

Revotes for Roads, £5,461:

Item—Maintenance of main roads, Claremont-Subiaco, £200:

Mr. TROY moved an amendment—

That the item be struck out.

This and a number of items dealing with the maintenance of main roads could be treated as one. We originally provided the money to build these roads, and year after year we were called on to pay for their maintenance, while other districts were neglected in the matter of roads. It was time the local authorities maintained these main roads. The money that would be saved on these Estimates from this maintenance would construct many roads into new districts. He strongly objected to the Government maintaining roads about the metropolitan area or in populous centres.

Mr. SCADDAN supported the amendment. He had always protested against huge sums of money being provided for the maintenance of main roads about Perth. If it were to be the policy that all main roads throughout the State should be maintained by the Government he would not protest, but here was discrimination; only roads about populous centres were maintained. The fact that £500 was provided for the Kalgoorlie-Boulder road did not deter him from protesting against this expenditure. All country roads were main roads. Though members representing country districts objected to this expenditure, they still voted for the Government.

The MINISTER: These roads passed between centres like Perth and Fremantle, and the roads were mostly used by the traffic between the two places, so that it was unfair to call upon the local governing bodies along the roads to maintain them for traffic that did not belong to them. On the other hand, in the country districts some of the roads boards were of considerable extent, and the roads running through them were for purely local traffic. This matter had been discussed year after year *ad nauseam*, and no arguments would change the opinions of members on either side.

Mr. ANGWIN: The road on the south side of the river between Perth and Fremantle was entitled to consideration.

The Minister: There was not the same traffic.

Mr. ANGWIN: The traffic was heavier than the Minister thought.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.28 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 6th December, 1907.

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

Prayers.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by the Hon. J. W. Langsford, leave of absence for 12 sittings was granted to the Hon. W. Oats, on the ground of ill-health.

BILL—BRANDS AMENDMENT.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL.

Second Reading moved.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) in moving the second reading said: I do not intend to speak at great length on the second reading. This

Bill is, as members know, purely a machinery measure and does not contain any decidedly new principles that are not in the present electoral law. It is more a Bill to mend the different faults and anomalies that have been discovered in the working of the present Act that has been in force for some four years. It is more a Bill that should receive careful consideration in Committee. It has been very carefully gone into during the past 12 months by the Chief Electoral Officer and his staff. They have studied the systems in force in all the Australian States, and in some instances they have gone outside the Commonwealth. The two main points in an electoral system are, to see that everyone who is qualified to have a vote is on the roll, and that every facility is offered to persons to get on the roll ; also to see that ample provision is made for striking off the roll the names of persons who are not qualified and who have no right to be on the roll ; purifying the roll. If we make it too easy for persons to get on the roll it works in the opposite way. If we are not careful, and go too far and make it too easy, we may get a roll that does not represent a particular constituency. This makes the drafting of a Bill of this nature very difficult indeed. These two main points have been kept steadily in view, and I trust after the consideration the measure has received in another place on two occasions, and the consideration it will receive here at the hands of members, many of whom have had a good deal of experience in the working of Electoral Acts, we shall have a good workable measure, and not hear the many complaints we do in regard to the present Act. I am afraid the trouble in regard to the last Act was rather the fault of the House than the form in which the Bill was introduced. Probably had the Bill been left as it was introduced it would have been better, but amendments were made here and in another place without members studying their real effect, and they made the measure in a sense rather unworkable, and during the elections numbers of anomalies were discovered that members never anticipated. These defects as far as possible have been got over in this Bill. They have been

noted from time to time and are provided against. One new feature of the Bill is in regard to transfers. Under the present Act there are two forms of claims provided for : claims to be registered on the roll and claims by way of transfer. The latter are done away with by this Bill, and in each instance the elector makes a claim. In the past these transfers led to a great deal of trouble, because a man who was on one roll might turn up in another district and become registered for that district. For instance, a man on the Perth roll might go to Kalgoorlie and become registered on the Kalgoorlie roll, and possibly he was right because he may have been put on the roll in Perth by some other person. However, under the system proposed in this Bill, that is the card system, which I shall endeavour to explain later, such a thing cannot occur, because all the names on the rolls throughout the State are kept in a Perth office. There is another point I may mention. Under the transfer system there were anomalies. Though in the first place a man, so long as he was six months in the State, could be put on the roll of any electorate without the necessity of having been in that electorate for any specified time, when it came to his getting on a second roll by way of transfer he was put in an entirely different position ; He had to be one month in the new electorate before he could register. Under this Bill it is provided that he can register almost immediately in the new electorate, while automatically his name is struck off the roll of the electorate he has left ; and no man is disfranchised, because any elector can vote in the electorate he has left for three months after he has ceased to reside there. If he become disfranchised at any time, it is really his own fault for not asking for a transfer. Clauses 17 and 18 of this Bill provide for the qualification of the electors for the Legislative Assembly. This is an alteration of the Constitution. The qualifications of electors for the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly are contained in the Constitution Act, but Clause 17 transfers from the Constitution Act the qualifications of the electors for the Legislative

Assembly and places them in the Electoral Bill. The qualifications are not altered ; it is only sought to have them transferred from one Act to another.

Hon. M. L. Moss : Are you sure what the qualifications are at the present time, because I am not ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Residential, and one adult one vote.

Hon. M. L. Moss : I believe that is not correct.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : That has been accepted for the last three or four years at any rate. Clause 18 provides for a slight alteration to the Constitution Act. The Constitution Act provides that any person receiving aid or charity from the State shall not have a vote. This clause provides that persons not wholly dependent on relief from the State or on any charitable institution subsidised by the State, are eligible to vote. If they are in homes like the Old Men's Depot and wholly dependent on the State, they will not receive a vote. Clauses 19 to 22 contain provisions similar to those in the existing Act for the keeping of separate rolls for each province and district, and existing rolls are to remain in force until new rolls are prepared under the provisions of this Bill. In future new rolls will be prepared and issued by the Chief Electoral Officer when directed by proclamation, and supplementary rolls will be prepared at the end of each quarter. To avoid confusion there will only be one supplementary roll at any time. When the new quarterly supplementary roll is issued, the previous quarterly supplementary roll will be included in it, so that at no time will there be more than the main roll and the one supplementary roll which is issued at the end of the quarter and comprising the names on previous supplementary rolls issued at the end of the previous quarters since the issue of the main roll. Provision is also made in Clauses 26 to 30 empowering the Governor to make arrangements for the production of rolls in conjunction with the Commonwealth. Clause 39 provides for taking an electoral census at such times as the Governor may direct. That is a new feature. It is

also provided that in preparing new rolls the registrar after giving notice shall strike the name of any person off the roll ; that is an omission of the present Act. It is provided that the person whose name it is intended to strike off shall receive due notice, so that if he so desires he may have an opportunity of appealing. Clause 42 provides, as I have already explained, for claims and transfers. I have with me samples of the card which will be used for claims. Members will understand this system better if they first read the clause and then examine these cards. Then they will see exactly how it is proposed to work the system. The claims are made on cards and duplicates, and the duplicates are sent to the central office in Perth. It will thus be easy to detect if any person already on the roll for one electorate registers for another electorate. Suppose John Smith applies at Kalgoorlie and he is already on the roll for Perth, the fact will be discovered immediately his duplicate claim arrives at the Perth office, because on receipt of the card at the Perth office it is placed in alphabetical order with the other cards that have been received previously. It may thus be placed alongside an old claim-card bearing the name of John Smith.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : Is that Mr. Daly's idea ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : It may be ; I do not know whose system it is. Now there are several John Smiths and the Chief Electoral Officer shall compare the handwriting on the cards. It is hardly likely that though in all other points the cards might correspond the handwriting would be the same if the claims were made by different persons. [*Hon. W. Kingsmill* : You should have a finger print.] It is only in one case out of a thousand that duplication will remain undetected. By this system a great deal of the present trouble will be got over. We know that the present rolls as printed by no means represent the true number of electors, because in many cases there are thousands of electors nominally on the rolls who do not exist. Probably not 70 per cent

of the names on the roll in any electorate represent true electors; but by this card system the names will be automatically checked for duplications and the rolls will be kept in a pure state, so that if there are a thousand names on a roll we will know there are a thousand possible voters. Clause 41 deals with additions to rolls. A period of fourteen days must elapse after the receipt of the claim before the name is put on the roll, so that the registrar may satisfy himself by inquiries as to the validity of the claim. Under the old system prior to the passing of the present Act, a name had to remain a certain time on the claim list before being put on the roll, but under the present Act a person may sign a claim, put it in, and may vote if an election takes place before his name is submitted to a revision court. Under the Bill the name will remain fourteen days on the list to give any elector an opportunity of lodging an objection or of bringing under the notice of the registrar any objection to the claim, and it is the registrar's duty to inquire into the claim. If the registrar is satisfied the claim is not good, the name does not go on the roll. Considerable discussion took place in another place as to whether fourteen days was sufficient to enable persons who desired to scrutinise these claims as they came in to do so; but I think it is a fair time to keep a person in suspense as to whether his name should go on the roll and sufficient to allow any elector to lodge an objection to the claim. By Clauses 46 to 48 provision is made for objections against claims. Whereas at present an objection can only be lodged against a name on the roll, by this Bill objections may also be lodged against claims not yet enrolled. Revision courts which are held periodically under the Act are abolished by this Bill. A person whose name has been objected to by an elector or registrar may be called upon by notice to appear before a magistrate to have his appeal against such objection heard. The magistrate will sit frequently. Therefore, although there will be no revision court as we have now, objections will be dealt with much more frequently

than under the present system. If an objection is lodged against a claim and it is received by the registrar not later than fourteen days before the issue of a writ the registrar must enrol that claim; but if there is an objection lodged against a name already enrolled, in the event of a writ being issued before the objection has been heard by the magistrate, the appeal shall lapse and the elector shall not be prevented from voting in these circumstances; but should the registrar be the objector the elector will be required to support his claim by a declaration before the presiding officer. He would have to make a declaration that he had the qualifications he claimed. In regard to the issue of writs mentioned in Clauses 62 to 65 there is a new departure. It is provided that the Government shall appoint a clerk of writs by whom all writs for the election of members shall be issued and to whom writs shall be returned. There is also provision for the appointment of a deputy clerk.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Are the Government satisfied about the legality of this?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I presume so.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I have very grave doubts about the power.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is provided that in Clause 64 before any writ is issued, twenty-one days notice of the intention to issue the same shall be published in the *Government Gazette*. That provision was inserted in another place, and gave rise to a good deal of discussion. The idea really is to give notice to intending electors to get on the roll as a writ for an election is about to be issued. The extent of a notice given to an elector is really about seven days for it is provided that they shall be registered for fourteen days before the issue of the writ.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It will hang the business of the country up sometimes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That point raised a considerable argument in another place, for it was considered that at all times it would not be practicable. A long delay will be caused owing to this clause, for in the first place you have to

give twenty-one days' notice under this clause, then a certain time, say fourteen days between the issue of the writ and nomination day, another fourteen days between that and polling day, and a week or fourteen days for the return of the writ.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It is all right unless there is a dissolution.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In ordinary general elections the extended time will not matter, but on the other hand when Parliament expires suddenly it would be a case of sitting down and waiting for three weeks before the death warrant to members could be issued. However, this question can be taken into consideration, and I simply draw attention to the clause. The old system of voting by post is preserved as mentioned in Clauses 89 to 98. It is not possible, nor do I think it desirable, to do away with voting by post, more particularly in the case of voters for the Upper House.

Hon. M. L. Moss: There is an important departure in Clause 94 which provides that the postal vote officer is not to visit electors.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is very desirable, more particularly in regard to the Upper House, that postal votes should not be done away with, for otherwise we disfranchise a number of electors. It always happens that there are hundreds of voters for the Upper House absent at election time. In Clause 9, as the hon. member says, there is a departure, for it is laid down that it shall be unlawful for any postal vote officers to visit any elector for the purpose of taking his vote or to take any elector's postal vote in any other place than such postal vote officer's ordinary place of living or business. It is a good thing in most cases. It has been argued that it inflicts a great hardship on the people as, under the present Act, they can take an appointee to the person and receive the vote. Complaint has been made that it is not always easy for a business man to leave his place and go to the appointee. On the other hand, unless this provision is enacted there might be abuses. Although I do not know whether in the

existing Act this point was considered, certainly at the time it was framed it was not intended that the voter should go to the appointee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: In many cases the appointees have had their appointments cancelled for that very reason. It is a pity the Commonwealth system was not introduced.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Commonwealth system is a safe one, but it is very cumbersome. I do not think that system would be applicable here. It is all right with manhood suffrage, but if it were adopted here many absentee voters, especially for the Upper House, would not have a chance of voting.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Look at Clause 122, you will see you have destroyed the secrecy of the ballot?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not intended to do that.

Hon. M. L. Moss: You provide in the schedule for a number on the counterfoil of the ballot paper and it can be found out from that how the electors voted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That clause is taken from the present Act.

Hon. M. L. Moss: No, it is not, and you will see that if you look at the form in the schedule.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Are not the ballot papers numbered even now? How is a returning officer to know otherwise if someone has not put in a number of illegal ballot papers?

Hon. M. L. Moss: That cannot be done, for the initials of the returning officer must be on the back of every voting paper.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If a point should arise, the returning officer has to certify to the *bona fides* of a ballot paper; it would be necessary to examine that ballot paper, but it would not destroy the secrecy of the ballot.

Hon. M. L. Moss: You are departing from the Commonwealth and the local Acts in this manner, and I do not think the point can have been noticed in another place.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I should not think such a point would have been overlooked. It is not intended to do away with the secrecy of the ballot.

There is a new principle in the Bill having reference to preferential voting, and it is contained in Clauses 127 onwards. This system is in force in Queensland and Tasmania. It is not compulsory in Queensland, unless made so of late years, and it is not sought to make it compulsory here either. If a person so desires he can vote preferentially at any election; that is to say, if there are three candidates he can vote 1, 2 and 3 for them. Should his first choice not receive a majority of the votes then his vote will go to the second choice, and if that should not receive a majority then it would go to the third choice, and so on, if there are more candidates. It really provides a system of exhaustive ballot and ensures that the true choice of the electors shall be obtained.

Hon. M. L. Moss: How can you get the true choice unless preferential voting is made compulsory?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am arguing on the basis that all vote preferentially. If the electors do that then the true choice will be obtained. It has frequently happened that where there are three or four candidates at an election one is elected on a minority vote, whereas if he had to stand alone against any one of the other candidates he would have been defeated. That is an undesirable state of affairs; but, as the hon. member says, if the electors do not use the preferential system the real effect will not be produced.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Suppose one half of the electors use it and the other half do not, where does that land you?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They will count the votes as far as they go. That is the system in force in Queensland. In some electorates there they use the preferential system to a considerable extent, while in others they do not use it at all. In two instances there the men who received the most votes in the first counts were unseated afterwards on the count of the preferential votes. I admit that the system is not satisfactory, unless everyone uses it. The reason it is not made compulsory at first is that it was thought, and rightly so, that there would be a big percentage of informal

votes. The present system is surely simple enough, for it consists merely of striking out the names of the persons you do not want, but even now there are a number of informal votes, and if we get anything slightly more complicated the number of informal votes must increase. It seems to be a simple matter merely to mark the ballot paper according to your preference of the candidates, and one could hardly imagine anything more simple; but still it is likely, owing to the change, there would be a large number of informal votes. Even after years of working it has not been thought fit to make the system compulsory in Queensland, and it is therefore considered unwise to make it compulsory here until the people get used to it. In this Bill there is another new departure by which courts of disputed returns are provided for. They will deal with all questions with regard to elections.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Why do you exclude candidates from the count, as provided under Clause 133?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not desirable that a great many people should be present at the count. I do not know whether a candidate has the right to be present even now.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It is always the rule here to allow a candidate in, although it rests solely with the returning officer. Now, however, the clause says that only the scrutineer and the returning officer shall attend.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A candidate cannot be present in the polling booths, especially in connection with the Upper House elections, where there are so many counting places. I do not think this clause will inflict any great hardship on a candidate, for after all it is probably better that he should not be present. It is also provided in that portion of the Bill that the court shall deem the register conclusive evidence, and that persons enrolled thereon at the date of completion of the roll are entitled to be enrolled. That was the intention of the present Act, but a flaw was found in it, and by it great hardship was inflicted.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : That was caused through an ill-considered amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Probably, and a good many of the faults in the present Act were caused in that way. Considerable hardship has thus been inflicted on successful candidates; and I think some of the recent disputes since the last general election were caused by this very defect. The candidate accepts the roll, and rightly. He has a right to presume that the roll handed to him is correct; but, unfortunately for some successful candidates, it proved to be incorrect, and they had to suffer. I do not think that is just; and the Bill provides that the roll as handed to the candidate shall be conclusive evidence. A clear distinction is made in Clause 173 between what are and what are not "election expenses." It also provides that any person who neglects to furnish the necessary return after a contested election shall be liable to a penalty.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : That is better than the existing provision, which made a return necessary after all elections.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I presumed it is not necessary to expend money on a non-contested election.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : Sometimes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is provided in Clause 193 that an employer must give his employees leave of absence to vote; but the clause will apply only when they are employed during the whole of the time occupied in polling; and this will seldom be the case. Clause 194 is a new clause, and one with which members will doubtless agree, as its necessity is obvious from past experience. The clause makes it an offence to publish any false statement in relation to the personal character or conduct of a candidate. By a proviso some little latitude is given; and I think in politics it is necessary to allow a little more latitude in such a matter than is given in private life.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : There will not be any more election speeches.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think, if the clause and the proviso are read together, members will find that only false and misleading statements are

prohibited. There is nothing to prohibit proper electioneering speeches.

Hon. M. L. Moss : Whence does Clause 194 come?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think it is new. Clause 205 sets out what persons may be authorised to witness the signatures of claimants for votes. Under the present system any one over a certain age can witness a claim. The clause provides that such witnesses are to be justices of the peace, returning officers, electoral registrars, post and telegraph masters, public officers classified in the administrative, professional, or clerical division of the State or Commonwealth Public Service, classified State school teachers, members of the police force, or any electors of the same province or district.

Hon. W. Kingsmill : I see by the form that the justice of the peace certifies that the claimant has satisfied him that the claimant possesses the necessary qualifications. That is rather strong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: All depends on what will be needed to satisfy the justice. He may demand, for instance, proof that the claimant has lived for the necessary period in the electorate. It is not intended to be so stringent as that; but I think it right to give the attesting witness a certain amount of power. As members will see, numerous classes of people may be appointed as witnesses; and while the officials named may be easily accessible in towns, with the exception of policemen they may not be so easily found in the remoter parts of the State. I have touched on the new points merely. As I stated at the beginning, I do not think it necessary to go into detail.

Hon. M. L. Moss : Clause 189 is rather strong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It prohibits canvassing at the entrance to or within a polling booth on polling day. A similar provision was included in the last Municipalities Act. The other day, at a municipal election, I was surprised when I saw no canvassers round the door of the polling place, and then I recollected that their presence would have been illegal. I think it is wise to prevent

canvassers crowding round the door of the booth, and thrusting cards into the hands of voters. The only other feature to which I will draw members' attention is the new form of ballot paper, to be found in the schedule. It will be noticed that the paper is traversed by broad black lines between the names of the candidates, so that it will be almost impossible for a man to poll an informal vote. This type of ballot paper is taken from the Canadian Act, and will be found on page 69 of the Bill.

Hon. M. L. Moss: The 1904 Act does not provide consecutive numbers for ballot papers. Such numbering is wrong, and will destroy the secrecy of the ballot.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not the intention to destroy the secrecy of the ballot. I will note the point made by the hon. member.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Such numbers are necessary only in case of an inquiry.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think the numbers are necessary so that in certain cases we may be able to trace the votes. The absence of numbers might work greater harm than their presence. I have confined myself principally to mentioning the points of difference between the Bill and the existing Act. As I have said, the Bill has been carefully compiled during the past twelve months by the administrative staff of the Electoral Department. All the systems in force throughout the Commonwealth, and some outside the Commonwealth, have been taken into consideration. I have every confidence that if this Bill is passed in anything like its present form, it will work efficiently. I do not pretend to be sufficiently expert in electoral matters to say definitely whether it will be efficient; but I have sufficient confidence in the officers, and in the Minister who controls this department, to venture the opinion, knowing the time they have devoted to the measure, that the Bill will be a decided improvement on the present Act, and will be found to be a good workable measure.

On motion by the *Hon. M. L. Moss*, debate adjourned.

BILL—LIMITED PARTNERSHIPS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (*Hon. J. D. Connolly*): I had intended to say a few words earlier on this measure, but my time has been fully occupied with a number of other Bills. Speaking generally, this Bill meets with my approval, and I think it would certainly be a convenience if it became law. At the same time, it provides some very startling innovations; and as I think it is the intention of the hon. member (*Mr. Moss*) that it should not become law in a hurry, he is taking a wise course, although a similar Bill has, I understand, passed the House of Commons and is acceptable to commercial men in Britain. At the same time, that measure in its English form may not be altogether applicable to Western Australia. If the hon. member brings it forward simply with the intention of passing it next year, I think he is wise; because it is a Bill that should receive the serious consideration of chambers of commerce throughout the State. The main principle is apparently to apply to private partnerships the limited liability provisions of the Companies Act. But the point is that the guarantees and the safeguards to be found in the Companies Act are, so far as I can perceive, wanting in this Bill. The Companies Act contains certain powers and safeguards which the Bill does not contain. For instance, under the Companies Act a share register has to be kept, accounts have to be published, and the operations of the company are limited by its memorandum of association. The Bill would seem to be to some extent open to abuse. The limited partner may be a man of substance, while the general partner may be a man of no substance at all. This provision should be safely guarded; and in my opinion the Bill goes too far. It provides, if I remember rightly, that as many as twenty persons can form a limited partnership in other than a banking business, and ten in a banking business. When the number of partners reaches twenty, then I think they should be

formed into a limited company, that number being too many for a private partnership.

Hon. M. L. Moss : If they exceed twenty, they must come under the Companies Act.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : I think that number is too large, and a reduction would be a decided improvement. One very good feature of the Bill is that it limits the liability of a sleeping partner. At present there are many small businesses in which men of means would take an interest ; but as soon as they do so they become partners, and are liable for the whole of the debts of the concern. This often deters them from investing in businesses which might eventually become very large. I think we should give every encouragement to moneyed men to buy into small businesses. It often happens that if a man puts a few hundreds of pounds into a business, before many years elapse he finds himself liable for thousands. He is quite willing to risk the few hundreds invested in the first instance ; and the only method of overcoming the difficulty is to form a limited company—a very cumbersome and expensive process for a small concern. The Bill will solve the problem by providing that where a person buys into a business to the extent of say £500, he is liable simply for that sum and no more ; but if during the continuance of the partnership he draws out that sum or any portion of it, he shall be liable for the debts of the firm to the amount of the portion drawn out. Farther, if a limited partner takes any part in the management of the business, he shall be liable for all debts and obligations incurred while he takes part in the management, as if he were a general partner. The point is not quite safeguarded. For example, John Smith may start a business, and a number of persons well known in the town may join that business as limited partners. The mere fact of those residents being known as connected with that business would tend to enable John Smith to obtain practically unlimited credit. The point I wish to emphasise is that better publicity should be given as to who are limited partners in the concern, and ex-

actly what amount of interest they have in it. Publicity is now given as to the number and names of limited partners but that seems to me insufficient. With the exceptions I have mentioned, I agree with the Bill, which will do some amount of good.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—FREMANTLE GRAVING DOCK.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.33 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly.

Friday, 6th December, 1907.

Appropriation Message, Bunbury Harbour Trust Bill	Pa
Leave of Absence	1
Bill: Fremantle Graving Dock, &c. debated	1
Estimates resumed: Works Votes and Items farther discussed throughout the night, progress	1
All-Night Sitting, Estimates	1

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

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Treasurer : Papers relating to the alleged ill-treatment of Aborigines by the Canning Exploration Party.

APPROPRIATION MESSAGE—BUNBURY HARBOUR TRUST BILL.

Message from the Lieutenant Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill