Colonial Secretary had not been about the country sufficiently, but he (Mr. Burgess) was everlastingly going amongst these people, and he contended that every convenience and justice ought to be afforded to those who had taken up land for years. Many men had made fortunes by tricks having reference to land, and such things as had happened in other colonies would happen here. He lived where there was no post office at all, yet he had very little trouble in getting his registered letters, telegrams, and everything else. A registered letter ought to be sent to any man before his land was forfeited. There was too much red tape in the Post Office, in the Colonial Secretary's Department, and in the Railway Department, and if we were to burn that red tape, the country and the revenue would be in a better position, and we should have more satisfaction throughout the colony.

HON. E. McLARTY: The proposal now made would assist many people in different parts of the bush, and land could not be forfeited unless notice had been given. Every man who held land understood perfectly that he was under an obligation to pay his rent, and to see that the land was not forfeited. Moreover, notice must be published in the *Government Gazette* 60 days before the land could be forfeited, and that period was long enough to give any man an opportunity to pay his rent. He (Mr. McLarty) did not think that one letter in a hundred miscarried because it was not registered. He never registered a letter, but he always found that his letter arrived at its destination. He had sent good large sums.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Had the hon. member ever been prosecuted?

HON. E. McLARTY: No. There was no obligation to register.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If a letter contained coin, it should be registered.

HON. E. McLARTY: Registered letters were kept a considerable time before they were delivered, and this provision would afford convenience, whilst at the same time there would be very little fear of the land being forfeited, and if it was forfeited, it would be through the holder's neglect.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 to 12, inclusive—agreed to.

New Clause:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the following clause be added to the Bill:—

Section 130 of the principal Act is amended by inserting in line 1, after the word "split," the word "remove."

Clause put and passed, and added to the Bill.

New Clause:

HON. J. T. GLOWREY moved that the following clause be added to the Bill:

Section 102 of the principal Act is hereby amended by striking out the words, "or more than twenty thousand acres, at a rental of ten shillings per thousand acres," in the fourth and fifth lines thereof, and by substituting the words "at the same rental prescribed for pastoral leases within the division in which the land is situated."

Pastoral lessees on the goldfields, and in mining districts generally, were supposed to pay 10s. per thousand acres, but at Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, which were situated within the eastern district, only 2s. 6d. per thousand acres was at present paid. When the Bill was framed, there must have been an oversight, because there were many reasons why the price in those districts should be lower, seeing that the land there was of very poor quality.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: These people had railway communication.

HON. C. SOMMERS supported the proposed new clause. The Bill was introduced to give persons an opportunity on the goldfields of following pastoral pursuits, and even if they had a railway, the absence of a rainfall counteracted that benefit; and to charge 10s. per thousand acres, for what had hitherto been regarded as waste lands, was altogether unreasonable. If any change

were made, the charge ought to be decreased rather than increased. There had been an exceptional season this year, which might almost tempt one to stock that country, but he did not think we could hope these favourable seasons would last.

Clause put and passed.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

KALGOORLIE TRAMWAYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: It is not necessary for me to make more than two or three observations. A provisional order was made some time ago by the Commissioner for Railways, and I believe all that is necessary to be done has been done by the contractors or concessionaires, and the local authorities have acquiesced in the scheme. It is, therefore, merely a formal matter to pass the Bill. There is only one point I need refer to, and it is the same point which has arisen in regard to other tramway concessions given in the past. The last clause of the Bill refers to the telephone service at places where tramway concessions are granted, and reads:—

Whenever any telephone service is erected prior to the construction of the tramways, and is prejudicially affected by the construction or working of the tramways, the Postmaster-General may, at the cost of the promoter and his assigns, do all such things as may be necessary to protect the telephone service from being so affected, either by placing the same on a metallic circuit system or otherwise.

Immediately after the tramways commenced running in Perth, the whole of the telephone service within a certain radius, was very prejudicially affected, and to overcome the difficulty, it was necessary to expend some thousands of pounds in installing what is called the metallic circuit; that is, a wire circuit back to the office to prevent interruptions which would otherwise be caused by the electric current of the tramways. The system prevailing before was what is called the earth circuit, which was of no use as soon as the trams began to run. It is only right to the country that some provision should be made to meet these circumstances; and indeed it was at my suggestion that this clause was inserted.

I believe hon. members will be willing to protect the country as against these contractors, syndicates, or whatever we like to call them, and to make provision to prevent injurious interference with the telephone lines constructed by the Government. Our first duty to the country is to take care that its funds are not interfered with in any indirect way, and I hope hon. members will see the absolute necessity for this clause. After a provisional order is granted, it is necessary that Parliament shall be asked to carry it into effect, and in this connection some arguments were used in another place which I think were exceedingly improper and not in accordance with the facts of the case. I know these statements were unauthorised and were made without a knowledge of the facts and without due consideration, so I obtained some information, which I should like to read to hon. members, in reference to the telephone system now in operation in the colony. The information is contained in a memorandum from Mr. E. W. Snook, Superintendent of Telegraphs. It was stated that we had an effete or antiquated system of telephone communication, and that there was no reason why private persons constructing tramways should be asked to bring the telephone system up to date; but Mr. Snook, in his memorandum, says:—

Switch boards: Those in use here are the Western Electric Multiple boards, made to use either with metallic circuit or with earth return, and are, with the exception of the new boards in Sydney, the most modern in Australia.

I want hon. members to take notice of that. Mr. Snook goes on:

Instruments: The standard instruments adopted here for the past years are Ericsson's. They are the best in the market, and are now being used in the United States and generally throughout Europe. Sydney is now also adopting this type.

Hon. members will see that the telephone service in this colony is in this respect ahead of the other colonies. Mr. Snook proceeds:

The goldfields exchanges were each started and have been arranged on the metallic circuit system. Perth, Fremantle, etc., are on the earth return, and it is only possible to change them slowly owing to the congested state of the poles in the streets. Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane are working on the earth return system; also their trunk lines are

worked on the single lines, whereas ours have been metallic circuit ever since they were erected. The only exchanges in Australia which are metallic circuit throughout are Geelong and Ballarat. From the above it can be seen that ours is the most modern system in Australia, though when Sydney and Melbourne complete the work they have on hand now, and unless we go underground with our wires, they will be ahead of us.

I think it will be satisfactory to hon. members to know that the telephone system of the colony is not antiquated, but is the most modern in the Australian colonies. I may be pardoned for referring to this, though of course complaints arise always in regard to telephones, and even in England, where we might expect perfection, if that be possible, there are some defects, and in a larger ratio I believe than here. Of course it is not a perfect system, like a man speaking face to face with his friend, for there are many influences operating—the weather and other things—and sometimes we are disappointed. I am glad to tell hon. members that the telephone system of this colony is certainly up to date, and it is the object of the officers to progress with the times. I do not think I need say anything more about this Bill, excepting that I believe these conveniences are very desirable in towns, and it is the wish of the Government to assist in giving facilities of communication between one part and another. There is no doubt the electric tramway is a most excellent means of locomotion, and I think it is ahead of all other systems in the world, whether by horse or steam, at the present time. We may congratulate ourselves that in Perth we have a most efficient and up-to-date service of tramways. Doubtless the goldfields will take good care to see they obtain an equally good service, and it is only to be expected from the Government and Parliament of the country that they will assist local institutions in obtaining these modern and useful advantages.

HON. R. G. BURGESS (East): I would like to know whether there is not already a railway line which goes almost within a few yards of the route of the tramway proposed. The Government have already spent a large sum in duplicating the line, and I shall be glad if the Colonial Secretary will explain this. I do not want to object to the giving of facilities to the goldfields, but it seems rather queer that the Government have already

built a line and duplicated it, and now we are going to establish a private tram-line to take away the traffic.

HON. C. SOMMERS (North-East): I may explain that this tramway will be in my electorate, and there are no railways which will be affected by this particular Bill. This tramway is not the Boulder tramway, but it is within the municipality of Kalgoorlie pure and simple.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Kalgoorlie Roads Board tramway.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Another Bill on which Mr. Burges may perhaps be justified in giving remarks will come before this House.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: I am asking for information.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The other Bill is under the consideration of a Select Committee.

HON. C. SOMMERS: To the tram line referred to in this Bill, there is no objection by the people of the North-East province or anyone else. Even the Boulder Municipality and the Roads Board offer no objection to it. Moreover, the Municipal Council of Kalgoorlie have made a very good bargain, and the citizens of that town are very anxious to get the Bill passed, and to enjoy such facilities as those possessed by the city of Perth.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: It is only within the municipality of Kalgoorlie.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Yes. The rate-payers have made a very good bargain. They are getting 3 per cent. of the gross takings of the Tramway Company, and I think that is a better bargain than the bargain made by the Perth people. I trust, therefore, hon. members will allow this Bill to go through.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The percentage is the same.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

LEEDERVILLE TRAMWAYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second

reading, said: This is a Bill of the same description as the last, and I find that the councillors and ratepayers of the municipality of Leederville on the one part, and the promoter on the other part, have agreed to this tramway, subject to the Tramways Act of 1885. I do not think I need detain the House with any further remarks upon it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

FREMANTLE TRAMWAYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: This is a Bill to confirm an order made by the Commissioner of Railways on the 11th October last, and set forth in the schedule. I believe that, although the clauses are less in number than those in the other Tramway Bills, the measure is practically the same. I need not dilate upon the advantages to be derived by the town of Fremantle from the passing of this measure. I believe the municipal authorities have come to a satisfactory arrangement with the promoters.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through Committee, and reported.

RECOMMITTAL.

HON. M. L. MOSS moved that the Bill be recommitted for substituting a new clause in lieu of Clause 6.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member ought to give notice, so that members might have an opportunity of seeing the new clause.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Mr. Moss, it was understood, was going to ask for an adjournment so as to get the opinion of the Colonial Secretary on the proposed new clause.

Motion put and passed, and the Bill recommitted.

HON. M. L. MOSS moved:

The promoter and its assigns shall take all reasonable precautions in constructing and

placing its electric lines, and in working the undertaking, so as not injuriously to affect the working of any wire or line used for the purpose of telephonic communication, or the currents in such wire or line. If any question arises between the promoter and its assigns and the Postmaster General as to whether the promoter and its assigns has constructed or placed its electric lines or worked its undertaking in contravention hereof, and as to whether such wire or line, or the current therein, is or is not injuriously affected thereby, such question shall be determined by arbitration of two arbitrators and an umpire, under the provisions of "The Arbitration Act, 1895," and the arbitrators, or, in case of dispute, the umpire, may direct the promoter and its assigns to make any alterations in or addition to its system, so as to comply with the provisions of this clause, and to bear and pay the cost, or some part thereof, of altering the telephone service so affected as may be necessary.

Clause 6 appeared to be very drastic, and the proposed new clause was a fairer one. He did not move the clause with any intention of throwing the slightest obstruction in the way of the Bill being carried, and if the Government opposed the clause, he would not press it. He suggested, however, that the Government should seriously consider whether the proposed clause was not much fairer than the one in the Bill.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL.

POSTPONEMENT (re PRINTING).

Order read, for consideration of the Bill in Committee.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the order be postponed until the next Tuesday, because the report of the Select Committee on the Bill had not yet been received from the Government Printer.

HON. R. S. HAYNES seconded the motion, and said he would like to point out the serious inconvenience caused by the report not having been printed. He understood the report was sent to the Printer yesterday, and there had been ample time to strike off sufficient copies to give the Committee an opportunity of proceeding with this important Bill and amendments to-night. Instead of doing the work, however, the printers took a holiday, although these were the identical persons who were clamouring for higher

wages and less work. The printers seemed to forget that the Council were sitting, and that goldfields members and country members had remained in town for the special purpose of considering the Bill, this evening having been kept clear for the purpose. All the trouble had arisen from the printers being given a holiday on a day which was not a public holiday; and if any private firm had taken a like step, what would hon. members have said? To keep the House waiting in this way was deserving of the severest censure, and he hoped it would not occur again. This was a Bill in the interests of the workmen themselves, and yet they were delaying and possibly jeopardising it. Some explanation ought to be given by the Government Printer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY said he entirely concurred in the strictures which Mr. R. S. Haynes had passed. He (the Colonial Secretary) had no knowledge of the circumstances until he came down to the House this afternoon, and he would certainly look into the matter. There had been gross neglect of duty, so far as he could see, although there might be some explanation he was not at present acquainted with. He would make it his business to inquire as to why the House had been kept waiting for this report, because the delay was little short of a disgrace.

THE PRESIDENT: What did the Colonial Secretary propose to do?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It had already been moved that the order of the day be postponed until Tuesday.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It was to be hoped the Colonial Secretary, on behalf of the Government, could give some assurance that this state of things would not occur again. The House had to a considerable extent been treated with contempt in connection with the printing of this report; and he could not understand why copies had not been supplied, in view of the fact that the report was in type, and only required to be run off on the machines. He could not help thinking there must be something very remiss in the administration of this particular department.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Goldfields members had stayed in town purposely to consider this Bill and the report of the

Select Committee, and were prepared to sit even to-morrow night for that purpose.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY assured hon. members that he did not know the employees of the Printing Office had a holiday yesterday. He had not been consulted in regard to that holiday, and by whose orders it had been granted he could not say.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: But what had the printers been doing to-day, that they could not print off the report?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY said he did not know. If his attention had been drawn to the matter that morning, he should have insisted on the report being printed in time. He would have the matter strictly inquired into, and would take care such a thing did not occur again, or, if so, the offenders would be visited with penal consequences.

Question put and passed, and the order postponed.

SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT—POSTPONEMENT.

Order read, for consideration of Select Committee's Report.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that that the order be postponed until the next sitting of the House.

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he was afraid there were so many Bills on the Notice Paper for Tuesday, that this measure would not be reached.

HON. A. B. KIDSON protested most strongly at the consideration of this Bill being further postponed until Tuesday, and said that if necessary the House ought to meet on Monday to deal with it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no business for Monday, or he would have proposed to meet on that day.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Monday was a holiday.

Question put and passed, and the order postponed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half-past six o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 8th November, 1900.

Hampton Plains Railway Bill (private), Message as to Crown Lands—Loan Estimates, Appropriation Message—Papers presented—Lands Resumption Amendment Bill, Council's Amendments—Annual Estimates, Committee of Supply, Railways vote (resumed) passed, Division; Works vote (progress)—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

HAMPTON PLAINS RAILWAY BILL
(PRIVATE).

MESSAGE, CROWN LANDS.

Message from the Administrator received and read, assenting on behalf of Her Majesty to this Bill being proceeded with, in so far as it affected Crown lands.

LOAN ESTIMATES.

APPROPRIATION MESSAGE.

Loan Estimates presented, showing expenditure out of loan funds proposed for the year; also, Message from the Administrator read, recommending appropriation for the same.

Ordered that the Message and Estimates be considered at the next sitting.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Acclimatisation Society Committee's Report, annual; 2, Auditing of Railway Accounts, Telegrams from other Australian colonies.

Ordered to lie on the table.

LANDS RESUMPTION AMENDMENT
BILL.

COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

Schedule of two amendments in Clause 1, made by the Legislative Council, considered.

IN COMMITTEE.

On motion by the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, the Council's amendments agreed to without debate.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from 6th November.

RAILWAYS AND TRAMWAYS DEPARTMENT (Hon. B. C. Wood, Commissioner).