

entirely in accord with the Bill, but any alterations to be made would have to be dealt with in Committee.

MR. HIGHAM asked leave to withdraw his motion.

Motion for adjournment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex): I do not know whether they are trying to spring a point on us. If we pass the second reading, we may be pledging ourselves to the Bill to a certain extent. It is my intention to oppose the Bill; and if, by letting the second reading go, I am to lose any points in it, I should like to have the Speaker's ruling.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member wants to throw the Bill out, it should be done on the second reading.

MR. LOCKE: Then the right thing would be to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. It appears to me this Bill is brought forward by some "goody-goodies" in this and another place, and I intend to block it at every stage I can.

Question—that the Bill be read a second time—put, and passed on the voices.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:35 p.m., until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 19th September, 1899.

Petition: Commonwealth Bill—Papers presented—Question: Seabrook Battery, Purchase of Trucks—Motion: Midland Railway Company, Joint Committee, Extension of Time—Constitution Acts Amendment Bill, Report of Select Committee on Schedule 2—Pharmacy and Poisons Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Motion: Urgent Telegrams—Constitution Acts Amendment Bill, in Committee, Schedule 2 to end, reported—Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Bill, motion to postpone—Municipal Institutions Bill, in Committee, Clauses 331 to 335, Division; progress—Draft Commonwealth Bill, Joint Committee's Report presented (debate)—Police Act Amendment Bill (Betting), in Committee, Clauses 1 and 2, progress—Bank Note Protection Bill, second reading, Division—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITION—COMMONWEALTH DRAFT BILL.

MR. LEAKE presented a petition from the Western Australian Federal League, praying the House to take all the necessary steps to have the Commonwealth Bill referred to the people in time to allow of Western Australia joining the union as an original State.

Petition received, read, and ordered to be printed.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Return showing Government Liability undischarged, 1898-9; 2, Return showing Government Advertisements, as ordered.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—SEABROOK BATTERY, PURCHASE OF TRUCKS.

MR. HOLMES asked the Commissioner of Railways: 1, Whether the Railway Department has recently purchased a number of trucks from the Seabrook Battery Company. 2, If so, how many, and at what price. 3, Whether payment was made in cash, or settlement effected by contra account due to the department.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS replied:—1, Yes; 2, Forty, at £90 each; 3, Settlement was effected by contra account due to the department.

MOTION—MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY, JOINT COMMITTEE.

EXTENSION OF TIME.

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved that the date for the bringing up of the report be further postponed for two weeks. He explained that the members of this committee were also members of other select committees, and it had been impossible to get a meeting.

Question put and passed.

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into Schedule II. of the Constitution Acts Amendment Bill.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed.

PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

MOTION—URGENT TELEGRAMS.

MR. MORGANS (Coolgardie) moved :

That, in the opinion of this House, the practice of allowing urgent telegrams from this colony to the Eastern colonies should be re-established.

This motion would not apply to telegrams within the colony, but to urgent telegrams to other colonies. There was a necessity for this change to be made in favour of the inhabitants of Western Australia, especially those who were dealing largely in mining shares. It would be remembered that some time ago the right of sending urgent telegrams was abolished by this House, and on that occasion the urgency system applied to telegrams inside the colony as well as to those going outside the colony. On that occasion he supported the motion, because he looked upon it as unfair that urgent telegrams should be allowed within the colony itself. When one looked at the large volume of business which took place outside the colony, and took into account the large number of London companies having their offices centred in Adelaide, doing a large business in this country, it was only fair we should have the right and

privilege of sending urgent telegrams to the other colonies. He respectfully suggested that the House should approve of the motion, in view of the fact that it was necessary in order to enable those dealing largely in mining shares in the colony with people outside, especially in Adelaide, and also to a large extent in Melbourne.

Question put and passed.

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from the 13th September.

Schedule II. :

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest): As to the select committee's report, he had no desire to hurry on members in regard to it, but he might say there were no alterations of any importance proposed by the select committee in Schedule II. of the Bill; certainly no alterations that any one was likely to remark upon. There were, however, slight alterations here and there, certainly not any which would give rise to comment from hon. members. Whether hon. members would like to go on with the Bill without studying the select committee's report, he would like to know, but he could assure hon. members there was nothing in the report of any importance. In regard to the name of the electorate of the Collie, which he thought was very inappropriate, he was inclined to ask the Committee to change the name to one more appropriate and one more likely to give satisfaction. The select committee had not dealt with this matter.

MR. VOSPER: Was it desired to call it Donnybrook?

THE PREMIER: To call it the South-Western Mining District would be much better than "Collie."

MR. VOSPER: Too clumsy in the House.

THE PREMIER: In England, he had been informed, it was not uncommon to have very long names, two or three places bracketed together, as the name of an electorate. This had been brought to his notice the other day; but apart from that it was very convenient to have a name suggestive of the place. If the electorate was called "Collie," it would simply mean the Collie coalfields,

whereas there was a goldfield at Donnybrook, also tinfields at Greenbushes, each probably being as important as the other. After giving the matter a great deal of consideration, he was inclined to suggest that the name should be altered to the "South-Western Mining District," which was not a very long name, not longer than North-East Coolgardie.

MR. VOSPER: The electorate might be called the "Southern Mining Fields."

THE PREMIER: Perhaps that would be more poetical, but "South-Western Mining District" would actually designate what was intended. The select committee had recommended that this district should be divided into three distinct parts, the Greenbushes tin area, the Donnybrook goldfield, and the Collie coalfields. These areas would not be joined together: it was considered almost ridiculous to join them together by a strip of country. It was thought better to have three areas, although that was contrary to what had been done hitherto in this colony; still there was nothing objectionable in it, and nothing for which there was not a precedent in the old country. There were plenty of places in England where the whole district which a member represented was not contiguous. He did not think anyone could take exception to the boundaries which had been given to this district. Then the select committee had made an alteration to the boundary of the Canning district, by which that portion east of the railway was divided between the Murray and the Swan. A little portion had been added to the South Perth electorate, and a little to Guildford, and the Geraldton electorate had been altered. With these exceptions there was no other alteration to the boundaries of districts as given in the Bill. The committee were unanimous about these small amendments: there was no difference of opinion in the committee in regard to them. The committee had tried to carry out the wishes of hon. members, not only of those members on the select committee, but in regard to members who were supposed to know more about their districts than members of the select committee. He was going to say that the duty entrusted to the select committee was a very easy one, and we had been unanimous in our decision. No alterations of import-

ance had been made in the schedule of the Bill, and if hon. members were willing to make the small alterations in the schedule, he would be glad, as he would like to get the two Bills—the Constitution Act Amendment Bill and the Electoral Bill—forward a little, so as to get them to the other House as soon as possible.

MR. VOSPER: No one could take any great exception to the arrangement of the southern mining fields, but there was one fact which the select committee had overlooked, that mining country generally ran in belts, taking a northerly and southerly direction, and in the near future discoveries might be made which would connect the Donnybrook goldfield with the Greenbushes tinfield, and probably other discoveries might be made in regard to the Collie coalfields.

THE PREMIER: Another member would be wanted then.

MR. VOSPER: If we agreed to the district as suggested, we might disfranchise some electors by amalgamating a portion of a mining electorate with an agricultural district. Therefore it might be wise to make the electorate one narrow strip, so as to take in the three blocks.

THE PREMIER: They were not all in a line; it was more an equilateral triangle.

MR. VOSPER: Donnybrook and Greenbushes might be connected by a strip, but Collie was a little off the straight line. Still, he was not going to find much fault. While the committee were engaged in the work, they might have taken means to remove Black Flag from the North-East Coolgardie electorate and put it into the Mt. Burges district. He believed most of the trade from Black Flag now went to Coolgardie, via the 25-mile.

THE PREMIER: It would be rather awkward to divide the electorate.

MR. VOSPER: When the matter came up for the third reading he would have some observations to offer. Kanowna deserved more consideration than the House seemed inclined to give it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could deal with the question when the second schedule came up for consideration.

THE PREMIER moved that Schedule II. as recommended by the select committee be adopted.

MR. LEAKE: The right hon. gentleman recognised, he presumed, that the Bill would have to be recommitted.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member wanted an opportunity of altering the schedule?

MR. LEAKE: There were one or two points for reconsideration.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member would have to give notice.

MR. LEAKE: That was quite understood by him.

THE PREMIER: No objection would be raised on his part.

Question—that boundaries of the various districts as agreed to by the select committee be the boundaries of Schedule II. of the Bill—put and passed.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

INDUSTRIAL CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION BILL.

MOTION TO POSTPONE.

Order read, for consideration of report from Committee.

MR. WILSON moved that the consideration be postponed for a fortnight.

THE PREMIER: There had already been a postponement for a fortnight.

MR. WILSON: Yes; but there had not been time to consider the measure. It was under consideration of all the different Chambers of Commerce and Chambers of Mines on the goldfields, and by the Manufacturers' Association, Chambers of Commerce, and Shipping Association. Meetings had been held, and it had been found impossible for those bodies to give their attention to all the clauses in the Bill and consider them in the time available. It was only reasonable the subject should be adjourned for at least a fortnight, to enable members to get the views of the different bodies controlling labour throughout the colony, and he hoped members would agree to the adjournment.

MR. MORGANS: The motion for postponement was one he was anxious to support. He could indorse what the hon. member said with regard to the Bill now being before the Chambers of Mines on the goldfields, and remembering this was a Bill having very far reaching effects, and looking at the enormous

distances to the goldfields, the request of the hon. member was a very fair one. He was aware from his own knowledge that copies of the Bill had been sent away into the north-east goldfields, and in many cases people had hardly had time yet to receive the Bill. Looking at the great importance of the measure, and realising it was a class of legislation entirely new, surely the Bill would require great consideration on the part of every one interested; not only employers but also employed.

THE PREMIER: The request of the hon. member was one which he did not like to oppose, but he might point out that the Bill had been on the table four weeks, which was a longer time than he could remember any other Bill being there without being dealt with. He thought there was an adjournment of a fortnight last time.

MR. MORGANS: Not a fortnight.

THE PREMIER: Very nearly. Of course the session was getting on. A fortnight seemed a long while more to ask for, and he noticed very little interest seemed to be taken in the measure throughout the colony, especially on the part of those who had been clamouring for it.

MR. VOSPER: They were satisfied with it.

THE PREMIER: They had never said so. One would have thought they would have congratulated the Government on bringing it in, or there would have been some expression of approval of it; but instead of that it seemed to him they had gone to sleep over it. People clamoured for things, and as soon as those things were granted they were not thought anything of. The anticipation seemed greater than the reality. That was the case even in regard to the Redistribution of Seats Bill. When the Government introduced it no one seemed very pleased about it, although people were all very anxious before the Bill was introduced, so long as the question could be used for a party purpose, or for putting the Government in a light they did not deserve to be put in. These things were very important, but as soon as anyone brought them before the House, no one said anything about them. The members for Fremantle talked a good deal about this Bill before Parlia-

ment met, but they had been very quiet since it had been placed on the table. He believed the Bill did not look so good now as it seemed to be before.

MR. VOSPER: The members approved of it.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member was disappointed perhaps because the Government were going to make him vote for it. However, he (the Premier) now asked hon. members not to delay the measure longer than was absolutely necessary. If we adjourned the question for a week, and then there was still an expression of opinion that further time was required, he would not object to such extension, for he desired that the fullest information should be obtained. He hoped the Bill would be approved of both by employers and employed, and that it would have the effect of producing a good understanding between them.

MR. SOLOMON: Why the members for Fremantle should be attacked in relation to the Bill, he did not see. For his part he approved of the Bill; therefore he did not consider it necessary to take up the time of the House in speaking on it. He certainly thought the Government were to be congratulated on bringing it forward, and he thought other members also were satisfied. That was sufficient explanation.

MR. WILSON accepted the suggestion to adjourn the consideration of the measure for a week. It was not in opposition to the Bill that postponement was asked for. Everyone believed in the principle of conciliation; but it was necessary, in order to make a workable measure, that both parties interested should consider it carefully.

MR. VOSPER: With reference to the associations which at the present time were said to be busily discussing the measure, we must remember that these various societies, scattered up and down the country, did not include the whole of the people interested. He wanted to prevent the Bill being shelved altogether. It was not the desire of the hon. member (Mr. Morgans), and certainly not his own desire, that consideration of this Bill should be indefinitely postponed.

MR. MORGANS: That was no one's desire.

MR. VOSPER: If there were any serious delay, there would be no time this

session to pass the Bill through its remaining stages. As to the statement that the people who had clamoured for the Bill were now perfectly quiet when it had been brought in, he could only assume that the people were perfectly stupefied at the action of the Government in bringing in the Bill at all.

MR. RASON: This measure was foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament; it was then known that some such Bill as this had been promised by the Government; and those who took a warm interest in the matter might easily have foreseen that the Bill would travel on the lines of the New Zealand Act. Therefore such people had had ample time to consider the measure; and it was well known to every member that the Bill was welcomed by the working classes.

MR. MORGANS: The working classes had said nothing about it yet.

MR. RASON: They had no means of doing so; but their voices would have been heard loudly enough had they objected to it. The mere fact of their silence implied their consent.

MR. WILSON: Perhaps they did not understand it.

MR. RASON: Do not run away with an idea of that sort. The working men interested in this Bill were well aware of its provisions, and were satisfied with them.

MR. VOSPER: Perfectly satisfied.

MR. RASON: Had they not been satisfied, we should have heard their voices; and the other people interested had also had ample time and opportunity to consider the clauses. If a further extension of one week were granted, no additional time should be asked for or granted.

Motion (altered to one week) put and passed, and the order postponed for one week.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from 14th September.

Clause 331 (further discussed)—Council authorised to strike a rate:

MR. EWING: Since pointing out what was apparently an error in the clause, he had seen on the Notice Paper

an amendment by the member in charge of the Bill ; and as that amendment would evidently meet the case, his own amendment was unnecessary, and he would withdraw the same.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. A. FORREST moved that the words "upon the annual unimproved or capital value of all ratable land," in line 7, be struck out, and the following inserted : "Under either Sub-section (1) or Sub-section (2) of Section 335, setting forth the principles to be adopted for the valuation of land."

Amendment put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 332—What shall be ratable property :

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that Sub-clause 1 be struck out, and the words "Belonging to the Crown and not used or occupied otherwise than for public purposes," be inserted ; also that the words "Belonging to the Metropolitan Waterworks Board" be inserted to stand as Sub-clause 2.

MR. A. FORREST : It seemed unfair that the premises of the Waterworks Board should not be rated, as the municipal council had to pay the board for water.

THE PREMIER : The board existed for the benefit of the city.

MR. A. FORREST : The city paid for what it received. The board were charging increased rates ; the streets were watered at an immense cost ; and it was too much to ask that the board should be exempted from the small rate they would have to pay. The council made roads for the board's use, and the only benefit received in exchange was the water rate of 1s. in the pound.

THE PREMIER : The hon. member's statements would be good reasoning if the board were a foreign company unconnected with the city ; but the Government had come to the rescue of Perth, and had provided money to buy the waterworks for the city's use. The board had still great difficulty in "making both ends meet," and would be seriously burdened by having to pay rates. The clause could only tend to making the board insolvent, or to increasing the price of water.

MR. A. FORREST : The price could not be raised above the 1s. rate.

THE PREMIER : Then the board must become insolvent. Rating the board's premises should not be attempted until the waterworks paid their way. At present the board were doing very well, but were contending with serious difficulties.

MR. SOLOMON : In the event of the board renting property, would they be liable for the rates ?

THE PREMIER : No.

MR. SOLOMON : If the board rented premises from a private person, such person should pay the rates.

THE PREMIER : The premises occupied by the board were their own property.

Amendments put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 333 and 334—agreed to.

Clause 335—Mode of making valuation :

MR. QUINLAN moved that in line 7 the word "ten" be struck out, and "twenty" inserted in lieu thereof. Unfortunate owners of property must know that 10 per cent. was not sufficient for outgoings, and it was well known that, so far as property was concerned, there were now many more sellers than buyers.

MR. A. FORREST : That was not the result of the rates, but was owing to depreciation in the value of land.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. EWING : What was there "peculiar" in goldfields property to justify paragraph *b* of Sub-clause 2 ? His own idea was that the intention was that gold-mines should be exempt from taxation on the minerals contained in the mines, but the clause did not convey that intention. On reading through this Bill, members were brought face to face with necessary amendments of this kind, and he now found he was wrong in withdrawing the previous amendment as to the rating on annual value. He mentioned this to show how carelessly the Bill had been drafted, and how impossible it was for members, whether lawyers or laymen, to frame necessary amendments at a moment's notice. He asked the member in charge of the Bill whether it would not be wise to withdraw or abandon the Bill, in order that a properly digested and well-considered measure might be introduced later on. Members were not prepared to frame amendments to meet all objections, and, as a matter of fact, a

clause had been passed as to the rating, and it was not stated whether that rating had to be on the capital or the annual value.

MR. A. FORREST: The clause in question was copied word for word from the Queensland Act, and if it had been in operation in that colony so long, there could not be anything very wrong with the provision.

MR. MORAN agreed with the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing), and said there was no desire in the House to have a repetition of the Broken Hill litigation. It would be a most serious thing for some of the large mines to discover that they had to pay their rates, not on the annual value but on the capital value. It had been found impossible to keep mines out of municipalities, not because the municipalities extended into the mines, but because the mines extended into the municipalities; and examples of this were to be found at Ballarat and Charters Towers. The fair annual value of an unimproved lease should be £1 a year, which was the rental paid to the Government; and when that lease was improved by buildings, then it ought to be rated as other improved land was; but he did not suppose the shaft or any works underground would be considered improvements for the purpose of rating. It would give satisfaction to mining people to know that none of the minerals would be valued for the purpose of rating; and if a similar provision had worked so long and so satisfactorily in Queensland, there was no doubt it would work satisfactorily in this colony.

HON. S. BURT said he had no desire to make frivolous objections to the clause, or to show hostility to the Bill; but he could not help thinking that the person who drafted the measure had overlooked the principle embodied in Clause 331. In considering this clause hon. members could not but bear in mind Clause 331, one of the main clauses of the Bill, the substantive clause which laid down the basis on which the rate should be collected, and that basis was the annual value. It was not proposed to give to a municipal council the privilege of rating on anything like the capital value, and there were certain rules laid down in the present Act for ascertaining what the annual value should be. In the

first place, the annual value had to be rent got from the property; but that was not sufficient to meet all cases, because there were some properties unlet or unoccupied. In such cases, for the purpose of finding the annual value, a rule had been made that that annual value should be a certain percentage on the capital value. That, however, was quite a different thing from rating on the capital value; the object being to ascertain in this way the annual value, in default of there being a rent-producing property. If the property were unoccupied and, of course, no rent obtained from it, the annual value was said to be 4 per cent. on the capital value, and the only desire in this arrangement was to arrive at the annual value. There was the case of a large town lot on which a shanty was erected and let for £5 a year; that shanty was erected on the land so that the land should not be unoccupied. The rules under the present Municipalities Act provided, so as to meet such a case, that the annual value should not be less than a certain amount. All these rules were adopted in the clause which we were now considering; but on top of them came another set of rules, so that in the clause there were two sets of rules. Paragraph *b* of Sub-clause 1 was inserted for the purpose of finding the annual value, and when we came to paragraph *b* of Sub-clause 2, it was stated that the annual value was to be a percentage of the capital value. The rule in paragraph *b* was given for finding out the capital value, and in paragraph *d* there was a rule for finding out the annual value. Sometimes the annual value was calculated on the capital value. When we came to Sub-clause 2, the rules said the same as the rules under Sub-clause 1. There were two sets of rules, both of which were to be observed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: One or the other.

HON. S. BURT: The rate might be ordered to be struck, not exceeding two shillings in the pound in any one year, either under Sub-clause 1 or Sub-clause 2; but upon what basis? The rate could not be struck under Sub-clauses 1 and 2 of Clause 335. The clause should say that the rate must be struck upon the annual or the capital value. The rate had to be struck according to the clause

under one set of these rules, which did not refer to the striking of a rate at all, but were rules for finding out what the rate had to be struck upon. In Clause 331 there should have been a provision that the rate was to be struck on the annual value, but it did not say that the rate must be struck either upon the rules in Sub-clause 1 or Sub-clause 2. The rules did not give the capital value or the annual value. These rules were for the purpose of finding out the annual value of the land. Sub-clause 2 was in the same words as Sub-clause 1, and was taken from the Queensland Act, and comprised the rules in force there for finding out the annual value; but in the Queensland Act there were not two sets of rules. What was the municipality going to strike the rate on, the annual or the capital value—because the rules did not assist the municipality. The Bill was silent as to what the rate had to be struck on. In regard to land in mining districts, there could be new rules in regard to that land, and paragraph *b* of Sub-clause 2 might be incorporated in the first set of rules to meet that class of land. Power was given to observe either set of rules, which was a curious thing to do. One set of rules was found in the old Queensland Act and the other in the new Queensland Act, but in this Bill two sets of rules had been set up. No power was given to strike a rate unless we came back to Clause 331, and said the rate was to be struck on the annual value; and under the rules it could be ascertained what process should be adopted for finding the annual value. When the municipality had gone through the operation of finding the annual or capital value, they could not give effect to the clause, because the clause imposing the rate did not say on what value the rate was to be imposed.

MR. MORAN: Would the member in charge of the Bill say whether, on recommitment, he intended to make the alterations suggested?

MR. A. FORREST: There were several amendments to be made.

MR. MORAN: So long as the Committee understood that, we could go on with the Bill.

SIR JAMES G. LEE STEERE: Would the member in charge of the Bill tell the Committee whether there was

any precedent for having two methods of arriving at the value?

MR. A. FORREST: It was absolutely necessary to have the two ways of valuing.

SIR JAMES G. LEE STEERE: Was there any precedent for it?

MR. A. FORREST: This clause had been passed by the Municipal Association.

SIR JAMES G. LEE STEERE: What did they know about it?

MR. A. FORREST: The members of the Municipal Association knew as much as, perhaps more than, the members of this Committee did about this matter. Members of the Municipal Association had been conducting municipalities for years. He was not prepared to fight the clause on the technical point raised by the legal gentlemen. The Bill had been drafted with the sanction of the whole of the municipalities of the colony, and they were the general principles they wished adopted. He did not know how many people's hands this Bill had gone through. He hoped the Committee would allow the Bill to pass. In the meantime, if members would give notice of amendments they desired to make in the Bill, the measure could be recommitted and amended. The objection raised by the member for the Ashburton could be easily overcome.

MR. EWING: Had not the present system of rating worked satisfactorily, not only here, but in New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland? Yet we were introducing a number of clauses into the Bill which he was certain would tend to throw the municipalities into endless litigation. There were a large number of clauses which he did not exactly understand the meaning of. Would the member in charge of the Bill tell him what would be the effect of the alternative system of rating? It would have one effect which he saw clearly. We were giving to the municipalities two methods of rating the people living in the same town; and a municipality would be able to make one set of people pay more towards the maintenance of the town than another set of people. A municipality could adopt one of the two systems, and he did not see anything in the Bill to compel the municipality absolutely to adopt one system.

MR. A. FORREST: It must be according to the sanction of the ratepayers.

MR. EWING: The clause did not say anything about the sanction of the ratepayers. The municipality might rate the people living in St. George's Terrace under one system, and the people in another part of Perth under another system.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the municipality took No. 2 system, they would have to stick to it for three years.

MR. EWING: But if they adopted system No. 1, apparently they could change it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Annually.

MR. EWING: Yes; so that at the will of the council people might be rated on one principle one year, and on an absolutely different principle the next.

MR. A. FORREST: The hon. member had evidently had no experience of rating in towns, or he would not say the present system was conducive to the good government of any city or town in the colony. At the present time a person could put up a building costing £10,000 or £20,000, and for that person's enterprise in putting up the building he was taxed very severely. Perhaps a man had a cottage bringing in £20, but worth £5,000, and it was difficult for the municipal authorities to get him rated on the capital value of the land. Take Barrack Street to William Street, in Perth, which we all knew. On each side everybody should pay the same, whether he had a building on the land or not. Take the rents at present received, and then divide the amount by the number of feet, and rate the people living in those places. That was the principle which he had been advocating ever since he had been in the municipal council. It was difficult for valuers to deal with each property on its merits. We found some rated at £200 a year, others of a similar class at £150, others £100, and there was no satisfaction given to anybody. The people in a town should have the right to say whether the property should be rated on practically the frontage value, or whether they should go on in the same way as during the last 10 years.

MR. EWING: Why did not the hon. member give the power to the people, and not to the council?

MR. A. FORREST: The mayor and one councillor in each ward went out of office every year, and would they be re-

elected if they abused the rights of the people? Those who represented the municipal government tried as hard as they could to keep down the burdens of the people. He hoped the Bill would be allowed to pass practically in its present shape. He would agree to its being re-committed.

HON. S. BURT: The clause at present under discussion was the most important part of the Bill. This alternative method of valuation was a valuation on capital value alone. It would be seen there was not a word about annual value in any of these clauses. Sub-clause 2 was taken from the Queensland Act, which was passed to find the capital value, and not the annual value; therefore, it was no alternative to the rules mentioned in the first sub-clause, because the rules in the first sub-clause were to find the annual value, and not the capital value. The second lot of alternative rules were inconsistent with paragraph *b* of the first sub-clause. Clause 331 professed to give the rate on annual value or capital value, whichever the authorities liked; but the Committee had given up the idea of rating on capital value, and had given up, apparently, the annual value. The second set of rules for finding the capital value was not required, and if the authorities found out the capital value, they could not act on it. It was clear these sub-clauses must be recast entirely. Paragraph *c* of sub-clause 2 referred to land "held under lease or license from the Crown for pastoral purposes only, or as a grazing farm, or under a license to occupy an agricultural farm." Were the authorities going to give leases for pastoral purposes on goldfields? The sooner some other method was adopted of defining townships the better. The hon. member told us this was taken from the Queensland Act. The Queensland Act, however, was not a Municipal Act, but an Act for the purpose of valuing land in connection with roads boards. It was a Local Government Act. He did not think there was a farm in a town in Western Australia.

MR. MORAN: Yes; York. There were some extensive wheat farms in York.

MR. A. FORREST: Five acres belonged to himself.

HON. S. BURT: Was there such a thing as a town with land for pastoral purposes? He would ask the Com-

missioner of Crown Lands if he would give him a pastoral lease or a grazing farm in a township. It was utterly inapplicable. This was taken from an Act designed for another purpose altogether, and the principle of alternative rating was really ridiculous.

MR. LEAKE: The hon. member had better be careful what he said about the Bill, because it was said to be a splendid one.

HON. S. BURT: At any rate, he would like his arguments answered.

MR. A. FORREST: Pastoral leases could come out.

HON. S. BURT: And agricultural farms might come out also. Supposing he had a bit of unimproved land in Perth, and turned his cow on it to graze, was he to have the benefit of calling that land an agricultural farm? Would not the valuer say, "It is a town block worth £20,000, and we want $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital value?" He (Mr. Burt) would be able to claim the benefit of paragraph c of Sub-clause 2, and say it was an agricultural farm because he kept a cow on it. Was land in a township of any use to farm, agriculturally or otherwise? If one had land in a township and only put it to farm uses, he ought to pay at the town rate, the same as another person who had a block of which he made use. In this Bill we found the two systems of rating put together, and we were told the council should be given a choice whether they would have annual value or capital value; therefore, it seemed to him that the whole of the measure, with regard to this question of rating valuation, must be recast.

MR. EWING: The member in charge of the Bill had never yet explained what would be the effect of these rating clauses. As the hon. member had agreed to abandon the principle of rating on the capital value, the provision in the clause for rating on the unimproved value apparently served no purpose. Referring to the remarks of the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), with regard to Sub-clause b, a council must adopt one or other method of rating; and if the method provided by Sub-clause 1 were adopted, all the minerals in gold mines could apparently be rated.

MR. MORAN: True.

MR. EWING: And thus one or two useful paragraphs in Sub-clause 2 would be rendered ineffectual. If, on the other hand, the method of rating on the unimproved value of land provided by Sub-clause 2 were adopted, then, the principle of rating on capital values having already been struck out of the Bill, Sub-clause 2 would be useless to a council.

MR. A. FORREST: What?

MR. EWING: The hon. member evidently did not understand the Bill, but, being a layman, was not to blame for his failure to grasp the argument. The Bill should have been placed in charge of a lawyer who understood something of municipal law. How could the hon. member perceive the legal effect of the various clauses? Though the principle of taxing on the capital value had been struck out, Sub-clause 2 was still retained; and if a council elected to rate under Sub-clause 2, how then could such a rate be imposed? Again, if the council elected to rate under Sub-clause 1, gold-mines and other mines which ought to be exempted from exorbitant rating would be rated in respect of all their minerals. He (Mr. Ewing) ought not to have withdrawn his amendment earlier in the evening, when he accepted the amendment of the member in charge of the Bill; but he had taken the hon. member's assurance that the latter amendment had been subjected to legal scrutiny. The effect of that (Mr. Forrest's) amendment had been to abolish the rate, not only on the capital value, but on the annual value, and there was now no basis of rating. The words "annual value ascertained," etc., should be reinserted, leaving the annual value to be ascertained upon either of two bases, one applicable to annual values and the other to capital values. But of what use were the alternative methods of rating, if the system of rating on annual values only was to be adopted?

MR. A. FORREST: Then put in the provision which had been struck out.

MR. EWING: None would desire to impose a rate of 1s. 6d. in the pound on the capital value. The only method of remedying the evil was to strike out the whole Bill, and to bring in an amendment to the Municipalities Act, having clauses embodying the provisions necessary to enable councils to do their business

properly. By this Bill, it was sought to repeal the existing Act, and to re-enact a number of its provisions, mixed up with provisions from Acts which did not apply at all to municipalities; mixed up, he might almost say, by amateur hands, in such a manner that, when the Bill came into operation, the member in charge of it would be sorry for having introduced it, for such a measure would principally benefit lawyers.

MR. A. FORREST: The Bill had been drafted with the contrary intention.

MR. EWING: No man could put this Bill in order when it was passing through Committee clause by clause; for in such circumstances it was impossible, when altering one clause, to ascertain the effect of the alteration upon others. Seeing that the forcing of the Bill through Committee would be the worst thing that could possibly happen to municipalities, and that the hon. member would be serving his cause well by bringing in a simple amendment to the existing Act, giving councils the power they desired, he moved that the Chairman do leave the Chair.

Motion put, and division taken with the following result:

Ayes	8
Noes	15

Majority against ... 7

AYES.

Mr. Burt
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Leake
Sir J. G. Lee Storer
Mr. Vosper (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Conolly
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Hall
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hubble
Mr. Moran
Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Rason
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Wood
Mr. Higham (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

At 6.30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

MR. A. FORREST (in charge of the Bill): As there appeared to be a difference of opinion in regard to the clause under discussion, he moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

DRAFT COMMONWEALTH BILL.

JOINT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

THE PREMIER presented the report of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider the draft of a Bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia.

Report received and read.

THE PREMIER: I move that the consideration of the report be made an Order of the Day for this day fortnight.

THE SPEAKER: I am doubtful if that can be done under our Standing Orders, which say:—

If any measure or proceeding be necessary upon a report of a committee, such measure or proceeding shall be brought under the consideration of the House by a specific motion, of which notice must be given in the usual manner.

I read that to mean that notice must be given at the commencement of the sitting, for the consideration of the report of the select committee on another day.

THE PREMIER: I will give notice to-night.

THE SPEAKER: That is not in order, as the Standing Order says "in the usual manner," which is at the commencement of every sitting day.

THE PREMIER: Then I move that the report be printed.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): Before this motion is carried, I wish to say a word or two on it. I intend to oppose this motion, and I do so for various reasons. Hon. members have heard the report of the joint committee read, and it will be noticed that it is signed by the chairman, and purports to be practically a unanimous report of the joint select committee. It is not divulging any secret to tell the House that the report was not unanimous, and that will be evidenced from the minutes of the proceedings of the joint select committee. If hon. members will look at these proceedings, they will see that on Friday last a motion was proposed by me in the joint select committee, to this effect:

That this Select Committee having considered the Draft Commonwealth Bill, and having heard the opinions of witnesses who have spoken for and against the Bill, recommends that the Bill which has now been accepted by all the other Australian colonies be submitted without amendment to the vote of the electors;

and this committee expresses the opinion that no good reason has been advanced why this colony should not enter the proposed union as an original State.

From that it would appear that a certain section of the committee desired to express their emphatic opinion, which certainly is opposed to the tenor of this report. There is no minority report, as members will notice, nor is there any dissentient note; and the reason is that when the suggestion was made in the committee that such a paragraph or note should be appended to the report, it was ruled that this could not be done. There were three hon. members, at least, of that committee who desired to dissent from the report of the select committee, and desired to say that their views were embodied in the motion which I have just read. When it was proposed that a paragraph to that effect should appear on the face of the report, it was ruled first of all that the paragraph could not be put, and it was not put.

THE PREMIER: By the chairman.

MR. LEAKE: Of course the chairman ruled it, and we know who supported the chairman.

THE PREMIER: It never came to "support."

MR. LEAKE: The privilege was also denied to me and to two other members of the committee (Mr. Matheson and Mr. Illingworth), of expressing dissent in the terms I have suggested. Another hon. member (Mr. Vosper) desired to express dissent from certain particulars, and he too was ruled out of order. My protest is this—and I oppose this motion more by way of protest than for any other purpose—to show and have it thoroughly understood that the select committee was not as unanimous as this report would lead hon. members to suppose. And in my opinion at least I say it is neither in accord with the practice, at any rate, of select committees of this House, nor with the principles of fair play, that we should be debarred from expressing emphatically, freely, and openly our dissent and the grounds of that dissent. That is all we object to, and that is what we object to. If this report goes forth, no doubt as it should do, as the report of the majority of the select committee, there is no reason why it should be assumed that it was unanimous; nor could it be expected of

us who were opposed to this report that we should assent to such an expression as that given in paragraph 7 of the report, which reads:

The evidence given in regard to the sliding scale, provided by Clause 95, led to the conclusion that it would cause a great deal of inconvenience, be of little benefit to the industries assumed to be assisted, and would hamper the operations of trade in many directions. With this opinion your Committee are in accord, and have no hesitation in recommending that the portion of Clause 95, providing for a sliding scale of duties and customs, should be excised from the Bill. It was also pointed out that it would be within the power of the Commonwealth to close the Perth Mint, if it were found that it would be cheaper to confine minting operations to a single establishment.

These words clearly express unanimity, if they express anything; and I desire, in opposing the motion that the report be printed, to protest against the way in which the matter has been discussed. Perhaps this is not the proper time for me to refer to the evidence and proceedings of the select committee: that can be done at another time when hon. members are in possession of the printed report of the select committee: but in order that I may satisfy hon. members that I am not expressing my own views only, I have a memorandum here signed by three members of the committee (Mr. Matheson, Mr. Illingworth, and myself), to this effect: "We, the undersigned members of the Joint Select Committee appointed to consider the Draft Commonwealth Bill, dissent from the report of the select committee, and desire to say that our views are embodied in the resolution proposed by Mr. Leake at a meeting of the select committee on Friday, the 15th instant." I have expressed my opinions as concisely as possible, and my reasons for opposing this motion; and I hope that what has taken place to-day will not be a fair index of the treatment which will be meted out to us in the ultimate discussion of the subject. It was a foregone conclusion, when the committee were appointed, that with 11 members on the committee anti-federalists against three federalists, the report would be one-sided. I hope hon. members are not disappointed.

THE SPEAKER: The Premier proposed that the report be printed. I suppose the right hon. gentleman means the evidence as well.

THE PREMIER: Yes; the whole of the evidence. Am I at liberty to speak?

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member has made a motion; he can reply.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): With reference to the motion before the House, I may say that I stood in a worse position even than the hon. member for Albany, because I stood in the position of a minority of one. The position I took up on the report was not so sweeping as that indicated in the memorandum which has been read; but, as will be seen, I took exception to certain paragraphs in the report, and I embodied my objection in the form of a dissenting note which I handed to the chairman of the select committee. That note reads as follows:—"I dissent from Clauses 5 and 8 of the report, and Nos. 1 and 3 of the proposed amendments. I am further of opinion that no amendments should be made in the Draft Bill when submitted to the vote of the people, but that if such amendments are passed by the Legislature, they should be embodied in a separate schedule to be voted upon separately; so that in the event of the amending schedule passing the referendum, such schedule may be submitted to the Imperial Parliament for consideration." I need scarcely recapitulate the proceedings that took place, but I may say that I handed this document to the chairman for his ruling, and the chairman ruled that it could not be put in the form of a motion, and that it could not be placed in the report either as a paragraph or as an addendum. Further than that, and this is what I most particularly object to in the proceedings of the select committee, the chairman ruled that in the event of the motion being moved—and he also ruled this in regard to the motion of the hon. member for Albany—the motions could not be recorded on the minutes of the proceedings. The chairman may have been within his powers; he may have interpreted the Standing Orders most correctly; but every fair-minded member of the House will agree with me that the effect of the ruling was to place the minority on the committee in an invidious position, because according to the reading of paragraph 7 of the report, it appeared the committee were practically in accord with all the report

contains, which is certainly calculated to mislead the House. The whole proceedings were in the highest degree calculated to bring about a sense of injustice. I have expressed myself in emphatic terms in regard to my objections to the Commonwealth Bill. During the time I was able to attend the proceedings of the select committee I took an active part in the proceedings, and I did not give any great support to the motion of the hon. members who constituted the minority on the select committee represented by the member for Albany (Mr. Leake). But I do say this, that for my own part, as a free-trader and as a goldfields representative, I could never give my vote in favour of the two paragraphs to which I take exception. Hon. members will see that paragraph 5 raises an objection to the Commonwealth Bill, on the ground that its passage must interfere with our native industries by doing away with certain duties. Ever since I have had the honour of a seat in this House, I have sought to bring about the abolition of those duties. One objection I have had to the Commonwealth Bill is that I fear the people of this colony will be far too heavily taxed, when they have to pay a large federal tariff superadded to a large local tariff. The paragraph to which I have taken exception is the reverse of this. It says the tariff will not be sufficient to protect any infant industries, so that in addition we must have a tariff over and above that of the Commonwealth.

THE PREMIER: It does not say that.

MR. VOSPER: That is the tenor of the clause itself. Then paragraph 8 suggests a system whereby the representation of the Senate shall be allotted by this Parliament, and that I fear would have the effect of giving too much consideration by half to territorial matters, and not sufficient to the principle of representation according to population. On these two grounds I thought I had reason to object to the report. I was perfectly willing to let the rest of the report go through. I wished that my dissent should be expressed in the report, so that the House should not be led into thinking I was a party to all the terms read to the House. As it is, the report as framed goes forth to the country, or it would have done so but for this timely interruption, as the unanimous expression of

opinion of the committee; which I contend is not the case. Really speaking, the report obtains credence and respect on false pretences; for it does not represent the actual facts; it does not represent the actual opinions of the committee; and I think when this House, with another place, appoint hon. members for the important task of investigating a Bill of this character, the investigations from all points of view should be fully reported to the House. This House appointed a select committee for the purpose of giving information upon the whole of the Bill. Surely if opinions adverse to the Bill, and others in favour of the Bill, were brought forward to that committee, the House should have the benefit of both. I am not pretending in the slightest degree to censure the chairman of the committee for the action he took. As I said before, his action may be perfectly consonant with the Standing Orders; but at any rate the report is not calculated to enlighten the public, but rather to have a contrary effect. When the question of the appointment of this select committee was before the House, I was one of those foremost in supporting the appointment, and also supporting the extension of time in order to get the whole of the evidence. I urged that the public and the House should be enlightened about the whole tenor of the Commonwealth Bill from beginning to end; and now the very object for which I, and other members, were induced to vote for the appointment of the committee and give every facility for its working has been practically destroyed by the tenor of the report brought in. It is not fair to the House or to the committee, and still less to the minority of the committee who fought the majority and did their best to express their own opinions. I am not going to repeat what the hon. member for Albany (Mr. Leake) said with regard to the general unfairness of the report, which he has voiced very well; but this report does not carry out the object for which the committee were appointed, and it cannot do so, for the simple reason that certain expressions of opinion have been deliberately suppressed, and the verdict cannot be looked upon as otherwise than tainted. I object to the Commonwealth Bill, and will probably be found in a few days fighting that prin-

ciple—not the referendum, but the Bill on its merits. I regret very much being forced into this position, but I see no choice open to me. I think any man endowed with a sense of justice and fair play must join with me in protesting as I do, and vote with the member for Albany. I think when a committee are appointed by this House for the purpose of investigating a certain question, the members of the House are entitled to the opinions of the whole of the members of the committee appointed to carry out such investigation. The report does not give the opinion of all the members of the committee appointed in this case, and consequently I object to its being printed and placed on the records of the House.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest): I should like to say at once, I am in no way responsible for the rulings given by the chairman of the committee; neither did the chairman ever speak to me in regard to his rulings. I can assure the House that neither directly nor indirectly had I any communication whatever with the chairman of the select committee, as to how he should rule on any point that came before us during all our sittings. I think that is sufficient for me to refute the insinuations or the observations of the member for Albany. It would appear from him that I am responsible in some way or other for the rulings from the chair. I am not responsible in any way. Neither, unfortunately, do I know the Standing Orders well in regard to these rulings. Before we separate to-night I hope you, Mr. Speaker, will be able to enlighten us, as from your great knowledge of parliamentary procedure you are so well able to do, in regard to this matter. But whatever you may say in regard to the ruling of the chairman, I assert I, at any rate, am in no way responsible for that ruling, not having been consulted or spoken to directly or indirectly by the chairman in regard to the matter. As to the hon. member's protest, and also any remarks the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) may like to make, I may say that personally I should have been delighted if they had found a place upon the report of the committee. Surely it is too puerile for anyone to suppose anyone desired to keep the hon. member from expressing his opinion, because we

knew very well he would have an opportunity of expressing it in this House, and he has already done so upon the first opportunity. What, then, could be the object?

MR. LEAKE: You yourself suggested that my motion was out of order, when I proposed it.

THE PREMIER: I do not think so. If I made any such observation, it must have been after the chairman had ruled.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Before the chairman ruled.

THE PREMIER: I deny it. I absolutely deny it. I had nothing to do with the order or the ruling either. I had nothing whatever to do with the ruling of the chairman, and neither was I consulted directly or indirectly with regard to it. That ought to satisfy hon. members with regard to it.

MR. LEAKE: No one said you had.

THE PREMIER: What is the insinuation?

MR. LEAKE: It is not an insinuation, but a refutation.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member is always saying something that is rude, or that reflects upon one's honour, or something of the sort. However, I am not going to follow him. The hon. member is noted for his high character, and therefore I am sure it would not be possible for me to say anything with regard to him. But of course he, on the other hand, can say what he likes with regard to me.

MR. LEAKE: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: In regard to the hon. member's opposition to the report, it seems to me they knew about that, because he was opposed from the very start. He did not assist the select committee in the slightest degree, as far as I know. He never called any witnesses, and never took any part in initiating anything. He certainly did ask some questions of witnesses, but he took no part, and from the very beginning of the proceedings he called the committee "names" outside, and said it was a farce. I wonder the hon. member did not manage by some means or other to avoid getting on the committee. There are other hon. gentlemen on that side of the House who, I am sure, would have been glad to give their services to the country, and have done their best, and would not have

sat upon the committee for the sake of traducing it and holding it up to ridicule. That is what the hon. member has done from the time he took his seat up to the present moment. If that is the way the hon. member carries out his duties to the country, I am sorry for him. As I say, the hon. member took no part whatever in initiating anything, and the opinion he formed of the committee at the end was exactly the opinion he formed at the beginning; and therefore the evidence, whatever it may be worth, had no effect on him. He opposed every resolution, every motion, and every paragraph, and his trusted followers said "hear, hear" to it. They, too, seem to have had the same opinion as himself from the beginning, and I only regret hon. gentlemen can be found in the Parliament of this country who will undertake public and responsible duties, and not try to carry them out in the way the House that elected them desired they should be carried out. The results of the labours of the committee are before the country now. Let the people judge of them, and see who has tried to do his duty to Western Australia and who has not. The people can judge, and we will all abide most loyally by the decision.

MR. EWING: Send it to the people.

THE PREMIER: They will be able to say, if they read that report with the care, the open mind, and the honesty of purpose I hope and believe they will, who are the friends of Western Australia and who are really the friends of federation. They will be able to find, if they study this report and the evidence, that the action taken by the member for Albany proves that he is a friend of every country but his own.

MR. JAMES (East Perth): I should regret to lose this opportunity of expressing my thorough concurrence with the remarks of the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), and the position he has taken up with reference to this committee; and I beg to express to this House, and if I may do so through the Press to the country, my opinion that I am just as attached to the colony and as anxious to promote its best interests as the right hon. gentleman who is so fond of lecturing members of the House from the Ministerial bench, and assumes on so many occasions that because for nine years

he has drawn a large salary from this country, he alone preserves and has at heart its best interests. Those who sit on the cross Opposition benches, the cross Ministerial benches, or the front Opposition benches, try to do our duty; and although we cannot always be drawn over this country in Ministerial waggons or cars, and be publishing ourselves to the world at large, it should not be said we have not the best interests of the country at heart. I think it is very nearly time we had done with this petty little squabbling that goes on in this House. Surely members have a right to their opinions on this great question of federation, whether for or against the Commonwealth Bill, without being subject to these attacks from the right hon. gentleman. The right hon. gentleman must know in his calmer moments that there are those who believe in federation, who believe in and are attached to the colony. No one has the right to make those calumnious charges, that because we support federation we are untrue to the colony in which we were born, and which we are trying to serve. I hope the country will have an opportunity of seeing who are their friends and who are their foes on this question. The right hon. gentleman has said the time will come when the country will have that right. It is for the purpose of giving the people that right that we have been taking up the position we have during the whole of this agitation. It is not we who are afraid of the verdict and judgment of the people, but the right hon. gentleman, who throughout this discussion has never failed to seize hold of every instrument, to take every opportunity, for the purpose of preventing this question going to the people and their judgment being delivered.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No.

MR. JAMES: I say, let it go to the people; let us have their judgment. Of course I expected to hear "no." When the Premier shakes his head in the negative, the automatic machines ejaculate "no." I knew that; I expected it; it always does and always will happen.

THE PREMIER: Behave yourself!

MR. JAMES: I want to behave myself. I wish to express my views clearly, and not to go behind people's backs to utter my opinions. The Premier says the public of this country will be able to see

who have done their duty; and he points with indignation to the position of the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), and says the hon. member went into this committee with the same opinion with which he came out of it. But what is the position of the Premier? What is the position of the ten or dozen other members who follow his opinions upon this question? Have they altered their opinions? Does the Premier realise that the position of that committee is exactly the same now this report is brought forward as when the committee was appointed?

A MEMBER: The same remark applies to the other side also.

MR. JAMES: But I did not hurl the charge first: the charge of inconsistency was first made by the right hon. gentleman; and he entirely overlooked the fact that the charge applies to himself and his followers just as much as to the member for Albany (Mr. Leake). It is as well to point out these little things occasionally.

MR. A. FORREST: Give us something about the Bill.

MR. JAMES: We are not talking about the Bill. The hon. member should learn a little about parliamentary procedure. The Premier asked us: "Is there a member here who has taken up duties or responsibilities and who has failed to carry them out?" Does the Premier realise the force of his words when he talks in that way? Does the right hon. gentleman come to this House, and wish this House and the country to say that of the 14 gentlemen on that committee, eliminating three who, he says, never altered their minds—that the 10 others besides himself have satisfactorily discharged their duties? What have the 10 others alluded to by the Premier done? If the Premier asks this House or this country to believe that those responsible gentlemen, or most of them, have discharged their duties, then I say he is asking this country to believe something which the country will have great difficulty in accepting. But I fail to understand why the Premier grew warm over this particular question. I fail to realise why he should —

MR. MORAN: When did you cool down?

MR. JAMES: Before the right hon. gentleman spoke, the members of this House took the opportunity of expressing—and I think it was the only opportunity they could have—their dissent from that report, and of pointing out that the report was not unanimous. That was clearly their duty, not only to this House, but to the country; and as I understand it, those hon. members did their duty at the right moment. Yet the Premier gets up and makes a speech which is largely devoted to a personal attack on one of those members. I understand that, in the past, the practice has been for select committees to embody in their reports the reports of minorities; and I also understand that this practice is not a correct practice; and the hon. member, Mr. Loton, the chairman of this Joint Select Committee, who was for years a member of this House, in giving the ruling he did give, not only acted in accordance with the Standing Orders, but also acted as those of us who have known him personally so long would expect him to act—with a thoroughly conscientious desire to properly discharge his duty, and not endeavouring in the least degree to assist either one side or the other. But the Premier, having regard to the power he had on that committee—and we all know his power controlled 10 votes out of 14—could easily, when he was preparing this report, have said: "Put in here some words which will point out to the country, for whose information this report will go forth, that it is not the unanimous report of the committee." That could easily have been done, for instance, in paragraph 13, where, instead of saying, "your committee are therefore of opinion," it might have been said, "the majority of your committee are therefore of opinion."

MR. HIGHAM: Why did not the minority do that?

MR. JAMES: They never had the chance, because you blocked them.

THE PREMIER: The minority could have moved to insert any words of that sort.

MR. JAMES: Why was not that done by the majority, from a sense of fair play? Why should it always be necessary for the minority to protest? On that committee there should have been no majority and no minority. The com-

mittee was appointed for the express purpose of enlightening the public; and it was the bounden duty of every member of the committee to consider, not only his own opinions, but the opinions of every individual member, in order to enable the public to gauge accurately the force of those opinions. We know that this report was prepared for the purpose of being disseminated amongst the people. What record is there in the report, in tangible form, to show that the document does not represent the views of four out of 14 members of that committee? It is idle to say that we have the opportunity now, although the Premier evidently objects to that opportunity being seized. It is idle to say we have that opportunity now, for, out of every 100 persons who read that report, not one will read the *Hansard* report of the discussion this evening, correcting the misapprehensions which must arise concerning that committee.

MR. MORAN: It will be the other way about. The public will read the report of this discussion rather than the committee's report.

MR. JAMES: I hope that will be so, and that it will do good, and that the people will understand exactly how such reports originate.

THE PREMIER: That reflects upon the chairman, if there is anything wrong in the procedure.

MR. JAMES: Pardon me; no one reflects upon the chairman. We are all aware that he has discharged his duties conscientiously, and so as not to be unfair to either side; and when he said "no" in reply to the request for an expression of the opinion of the minority, I say he was quite right in saying "no"; but what we do complain of is that the committee, appointed not to oppose federation, but appointed for the purpose of collecting evidence to assist the public of this colony in arriving at a just conclusion, have, throughout the whole of their proceedings, taken a partisan view; have called evidence for one side and one side only—

MR. HIGHAM: That is absolutely untrue.

MR. JAMES: And now, instead of pointing out, as they ought to do—and the greater, the more powerful the majority is, the greater need there is for justice

to the minority—instead of pointing out that there was a dissenting minority, this report is brought forward; they continue those tactics, and bring in a report which purports to be unanimous; they know that this report will, on the face of it, mislead the people into the belief that it is a unanimous report; and now they come to the House and say, "The law allows it; in the name of the Standing Orders, we did injustice, and we used the Standing Orders to sanctify that injustice."

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): The opportunity is now given, and the only opportunity that hon. members on this select committee have, to enter their protests; and hence I rise merely to enter my protest. I do not desire in the smallest degree to reflect upon the decision of the chairman of the joint committee. No doubt he was perfectly justified in the position he took up, and I do not complain of it in the least. But it is necessary—more than necessary; it is of the highest importance—that those members of the committee who did dissent, and who do dissent from the statements contained in this report, should have an opportunity, at the earliest possible moment, of declaring their dissent from the conclusions arrived at. This report will, of course, come up for discussion in its proper place and proper way; and I judge it is not for me or for anyone else at the present time to enter into the facts, or otherwise, the statements contained in this report. As I pointed out when the committee was elected, I requested that I should be left off that committee. I urgently desired to be left out; but, as it was the wish of the House that I should sit on that committee, I became a member and tried to do my duty. But at the same time, the committee were appointed to perform an impossible task: they were called on to find data when no data existed, and to produce results without having any basis upon which those results could rest; and consequently, as an hon. member suggests, the committee were called upon to make bricks without straw. They have made them without straw, and those bricks will be like all bricks of the same sort: they will tumble to pieces as soon as pressure is brought to bear upon them.

MR. HIGHAM: No.

MR. MORAN: Where did you learn to make bricks without straw?

MR. HIGHAM: In Egypt.

MR. MORAN: The straw brick is very old.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And so are the tactics of the hon. member. I shall not deal with this subject at the present time, because this is neither the proper time nor place; but I desire to record my protest against the apparent unanimity of this report. It was not unanimous. There ought to have been some opportunity of making some statement to the public to that effect; and we are now taking the only possible means of making that statement, so that it may be publicly known that the committee were not by any means of one mind. As to the Premier's remark about members who were not on his side of the question not doing their duty, I think that at the sittings of the committee I was in my place pretty often; I remained at my post and watched the evidence as closely as any other member of the committee; and if it had been possible to have called a witness who could have recorded or given to the committee or this country any facts, I would have been the first to have called such a witness; but, knowing as I did that the whole question is one of hypothesis, I was not prepared to waste the time of the country, and the time of the committee, in calling people who simply came there to give their opinions; because I hold that the proper place to take the opinions of the people upon this question is at the ballot box: take the voice of the whole people, and not of half-a-dozen people called to give their opinions before a committee.

MR. JAMES: Hear, hear.

MR. EWING (Swan): Although I think there has been a serious omission from this report, in that the fact is not anywhere disclosed that it is not unanimous, and the direct inference to be gathered from the report is that it is unanimous, I think I should not have risen to address the House to-night had it not been for the speech made by the Premier. I listened to the member for Albany's (Mr. Leake's) concise, reasonable, and fair remarks with regard to the attitude he had taken up; and I do not think that those remarks in any way justified the abuse hurled at that hon. member by

the right hon. gentleman, or that the Premier was in any wise justified in calling him a traitor to his country. I say that the member for Albany, just as much as the Premier of this country, is entitled to hold his own views on this question; and if those views are not expressed in that committee's report, I take it that the hon. member is fully justified in expressing them here; and I speak now as one always open to conviction, and not a strong partisan on the question of federation. I believe that the matter should go to the people. I am always ready to be convinced; and if I am convinced when I read this report that federation will not be for the benefit of Western Australia, and that this colony will seriously suffer, I for one will not do anything to bring about that state of affairs which federalists desire. But I do not anticipate having my views changed, and therefore I simply wish to rise as an independent person to protest against the remarks made by the Premier with regard to the member for Albany, who fairly and reasonably stated his views to this House; and to protest as a private member, and as a young member, against the introduction of such remarks as "a traitor to his country," and "a friend of every country except his own;" and if that expression does not mean a traitor to his country, I do not know what it does mean. I say I protest as a private member in this House, I protest even as a junior member of this House, against the introduction of such remarks, against what I may almost term the introduction of "billingsgate" into the discussion of such a great and important question as the one before us. I think the Premier will do well to be more temperate in his remarks when discussing the question now before the House. It will be for the benefit of the electors, it will be for the benefit of this House, if we have more argument, both from the Government and from the Opposition benches, and less acrimony, less bad feeling and spleen displayed and vented by the leader of the House towards hon. members from whom he differs.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): It becomes the duty of someone on this side of the House to say a word in defence of the leader of the Government. It would be unjust to the Premier, if we sat silently

by and heard these accusations made against him. We who follow the Premier, and the majority of those people who do not follow the Premier, are always willing to give him credit for at least telling the truth; but by imputation it has been said to-night that the Premier is not telling the truth. It was stated by the leader of the Opposition that the Premier influenced the chairman of the committee in putting the motion which prevented the views of the minority being set forth in the report. That such influence was exercised is denied absolutely by the chairman; and it would have better become the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing), instead of lashing out so vindictively against the Premier, to have found fault with the leader of the Opposition for doing what no gentleman would do in regard to another, namely persist in misrepresentation after a denial has been made.

MR. LEAKE: I did not make the remark attributed to me, and it would be better if the hon. member did not continue in that strain.

MR. MORAN: I leave it to the House.

MR. LEAKE: That is the fairest way.

MR. MORAN: I heard the leader of the Opposition say the Premier influenced the chairman of the Committee in the ruling he gave.

MR. JAMES: On a point of order.

MR. MORAN: That accusation was made by the leader of the Opposition and was absolutely denied by the Premier, and it would be unjust if members were to stand quietly by, and allow the Premier to be put in that light before the public. The leader of the Opposition was the first to start the acrimonious discussion. It is to be regretted the Standing Orders did not give the minority an opportunity of stating their views; but, in any case, we are after the truth, and it is most unjust on the part of the leader of the Opposition to level this charge against the leader of the Government, of having brought undue influence to bear upon the chairman. The leader of the Opposition had no right to accuse the Premier of bringing undue influence to bear.

MR. EWING: I do not think he did.

MR. MORAN: I am glad to hear the hon. member say that. The member for

East Perth (Mr. James) has taken a new seat in the House, but I do not think it has changed his sudden impetuosity.

MR. JAMES: It has rather accentuated it.

MR. MORAN: When a young and enthusiastic member of the Opposition rises to rebuke the leader of the Government, I would implore him not to kick the furniture. A motion has been submitted for printing the report, and on this question we have really been firing at each other from long distances. The leader of the Opposition takes the opportunity, as he ought to do, of objecting to the statement going forth that this is a unanimous report; but I regret exceedingly that there should have been the interchange of amenities between one side of the House and the other that we have witnessed to-night. The member for East Perth would not in his calm moments have referred to the fact of the Premier drawing a certain salary: that is quite out of accord with the spirit of the hon. member, who I am sure must be sorry for what he has said. The hon. member does not accuse the Premier of going about the country at the public expense, because he knows that the Premier always pays his own way, though Premiers in the other colonies do not pay their way very often; in fact, there are two or three Premiers in Australia now who could not pay their way if they tried. The accusation made by the member for East Perth against the Premier was scarcely up to the standard of debate which that hon. member usually sets before him, and we are all sorry that so much acrimony should have been imported into the discussion of this question. It is a great mistake to introduce party politics into a question of this character. The figurehead of the ship has nothing to do with the guiding of the ship, and I hope that nobody will suspect that because he has become the figurehead of the movement he is responsible.

A MEMBER: Who is that?

MR. MORAN: Nobody.

MR. MORGANS (Coolgardie): I have observed that when accusations are brought by hon. members on the Opposition side of the House against members on this side, they on the other side seem to desire all kinds of license, and no objection must be raised at any time

against those accusations; but if something is said from this side of the House, they on the other side are all up in arms at once with strong protestations. I am sure the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) did not intend to be rude, but at the same time he said something which verged on rudeness.

MR. LEAKE: Would the hon. member mind repeating those "rude" remarks, because I have forgotten them?

MR. MORGANS: The hon. member spoke of "figureheads" who voted with the Premier, and also said the Premier was a "figurehead;" and the hon. member further said the Premier dominated the Select Committee.

MR. JAMES: That was my statement.

MR. MORGANS: If what the member for Albany said was not rude, it was verging on what was rude; suggesting that the gentlemen who sat on the Select Committee only acted in accordance with the wishes of the Premier. It is absolutely unjust for any hon. member to get up in his place and speak of the Premier in that way.

MR. JAMES: Must we not tell the truth sometimes?

MR. MORGANS: You may tell the truth, but you must not make insinuations that have no foundation in fact. The work of the statesman and the legislator is to tell the truth.

MR. JAMES: But you object when we do it.

MR. MORGANS: I object to improper motives being attributed to members on the Government side of the House. With regard to a minority report, I regret that such a report could not be made, but no one on the committee is to blame for that. I understand the reason a minority report could not be made was because the Standing Orders do not permit of such a report. If that be so, why should the member for Albany get up and infer that some covert act on the part of members of the committee had prevented a minority report being brought in? First of all the member for Albany insinuated that the Premier had influenced the chairman, and after that he insinuated that other members of the committee had followed the lead of the Premier.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You should not draw an inference where there are no premises.

MR. MORGANS: I am speaking of what the member for Albany himself said, and am drawing the inference that not only members of the House but the public will draw from his words. As I have pointed out, a minority report was prevented by the Standing Orders, and, therefore, no one is to blame. I listened to the very violent speech of the member for East Perth (Mr. James) with some dismay, and I am bound to say that speech was unworthy of him. He stood up in the House and accused the Premier of being biassed, simply because the Premier draws a salary from the country. That was a most unworthy suggestion to make, and I can only hope that the hon. member is sorry for having made it. An hon. member who would get up and speak of the Premier or any other member of the House in that way is entirely wrong.

MR. LEAKE: The hon. member did not say it; that is all.

MR. JAMES: Do not check the hon. member.

MR. HIGHAM: The member for East Perth did say it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is a matter of inference.

MR. HIGHAM: There is no inference about this.

MR. MORGANS: No doubt the member for East Perth lost his temper, and said things which, on calm reflection, he will regret, and I certainly hope that on some future occasion he will take an opportunity of apologising to the Premier for the unworthy attack made this evening. We know quite well that some of the members of the Select Committee were from the first opposed to the appointment of the committee, and characterised it as a "farce" and an "abortion"; indeed, all kinds of rude expressions were used in regard to the Select Committee, notwithstanding the fact that it was appointed by the Legislative Assembly. To speak of a committee in that way appears to me improper, and the member for Albany has been entirely wrong from the beginning in the hostile position he has taken up. Some day perhaps we may be able to debate the reason for his hostility. I have my own opinion, and no doubt the public have, as to the hostility of the member for Albany to the Select Committee. No doubt there is some very

good reason for this hostility, and when we have settled the question of federation, we may be able to assign the reason for this constant opposition to investigation. We know what happened when the Premier asked the House for an extension of time for the presentation of the report of this committee. The member for Albany opposed that extension of time, and so did the member for East Perth; in fact, every one on the other side of the House who are supposed to represent the spirit of federalism, opposed the extension of time. What is the reason of this? Some day we shall inquire into it, and find out the reason. As to the members of the committee, speaking as one of them, I indignantly reject the suggestion made by the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), that we were acting as dummies on the committee. I went on that committee for the purpose of listening to the evidence for and against federation. The object I had in going there was for the purpose of ascertaining facts and figures with regard to this important question. I did not go on the committee as a dummy to anyone, nor would I allow myself to occupy such a derogatory position. Therefore, I protest on my own behalf against the suggestion of Mr. Leake that we were acting as dummies on the committee. I know that this select committee has done a great deal of good work. It has obtained some valuable information, which has thrown a great deal of light on the question of federation. I am perfectly certain that the general public are not biassed in their opinion on this matter, and will say that the committee have done good work, and the country deserves well of their service.

MR. RASON (South Murchison): I do not think there is much to be gained by prolonging the debate further. A number of members who have addressed the House have regretted the warmth of the debate. I do not propose, like a number of speakers who have also, regretted the warmth of the debate, to add sticks to the fire and make it a little warmer. At the commencement of this debate each hon. member who regretted the warmth of the debate proceeded to stir up the fire and make it warmer. I think the member for Albany was certainly right in recording his dissent from the report

of the select committee. Undoubtedly he took the first opportunity open to him of recording his dissent; he had no opportunity of doing so in the report of the committee itself, through nobody's fault, through no bias or wilful malpractice on anybody's part; therefore when he in this House recorded his dissent, he fulfilled his desire, which was a legitimate desire, and he gained his wish, for the notice of his dissent will reach the country as soon as, if not sooner than, the report of the committee itself. Having recorded that dissent in the House, the hon. member will know that his dissent is well known throughout the colony. The mischief was done when the member for East Perth (Mr. James) rose to impress his views on the House, and the hon. member for East Perth, if he will pardon me for saying so, seems never to approach the subject of federation without losing the good taste and brightness of intellect which are characteristic of him at all other times. I may quote a little piece of poetry for the benefit of the member for East Perth :

There was a little girl, who had a little curl
That hung right down on her forehead;
And when she was good she was very, very good,
But when she was bad she was horrid.

The member for East Perth always seems to have had one of his bad fits, when he approaches the subject of federation, because he appears to be very, very "horrid" to himself, and particularly to members of this House.

MR. LEAKE: This is stirring up the fire.

MR. RASON: I thought the member for East Perth would appreciate that poetry, because he always speaks of the high intelligence and the noble minds with which he was associated when he was at the Convention, and that piece of poetry was quoted by one high-minded man whom he had the pleasure of meeting at the Convention. Every member of the House will regret—every member on this side as well as on the other side of the House—that the member for East Perth should have thought fit to level charges against the Premier; charges which undoubtedly are unfounded, and which I am sure the member for East Perth will regret. I think I am only voicing the opinions of every member of the House, that every one will regret for a long time that such charges should have been

brought. I hope the matter will now be allowed to drop.

THE SPEAKER: In the first place, I wish to call attention to a fact—I ought to have done so, perhaps, at the time—that the member for East Perth was guilty of a breach of order in not speaking from his place this evening. I regret I had not an opportunity of rising before the discussion had taken place, or perhaps a great deal of the discussion which has taken place would not have taken place; but I wish to give hon. members my opinion of what is the proper procedure of a select committee, and if I had done so earlier a great deal of the discussion would perhaps have been avoided to-night. Both May's *Parliamentary Practice* and our Standing Orders lay down what proceedings shall take place during the sittings of a select committee. It is stated in both of these books that if a select committee has taken all the evidence considered necessary, it is then the duty of the chairman to draw up a draft report; that draft report is then submitted to the members of the committee, who discuss it paragraph by paragraph in exactly the same manner as a Bill is discussed and amended in Committee of the whole House. Hon. members who do not agree with the draft report or paragraphs are quite at liberty to move amendments and bring forward fresh motions themselves, and have them submitted to the committee. These motions are put to the committee, and are divided upon and discussed exactly, as I say, the House deals with a Bill in Committee. And after the members of the select committee have discussed and agreed to the motions, the chairman brings up the report, and these are the words made use of in *May*:—"After the whole report has been agreed to, the question is put that it be the report of the Committee of the House"—not the report of a majority or a minority, but the report of the committee. Let us take the case of the Chairman of Committees bringing up a report on a Bill, and reporting that the Committee have gone through the Bill and agreed to it with amendments. The chairman does not say that the majority have agreed to the Bill, but he says "the Committee have agreed to the Bill," and it is well understood. If the public want to find out which members of the com-

mittee agreed to the Bill and which did not, they can study the reports in the papers. I think it would be improper and contrary to the practice of Parliament for a committee to bring up a minority report. That is done in the case of a Royal Commission, when a minority report may be brought up; but a Commission is not guided by Parliamentary proceedings, and that is the difference between the two; and perhaps some hon. members have mixed up the proceedings of a Commission with the proceedings of a select committee. But the proceedings of a Commission are not guided by Parliamentary practice, whereas the proceedings of a select committee are. It has been stated by some members that they have not been treated fairly because they were not allowed to bring up a minority report of their own. I think if hon. members were aware that in the proceedings of the select committee, when considering the report, the motions brought forward by both the majority and minority are stated in the proceedings, and the divisions which take place are also recorded in the proceedings which will be published when the report is published, those remarks would not have been made. Therefore, if the public or hon. members choose to read the evidence and the report, they will see exactly those members who did agree to the report and those who did not. There is no other way in which the views of the members of a select committee can be known to the public, except the public or hon. members read the evidence. That is the rule which is observed in select committees, and I do not think it has been departed from on this occasion. I believe that was done, as far as I can ascertain; that the chairman did draw up the draft report, and after it was presented certain motions were brought forward by gentlemen in the minority, and they were put to the committee.

MR. VOSPER: They were not entered on the minutes.

THE SPEAKER: According to the evidence in the documents, motions were put and divisions took place on them, and I do not know how a division could have been recorded if a motion had not been put to the meeting. According to this evidence, motions were proposed and divisions took place on them, and the names

of the members are given in the draft report; and no one can be misled into thinking that the report is the report of the whole of the committee. In a Parliamentary sense, the committee does not mean the whole of the members of the committee, and members who are conversant with Parliamentary practice do not think so. The committee, in Parliamentary practice, does not include the whole of the members of the committee any more than the whole of the members of Parliament are included in the word "Parliament." I do not think anyone conversant with Parliamentary procedure will be misled by the words "that the committee approve of so and so."

MR. LEAKE: May I rise in explanation? I do not wish to detain the House for any length of time; but even Mr. Speaker does not seem to grasp the position I have placed before the House.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not go to any great length.

MR. LEAKE: Perhaps I did not make myself clear. I was proposing to explain.

THE SPEAKER: I understood the hon. member to complain that the minority was not allowed to bring up a minority report.

MR. LEAKE: That was what I was going to explain. A minority report was proposed, or a dissentient note; but it was ruled that this could not be done. Then I proposed that a new paragraph should be added to the report, to this effect: "That Mr. Matheson, Mr. Leake, and Mr. Illingworth dissent from this report, and desire to say that their views are embodied in the resolution proposed by Mr. Leake at the meeting on Friday night." The chairman refused to put that, and he was supported by the Premier and other members of the committee. The chairman also refused to allow it to be put on the minutes. That is the position.

THE SPEAKER: Of course I am not prepared to say anything about that.

THE PREMIER: I crave your permission, Mr. Speaker, for a moment. I have no recollection whatever of the chairman putting such a question to the members. The chairman said he declined to put the question, and no one had an opportunity of supporting or dissenting from his action. I would like to say, in

reference to what the member for Albany had asked to be put, that it had already been put the day before, when dealing with motions, and the motion is on the minutes. It was proposed by Mr. Leake, but was not carried.

MR. LEAKE: Not in considering the report.

THE PREMIER: Before the report was brought up, the hon. member had an opportunity of proposing a new clause to the report, which the chairman ruled that he was not at liberty to place in the report, that so many members dissented from the report. I was never asked for my own opinion: certainly I had no right to give it. I have no recollection of having given my opinion, and I never intended to give it.

THE SPEAKER: It is impossible for me to say what was in the chairman's mind when he refused to put the motion. May's *Parliamentary Practice* says the chairman may refuse to put anything which is not in the order of reference. Whether the chairman came to the conclusion that it was not in the order of reference, I do not know.

Question—that the report be printed — put and passed.

POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL (BETTING).

On the motion of Mr. ILLINGWORTH, the House resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Betting prohibited on racecourses, recreation grounds, etc.:

MR. JAMES moved that all words in the first five lines be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:

Every person betting or offering to bet, or crying or calling the odds on or near to any racecourse or any grounds, building, or premises where any fight, game, sport, or exercise is being or is about to be carried on, or on or in any street or public place, or any building, premises, or place to which the public are permitted on payment or otherwise to have access, shall be liable, on —.

MR. MONGER: The question required careful consideration, and seeing the House was a comparatively small one, he moved that progress be reported.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

BANK NOTE PROTECTION BILL. SECOND READING.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley), in moving the second reading, said: I have been asked by the associated banks to introduce this small Bill. They ask for it to be passed, first, because it has been in Victoria for many years, and it is in existence in all the other colonies. They ask that they shall be protected in the same way as bankers in other parts of Australia. The practice of stamping bank notes originated among tobacco-nists and sweep promoters, and notes so stamped get into such a state that whether new or not they are returned to the bank in the ordinary course of business in 24 or 48 hours, and are not issued again. The practice of stamping notes is universal amongst sweep promoters in this city and Fremantle, I understand. New notes are issued in the morning, and next day they are returned covered with the advertisements of traders who wish to make use of the notes for the purpose of advertising their wares. The proprietary banks say it is unfair and unreasonable, and it is not allowed in the other colonies. In the other colonies they have an Act to protect themselves. They have no wish that a person passing from one part of the colony to another shall not write his name on a note so that should the note go astray it could be identified, but they do object to the stamping of notes by sweep promoters and tobacco-nists. They say it causes the banks a large amount of expense in the printing of these notes, and their withdrawal, because when a note is withdrawn there is a certain process to go through. It goes through a good many entries, and the note has to be destroyed eventually, so that altogether a great amount of trouble is given to a bank when notes come back in a few days practically useless for further issue. The bankers say the banks pay a commission of 2 per cent. on the circulation, and they consider themselves entitled to the protection asked for. They assert the first cost of the note is heavy, as is also the labour in connection with their signatures. You can understand the issue of 10,000 notes, which have to be signed by two or three people, entails a lot of labour. Notes come back next day defaced and have to

be entered up and afterwards destroyed, which entails a great deal more loss than the public are aware of. Although, no doubt, members of the House would like to see clean notes issued—I know I would myself—still, notes are spoilt by the general public in such a way that the cost is beyond what the banks can afford to pay. That is their contention, and I agree with them to a certain extent, although we like to see crisp notes instead of old ones that are torn. They also say it is unfair the traders should endeavour to advertise on their notes, and spoil them, and they ask that this short Bill shall be carried if possible so as to do away with what I have referred to. Notes pass through one or two hands and get into circulation and eventually are returned to the bank, where they are destroyed. This Bill is exactly the same as the Act existing in Victoria, and I am told by the associated banks that it has a place in all the colonies except Western Australia.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie) : The remarks of the hon. member in moving the second reading practically mean, I think, "Pity the sorrow of a poor old banker, whose trembling steps have brought him to your door." I think the House will sympathise with these poor unfortunate bankers. I would, however, remind the hon. member that, as far as the Bank of England is concerned, the greatest of all such institutions, the custom of that bank is that as soon as a note gets back into the bank's possession it is invariably destroyed.

MR. A. FORREST : Not all banks.

MR. VOSPER : Perhaps not; but be it remembered that in the case of the Bank of England, whether a note has been five minutes or five years out, that note is destroyed when it is returned to the bank. I cannot help thinking it is rather to the public advantage than otherwise that notes should go back to the bank and be destroyed as soon as possible. Medical men tell us there is a certain amount of danger in handling unclean coin; and it is more dangerous to handle dirty bank notes. I know most of us are perfectly willing to take the risk. Nevertheless, it is true the banks themselves, when they have a large quantity of notes in their possession, are obliged to use means to disinfect them. The longer a

bank note remains in circulation, and the dirtier it is, and the more torn it becomes, the greater is the number of disease germs carried about in it. There may be some hon. members who seldom see a bank note, but those accustomed to seeing large quantities will inform hon. members that the smell proceeding from a large mass or quantity of bank notes is offensive in the extreme; and that indicates a certain amount of disease carried about in them. As far as advertising on bank notes is concerned, I think any poor traders of Perth would be only too glad to get a chance of obtaining enough to make a profitable advertisement. The marking ink and other stuff used for advertising purposes may have some disinfecting properties which may be beneficial. At any rate, I do not think the House need trouble about such small details as this. If we are to be asked to use the Parliamentary machinery to do a small favour to the banks, why should we not consider the maker of bank note paper, and the poor printer, and do something to increase the printing of bank notes instead? Surely that point is entitled to some consideration. I do not think bank managers regard this as a serious matter. For my part, I regard it as rather nonsensical, and the sooner bank notes go back and are destroyed the better for the public generally.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir John Forrest) : I should be sorry to do anything that would act injuriously to the banking institutions of the colony, and on the whole I would be perhaps inclined to vote for the Bill; but I must say there is good cause for complaint about the length of time bank notes are allowed to be in circulation in this colony before they are destroyed. In fact I do not think you could find a clean note in circulation in Perth. At the present time, I believe a certain class of people, miners and others, carry notes in their boots and socks for safety, poor fellows! I really think we ought to be careful about this, because, while we do not want to have bank notes mutilated unnecessarily, still there ought to be some protection to people who have to carry them about, so that they shall not be offensive, which they are, very often. People seem very eager to get bank notes and appear to be attached to them, but bank notes are

sometimes very offensive. I think the banks can hardly expect the House to carry the Bill, knowing, as we all do, these notes remain too long in circulation. Perhaps the assurance of the hon. member that the banks will look into this matter and will not allow notes to be too long in circulation will suffice, and with that assurance I shall be inclined to support the Bill.

MR. A. FORREST: Put a clause in the Bill to that effect.

MR. MONGER (York): I am surprised that no worthier Bill should be brought forward by, and should emanate from, the brains of those great financial institutions than a thing like this. I believe this Bill is the outcome of the joint brains of the joint representatives of the whole of the big financial institutions trading in Western Australia.

MR. A. FORREST: It is a copy of the Victorian Act.

MR. MONGER: If those representatives could not bring forward anything better than this, it certainly seems to my mind that the Legislature of this colony would be acting in a way unworthy of itself in accepting such a Bill. I am surprised that those great financial institutions should ask protection of this Parliament for such a paltry cause. What do they want to do? They want to render liable any poor, unfortunate, person who sticks a rubber stamp on the back of a £5 bank note, "before a Court of summary jurisdiction to a fine not exceeding £5." I say it would be almost a standing disgrace to the Legislature of this or any other country, to sanction such a Bill emanating from such high quarters.

MR. A. FORREST: It is the Victorian Act.

MR. MONGER: I do not care whether it is the Victorian or the New South Wales Act.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): It is not often I have the privilege of supporting or agreeing with the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest); therefore it is with very great pleasure that I find myself agreeing with him on the present occasion. I think it very undesirable that bank notes should go about the country plastered all over with impressions of india-rubber stamps, and bearing other advertisements; and I

shall support the second reading of this Bill in defence both of the banks and of the public. But I wish to take this opportunity of expressing once again what I expressed upon a former occasion regarding the issue of dirty bank notes.

MR. VOSPER: That is the very practice you are defending.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They are an absolute menace to the public health; one of the very best means of disseminating diseases of the worst kind.

MR. A. FORREST: For my part, I do not take dirty notes.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I hope the banks, seeing that they claim protection in this particular way, will call in dirty notes, which are a disgrace to the banking institutions themselves, and are unfit for circulation. I shall support the second reading because I think the Bill is one step in the direction of obtaining clean notes for the public.

Question put, and a division having been called for by Mr. Vosper, it was taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	18
Noes ...	7

Majority for	11
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AYES.

Hon. S. Burt
Mr. Ewing
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hubble
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Moran
Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Rason
Mr. Robson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Throssell
Mr. Wood
Mr. Doherty (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Hassell
Mr. Lenke
Mr. Locke
Mr. Monger
Mr. Vosper
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Holmes (Teller).

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9-23 p.m. until the next day.