

let the rich man go free. No one would more strongly deprecate such conduct than the hon. member; and in such cases the department very properly began with the man of wealth. He gave the assurance that he would be extremely watchful against, and would much regret, any high-handed or unnecessary action by his officers. At the same time, he would not flinch in carrying out the Act.

Vote put and passed.

*Agricultural Bank, £1,270:*

Item, Allowance to manager for horses and man, and personal expenses when travelling:

MR. GEORGE: How could the bank manager, who travelled a great deal, provide two or more horses and a man for £2 a week?

THE PREMIER: The expenditure for the previous year had only been £84.

MR. GEORGE: But last year the manager practically had to groom his own horse.

MR. A. FORREST: The manager was perfectly satisfied.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: The item had been inserted in error, and a substantial increase had already been provided for. He had pleasure in testifying to the efficiency of this officer, and to the economy with which the department was managed.

Item passed.

MR. ROBSON, referring to "Incidental expenses (including travelling expenses)," said the member for the Murray (Mr. George) should have taken into consideration the amount of this item, £250, when deprecating the small travelling allowance to the bank manager, for the manager was probably the only officer who travelled.

MR. A. FORREST: The hon. member (Mr. George) did not really study the Estimates.

Item passed; other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

This completed the Lands votes.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at nine minutes past 11 o'clock until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 14th November, 1899.

Papers presented—Question: Circuit Courts Act—Roads Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Bills of Sale Bill, third reading—Constitution Acts Amendment Bill, second reading (concluded), in Committee, Division; progress—Electoral Bill, in Committee, reported—Fisheries Bill, first reading—Cottesloe Lighting and Power Bill (private), first reading—Motion: Harbour and Pilot Services, Joint Committee's Recommendations—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

BY THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, Report on working of Government Railways and Tramways, 1898-9. 2, Report (with estimate and plan) of route of proposed Railway from Coolgardie to Norseman. 3, Report (with estimate and plan) of route of proposed Railway from Coolgardie to Bonnie Vale. 4, Report (with estimate and plan) of route of proposed Railway from Menzies to Leonora. 5, Report (with estimate and plan) of route of proposed Railway from Northam to Goomalling. 6, Land Selection for six months ending June, 1899. 7, Cookernup Cemetery Board balance-sheet.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### QUESTION—CIRCUIT COURTS ACT.

HON. A. P. MATHESON asked the Colonial Secretary, what steps has he taken to carry out the promise he gave this House on the 17th August, to introduce a Bill amending the Circuit Courts Act, 1897?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—It is still the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill to amend the Circuit Courts Act, this session.

#### ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by HON. R. G. BURGESS, and read a first time.

#### BILLS OF SALE BILL.

Read a third time, on motion by HON. A. B. KIDSON, and returned to the Legislative Assembly with amendments.

CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT  
BILL.

## SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from 31st October, on motion by the Colonial Secretary for second reading, and on amendment by Hon. A. P. Matheson to postpone second reading for six months.

HON. F. T. CROWDER (South-East): It is my intention to support the second reading of this Bill, in order that we may go into Committee on it. This measure was introduced by the Government at the request of the goldfields people, in order that the goldfields may have more seats in both Houses of Parliament; and I was somewhat surprised at a gentleman representing one of the goldfields constituencies of this colony proposing that the Bill should be read this day six months. I believe there is a feeling in this House, seeing that the goldfields members are against the Bill, that it should be thrown out, as the Bill was ostensibly introduced for the benefit of the goldfields; but I have yet to learn that the members who are supposed to represent the goldfields absolutely represent the people on the goldfields.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: You need not trouble about that.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: If the Bill does anything else, it reduces the term for which Parliament is elected from four years to three, which is a concession that has been asked for over and over again. The Bill also provides that the number of members of the Legislative Assembly shall be increased from 44 to 50, and, as far as the Legislative Council is concerned, from 24 to 30. I have no objection, seeing that the Legislative Assembly has passed this Bill, to the extra representation in another place; but so far as the Legislative Council is concerned, I shall vote, in Committee, against any extra representatives in this House, as I consider the representation in the Council is quite sufficient for the colony; and when we bear in mind that in another place it has already been passed that payment of members is to come into force, an extra number of members will mean an extra drain on the exchequer of the country. In Committee I shall do my level best, if I stand alone in voting on the question, to do away with women's franchise. The Bill proposes to give

women a vote; but I strongly object to that, and shall divide the House on it in Committee. I do not think it is necessary to detain the House further. The Bill is a step in the right direction, except for the extra representation, which I do not think is called for.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON (North): It was my intention at first to oppose the second reading of this Bill; but on more mature consideration I do not feel justified in voting against it, though I am sorry to see that the North has been deprived of two of its members. I suppose we must bow to the inevitable, and be thankful that the representation of the North is not knocked out altogether, as goldfields members would like it to be. If we negatived the motion for the second reading of the Bill, possibly we might get a worse measure next session; therefore I shall support the second reading.

HON. S. J. HAYNES (South-East): So far as I am concerned, I cannot say I am deeply pleased with the Bill, but I shall support the second reading. The Bill does not proceed sufficiently far to meet the demands, but at the same time it minimises to a certain extent the inequalities of the present representation. I am in accord with the previous speaker, inasmuch as I consider there is no necessity for any extra representatives in this House; and I also do not think an increase in another place is desirable. But as the Bill has been adopted there, I do not intend to oppose that provision. The Bill provides, amongst other things, for the inauguration of women's suffrage; and I shall certainly oppose that in Committee, because there has been no public demand for women's suffrage, and I think that where the system has been adopted it has been a signal failure. It will be time enough to adopt extreme legislation of that nature when there is a public demand for it. The women themselves have not demanded it, and I am sure that the majority of the best of them do not require it. Let the matter go before the constituencies, and when the public ask that the suffrage shall be granted to women the House will support what may at that time be considered a very reasonable demand. I have ever been against women's suffrage, and I think I ever shall be, for the

reasons already given. With the objections I have raised, which can be attended to in Committee, I shall support the second reading.

HON. D. K. CONGDON (West): I also intend to support the second reading; and when the Bill goes into Committee I certainly shall not support women's suffrage. As the last speaker said, it has never been demanded by the women of the colony, and the various reasons that so far have been given for granting it do not commend themselves to my mind as being strong enough to justify such extreme legislation. With regard to the representation in the two Houses, we have nothing whatever to say as to what they require in another place.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: We have.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: I do not think we have. If they say, "We want it," I do not see that we can well say that they do not. If they want that representation, let them have it.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: We do not give them everything they ask for.

HON. D. K. CONGDON: So far as I am concerned, I shall not oppose in Committee the proposal to give that additional representation in the other House; but so far as this House is concerned, I do not think we want additional representation, and if the subject is brought forward I shall certainly vote against that additional representation in the Council.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill. I recognise there has been a great deal of care and thought bestowed upon it, and also how difficult it will be to frame any measure which will give general satisfaction. I think it would be almost an impossibility to do that, for if it would give general satisfaction on the goldfields, it certainly would not satisfy other parts of the colony. I think we had a very good instance of that the other day. The goldfields representatives do not always consider the people living in other parts, and when the Immigration Restriction Bill was before the Assembly we found members representing the goldfields constituencies even voting against allowing people in the northern parts of the colony a cook. The only possible chance people in the northern parts of the colony have of obtaining a cook is

by getting Chinese labour, and the members to whom I refer opposed that, although it could not in any way affect the other parts of the colony. Looking at this fact, we should be in a poor position if we were to put the power altogether in the hands of that portion of the community. I approve of the system adopted of giving representation to distant and important parts of the colony, though perhaps those portions may contain but a small population. I am convinced it is the proper line to go upon, and that if a Bill were brought into this House on a population basis, it would not work with satisfaction to the community or to the best interests of the colony. As to the goldfields, I think that at one township a short time ago the population was estimated at about 10,000, whereas a short time afterwards it was 3,000.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Fifteen hundred.

HON. E. McLARTY: After the time I refer to the population fell to about 1,700, and possibly to-day it is less than 1,000. So I cannot see how a Bill can be framed to meet these contingencies, where population goes up and down every week. But as I said before, I approve of the action taken by the Government in giving representation to different parts of the colony that come into prominence, and which I think should not be overlooked.

Amendment (to postpone second reading for six months) put and negatived.

Question (second reading) put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interpretation:

HON. S. J. HAYNES moved that the word "either," in the last line of the last paragraph, be struck out, and "the male" be inserted in lieu thereof. The question of women's suffrage had not been before the people at all, and in those colonies where women's suffrage had been tried it had, he believed, been disastrous, in the opinion of most people.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Hon. members would not, he hoped, expunge the word "either" from the clause. A resolution in favour of women's suffrage was recently passed by the House, though not by a large majority, and he

trusted the House would not go back upon that resolution. Personally he was strongly in favour of giving the franchise to our fellow citizens of the female sex. As he said before, he believed they were quite as capable as the men of exercising the vote intelligently and in the best interests of the colony; and, taking them as a whole, it would be safe to assert they would exercise the privilege, if granted to them, in a way we should be proud of afterwards. Mr. Haynes said the system had not acted well where it had been introduced; but information he and other members had received went to show that really the franchise had been exercised by women most beneficially and loyally in the interests of the countries to which they belonged. There was no intention to go back from the principle elsewhere; and the probability was that other countries would, in the near or remote future, follow in the footsteps of those which had adopted female suffrage.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: The Legislative Council of Victoria refused to pass it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Legislative Council was a court of last resort, in these cases. He believed the Legislative Council of Victoria did refuse to pass women's suffrage on one occasion, but by a small majority. At any rate, this House had passed a resolution in favour of that principle. He believed it would be to the best interests of the colony to grant women the franchise, and that it would be to the interests of conservatism, which the Legislative Council were always supposed to support. After a very careful and deliberate consideration of the question in all its bearings, and after having started with some doubts as to whether it was advisable in the interests of the sex itself to grant women the franchise, he was strongly in favour of adopting this step. He was at an election the other day in a suburb of Perth, at which a lady exercised her vote for the first time. He believed she went with a good deal of trepidation, but having returned she said, "It is not such a very terrible thing after all," and she was quite pleased she had the privilege and opportunity of exercising her vote.

HON. F. T. CROWDER, in seconding the amendment, hoped hon. members who voted in favour of women's franchise on

a previous occasion would reconsider their decision. Since the vote was taken previously, hon. members had had a chance of listening to opinions outside the House. The question of women's franchise had never been before the people in this colony; and it was undesirable, when there would be a general election in a few months, to decide on this question without submitting it to the people. Payment of members had been before the people, and at the last election a majority of members were returned in favour of payment of members; yet, when that matter was brought up in the Assembly, the Premier would not agree to payment of members until the matter had again gone to the people. Still the question of women's franchise, which had never been before the people, was supported by the Premier. Women's franchise was not in vogue in Great Britain, and the Government of this country prided themselves that they followed in the steps of Great Britain.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Only in parliamentary elections it was not in vogue.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The women of the colony were absolutely against the franchise: they did not require it. His (Mr. Crowder's) constituents did not want the vote, and the women in most of the other constituencies were of the same opinion. If the franchise was granted to women, it meant that in a well-conducted household the man would have so many more votes, in proportion to the number of women over twenty-one years of age in the house.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It meant five votes to him.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Why should we give Mr. Kidson five votes, when other members would only have one vote?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Quite unfair.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Until the people had a chance of voting on this question, the Committee should not pass the clause. Women should not be forced to do that which they did not require to do.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: There was no compulsion.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Women would be just as willing to attend a police court as to go to a polling booth. It was all very well for the Colonial Secretary to instance the case of a muni-

cial election; he supposed the voting was at Claremont, a quiet little suburb where the people never got excited. In South Australia, in the early years of women's franchise, the working men forced the females to the poll, and the consequence was that labour members were returned. Now, to-day, the middle classes were trying to win back the seats which they lost, but it was too late.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Why was it too late?

HON. T. F. CROWDER: Because the labouring classes had the upper hand. He (Mr. Crowder) knew why the franchise was brought forward in another place.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Tell us.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: It was not brought forward because the female population were demanding the franchise, but for political purposes; for political purposes might be good in some instances, but in regard to female franchise we should wait until the question had been before the people at a general election.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Political purposes had done a good thing:

HON. H. LUKIN: To be consistent he would support the amendment. He regretted that this subject, which had been carried by a fair vote a short time ago, had been brought up again by a kind of side wind; although we must not forget the introduction of women's suffrage was by a kind of side wind; it was treated as a matter of expediency.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: And justice.

HON. H. LUKIN: There was no demand for the franchise by the women, but it was brought forward as a matter of expediency because it was thought that it was wanted. We should remember that female franchise had only been in force in the other colonies for a few years, not long enough to tell how it would affect the national life. In America, the State of Wyoming, and one or two of the other States adopted female franchise years ago, but the other States of America, where there were 'cute men and women, never adopted the system. Women's franchise did not spread to the other States. The American people had not been enamoured with the system, which had stopped in one or two of the States where it had been introduced.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It had never been repealed in those States.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: If the system had been introduced in other States, elections might have been secured.

HON. H. LUKIN: "Might?" That was as far as the hon. member could go.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes	...	...	7
Noes	...	...	10

Majority against	...	3
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AYES.	NOES.
Hon. D. K. Congdon	Hon. H. Briggs
Hon. F. T. Crowder	Hon. R. G. Burges
Hon. H. Lukin	Hon. C. E. Dempster
Hon. D. McKay	Hon. A. B. Kidson
Hon. J. E. Richardson	Hon. W. T. Loton
Hon. H. J. Saunders	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. S. J. Haynes	Hon. G. Randell
(Teller).	Hon. W. Spencer
	Hon. F. M. Stone
	Hon. J. W. Hackett
	(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Legislative Council to consist of thirty members:

HON. F. M. STONE moved that in line 1 the word "thirty" be stricken out and "twenty-four" inserted in lieu thereof. That would make the number of members as at present. Additional members were not required in the Council. There were plenty of members who represented, to his mind, the whole colony; and how the additional six members would further represent the interests of the colony in any way he could not see. Clause 6, which contained the provinces, would have to be altered later on if the amendment were carried. The two new provinces were the Metropolitan-Suburban and the Southern, thus giving one new province to the coast and one to the goldfields, and making the power equal as at present. The proposed new Southern Province would have to merge into the North-East Province again, and the Metropolitan-Suburban Province would go back partly into the East Province and partly into the Metropolitan.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: As a representative of the East Province, he would rather see more representation, than keep the provinces as under the existing Act. The East Province at present took in the suburban settlements on the east side of Perth, one of the polling places being Victoria Park; and

he did not see how anyone who studied the interests of the agricultural districts could say that was satisfactory. Although opposed to an increase of six members, he thought we might fairly give the goldfields an increase of three. As the colony was progressing, there might be an increase of six if we had a proper place for them to sit in; but what about this miserable building?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: It was good enough.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: It was not good enough. If there was to be any addition, there must be a better place to sit in. He would like to have heard Mr. Stone with reference to these provinces. He would sooner see 30 members than have the provinces left as at present. It would be useless for anyone to try to represent a province, unless he fell in with the views of the electors in the thickly-populated places, because the electors in those places would be too numerous for others in the country districts to take a prominent part in the elections. The Eastern Province, under the present Act, extended to Southern Cross in the East, to Victoria Plains in the North, to the Moore River, Gingin, the Swan, East Perth, Victoria Park, South Perth, Canning Mills, Midland Junction, Guildford, and all the mills up the Eastern Railway. How was it likely that country districts within the province would be represented at all in a province so situated? Members for the North, South-West, and South-East provinces should join together in these matters, and not only consider whether there should be three or six more members of the Council, but see that each industry was represented. If we let the matter rest as at present and did not sever those districts, it would be a perfect farce for the country districts, or at any rate for the East Province, to try to be represented. One member had said we had to accept the inevitable; but he (Mr. Burgess) did not see why we should accept everything without a murmur. We ought to look ahead in these matters, and see that each industry was represented properly, even if it cost a little more; therefore it would be far better to give the goldfields an increase of three members, and divide the other provinces so that each industry should be properly

represented. He could not support the amendment of Mr. Stone, unless that gentleman gave a fuller explanation than he had done at present. How were the provinces going to be divided?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That could be done in Committee.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Members did not know what would be done afterwards, if the amendment were passed.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The amendment would have his support, but he sympathised with Mr. Burgess, and agreed it was necessary, so far as the Eastern Province was concerned, to alter the boundaries. He thought every member would support him in the contention that East Perth, Guildford, and other populous places should be put into other constituencies, and that the Eastern Province should be an agricultural and viticultural province. It was not desirable to have different portions of an electorate clashing. He could not see the necessity for an increase of members of the Legislative Council. It was all very well to say the goldfields deserved another three representatives; still, no member was here to represent any particular part of the colony, but the colony as a whole, and he thought the goldfields, the same as any other part of the colony, would, at all times, receive justice from the majority of the Council.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The amendment was one which he could not support. As to the goldfields province, it was an extremely difficult one to canvass, there being a large number of electors in the various centres.

HON. F. M. STONE: What about his (the North) province?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The hon. member's province was all very well: it was extremely sparsely populated, and it was sufficient for a member to go to the coast in order to interview an absolute majority of his electors. But in the goldfields province it was quite a different thing, for a member or a candidate had to start at Esperance, and visit Norseman, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Kanowna, Bulong, and go right away up to Menzies, to Mount Margaret and Leonora, and to several other districts. It was a physical impossibility for any candidate to canvass all those districts and populated centres. The electors of the particular goldfields

in the province he represented amounted to almost as many as there were in Fremantle and Perth, and on that account alone they were entitled to increased representation.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Canvassing was discouraged, nowadays.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It might be, but electors expected candidates to express their opinions personally in every inhabited centre. Mr. Hackett had a convenient constituency, which had already, eight or ten months before the election, framed a requisition asking him to stand. Unfortunately the electors on the goldfields were more *exigeant*, expecting a candidate to come and see them and express his opinions. The Metropolitan-Suburban Province could also have its boundaries so adjusted as to suit the views of Mr. Burges and other members. He had no objection to the reduction of the number of metropolitan and suburban members, in order to meet the views of other members of the House; but he strongly objected to sweep away the three who would otherwise represent the proposed South Province. He, therefore, moved as an amendment on Mr. Stone's amendment, that the number of members of the Council be twenty-seven. That would provide three additional members for the proposed South Province.

HON. A. B. KIDSON supported the amendment by Mr. Stone (24 members), because there was absolutely no need whatever for further representation in the Council. The Bill provided three additional members to represent the goldfields, and three members for the Metropolitan-Suburban Province to counteract the three additional members for the goldfields; therefore we should be in the same position as we were now.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Why to "counteract"?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That, he did not know; but it was to counteract them, as we found they required counteracting. He had never known the House refuse any progressive legislation, whether for the goldfields or any other part of the colony, therefore he did not think the goldfields could complain of the representation in the Council. His principal reason for supporting the amendment was that the additional representation was not required.

HON. H. LUKIN, in supporting Mr. Stone's amendment, said he understood that in the event of the number of members being reduced to 24, the boundaries of the East Province would be altered.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Mr. Stone did not say so.

HON. H. LUKIN: That was what he (Mr. Lukin) understood. It was not right to have conflicting interests in one electorate, but that was so in the East Province which was supposed to represent purely agricultural and horticultural interests. At the present time the East Province ran into the suburbs of the metropolis and also included Helena Vale and Mundaring Weir, the interests of which places had nothing in common with the agricultural interests of the province. In the recent election which he contested, he found the two interests entirely conflicting, and it would be more so as time went on. The East Province should be cut off somewhere above Guildford, and then the province would be large enough. At present the East province ran from Pingelly to Victoria Plains, including Moora and Dandaragan. The province should not take in any portion of the metropolis; but there were something like 160 or 170 voters between St. George's Terrace and the railway station in the East Province. Provided the boundaries of the East Province were altered, he would support Mr. Stone's amendment. There was no real call for an additional number of members for the Council. If he could see any reason for an increase of members he would support the clause. The Council adequately represented the colony at the present time, and we should not go ahead of the requirements.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER agreed with Mr. Stone's amendment. Twenty-four members ought to be quite sufficient for the Legislative Council. If the number of members were increased it would necessitate the expenditure of a large amount of money in increasing the accommodation of the Chamber, but there was no necessity to increase the number of members. The whole colony was fairly represented by the present Council, and members acted, and endeavoured to act in a disinterested way, and were not unmindful of every portion of the colony,

therefore it was not desirable to make any alteration.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Did the hon. member know Esperance?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Yes. The boundaries of the East Province should be altered. The agricultural portion of the colony should not be associated with Mundaring. It would have been advisable if some mention had been made of Esperance in the provinces; that town had been entirely ignored.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It was included in the South Province.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Esperance had been overlooked.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It was already part of the Dundas electoral district.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Esperance was a considerable township, and should be considered. He supported the amendment of Mr. Stone, believing that 24 members were sufficient to represent the interests of the colony.

HON. F. M. STONE: If his amendment were carried, he would propose to postpone Clause 6, to enable him to alter the boundaries of the provinces to meet the reduction. He had not mentioned how he proposed to alter the boundaries. The East Province as it stood included Beverley, the Canning, the Moore, Northam, the Swan, Toodyay and York electoral districts. As the province included the Canning, it took in South Perth. The Bill provided that, for representation in the Assembly, South Perth was to be a separate electoral district, that the Canning was to be in the new electoral district of Cockburn Sound, and that the electorate of Guildford was to take in Midland Junction. The Swan was also to be a separate electoral district. This being so, he suggested that the East Province should stand as it appeared in the Bill, leaving out Guildford, Midland Junction, and South Perth, and taking in the Swan, which was an agricultural district. The East Province as defined in the Bill did away with the objection which the hon. member (Mr. Burges) had raised.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: How did the hon. member propose to divide the other electorates?

HON. F. M. STONE: South Perth and Guildford could be put into the Metropolitan Province, and Cockburn Sound

could go into the West Province; but this matter could be threshed out subsequently. In regard to Mr. Matheson's objection, the hon. member had complained that he had such a large district to canvass; yet the hon. member supported the Commonwealth Bill, and the electorate for the Commonwealth comprised the whole of the colony! The hon. member wanted three additional members for the goldfields, but would leave the metropolis as it was at present. The whole thing was what we should have expected from the hon. member. The hon. member was going dead for the goldfields, and the rest of the colony could go.

Amendment (Mr. Matheson's) put and negatived.

Amendment (Mr. Stone's) put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 6—Colony divided into ten electoral provinces, each returning three members:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that in consequence of the vote just taken, consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed, and the clause postponed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Members to retire periodically:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed, and the clause postponed.

Clauses 9 and 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—President of Council to hold office in certain cases until meeting of Parliament:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that there be inserted at the end of the clause the words: "but nothing in this section shall enable a President hereby continued in office to preside at any meeting of the said Council." These words were inadvertently left out. If members would refer to the parallel clause relating to the Speaker, they would find that similar words there appeared.

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

Clause 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Qualification of electors:

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The qualification of electors remained the same as



under the old Act. We had been led to suppose that this was a reform Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: So it was. The qualification was not the same.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The qualification was the same, but a provision had been inserted relative to the removal of the term limit. That in itself was practically nothing. An enormous number of electors in Western Australia had been led to suppose that for the Legislative Assembly we should have manhood suffrage, and that for the Legislative Council the qualification would be reduced. He proposed to deal later on with the Legislative Assembly. He moved that in line 1, Sub-clause 1, the words "one hundred" be struck out with a view of inserting "fifty" in lieu thereof. The Bill would be an absolute farce without such amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member would not be able to convince the House it was desirable to lower the qualification of electors for the Legislative Council. It was highly desirable in the interests of the colony that the members of the Council should be elected on a suffrage different from that on which members of the Assembly were elected.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: So it would be.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: One of the great blots of the Federal Bill was that the qualification was the same for both Houses of Parliament. A qualification consisting of the possession of a freehold estate of the value of £100 could not be considered extreme in the case of a colony like this.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 14 and 15—agreed to.

Clause 16—Legislative Assembly to consist of fifty members:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that the word "fifty" be struck out and "forty-eight" inserted in lieu thereof, forty-eight being the number in the Bill as originally placed before the Assembly. To effect this change, he proposed to move later on to strike out of Clause 17 the words "East Kimberley" and "West Kimberley," and to insert "Kimberley." He would also propose to strike out "Greenough," with a view of merging the Greenough district with the Irwin

district. In the Greenough district there were 178 on the roll, and in the Irwin district only 106, these together amounting to 284, which was almost the minimum number of voters entitled to one member in the other place. It was not necessary to go through all the Parliamentary districts which had a very low number of electors, but he might quote in evidence two or three of the lowest to justify his view that 284 was a reasonable number of voters to have only one representative. The member for Beverley had only 295 voters; Pilbarra, 215; Sussex, 361; and Toodyay, a most important place, 416. Those constituencies were four of the lowest on the list.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Why did not the hon. member take the populations instead of the electors?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: In the first place, he had no means of telling the population; and in the second place, if persons entitled to vote did not take the trouble to get their names on the electoral list, they hardly deserved consideration. The great trouble throughout the colony was that in a large number of cases there were men who had never taken the trouble to get on the list. The old electorate of Coolgardie had been split up into three electorates and had a voting list of 5,674 electors.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Half of them were in the Eastern colonies.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: That was a view from which he differed.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Such was the supposition up there.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: That had never been heard by him. He had returns from the mayors of different townships with which he would not trouble the House, but the municipal returns bore out very much the deductions one would draw from the electoral list. In the case of East and West Kimberley, the representation of the two constituencies combined would be one member for 235 voters. East Kimberley had 90 voters, and very few were resident in the electorate. They exercised the function of voting by the pernicious practice of voting by proxy.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 17 to 22, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 23—Qualification of electors:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that Sub-clauses 2, 3, 4, and 5, and Sub-clauses 6 and 7 of the proviso, also proviso number 2, be struck out. He did not intend to take up the time of the Committee, recognising the feeling of hon. members was not with him. There was no true desire on the part of members of the House to facilitate the introduction of a real Reform Bill, such as the country expected.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The country would not get it from the hon. member. He was the last man in the world—a conservative of conservatives.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The hon. member had a very funny way of interpreting facts. His (Mr. Matheson's) actions were sufficient evidence that he could not be criticised in the smallest sense as a conservative of conservatives; but we recognised Mr. Hackett's way of looking at these matters. It was a false kind of criticism to say the opinions a man expressed were not real. He moved to strike out the sub-clauses he had mentioned, with a view to the introduction of manhood suffrage for another place.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause put and passed.

Clauses 24 to 27, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 28—Disqualification for membership of either House:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that in Sub-clause 5 the words "be an undischarged" be struck out, and "becomes a" inserted in lieu thereof.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: How many members would there be left in the House?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: These matters should be treated becomingly, and not made the subject of ribald mirth. It was exceedingly undesirable that when a member of Parliament became bankrupt, he should be able to take his seat if he obtained his discharge before Parliament next met. No person who became bankrupt should be qualified to retain his seat in the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly. The act of bankruptcy ought to vacate the seat. He felt strongly on the subject, and if members thought his amendment did not arrive at what he desired to carry out, he would withdraw the amendment in favour of some other proposal which would convey what he wished.

HON. D. MCKAY: Did the hon. member mean that a bankrupt should be disqualified for all time?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The act of bankruptcy should render the seat vacant. If a man became bankrupt, and obtained a discharge before the meeting of Parliament at the present time, he retained his seat.

HON. H. LUKIN: A time should be named.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: If a man became bankrupt, his seat should thereby become vacant, and as soon as he obtained his discharge he could seek election.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: In what position would a man be who had been made bankrupt through spite, and the Court upset the bankruptcy the next day?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: He would have to vacate his seat and go to his constituents.

HON. F. M. STONE: There was something in what the hon. member had advanced. We knew of cases in which members had become bankrupt, had obtained their discharge before Parliament sat, and taken their seat in the House. If Parliament were sitting and a member became bankrupt, the course was for the House to declare the seat vacant on the ground that the person had become disqualified. He would like the clause postponed to consider this matter, because if the hon. member read further on it said "or a debtor against whom a receiving order in bankruptcy has been made, or whose affairs are in course of liquidation or arrangement." He would like to see how we could arrive at what was desired, as he was with the hon. member in his argument. If a member became bankrupt, his seat should become vacant, and he should remain disqualified until he obtained his discharge. Often, when a man applied for a discharge, the judge as a punishment suspended the certificate for three years; and under the clause, being an undischarged bankrupt, that person would be prevented from becoming a member of Parliament for three years. He moved that the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed, and clause postponed.

Clauses 29 to 33, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 34—Office-holder taking the oath as member thereby to vacate his office:

HON. A. P. MATHESON: This clause provided that if any person held an office of profit under the Crown, and was elected a member of the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly, by so doing he vacated his office of profit, and there was a provision excepting Ministers of the Crown. As the clause stood, it would be impossible for a member of the Federal Parliament, or of the Federal Ministry, to be a member of the Western Australian Ministry. No provision had been made in the proviso that they could be elected members of the local legislature if they were members of the federal legislature.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: There was nothing to forbid it.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Yes; the first part of the clause said "If any person, while holding an office of profit under the Crown."

HON. J. W. HACKETT: "Under the Crown," but this was not an office of profit under the Crown.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: A Minister of the Crown, he took it, held an office of profit.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member said "member of Parliament."

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Yes; perhaps he went too far. At any rate, a Minister held an office of profit under the Crown. He was not clear as to a member of the Federal Parliament holding an office of profit under the Crown.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was not an office of profit.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: A Minister would hold an office of profit, and the effect of the clause as it stood would be to debar the Premier of this colony from being a member of the Federal Ministry.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: He could not be both.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: As far as one could see, there was no reason why the same person should not be both. He moved that the words "nor to Federal Ministers of State" be added. He had proposed to add "members of the Federal Parliament," but Mr. Hackett said it was not necessary, and that hon. member might be right.

HON. F. M. STONE: There was some doubt whether a member of the Federal

Parliament would not be the holder of an office of profit. He would be paid by the Crown.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The question had been raised, and it had been settled that a member of the Federal Parliament would not be the holder of an office of profit under the Crown. A member was supposed to be paid by his constituents.

HON. F. M. STONE: A member would be paid by the Crown, and the money would be voted every year, and paid out of the taxes. He would like to know the decision Mr. Hackett referred to. There might be such provision in an Act relating to payment of members; but, speaking from recollection, that provision was not in the Commonwealth Bill, where it should be. He would ask Mr. Matheson to add those words relating to members of the Federal Parliament.

HON. A. P. MATHESON, by leave, withdrew his amendment, and moved that the following be inserted at the end of the clause, "or to membership of the Federal Parliament or to Federal Ministers of State."

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The amendment should not be passed. One doubted whether the amendment was necessary as regarded payment of members, for, so far as he was aware, it had been held that a member of the Federal Parliament would not hold an office of profit under the Crown. But the question was raised whether it was advisable to permit Ministers to, so to speak, be in two places at once; and the central Government of the Commonwealth being more than 2,000 miles from here, was it right for a member to sit in both places and do the work badly in each of them? So with regard to members of Parliament. The reason he urged this point was not that he was for or against the proposal, but it ought not to be sprung upon the House by a side-wind.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Notice had been given by him that he would move amendments.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Such an amendment ought not to be inserted at the last moment in a Bill that had been discussed for weeks in another place. The question whether it was advisable in the interests of federation for a Minister of a State to also hold office in the Government of the Commonwealth occupied the

attention of the Convention for days. Let the question be raised definitely, when the proper time came.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It would be necessary to amend the Constitution.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: There was a good deal to be said on both sides. The original Convention of 1891 was entirely against allowing persons to be members of a State Parliament and also members of the Federal Parliament. It was afterwards pointed out that in certain cases there might be a difficulty in finding a sufficient number of members both for the State Parliament and the Federal Parliament; but the motion was carried by only a small majority. The question was so weighty that it required to be considered on its own merits and in a separate Bill, and the occasion would be when the subject of federation came before us.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The utterances of Mr. Hackett met with his entire approval. The addition of the words proposed would be mischievous. The question had been raised as to South Australia, but we were in quite a different position. If the question had to be raised, it should be raised outside this Bill. We should not commit ourselves to a course that might be fraught with great difficulties and danger. Personally, he thought no man should hold the office of Minister here and also that of a Minister in the Federal Government, and he believed such would be the general feeling of the community.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It was all very well for Mr. Hackett to say, "Leave the matter to be considered later on." We were now discussing the Constitution Bill, and that Bill when approved would have to be referred to England. There would be a great delay before we could obtain the assent of the Crown, and the same thing would happen if we wanted to amend the Bill at a later date. He would strongly urge that to-day was the proper time to consider the question. The suggestion for adjournment was on a par with suggestions that frequently fell from Mr. Hackett and other members. Whenever any matter came up which raised any question upon which two or three members were not posted, and had not had time to consult their chief, we were told to adjourn the subject,

so that there might be a little conference, and members might have a little indication given them of the views of the commander-in-chief.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: When was the hon. member told that, by him?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: No statement had been made that he was told so by the hon. member.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Such statement had been made by the hon. member.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: What he said was that the hon. member frequently advocated postponement and adjournment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Let Mr. Matheson give instances.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: There were too many for him to take up the time of the House.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member could not name one.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Not one off-hand, but what he asserted was known to every member of the House.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The assertion was most audacious.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: What he had stated was a matter of notoriety, so it was not necessary to quote any particular case.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was an invention by the hon. member.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: This was a serious question, and he failed to see why the discussion of a serious question should, as usual, be burked.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

At 6.30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Clauses 35 to 49, inclusive—agreed to.

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

#### ELECTORAL BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 12, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 13—Keeping of forms:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that after the word "registrars," line 1, the words "and assistant registrars" be inserted. He intended to move later, the insertion of two new clauses to stand as 12 and 13. As the Bill stood, there was

provision for only one electoral registrar in each parliamentary district; but experience had shown this was insufficient, and entailed hardship on a number of people who desired to get on the roll. Application had been made from time to time for the Government to appoint assistant registrars, and the Government in the past had done so in many cases; but recently a suggestion had been made that these assistant registrars had been improperly appointed, and the appointments were, he believed (speaking subject to correction) cancelled. No provision was made in the Bill for the appointment of assistant registrars. This Bill was copied almost entirely from the South Australian Act, with certain important omissions. The proposed new Clause 13 would read thus:

Postmasters at any place in which no registrar is appointed shall, by virtue of their office and without any appointment, be assistant registrars, and shall exercise, subject to the control of the registrar, the powers of the registrar.

That was copied almost *verbatim* from the South Australian Act. The postmasters had been found in practice to be the best qualified to judge of the right of any individual to be registered, they being thoroughly posted as to the movements of electors. He understood that the system of appointing postmasters worked well in South Australia.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Postmistresses too?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It was sufficient to deal with postmasters, at present.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The proposal of the hon. member was in advance of the circumstances of the colony. The arrangements in South Australia were totally different from those here. For instance, at East Torrens there were 11 subdivisions of the district, and each one of these had to a certain extent a registrar. In this colony there was no necessity to appoint assistant registrars and give them all the powers of a registrar. As to post offices, in a large number of cases postmistresses were employed here, and those in charge of post offices were frequently shifting from one place to another. This matter had been carefully considered with respect to the circumstances of

Western Australia, and in his opinion this Bill afforded every reasonable facility for persons to get on the roll of the district or province. He therefore opposed the amendment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The real question was whether the South Australian system would work into ours, and he was afraid it would not, the South Australian system being wholly different from ours. As the Colonial Secretary pointed out, in South Australia they subdivided their districts into a number of sections, and each section was complete in itself. A person in one section could not vote in another section, and it was necessary for a registrar or assistant registrar to be appointed in each section. If we subdivided the districts among registrars and assistant registrars, we should have half-a-dozen registers, and no one would know where his name was, or whether he was on the roll or not.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The matter seemed to be misunderstood, because, as a matter of fact, assistant registrars had been appointed, and for some considerable time had been at work. They sent in their returns to the registrar, and those returns were entered up by the registrar. It was only recently that the appointment of those assistant registrars was cancelled. Postmasters were the most suitable to exercise the functions of assistant registrars, and where there was a postmaster it was hardly fair to ask a man to travel a considerable distance.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Under this Bill a person could forward his claim.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 14 to 28, inclusive—agreed to. Clause 29—Inspecting of original rolls:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that the words "at least two days in every week" be struck out, and "every week day" inserted in lieu thereof. A person ought to have an opportunity of inspecting the rolls every week day during the ordinary business hours.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It would be necessary to attend to that and nothing else, if that principle were adopted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the amendment were carried into effect, it would largely increase the cost of administering the measure. Supposing a

postmaster were appointed, his whole time might be occupied, and he might not be able to discharge his other duties. Two days a week seemed a liberal and fair provision for persons to inspect the roll, and they ought to avail themselves of those days.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And perhaps there might be half-a-dozen names dealt with in the week.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amendment was entirely unnecessary.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The amendment would not entail all this unnecessary work on a registrar, who had the rolls lying in his office in a convenient place, and any person who wished to inspect them could ask for them. It did not mean that the registrar would have to hold the rolls whilst a person inspected them. In Perth a man could go into the registrar's office and ask for the roll, and it was shown to him. The registrar need not attend upon the person, only to hand him the roll.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 30 to 36, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 37—Applications for transfer:

HON. A. P. MATHESON: This clause was an improvement on the existing Act, but it provided the applicant for a transfer certificate or for a transfer from one district to another must have resided one month in the district for which he applied to be enrolled, which was an unnecessary stipulation. The clause to a large extent was copied from the South Australian Act, but the South Australian Act provided that a man who was moving from one district to another went to the registrar and obtained a certificate that he was on the roll of the district he was leaving. The man took the certificate to the registrar of the district to which he proposed to remove, and asked the registrar to insert his name on the roll, which was accordingly done. There were limitations, such as in this Bill, preventing a man transferring a certain number of days before an election. In other respects a man had a right to go at any time and get his name transferred. The clause disfranchised a voter for a month. He moved that after "made" in line 5 the words "until the applicant has resided for one month in the district for

which he applies to be enrolled, nor at any time" be struck out. If that amendment was carried he would then move to strike out the last three lines of the clause: "and shall not be complied with until the registrar is satisfied that the applicant is registered on the roll from which he desires to be transferred." He would also have to amend Schedule 8 accordingly.

HON. D. MCKAY: A man could vote in 12 electoral districts in 12 months.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: If he moved 12 times. The man was entitled to vote already, and what did it matter in which district he voted. If his business compelled him to move, he could not vote in two districts.

HON. D. MCKAY: He would be a peddling voter.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: He would be only exercising his one vote which he was entitled to exercise.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The real thing the Committee had to guard against under the rapid change of voters, was corruption. It was throwing undue weight in the hands of capital. It would be a simple thing to transport several hundred voters a month before an election. Mr. McKay's interjection hit the thing off—a man would be a peddling voter. The Committee should try and guard against electors being shifted about from one electorate to another.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 38 to 46 inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 47—Revision Courts:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved to add at the end of the clause "and the time for holding all such Courts shall be the hour of 7 p.m." He could not do better than give an example of what happened at a Revision Court in Perth not long ago. Several hundred names were objected to, and a large number of claimants attended at 10 o'clock on the morning of the day fixed in the notice. They were chiefly working men, and they were informed that their cases would be taken in alphabetical order. The Court sat two or three days. His (Mr. Matheson's) name was objected to, and he believed the greater proportion of the men whose names were objected to were entitled to be on the roll; but these men were unable to establish their claim

because they were unable, day after day, to sacrifice a day's wages. That was the difficulty which occurred in South Australia, and had to be dealt with. Most ample powers were given to object to a voter's name being placed on the roll, and when a man attended to substantiate his claim he might have to dance attendance to the Court for two or three days; if he could not do that, then he became disfranchised. If members submitted to that sort of thing, and refused to accept his amendment, the public would be able to judge of their action. There was ample opportunity afforded by the clause to any person wishing to prevent working men getting on the roll.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Court might be held at 7 o'clock under the Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was undesirable to add the words to the clause. In trying to accommodate one particular class, others would be inconvenienced. It might be inconvenient for the hon. member to attend a court at 7 o'clock, as probably that was his dinner hour. As Mr. Hackett had observed, the Court could sit now till 7 or 8, or even 9 o'clock at night.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It never would unless it were made compulsory.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Because South Australia had gone so far, that was no reason why we should follow the example. There was no necessity why a Court should sit at 7 o'clock and not during the daytime.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 48 to 101, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 102—Council electors to vote in their divisions:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the words "elector shall vote at any election" be struck out, and that "elector's vote at any election shall be received" be inserted in lieu thereof. As the clause stood, there might be two interpretations, and the amendment would make quite clear what was intended. As amended, the clause would read: "No Council elector's vote at any election shall be received except in the division for which he is registered to vote."

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

Clauses 103 to 163, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 164—For the holding of first elections, Governor in Council may, by *Gazette* notice, after this Act:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that in line 3 the words "in Council" be struck out.

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

Clause 165—agreed to.

New Clause:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that the following be added, to stand as Clause 12:

Every registrar shall reside within his district, or shall have an office therein, which shall be open for the transaction of electoral business from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on week days, with the exception of Saturday, when it shall be open from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

There was no provision in the Bill for a registrar residing within his district or for keeping his office open, and it was advisable that provision be made for both purposes. The hours which the office should be kept open he suggested should be 10 a.m. till 4 p.m. on week days, and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday. He had intentionally suggested the late hour on Saturday because it was convenient for people who were employed during a greater portion of the day to attend at the registrar's office to register their votes. The clause was copied in a great measure from the South Australian Act, but not wholly. He did not think it unreasonable to suggest that the registrar should reside in his district and keep his office open on week days.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Perth registrar could not live at Claremont.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: He should live in Perth.

HON. D. MCKAY: The hon. member meant during office hours.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: He should be a resident.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: At his office?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The registrar should have an office in his district, and it should be kept open.

HON. E. McLARTY: In some of the small electorates of the colony electoral registrars only received £20 a year; and surely hon. members could not expect, for such a small salary, that an electoral registrar should keep his office open every

day of the week; he failed to see the necessity for a registrar's office being kept open every day; one day a week would meet all the requirements. If the amendment were carried it would mean a large additional cost to the country, because registrars would have to be paid a salary which would enable them to attend the office every day. He agreed that some amendment of the law was required. He knew of one registrar who received £20 a year, but it was difficult to find him within fifteen or twenty miles of the central part of the district on any day of the week; he was very seldom to be seen.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: He could be communicated with by letter.

HON. E. McLARTY: There should be an office and it should be opened once or twice a week.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: The Magistrate's clerk could act.

HON. E. McLARTY: The provision in the Bill that the office should be open two days a week was satisfactory.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: How many days a week should the registrar's office be open at Wyndham?

HON. E. McLARTY: Once a month would do for that electorate, and the same could be said of many other districts in the colony. People in the country were not running to be put on the roll every day. If a man found his name was not on the roll he could attend on Saturday or any day when he knew the registrar would be in attendance. A time should be stated when the registrar would be at his office.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The principle embodied in the amendment had already been voted on, but there was no necessity for the amendment. The Bill would be carried out in a proper manner, and if the amendment were carried it would entail great expense. In a large district everyone could not have a registrar living next door. If a person wished to exercise the franchise, he should make a little sacrifice. To keep an office open for a whole week in some parts of the colony would be ridiculous. The chief registrar kept his office open every day of the week, and the convenience of the public was met when near election times by having an office in various parts of the town and keeping open till 10 o'clock at night.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: There was no provision whatever that the office should be in the district.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The registrar could not exercise his functions outside his district.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Mr. McLarty had pointed out that in one case no one knew where the electoral registrar was to be found.

Motion put and negatived.

New Clause:

HON. A. P. MATHESON said he had further amendments to suggest, to form an entire new part of the Bill, to be called "Part 4." These amendments had been copied almost *in extenso* from the South Australian Act; and they dealt with the regulation of electoral expenditure, by limiting the amount of money to be spent by a candidate to £100, and £5 additional for every 200 electors on the roll up to 2,000. In South Australia, the limit was £50 for each candidate; but taking into consideration the special circumstances of this colony, it was unreasonable to fix the maximum sum at so low a figure, therefore he had inserted £100. There were a number of new clauses dealing with this question, and he would like to ask what would be a convenient way of putting the clauses. Could they be put as a chapter?

THE CHAIRMAN: The best plan would be to move the first clause, and then the hon. member would find out whether the Committee were favourable.

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that the following be added to stand as clause 123:

"Electoral expense," in parts IV. and V., include all moneys expended or expenses incurred by, or on behalf, or in the interests of, any candidate at or in connection with any election, excepting only the personal and reasonable actual living and travelling expenses of the candidates.

The expenses in connection with many elections were very large, and such as to render it impossible for a man of moderate means to offer himself for election. This provision was in force in South Australia, and he understood it worked well.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This part of the South Australian law received the serious consideration of the leader of the Government, who arrived at the conclusion, in which he was supported



in the Assembly, that it was an unnecessary encumbrance and would be difficult to carry out. Personally, he (the Colonial Secretary) had no objection to the clause. On the goldfields he believed the expenses were enormous; and in many instances they were certainly high. Whether it would be advisable to adopt this somewhat cumbrous proceeding in the present circumstances of the colony, he would not say.

HON. F. T. CROWDER supported the new clause. This amendment was a most important one, and from what knowledge he had, he believed it worked with satisfaction in South Australia. Gentlemen who aspired to become members of Parliament should be protected in some way, seeing that members were not paid. It was quite sufficient for a member to give his time without paying £100 or £200 to gain a seat. This provision might, to some minds, appear cumbersome, but he did not see that it was. There was a provision that no expense should be recoverable in a Court. That would be a check on the amount of money spent, and he thought £100 was quite sufficient for a man to pay to obtain a seat in Parliament.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The difficulty he felt in regard to this new part was that whenever an allowance was made lawful by enactment, hon. members might be sure the electors would insist on its being spent to the maximum. If the amount could be kept down to £100, that would be all right. This Bill was a transcript of the English Act, and by experience in England it was found that the expenses ran to thousands and thousands of pounds, the greater portion of which was never heard of. The law had little effect in reducing expenses in England. There was another objection that by passing this clause hon. members were inviting an inquiry after each member had taken his seat, because the penalties were stringent. If inadvertently a member fell into any of the rules laid down, he had to stand his trial before the court of disputed returns, and some hon. members who had had experience of the Supreme Court would sooner fight one or two disputed elections than go before the Supreme Court even with the assistance of a legal gentleman. That was his experience. The amend-

ment would be going beyond what we required at present. Sometimes elections cost something and sometimes nothing. He believed that at the last election a member of another place was elected at the cost of half-a-crown, which he paid for a telegram. The lucky individual represented one of the Northern constituencies. One believed that if the amendment were carried into effect it would, in the hands of any man rather maliciously disposed, be almost certain to lead to an inquiry. We might leave the point until the very important question was adopted in another place.

New clause put and negatived.

THE CHAIRMAN: Was the hon. member going on with the other amendments, or would he abandon them.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: They would be abandoned.

Schedules (18)—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

#### FISHERIES BILL.

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

#### COTTESLOE LIGHTING AND POWER (PRIVATE) BILL.

Received from Legislative Assembly, and on motion by HON. F. M. STONE (for Hon. A. B. Kidson), read a first time.

#### MOTION—HARBOUR AND PILOT SERVICES.

#### JOINT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS.

Debate resumed from 25th October, on motion by Hon. F. T. Crowder, to adopt the Committee's recommendations.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): I have only a few words to say on this report. I have gone fairly carefully through a good deal of the evidence, some of which is of a conflicting character, and would lead me to believe that, after all, the committee have not really got to the bottom of the trouble, especially in regard to the wreck of the "City of York." With some of their recommendations one can only agree. Some of them have been carried into effect, and one wonders that the poor arrangements which existed for a con-

siderable period were not taken notice of earlier, and altered. However, it appears that since this sad and lamentable event matters have in many respects been remedied. With regard to the disagreement between the lighthouse keepers at Rottneest, which do not appear to have affected the issue, however, I think it a pity the Committee have not endeavoured to get to the bottom of the question and find out the cause of the disagreement. Although it was stated by the witnesses, two of whom the Committee examined, that the disagreement did not affect the discharge of their duty, yet, if such a state of affairs does exist—and from information from other sources I am led to believe there is not a happy feeling between the lighthouse keepers at Rottneest—in my opinion it is bound, sooner or later, to affect the usefulness and the effective service of those persons entrusted with a great responsibility. I have also been pleased to see the committee have reported favourably on the present administration of the Harbour Department at Fremantle, and although we occasionally see complaints in the newspapers, there is no reason to doubt that, considering all things, the arrangements for the berthing and discharging of ships are carried out very fairly and expeditiously. We cannot expect to have everything complete in a few months, inasmuch as we are constructing a harbour, and work has to be carried on, whilst trade appears to have been increasing rapidly. It is scarcely possible to overtake at once the necessities of the case, but it is satisfactory to find the committee are able to report that on the whole the management of the Fremantle Harbour and of the Jetty is satisfactory. With regard to the sad event which happened to the "City of York," and her captain and some of the crew, of course we all regret that circumstance, and the regret will remain with us for a considerable time, but it seems to me to be very questionable whether anything that happened on the Island is responsible for the loss of that ship. I have placed on the table here to-night a chart of Rottneest, which will show the soundings outside of the Island. Whether the committee had that chart under their observation or not I cannot say. I do not think it appears in the evidence; but looking at that chart

and the soundings which took place, one is perfectly surprised that a ship should ever find itself ashore opposite the lighthouse at Rottneest. Whether the verdict was too strong or not is, I think, a matter for difference of opinion. I believe most people would have been satisfied if the inquiry had resulted in a verdict on the one count instead of the two. If "gross carelessness" had been left out and "error of judgment" had remained, probably there would not have been so much excitement and controversy as resulted. The captain is not here to answer for himself, and if he were he could perhaps throw more light on the subject.

HON. D. MCKAY: It is an unaccountable judgment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That shows at once that there are two opinions on the subject; and of course the seriousness of the case, the way in which it affects the port, the memory of the captain, and to some extent, too, the Harbour Master and pilot service, shows we should be very careful in arriving at a judgment. I have some little knowledge of the sea, having been on the coast of England very often, and had a considerable experience since upon Western Australian waters, and I must say I think it most unaccountable that the captain, picking up the Island at half-past four in the afternoon, finding the lighthouse in the middle of the island, and knowing very well a ship could not go over the rocks, should have steered his ship towards the lighthouse, notwithstanding the flare light and that he got into shallower water. He would probably have been safe if he had hauled up when at 15 fathoms, or if he had done so when at nine fathoms, but instead of that he got into five fathoms. The wind had slackened down, but the sea was heavy, and the vessel became unmanageable. It seems singular that a light 150 feet above the level of the sea should have been mistaken for a flash light in a pilot boat. I think these circumstances are some justification for the verdict given by the Court of Inquiry, though I could have wished that "gross carelessness" had been omitted. After reading over the evidence, examining the chart, and taking all the circumstances into consideration, it appears to me a most extraordinary thing that the vessel should have steered for the lighthouse. If the captain had not

picked the lighthouse up in the middle of the day, perhaps there would have been some excuse, but the sailing directions are clear. These warn vessels not to enter less than 30 fathoms, and when the captain found he was getting into shallow water he ought to have known he was in dangerous ground, and to have sailed away to the north-east. I do not think I need enter into the question of the pilot boats, but my own opinion is that a steamer would be of very little use except in fine weather. A steamer could not get alongside a ship in a rough sea, for the impact would be so great, and it would be necessary for the pilot to be put in a dinghy to get alongside the ship. No doubt a steamer in some cases would be of great assistance, but I have arrived at the conclusion, from reading the evidence, that the boats at Rottnest are suitable. Pilots on the north coast of England meet ships as far away from Sunderland as Flamborough Head, sometimes further away; but those pilots get the fees. They sail in boats called "cobbles," peculiarly constructed open boats; and in these boats the pilots sail over 150 miles. Pilots when sailing, although there are risks, have practically safe boats; therefore to that extent the pilot service at Rottnest is effective. I agree with the finding that there should be three pilots at Rottnest, as the present arrangements are not of a satisfactory nature. I think the Government should at once consider whether the cable between Rottnest and Fremantle should not be at once laid. The difficulty I have always had in my mind about the cable is as to where it should be laid, and whether it would not be likely to be hooked by anchors of ships near the piers; but I suppose precautions can be taken, and the cable placed in such a position that it will not be liable to that risk. I have handed to hon. members to-night a report of some experiments made by the Superintendent of Telephones in testing wireless telegraphy, and I think the officer has got so far as to clearly demonstrate that wireless telegraphy can be used. The Superintendent of Telephones may, by further experiments, be able to establish wireless telegraphy with Rottnest; or, if wireless telegraphy be found impracticable, I am inclined to think the Government ought to lay the cable at once. We have a large number of ships coming

to this port, and Rottnest has 100 people on it; therefore I think it is desirable we should have the quickest and best possible communication with the island. I believe the pilot service can be carried out better from Rottnest than from Fremantle; and though perhaps I should not offer an opinion on that, still I cannot help thinking we should have a complete pilot establishment at Rottnest, which is 12 miles nearer to ships that are coming into the harbour, and vessels can be boarded by a pilot more quickly and become safe for entering port. Those are some of the points which have come to my mind, on reading the evidence. I think the report of the Select Committee on the whole is a favourable one, and many of the recommendations are good and useful, and should be carried out. I do not think I need add anything else, except to repeat that I am perfectly in accord with the finding of the inquiry; subject to the reservation that I should like to have seen the words "gross carelessness" left out of the verdict. No one who understands navigation, or who has had any experience of the sea, can arrive at any other conclusion on the facts of the case than that the captain committed an error of judgment.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): I have not been able to go thoroughly through the whole of the report; but, as far as I have been able to read it, I certainly think it is the duty of the House to thank the members of the committee for the careful way in which they have gone into the matter. I think they have dealt most carefully with every question that came under their notice, and have given opinions which I think ought to be of some value to the Government. They have made many suggestions as to the pilot service at Rottnest which I think will be beneficial, if adopted, for it appears to me the pilot service at the present time is not adequate to the requirements of the port. When two or three vessels are sighted, it does not seem possible that they can be immediately served, therefore they run a risk in coming into the harbour. Losses have occurred, which, if we had had an efficient pilot service, might have been avoided. The boat service is not all that it should be, and a quicker boat would be of far greater service to the pilots in boarding vessels when there are

head winds to deal with. I have had a little experience in open boats myself, and when I have had to pull against a head wind the progress has been very slow. Under circumstances of that kind it would be difficult to serve more than one vessel at a time. I think the best thanks of the House are due to the members of the committee who so carefully went into the matter, and have done their duty so efficiently.

Question—that the recommendations be agreed to—put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.9 p.m. until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 14th November, 1899.

Petition (Perth Tramways Provisional Order), against certain extension of Tramways—Subiaco Tramways Bill, first reading—Seats for Shop Assistants Bill, first reading—Land Act Amendment Bill (private), second reading, in Committee, reported—Annual Estimates, Committee of Supply, votes passed for Mines, Attorney General, Colonial Secretary (to Printing), progress—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### PETITION.—PERTH TRAMWAYS.

MR. A. FORREST presented a petition from 1,300 residents of Perth against the Provisional Order for extending tramways along St. George's Terrace.

Petition received, read, and ordered to be printed.

#### SUBIACO TRAMWAYS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

#### SEATS FOR SHOP ASSISTANTS BILL.

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

#### LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (PRIVATE).

##### REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

On Motion by MR. JAMES, report of select committee adopted.

Standing order suspended by resolution, to allow of the second reading of the Bill being taken forthwith.

##### SECOND READING.

MR. JAMES (East Perth), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill proposes to deal with certain conditional purchase leases taken up by various persons. At the time the leases were taken up, application was, I believe, made to the Government to allow the land comprised in the leases to be dealt with by way of grant to the Salvation Army, to enable that body to establish what was then called an "oversea colony." The Government were not able to see their way clear to give the grant for that purpose, and the land was then taken up by various leaseholders, all of whom belonged to the Salvation Army, and all of whom held the leases as trustees for that body. Since that time applications have been made to enable the Salvation Army to consolidate the leases and carry out a scheme by which the whole of the area could be developed and settled under authority; and the Bill proposes to give the various holders of the leases the right to transfer those leases to any person, company, or association, provided that in each case the consent of the Minister is obtained. It will be seen that before any departure whatever can be made from the provisions of the Land Act of 1898, the permission of the responsible Minister must be obtained; and in addition no financial privileges whatever are given to the leaseholders under the Bill, whether the leases are held independently or by one person, and there must be the same amount of settlement and the same amount of money spent on improvements as at present. The only variation is that if the leases remain held by various persons, the exterior fencing will have to be round the exterior boundaries of each lease, whereas if the leases are amalgamated, the exterior fencing will be round