

Mr. BATH: If we adjourn now there will be the usual rush towards the end of the session.

The PREMIER: As I pointed out I think the Speaker is desirous of attending the reception, and I understand a good many members have been invited.

Mr. Taylor: A few of the chosen.

The PREMIER: I hope the Leader of the Opposition will recognise that we are desirous of paying every respect to His Excellency the Governor General, and it certainly would not be possible to carry on the business with so many members absent.

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know whether I am in order in debating the point.

The SPEAKER: I think the member is hardly in order.

Mr. TAYLOR: I will be brief. The Premier's reasons for adjourning are reasons why we should not accept the motion. It is the desire of Ministers to meet His Excellency the Governor General and it is also your desire, Mr. Speaker, in your official capacity, to do the same. From what I can gather very few members of the House will take part in either of the functions indicated by the Premier.

Mr. Heitmann: A good reason why.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am reminded there is a good reason why the invitations are not extended to members generally, but I ask the Premier to allow one of the Ministers to remain in charge of the House so that we may carry on the business of the country to-night until a reasonable hour, say 10 or 11 o'clock. You know as well as I do that towards the close of the session the business will be rushed. We shall be sitting five days a week, starting at two o'clock, and sometimes sitting all night. While there is work for the Parliament to do we should do it, and I hope the Premier will see his way, without taking a vote of the House, to withdraw the motion and allow one Minister to remain. I am sure one Minister will not be missed from the functions.

Question (adjournment) put, and a division (called for by Labour members) was taken with the following result:

Ayes	25
Noes	15

Majority for .. 10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Bath
Mr. H. Brown	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Collier
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Davies	Mr. Holman
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Gull	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Stuart
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Walker
Mr. Layman	Mr. Ware
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Troy (Teller).
Mr. Male	
Mr. Mitchell	
Mr. Monger	
Mr. N. J. Moore	
Mr. S. F. Moore	
Mr. Piesse	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Vervard	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Gordon (Teller).	

Question thus passed.

The House adjourned accordingly at twelve minutes past 6 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 14th August, 1907.

	PAGE
Question: Railway Employees and Benefits.	775
Leave of Absence	775
Motion: Agricultural Railways, Commission to Inquire	775
Bills: Marine Insurance, &c.	776
Public Education Amendment, Com. reported	776
Permanent Reserve Rededication, Com. reported	776
Police Force (consolidation), Com. reported	776
Police Offences (consolidation), Com. resumed, progress	777

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

QUESTION—RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AND BENEFITS.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Has the proposed scale of levies and benefits in connection with the Western Australian Railways been reported upon by the Government Actuary? 2, If so, does he consider the scale to be safe and equitable?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1. The Government Railway Department Fund is one entirely established by the employees for their mutual benefit. The department is not responsible for the solvency of the fund, which is managed by a committee elected by the employees, together with an officer nominated by the department.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by *Hon. W. Kingsmill*, leave of absence for one month was granted to the *Hon. T. F. O. Brimage*, on the ground of urgent private business.

MOTION—AGRICULTURAL RAILWAYS, COMMISSION TO INQUIRE.

Hon. J. W. WRIGHT (Metropolitan) moved—

That an address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying His Excellency to cause a Royal Commission to be issued to inquire into and report on the construction of the Goomalling-Dowerin, Wagin-Dumbleyung, and Katanning-Kojonup Railways.

He said: Before tabling this motion I fully considered the matter, and concluded that a Royal Commission was necessary; although an hon. member interjected yesterday, when I gave notice, that he thought a select committee would suffice. A select committee, being too restricted, does not give us power to get the evidence necessary in such a case. I move for a commission with the idea that it will secure the evidence of those who have a special knowledge of railway construction and of the work

carried out; and farther, that it will enable us to get all the papers and documents in support of that evidence and connected with the works generally. Moreover, suppose the present session comes to a sudden determination, the appointment of a Royal Commission now will prevent our having to move at a later stage for a commission to carry on the work begun by a select committee, which work would otherwise be wasted. To show how necessary is this inquiry I may mention that from the beginning of this year there has been continually in the Press any amount of correspondence and several leading articles condemning the work in no measured terms; and it is for this reason, and to set at rest public misgivings, that I wish the commission appointed. If it should appear that the Government have carried out the work in accordance with the plans and specifications tendered on by the contractors, the fact will strengthen their hands for farther day work, and they need have no fear. But if this is not so, the fact will be established that departmental day work is not so good as contract work. To show the interest which the public have taken in the subject I need only quote the report of the Works Department, wherein the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. James Thompson, states:—

“Tenders were invited for these contracts, and the Public Works Department allowed to compete, with the result that the department was the lowest and secured the three, much to the disappointment of outside contractors. Great public interest is being taken in the construction of these light railways.”

He farther says: “It is intended to duplicate the lines.” If I were to read all the newspaper cuttings I should probably occupy three hours, but I will content myself with showing why the inquiry is necessary. On the 11th January last the *West Australian*, in a leading article, states:—

“Twenty-five per cent. of the sleepers in one case do not fulfil the conditions of the specifications. Thousands of sleepers, if a contractor had attempted to use them, would be con-

denmed. Already the white ant is present in some of the sleepers."

The same article states farther on :—

"It is doubtful if it be a wise policy to economise in any event over sleepers, for the quality of the sleepers means the life of the rails. Mr. Smith expresses his positive belief that neither Mr. Moore nor any of his Ministers would allow the use of sleepers which did not conform to the contract specifications ; and everybody will concur in that view. But the question arises, Who then, if these allegations be true, is responsible ? Whoever it is should be dealt with severely and summarily. A better course would have been to have asked Mr. George."

I think that one article is enough to warrant my asking for a commission to inquire into the construction of these railways. I know from one trip I made along them that the cuttings, the bridge work and other features were not in accordance with the specifications as tendered on. I think the commission would either establish the Government departmental work as being preferable to contract work, or *vice versa*. Of course I have been twitted with the fact that a Royal Commission was asked for last year in another place, when the Premier, in reply, said he refused because the construction was nearly completed. To my own knowledge, that reply, to say the least of it, was misleading. There is no doubt the Premier was misled by his officers ; because ten days afterwards I took the trouble to find out where the heads of the lines were, and on the Wagin-Dumbleyung line the head was only 18 miles 77 chains, and on the Katanning-Kojonup 8 miles 55 chains—ten days after the Premier's statement was made in another place. Whether the object was to cover up the works that were going on it is hard to say, but there is no doubt in my mind that a commission will do infinite good. In the construction of these railways it is well known that the departmental engineers have been the contractors, have had only themselves to look after them ; and I think that some of the work done would never have been passed by the department for any con-

tractor that I know of. I know that in my day when I was doing railway work they would not have overlooked it. I think that with these few remarks I will leave it in the hands of the House to say whether we should have this Royal Commission or not.

On motion by the *Colonial Secretary*, debate adjourned.

BILL—MARINE INSURANCE.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION AMENDMENT.

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

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVE REDEDICATION.

In Committee.

Clause 1—Reserve 6895 revested in His Majesty:

On motion by the *Colonial Secretary*, clause amended by striking out the words "as of his former estate."

Clause as amended agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendment ; report adopted.

BILL—POLICE FORCE (CONSOLIDATION).

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day.

New Clause—Power to Fremantle Harbour Trust to appoint special constables:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the following be added as Clause 27:—

The Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners may from time to time appoint and dismiss special constables, who within the limits of the Fremantle Harbour shall have and exercise and enjoy all such powers, authorities, and immunities, and be liable to such duties and re-

sponsibilities, as any police officer duly appointed now has by law ; provided that such special constables shall not be members of the police force, but shall be servants of the Fremantle Harbour Trust Commissioners, and under their direction and control.

This clause was provided in accordance with the suggestion of Mr. Moss, who on the second reading pointed out the difficulty the Fremantle Harbour Trust experienced in the detection of crime, or in dealing with persons detected pilfering cargo. It was similar to a provision in English Railway Companies' Acts; and such companies in England had special constables under exactly similar conditions. As to uniforms, these special constables would do the work of detectives and would probably not wear uniforms.

Question passed, the clause added.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with a new clause; report adopted.

BILL—POLICE OFFENCES (CONSOLIDATION).

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day.

Clauses 38 to 57—agreed to.

Clause 58—Betting-houses :

Hon. C. SOMMERS asked that the clause be postponed until after Clause 77, as he had an amendment to the latter clause which really affected Clause 58.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Clause 58 was taken from the Criminal Code, Section 209, and there was nothing new provided. The present measure was a consolidating one, but certain sections were included in the Bill for the convenience of police officers. The amendment of the hon. member could be discussed on this clause.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : The intended amendment to Clause 77 appeared on the Notice Paper. On the second reading, he had asked whether it was intended to stop betting on racecourses, and was told the present law was that betting was illegal on racecourses as elsewhere. He could see no reason why we should per-

petuate such a state of affairs, for everybody knew that the authorities winked at betting on racecourses, and in fact encouraged people to break the law in that direction. At present any man could go on a racecourse and make what bets he liked, just as if he was betting on the totalisator. The Government should see that the law was insisted on, or should insert in the Bill a proviso that betting in certain circumstances would not be illegal. It would be better if his amendment were to follow Clause 77, which dealt with betting on horseraces. Under the law at present, a man who made bets on a racecourse was liable to be arrested and perhaps fined £50, while it would also be possible for the stewards of the W.A. Turf Club to be arrested for a similar offence. That state of affairs should not be allowed to continue. In Victoria last year street and shop betting had come to such a pass that the Government introduced—in December—a very drastic Bill dealing with betting, and containing an amendment exactly similar to the one he was now proposing. The Government should be consistent. They had legalised the totalisator ; but if Clause 53 were passed as in the Bill, people would not be allowed to bet with bookmakers who had been licensed for that purpose by the W.A. Turf Club. Personally he thought betting should be swept away ; but reforms of that nature could only be brought in gradually. The public had become accustomed to betting, and it had been to all intents and purposes legalised as far as racecourses were concerned ; but under the law a new Commissioner of Police might at any moment arrest people there for betting. Later on, when the public became educated up to it and it was thought well to do away with betting altogether, definite action could be taken, and when that time did arrive, betting on the totalisator also should be prohibited. Betting on racecourses was nothing like so bad as betting in streets and shops. As reasonable men they must admit that the time had not yet arrived for betting to be stopped on racecourses. He moved—

That Clause 58 be postponed until after the consideration of Clause 77.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member had been allowed considerable latitude in giving his reasons for asking for postponement of the clause; but members must now deal only with the question of postponement.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: Would it be in order to speak to the clause?

The CHAIRMAN: No. The question was that the clause be postponed.

Motion passed, the clause postponed.

Clause 59—Keeping a betting-house:

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Why was the existence of the totalisator, which was a great source of gambling and betting in this State, preserved under the Bill?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Under Clause 209 of the Criminal Code, it was provided that the totalisator might be used by clubs registered through the W.A. Turf Club. With the approval of the Colonial Treasurer (he thought), it was deemed wise to re-enact this law, and the Government did not see any reason to change it. It brought in a certain amount of revenue, but that was not the sole reason for re-enacting the law. There was no harm in the totalisator, but there might be a great deal of harm in allowing bookmakers to ply their calling indiscriminately. The totalisator was a legalised form of gambling, if it might be so called, and tricks could not be carried on with the totalisator. The totalisator was an instrument of mutual benefit; people put their money on, and as it worked out, so the dividends were given. One man did not scoop the lot; therefore the totalisator ought to be allowed. In a country where bookmakers were strongly prohibited, New Zealand, the totalisator was allowed to exist, and no great harm was done.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: The clause and the preceding one were a re-enactment of the present law, but the present law had not been administered and never would be administered.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: It could not be.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: Anyone who understood human nature in Australia knew that it was impossible to prevent an Australian community from betting. It

might be somewhat of a serious confession to make, but the fact remained that an Australian community must have some interest in the shape of a bet on an event on a racecourse. Looking at this question from all sides and not looking at it from the view of an extremist, one way or the other, it was not wise to make the totalisator unlawful; but it had seemed to him for a long while a tremendous farce to have a law on our statute book and the whole thing treated with contempt. Mr. Sommers had said that another commissioner of police might come along and enforce this law. In fairness to Mr. Hare, he (Mr. Moss) would say that he happened to know from having held a Ministerial position that for two years before the Rason Government went out of office the Commissioner of Police asked the Government if he should carry out the provisions of the criminal law and stop betting on racecourses. The Commissioner was not responsible for the non-carrying out of that law, because the Government said that it was a matter that had been going on so long and they would not interfere. That was a contemptible position, and he (Mr. Moss) was a member of one Government that said this. It was contemptible to have this legislation on the statute book and the whole thing treated as an absolute nullity. It was not in the interest of sport that the stewards of the West Australian Turf Club, and other clubs associated with that club, should continue to license bookmakers. The first reason was this: he did not want to hold up any terrible example, but there were lots of young fellows who had gone astray with the betting curse in the community. The trouble was that in betting with a bookmaker anyone could have any amount of betting on credit. That was a fearful disaster. The betting men booked up the bets called debts of honour in the community, and these debts had to be paid; and unfortunately they were paid very frequently by the employee taking the employer's money. We might well deal with this question from this point of view. Could we stop the credit betting? That was the mischief,

and it was a discredit to the community. We had said that betting was unlawful, but we had permitted it in the streets. We had not prevented people crying out the odds frequently in St. George's Terrace, defying the law. If we were to stop credit betting we should do some good, for if a person wished to bet on the totalisator, he could only do so on the day of the race. One would not say this totalisator betting was desirable, but it was the least evil that would arise out of betting. It was absolutely impossible for any community in Australia to stop betting, and he would not start out on an expedition to do that. If the totalisator, which was only permitted on race days, was allowed to continue and we crushed out the unregistered meetings and allowed the prosecution of bookmakers, we might do some good. When standing on a public platform seeking re-election what he was now going to say might cause him the loss of some amount of support, but he was going to say it. He thought the unregistered course at Fremantle and at South Perth a terrible disgrace in both communities. The law ought to be rigidly carried out, and the Commissioner of Police should be aided in carrying it out. The stewards of the West Australian Turf Club he believed received as much as 70 guineas in fees at Christmas time for licensing bookmakers. Looking at the question from a revenue point of view, it was better to force money through the totalisator, because the Government received a certain revenue from the totalisator. The police should enforce the law. The totalisator should be allowed by the West Australian Turf Club and the other clubs registered by that body, but the unregistered racing should be done away with. He had heard it said that there were great vested interests growing up in connection with unregistered racing, but he did not know what that was. It was vested interest which had accrued in spite of the statutes which we had in force, and if people had made improvements to unregistered courses they had had a good fling indeed. It was to be hoped none of the provisions in the Bill would be interfered with. But it was a farce to pass drastic legisla-

tion and not enforce it except in one instance and that was as far as unfortunate Chinamen who gambled amongst themselves were concerned. These Chinamen did not take into their gambling dens European or Australian people. These Chinamen were prosecuted, their money was taken from them, and they were fined heavily. The police now with the severest and strongest arm of the law possible enforced the law against the Chinese, but did not enforce it against those who made the law. We were asked to pass Clauses 58 and 59, and the Minister said they were a re-enactment of the Criminal Code and now Mr. Sommers asked that betting should be allowed to be legalised on racecourses. We should not allow that. We should force the money into the totalisator, so that the Government would get their cut out of it. Then we should have cash betting only of a limited character. There would not be an opportunity for credit betting, and opportunities afforded to people of paying their debts afterwards with other people's money. It was to be hoped the Committee would pass the clause, but he had his doubts whether the Government were going to be any better than the Government of which he was a member, or the Labour Government, or the Government preceeding that. Ministers who had not the backbone to carry out the legislation were inviting the House to carry laws which would not be enforced. Were the laws to remain on the statute book as a menace to Chinamen and to be winked at when others broke the law? The legislation was all that could be desired. We were going to make betting illegal and make it legal on the totalisator because that was the least evil. It would be absurd to make betting illegal and knock the totalisator out, because it would be said that we were trying to make people moral by Act of Parliament, and we could not do that.

Hon. G. Randell : Was not there one case against a white man?

Hon. M. L. MOSS : Probably there was; but his point was that while Chinamen, who formed a small fractional portion of the community, were frequently prosecuted, no prosecution was

taken against white people. He instanced that to show what a farce the law was at the present time. The Commissioner of Police for two years asked to be allowed to carry out the law and punish those who were openly breaking the law, but the Government, not to make a farce of the whole proceeding, allowed things to go on as they had gone on for years.

Hon. R. F. SHOLL : The administration of the Act in the past had been inconsistent. Asiatics, in whom the instinct of gambling was inherent, and by whom the practice was not regarded as a crime or offence, were dealt with in accordance with the provisions against gambling, while on racecourses and elsewhere those provisions had been a dead-letter. And it was singular that those raids on Asiatics appeared always to take place when, in consequence of the low state of the Treasury, money was urgently required by the Government. The main evil of horse-racing was the facility which the licensing of bookmakers afforded for credit betting; and this could be checked by directing betting into the totalisator, and stopping the practice of licensing bookmakers. Proprietary courses were, to his mind, no different from unregistered courses. Merely because an individual, or twenty individuals, happened to own a racecourse, they were recognised and permitted to run what was neither more nor less than a huge gambling concern; they were allowed to use the totalisator and to license bookmakers, and the profits went into the pockets of those individuals. In the case of the W.A. Turf Club and other non-proprietary courses, the profits were devoted to the improvement of the sport. He would not vote for taking away the right of prosecution against bookmaking. The opinion amongst racing people was that the sport would be cleaner and many turf abuses would be removed if the power were taken away from proprietary clubs, as from the unregistered clubs, of using the totalisator, and if betting were prevented not only on proprietary courses but also on the W.A. Turf Club's course. [*Hon. W. Patrick* : That simply would be administering the

present law.] Yes. The evils of horse-racing would be reduced to a minimum if the totalisator were the only recognised means of speculation on a race. In other days a person might invest a modest shilling in a sweep on a race; but that to-day was illegal, though one could go into the ring or to the totalisator and bet with impunity to any amount—that was a phase of what might be called “Australian justice.” He would not vote for the alteration of the law in a direction which would legalise betting in any public place. The sooner the Government consistently administered the law and put down betting, the better for the community.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY trusted the clause would pass as printed, and the totalisator remain the recognised legal medium of betting. Without doubt, as Mr. Moss had said, Australians would gamble; and as sensible legislators it was no use shutting our eyes to that fact. Hence, the first step to take was in the direction of protecting people in their gambling; and the totalisator was the best medium, when it was recognised that people would gamble, since it was not possible to gamble on credit through the totalisator. Personally he thought racing could be as well carried on without as with bookmakers, and on principle he never betted with bookmakers. To go the length suggested by the amendment would be dangerous; for although strictly speaking it was now illegal to permit bookmaking on a racecourse, it would be much worse if the amendment were agreed to, as then all classes and conditions of men would take up betting and the practice be uncontrolled. Mr. Moss had been severe on the present and previous Governments; but members would see that it was not always wise, even if practicable, to enforce the law. An instance of his meaning was afforded in the late timber trade dispute.

Hon. J. W. Wright : But the Commissioner of Police should enforce the anti-betting law without reference to the Government in the matter at all.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Parliament now had an opportunity of indicating whether it was its wish that

the law be rigidly enforced. The Attorney General intended almost at once bringing the question of betting before a conference, with a view to its being brought under the notice of the Government.

Hon. M. L. MOSS desired the Minister to understand that his previous remarks had not been intended as reflecting on the Government of the day. Parliament was now dealing with an important matter, and he wished to guard against members being merely actors in the farce of putting stringent provisions on the statute-book which the Minister declared to be difficult of enforcement. Such a position was intolerable. The police were quite capable of dealing with this matter; and if the W.A. Turf Club were acquainted with the intention of the Government to in future enforce the provisions of the Act against bookmaking, the club would not accept the fee of 70 guineas for licensing bookmakers. The Turf Club had power to eject from its course any unauthorised person calling the odds there. That racing could be carried on without bookmakers was demonstrated in New Zealand, where they were not permitted to ply their calling; and the enforcement of the law here would be the simplest thing imaginable, were the Government to announce that the declaration of the Legislature as expressed in this Bill would in future be enforced. He declined to be a party to again placing on the statute-book provisions which were to be allowed to become a dead-letter. He disagreed with the opinion of the Colonial Secretary that this matter should be grappled with by degrees. What was necessary was that the W.A. Turf Club should be notified that the Act would in future be enforced; then the Turf Club would not grant farther licenses to bookmakers. And when the bookmakers were assured that disregard of the Act was not to continue, instead of there being an army of bookmakers and their satellites in Perth, those men would go elsewhere—they constituted a class the State could well do without. Without delivering a moral lecture on the evils of gambling, he urged that this was a problem for Parliament to grapple

with firmly; that it was the duty of the House and the country to say that when legislation of this kind was placed on the statute-book, it was expected of the Government to administer the law. No hon. members would deny that during racing carnivals, both on the goldfields and in the metropolitan area, considerable sums of money went into the pockets of bookmakers which should rightly go to the tradespeople. [*Hon. J. W. Hackett*: That was true of the totalisator also.] Undoubtedly; but only to the extent that in dealing with the two evils, the totalisator was very much the lesser. Members should express their desire to minimise the evil.

Hon. W. MALEY endorsed the previous speaker's remarks.

Question put and passed.

Clauses 60 to 76—agreed to.

Clause 77—This Act not to extend to stakes due to owner of horse winning a race :

Hon. C. SOMMERS moved an amendment that the following be added—

“or to any person betting by way of wagering on any racecourse licensed by the W.A. Turf Club during the holding of a race meeting thereon.”

Any great reform must come slowly. In December last Victoria passed a stringent Act to put down gambling, but nevertheless allowed betting on licensed racecourses. By the amendment a man wishing to bet must bet on the Turf Club's racecourse with a licensed bookmaker. The existing Act prohibited betting, but was not enforced. Let us either abolish betting or specify what betting should be allowed. The time for absolutely putting down betting had not yet arrived, but might come in a year or two if betting were meanwhile restricted.

Hon. J. T. GLOWREY supported the amendment. There was far too much gambling, and the amendment would do much to stamp it out by abolishing unregistered race-meetings, and by securing the enforcement of the Act. Victoria, which had more experience of the evil than we, had a similar provision. Since our betting shops were closed a highly undesirable class of street bettors had

sprung up, some of whom did not pay winners.

Hon. J. THOMSON opposed the amendment. Gambling was a dreadful evil in this State, especially on the gold-fields. In his experience Kalgoorlie newsboys called out nothing but turf events. The amendment would legalise betting on racecourses, and enable betting men to lay wagers with and draw money from fools who were willing to risk or invest it with them.

Hon. J. W. Hackett : Put the totalisator out with it.

Hon. J. A. THOMSON was referring to bookmakers who accepted bets from fools and idiots ; because many of these bookmakers lived at the rate of £3,000 or £4,000 a year, and hardly any of them at less than £2,000 a year. Where did they get all this money ? From ignorant, foolish people, and from some worse than foolish people who robbed their employers to bet with these men, thereby ruining the prospects of a life to indulge in a gamble. There was nothing he could speak of with more feeling than with regard to the gambling evil in Australasia, and especially as it existed in this State. If the only betting allowed were through the totalisator, the present practice would disappear except on race days ; but these betting-men induced gullible and foolish people to bet with them. Members of this House should endeavour to get the present law against betting carried out as it ought to be. He hoped never again to hear that a Commissioner of Police had sought the advice of the Government as to whether he should carry out his duties by putting down betting. It was a standing disgrace that this could happen, and he was only a very weak Commissioner who would ask that question of any Government. If the Commissioner was afraid of his position, and if anyone threatened him for enforcing the law, that Commissioner would have the feeling of the people in his favour, because whether they believed in the suppression of gambling or not, they would say that this was a strong Commissioner who ought to be supported in carrying out the law.

Hon. G. BELLINGHAM opposed the amendment. The gambling evil was one of the blots on Australia. At almost any hour of the day one might see in Hay Street or Barrack Street a lot of street-betting going on, and a number of persons who lived on gambling. Take up any or all the newspapers of this State, and one would find a whole page devoted to racing and gambling, whereas the principal industry in the State, that of mining, had half a column devoted to it as compared with a whole page devoted to racing and gambling. The amendment if passed would enable the W.A. Turf Club to license bookmakers for the purpose of betting as was done at present. Mr. Sholl, speaking as a member of the Turf Club committee, had told the House to-day that the betting license fee for bookmakers at the Christmas meeting of three or four days was about 70 guineas. This money went to the Turf Club, and those who paid it in reality were the people who laid bets with the licensed bookmakers. If this power were legally given to the Turf Club, where would the practice end ? What was the use of having this provision in an Act of Parliament, if it was not to be complied with ? It was the duty of the Government to see that the law was carried out for the suppression of betting.

Hon. G. RANDELL would vote against the amendment because it was a retrograde proposal, and would destroy very largely the value of the Bill, which was intended to re-enact the law for the suppression of betting. The amendment would in fact bring about the old state of things on racecourses, and that would not be in the public interest. He would assist to do away with betting and gambling, but this amendment would nullify many of the provisions in the Bill. He realised that one could not get all he wanted, but he would oppose this proposal.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD : The mover of the amendment having ascertained the feeling of the House, his object would have been achieved and the amendment should not be pressed.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : The amendment had elicited something from the Government and an expression of opinion from many members. He objected to re-enacting legislation which the Government would not enforce, and was not enforced in the past. Either the law should be enforced as passed by Parliament, or people should know exactly what they were expected to do. One Commissioner of Police might take one view of the law as to the suppression of betting, and another Commissioner might take a different view and sweep away the practice of licensed betting. This had occurred once in the past. If we passed the Bill as printed, it would not attain the objects sought ; so it would be wiser for this House to say distinctly what should be done. Victoria had grappled with the question, and had been obliged to recognise that Parliament could not suppress betting, but found it necessary to permit the registration of bookmakers on racecourses, at the same time doing away with street betting and shop betting. This House might follow the same course, by providing for the licensing of bookmakers. Having moved the amendment he would rather test the feeling of the House and call for a division if necessary, because in attempting to suppress betting in this State we were attempting too much. Wagering was bad generally, but if permitted under supervision such as that of the W.A. Turf Club, we should give this little protection and try to bring about a reform gradually.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices. The mover called for a division, but there being only one voice, a division was not taken.

Question put and passed.

Clause 77—This Act not to extend to stakes due to the owner of a horse winning the race—agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 6.17 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 14th August, 1907.

	PAGE
Petition: R.C. Church Lands, as to a Bill ...	783
Bills: Statistics, &c. ...	783
Marine Insurance, &c. ...	831
Private Bill: R.C. Church Lands Amendment, &c., referred to select com. ...	783
Pastoral Industry Inquiry: Select Com., Change of a Member, Complaints as to Tactics ...	783
Motions: Camels Importation, Papers ...	806
Mines Robbery and Shooting ...	822

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PETITION—R.C. CHURCH LANDS.

Mr. DAGLISH (Subiaco) presented a petition relating to a proposed Bill amending the Roman Catholic Church Lands Amendment Act, 1902.

Petition received.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: 1, Statement of Expenditure under the Mining Development Act, 1902, to 30th June, 1907; 2, Papers relating to lease of Boulder Lot 664 to Mr. Page. (Return to Order of the House dated 31st July).

BILL—STATISTICS.

Read a third time, and returned to the Council with amendments.

PRIVATE BILL—R.C. CHURCH LANDS AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Daglish, read a first time, and referred to a select committee.

PASTORAL INDUSTRY INQUIRY.

Select Committee, Change of a Member.

Complaints as to Tactics.

Mr. W. D. JOHNSON (chairman of a select committee) moved—

That the hon. member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher) be discharged from the Select Committee re assistance to Pastoralists, and that the hon. member for