

we are endeavouring to meet the wishes of the Government and the Legislative Assembly.

Question passed, and the Bill returned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was necessary and advisable that from now onwards to the prorogation, which he hoped we should accomplish in the next day or two, the two Houses should sit as nearly as possible at the same time; therefore he moved that the House at its rising do adjourn to 3 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. He hoped members would receive this motion favourably, so that the conference which he had spoken of might be arranged without undue delay.

Question passed.

The House adjourned at 8-23 o'clock, until the next afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 12th January, 1904.

	Page
Petition: Railway Trains, Goldfield Suburbs	3155
Question: Royal Commissions, particulars	3155
Bills: Amendments and Procedure, Electoral	3155
Constitution Bill amendments, postponed	3156
Redistribution of Seats, Council's message	3157
Adjournment of House, remarks	3158

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

PRAYERS.

PETITION—RAILWAY TRAINS, GOLD-FIELD SUBURBS.

MR. JOHNSON presented a petition from residents of Kalgoorlie and Boulder, and suburbs, praying for alteration in suburban railway train service between Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

Petition received and read.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the **PREMIER:** By-laws of Kookynie Municipality.

By the **MINISTER FOR WORKS:** By-laws of North Coolgardie Roads Board. Alteration to Railway Classification and Rate Book.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSIONS.

MR. STONE asked the Premier: 1, How many Royal Commissions have been appointed during the past three years. 2, The objects for which they were appointed. 3, The names of members of Parliament and others who served on such Commissions. 4, What remuneration each member of Parliament received for such services. 5, What members of Parliament refused remuneration for their services. 6, Whether members of Parliament are entitled to receive remuneration in such cases.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Seven. 2, See column 2 of attached return. 3, See column 3 of attached return. 4, See column 4 of attached return. 5, None. 6, Yes.

BILLS—AMENDMENTS AND PROCEDURE.

ELECTORAL BILL, POSTPONEMENT.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): I purpose to ask the House to adjourn; but we shall have to meet formally at half-past seven this evening, to enable us to transmit to the Legislative Council a message conveying our reasons for disagreeing with some of the Council's amendments in the Factories Bill, this message having been suspended since we last met. Instead of moving that the House do now adjourn, I will ask that Mr. Speaker be good enough to leave the Chair, if the House agrees with me in this course, so that we can meet again formally at half-past seven without placing on members the burden of then attending to make a quorum merely for two minutes, whilst a messenger passes from this House to the Council with our message regarding the Factories Bill. To enable members to now discuss this matter if they so desire, I propose to move that consideration of order No. 1 [Electoral Bill, Council's Message No. 51] be postponed till the next sitting of the House. When the House rose on the 23rd

December a motion had been agreed to that it should stand adjourned until to-day. At the same time the Council stood adjourned until the 7th of January, there being a period of five days during which we had hoped the Council would deal with the business before it, and thus enable us to complete the work we have in hand. The Council then had, and still has, the Redistribution of Seats Bill, the Government Railways Bill, and the Factories Bill. The Government are anxious to secure the passage of these Bills, if possible; and we had expected to have those Bills dealt with by the Council and placed before us to-day, so that we could deal with the Factories Bill, the Railways Bill, and the Redistribution of Seats Bill in conjunction with the Electoral Bill and the Constitution Act Amendment Bill. However, owing to some misunderstanding, the Council was adjourned from its sitting on the 7th until this evening at half-past seven. I am satisfied there was no intention whatever of delaying the consideration of the Redistribution of Seats Bill, that the adjournment was not intended to have that effect; and as a matter of fact the motion was moved by the Colonial Secretary in the Legislative Council. We have taken up this position, that it is desirable the three Bills which amend the Constitution should be taken as a whole.

MR. STONE: We wanted that from the beginning. It would have saved a lot of time.

THE PREMIER: Personally, I am above all things anxious that we at all events in this House shall avail ourselves of every constitutional means for bringing about unanimity in connection with this legislation; and it would be very wrong of us if, having regard to the amount of time we have expended in the discussion of those Bills, we parted without availing ourselves of the last constitutional resource for coming to agreement in connection with them. By to-morrow we should have, and I am confident we shall have, a message from the Legislative Council dealing with the Redistribution of Seats Bill. Then we shall have cognisance of that subject; and it will rest with us then to take some action for the purpose of seeing if we cannot, in connection with the whole of those

three Bills, have a conference between the two Houses with the object of coming to a settlement, and enabling those three most important Bills to be placed upon the statute-book of the State. I do not think any of us want a discussion on the merits of the question at this particular stage. We shall have ample opportunity for that to-morrow. I have intimated to the House my reasons for making this special formal motion; and I content myself now with moving that order of the day No. 1 be postponed till the next sitting of the House.

MR. A. E. THOMAS (Dundas): I have no intention of raising objection to the wish expressed by the leader of the House that this order of the day shall be postponed; but at the same time I cannot help pointing out that the Premier himself was the first to ask us and to ask another place to so arrange the Redistribution of Seats Bill that it should be considered separate and distinct absolutely and entirely from the Electoral Bill and the Constitution Act Amendment Bill. The intention of the Government—if we can believe what they tell us—was certainly at that time to take away from the Electoral Bill and from the Constitution Act Amendment Bill all contentious matter as far as the Redistribution of Seats Bill was concerned; to allow that to stand as a separate and distinct measure. Contrary to that intention, and contrary to what the whole of us I think understood, we have the Premier to-day asking us to postpone the consideration of the Electoral Bill because the three Bills should be taken as one. I only wish to enter my protest against the attitude taken up by the Premier, with no desire to oppose this motion.

Question passed, and the order postponed.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

AMENDMENTS POSTPONED.

Order read for consideration of the Legislative Council's message.

THE PREMIER: In view of the explanation I gave to the House, I take it that Mr. Speaker is prepared now to leave the Chair till half-past seven o'clock.

THE SPEAKER: If that is the wish of the House.

THE PREMIER: I must explain again that it is desirable to meet formally at half-past seven, so that we shall be able to have our message with regard to the Factories Bill delivered to the other Chamber. There will be no need to form a quorum.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH: Is it the intention to do business?

THE PREMIER: Not to-night.

THE SPEAKER: I will leave the Chair till half-past seven this evening.

MR. JACOBY: What time to-morrow?

THE PREMIER: Half-past two.

THE SPEAKER accordingly left the Chair.

Sitting suspended at 5 o'clock.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

THE PREMIER: It has just struck me that, as to the Factories Bill message, we may have the same difficulty to-morrow that we have had during the past few days. The proposition before the House is that we meet to-morrow at 2:30. To obtain then from the Council a message as to the Redistribution Bill that body would have to be sitting at the same time as this House, and 2:30 is of course an unusual hour of meeting for the Council; hence I am inclined to think that if we sit for another half hour this evening we shall obtain from the Council a message dealing with that Bill, which we can then place on the Notice Paper so that it may be disposed of to-morrow. I think all of us are anxious to get on with the work as quickly as possible; and if by delaying our sitting for a few minutes this evening we can have the message delivered to us, we shall save time. No business can be transacted to-night, because at 4:30 this afternoon the understanding was that we should meet at 7:30 merely to receive the expected message (Redistribution Bill). I suggest that we sit for another half-hour to receive the Council's message, and thus save a day's work to-morrow.

MR. THOMAS: Why a day's work?

THE PREMIER: Because otherwise business will be delayed for a day. This House and the Council must be sitting simultaneously in order that one House may send to the other a message. Unless

therefore both are sitting when the Council disposes of the Redistribution Bill and sends a message to us, business will be delayed.

MR. THOMAS: We can proceed with the two other orders of the day (motions for debate).

THE PREMIER: I do not think the hon. member would ask that. I understood from the members in charge of those orders that neither of them desired to proceed with the discussion until the Bills amending the Constitution were disposed of. I would suggest that, with the concurrence of the House, Mr. Speaker should leave the Chair till 3 o'clock; for we may then receive a message as to the Redistribution Bill. The procedure will be purely formal, as we shall sit merely to create a House and enable the message to come to us.

MR. THOMAS: I have no objection to the procedure proposed by the leader of the Government; but I cannot help drawing attention to the fact that on the 23rd December—

THE SPEAKER: There is no motion before the House.

MR. THOMAS: I understand there is a suggestion. If a motion is made that you do leave the Chair, is not that debatable?

THE SPEAKER: There is no motion.

MR. THOMAS: Then I shall wait for a motion to be proposed.

THE SPEAKER: I was merely asked to leave the Chair. That is not debatable.

MR. THOMAS: I wish to raise a point or two. I shall do it when we resume.

THE SPEAKER: Then will be the proper time.

MR. THOMAS: I wish to protest against the procedure.

THE SPEAKER: You have already protested. Raise the points when we meet again.

At 7:40, the Speaker left the Chair.

At 8:30, Chair resumed.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS BILL.

COUNCIL'S MESSAGE, REASONS.

Message from the Council received and read, acquainting the Assembly with reasons for insisting on certain amendments and for not agreeing to the Assembly's farther amendment.

On motion by the PREMIER, consideration of the message made an order for the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until 3:30 o'clock to-morrow.

MR. A. E. THOMAS: While desiring to help the Premier in every possible way to facilitate the business of the country, he wished to enter his protest against the procedure adopted by the Premier in asking the House to postpone the business of the country until to-morrow afternoon. There was plenty of time this evening to carry on the business, and there was plenty of business on the paper to go on with. As a country member, he wished to enter his protest against this adjournment. On the 23rd December, after two weeks of continuous sitting from 11 o'clock in the morning until 1 or 2 o'clock on the following morning, the Opposition sat patiently listening to members of the Government wasting the time of the House in talking needlessly on various subjects. An arrangement had been arrived at that members should do their utmost to finish the business of Parliament and prorogue before the Christmas holidays; but through the attitude adopted by the Hon. J. W. Hackett in another place, such proceeding could not be carried out. Members were consequently brought back after Christmas, and it was presumed the Government intended then to go on with the business of the country. Those members who resided in the country had objected to sitting so close to Christmas; but a reasonable postponement of the business was not then granted. And now, instead of bringing back members from Cue, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Albany, Bunbury, and other distant places, to find the Government did not intend to go on with the business, it would have been better if country members had been wired to, stating that only formal business would be gone on with to-day, instead of being brought back on Tuesday and their time wasted in this way.

Question put and passed.

THE PREMIER: In moving that the House do now adjourn, it would be wrong if he did not, on behalf of the House,

express to the member for Dundas the thanks and pleasure of members for his instructive and interesting remarks about the weather.

Question passed.

The House adjourned at 8:42 o'clock, until the next afternoon at 3:30.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 13th January, 1904.

	PAGE
Petition: Voting to be compulsory	3158
Leave of Absence	3159
Bills: Government Railways, third reading ...	3159
Factories, Amendments considered	3159
Roads and Streets Closure, Amendment considered (closing of Ord Street)	3164
Roads Act Amendment, Amendment considered	3164
Conference on Constitution Bills (3), Assembly's request, Council's reply	3165

THE ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon. H. Briggs) took the Chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

PETITION—VOTING TO BE COMPULSORY.

THE HON. J. W. WRIGHT presented a petition from Mr. F. L. Weiss, praying for a clause to be enacted to enforce the exercise of the franchise at elections. This petition was the outcome of a recent election, and followed closely on another petition presented to the House a short time ago. It expressed his (Mr. Wright's) view of the case, though perhaps not so drastically; for as the State had a duty to perform to the elector in enfranchising him, the elector had also a duty to perform to the State by voting when possessed of the franchise; and any elector who failed to exercise his vote at an election should be fined, unless he gave a really just excuse, such as illness, or absence from the State, or inability to attend and record his vote. Any elector so neglecting to vote should be disfranchised for the next election.