the restriction which the clause proposed to repeal was found to be inconvenient, and there was really no necessity for it. For instance, the minimum number of shares to be held by a shareholder in the parent company was 50. The original value of the shares was £1, but now their value was £9 or £10.

The clause was agreed to.

The preamble having been adopted, the Bill was reported with amendments, and was afterwards recommitted for the further consideration of clauses 4 and 5.

On the motion of the Hon. H. Cuthbert, clause 4 was amended by the insertion of the words "knowingly and wilfully" before "appropriates" in the portion of the clause rendering any director, member, or officer of a trustee company guilty of a misdemeanor if he improperly appropriated or dealt with any trust money, and by the insertion of the words "or any of them" after "they," in the latter portion of the clause.

On the motion of the Hon. J. Service, the word "wilful" was inserted before "breach" in the latter part of clause 5, declaring that any director, member, or officer of a trustee company who was shown to be concerned in or a party to any wilful breach of the provisions of the clause should be guilty of a misdemeanor.

The Bill was then reported with further amendments.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past ten o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Tuesday, October 30, 1888.

toral Act 1885 Amendment Bill—Assent to Bill—Electoral Districts Alteration Bill.

The Speaker took the chair at half-past four o'clock p.m.

NORTH MELBOURNE TRAMWAY.

Dr. Rose asked the Premier when the construction of the tramway line to North Melbourne was likely to be commenced, and when it was likely to be completed; what was the cause of the delay in commencing it; had Parliament any control over the construction of tramways; if so, what control, and in what way could that control be applied in the case of the North Melbourne tramway, the delay in the construction of which was adverse to the interests of the district?

Mr. Gillies said that he knew nothing about the matter referred to in the honorable member's question. It was in no respect under the supervision of any Government department.

Mr. Laurens stated that a tender for the construction of tramways to North Melbourne and West Melbourne was accepted by the Tramways Trust some time ago, and intimation had been given by the Trust that the work in connexion with the North Melbourne tramway would be commenced in fourteen days.

CADET CORPS.

Dr. Rose asked the Premier how many cadets were in the colony; did they find their own uniform; what was the approximate cost per annum to each cadet; were they compelled to find their own uniform under regulations made by the Defence department; and, if so, what were those regulations?

Mr. Gillies stated that there were 2,900 cadets in the colony, and each cadet had to find his own uniform. The cost of each cadet to the country was about 25s. for cadets in connexion with State schools, and about £2 for those in connexion with private schools. No boy was allowed to be enrolled unless in a position to supply himself with a uniform.

THE CHINESE.

Dr. Rose asked the Chief Secretary if he was aware that Chinese cabinet-makers continue their work on Sundays; if so, had he taken any action to prevent this breach of the law, and this unfair competition with Victorian cabinet-makers; and also, what action, if any, had been taken with reference to the Chinese cabinet-maker whose case was brought under the Minister's notice about a fortnight ago?

Mr. Deakin said it was known that certain Chinese cabinet-makers frequently worked on Sundays. It had been found that some of them did so without being aware that they were breaking the law. He therefore thought that it was only fair to give them warning before legal proceedings were instituted against them, and every Chinese cabinet-maker in the colony had been warned accordingly. In the particular case referred to by the honorable member, special warning
Banking Legislation. [October 30.] Public Service. 17:9

had been given, and the Chinaman in question had not since been detected in working on Sunday. It was, however, very difficult to discover Chinamen at work on Sunday, because, when following their employment on that day, they did so with closed doors, and had a very keen eye to the approach of the police.

PINE LODGE WEIR.

Mr. GRAHAM asked the Minister of Water Supply if he had considered the report of the select committee on the Pine Lodge weir; and, if so, was he prepared to give effect to their recommendations, or would he treat this case in the same manner as he had treated other failures? It was absolutely necessary to have this matter settled, as its non-settlement was retarding the progress of irrigation on the eastern side of the Goulburn, the people there declining to form an irrigation trust until their liability with respect to the Pine Lodge weir failure was known.

Mr. DEAKIN said he was awaiting the decision of the residents of the district with respect to the formation of a trust. When he received their proposals, he would be prepared to recommend that the trust should be dealt with leniently—somewhat on the lines of the recommendation of the select committee—as to the present liabilities in connexion with the Pine Lodge weir.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. TOOHEY asked the Minister of Railways if he would inquire into the case of a man named Duggan, line repairer, Warragul, who captured a man while in the act of garrotting a labourer, and who had had to attend at court to prosecute, and had had his pay stopped during his absence from work?

Mr. GILLIES said he the honorable member must have been misinformed. The line repairer referred to in the question did not lose any wages at all.

BANKING LEGISLATION.

Mr. ZOX asked the Premier if, in consideration of the vast importance of the interests involved, the Government would at once proceed with the consideration of the Banks and Currency Amendment Bill and the Banking Companies Registration Bill; also whether, in the event of the Government not being able to ask the Legislative Assembly to deal with those measures, he would cause them at once to be introduced in the Legislative Council, so as to afford the members of that House an opportunity of dealing with them? The two measures referred to, which were the result of an inquiry made by a Royal commission, were of the greatest importance, and he sincerely trusted that the Government would be able to see their way to get them dealt with this session.

Mr. GILLIES said he would be very glad to be in a position to proceed with the Banks and Currency Amendment Bill and the Banking Companies Registration Bill. He was especially desirous to get the latter Bill passed. It was a measure of great importance, inasmuch as it would lead to the introduction of a large amount of capital into the colony. In the present state of public business, however, it would be impossible to say whether the Bills could be dealt with this session or not. There would be no difficulty in their becoming law if there was a general wish on the part of the House to assist the Government in passing them; but if there was to be any strong opposition to them, it would be quite hopeless to attempt to carry them this session. The subjects dealt with in the two Bills had received careful attention from a Royal commission, and he thought that there really ought to be very little objection to the measures. If he got any encouragement, he would be glad to push the Bills forward.

WHITTLESEA RAILWAY.

Mr. HARPER asked the Minister of Railways whether his attention had been called to the delay in the progress of the construction of the Whittlesea Railway, and whether the line was likely to be finished within the contract time?

Mr. GILLIES stated that he was informed by the Railway Commissioners that there had been great delay in proceeding with the work of constructing the Whittlesea Railway. The commissioners were pressing the contractors, and intended to insist on their making better progress and employing a larger number of men. The line, however, was not likely to be finished within the contract time, and the question of penalties would have to be determined when the contract was completed. (Mr. Langridge—"Has any extension of time been granted?"") None whatever; and it was not intended to grant any extension of time.

PUBLIC SERVICE.

Mr. DUFFY asked the Premier whether he was aware that there were classes of
officers in the Chief Secretary's office, General Post-office, Public Works department, and Lands department, who, at present, received only a fortnight's holiday annually; and whether he would take steps to have carried out the implied intent of Parliament when passing the Public Service Act 1883, that all officers in the service should, wherever possible, enjoy a holiday of three weeks annually?

Mr. GILLIES replied that it was true that there were officers in a number of departments of the public service who at present received only a fortnight's holiday per annum. It had never been the practice to allow every officer in the service three weeks' leave of absence; in fact, it would be impossible to grant all officers three weeks' leave every year if the convenience of the public was to be considered. Three weeks was the maximum leave which could be given under ordinary circumstances, and it was not intended by the Public Service Act that all Government employes should have an absolute right to three weeks' holiday per annum. If every one were granted three weeks' leave, that would involve the employment of such a large number of additional officers, and such a considerable expenditure, as would rather surprise honorable members.

PETITIONS.

Petitions praying that the time for closing the poll at parliamentary and municipal elections might be extended to eight o'clock in the evening were presented by Mr. Zox, from the following societies:—Aerated Waters and Cordial Society, Bookbinders' Society, Bootmakers' Society, Brewers' Employes Society, Certified Engineers' Society, Drivers' Society, Cigar Makers' Society, Coopers' Society, Cutters' and Trimmers' Society, Felt Hatters' Society, Melbourne Engineers' Society, Ironmoulders' Society, Ironworkers' Assistants' Society, Operative Masons' Society, Pressers' Union Society, Melbourne Typographical Society, Quarrymen's Union Society, South Melbourne Engineers' Society, Tailors' Society, Tin-smiths', Ironworkers', and Japanners' Society, United Furniture Trade Society, Wharf Labourers' Society, and Williamstown Engineers' Society.

WIMMERA IRRIGATION TRUST.

Mr. GAUNSON asked the Minister of Water Supply if the election of members of the Western Wimmera Irrigation Trust had been postponed; and, if so, to what date?

Mr. DEAKIN said the election had been postponed until the 5th of December.

POPULATION STATISTICS.

Mr. McCOLL asked the Premier whether he had obtained a report from the Government Statist, as promised a fortnight previously, explaining the manner in which the population statistics laid before the House in connexion with the Electoral Districts Alteration Bill had been compiled? It was very desirable that, if possible, the report should be in the hands of honorable members before they dealt with the proposed redistribution of seats.

Mr. GILLIES said he had not yet received the report alluded to by the honorable member.

ELECTORAL ACT 1865 AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. GILLIES presented a message from the Governor, recommending an appropriation out of the consolidated revenue for the purposes of this Bill.

The message was ordered to be considered in committee next day.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Mr. GILLIES presented a message from the Governor, intimating that at the Government Offices, on the 29th October, His Excellency gave his assent to the Marine Board Act Amendment Bill.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ALTERATION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

Mr. GAUNSON said he desired to make a personal explanation with reference to a letter in the Argus newspaper of the previous day, written by Councillor Dinsdale, of South Melbourne, on the subject of the new South Melbourne electorates. He would not have brought the matter under the notice of honorable members but for the fact that the honorable member for Sandhurst (Mr. Burrowes) had informed him that an impression prevailed that the letter was a conclusive answer to the statements he (Mr. Gaunson) had made with reference to the proposed South Melbourne electorates. It was, therefore, as well to set the subject at rest at once and for ever. He was prepared to show that the writer of the letter was as inaccurate as the Premier himself in connexion with the South Melbourne electorates. The letter said—

"In the report of the discussion that took place in the Assembly, which appeared in your
The consideration of the 2nd schedule, setting forth the boundaries of the various electorates (adjourned from Thursday, October 25) was then resumed.

Discussion took place on the 64th subdivision, describing the electorate of Port Fairy.

Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment with the view of altering the boundary of the portion of the electorate extending to Koroit. The amendment, he said, would make that boundary "the road on the north of allotment 50, parish of Tyrendarra; east to the Eumeralla River, and up to that river." This would give a better and a straighter boundary.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he desired to submit an amendment to provide that the boundary of the electorate intended to be called Port Fairy, and at present known as Belfast, should be the existing boundary on the eastern side of the town of Belfast, cutting out Koroit, which was at present part of the electoral district of Villiers and Heytesbury. The honorable member for Villiers and Heytesbury (Mr. Toohey) had handed him a letter written by the town clerk of Koroit, which truly represented the opinion of the people of Koroit as to the proposal of the Government to include them in the electorate of Port Fairy. The latter, which was addressed to the honorable member, and dated the 8th of October, stated—"By direction of the council of the borough of Koroit, I have the honour to invite your attention to the manner in which the county of Villiers, as a whole, and the Koroit division of the electorate in particular, is dealt with in the Electoral Bill now before Parliament. Villiers, the richest, most fertile, and, for its area, the most populous county in the colony, is parcelled out into a number of small allotments, and tacked on to other electorates, without any apparent regard to identity of interests. Thus the Koroit division is thrown in with Belfast, and a new name created for the proposed electorate. Koroit does not object to the name; but it decidedly objects to being associated with Port Fairy, a place with which we have no common interests, except propinquity of position." One or two cases had come under his own observation since he had represented Belfast which showed that the interests of Koroit were utterly opposed to those of Belfast. Koroit promised to be a large inland agricultural town, like Kyneton. It was already gone up in cultural town, like Kyneton. It was already a very rising township, and land there had gone up in value enormously. The people of Koroit objected to its being tacked on to Belfast. The town clerk of Koroit further remarked—"The proposed Bill annihilates Koroit politically, and utterly deprives us of the

Friday's issue, with reference to the municipality of South Melbourne, the Premier stated that the Government had agreed to allow this city to have three members within its municipal boundaries, in answer to the request of the local council and others who had interested themselves in the matter, and that the division had met with their entire approval. To this statement Mr. Gaunson gave a point blank denial.

Now he desired to say—and the truth or otherwise of his statement could be proved incontrovertibly—that the South Melbourne Council, as a body, had never ventured, at any time or in any place, to give any opinion whatsoever in favour of three single electorates for the district. This was a statement which his honorable colleague, the Minister of Public Works, knew was true. The council, as a council, had never asked for three single electorates within the district of Emerald Hill. The letter further stated—"Mr. Gaunson says the local council have not passed a resolution in favour of single electorates. This is simply a lawyer's quibble."

It was easy to see whether his statement was a lawyer's quibble or not. Not only would he say that the council, as a council, had not passed any resolution in favour of single electorates, but he would go further, and state that the council, as a council, had never passed any resolution in favour of having three members for the one electorate. As a matter of fact, the council were divided on the question, and, as a body, had not expressed any opinion upon it. The letter was certainly most disingenuous and misleading, and he would show in what particular. The writer said that—

"The policy of Parliament having been determined by the second reading of the Bill being carried by a large majority, our council unanimously passed a resolution, which was adopted, also unanimously, by a public meeting, called by the mayor, demanding that we have three electorates, coterminous with our boundaries."

The very public meeting referred to in the letter passed a resolution denouncing single electorates for South Melbourne. The letter, he would repeat, was most disingenuous, most misleading, and, in the matter which he had mentioned, it was incorrect. He would pass by the threats contained in the letter. The gentleman who wrote the letter performed what he believed to be his duty in supporting him (Mr. Gaunson) at the last election for Emerald Hill, and no doubt he would perform what he believed to be his duty in opposing him, as he threatened to do, at the next election. He (Mr. Gaunson) would regret the opposition, but he was not afraid of it.
Electoral Districts

[ASSEMBLY.]

Alteration Bill.

political power we did enjoy. Penshurst is joined to Dundas, and I am sure they are not proud of the union. They would much prefer to be linked with Koroit, as hitherto. The Bill, as affecting this electorate, is condemned on all sides. We are deprived of one-fourth of our political influence; and combinations are formed which are most undesirable and unsatisfactory. I am therefore to request you respectfully to give the Bill your most strenuous opposition in its present form; and to strive by every means, legitimate and reasonable, to preserve to us the small voice which we have hitherto enjoyed in the legislation of the country."

The people of Belfast did not wish the addition of people who did not desire to be joined on to them. Under the circumstances, what he would suggest was that the old boundaries of Belfast should be adhered to, and that the borough of Koroit and the shire of Minhamite, which the Bill proposed to add, should be left in Heytesbury. The description of the old boundaries was in the Act of 1876, and therefore there could be no difficulty in adopting it. The Bill proposed that Port Fairy should have seven divisions, and that Heytesbury should have five divisions; but, if the Koroit division were taken from Port Fairy and added to Heytesbury, each electorate would have six divisions.

Mr. TOOHEY said he would feel bound to move the amendment of which he had given notice unless the suggestion of the honorable member for Belfast was accepted. He considered that no better evidence of the undesirability of linking Koroit to Port Fairy could be afforded than the letter which had been read by the honorable member for Belfast.

Mr. GILLIES observed that he could greatly sympathize with honorable members who found the task of dealing with the electorates as constituted by the Bill a very difficult one. Naturally no honorable member liked to acknowledge that he desired to get rid of any portion of his electorate. But the committee must look at the matter from a higher standpoint than that. If they desired an honest redistribution of seats they must do something in every case in which the population of an electorate was not sufficient to entitle it to a member, to increase that population. Of course, he could understand the members of a municipal body expressing the desire that the electorate in which their municipality was situate should not be altered. But Parliament in this matter could not be influenced by merely local interests. They must take into consideration other interests. One object which the Government kept in view in altering the electorates as they had was to bring together those districts which were closely allied so far as propinquity was concerned. Belfast and Koroit were in that position. He did not know of any divergence of interest between the two places. On the contrary, he had always understood that the people of the one borough were on the most brotherly terms with the people of the other. The present electorate of Belfast consisted of the borough and shire of Belfast, and it was proposed to add to that area the shire of Minhamite and the borough of Koroit. The combined territory, which would be known in the future as the electorate of Port Fairy, would contain a population of 8,823; and he ventured to say that by no other arrangement could so compact a population, having such an identity of interest, be brought together. No doubt the honorable member for Belfast did not wish to have the people of Koroit thrust upon him against their will; but it was to be presumed the honorable member would not object to represent them. (Sir B. O'Loghlen—"Personally, I would be very happy.") The honorable member might think he would place himself in a false position if he supported the Government proposition while he thought that Koroit did not wish to be united with Belfast. But the honorable member was called upon to deal with the matter on higher grounds. He was bound to consider the whole of the surrounding circumstances. With less population than had been added, making the total 8,823, Port Fairy would not be entitled to a member. If more population could be added he would be glad, but this could not be done without disturbing other interests and probably doing more harm than good. Those who represented that part of the country must be aware that the arrangement which the Bill provided for, under which a sufficiently large population, and interests which were kindred, were brought together, was about the best that could be made. It was not necessary in every case that electoral boundaries should correspond to municipal boundaries. Of course, when the two sets of boundaries did correspond, the compilation of the electoral roll was facilitated. The only real objection to the constitution of the district as proposed by the Bill was that it materially interfered with Villiers and Heytesbury. But there was no way of enlarging Belfast, Dundas, Ripon, and Ararat, so as to entitle each to one member, except by taking territory from Villiers and Heytesbury.
Mr. ANDERSON (Vllieres) remarked that the objection to the union of Koroit with Belfast was not confined to the Koroit Borough Council. The great bulk of the inhabitants of Koroit were opposed to the change. They were in the centre of an agricultural district, and their surroundings were agricultural; and they hoped to be in a position, by-and-by, to have a name of their own, and a representative of their own. Under these circumstances, they would much rather retain a portion of the electorate of Heytesbury than be attached to Belfast. It was his intention to support the amendment of which his honorable colleague had given notice if it was brought forward.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he would move that the boundary of the new electorate of Port Fairy should exclude the borough of Koroit and the country around it. (Mr. Gillies—"What about the population?") The statistics of population upon which the Government had based the Bill were only approximate. Koroit was a borough that did not want to be tacked on to a seaport, but wished to be left in the district of which it at present formed a part. (Mr. Gillies—"The union with Belfast will not lessen its importance.") It made a great difference to a township whether it was a leading political centre, or whether it was tacked on to the tail of another constituency. Why should not country be added to Port Fairy from some other direction than Koroit?

Mr. GILLIES stated that, if the committee were to agree in the view of the honorable member for Belfast, the subdivision would have to be struck out, and a new subdivision provided. It would be impossible to amend the subdivision so as to carry out the honorable member for Belfast's views. If the committee were to strike out the subdivision he would take that as an instruction to frame a new subdivision on the lines advocated by the honorable member for Belfast.

Mr. JONES suggested, as one way of ascertaining the mind of the committee on the subject, that the question should be put as to whether Koroit should or should not be retained in the Heytesbury electorate.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that one way of testing the opinion of the committee would be to take a division on the question that the Port Fairy subdivision stand part of the schedule.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he thought he would be in order in moving that the township and district of Koroit be excised from the Port Fairy electorate.

Mr. DUFFY observed that it was a pity that the committee should be confused about what was, after all, a simple matter. He would suggest that the honorable member for Belfast should move the omission from the subdivision of any words he pleased. Probably the omission would make nonsense of the subdivision; but, if it were carried, no doubt the Premier, on his own motion, would withdraw the subdivision, in order that it might be redrafted in accordance with the views of the honorable members who represented the districts affected. Seeing that those honorable members, and also the municipal authorities and ratepayers of Koroit, were adverse to Koroit being embraced in the electorate of Port Fairy, he was disposed to vote for its excision unless some stronger argument for its retention than had already been adduced was forthcoming.

Mr. MURRAY said it would be easier to understand the proposal of the honorable member for Belfast if he had shown how the population which would be taken from the Port Fairy electorate, by the excision of Koroit, was to be made up. (Sir B. O'Loghlen—"The Government can do that.") Population could not be transplanted from one part of the country to another exactly to suit the constituency of Port Fairy. The main stumbling block to the proper re-adjustment of constituencies in the western district was Port Fairy, because that electorate was so tremendously below the basis of population required for one member. The only way of approximating the electorate to that basis was by including in it the district of Koroit. If that could not be done, the only alternative was to take in Portland, but that would mean destroying another constituency; and, besides, Portland and Belfast would hardly agree. It was said that there was no community of interest between Koroit and Belfast; but what community of interest was there between Portland and Belfast? Again, if it was correct to say there was no community of interest between Koroit and Belfast, although they were both agricultural centres, separated by only nine or ten miles, Belfast being the seaport outlet for Koroit, what community of interest was there between Koroit, as it stood at present in the constituency of Villiers and Heytesbury, and Port Campbell, which was 50 or 60 miles away? In his (Mr. Murray's) opinion, there were several other small centres of population in Villiers and
Heytesbury which had fewe interests in common with Koroit than Belfast had. If the honorable member for Belfast could show a better way of bringing the population of his electorate up to the proper level than that of adding Koroit to it, and would embody his views in an amendment, be (Mr. Murray) would be glad to support it, and he was sure it would also command the support of every other western district member. As for the people of Koroit, he was certain that they were wrong in supposing that they were going to have their representative power in any way lessened. In fact, their representative power would be rather increased than otherwise. For example, instead of being part of a population of 19,889, returning two members, they would be part of a population of 8,623, returning one member. Besides, he did not think, from his knowledge of the Koroit people, that they would regard themselves as any the worse off in being represented by the present honorable member for Belfast, instead of by either or both of the two present representatives of Villiers and Heytesbury.

Mr. TUTHILL said he regarded the new arrangement of the Villiers and Heytesbury electorate as one of the hardest cases under the Bill. In the first place, Villiers and Heytesbury was about the only country electorate which was to be reduced from a double to a single electorate. Such a reduction was in itself a bitter hardship, and the object of the Government should be to lessen the sense of that hardship as much as possible. Then he was led to understand that adding Koroit to Belfast would so alter the balance of power in the electorate from which Koroit was taken, as to turn the representation of the district into an altogether new channel. (Mr. Gillies—"You have never heard any honorable member say that.") Nevertheless, he had gathered the idea from remarks made to him. Under the circumstances, it would be only a small matter to keep Koroit where it was under the existing law, and he was sure that so keeping it would be highly satisfactory to the sitting members concerned. Another point was that, with respect to the Bill, there was this coincidence, that while the policy of the measure was stated to be one of single electorates, and Villiers and Heytesbury was to be reduced to a single electorate, another single electorate, in which certain members of the Government were interested, was to be raised to the rank of a double electorate. (Mr. Gillies—"This is a second-reading speech.") He had no intention to "stone-wall"; he did not believe in "stone-walling," and would never be a party to "stone-walling" tactics; and he could tell the Premier that he was extremely foolish in attempting to rub honorable members the wrong way in an affair of this kind. He (Mr. Tuthill) was simply referring to the way in which Villiers and Heytesbury was to be reduced to a single electorate, without any other seat being thereby created. (Mr. Gillies—"This is not a Bill to provide honorable members with seats.") He was aware of that, but he still thought the Government were acting unwisely in going against the wishes of the people of Koroit, when it would make no real difference if they were to give way to them.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier to temporarily withdraw his amendment in order that he (Sir B. O'Loghlen) might propose a prior one, which would test the question whether Koroit was or was not to be added to Port Fairy.

Mr. GILLIES said he was perfectly willing to meet the honorable member's views. The amendment was withdrawn.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN moved the omission of certain words relating to the Tower Hill boundary. He stated that he did this with the view of inserting other words in their stead.

Mr. BENT said he would support the amendment. In the first place, he was satisfied that, with railway communication established between Koroit and the districts to the north, the result would be such an exchange of products and such briskness in trade that many thousands of persons now in other parts of the colony would be induced to settle in the Koroit neighbourhood. That was what he prophesied in connexion with the Railway Bill he proposed in 1882, and he felt certain that his prediction would be fulfilled. (Mr. Murray—"But such a state of things would not alter the political view of the question.") It would alter it so far as a community of interests in the proposed Port Fairy electorate was concerned. At present the feeling between Koroit and Belfast was simply one of rivalry. In fact, the trade done by Koroit was done with Warrnambool, and consequently Koroit felt towards Belfast just as Warrnambool did. If Koroit was taken away from Villiers and Heytesbury, at all events the object ought to be to add it to Warrnambool. To add it to Belfast would be to violate the principle respecting community of interests in an electorate which the Premier had professed to lay down from the first.
The amendment was agreed to, and the subdivision, as amended, was passed.

Subdivision 67, describing the electoral district of Prahran, was technically amended, and agreed to.

On subdivision 68, describing the electoral district of Richmond,

Mr. BOSISTO stated that at a public meeting, held in this electorate last week, a wish was expressed that the boundaries of the municipality should be kept electorally intact; and, he would add, that he also felt great unwillingness to see any portion of Richmond attached to another electorate. Still, he was not prepared to move any amendment. When, however, the subdivision relating to Jolimont was under consideration, he would ask the Government to alter its name (so as not to ignore Richmond in the matter) to "Jolimont and West Richmond."

The subdivision was agreed to.

On subdivision 69, describing the electoral district of Ripon and Hampden,

Mr. GILLIES moved the omission of a portion of the subdivision with the view of technically amending it. The population affected by the amendment would not be more than 20 or 30.

Mr. JONES said he understood that the honorable member for Villiers (Mr. Toohey) desired to propose an amendment, and perhaps the Premier would advise as to the point at which it would be most convenient to be dealt with.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that the amendment of the honorable member for Villiers (Mr. Toohey) was of such a character that it could not be carried out unless this sub-schedule was omitted altogether. If the committee decided to omit the sub-schedule, then it would be competent for any honorable member to propose a new one in its place.

Mr. TOOHEY said there was a portion of the electorate of Villiers and Heytesbury taken away and included in the proposed electorate of Ripon and Hampden. What he desired was that that portion should be struck out of this sub-schedule, so as to be retained in Villiers and Heytesbury, in order that the latter might still return two members.

The CHAIRMAN.—I may point out that the decision of the committee in the case of the Port Fairy electorate will preclude the honorable member from proposing the whole of the amendment of which he has given notice.

Mr. BENT said the object of the honorable member for Villiers (Mr. Toohey) was
to propose in some way that the constituency of Villiers and Heytesbury should still return two members, and he sought to have an opportunity of testing the opinion of the committee on that point. It was a rising part of the colony, and although it might not have the full population now to entitle it to two members, there was no doubt that, with the improvement of the western harbours and the extension of railway communication, the population would soon increase.

Mr. MUNRO asked whether it was to be understood, from the ruling of the Chairman, that, if, in one sub-schedule, a certain portion of territory was included, and an amendment was subsequently submitted which must overlap that territory, such an amendment would not be in order? It would be extremely inconvenient if such a rule was laid down.

Mr. GILLIES said all he understood the Chairman to rule was that an amendment which was inconsistent with an amendment previously carried could not be proposed. (Mr. Munro—"Cannot the previous amendment be re-amended?") Yes, but that would require the committee to go over the previous sub-schedule again. As to the amendment of the honorable member for Villiers (Mr. Toohey), he understood that the desire of the honorable member was to retain in the Villiers and Heytesbury electorate a certain portion of territory that was proposed to be assigned to Ripon and Hampden. If the words he (Mr. Gillies) proposed to substitute for the words to be struck out of the sub-schedule were not agreed to, then the honorable member for Villiers would have an opportunity of proposing the insertion of any words he desired.

The amendment to strike out certain words was agreed to.

The committee then divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr. Gillies to be inserted be inserted—

**Ayes** ... ... ... ... 36

**Noes** ... ... ... ... 18

Majority for the amendment 18

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<td>Mr. Anderson (C.), Bosiato, Bourchier, W. M. Clark, D. M. Davies, Deakin, Derham, Dow, Ferguson, Gardiner, Gillies,</td>
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The subdivision as amended was then agreed to, as was also the 70th subdivision describing the electoral district of Rodney (two members).

The 71st subdivision (Sandhurst) was postponed.

On the 72nd subdivision, describing the electoral district of South Yarra,

Mr. GILLIES stated that an alteration had been rendered necessary in the boundary of this electorate, in consequence of the original proposal of the Government having been altered. It was originally proposed to include a portion of South Yarra in the district of Albert Park, but, inasmuch as Albert Park was to be retained as a part of South Melbourne, an amendment of this sub-schedule was necessary.

He therefore begged to move that the description of the South Yarra electorate should be amended so as to read as follows—

"Commencing on the River Yarra at Princesbridge; thence southerly by the St. Kilda-road to High-street, Prahran, east by High-street to Hoddle-street or Punt-road, north to Commercial-road, east by Commercial-road and Malvern-road to the main drain; north by that drain and east boundary of section 9, parish of Prahran, to the Yarra River; down that river to the commencing point."

Mr. MUNRO inquired whether any alteration had been made in the eastern boundary of the South Yarra electorate from that originally proposed in the Bill?

Mr. GILLIES replied in the negative.

The amendment was agreed to, and the subdivision, as amended, was adopted.

On the 73rd subdivision, describing the electoral district of St. Kilda,

Mr. J. HARRIS said that the Brighton Council had protested against the inclusion
of a portion of their municipality in the St. Kilda electorate, and the St. Kilda Council also desired that the electoral boundary should be coterminous with the municipal boundary.

Mr. GILLIES intimated that he had agreed to make the alteration desired, which would only be a very slight one, on reporting the Bill to the House. The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 74th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Stawell,

Mr. WOODS asked if any alteration had been made in the boundaries of this electorate?

Mr. GILLIES stated that there had not. Glenorchy was not included in the electorate, as appeared to be supposed.

Mr. LANGDON asked the Premier whether he intended to agree to any of the alterations which were to be proposed by his (Mr. Langdon's) colleague? One of them would affect this sub-schedule.

Mr. GILLIES stated that the alterations would involve great changes, and he could not see his way to acquiesce in them.

Mr. BOURCHIER expressed the hope that the sub-schedule would be postponed until the electoral districts of Ararat and Clunes had been dealt with, as carrying the present sub-schedule would affect the proposals of which he had given notice. Avoca was a very old electoral district, and a very strong feeling existed with regard to wiping it out.

The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 75th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Swan Hill,

Mr. BAKER asked that the subdivision should be postponed, as there was a probability of some arrangement being come to between the people of Donald and the people of Swan Hill with the view to a re-adjustment of boundaries.

Mr. LANGDON expressed the hope that the Premier would agree to let the subdivision stand over, inasmuch as information would be obtained in a day or two as to the wishes of the people in the district with respect to the suggested exchange of a portion of the electorate of Donald for a portion of the electorate of Swan Hill, which could be carried out by a very simple alteration of boundaries.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he could not consent to postpone the subdivision. The subdivision was agreed to.

The 76th subdivision (Talbot) was also agreed to.

The 77th subdivision (Tambo) was amended by changing the name of the electorate to "East Gippsland."

On the 78th subdivision, describing the electorate of Toorak,

Mr. MUNRO proposed that "Armadale" be substituted for "Toorak" as the name of the electorate. The electorate comprised four suburbs of Melbourne, namely, Toorak, Malvern, Armadale, and Caulfield. From a return which had been laid on the table, in compliance with an order of the Assembly made on his motion, it appeared that the population of Toorak was 2,457; the population of Armadale, 4,468; of Malvern, 2,395; and of Caulfield, 2,509. Toorak was the extreme north of the electorate; but Armadale was the centre of the whole district, and the most populous part of it, and, therefore, it should give the name to the electorate. (Mr. Gillies—"Did not you give Armadale that name?") He confessed that he was instrumental in giving the suburb of Armadale that name. He called his residence Armadale, and the suburb in which it was situated, which had now become very populous, was named after it.

Mr. J. HARRIS stated that he objected to the proposed alteration. Toorak was a name which had been well known for upwards of 30 years; but Armadale was a name of yesterday. He thought that Toorak was a far nicer and more euphonious name than Armadale.

Mr. MUNRO urged that the electorate ought to be called after the most populous and central portion of it—the portion which would be the most convenient in which to lodge nomination papers, and make other arrangements in connexion with the elections.

Mr. GILLIES said that he had no objection to the name of the electorate being Armadale, if the committee approved of the alteration.

The amendment was agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. GILLIES, the 79th subdivision (Wangaratta) was amended by the addition of the words "and Rutherglen" to the name of the electorate; and the 80th subdivision was amended by substituting "West Gippsland" as the name of the electorate, instead of "Warragul."

On the 81st subdivision, describing the electorate of Warrenheip,

Mr. GILLIES said that a portion of the existing electoral district of Ballarat East was, as the Bill now stood, taken from that electorate, and added to the electorate of
Ballarat West. It was proposed to take it back again, and include it within the boundaries of the new electorate of Ballarat East, and it was proposed to place another portion of the area included in Ballarat East in the electorate of Warrenheip. He begged to move an amendment in the subdivision now before the committee, so as to add to the electorate of Warrenheip the area which it was desired to take from the electorate of Ballarat East.

Mr. MURPHY stated that he held in his hand a copy of a resolution passed by the borough council of Ballarat East, with reference to the proposed electoral boundaries affecting that district. The council and a great majority of the citizens desired that the electorate of Ballarat East should remain as it was at present constituted. His honorable colleague had given notice of his intention to propose that the subdivision describing the boundaries of the Ballarat East electorate should be amended so as to effect that object, but as he had intimated that he would not proceed with the amendment, he (Mr. Murphy) would take the matter up and propose an amendment accordingly.

Mr. BENT asked if the Government would have any objection to the proposal of the honorable member for Ballarat East (Mr. Murphy) in regard to that electorate?

Mr. GILLIES said that he could not accept the amendment which the honorable member for Ballarat East (Mr. Murphy) intended to propose. Practically what it amounted to was that Ballarat East should continue to return two members, as at present, and that there should also be the electorate of Warrenheip, to return one member.

Mr. BENT remarked that Ballarat East had the full population to entitle it to two members, and he did not see why there should be any objection to it being continued as a double-seated constituency, as it was at present. The Minister of Public Works thought that the views of the South Melbourne Council should be considered in connexion with the Emerald Hill electorate, but it appeared that the Government were unwilling to act upon the resolution of the Ballarat East Council in regard to the electorate of Ballarat East. He (Mr. Bent) hoped that the Government would give old Ballarat a show.

Mr. RUSSELL said that, at a recent public meeting held at Ballarat East to consider the Bill, a resolution was carried to the effect that the electorate of Ballarat East should be retained as a dual constituency; and that it should comprise the Mount Clear district, the municipality of Ballarat East, and Little Bendigo; but when he submitted the proposal to the Premier, the honorable gentleman stated that it would be impossible for the Government to accept it, as it would disarrange the constituency of Ballarat West and make it necessary to abandon the proposed electorate of Windermere. At the same meeting an amendment was proposed that the existing boundaries of the electorate of Ballarat East should be retained, but only the mover and the seconder voted for it. He objected to a portion of the territory which belonged legitimately to Ballarat East being taken from that electorate and placed in Ballarat West, or to any amendment being made which would be inimical to the interests of Ballarat East.

As to the proposed electorate of Warrenheip, it was an agricultural district, and had no community of interest with Ballarat East, which was a mining constituency.

Mr. VALE observed that it was important that honorable members should understand exactly what was being done. If he was not misinformed, the Government, instead of adhering to their original proposal, were going to transfer a part of the municipality of Ballarat East from the electorate of Ballarat West to Warrenheip. ("No.") A map had been shown to him from which it appeared that the electorate of Warrenheip took in part of the borough of Ballarat East. (Mr. Gillies—"It takes in a portion of Ballarat East, but none of Ballarat West.") The question which ought to be considered was not how the interests of any particular member could be secured, but how far the electoral power of the district of Ballarat was to be conserved. The action of the Government in making a change in the boundaries of the electorate of Ballarat East simply to suit the comfort of one of the honorable members for that constituency (Mr. Russell) was not a statesmanlike proceeding, nor was it justified on political grounds. The original arrangement, which he (Mr. Vale) believed was made with the full knowledge and consent of Ballarat East, should not have been jumped about simply because the honorable member found that it was not so good for him as he would have liked it to be. If the Premier had called together the members representing Ballarat East and the members representing Ballarat West, and had consulted with them as to what should be the boundaries of those electorates, without regard to the side of the House on which their
representatives sat, an arrangement might have been come to which would have suited the comfort and convenience of the electors, and would have given fair play to a district of such historical renown as Ballarat. He would suggest that the subdivision setting forth the boundaries of the Warrenheip electorate should be postponed with the view of taking it into consideration in connexion with the subdivisions describing the electorates of Ballarat East, Ballarat West, and Windermere. One of the most influential and oldest politicians on Ballarat had suggested that Ballarat East and West, with Sebastopol, and a portion of the outlying district, would form an area with sufficient population to be entitled to four members, and this suggestion was one worthy of consideration.

Mr. JONES remarked that he was quite sure none of the members for Ballarat West desired to interfere with the boundaries of the electorate of Ballarat East, and he understood that the two members for Ballarat East were quite content with the arrangement already made. He did not believe that the members for Ballarat East were seeking any personal aggrandizement in the matter.

Mr. MURPHY said that, as he was not supported either by the Government or by his honorable colleague in the representation of Ballarat East, he would not persevere with the amendment which he had intended to propose.

The amendment moved by Mr. Gillies in the subdivision describing the electorate of Warrenheip was agreed to.

The 82nd subdivision (Warrnambool) was agreed to.

On the 83rd subdivision, describing the electoral district of Williamstown,

Mr. GILLIES said that the proposal of the Government, as embodied in the subdivision, was to add to the existing electoral district of Williamstown about 300 electors who resided in the vicinity of Kororoit Creek, but, as some feeling had been displayed against the proposition, the Government intended to abandon it and adhere to the old boundaries of the electorate. He would therefore move that the subdivision be struck out, and that a new one be inserted in accordance with the boundaries of the existing electoral district of Williamstown.

The amendment was agreed to.

On the 84th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Windermere,

Mr. GILLIES moved that the subdivision be postponed with the view of taking it into consideration in connexion with the subdivision describing the electoral district of Ballarat West. It was proposed to add Sebastopol to the electorate of Windermere, and to give a part of the northern portion of the old Ballarat electorate to the electoral district of Ballarat West, so as to give it sufficient population to return two members.

Lt.-Col. SMITH said it would afford more satisfaction to the residents of Ballarat if the proposed electorates of Windermere and Ballarat West were amalgamated, and allowed to return three members.

Mr. GILLIES stated that that proposal could be discussed later on.

The subdivision was postponed.

The committee then proceeded to consider the subdivisions which had been postponed.

On the 83rd subdivision, describing the electoral district of Anglesey,

Mr. GILLIES moved an amendment to provide that the Howqua River should be the southern boundary of the electorate, instead of the county of Delatite.

Mr. HUNT said as the amendment affected the district which he represented, he thought that the Premier of courtesy should have given him notice of the proposed alteration, so that he might have had time to consider it. As the subdivision stood at present, the proposed electorate of Anglesey had 3,003 electors, and he would like to know whether the amendment would increase or diminish that number? (Mr. Gillies— "It will make scarcely any difference.") He pointed out in his speech on the second reading of the Bill that the residents of Anglesey were most unfairly treated by the scheme submitted by the Government. He showed that there was a great disparity between Anglesey, in regard to the number of electors it contained, and all the other single country electorates. He also showed that ten of the Melbourne and suburban constituencies, which it was proposed should return one member each, contained, on the average, 500 electors less than Anglesey. (Mr. Gillies— "There is the question of population.") It was utterly impossible to get the exact population of Anglesey, or even an approximate estimate, inasmuch as a great deal of the territory was outside municipal boundaries. It was said that the Bill was intended to wipe out anomalies, but in the case of Anglesey it would create a greater anomaly than any that existed at present. Perhaps the most striking anomaly of all was the fact that the aggregate number of electors in the proposed electorates of Beechworth and
Bright was only 3,369, whereas the number in Anglesey alone was 3,008. Therefore, taking Beechworth and Bright together, and deducting from the number of their electors the number comprised in Anglesey, one member would be returned by 866 electors, while Anglesey would have only one representative for its 3,008 electors. If the Premier had really wished to deal fairly with Anglesey he should have allotted it two members, as he had done with respect to some other constituencies. He (Mr. Hunt), however, was opposed to the total number of members of the Assembly being increased. If anything further was necessary to show the anomaly created by the way in which Anglesey was dealt with under the Bill, he might mention that a lot of the territory comprised in the electorate was still undeveloped, and that it was bound to become more populous. In other portions of the district there were signs of the commencement of great mining prosperity. Another fact was that the town of Seymour had lately increased so immensely in population and in importance as to justify it in being made the centre of a separate electorate. Alexandria was also of sufficient importance to be constituted a separate electorate along with some of the surrounding country. In the hope that honorable members would be inclined to do justice to Anglesey, as far as was practicable under existing circumstances, he begged to move that the subdivision be struck out with the view of substituting for the proposed boundaries the boundaries of the existing electorate of Kilmore and Anglesey, which was about the largest electorate in the colony at the present time, and had upwards of 2,600 electors.

Mr. DUFFY stated that he had great pleasure in supporting the amendment of the honorable member for Kilmore, which was one that ought to receive fair consideration from honorable members on both sides of the House, if any amendment whatever was to obtain fair consideration. The honorable member had put the case very clearly. There were good reasons why Anglesey should not be treated upon the basis of its actual population. One was that one of the principal towns in the electorate — Seymour — from peculiar circumstances connected with the growth of the railway system of the colony, and from the progressive character of the people, had so largely increased in population, and was still so increasing, that any enumeration of its inhabitants, unless taken under a census, must be absolutely inaccurate, and inaccurate to a very large degree.

On the other hand, the district of Anglesey, which was one of the largest in the colony, was composed of a great deal of unopened-up country — a country which day by day was being selected by farmers and pastoralists, and which was prospected by gold-miners. It embraced a number of auriferous localities which only required to be prospected, as they were being prospected at present, to turn out very large gold-fields, supporting a great many miners. Now he considered it would be a pity, merely because at present the district had not the precise number of inhabitants required by the Bill, that the Premier should not allow for any elasticity in that matter. Not going so would result in the creation of anomalies which would have to be remedied in a comparatively short period. Instead of laying down a hard and fast mathematical line within which there must be a certain population, a preferable course would be to leave those districts which, in the nature of things, must expand — in which population must grow — as they were at present, even though they might have less population than other districts which were likely to stand still or go back. As the honorable member for Kilmore had pointed out, Anglesey was a district which, from the nature of the country it included and its position, must necessarily grow. That being so, it was a pity — nay, more, it was a shame — to alter the district in the way it had been altered. A glance at the map would show that the way to get to Jamieson and Wood's Point was through Delatite. Those places had no connexion with the lower portions of Anglesey. They naturally belonged to Delatite, of which they at present formed a part. Yet merely to have mathematical accuracy, to a decimal point, in the matter of population, the Premier took those gold-fields from the district to which they had always belonged, and to which they naturally belonged, and joined them on to a district with which they had no connexion, geographical or otherwise. He would be glad to hear some answer from the Premier to the allegations of the honorable member for Kilmore. If no answer was forthcoming, he hoped Anglesey would receive fair play at the hands of the committee.

Mr. GILLIES said he thought the explanation which he gave on the second reading of the Bill was a sufficient answer to the objections of the honorable members for Kilmore and Dalhousie. He then stated that several of the existing electoral districts contained such a small population that the
question arose whether they should be blotted out altogether by being merged into adjoining electorates, or whether territory should be added to them, in order that they might be retained in existence. (Mr. Hunt—"That does not apply to this district.")

The honorable member looked at the matter only from his own point of view—not in the broad way which must necessarily be taken by gentlemen whose duty it was to submit to Parliament a scheme for electoral redistribution founded upon a fair and equitable basis. In framing the Government proposals, he (Mr. Gillies) found the electoral district of Kyneton with a population very much below that which was required by the Bill for the return of one member. But he did not feel justified in blotting out such an old district, and dividing the territory among adjoining electorates; so he had to take territory from those electorates, in order that Kyneton might have sufficient population to return one representative. He encroached upon Dalhousie to such an extent that its population fell below the number entitling it to return a member. To meet that difficulty he took Kilmore from the district now known as Kilmore and Anglesey. By that arrangement Anglesey was left without sufficient population, and therefore he added to it a portion of Delatite, which was a very large district, and contained a population very much in excess of the requirements for one member. But as soon as one district was encroached upon to help another, the district so interfered with made a noise. It did not want to be touched. And that was the spirit which animated all the meetings that had been got up in various parts of the country. Those meetings denounced not the principles of the Bill, but the way in which particular electorates had been altered. It was only natural that difference of opinion should arise as to whether the best course had been adopted in each case. Probably the electorates might have been constituted in a different manner from that proposed by the Government; but, in connexion with a scheme which involved the taking of territory from one district and adding it to another, there was bound to be some dissatisfaction. It had been said that instead of increasing the number of members of the Assembly, the Government ought to have reduced them. (Mr. Woods—"Hear, hear.")

Well, he was amazed! Notwithstanding they had heard so much about the injustice done to particular districts by reducing the number of representatives for those districts, and the heart-burnings which had arisen in consequence of that injustice, there was an honorable member who would go in for a wholesale reduction of members. He ventured to think that the honorable member for Stawell, if he had the opportunity, would have great difficulty in convincing Parliament and the country that the best course to pursue was to reduce the number of members. At any rate, he (Mr. Gillies) would not envy the honorable member the job. (Mr. Woods—"At all events, it is a proper thing to do.") There were a great many proper things to do which, in the first place, might not be expedient, and which, in the next place, would be impracticable. If any attempt were to be made to reduce the number of members of the Assembly from 86 to say 50, it would soon be found that the thing was perfectly hopeless. The task was undertaken last session in New Zealand. (Mr. Munro—"And they succeeded.") And they were very dissatisfied with their success. (Mr. Munro—"Hear, hear.") There was a strong feeling throughout New Zealand that the cost of government was too great, and, as the State expenditure included payment of members, the Ministry determined, with the strong backing they had from the country, to reduce the number of Members of Parliament. But their proposal met with an opposition which was somewhat alarming. What had to be done? The Speaker had to exercise an unwonted and unusual authority. He absolutely declined to hear honorable members, he would not listen to them; but he had a division taken, and in that way settled the question. He (Mr. Gillies) mentioned the matter to show that such a strong feeling prevailed against the disfranchisement of so many electorates that it was only by resort to means which, in these days, could scarcely be considered constitutional, that the Ministry were able to carry their proposal. Did not honorable members, as practical men, know that any Government that proposed a reduction in the number of members of the Assembly, unless they had the overwhelming support of the public, would soon find that they had undertaken a hopeless task? (Mr. Woods—"Still, it is proper to be done.") It was not proper to be done unless it was supported by outside public opinion and by an overwhelming majority in Parliament. The difficulties which the Government had had to encounter in the preparation of their Bill were infinitesimal as compared with the difficulties which would face any Government that attempted to largely reduce the number of members of the Assembly. The honorable
member for Kilmore might think he had a grievance. (Mr. Hunt—"I have no personal grievance.") Then the district could have no grievance. No electorate, as an electorate, could last for ever. It must change from time to time. Whenever public necessity required electoral boundaries to be altered, the alteration must be made. He had stated from the beginning that he could not venture to say that the Bill was free from anomalies. It would be impossible to have an Electoral Bill without anomalies unless the map of the colony were as a clear sheet of paper, and lines could be run right and left with mathematical precision. So long as population was located in peculiar ways all over the country, the lines of division must be made to suit the population. There was no use in attempting to suit the population to the lines. Accordingly, the lines of the electorates had been run so that each might embrace a fair average population. The honorable member for Kilmore had made some reference to a comparison between population and electors. If the honorable member would devote his attention to a bulky volume which was published in connexion with the census of 1881, he would find a page setting forth some very curious facts as to the proportion of electors to population. The proportion of electors to population averaged 4.25—a little more than one-fourth; but in some cases it was only 2.25. That was one reason why he (Mr. Hunt) interjected justified the estimate of population provided for by the Bill. Then again there was one period in the life of a Parliament when the number of electors on the general roll was much smaller than at others. (Mr. Hunt—"That applies all round.") Not necessarily. There were some districts where the number of electors on the general roll was very small as compared with the number of ratepayers; and there were some districts where nearly all the electors were ratepayers. He considered that the Government were perfectly justified, so far as the electorate of Anglesey was concerned, in taking the course they had.

Mr. WOODS observed that the reference which the Premier had made to the remark that he (Mr. Woods) interjected justified him in following up that reference, although it did not bear directly on the question now under consideration. He believed the history of the colonies went to show that the larger Houses of Parliament were, the more unmanageable they became, and the less business they did. This, however, was not the greatest evil. The tendency lately had been to reduce Parliament into a huge municipal institution. And the more the number of representatives was increased, the more like a municipal body did Parliament become. If the shire and borough councils of the colony had imposed upon them the large amount of local business which was now transacted by means of deputations to the Government, the consideration by Parliament of many little local matters which now engaged its attention would be rendered entirely unnecessary.

The CHAIRMAN. — The honorable member is going into an abstract question which has nothing to do with the subject before the chair.

Mr. WOODS submitted that the time for the chair to take exception was when the Premier alluded to the matter—when the Premier indulged in sundry comments because he (Mr. Woods) cheered the remark that the number of members of the Assembly ought to be reduced, instead of increased. He believed the country would be in favour of a decrease, not on the system which obtained at present, but on the system which he advocated, and which was that the colony should be divided into thirteen electorates, each returning six members.

Mr. TUTHILL remarked that the Premier had given a very good reason for altering Kilmore and Anglesey in the first instance—namely, for the purpose of giving territory to Kyneton and Dalhousie. But he did not see why territory should be added to Anglesey, seeing that, after it had been reduced, it had quite sufficient population for one member. It was not necessary to deprive Delatite of any portion of its territory in order to add it to Anglesey. (Mr. Gillies—"The population of Anglesey is not more than 10,957.") He was perfectly satisfied that the estimates of population on which the Government relied were not correct; and it was impossible to have correct estimates when municipalities were split up as they were under the Bill. He considered it unfair that Anglesey should embrace the immense area assigned to it under the measure, and that, with over 3,000 electors, it should have only one member.

Mr. MUNRO said he desired to correct a statement which the Premier had made with regard to New Zealand. The honorable gentleman said that the action of the Speaker of the House of Representatives was taken in connexion with the Bill to reduce the number of members. That was not so. The Bill passed without any great
trouble at all. But that measure was based on the report of three commissioners—men free from all political bias—who were appointed to consider and deal with the question. If a course of that kind had been followed here, what a large amount of time, trouble, and ill-feeling would have been saved. With regard to Anglesey, a rough estimate showed that the population of that electorate was much larger than the population of East Melbourne. That being so, the treatment to which Anglesey was subjected by the Bill was very unfair. He considered the area of Anglesey should be reduced. To travel over some parts of it, in winter, was impossible.

Sir B. O'LOGHL EN considered the arguments put forward by the Premier to be without proper foundation. What the honorable gentleman had done in a number of cases, that of Anglesey included, was simply to begin by taking territory away from a particular electorate, and then to take portions from other adjoining electorates in order to balance the first taking away. In some instances this taking away and adding on had extended several electorates deep. For example, Kyneton being too small, he went for additional population for that electorate to Dalhousie, and, in order to make up the loss to Dalhousie, he went to Anglesey, which, in its turn, got an addition from Delatite. But what need was there for such inconvenient alterations? Why should, say, Wood's Point and Jamieson be included in Anglesey when all their business relations were with Delatite? Why could not Kilmore be left to Anglesey, Seymour to Dalhousie, and Wood's Point and Jamieson to Delatite, as formerly? (Mr. Gillies—"Blot out Kyneton, and the thing can be done.") If Dalhousie were to give a portion of its territory to Kyneton it would still, with Seymour, be big enough for all electoral purposes. For himself, he did not believe in any strict rule of population in the matter. Under the circumstances, no strictness of the sort could possibly be called for. It was of infinitely greater importance that the electorates should be mapped out in accordance with the configuration of the country. Besides, had the Government ever gone strictly by population when it happened to suit them to do the other thing? Take, as an illustration, the case of Warrnambool, whose representative was getting so many crumbs from the Government, and whose district was not to be touched. Warrnambool had a population of 8,568, with 1,412 electors on the ratepayers' roll. He (Sir B. O'Loghlen) would say nothing of the general roll, not being quite radical enough to mention such a thing to the conservative side of the House. On the other hand, Anglesey would have double the number. Yet honorable members were told that there was a principle in the Bill. Was ever such humbug preached before? (Mr. Gillies—"Who preaches it now?") Did not the Premier say that the Bill followed a principle in the matter of population? Yet 1,412 electors in Warrnambool were to have as much power as 3,008 electors in Anglesey. Was this the Bill to sweep away anomalies? Would the honorable members on the Ministerial side of the House, who had hitherto seemed bound to simply register the decrees of the Government, give these things a thought? All he (Sir B. O'Loghlen) could see in the Bill was a compromise of various principles. Not that that sort of thing was objectionable in itself, if only the wishes of the public were met. But, with respect to the Bill, the wishes of the public had not been met. For instance, the shire council of Koroit were unanimous in desiring that their district should be included in Villiers and Heytesbury; and the mayor and councillors of Ballarat East had urged objections to the way in which their electorate had been carved into. But how had their representations on the subject been replied to? They had been told that the principle of the Bill must be adhered to. That was to be the rule, but Warrnambool and South Melbourne, not to speak of other cases, were to be exceptions to it. In fact, besides the taking from one electorate in order to give to another, there was in the Bill no settled system whatever; and, as for the wishes of the electors, they had, generally speaking, been utterly disregarded. In no less than 50 electorates had particular alterations in boundary been earnestly prayed for, but they were not, it appeared, to be conceded. True, the Bill might pass, but when it became law it would have to be treated as only a temporary measure, which must be amended next session in order that the wishes of the country might be complied with. Honorable members behind the Government might treat the matter as of little importance now, but the time would soon come when their note would be changed. The Premier shook his head, but, of course, he did not care.
Albert Park. If the majority of the electorates were even now altered back to their old lines, substantial justice would be done.

Mr. McIntyre said he found, on looking over the speeches made when the Electoral Bill of 1876 was under consideration, that the rule then uniformly laid down in its behalf was that it would be unjust to take any other basis for electoral division than the electoral roll. But how would such a basis correspond with the basis adopted in the present Bill? Compare Benambra with its 1,739 electors, Beechworth with its 1,695 electors, Bright with its 1,674 electors, and Ararat with its 1,710 electors—all represented by Ministerial supporters—with Anglesey with its 3,008 electors. Did that sort of thing seem like doing justice to all electorates alike? The electoral proposals with which the Premier formerly had to do were very fair, but those made by him in the present Bill were very much the reverse. For instance, the position taken up, in 1876, by the then Chief Secretary, the honorable gentleman's colleague, was as follows:—

"I found that the proper mathematical distribution would be about 2,000 electors to each member; but, although I started from that point, I allowed a considerable margin in cases when the constituency I was dealing with would come of more importance than exactitude in the proportion of numbers."

More fairness could hardly have been displayed. Again—

"In single electorates, therefore, the number of voters varies from 1,300 in South Gippsland, and 1,350 in Portland, to 2,300 in Carlton, which will have the largest number of electors returning only one member in the colony. Of course, 2,300 is rather above the proper number, but it is, I think, impossible to make a distribution of this sort in a satisfactory manner without taking into account and making a large allowance for such surrounding circumstances as the nature of the district in question and, as far as possible, the community of interest and avocations existing in different localities."

And in another passage—

"From a public point of view—from a national point of view—I came to the conclusion that it was not desirable to make alterations unless in places which were largely over-represented or largely under-represented, and that it was desirable to make the alterations by adjusting the electorates with the nearest territory with which they had some common interest."

Why did not the Premier go to work in the same way with this Bill? On the other hand, now that he was proposing a number of alterations in different constituencies, why were honorable members not allowed a day or two to consider them? Ought they not to have some fair idea of the changes they were required to assent to? As for Maldon, he (Mr. McIntyre) did not know in the least what was going to be done with it. All he did know was that, while North Melbourne would have 2,854 electors, Jolimont 2,853, South Melbourne 2,353, South Yarra 2,681, St. Kilda 2,312, Prahran 2,081, and Toorak 2,371, each of these electorates lying compact, and within a radius of only a mile or a mile and a half, Maldon would have as many or more electors, scattered over 60 or 70 miles square. He also knew that Anglesey would have over 3,000 electors, scattered over an immense district. But there was no use in going over the whole thing again. Considering the great progress already made with the Bill, the Premier ought to simply state what alterations he intended to propose in the remaining subdivisions, and to allow their further consideration to be postponed.

Mr. Zox thought that excellent reasons had been supplied why the Premier should give way to the request of the honorable member for Kilmore for time to consider the alteration which the honorable gentleman proposed to make in the Anglesey electorate. Such a postponement ought to be conceded, it only in the interests of fair play. (Mr. Gillies—"Do you want the Bill to hang over for another month?") The Premier had no right to make such an observation, for he (Mr. Zox) had never, in the slightest way, sought to obstruct the Bill. In fact, he had hardly spoken on the measure except during the debate upon its second reading.

Mr. GRAVES said the municipal council of Mansfield had petitioned that the Howqua River should form part of the electoral boundary of Delatite.

Mr. Gillies' amendment was agreed to.

Mr. HUNT stated that he desired to propose the omission of the subdivision with the view of substituting another.

The CHAIRMAN.—The only chance the honorable member will have of proposing the substitution of another sub-schedule will be by securing the negativing of the question that the sub-schedule, as amended, stand part of the schedule.

The committee divided on the question that the subdivision, as amended, be agreed to.

Ayes 34
Noes 24

Majority for the Anglesey subdivision 10
Mr. Anderson (V.), 
" Bosisto, 
" Deakin, 
" Derham, 
" Dow, 
" Fould, 
" Gardiner, 
" Gillies, 
" Gordon, 
" Graham, 
" Groom, 
" Hall, 
" A. Harris, 
" J. Harris, 
" Highett, 
" Keys, 
" Langridge, 
" McLean, 
Mr. McLellan, 
" Murray, 
" Nimmo, 
" Officer, 
" Outtrim, 
" Pearson, 
" Rees, 
" Reid, 
" Russell, 
" Uren, 
" Walker, 
" Wright, 
" Wrixon, 
" A. Young, 

Mr. Cameron, 

Mr. Murphy, 

Sir B. O'Loghlen, 

Mr. Patterson, 

Dr. Quick, 

Mr. Toohey, 

Tuthill, 

Wheeler, 

C. Young, 

Zox, 

Tellers. 

Tellers. 

Mr. Staugton, 

Mr. Langdon, 

Mr. McIntyre, 

Mr. Bent, 

" Munro. 

On the 4th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Ararat, 
Mr. Toohey proposed an amendment, with the object of exciting the portion of the existing electorate of Villiers and Heytesbury proposed to be assigned to the electorate of Ararat.

The amendment was negatived.

The subdivision was agreed to, as was also the 6th subdivision (Ballarat East).

The 7th (Ballarat West), 9th (Beechworth), and 12th (Bendigo) subdivisions were postponed.

The 13th subdivision (Bourke East) was agreed to.

Mr. Harper said he thought this sub-schedule was to have been postponed.

Mr. Gillies remarked that the reason he agreed to the postponement of the sub-schedule the previous Thursday night was because the honorable member asked for certain information as to the boundaries. He had not a special map with him showing the boundaries of this district, but they were shown on the large map. The Government had been obliged to add to the western portion of the electorate, for the purpose of bringing it up to the average population of districts returning one member. The western boundary was a municipal boundary, and a very good boundary.

Mr. Harper said he would be glad if the Premier would postpone the sub-schedule until next day, so that he (Mr. Harper) might get certain information with regard to the western boundary, because the electors objected to the alteration on that side. (Mr. Reid—"The sub-schedule has been passed.") He was not aware that it was passed.

Mr. Gillies stated that he would promise to supply the honorable member with all the information he required, and if it was found that any mistake had been made there would be an opportunity of rectifying it on the report.

Mr. Langridge regretted that the subdivision had not been postponed. He and others were interested in the matter, because the boundaries of East Bourke affected the boundaries of neighbouring constituencies.

On the 14th subdivision, describing the boundaries of the electoral district of Bourke West, 
Sir B. O'Loghlen asked the Chief Secretary whether there had been any expression of opinion from the inhabitants of West Bourke as to the division of the district? Was the honorable gentleman aware whether the present proposal was agreeable to the electors or not?

Mr. Deakin stated that there had been no objection, so far as he was aware, from any part of the district that was proposed to be included in the new electorate of West Bourke. There was a desire, however, on the part of one portion of the present West Bourke electorate, which was not included in the new electorate, to be included in it. He referred to the Springfield-shire, and he was not sure but what the Romsey-shire also desired to be included. To grant this, of course, would increase the number of electors considerably, and correspondingly decrease the number in the electorate in which it was proposed to put those places. (Sir B. O'Loghlen—"What electorate is that?") In Dalhousie. He had refrained from taking any part in the Cabinet in dealing with the district, as he was personally interested in the matter.

Mr. Staugton stated that he had received a protest from the local councils of Springfield and Romsey against being severed from the electorate of West Bourke, and he would be glad if the Premier could
see his way to an amendment by which those municipalities would still be included.
The subdivision was agreed to.
Progress was then reported.
The House adjourned at five minutes to eleven o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.
Wednesday, October 31, 1888.

Telegraph Cable between Canada and Australia—
Licensing (Public-houses) Act: Convictions—Trustee
Companies Bill—Noxious Insects Bill—Lunacy Statute
Further Amendment Bill.

The President took the chair at twenty-five minutes to five o'clock p.m., and read
the prayer.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION
WITH CANADA.

The Hon. J. SERVICE asked the Minister of Justice whether the Premier had
recently received a further communication from Canada relative to the laying of an
electric cable between Vancouver and Australia; and, if so, whether he would take the
necessary steps to lay a copy thereof on the table of the House?
The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said that the only recent communication which the Premier
had received relating to the laying of an electric cable between Vancouver and
Australia was a letter from Captain F. C. Rowan, a copy of which appeared in the
Argus newspaper of the 26th September last. He had no objection to lay a copy of
that letter on the table of the House.

MR. P. KERR.
The Hon. H. CUTHBERT, pursuant to order of the House (dated October 23), laid
on the table a copy of the recommendations made by the Parliament Buildings Commis-
sion with reference to Mr. P. Kerr, the architect of the Houses of Parliament.

LICENSING (PUBLIC-HOUSES) ACT.

Convictions.
The Hon. J. SERVICE moved—
"That a return be laid on the table of the Council showing particulars of all convictions
under the 98th section of the Licensing Act 1885, distinguishing between first, second, and third
offences, and showing the penalties in each case, also showing the names of all persons declared
'disqualified' under the said section, and the period of disqualification, and the names of any
such disqualified persons (if any) to whom a licence has been subsequently granted."
The Hon. J. BALFOUR seconded the motion, which was agreed to.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES BILL.

This Bill was recommitted for the further consideration of clause 4.
The Hon. J. BALFOUR said that the clause rendered any director or officer of a
trustee company guilty of a misdemeanor if he knowingly and wilfully dealt with any
trust money contrary to the instrument creating the trust and the law for the time
being in force. The previous day there was a general consensus of opinion amongst
honorable members that it was absolutely necessary to make some amendment in the clause,
so as to enable trustee companies to deposit trust funds temporarily in a banking
institution if they thought it desirable to do so. Some difficulty, however, was felt as to
the precise character of the amendment that should be made. While, on the one hand, it was thought that trustee
companies should not be restricted in the deposit of trust moneys to what were known as the
associated banks, on the other hand it was considered that they should not be at liberty
to deposit with mere trading companies. To meet the difficulty, he now begged to move
that the following words be inserted after the words "the law for the time being in
force";—

"Except by depositing the same in a bank
having a subscribed capital of at least £300,000,
a paid-up capital of at least £150,000, and a
reserve of at least £50,000, and which does not,

as part of its ordinary business, buy and sell land,
or shares, or other property." He had submitted this amendment to the
Minister of Justice, who was willing to ac-
tcept it. It was even more restrictive than
the amendment suggested, the previous day,
by the Minister of Defence, who thought that
trustee companies should not be allowed to
deposit trust funds with any banking insti-
tution which had a subscribed capital of less
than £250,000, and a paid-up capital of less
than £125,000. The amendment would
cover the case of two institutions with which
some of the trustee companies were at pre-
sent in the habit of temporarily depositing
trust funds, namely, the Land Mortgage
Bank and the Australian Deposit and Mort-
gage Bank, each of which had a larger capital
and reserve fund than the amounts named,
while it would exclude mere land banks and
trading institutions. Many of the latter
were, of course, perfectly sound institutions,
but such a large number had sprung up lately that it was absolutely necessary, while rendering it legal for trustee companies to deposit trust funds with banking institutions, to place some limit on their powers in that respect.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT remarked that the amendment would afford sufficient protection to persons interested in estates committed to the management of trustee companies against the funds being deposited with institutions that were insecure. With the restrictions which it imposed, he thought that the Legislature might safely rely on the good judgment and discretion of trustee companies as to the depositing of any trust moneys which came into their hands.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL said that he thoroughly concurred with the amendment, but he thought it would be prudent to provide that in the event of a trustee company having a large sum of money—say over £10,000—belonging to one estate, it should not be allowed to deposit, the whole amount in any one banking institution. The Government, in dealing with the general revenue, did not put the whole of their eggs into one basket, but divided the public account pro rata amongst the associated banks. He was of opinion that, on the same principle, a trustee company should distribute its deposits in dealing with a very large sum of money belonging to one estate.

The Hon. S. FRASER stated that he heartily approved of Mr. Zeal’s suggestion, and would like to see it embodied in the amendment, so that no trustee company would be able to deposit in any bank a larger sum belonging to one estate than £10,000.

The Hon. J. SERVICE said all honorable members would concur in the object which Mr. Zeal had in view, but he was afraid that the honorable member desired the Legislature to go a little too far in a grandmotherly direction. If any money committed to the care of a trust company was deposited in a bank, it would have to be deposited at call, or, at all events, subject to withdrawal at very short notice; and no bank would care for the deposit of a very large sum of money which was liable to be withdrawn almost at any moment. He thought that honorable members might safely leave the directors of trustee companies to be guided by ordinary commercial principles in depositing trust funds in a bank. If they had a very large sum to deposit, they would, no doubt, divide it amongst two or more banks, so as to get as much interest upon it as they could.

Mr. Balfour’s amendment was agreed to.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL moved that the following additional words be inserted in the clause:

“In the event of any proposed deposit exceeding the sum of £10,000, the surplus of such deposit shall be divided and lodged in another bank, so that no one bank shall have more than £10,000 of any one estate.”

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT expressed the hope that Mr. Zeal would not press his amendment. The matter was one which might safely be left to the judgment and discretion of the directors of the companies.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL urged that the amendment would provide a very necessary safeguard in cases in which a trustee company had a very large sum of money in hand belonging to one estate.

The Hon. J. A. WALLACE stated that he approved of the principle of the amendment. If, however, the amount of any one deposit was limited to £10,000, a trustee company would have to find twenty banks to enable it to deposit funds amounting to £200,000 belonging to one estate.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL observed that he wished the principle of the amendment to be adopted, and did not attach so much importance to the precise limitation placed on the amount of the deposits.

Sir W. J. CLARKE said he thought the amendment was a very sensible one. A trustee company and a bank might run in double harness, as it were—the directors of the company might also be directors of the bank—and in cases of that kind the whole of the funds belonging to a large trust estate might be deposited in one particular bank at a time when money was scarce, unless some limitation was adopted of the character proposed by the amendment.

The Hon. J. BALFOUR considered that the amendment would apply legislative machinery to a matter which had much better be left to the discretion of the directors of the companies in question. The cases in which a trustee company would have such a large sum of money to deposit as £200,000, or even £100,000, belonging to one estate would be very rare indeed. He had not known one instance of a company having had £20,000 on its hands belonging to one estate.

The Hon. J. SERVICE observed that there never had been a case in those colonies where a depositor lost money in a bank.
The Hon. H. CUTHBERT suggested that Mr. Zeal's amendment should be altered to read as follows:—

"Provided that no deposit of the funds of any one estate shall exceed the sum of £20,000 in any one bank."

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL intimated that he would accept the alteration.

The committee divided on the amendment—

Ayes ... ... ... ... 16
Noes ... ... ... ... 12

Majority for the amendment 4

Mr. Balfour, ... ... ... ... Mr. Lorimer, ... ... ... ... Mr. Melville.
Mr. Bell, ... ... ... ... Mr. Osmand, ... ... ... ... Mr. Cooke.
Mr. Buchanan, ... ... ... ... Mr. Roberts, ... ... ... ... Mr. Dowling.
Sir W. J. Clarke, ... ... ... ... Mr. Wallace, ... ... ... ... Mr. Gore.
Mr. Connor, ... ... ... ... Mr. Zeal, ... ... ... ... Mr. D. Ham.
" Cuthbert, ... ... ... ... Mr. Davis, ... ... ... ... Mr. James.
" Davis, ... ... ... ... Teller.
" Fraser, ... ... ... ... Mr. Brown.

The Bill was then reported with further amendments.

NOXIOUS INSECTS BILL.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL remarked that this Bill be recommitted for the reconsideration of clauses 4 and 6, and to add new clauses.

The Hon. F. S. DOBSON observed that, as he could not speak in committee, he desired to call attention to the extraordinary powers conferred on inspectors by clause 10. This clause provided that an inspector might enter any ship, storehouse, &c., and also that he might, by notice in writing, direct any person in occupation of any land, ship, storehouse, &c., "to take such measures and do such acts as the inspector thinks fit" for the eradication of the disease or destruction of the insect. There was absolutely no limitation as to what the inspector might order, and in the case of a ship, for instance, if he found a diseased apple on board, he could actually order the vessel to be destroyed. (Mr. Bell—"Nonsense.") He would ask Mr. Bell to show where any restrictions were placed on the inspector's power? The whole thing was left absolutely to his discretion. This was surely legislation run mad. He (Dr. Dobson) considered that it was part of the duty of Parliament, when conferring large powers, to provide for their being exercised within reasonable limits, and not to give untrammeled authority to any officer. Clause 4 empowered the Governor in Council to make regulations, and, in order to meet the objection he had pointed out, he would suggest that clause 10 should be amended by inserting after the words he had quoted the words "and as may be sanctioned by the regulations to be made as aforesaid." Then the inspector could only order things to be done which were provided for in the regulations.

The Hon. J. BELL intimated that, to relieve the honorable member's mind, he would propose the alteration suggested in committee.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR expressed the opinion that the Bill should be recommitted generally, as a number of important amendments would have to be made in it. Even the interpretation clause was too wide, as by it the word "insect" might be made to include anything. Farmers might be compelled to destroy caterpillars. The term "fungi again should not be included with insects. The whole machinery of the Bill was to be carried out by regulations which honorable members knew nothing about, and he feared that, in its present form, the measure would be quite unworkable.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL remarked that the suggestions of honorable members had removed a great number of obnoxious features from the Bill, but it was still very objectionable. He doubted whether, under the interpretation clause, an inspector could not compel an unfortunate landowner to kill all the mosquitoes on his property. He had received a letter from a very successful fruit-grower at Diamond Creek, who protested strongly against the provisions of the Bill.

The Hon. J. SERVICE said that a more extraordinary interpretation clause he certainly had never seen than that in the Bill. "Vegetable parasite" was unneccessarily included under the term "insect," when it might have been defined in connexion with the term "vegetable" in the same clause. Then the definition of "Minister" was sandwiched between the definitions of insect and vegetable, so that it would seem at a cursory glance that a Minister was a hybrid between an insect and a vegetable.

Sir J. LORIMER stated that, in an interpretation clause, it was usual to give the meaning of terms in alphabetical order.

The Hon. G. DAVIS considered that the Bill should be recommitted generally,
because he thought it was at present in a form which the Council could hardly accept. The Bill was an attempt to deal experimentally with a subject about which little was known. The experts who had been examined by the Vegetable Products Commission disagreed so widely as to the nature and origin of a number of these diseases that he thought the question was hardly ripe for legislation. Their evidence showed that the codlin moth was disseminated everywhere throughout the colony, and the effect of this measure, if it was enforced, would be very harassing. Every one owning an orchard would have to report the existence of the codlin moth in it, or else he would be liable to be fined from £1 to £10, and there was not an orchard in the colony where it did not exist. In England the codlin moth was not regarded as an unmixed evil, and there was no special legislation against it. While giving Mr. Bell credit for the best intentions, he thought that, in view of the harassing effect the Bill would have on a great industry, it would be wise to drop it for the present, until the question had been more thoroughly investigated.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE moved as an amendment that the Bill be recommitted generally. He had that day called on importers of fruit from California, and had had cases of apples opened for his inspection. He found that, although the apples were carefully picked and placed in separate papers, the codlin moth was all over the cases. There were thousands of these insects all about, and he did not see how the Bill was to get rid of them. For his own part, he really thought the best course would be to put off the measure until next session.

The amendment was agreed to, and the Bill was recommitted.

On clause 1,

The Hon. D. MELVILLE moved that progress be reported. He thought it was desirable that the further consideration of the measure should be deferred until the next sitting. Honorable members were very anxious to deal with other important business on the paper that evening.

The Hon. J. BELL expressed the hope that the committee would not accept Mr. Melville's proposal. The Bill was really a very important measure, and as deserving of consideration as the other Bills to which Mr. Melville had alluded.

The Hon. J. A. WALLACE said he thought the best plan would be to clear the bill off the paper altogether. He therefore begged to move that the Chairman leave the chair. He had looked at it carefully, and the more he read it the less he liked it. There was not a single orchard round Melbourne but must be destroyed if the measure was enforced.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR said he was satisfied that until the people concerned had had full time to inform themselves of what the Bill really meant, it would be wrong to attempt to pass it into law. The best plan would be for the Government to bring down suitable proposals next session.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD stated that he was in favour of progress being reported. Many honorable members were prepared to support the Bill, but it would be hardly wise to press it forward in the face of the great opposition offered to it.

The Hon. J. BELL submitted that the opposition offered to further progress with the Bill was scarcely reasonable in view of the additional clauses he intended to propose, and also of the fact that no tree could be destroyed except with the concurrence of the owner. On the other hand, the need of some legislation against insect pests was very pressing. Other colonies had adopted such legislation with distinct success. Why should not Victoria follow the example? He was afraid that even hanging up the Bill for a fortnight would lead to it being shelved altogether.

The Hon. F. ORMOND said he was not at all satisfied with the arguments offered against the Bill. If it was defective to any extent, was not Mr. Bell ready to accept any reasonable suggestion for its amendment? His (Mr. Ormond's) own idea was that the codlin moth should be treated in much the same way as scab in sheep was formerly treated. He also thought that clause 10 should be amended so as to be governed by the conditions laid down in clause 6. Unquestionably the measure could be rendered very serviceable to the colony.

The Hon. G. LE FÉVRE stated that he quite agreed with Mr. Ormond as to the desirableness of the Bill. He would also congratulate Mr. Bell upon the patience and conciliatory spirit he had displayed with regard to it. The thing to be dreaded was that, if the proposed legislation or something like it was not adopted, there would be a strong chance of the colony missing the brilliant future in the matter of fruit-growth which was now before it.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL expressed the opinion that Mr. Bell deserved the thanks
of the House for his conduct with respect to the Bill. At the same time, it might well be asked what sort of measure would it have been but for the alterations made in it at the instance of those who were not satisfied with it. Why, even now, the Bill might be interpreted to sanction the prosecution of a man who could not keep down the locusts in his garden. The words "any other insect" could be made to apply not only to locusts but to even bees or flies. The best plan would be to let the measure stand over for further consideration.

The Hon. J. SERVICE said he would ask Mr. Wallace to withdraw his motion that the Chairman leave the chair. He made this request in order that progress might be reported.

The motion that the Chairman leave the chair was withdrawn.

Mr. Melville's motion that progress be reported was agreed to.

Progress was then reported.

LUNACY STATUTE FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

On clause 11, providing that if an outside medical practitioner called in under the provisions of clause 10 did not concur with the superintendent, another outside medical practitioner should be consulted; and also that, according to his opinion, the patient should either be discharged or remitted to a lunatic asylum,

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT moved an amendment to the effect that a patient might, as an alternative, be sent "to a philanthropic hospital, if the governors of the hospital be willing to receive such patient." He said he intended to move a similar amendment in connexion with a number of other clauses.

The amendment was agreed to.

Discussion took place on clause 12, providing, when the superintendent was of opinion, after a patient had been detained in a receiving house for three days, that he was insane, for the calling in of outside medical opinion in the way described in clauses 10 and 11, and also, if both the outside medical practitioners consulted decided that the patient was not insane, for his discharge by the superintendent.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE expressed the opinion that if two outside medical practitioners were to be enabled, after, say, some five minutes' consultation, to give an opinion on which the superintendent would be bound to order the discharge of a patient as not insane, the community would incur very great risk. It should be borne in mind that the views of the superintendent, who had had the patient under his observation for a number of days, were much more likely to be correct than those of the outside medical men called in. Besides, it was within his (Dr. Le Fevre's) experience that a patient might, during 28 days' detention in a receiving house, manifest no sign of insanity, and shortly afterwards break out into fits of dreadful violence. He thought, therefore, that there should be a final appeal to the opinion of an inspector.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY said he did not agree with Dr. Le Fevre. If a patient who had been discharged at the instance of two outside medical men afterwards broke out into violence, assuredly those gentlemen ought to be called upon to offer some explanation. It should be borne in mind that such medical men would form their opinions, not alone from, say, five minutes' examination, but also from the history of the case. Upon the whole, he thought that the provisions of the clause might be relied upon with confidence.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE observed that the improper discharge of a patient when he was at the incipient stage might often greatly protract, if not wholly prevent, his cure. The mischief was that medical men were, as a rule, so dreadfully afraid of signing a lunacy certificate.

The Hon. J. BUCHANAN thought that, inasmuch as many of the patients brought to a receiving house would be simply suffering from the effects of drink, provision should be made for sending such of them as might not be immediately cureable to an inebriate asylum.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE considered it to be quite possible for the committee to derive much benefit from the disagreement of such medical authorities as Dr. Beaney and Dr. Le Fevre. His own opinion was that, if any two responsible medical men could be got to declare a patient in a receiving house to be not insane, he ought to be immediately discharged from custody.

The Hon. J. H. CONNOR said he considered that provision should be made in the Bill for the treatment of confirmed drunkards. He believed that more lunacy was caused by the use of strong drink than in any other way. He was in favour of any two magistrates having power to commit confirmed drunkards to a receiving house where they could be properly treated, for a given term.
by competent medical men. That would be striking at the root of the evil. He would be glad to assist in carrying a similar provision in this direction to that which Mr. Buchanan induced the House to adopt in 1884.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that he was indebted to Mr. Buchanan for the suggestion he had made as to the insertion in the Bill of provisions relating to inebriates. He (Mr. Cuthbert) had had certain clauses prepared to meet the case of inebriates, his desire being that they should form a separate part of the Bill. Those clauses would empower the Government to establish two asylums for inebriates—one for paying patients, the other for patients who were unable to pay, but who, after their cure had been effected, would be responsible to the State for the cost incurred on their behalf. However, it was not his intention to deal with the inebriate question at present. With regard to clause 12, which the committee had been considering, he must say, in answer to the argument advanced by Dr. Le Fevre, that he considered that if two independent medical men came forward, and declared—that each had had the opportunity of forming his own individual judgment—that a patient was sane, he ought to be set at liberty notwithstanding that the superintendent of the receiving house might be of a contrary opinion.

On clause 13, providing that, in the event of the two medical practitioners who might be called in differing as to the sanity of the patient, an examination should be conducted by the police magistrate of the district, and that the patient should be treated as insane or ordered to be discharged according to the evidence which might be submitted,

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE proposed the substitution for “the police magistrate of the district” of the words “the superintendent of one of the lunatic asylums.” It was a matter of impossibility for a layman to understand the whole of the phases of insanity, and so frame his questions as to ascertain the nature of a man’s disease. The thing required years and years of constant study. The proper course was to have an expert. The matter was discussed by the local council of the British Medical Association a few evenings ago; and they came to the conclusion that the clause as it stood would be unjust to the patient and also to the general public.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY supported the amendment.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS observed that the clause was only following the law at present in existence with regard to lunatics being brought before courts of petty sessions. The patient was first examined in private by doctors, and afterwards in court when the evidence of the doctors was taken, and upon that evidence the patient was either discharged or committed to an asylum. He considered that expert evidence should be given in all cases, and that the man who had to judge of the evidence should be conversant with the law. Under these circumstances, he was opposed to the amendment.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT expressed the hope that the amendment would not be pressed. The clause was properly framed. It was intended not that the police magistrate should usurp the functions of an expert, but that he should act as a judge. The police magistrate was empowered by the clause to “call in to his assistance one medical practitioner to be selected by him for that purpose.”

The amendment was withdrawn.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE then proposed the substitution for “one medical practitioner to be selected by him for that purpose,” of the words “two experts who shall be superintendents of lunatic asylums.”

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS said he had no objection to the police magistrate having the power to call in two medical practitioners to his assistance, but he objected to either of them being the superintendent of a lunatic asylum. It was absolutely necessary that the superintendent of a lunatic asylum should be at the institution of which he had charge day and night; but, if superintendents were liable to be called upon to go from court to court to give evidence, what would become of the lunatics?

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE said he would withdraw his amendment if the Minister of Justice would agree to an amendment to provide that the police magistrate should call in two medical experts.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT remarked that he was afraid that considerable expense would be involved if the police magistrate was required to call in two medical experts in every case. He, however, would not object to the insertion of the words “or more” after “one,” which would enable the police magistrate to call in to his assistance “one or more” medical practitioners.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE stated that he would accept the suggestion. He would, therefore, withdraw his amendment, and
move the insertion of the words "or more" after "one."

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL expressed the opinion that a police magistrate would be quite competent to decide the question of sanity or insanity under circumstances of the kind contemplated by the clause. There was no necessity to make any amendment in the clause.

The Hon. S. FRASER remarked that there was nothing to prevent a police magistrate taking the evidence of a dozen different persons, if he thought it necessary to do so, in any case.

The Hon. J. BUCHANAN observed that, before the functions of the police magistrate would be brought into operation under the clause, the alleged lunatic would have been examined by five or six medical men. The clause, as it stood, contained everything that was required.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY said it would be a safeguard if the clause provided that the police magistrate should call in two medical men to his assistance.

The amendment was negatived.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT called attention to the portion of the clause providing that, if the police magistrate arrived at the conclusion that the patient was insane, or required treatment and control, "he shall order the patient to be conveyed and placed in such asylum as he may direct," and moved that, after the words quoted, the following words be inserted:—"or to a philanthropic hospital, if the governors of the hospital be willing to receive such patient."

The amendment was agreed to, and a consequential amendment was made in another portion of the clause and in some subsequent clauses.

On clause 17, providing that every patient in a lunatic asylum, or other similar institution, should be examined once, at least, in every twelve months by a medical practitioner appointed by the Governor in Council,

The Hon. F. BROWN asked if the examination would be made by the medical superintendent of the institution in which the patient was confined, or by some other medical man?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT replied that the examination would be made by an independent medical practitioner.

On clause 18, providing, inter alia, that, if the medical practitioner appointed under the previous clause reported that any patient was not insane, and did not require care or treatment, a copy of the report should be sent to the Inspector, who, if he agreed with it, should make an order for the discharge of the patient,

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD remarked that the power which the clause placed in the hands of the Inspector seemed to be rather dangerous. If he agreed with the medical practitioner appointed under clause 17 that a patient was not insane, he could order him to be discharged. It was possible that pressure might be brought to bear on the Inspector to concur with a medical practitioner that a patient was not insane, and thereby procure the discharge of the patient. Should not that be guarded against?

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said he thought that the clause was very carefully framed to prevent anything wrong being done under it. The Inspector was not to be the superintendent of any lunatic asylum.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY observed that the Inspector would have somewhat autocratic powers, and it was therefore desirable to know what his qualifications were to be.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT intimated that the Government would be careful that no gentleman was at any time appointed Inspector of Lunatic Asylums unless he was properly qualified for the position;

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE called attention to a portion of the clause providing that if the medical practitioner who made the examination reported that a patient was not insane, and the inspector disagreed with that opinion, "the Chief Secretary shall take such steps either for the further examination of the patient by another medical practitioner selected by the Chief Secretary, or for the examination of the patient and the taking of evidence as to his sanity before a police magistrate." The words "or for the examination of the patient" were rather ambiguous, and it would be well to insert after "patient" the words "by a medical practitioner."

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that, in the event of the inspector and the examining medical practitioner disagreeing as to the sanity of a patient, the Chief Secretary, by the clause, had the power either to have the patient examined by a third medical man of his own selection and to act on his report, or else to have an inquiry held by a police magistrate, at which expert evidence on both sides could be heard. The probability was that the Chief Secretary in most cases would adopt the latter course.

The amendment was agreed to.
On clause 21, providing, inter alia, that no patient absent on parole, or on trial, “or who has escaped from detention, shall be recaptured after the expiration of three months from the date of such breach of parole, expiration of leave of absence on trial, or escape, without recommittal,”

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE moved the substitution of “recommitted” for “recaptured.” He thought it would be offering a premium to lunatics to escape if they could not be recaptured after the expiration of three months. It was right that they should not be re-committed to an asylum after three months without fresh evidence of insanity, but they should be liable to recapture so that they might be sent to a receiving house for inspection.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY remarked that if an escaped patient remained so quiet during three months as to elude observation, it was strong proof that he had recovered his sanity. If an escaped patient remained insane, he would be heard of long before the expiration of three months.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT stated that the Lunacy Commission strongly urged that if a patient who was out on leave absconded, and nothing more was heard of him for three months, he ought not to be sent back to an asylum without fresh evidence.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE observed that the clause referred to patients who had “escaped from detention” as well as to patients out on leave. It was to offering a premium to escape to lunatics detained in an asylum that he chiefly objected. He begged to withdraw his amendment with the view of moving the omission of the words “or who has escaped from detention.”

The Hon. D. MELVILLE expressed the opinion that if a man behaved as a sane citizen for three months, he should not be liable to re-arrest as a lunatic without fresh evidence.

The amendment was withdrawn.

The Hon. G. LE FEVRE then moved the omission of the words “or who has escaped from detention.”

The amendment was negatived.

Discussion took place on clause 23, which was as follows:—

“The Governor in Council may from time to time appoint for every receiving house a superintendent, who shall be a medical practitioner, and, if the Governor in Council think necessary, a deputy superintendent, and may also appoint all such other officers as he may deem necessary.”

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD suggested that after “may” (line 1) the words “subject to the provisions of the Public Service Act 1883” should be inserted. It was usual, since the passing of the Public Service Act, to provide that all appointments should be made subject to its provisions, and he did not see why that good rule should be departed from.

The Hon. F. BROWN remarked that if the Public Service Board had the making of the appointments referred to in the clause, they might transfer some Custom-house officer to the charge of a receiving house.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD said it was provided in the Public Service Act that if there was no officer in the service suitable for a particular office the Minister could recommend the appointment of some one from outside.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS stated that he would strongly oppose the amendment suggested. The Public Service Board had already appointed non-professional men to professional duties, and the sooner the Public Service Act was repealed or materially amended the better. He thought there was not a member of the Council who did not see the failure in the working of that Act from day to day.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL expressed the hope that the Government would not accept the amendment. There was sufficient interference by the Public Service Board already without allowing them to interfere in the appointment of medical practitioners to take charge of receiving houses. There were no such officers in the public service at present. It was high time that the Public Service Act was greatly amended. He was in favour of patronage being in a certain channel under proper control, but he could not vote for permitting the Public Service Board to meddle with matters that they knew nothing about. He was told by one of the oldest Government officials that, some time ago, when a sailor was wanted in the Bay, the Public Service Board, after six weeks’ deliberation, sent down a baker to fill the position. He really thought the Government should take the matter of the Public Service Board up, and see that the board’s proceedings were regulated by common sense.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD said that, while there might be considerable force in the contention that the medical superintendent of a receiving house should not be
appointed under the provisions of the Public Service Act, he would point out that the clause also provided for the appointment of a deputy superintendent, who apparently need not be a medical man, and also of "all such other officers" as the Governor in Council might deem necessary. It was absolutely necessary that the latter appointments should be made subject to the provisions of the Public Service Act. That Act was the law, and it should not be ignored while it remained the law. He believed that in the main it had worked well, although it might require minor amendments.

The Hon. F. BROWN expressed the opinion that the deputy superintendent ought to be a medical man, as otherwise he would not be able to perform the superintendent's duties if the latter was ill or absent. If the clause did not provide that the deputy superintendent should be a medical man, it ought to be amended in that respect.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said he thought the clause was properly framed without the amendment suggested by Colonel Sargood. The duties devolving upon the medical superintendents of receiving houses would be of a very special character. These gentlemen would be experts, and they were not to be found in the public service at present. As to the subordinate officers, it would be desirable that the medical superintendent should have a voice in their selection, as he would be specially qualified to judge of their suitability.

The Hon. S. FRASER considered that the amendment suggested would endanger the successful working of the measure, and he hoped the clause would be passed as it stood.

The Hon. F. T. SARGOOD observed that he was sorry to have to press the matter, but he felt that, if the committee passed the clause as it stood, they would be taking a step which would have the effect of ignoring very important legislation. As the question was one of great moment, he would suggest that the clause should be postponed.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS said that all honorable members admitted that the Public Service Act was bad. (Col. Sargood—"No.") The honorable member admitted that it wanted amending. The Public Service Board had worked great injustice. They had transferred from the Custom-house a man who had never seen a deed in his life and made him an examiner of titles, and they had done a number of other acts of a similar character. It would be most unwise to place the appointment of the officers referred to in the clause in the hands of such men. It was to be remembered that the Council were now legislating for the care of unfortunate beings who could not look after their own interests.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT said that, as there seemed to be a difference of opinion on the subject of how some of these officers, at all events, should be appointed, he would, in order to expedite the passing of the Bill, move that the clause be postponed.

The Hon. S. FRASER remarked that he was convinced that the vast majority of the committee were in favour of passing the clause in its present form. If the Bill was not pushed through now, it might not come on again for a month.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL considered that if the Minister of Justice desired to postpone the clause, against the wish of nine out of ten honorable members, some reason should be given for that course. He (Mr. Zeal) was strongly opposed to the Public Service Board being allowed to meddle in this matter. What did they know about the control of lunatics—except, indeed, that they had shown any amount of lunacy in some of their appointments? (Mr. Fraser—"Worse than lunacy.") He objected altogether to the Public Service Board. Until the head of that board himself obeyed the law, and showed an example to the other public servants, the Council should pay no respect to the board. The chairman of the Public Service Board was constantly setting the law at defiance.

The Hon. W. H. ROBERTS submitted that the majority of the committee should rule, and he would certainly ask for a division on the postponement of the clause. He did not see why the Bill should be delayed when honorable members were being constantly asked to push legislation through.

The Hon. G. YOUNG suggested that a simple solution of the difficulty would be to pass the clause as it stood, and then, subsequently, if the Minister in charge of the Bill thought it necessary, the clause could be recommitted. He quite agreed in the propriety of retaining the clause as it stood. He coincided in the remarks of honorable members as to the working of the Public Service Act, and the unadvisability of allowing the Public Service Board to control appointments of this kind. The appointments made by the Public Service Board...
had been most absurd in many instances. For instance, specially trained clerks of courts had been sent to do drudgery work in the mail branch of the Postal department—work for which they were quite unfitness, and which was unenjoyable to them. The chances were that, if the Public Service Board had the power of making the appointments referred to in this clause, they would appoint men from other branches of the service who knew nothing about the managing of lunatics. The Council should be very careful not to allow the Public Service Board to control these appointments.

The motion for the postponement of the clause was negatived, and the clause was agreed to.

On clause 27, providing that any patient certified by the Inspector or the superintendent of a receiving house to be harmless, and free from any symptoms of a dangerous tendency, might be boarded out, the Hon. D. MELVILLE moved that the clause be postponed for further consideration. On the second reading of the Bill, Dr. Le Fevre pointed out that it would be very dangerous to board out idiots in private families, under certain circumstances. He (Mr. Melville) questioned very much whether it would be to the public advantage to allow lunatics, even though they were harmless, to be boarded out at all, and thus brought into contact with families.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT observed that the Council had already approved of the principle of boarding out harmless patients by passing the second reading of the Bill without objection. It was true that, as pointed out by Dr. Le Fevre, it would be very undesirable that a family should receive an idiot or a lunatic at certain periods; but the head of the house would surely be the last person to desire to receive a patient at such times. There were many patients in lunatic asylums who were quite harmless and industrious, and a number of them might probably be boarded out with advantage. He had recently visited the Kew asylum, and he was struck by the admirable order in which the grounds and plantations were kept by the patients, and when he went into the different wards he was surprised to see nearly every patient engaged in some pursuit. The institution was so admirably managed that it was a sight worth seeing. As to the boarding-out system, some medical men thought it had not been a success where it had been tried, while others thought it had worked very well. There was, however, a general consensus of opinion that the experiment of boarding out harmless lunatics was one well worth trying in this colony. Many lunatics were merely insane on one particular point. For instance, he was told a story of a patient who, being allowed out on leave at intervals, was in the habit of visiting a bookseller's shop for three years. The bookseller had not the slightest conception that he was insane, but believed that he was one of the warders at Kew. On one occasion, when the patient visited the shop, a medical man happened to be there, and the bookseller was incredulous when he was told that the man was a patient. In fact, he would not believe it until the medical man asked the patient—"Well, Jack, how is your father?" when he burst out into a torrent of blasphemy. The only point on which he was mad was with regard to his father.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE expressed the opinion that the anecdote of the Minister of Justice supplied a strong argument against boarding out lunatics. If the lunatic to whom the Minister had alluded was boarded out with a family, and one of the children happened to ask him—"How's your father?" it would be a nice thing if he was met with a torrent of blasphemy. He believed that the experiment of boarding out lunatics would be a very dangerous one, not only as regards the families receiving the lunatics, but their neighbours. (Mr. Cuthbert—"They will be all sent to the country.") These men would be employed as carters or in other occupations which would bring them in contact with people in the neighbourhood, and perhaps, in a moment of madness, the lives of children or others would be imperilled. People would be anxious about their children if, in going to school, they had to pass a place where a lunatic was employed. There could be no certainty that a fit of dangerous insanity might not come on at any time, or that a harmless lunatic might not become dangerous at a certain age. No doubt the medical members of the Council would tell the committee that frequently, at a certain age, a lunatic would change altogether—perhaps turn from one completely harmless into one absolutely dangerous. Questions of this sort required very deep consideration in connexion with the adoption of any boarding-out system for lunatics.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL thought it would be an excellent amendment of the clause to limit its operation to any patient.
who was not an idiot. It would never do, for many reasons, to allow an idiot to be boarded out with a family. Of course, if a lunatic was not perfectly harmless no medical authority would allow him to be boarded out at all.

The Hon. T. DOWLING said he was convinced that, guarded as the experiment contemplated in the clause would be, with all manner of regulations, no harm could come from it.

Sir J. LORIMER observed that under the 6th schedule no lunatic could be boarded out until he had been certified to by the authorities as "harmless" and "free from any symptoms which could indicate any tendency of a character dangerous either to himself or to others." That provision sufficiently indicated the care that would be taken. It should be remembered that boarding out was strongly recommended by the Lunacy Commission.

The Hon. J. G. BEANEY thought that, with the exercise of sufficient care, the boarding-out system might well be adopted. After all, it would be only an extension of the probation system. In many cases the mere effect of living in a lunatic asylum was sufficient to cause a harmless curable patient to lapse into chronic lunacy.

The motion for postponing the clause was negatived.

The Hon. W. A. ZEAL moved an amendment to the effect that boarding out should only be permitted in the case of a lunatic who was not an idiot. An ordinary harmless lunatic might recover, but the cure of an idiot was essentially hopeless.

The Hon. H. CUTHBERT considered that the superintendent should be allowed to act upon his own discretion in all cases.

The Hon. D. MELVILLE expressed the opinion that before a lunatic was boarded out with a private family, something should be done to ascertain whether the neighbours were agreeable to the arrangement. Could not a clause be drafted to that effect?

The amendment was agreed to.

The Bill, having been gone through, was reported with amendments.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES BILL.

The amendments made in this Bill, in committee, were considered and adopted.

On the motion of the Hon. H. CUTHBERT, the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

The House adjourned at half-past ten o'clock, until Tuesday, November 13.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
Wednesday, October 31, 1888.

Auctioneers' Licences—Municipal Surveyors and Engineers—McBurnie Inquiry Board—The University:

The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock p.m.

AUCTIONEERS' LICENCES.

Mr. RUSSELL asked the Premier whether he had yet made arrangements whereby auctioneers would be able to obtain their licences from some local authority?

Mr. GILLIES observed that the law as it stood provided for the issue of auctioneers' licences only at Melbourne and Geelong, and required every applicant for the renewal of a licence to apply in person, and to produce a certificate of good character. He considered these requirements were unnecessary in the case of persons who were well known, and who had been in the habit of taking out licences for a number of years; and he proposed to ask the Attorney-General to frame such an amendment of the law as would dispense with the personal attendance of such licensees, and enable licences to be issued in the country districts.

MUNICIPAL SURVEYORS.

Mr. JONES (in the absence of Mr. GAUNSON) asked the Minister of Public Works whether it was the fact that several municipalities continued to employ, in the capacity of surveyor or engineer, persons who did not hold a certificate from the Municipal Surveyors Board, as required by section 176 of the Local Government Act; and, if so, whether he would take steps to enforce the observance of the law?

Mr. NIMMO replied that the section referred to was frequently evaded by municipal councils appointing as clerks of works persons who practically performed the duties of surveyor or engineer; but no special grants were paid by the department unless the claim was certified to by a certificated engineer qualified under the Act.

McBURNIE INQUIRY BOARD.

Mr. FEILD asked the Minister of Public Works if he had any objection to lay on
forces, and asked whether Harbour Trust employes, not for any fault in connexion with discipline as a member of the Victorian armed forces, was arrived at the dismissal of a man to the Harbour Trust Commissioners, for gross insubordination. The matter was reported to the Harbour Trust Commissioners, and the man was discharged from their employment. All men who joined the commissioners' service after May, 1885, must join the naval brigade or the Harbour Trust battery, when called upon to do so, or give up their employment. It was the fact that the best men in the employ of the Harbour Trust were the best and most efficient members of the naval brigade.

THE UNIVERSITY.

Mr. VALE asked the Minister of Public Instruction if the special or extra fees charged to candidates for matriculation in the country districts would be made at the examinations which would be held before the close of the current year?

Mr. PEARSON observed that part of the understanding arrived at, in consideration of the liberal increase of the State grant to the University this year, was that the extraordinary or special fees would not be charged in connexion with the carrying out of matriculation examinations in the country districts.

FOXES.

Mr. W. MADDEn inquired of the Minister of Lands what action he purposed to take to exterminate the fox pest?

Mr. DOW said it was proposed to deal with foxes under the Rabbit Act, by a subsidy to local bodies. (Mr. W. Madden—"Will you do something at once?") Certainly.

POPULATION STATISTICS.

Mr. JONES (in the absence of Mr. Gausson) asked the Premier how he had arrived at the population of any given proposed electoral district—say, Melbourne?

Mr. GILLIES stated that the estimates of population which had been relied upon in connexion with the Electoral Districts Alteration Bill were taken partly from the returns of the local bodies, and partly from the information obtained from year to year by the staff that had charge of the collecting of the census. By comparing the results, what was believed to be a close approximation was arrived at.

HARBOUR TRUST EMPLOYÉS.

Mr. JONES (in the absence of Mr. Gausson) called the attention of the Premier to the dismissal of a Harbour Trust employé, not for any fault in connexion with his employment, but for a breach of discipline as a member of the Victorian armed forces, and asked whether Harbour Trust employés were compelled to join those forces?

As he was informed, the person who had been discharged bore very good repute as a Harbour Trust employé.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he answered a similar question the previous week. Since then he had received information to the effect that, on the 7th July, an A.B. of the Naval Brigade, who was also an A.B. of the Harbour Trust, was dismissed from the Cerberus by the Naval Commandant, for gross insubordination. The matter was reported to the Harbour Trust Commissioners, and the man was discharged from their employment. All men who joined the commissioners' service after May, 1885, must join the naval brigade or the Harbour Trust battery, when called upon to do so, or give up their employment. It was the fact that the best men in the employ of the Harbour Trust were the best and most efficient members of the naval brigade.

PETITION.

A petition was presented by Mr. W. Maddern, from residents in the south riding of the shire of St. Arnaud, praying that that riding might be included in the electorate of Donald, instead of Swan Hill.

NORTH-EASTERN PROVINCE ELECTION.

Mr. GRAVES called attention to the fact that the Elections Committee of the Legislative Council had declared the recent election for the North-Eastern Province to be void, and asked the Chief Secretary whether he intended to cause an inquiry to be made as to the efficiency of the present returning officer? Information had reached him (Mr. Graves) to the effect that, owing to the defective polling arrangements at Greta, several electors in that neighbourhood were precluded from exercising their franchise.

Mr. DEAKIN said he had already caused an inquiry to be instituted.

MR. D. W. RAMSAY.

Mr. BROWN called attention to the fact that he had given notice of motion for the production of papers connected with the application for payment for special work done by Mr. D. W. Ramsay, in the Defence department, at the time of the re-organization of the defence forces; and asked the Premier whether he would allow the motion to go unopposed?

Mr. GILLIES said he would cause the papers to be placed in the Library.
DEFALCATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

Mr. COOPER called attention to the painful statement published by the Melbourne newspapers that morning, relative to defalcations by a public officer—this being the second case of the kind within a comparatively short period—and asked the Premier if he would consider the propriety of conferring with the senior Audit Commissioner with the view of ascertaining whether some effective means could not be adopted for preventing such defalcations?

Mr. GILLIES said it was necessary, for the satisfaction of Parliament and the public, that some steps should be taken to render the perpetration of such frauds as those referred to as difficult as possible. When an officer had been in the public service many years, and thoroughly enjoyed the confidence of his chief, the check which should be maintained on those who had charge of receipt books and dealt with moneys was apt to be withdrawn; but there was no doubt that the check should always be as efficient as could be devised; and he intended to make inquiries with the view to secure that end.

When defalcations did occur, the fact was regarded as a reflection upon the public service as a whole.

THE "CUP" DAY.

Mr. BROWN asked whether the Premier intended to propose that the House should adjourn over the following Tuesday, which was "Cup" day?

Mr. GILLIES observed that, for a number of years, a large majority of honorable members had always been anxious that there should be no sitting of the House on "Cup" day, which had come to be regarded as a national holiday. In the present state of public business, the loss of a single sitting day could be ill afforded. Perhaps honorable members would not object to meet later in the evening. (Cries of "No.") Of course, in a matter of the kind, the Government had to consult the wishes of honorable members. However, he hoped that the progress which might be made with business that day, and the next, would be such as to fully justify them in taking holiday on Tuesday.

Mr. JONES suggested that the whole of the present sitting should be dedicated to Government business, in order to avoid the necessity of meeting at all on Tuesday.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ALTERATION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

The discussion of the 2nd schedule, describing the boundaries of the new electorates, was resumed.

On the 15th subdivision, describing the electorate of East Bourke Boroughs, and allotting it two members, Mr. FEILD remarked that there was a strong feeling in Collingwood that the Clifton Hill division of that city, which had hitherto formed a portion of the Fitzroy electorate, ought not to be included in an electorate which embraced Brunswick and Coburg, with which places it had no community of interest. At a public meeting, held the previous night, it was resolved that East Bourke Boroughs ought to be divided into two single electorates—the one consisting of Clifton Hill, Northcote, and Alphington; and the other embracing Brunswick and Coburg.

Mr. GILLIES stated that a number of meetings had been held, and, as far as he could gather, the majority were perfectly unanimous in the opposite way from that indicated by the honorable member for Collingwood (Mr. Feild). They considered that the interests of all parts of the electorate were identical. It would be difficult to make such a division of the district as would be satisfactory.

The subdivision was agreed to.

Subdivisions 16 (Bright) and 17 (Brighton) were postponed.

On the 19th subdivision (South Carlton), Mr. LAURENS suggested that this subdivision should be postponed until he could have the opportunity of submitting the amendments of which he had given notice with respect to North Melbourne.

Mr. GILLIES said he would consent to postpone the subdivision until the committee came to North Melbourne, when the two electorates could be dealt with together.

The subdivision was postponed.

On the 20th subdivision (Castlemaine), Mr. GILLIES said it would be as well for the subdivision to be postponed until it could be dealt with in conjunction with the electorates of Sandhurst, Mandurang, and Maldon, with respect to which he had a proposition to submit.

Mr. McINTYRE suggested that the Premier should meet the members who represented the districts named, the following day, half-an-hour before the House assembled.
Mr. GILLIES said he would be happy to do so, if the honorable members had suggestions, and not objections, to offer. The subdivision was postponed.

On the 21st subdivision (Clunes),

Mr. ANDERSON (Creswick) stated that there were some slight inaccuracies in the description of the boundaries of this electorate, and he had been requested by members of public bodies in the district to ask that the subdivision should be postponed.

Mr. GILLIES said the question involved was whether Allandale should be included in Clunes or in Creswick, and he begged to propose that the subdivision be amended so as to embrace the whole of Allandale.

The subdivision was amended accordingly, and agreed to.

On the 22nd subdivision (Collingwood),

Mr. FEILD urged that Clifton Hill should be included in Collingwood. By that arrangement the electoral boundaries of Collingwood would be made coterminous with its municipal boundaries.

Mr. GILLIES observed that the electorate of Collingwood as it stood in the Bill was precisely as it stood under the existing law. It had quite sufficient population to entitle it to two members; and to add to it would be unjust to the people of the added territory.

The subdivision was agreed to.

The 23rd subdivision (Creswick) was amended so as to exclude any portion of Allandale.

On the 24th subdivision (Dalhousie),

Mr. DUFFY suggested that, as Kilmore had been added to Dalhousie, the fact should be recognised in the name of the electorate.

Mr. HUNT moved that the name of the electorate be "Kilmore and Dalhousie." The amendment was agreed to.

The 24th subdivision (Dandenong) was postponed.

The 25th subdivision (Daylesford) was agreed to.

On the 27th subdivision (Delatite),

Mr. TUTHILL suggested that, as Bright had been postponed, this subdivision should also be postponed. He wished the electorates of Bright and Delatite to be considered together. (Mr. Gillees——"Has the honorable member an amendment to propose?") He had. In order to avoid the necessity for any alteration on the report, which would be necessary if either the Beechworth or Bright sub-schedule was amended, he thought it would be well for the Premier to postpone this sub-schedule.

Mr. GILLIES stated that, if the committee altered the other sub-schedules affected, he would take care that the consequential alteration was made in the Delatite sub-schedule.

Mr. GRAVES remarked that whoever wished to contest Delatite would have to face an extent of country 86 miles long by 52 miles wide, with 31 polling places, 12,000 inhabitants, and nearly 8,000 voters. The Government estimate for the proposed district was 2,100 electors; but, within the last six months, 700 selections had been taken up, which were not included in this estimate. Moreover, in Delatite there were generally from 300 to 400 manhood suffrage voters, whereas on the general roll for 1887-8 only 75 were shown. He believed there was a desire to increase the proposed districts of Bright and Beechworth, each of which would have only 1,600 electors. If the Premier saw fit to comply with that request, and to take a portion of Delatite for the purpose, he (Mr. Graves) would not oppose it, although he had received no application from any residents to be joined on to Bright or Beechworth. The district of Delatite was too large for one man to attend to, and he would defy any candidate or representative to go over it under 20 days.

The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 28th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Donald,

Mr. W. MADDEN said he desired to call the attention of the Premier to a largely-signed petition which he had presented from the people of the south riding of the shire of St. Arnaud, asking that they should be severed from the proposed electorate of Swan Hill and included in Donald. The town of Donald would be in the proposed electorate of Swan Hill, and not in that of Donald; and the people of the town were, of course, desirous that it should be included in the electorate which was named after it.

Mr. GILLIES said he had received a number of communications, and he would have been glad to grant the request of the portion of the district referred to if he could have seen his way to do so, but he was sorry that he could not, as it would involve a number of other alterations.

Mr. W. MADDEN said he would ask that the name of the electorate should be changed from Donald to Borung, if nothing more could be done.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he had no objection to comply with the request.

Mr. BAKER expressed the opinion that the alteration asked for by the residents of
the district could have been very easily granted with very little interference with any other electorate.

Mr. GAUNSON considered that this was as good an opportunity as any other to have a chat about single electorates. Had the people of the Wimmera suffered any injustice through having had only two members? (Mr. W. Madden—"They have had two very good members.") They had not suffered any injustice, and why should this Bill pass at all? He was prepared to prevent the Bill from passing if other honorable members would join with him, on the ground that there was no justification for an increase of members. (Mr. W. Madden—"The Wimmers should have four.") Why should it have four? He could understand it having four, or even 40, if it was shown that any injustice had been suffered by its having only the present number. (Mr. Baker—"There is an injustice to the members.") Members had no right to complain, because they took the position knowing the work they would have to perform. It was a very low and improper ground on which to base the doctrine of an increase of members, that the members were drudges and slaves—not that the electors suffered any injustice. No man was compelled to become a Member of Parliament, and he took the work on his shoulders with a full knowledge of what he would have to do.

The subdivision, amended by altering the name "Donald" to "Borung," was agreed to.

The 29th subdivision (Dundas), with an amendment of the electoral boundary proposed by Mr. Gillies, and the 30th subdivision (Dunolly) were also agreed to.

The 31st and 32nd subdivisions (Eaglehawk and Eastern Suburbs) were postponed.

On the 33rd subdivision, describing the electoral district of Emerald Hill, Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment in the description of the electoral boundaries.

Mr. GAUNSON stated that he wished to have an opportunity of testing the opinion of the committee on an amendment in favour of the electoral district of Emerald Hill being retained as at present, but returning three members. If it was understood that he would be afforded such an opportunity when the sub-schedule for South Melbourne was proposed he would allow the present sub-schedule to pass.

Mr. GILLIES intimated that the opportunity would be afforded. The honorable member could test the feeling of the committee either by moving that this sub-schedule be struck out, or adopting the same course when the sub-schedule for South Melbourne was submitted.

The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 34th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Essendon, Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment altering the name of the electorate to "Essendon and Flemington."

The amendment was agreed to.

On the 35th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Evelyn, Mr. HUNT remarked that it was proposed to include a portion of the shire of Healesville, comprising possibly 100 electors, which was now in the electorate of Evelyn, in the electorate of Anglesey, and the residents in the locality had strongly protested against the change at public meetings held at Marysville and Buxton. Personally he had no objection to the alteration, but he thought that, if possible, the wishes of the electors should be consulted, especially as the Healesville-shire would be more properly attached to the district of Evelyn.

Mr. MUNRO stated that, by the Bill, the shire of Healesville was divided, the western portion being retained in Evelyn and the eastern portion put in Anglesey. All the communication of the inhabitants was with the west, and it would be a great convenience if the whole of the shire could be left in Evelyn. At the same time, he recognised that it was a troublesome matter to deal with.

Mr. GILLIES intimated that he would confer on the subject with the members for the districts concerned, and, if necessary, propose an amendment at a later stage.

The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 36th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Fitzroy (two members), Mr. REID observed that if the Premier could see his way to retain the municipal boundary of Fitzroy as the electoral boundary, he and his honorable colleague would much prefer it. He dared say it was a nice thing for the members for East Melbourne to get 5,000 or 6,000 of the residents of Fitzroy added on to their district, but he would prefer to keep them. The municipal boundary of Fitzroy had always been the boundary of the electorate hitherto, and he hoped the Premier would allow it to remain so. There would then be a population of nearly 32,000, who, he thought, were entitled to three members. If 7,000 persons were to return one member, surely 32,000 should be allowed to return three. He could understand the difficulties the Premier had.
to contend with, but he thought an injustice was being done to Fitzroy to make up the population of East Melbourne.

Mr. ZOX said he could assure the honorable member for Fitzroy (Mr. Reid) that neither of the representatives of East Melbourne was responsible for the addition which the Government proposed to make to the electorate from Fitzroy, and against which the Fitzroy Council had unanimously protested. While he would be proud to represent the electors proposed to be added to East Melbourne, he had no hesitation in saying that the arrangement was a most unfair one, and quite inconsistent with the statement of the Premier on the second reading of the Bill that the municipal boundaries would be followed as far as possible. If the honorable member for Fitzroy was sincere in his desire to keep Fitzroy together, and would divide the committee on the question, he (Mr. Zox) would support him. He had taken a great deal of trouble to ascertain the population of East Melbourne, and, as the result of his inquiries, he had come to the conclusion that the estimate of the Premier was quite wrong. There were many residents in boarding-houses, hotels, and coffee palaces who were not taken into account, and he believed that East Melbourne had the requisite number to return two members without any addition at all. If the Premier had even proposed to leave East Melbourne as it stood, and that it should only return one member, he (Mr. Zox) would have been prepared to consider the matter; but the proposed arrangement was very unsatisfactory. He thought it would be well to postpone the consideration of the sub-schedule with the view of arriving at a satisfactory adjustment of the boundaries of all the metropolitan electorates.

Mr. LAURENS said the remark of the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox), that the population of that constituency was not properly estimated, applied also to North Melbourne. The town clerk, who supplied the figures to the Government Statist, arrived at his estimate of the population of North Melbourne by multiplying the number of dwellings by five, under the impression that the last census showed an average of five inhabitants to each dwelling. On consulting Mr. Hayter, however, he (Mr. Laurens) found that the average at the census was 5·37, and this, if applied to North Melbourne, would have increased the estimate of population by nearly 2,000 persons. For the purpose of discussion in connexion with this Bill, however, it was necessary to accept the Government figures as correct, otherwise it would be impossible to institute comparisons. On that basis, the present population of East Melbourne was 21,000, and if the 3,000 or 4,000 electors of Fitzroy who were proposed to be added to East Melbourne were not so added, he would like to know how the district was to have sufficient population to entitle it to two members?

Mr. GAUNSON remarked that the Premier, on the second reading of the Bill, referred to "the importance of adhering as far as possible to municipal boundaries," but this and other cases showed that he had made no attempt to adhere to municipal boundaries. If it was found that a municipality, such as Fitzroy, having enough voters for three members was content with two, why force another member on them? (Mr. Woods—"More city representation to kill the country."). There was no doubt of it. The Bill ought to be squelched on this ground alone—that it swelled the head and diminished the body. It gave to the over-represented metropolis more representation and took away representation from the country. Out of eight additional members seven were given to Melbourne and its suburbs and only one to the colony at large. He would repeat that he was prepared to do his best to stop the Bill, so as to allow the law to remain as it was, if any honorable member would assist him. It was not proper that population should be the sole basis of representation because, to quote the Premier's own statement, densely populated districts had more influence with fewer members than scattered districts with more members. If the honorable member for Fitzroy (Mr. Reid) was sincere in his desire that Fitzroy should remain as it was, he ought to test the feeling of the committee. If he did not, he would have no right to say to the horny-handed sons of toil at election time—"I did my best, but I was unsuccessful." The outcome of the members for Fitzroy not being able to sufficiently impress the Premier with the importance of their case was this, that, while South Melbourne would preserve its municipal boundaries intact, their municipality, in spite of the unanimous protest of a large public meeting, and also of the fact that both its representatives had all along been faithful Government supporters, would have its boundaries cut up.

The Fitzroy subdivision was agreed to, as was also (with a slight amendment) the 37th subdivision, describing the boundaries of the Footscray electorate.
Discussion took place on the 38th subdivision, describing the boundaries of the Geelong electorate.

Mr. GILLIES moved that the subdivision be struck out, with the view of substituting another, describing boundaries embracing the town of Geelong, the borough of Geelong West, and the borough of Newtown and Chilwell.

Mr. MUNRO said he understood that the Premiut was willing to go back to the boundaries of the old Geelong electorate, so far as to include in the subdivision the portion of Corio-shire, containing about 530 inhabitants, which would, under the schedule as it stood, be taken from Geelong and added to Grant. He (Mr. Munro) was sure that Grant did not want to deprive Geelong of this small amount of population, and he was equally certain that the people themselves did not wish to be transferred. They were mostly brickmakers, whose business connections were wholly with Geelong. Moreover, they had been accustomed, ever since 1876, to make common cause with Geelong in the matter of elections. If they were connected with Grant, some of them would have to travel about 20 miles before they could record their votes.

Mr. GILLIES stated that, in the first place, the electors in question would not be required to travel any great distance to record their votes, for they would have a polling place for themselves. In fact, the new arrangement would prevent any necessity for two polling places in one division. The chief object, however, was to keep the electorates comprising Geelong, Geelong West, and Newtown and Chilwell strictly within municipal boundaries, and to have the whole of Corio-shire within the electorate of Grant. This end would not be gained if the portion of Corio-shire the honorable member for Geelong was interested about was included in any of the Geelong electorates.

Mr. MUNRO remarked that the matter was not worth much fighting about. But it would save a lot of trouble if the people in the portion of Corio-shire referred to, who were in every business and political sense connected with Geelong, were allowed to keep up the connexion.

Mr. GAUNSON thought that, if the electors in question were connected with Geelong by their business relationships, they ought not to be divided from it in electoral matters by any mere imaginary line.

Mr. GILLIES said that, when a number of town municipalities were bound up with a small piece of country district, the arrangement was at best only an incoherent one. It was preferable, for electoral purposes, that the piece of country district should be joined with the rest of the shire to which it belonged.

Mr. LEVIEN remarked that he would like to know from the Premier why there need be any special preciseness in the matter? If the people of Geelong asked through their representatives that this little piece of Corio-shire should be electorally connected with them as formerly, and the people of Grant offered no objection to that being done, what great harm would the Premier do by conceding the point? What mattered a hundred votes or so either way?

Mr. JONES stated that he believed that the population of 530 which the Premier wanted to connect with Grant included about 80 electors, who had been accustomed for a number of years past to vote at Geelong elections. Why should they not be still electorally connected with Geelong? If they were so connected everybody concerned would be pleased, particularly the honorable member for Grant (Mr. Rees), who would then be saved the trouble of certain long journeys at election times.

Mr. GILLIES pointed out that not adding this piece of Corio-shire to Grant would leave it one of the smallest electorates in the colony. Instead of a population of 9,026 it would have only 8,496.

Mr. McINTYRE remarked that it was most surprising to find the Premier arguing in favour of strictly equal electoral districts. What did he say when the Bill of 1876 was under consideration? He then said—

"I have had as much experience as any honorable member during the last few years in mapping out separate electoral districts, and I have been forced to arrive at the conclusion that to make all electoral districts completely equal, or even to make them anything like symmetrical, is utterly impossible and impracticable. . . . Under the last Reform Bill passed in England in 1867, there are some towns having a representative for only a few hundred electors, while others with 18,000 or 20,000 electors have only the same representation. In fact, a number of large boroughs, each of which has upwards of 100,000 inhabitants, the aggregate population being something like 4,500,000, return only about 50 representatives, whereas the boroughs with a population of less than 100,000 each, and a total population not exceeding 4,000,000, return 293 members. I say that for the Government to have assumed, as nothing like equal electoral districts would have been practically impossible. Not only so, but the highest authorities, such as Lord Brougham and Lord Macaulay, have advocated the principle that large populations should
not be represented to the same extent as small ones, and in 1873 Mr. Higinbotham spoke in favour of the same principle."

Why should the Premier alter the views he then expressed so well merely for the sake of a population of some 530 souls? It was to be hoped that the honorable gentleman would rally, and be his old self once more.

Mr. LAURENS thought that when a question of feeling was concerned, and the matter at issue was only a population of 530, the Premier might as well give way.

Mr. REES stated that he would esteem it as an honour to represent the honest and industrious population in question, but he felt bound to inform the committee that the people themselves desired to remain connected with Geelong, and he, for one, would be glad to see their wish complied with.

Mr. WOODS said the question raised by the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) was another illustration of the way in which the Bill set at naught old political associations. Here were people who had been in a particular political partnership for nearly a generation suddenly called upon to enter upon a totally different political partnership. Would it not be infinitely better to have the whole country cut up into, say, thirteen electorates, each returning, say, six members? Every voter in the colony would then have six representatives. It seemed to have become the habit, since the division of last Friday, to address the Premier with as much supplication as would satisfy any Hindoo god. He, however, was not going to join in anything of the kind. He would simply, in the first place, call upon the Government to be just, and, secondly, charge honorable members all round not to help in any way to increase the centralization of everything in Melbourne. It was not too much to describe every honorable member who assisted the Premier to carry the Bill as unfaithful to the country.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he would withdraw his amendment, in order to enable the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) to propose an alteration of the subdivision which would meet his views.

The amendment was withdrawn.

Mr. MUNRO moved that the subdivision be amended so as to embrace the description of the boundaries of the Geelong electorate contained in the Electoral Act of 1876.

The amendment was carried without a division.

Mr. GILLIES moved an amendment providing that the number of members assigned to Geelong should be "two."

Mr. MUNRO stated that he would, if he had the opportunity, vote for making the number of members "three." His object was to replace the Geelong district in its old position of an electorate returning three members.

Mr. GAUNSON stated that he would support the amendment on the ground that it would give the country districts—so far as the colony generally was concerned, Geelong might be regarded as a country district—a fairer representation than they would have under the Bill as it stood. He thoroughly believed that, although the existing law provided South Melbourne with only two seats, it did greater justice to the colony than the Bill would do, although it would provide South Melbourne with three seats. He took up this position on the ground of common sense and common honesty, and he was sure that his electorate did not desire its own aggrandizement at the expense of the country at large. He knew the danger he incurred in saying this, but he was quite prepared to incur it. If the result was to relegate him to private life, well and good; but assuredly it would be seen in the end that it was not he who was wrong, but the Electoral Bill. The Bill was incurably bad—destructive of every principle underlying true representation. As for the position taken up by the Premier, it was simply monstrous. What did he tell honorable members only a few weeks ago? He said—

"The Government were anxious that there should be no increase in the number of members. They believed that an increase of members, apart from the matter of expense, would not necessarily be an advantage."

But what did the Bill actually propose? An increase of members from 86 to 94, or an extra charge upon the country of £2,400 a year. Further on, the Premier said that the country was as well represented in Parliament by 86 members as it could be by an increased number. Could language be stronger? This was his (Mr. Gaunson's) justification for the action he had taken. And then the honorable gentleman went on to remark that, in going over the electorates, and endeavouring to re-arrange them without adding to the number of representatives, the Government found the difficulties in the way so great that "the idea could not be carried out without the re-casting of the whole system."

So, instead of "re-casting the whole system," the Government proposed a
nice little arrangement whereby Ministerial members were made sure of their seats, and members in opposition were liable to be banished from public life. He (Mr. Gaunson) would much prefer the continuance of the present law to the tinkering with the constituencies contemplated by this Bill. If the country was as well represented by 86 members as it could be by 94, what justification was there for increasing the number of representatives of the metropolis—because seven out of the eight additional members would go to Melbourne and the suburbs to the injury and detriment of the colony at large, and the addition to the permanent burthens of the country by something like £2,400 per year?

The committee divided on the question that the word “two,” proposed to be added to the subdivision, be so added—

Ayes ... ... ... 44

Noes ... ... ... 24

Majority for “two” members 20

The 42nd subdivision (Grant) was agreed to.

On the 43rd subdivision (Grosvenor), Mr. A. Young said he had received communications from Buninyong asking for some alteration in the boundaries of this electorate, and he understood that the Premier intended to propose the amendment of the subdivision in accordance with the wishes expressed.

Mr. GILLIES proposed certain amendments.

The amendments were agreed to.

On the 44th subdivision (Gunbower) was postponed.

On the 45th subdivision (Harrow), Mr. GILLIES proposed that the name of the electorate be altered from “Harrow” to “Normanby.”

The amendment was agreed to.

The 46th subdivision (Hawthorn) was postponed.

On the 47th subdivision (Heytesbury), Mr. GILLIES proposed that the electorate should be named “Villiers and Heytesbury.” He also proposed some amendments in the subdivision, rendered necessary by alterations made in the Dundas subdivision.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said the electorate, as reconstituted, would be one of the most extraordinary that could be imagined.

The amendments were agreed to.

On the 49th subdivision (Jolimont), Mr. BOSISTO suggested that this electorate should be called “Jolimont and West Richmond.” He considered it only right that the amendment should be made, because the district would include the western portion of the present Richmond electorate.

Mr. GILLIES said he had no objection to the amendment.

Mr. LAURENS stated that he thought this subdivision would be postponed until the North Melbourne electorate was dealt with. He had given notice of his intention to move that the Jolimont subdivision be omitted.

Mr. GILLIES said the subdivision did not affect North Melbourne in any way.

Mr. LAURENS observed that Jolimont affected East Melbourne, West Melbourne, North Melbourne, and Carlton, and the amendments of which he had given notice would have no meaning unless they embraced the omission of Jolimont. Because of an arbitrary attempt to create an electorate of which the public had not heard anything before—which did not continue any old landmarks—a large population in another...
portion of the metropolitan district was being cut up. The Richmond electorate was settled the previous night, and, if there was a balance of population to the east of Melbourne, it could be thrown into East Melbourne where it was wanted, and thus save the cutting up of North Melbourne as the Bill proposed.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) sought to convey the idea that Jolimont was new territory. At present it was part of the electoral district of Richmond, which contained a population sufficient for three members. One portion of that district would form the new electorate of Richmond and have two members; and the other portion would form the electorate of Jolimont and have one member. But the arrangement had no relation to North Melbourne at all.

Mr. LAURENS said he wished to put the matter before the committee in its true light. He understood the Premier had said that the Government would be prepared to deal fairly with any proposal for an alteration of any of the subdivisions of the schedule, and not only so, but that their supporters had full liberty to consider the arguments, pro and con, in connexion with any amendment that was submitted, and to vote upon it according to their convictions. Understanding that to be the position laid down by the Government, he wished, in the calmest possible manner, to place before the committee certain facts affecting the proposed electorate of Jolimont and other electorates. The figures which he would give were taken from the official returns that had been laid on the table of the House, and he would be glad if the Premier would put him right if he stated anything that was not correct. The population of the present electoral district of East Melbourne was only 15,144, which was more than 10,000 short of the number required to entitle it to two members. The population of the present electorate of West Melbourne was only 18,320, which was over 7,000 short of the number required for two members. These two electorates jointly were more than 17,000 short of the population required to entitle them to return four members on the basis laid down by the Government. The Government, however, proposed to give these two districts four members, and, to do this, the municipal boundaries of North Melbourne were being cut up for the first time in order to supply population for electorates which were only sectional parts of the municipality of Melbourne, whilst Jolimont, which was part of the same municipality, was arbitrarily created a separate electorate, instead of being thrown into the proposed electorate of Melbourne East, to which it municipally and geographically belonged. Nevertheless the population of the proposed electorate of Melbourne East, which was to return two members, would be only 21,384, being about 5,000 less than the number required for two members according to the standard laid down by the Government. The municipality of North Melbourne had a population of 20,133, and the present electorate of North Melbourne had a population of 31,750. It was proposed to cut up North Melbourne in a very remarkable manner. A portion of the population—2,600—were thrown into the electorate of Melbourne East from the Carlton side, and 7,500 were thrown into Melbourne West from the Hotham side. Was it fair, or was it consistent with the professions of the Premier that municipal boundaries would be interfered with as little as possible, that the municipality of North Melbourne which had hitherto formed part of only one electorate, namely, the electorate of North Melbourne, should now be cut up in a most extraordinary degree in order to supply population to the electorates of both Melbourne East and Melbourne West? Was it fair or proper to propose the arbitrary creation of the new electorate of Jolimont, of which no one had ever heard before? (Mr. Gillies—"That is not so.") The point was that the present electorate of East Melbourne was about 11,000 short of the number required to entitle it to two members, and yet, rather than throw Jolimont into East Melbourne, to which it municipally belonged, it was formed into a separate electorate. The previous evening the committee dealt with the Richmond electorate. (Mr. Bosisto—"No.") He said "Yes."

Mr. BOSISTO said that the present electorate of Richmond was entitled, on the basis of population, to return three members. The Bill, however, divided it into two constituencies, and to one of them—Richmond—two members were allotted. The honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) evidently forgot that the electorate already dealt with, to which two members were given, was only part of the present electorate of Richmond. About 7,000 of the population within the municipality of Richmond were taken out of the present electorate of Richmond, and, along with the population of Jolimont, would form the new...
electorate of Jolimont. As Jolimont had always formed part of the electorate of Richmond, no wrong was being done to any one by this arrangement.

Mr. Laurens remarked that the statement of the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. Bosisto) did not contradict the fact that the previous night the committee dealt with the Richmond electorate as constituted under the Bill, which was to return two members. Having done that, it followed that there was a stray population, so to speak—a population composed of the inhabitants of Jolimont, and of the balance of the population of the municipality of Richmond, or the surplus population in excess of the number required to entitle the electoral district of Richmond to return two members. The 7,000 of population in the municipality of Richmond in excess of the number required to entitle the municipality of Richmond to return two members, and who were not included in the new electorate, and the 6,000 inhabitants of Jolimont, which was in the municipality of Melbourne, were a stray or floating population that had not hitherto formed a separate electorate by themselves. It was not necessary to erect this population into a separate electorate for the sake of retaining an old landmark. One of the arguments used by the Premier in support of several of the electorates as proposed by the Bill was that old landmarks should be preserved as far as possible; but there had been no electorate known by the name of Jolimont or West Richmond, and therefore it was not necessary that the population of Jolimont and the surplus population of Richmond should be erected into a separate electorate. The proper course—the course which should have been adopted—was to throw that population into the electorates of Melbourne East and Melbourne West, so as to make up the deficiency of 17,000 or 18,000 in the population of those two electorates. If that course had been adopted, there would have been exactly the population—almost to a unit—required to give East Melbourne, West Melbourne, Carlton, and North Melbourne two members each, without interfering in any way with the boundary lines of North Melbourne. The Premier could not deny this. He would challenge the honorable gentleman to do so. If the honorable gentleman could show that any statement which he (Mr. Laurens) had made on this matter was not correct he would not say another word on the subject, and would withdraw from the position he had taken up. His position, however, was so strong that he felt he had a right to appeal to honorable members for fair play in the matter, and more especially to the liberal section of the House. He was entitled to ask that the liberal north should not be deprived of a member for the sake of giving an additional member to the constitutional party. If he could not rely with any degree of confidence on the support of the constitutionalist members of the House, at all events he had a right to depend upon those honorable members who, like himself, claimed to be liberals. He had no objection to see the constitutional party fairly represented, in a proper way; but he objected to the liberal north—the district north of Victoria-street, which had a population of 53,000, entitling it to four members—being dissected for the purpose of giving a member to the constitutionalists on the south. The Premier had chosen to make a separate electorate of Jolimont, and evidently the honorable gentleman would not recede from it unless the majority of the committee went against him. It might be the misfortune of the district which he (Mr. Laurens) represented that the majority of honorable members would be deaf to his statements, but if the proposal was carried into law his constituents would never forget it. His chances of being returned again for North Melbourne if he was a candidate would be as good, whether the proposal of the Government was adopted or not, and therefore he was not speaking on personal grounds, but because the matter was one which affected the district that he had had the honour of representing for many years. On behalf of that district he contended that it ought not to be cut up in the manner proposed, and he claimed that there was no necessity for it to be cut up at all, but that the population of East Melbourne and West Melbourne should be added to in the way that he had indicated. To test the feeling of the committee, he would move that the subdivision describing the Jolimont electorate be struck out.

Mr. Gillies said the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) had spoken of a large portion of the population of the present electorate of Richmond as a floating population. (Mr. Laurens—"I did not.") The honorable member repeated the statement several times.

Mr. Laurens stated that what he called a floating population was that portion of the population of the municipality of Richmond which the committee, the previous night, left outside the electoral district of Richmond by passing the subdivision...
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describing the boundaries of the new electorate of Richmond.

Mr. GILLIES observed that the explanation of the honorable member made the matter ten times worse. The honorable member now said that the 26,000 people of the new electorate of Richmond, passed the previous night, were a floating population. (Mr. Laurens—"I never said so?") They were as steady and solid a population as the population of the district which the honorable member himself represented; and to speak of them as a floating population was to use an insulting expression. He was, therefore, very glad that the honorable member disclaimed any intention to speak of them in that sense. The present electorate of Richmond had a population of 39,000 persons, and, upon the basis of representation adopted by the Bill, it was entitled to three members; but, instead of allotting it three members, it was proposed to divide the electorate into two constituencies, one to return two members, and the other to return one member. The honorable member, however, wished it to have only two members, and wanted all the population in excess of the number necessary to entitle it to return two members to be added to other electorates. And yet, when it was proposed that only a very small portion of the electorate of Emerald Hill should be taken away from that district and added to the Port Melbourne electorate, the whole district was up in arms against the proposal. The honorable member told the committee that the electorate of Jolimont was never heard of before. Had any honorable member ever heard of the electorate of Korong before, or of any of the new electorates formed out of the electoral district of Moira? He was surprised at the honorable member, and ashamed of him, for using such an argument. What difference did the name make? Supposing that the district had been called "Richmond West," instead of "Jolimont," would that make any difference? It was part of the present electorate of Richmond, and as such it was entitled to one member when the other portion of the district was to return only two members. (Mr. Laurens—"Speak to the cutting up of North Melbourne.") He would ask the honorable member whether, under the Bill, East Melbourne, West Melbourne, North Melbourne, or Carlton would lose one solitary representative? Not one. The honorable member had appealed to the liberals on the opposition side of the House and to constitutionalists on the Ministerial side to help him to carry out the object he had in view; but the Government had not descended so low as to make the arrangement of the electoral districts a matter of pleasing liberals or constitutionalists. The Government had acted towards North Melbourne upon the same principle that they had adopted in dealing with every other existing electorate, namely, not to interfere with it unless it was absolutely necessary to do so. They had taken away a small portion of the present North Melbourne electorate and added it to West Melbourne, they had taken away another portion and added it to East Melbourne, and they had also added a portion of the present electorate of Fitzroy to East Melbourne. These alterations of boundaries had been made in order to give East Melbourne and West Melbourne sufficient population to return two members each; but no injustice had been done to any district by this redistribution. North Melbourne was still left with two representatives. Of course, the honorable member wanted three. (Mr. Laurens—"No.") Practically the honorable member wanted an additional member for North Melbourne. He wanted two members for North Melbourne, two for Carlton, two for West Melbourne, and two for East Melbourne, and the only electoral district which he wished to deprive of a member was Richmond. But Richmond was fairly entitled to three members on the basis of population. He (Mr. Gillies) would repeat that no injustice was done to any one by the way in which North Melbourne was dealt with under the Bill. The class of population taken from the North Melbourne electorate and placed in West Melbourne was very much the same as the population of the present West Melbourne electorate. They both consisted of persons who thought, to a great extent, alike on political matters. There could be no question that, if the Government had acted on the principle which the honorable member for North Melbourne wished to lay down, they would have had to wipe out some districts in order to give a preponderance to others; but they had not adopted that course. Neither had they acted on the principle that the boundaries of electorates must always be coextensive with municipal boundaries. Municipal boundaries had, however, been adopted, as far as possible, for electoral districts simply for the convenience of compiling the electoral rolls. But for that reason he would not have considered municipal boundaries at all. (Mr. Laurens—"And because they have
been electorates in the past,"") Yes, that was a convenience. He would not break through a convenience of that kind unnecessarily—without rhyme or reason—but when there was a reason for departing from that principle it ought not to be adhered to. If a district could be prevented from being blotted out, or from having its representation reduced, by adding to it population from some adjoining electorate, that course ought to be adopted. If the honorable member could point out that his electorate was in future to return a member less than it had hitherto done, there would be some reason for his objection to a portion of it being taken away and added to East Melbourne and West Melbourne. (Mr. Laurens—"That is the proposal in the Bill.") No; the proposal was only to divide the district into two electorates, one to be called Melbourne North and the other Carlton South, each of them to return one member. The district remained the same, and the number of its representatives remained the same. As some persons seemed to think that North Melbourne was being deprived of a representative, in order to show that no such thing was being done the Government would have no objection to make the district one electorate, to return two members, instead of two electorates, as proposed by the Bill, with one member each.

Mr. C. SMITH said he was rather astonished when he heard the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) speak of a large portion of the population of the municipality of Richmond and the population of Jolimont as a "waste" population.

Mr. LAURENS remarked that he had already said he did not make that statement. It was a rule of Parliament that, when a member denied having made a statement, his denial was accepted.

The CHAIRMAN,—What I understood the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) to imply by the expression he used was simply that, in his opinion, certain population was not allocated to any district.

Mr. C. SMITH observed that the honorable member certainly used the words "waste population," and afterwards "floating population." Neither expression was a proper one to apply to a population of 13,000 persons living in a district which had been settled for many years. What the honorable member really wished was that a portion of East Melbourne, a portion of Fitzroy, a good slice of Richmond, and the district of Jolimont—portions of three different municipalities—should be amalgamated and made one electorate. He (Mr. Smith), as one of the representatives of Richmond, would strenuously oppose any portion of Richmond being taken away to suit the ends which the honorable member for North Melbourne had in view. If any alteration in the Government proposal was to be made, he would suggest that the municipality of Richmond should have three members, and then Jolimont might be added to the East Melbourne electorate. The municipality of Richmond had a population of 34,000, but as that number was not quite large enough, according to the basis laid down by the Government, for three members, it was perhaps not to be expected that the Premier would be induced to consent to this alteration. Nevertheless, if the proposed electorate of Melbourne East, with a population of 21,334, was entitled to two members, the municipality of Richmond, with a population of 34,000, was entitled to three members.

Mr. GAUNSON said that, on the basis adopted by the Bill, the electorate of Richmond was no doubt entitled to three members; but if there was no increase made in the total number of members of the Assembly, and in his opinion there ought not to be, neither Richmond, Emerald Hill, nor any other metropolitan constituency was entitled to three representatives. Out of the eight new members proposed to be added to the Assembly by the Bill, seven were to be given to the metropolis. Were honorable members acting honestly to their districts in permitting such a state of things? In no other country in the world was representation based, as it was here, upon the rotten foundation of population. What did the honorable member for Collingwood (Mr. Field) say to his constituents about the basis of population? The honorable member said—

"A great blunder was made by the Government in proposing to increase the number of members."

The honorable member, however, was going to fight tooth and nail for the proposed increase of members. The honorable member for Collingwood had declared that he was not in favour of increasing the number of members of the Assembly, and in this the honorable member was supported by the Premier, who declared on the second reading of the Bill that the business of the House was as well done, in the opinion of the Government, by 86 members as it possibly could be done by
94. And yet the Premier proposed to increase the number of members by eight, and the honorable member for Collingwood was assisting the Government in carrying out that proposition. He (Mr. Gaunson) believed that the country would be better and more efficiently served if 36 members were cut off and the Assembly reduced to 50 members, even though under such a system South Melbourne would only be entitled to one member. At the meeting to which he had already referred, the honorable member for Collingwood stated that, instead of increasing the number of the Assembly, he would prefer to see the basis of population entitling a district to a member increased from 13,000 to 15,000. But was the basis of population alone the right basis at all? There was no other country in the world where population was the only basis of representation. (Mr. Field—"Other countries have not manhood suffrage.") In America, where manhood suffrage flourished long before it was introduced here, population was not made the sole basis as it was by this Bill. The honorable member at the Collingwood meeting also stated that "he and his colleague had advocated the adoption of the municipal boundaries as the electoral limits for Collingwood." The only ground on which it was desirable that municipal boundaries should be taken for electoral boundaries was convenience in roll-making. If plural voting was abolished, it would be of no importance whether municipal boundaries were adopted or not, because a man would only have a vote for his residence, and, therefore, must reside within the limits of the electorate. At the same meeting a resolution was unanimously passed to the following effect:—

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the present Electoral Bill is inimical to the best interests of Collingwood, and this meeting unanimously declares that the municipal boundaries should be the electoral boundaries."

It was true that a resolution was subsequently carried that the members for the district should be left to use their own discretion in the House, and do what they considered best for the interests of Collingwood, but the first resolution condemning the Bill was not rescinded, and still remained as an expression of the opinion of Collingwood on this Bill.

Mr. DONAGHY stated that he desired to make a personal explanation as to the reason of his absence when the division was taken on the sub-schedule relating to Geelong. He had been for three weeks waiting anxiously for the vote on Geelong to be taken, as he desired that Geelong should retain its three members, but unfortunately pressure of business detained him from the House that afternoon half-an-hour longer than he expected, and therefore, to his great regret, he was absent when the division was taken. He need hardly say that, had he been present, he would have voted with his honorable colleague (Mr. Munro) in favour of allowing the constituency to return three representatives.

Mr. ANDREWS explained that his absence from the same division was due to a very important engagement in the country which he fixed ten days ago. He told his honorable colleague (Mr. Munro) the previous day that he had to leave Melbourne by the first train in the morning, but that he would be back by six o'clock p.m., and he requested the honorable member that if the question of Geelong came up earlier he would ask that it should be deferred for a little so that he (Mr. Andrews) might be present. To his great surprise, however, he found when he entered the chamber that the division had been taken in the absence of himself and his other colleague (Mr. Donaghy). Although his presence would not have altered the result of the division, he greatly regretted that he had not an opportunity of expressing his views on the subject.

Mr. MUNRO said his honorable colleague (Mr. Andrews) told him that he was going into the country, but he could assure the honorable member that he had no recollection of the honorable member telling him that he would be back by six o'clock, otherwise, ill as he was, he would have kept up the discussion until that hour.

Dr. ROSE remarked that the Premier, in replying to his honorable colleague, endeavoured to show that the honorable member was attempting by unfair means to prevent Richmond from having three members, thereby virtually disfranchising a large portion of the constituency. That, however, was not the case. If the outlines were taken as proposed by his honorable colleague, North Melbourne, East Melbourne, and West Melbourne would each have a population in accordance with the basis laid down by the Premier. If the statements made by the Premier himself held good, it would be found that there were 58,000 of population to the north of Victoria-street having three members, while there were only about 80,000 of population south of Victoria-street having four members to represent them. (Mr.
Gillies—"Put it the other way.") That was just what he wanted. (Mr. Gillies—"You make the addition the wrong way.") As to Jolimont, it would not be in any way interfered with to its disadvantage by being merged in East Melbourne, but would rather render that constituency more compact, and the junction would be more in accordance with community of interest, geographical position, and municipal limits. The Premier had stated that there was no question raised of liberals or conservatives in framing the Bill, and he (Dr. Rose) was not prepared to say that the Premier had arranged his proposal with the intention of favouring a conservative candidate, but it certainly was rather a singular anomaly that a large portion of Richmond which was almost entirely liberal had been added to a still more potent portion—(Mr. Gillies—"That is where the mistake comes in."). A portion of Jolimont which was absolutely conservative was united to a portion of Richmond which was liberal, and he was certain, from what he knew of the locality, that the conservative vote in Jolimont would entirely outweigh the portion of Richmond that was added, thereby virtually disfranchising the latter, and rendering the electorate exceedingly sure for a conservative candidate. A most influential portion of North Melbourne was put in West Melbourne, and the consequence was that a most extraordinary boundary was given to North Melbourne, and a population of something like 53,000 people would only be represented by three members. If the Premier would look carefully into the matter, he would see that the claims which had been put forward by his colleague were just as regarded the basis of population laid down by the Government, and just from the point of view of maintaining the municipal boundaries as electoral boundaries as far as possible. While it was not contended that the municipal boundaries should be adopted as a hard and fast rule, what was desired was that the districts should be as nearly as possible divided by those boundaries which were most satisfactory as regarded community of interests, population, and geographical position. Under the Government proposal there would certainly be considerable dissatisfaction in connexion with Jolimont, on the one hand, and North Melbourne on the other. On a former occasion a considerable portion of North Melbourne was cut off from that constituency, and placed in Carlton, in order, it was said—whether rightly or wrongly he knew not—to suit a particular candidate. Ever since then the people both of North Melbourne and of Carlton had felt great dissatisfaction, and at every election for North Melbourne candidates were urged, whenever a new Electoral Bill was proposed, to exercise all the power they possibly could to have the original boundaries restored, so that Carlton might be properly represented on the one hand and North Melbourne on the other. If the Premier could have seen his way, without doing injury to other constituencies, to let Carlton have two members, and North Melbourne, taking the boundary along Elizabeth-street, to have two members, the arrangement would have met with the entire concurrence of both districts. He believed that the requirements of the different metropolitan districts concerned would be most legitimately met by the arrangement suggested by his honorable colleague. The interests of Jolimont were much more nearly allied with East Melbourne than with Richmond. In fact, after crossing Hoddle-street there was no real community of interest or sentiment between the residents there and those of Jolimont, whereas there was a strong community of interest between Jolimont and East Melbourne. From what he had heard, the electors of Richmond proposed to be combined with Jolimont were strongly opposed to the proposal, and he felt confident that the Jolimont people would very much prefer, in their own electoral interest, to be connected with East Melbourne.

Mr. ZOX said he knew full well that, when the Government decided to adopt the basis of population in arranging representation, they would experience great difficulties, but still he thought that when the Premier was arranging the various districts he would have taken into consideration what might be regarded as natural boundaries. If honorable members looked at Jolimont on the map, and also looked at the various portions of other constituencies which it was proposed to allocate to East Melbourne, they could only come to one opinion, namely, that Jolimont belonged naturally to the electorate of East Melbourne. (Mr. Bosisto—"What would you do with the 34,000 people in Richmond?") He had not the slightest objection to see Richmond properly represented. If there were 34,000 people in Richmond, why should they not have three members without disturbing the electorate? He was not blaming the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. Smith) for endeavouring to get Jolimont to himself, but at the same time he did not see why, if
the Premier wanted to see every district properly and honestly dealt with, Jolimont should have been made a separate constituency instead of being added to East Melbourne to make up the requisite population there for two members. He really did not think that the Government were doing justice to the electorates of East Melbourne, West Melbourne, North Melbourne, and Carlton, and he would urge the Premier to consent to the postponement of the sub-schedules dealing with those electorates, with the view of some satisfactory arrangement being arrived at. He must say that the Premier had shown himself prepared to concede more to opponents than he had to honorable members who had given the Government a consistent support. For instance, when the honorable member for Williamstown objected to the way his district was arranged, the Premier agreed to the concession he asked for, and in the same way, because objection was raised to a portion of South Melbourne being put in Port Melbourne, that portion was restored. (Mr. Gillies—"East Melbourne will have more representation under the present proposal than it had before.") Yes, but the increase would be of a kind which the people of that electorate did not exactly want; they wanted, not population from North Melbourne or Fitzroy, but population naturally associated with them. On the other hand, North Melbourne, at all events, did not wish to be interfered with. Fancy the population of the Burlington-terrace quarter—of all that portion of East Melbourne lying south of Albert-street and east of Gisborne-street—being taken away from this natural electoral district, and handed over to Jolimont. (Mr. Brown—"You affirmed the principle of the Bill when you voted for its second reading.") But honorable members were promised that, if any wrong appeared likely to be done, the fault would be remedied in committee. Was it not better to let the Bill get into committee than to see the electorate to be interfered with. Fancy the population of Jolimont, 27,116 made Jolimont appear more than twice as large as it really was.
Mr. Laurens proceeded to observe that his argument rested largely on the fact that there was on the north side of Victoria-street a population of 53,358, which would have only three members as against the four members which the population of 30,409 on the south side of Victoria-street would have. These four members would be the two members for East Melbourne and the one member each for Melbourne and Melbourne West. Could not this state of things be altered? Another point was that taking population from North Melbourne into East Melbourne would only bring the total population of the East Melbourne electorate up to 21,384, which would be more than 5,000 below the population of the proposed Richmond electorate. Whatever the Premier might say about the even-handed justice of the Government proposals, he (Mr. Laurens) would contend that they were full of great disparities. The right arrangement would be for East Melbourne to take in the Jolimont division, and for Carlton and North Melbourne to have each two members.

Mr. Munro said he failed to understand why the Premier should adhere to his decision, seeing that the honorable members who represented the districts interested did not approve of the arrangement he had proposed. He (Mr. Munro) was not now speaking of Richmond proper, because the question of the new Richmond electorate had been settled. (Mr. Bosisto—"No.") That re-arrangement was made with the consent of the two sitting members. (Mr. C. Smith—"Certainly not.") Notwithstanding these denials, he would repeat that it had been decided, with the consent of the two members for Richmond, to take a population of some 7,000 out of Richmond; and it still remained a question how that population should be dealt with. As for the Jolimont division, the two members for East Melbourne wanted to see it added to their constituency, and, in all equity, they ought to be accepted as the best judges of the wishes of those concerned. They did not desire any addition from North Melbourne, with which they had nothing to do, but they contended that Jolimont properly belonged to them, and that Jolimont they ought to have. In past years, in order to bring Richmond up to the proper two-member level, the portion of Albert ward known as Jolimont was added to it, but now the Richmond population was considerably above the two-member level, and there was no need for the constituency to include Jolimont at all. Consequently, Jolimont ought to be joined on to East Melbourne, with which it was naturally associated. That being a perfectly fair arrangement, and one thoroughly acceptable to everybody, why was it not adopted? Would not the result be a plan which would be equitable all round? For example, East Melbourne having, with Jolimont, a more than ample sufficiency of population, the case of West Melbourne might be met by making the line of demarcation between East and West Melbourne not Elizabeth-street, but Swanston-street. The North Melbourne municipality would then not need to be interfered with, except in order to divide it into two constituencies—North Melbourne and Carlton—each returning two members. In that way full political justice would be done, for there could be no doubt that the North Melbourne and Carlton electorates differed greatly in political opinion from East Melbourne, including Jolimont and West Melbourne. If such a plan was not carried out, what would happen? In the first place, a big slice of North Melbourne would be added to West Melbourne, with the result that the liberals taken from North Melbourne would be swamped by the conservatives of West Melbourne. And for what reason, save the whim of the Government? On the other hand, under the scheme advocated by the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens), the liberals of North Melbourne and Carlton would vote together and the conservatives of East Melbourne and West Melbourne would vote together. (Mr. Gillies—"Why call West Melbourne conservative when it once elected the present member for Belfast?") But it turned him out again afterwards. As for the views of North Melbourne, he (Mr. Munro) ought to know pretty well what they were, for he represented the district for many years. (Mr. Gillies—"Were you not defeated there?") No, he had never been defeated in North Melbourne. He once left North Melbourne for Carlton, but he did so of his own free will. If he felt inclined he could stand for North Melbourne again, as one whom the constituency had never turned out. Under those circumstances he spoke with authority when he said that the proposals of the Premier were thoroughly unsatisfactory to North Melbourne. There might be some plausible excuse for subdividing other metropolitan districts, but for the proposed subdivision of North Melbourne no excuse whatever could be offered. There was no reason for it but the stubbornness of the Premier who, having, with pencil
and paper, drawn out a constituency, was determined to stick to it. Was that a fair way of dealing with the matter? The whole thing was wrong. (Mr. Gillies—"If the honorable member is correct.") He challenged the Premier to show that any single statement he had made was wrong. In order to form the electorate of Jolimont, other metropolitan constituencies were rendered dissatisfied. But what necessity was there for making Jolimont a separate constituency? There was no necessity known to the House. Surely, in a matter of this kind the Premier ought to have ascertained the opinion of the representatives of the districts affected. (Mr. Gillies—"I have taken the opinion of the members for Richmond.") The electoral district of Richmond had been dealt with and disposed of. (Mr. Gillies—"In part.") He wished to impress upon the committee his opinion, which was founded upon his personal knowledge of North Melbourne, that that district was grossly ill-treated under the Bill.

Mr. BENT remarked that he was present at a meeting at North Melbourne the other night, when the honorable member for West Melbourne (Mr. Peirce) promised that he would do all he possibly could to have the arrangements of the Bill with respect to North and West Melbourne altered. He hoped the honorable member intended to fulfil that promise. He considered that the electoral representation provided for by the Bill was, so far as the metropolis was concerned, anything but equal. For example, there was, north of Victoria-street, a population of 53,000 with only three representatives, while a population of 31,900 or 32,000 to the south had four representatives. (Mr. Bosisto—"There is a population of 40,000 in my electorate now.") The committee had already passed Richmond, and given it two members.

Mr. BENT said he would ask the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. Bosisto) who was the cause of that district being altered? (Mr. Bosisto—"Not I.") Perhaps the honorable member did not approve of the alteration? (Mr. Bosisto—"I did not say so.") The Jolimont seat was intended for Mr. Charles Smith, but he would be put out all the same. The cutting and carving of electorates which had been going on was simply wonderful. He regretted that Mr. Hayter and Mr. Hart had not been brought to the bar. Had that been done, he would have elicited from those gentleman such information as would have convinced the strongest supporter of the Government that the figures on which the Bill was based were utterly unreliable. He did not know how they had been arrived at. Here he desired to call attention to a statement which appeared in the Argus that morning, with reference to the proceedings in committee the previous evening. This was the statement which he was much surprised to find in what he had hitherto considered a truthful journal—:

"The change in the spirit of the House was evidently largely due to the determined stand taken by the majority on Friday last, and it is also to be noticed that Mr. Bent and Mr. Gaunson were absent from the chamber before the dinner hour. As an agreeable novelty, there was a total absence of anything which could be described as wilful obstruction."

The result of this statement was that he had been accosted by several friends, that day, in this fashion—"Hallo! you and Gaunson were away; and so they went on just as they liked." As a matter of fact, he was in his place the previous evening, but his name did not appear in the division lists simply because he paired for the sitting with the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppen). With regard to the question immediately before the chair, he considered that a better case than that of the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) had never been made out, and he hoped that, in the stand which he had taken, the honorable member would receive general support.

Mr. COPPIN stated that it was the fact that he paired with the honorable member for Brighton, the previous evening, and he was sorry that, in consequence, the honorable member should have been reflected upon
by the press. The Premier must now be thoroughly aware that the members for Melbourne East, West, and North were dissatisfied with the manner in which their electorates were divided, and, seeing that the majority were supporters of the Government, it would be only a reasonable course for the honorable gentleman to invite them to meet him in conference, to see if the electorates as constituted under the Bill could not be improved. His own impression was that they could be improved. At any rate, the Government would not suffer, and it would be a satisfaction to the metropolitan members if the Melbourne electorates were postponed until it could be ascertained what the representatives of those electorates could suggest. Of course, it might be argued that they would seek to cut up the districts for their own particular advantage. But if they were so selfish as to do anything of that kind, their actions would not escape criticism, and the probabilities were that what they proposed would be rejected by the House. It had been stated by the Premier that the Government had endeavoured to make electoral boundaries coterminous with those of municipalities, in order that the electoral rolls might be checked to greater advantage. That was a very desirable thing to do, but he regretted to say it had not been carried out so far as East Melbourne was concerned, because, instead of limiting that electorate to the city of Melbourne, territory had been taken from Carlton and Fitzroy—localities which were not at all in political accord with East Melbourne—in order to add to the population. Under the circumstances, he would ask the Premier to be kind enough to postpone the subdivision now before the committee and the other Melbourne subdivisions, pending a conference between the honorable gentleman and the representatives of those electorates, with a view to see whether the boundaries could be made more satisfactory to the representatives without doing any injury to the public.

Mr. JONES observed that, if part of Jolimont were absorbed in Richmond, and if another part was absorbed in East Melbourne, the necessity for East Melbourne poaching upon other parts of Melbourne proper would be obviated, and an opportunity would be afforded of allowing North Melbourne to be constituted according to its municipal boundaries, and thus a great deal of the ill-feeling which had been given voice to on this occasion would be effectually done away with. The suggestion of the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin) was an admirable one. Why should not the members for Melbourne have a meeting with the Premier next day, and argue this question out upon facts which they themselves knew better than any one else, the consideration of the Melbourne sub-schedules being postponed until the conference had taken place? In that way, a great deal of valuable time might be saved.

Mr. PEIRCE remarked that the occasion on which he made the statement referred to by the honorable member for Brighton was not a public meeting, but a dinner of railway employes at the North Melbourne Town Hall. Since then meetings had been held both in North Melbourne and West Melbourne at which resolutions were passed condemning the proposals of the Government. He knew also from coming into contact with the people of West Melbourne, in which he had resided for thirty-four years, that those proposals did not accord with the wishes of his constituents. At the last election, the greater number of the votes recorded in his favour were polled in the Railway and St. Mary's divisions, but, under the Bill, a large portion of each of those divisions would be cut away from West Melbourne. (Mr. Gillies—"That is because the present district of West Melbourne will be divided.") From 1,000 to 1,800 of the liberal electors of West Melbourne would be thrown into the new district of Melbourne. The Government arrangements did not suit him. (Mr. Laurens—"Do they suit your district?") He meant that they did not suit his district when he said that they did not suit him. He had given a very fair support to the Government, and yet his district had been as unfairly treated as any district which was represented by members in opposition. He hoped the Premier would accept the suggestion of the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin). It would be only fair for the honorable gentleman to give some attention to the representations which Melbourne members might have to offer.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he supported the views of the honorable member for West Melbourne (Mr. Peirce). At one time he sat for that district, and, therefore, he was in a position to state that the honorable member's account of the political position of the electors was quite correct. The proposition of the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) was the real practical solution of the difficulty into which the Premier had got by starting at the wrong end, namely, Richmond and Jolimont. The
honorable gentleman should have commenced by making Swanston-street, instead of Elizabeth-street, the boundary line between West Melbourne and East Melbourne, by which arrangement the number of electors in the metropolitan districts would have been properly balanced. The line of separation which the Bill made between West Melbourne and North Melbourne was decidedly faulty. (Mr. Gillies—"That is to say it is not perfect.") It was something more than not perfect. It was politically disastrous. He did not mean to say it had been made designedly, because the first night the Bill was under consideration he asked whether it was intended that the line of separation should so run as to place the Hobson Town Hall in the West Melbourne electorate, and the Premier said that was an error which would be corrected. However, if the line of separation which the Government proposed were adhered to, a number of the leading residents of North Melbourne would be separated from the district with which they were identified, politically, commercially, and municipally. He repeated that the difficulty had arisen through the Premier starting from Richmond—through taking territory from East Melbourne to add on to a slice of Richmond containing some 6,000 persons, and thus creating a new electorate. The honorable member for North Melbourne had been accused of using an ungracious expression because he talked of the population of the proposed electorate of Jolimont as a floating population. But Parliament House was in Jolimont, and what were honorable members but a floating population? As to the alteration which the Bill made in the boundaries of North Melbourne, he knew for a fact that it was absolutely condemned. Not a person had one word to say in its favour. He contested North Melbourne eleven years ago, and he knew both that constituency and the constituency of West Melbourne pretty well; and he was aware that the arrangement proposed by the Bill did not suit the people of either of those constituencies. The best course would be to adopt the suggestion to postpone the matter for a day, so as to enable the members for North Melbourne, West Melbourne, and East Melbourne to see if some arrangement could not be arrived at which would receive the approval of all parties concerned.

Dr. ROSE expressed the hope that the Premier would accede to the request—a very reasonable one—made by the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin) and supported by the honorable member for Belfast, that the Jolimont and other electorates concerned in the matter should stand over until the honorable members representing the districts concerned had an opportunity of conferring together to see if some arrangement could be made which would be satisfactory to all. If that was done, and a settlement was arrived at, it would greatly expedite business.

Mr. LAURENS said that no harm could be done by postponing the subdivision now before the committee until a conference took place, as suggested, between the members of the districts affected by the mode in which the Bill proposed to deal with the present electorate of North Melbourne. The Premier seemed to think that the alteration of the boundaries of that electorate was objected to by very few persons, but the fact was that the number of residents in North Melbourne who were aware of the alteration was comparatively few; but when the general election took place, and 10,000 of them found that they were no longer electors of North Melbourne, there would be a great outcry.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he would be very glad if the honorable members for the districts concerned could arrive at some reasonable conclusion with regard to the matter which might be adopted by the Government, but he must confess that he was not able to appreciate the arguments which had been advanced against the Government proposals. He had conversed with a number of the electors of both West Melbourne and East Melbourne, and they had not expressed any strong antagonism to those proposals. (Dr. ROSE—"We hear objections made daily.") He did not deny that there might be a large number of persons who entertained objections to the Government scheme as affecting the electorates of North, East, and West Melbourne; and if the representatives of those districts would meet together and make any reasonable suggestion to him by which the difficulty could be overcome, he would submit it to his colleagues and see if it could be carried into effect. The Government did not desire to do injustice to any district. Their sole object was that there should be fair representation all round; and he thought that would be attained by the proposal to allot a total of seven members to North Melbourne, East Melbourne, West Melbourne, and Carlton. Reckoning the population of those districts at 87,000, there would be an average population of something over 12,000 for each member. However, pending the holding of the conference which had been suggested, he would
Mr. McLEAN said that, when the Bill was last under the consideration of the House, the Minister of Water Supply explained that the object of the 3rd clause was to take power to transmit water from the national head-works through the natural water-courses to the residents lower down who wished to obtain and pay for a supply, and also that the clause was intended to prevent intermediate settlers along a water-course from diverting waters that were being transmitted to settlers lower down. He (Mr. McLean) and several other members objected to the clause, on the ground that it went a great deal further than that. In addition to preventing the intermediate settlers from diverting the waters sent down from the national head-works, it would virtually confiscate existing rights. The Attorney-General and the Minister of Water Supply, on looking carefully into the matter, admitted that it would have that effect—that it would interfere with existing rights to the natural supply of water in the streams supplied from the national head-works. The Minister of Water Supply had given notice of his intention to propose certain amendments, after the third reading of the Bill, to cure this defect and to conserve existing rights. He would like to have an assurance from the Attorney-General that the amendments proposed to be made would conserve existing rights—that no existing rights to the natural supply of the waters would be in any way interfered with. Unless honorable members were satisfied on that point—if there was any doubt whatever on the subject—it would be much better to drop that part of the Bill altogether for the present, and confine the measure to the portion which proposed to enfranchise certain persons, and enable them to vote at the election of members of irrigation trusts. The question of riparian rights was a very large and important one. It was fully considered when the principal Act was before Parliament, and it was then settled on a basis which was deemed to be satisfactory to all parties. It would be a great pity if, by inserting in a Bill brought in for another purpose altogether a clause like clause 8, the Legislature interfered in any way with such large interests as were involved in the question of riparian rights.

Mr. WHEELER regretted that a great deal of confusion prevailed when the Bill was being discussed the other night. It had been his intention to take exception to it, on the ground that it dealt with two distinct subjects, which were almost as wide as
the poles asunder. The first part of it enfranchised certain lessees, and enabled them to vote at the election of irrigation trusts. No one objected to that; and he, for one, would be glad to do anything he could to assist in carrying out that object. But, under cover of giving those people votes, the Bill dealt with riparian rights, which was a most dangerous thing to interfere with, and was supposed to have been settled for ever by a provision inserted in the principal Act. He would like to hear from the Attorney-General whether the amendments which the Minister of Water Supply intended to propose in the Bill would secure to the riparian owner all the rights that he possessed under the principal Act. If the Attorney-General could not give the House that assurance, it was not requesting too much to ask the Government to separate the Bill into two measures, so that the one enfranchising the lessees to whom it was desired to give votes might be passed at once, while the other could stand over for further consideration. The House was really in such a state of excitement when the Bill was before it the other night that it was read a second time and passed through committee without proper consideration. It seemed to him that the 3rd clause would place the holders of riparian rights in a false position, for it would compel them to defend their rights if a trust objected to their taking any water from any stream or water-course which was partially supplied by any national works. They were made liable to a penalty not exceeding £50 for any breach of the regulations framed with respect to such water-courses. Again, it seemed to him that the Bill would place riparian rights entirely under regulations; but surely riparian rights should be fixed by Act of Parliament, and not be left subject to be dealt with by any regulations which the Government of the day might frame. While he would be very sorry to oppose anything which would be beneficial to the inhabitants of the dry districts, he thought it was only right to protect the interests of people in other parts of the colony. It might be contended by the Government that the passing of the Bill would increase the value of land in some districts, but, on the other hand, it might have the effect of depreciating the value of a much larger area of land in other parts of the colony. The Government ought certainly to divide the Bill, so as to allow the portion relating to riparian rights to be more fully considered.

Mr. BROWN said he understood that this was an emergency measure, introduced for the purpose of giving certain people a right to vote in the election of an irrigation trust. Such being the case, he thought any debatable matter should be taken out of it.

Mr. W. MADDEN observed that the position taken up by some honorable members seemed extraordinary—namely, that there should be a separate Bill to deal with every little defect discovered in the principal Act. That was quite unreasonable. The principal Act having been found defective in one or two small matters, he saw no reason why those defects should not be remedied in one measure.

Mr. BOURCHIER concurred in the desirability of at once passing the first portion of the Bill, so that the leaseholders to which it referred should be able to vote. The question dealt with in clause 3, however, was a very serious one, which required great consideration. In his district, there had been a good deal of trouble about riparian rights and the diversion of the Loddon by the Tragowel Trust. What he feared was that riparian owners along the rivers might be excluded from their rights. If it was necessary to protect the interests of head-works, that matter ought to be specially dealt with.

Mr. WRIXON said he feared some honorable members really did not apprehend the meaning of the Bill. The question of riparian rights was dealt with in the principal Act as fully and fairly as Parliament was prepared to deal with it, and this Bill did not enlarge the principal Act in the slightest degree, or in any way impair the position of the riparian owner. The Bill was rendered necessary by the new departure which had been made by the Government undertaking the construction of "national works" wholly out of public money. When these works were constructed, the question arose how were they to be paid for; and it had been decided that the cost of the works was to be paid for by the Government selling the water which came from the national reservoirs. It was to secure that object that the clause objected to was required. Supposing a man held riparian rights on the banks of a river down which only a very small quantity of water ran, and supposing by the national works constructed by public money the Government sent down a large volume of water, surely it would not be contended that the riparian owner had either morally or legally a right to that increased volume of water unless he paid for it. All honest men would agree that the
riparian owner should not be allowed to take water which did not belong to him, and the problem to be solved was to enable this water to be got past the riparian owner who did not pay to riparian owners lower down the river who did pay. If the Bill did that, and did no more, it could not be said that any man's rights were interfered with. Suppose there was no water at all in a river bed, and the Government, by public money, sent a volume of water down the channel, it was evident that Parliament would sanction the Government taking steps to see that intermediate riparian owners did not take water which did not belong to them. The principle was exactly the same in a case where there were only 10,000 gallons of water flowing down a river in the dry season, and the Government increased the quantity to 1,000,000 gallons. The Government had a right to see that, in such a case, the riparian owner did not take more of the water than he was entitled to, and the Bill provided for the accomplishment of that object in the only way possible, namely, by enabling the Governor in Council to make regulations for the purpose. He himself believed that clause 3, as it stood, was satisfactory enough, and would accomplish the object in view without injuring any person's rights, but some honorable members considered that the regulations, when framed, might not sufficiently protect the riparian owner. In order to meet this view, his honorable colleague, the Chief Secretary, proposed, after the third reading, to submit certain amendments, the effect of which would be that the regulations must be so framed as to secure that the riparian owner should not be interfered with in taking his natural and lawful supply of water. If the regulations went beyond that, then the Supreme Court could be appealed to, and would declare them to be ultra vires. Unless honorable members wished to play into the hands of unconscionable landowners who wanted to get water they were not entitled to, he thought the House should have no hesitation in passing the Bill, seeing that the security was afforded that the regulations could not be framed to take away what lawfully belonged to any man.

Mr. SHIELS submitted that the remarks of the Attorney-General had conclusively shown that clause 3 was wholly foreign to the purpose of this Bill, and should be placed in the measure dealing with national head-works. The clause was wholly dependent on the sanction of Parliament being given to the Government undertaking national head-works, and therefore the House should wait, before dealing with this proposal, until the Bill relating to national head-works was before it. (Mr. W. Madden—"The House has sanctioned national head-works.") It would be necessary for the Government to carry out the enlargement of their original scheme by a Bill, and he presumed that the Bill to deal with the matter was that on the notice-paper entitled "Irrigation and Water Supply Loans Bill." (Mr. Deakin—"Yes.") Then that was the Bill in which clause 3 should be incorporated, so that the House might have the whole question before it together and discuss it on its merits. The present Bill was admittedly one of extreme urgency. Its object was to cure a defect within a certain time, and nothing could be more disastrous to the main purpose of the measure than to deck-load it with a provision which imported debatable matter of the most difficult kind. Moreover, the strongest objections had been urged in the Assembly as well as in another place against any attempt to deal with questions of great importance by Government regulations. The Legislature would be false to its trust if it handed over to the Government power to deal with rights of this kind. A most disastrous state of things might be brought about by regulations framed perhaps by a couple of members of the Executive in the absence of their colleagues. Frequently the gravest defects were discovered in legislation which had to run the gauntlet of both Houses of Parliament, and it was conceivable that far greater mistakes might easily be made when it was within the power of two members of a Government to frame regulations dealing with an important matter. The proviso at the end of clause 3 was not nearly sufficiently wide, as it only referred to the riparian owner using water for domestic or stock purposes. (Mr. Wrixon—"Look at the amendments to be proposed.") He was not now dealing with any amendments which might be proposed, but with the clause as it stood. By such a proviso the honorable member for Richmond (Mr. Bosisto), who had established a novel industry with great success, might be prevented from using the water necessary in the manufacture of eucalyptus oil. A mill-owner, again, might find himself barred from using the water he required. (Mr. W. Madden—"He does not divert the water; it is returned to the stream."). Under the first sub-section of clause 3 "any diversion or interference" with the water might be prohibited, whether it was subsequently
Mr. TUTHILL said he would also ask the Government to seriously consider the advisability of confining the Bill to the circumstances of the case. How could any one say what water he had used at a previous time from a stream which was running before his land? He would certainly urge upon the Government the advisability of excising clause 3 from this Bill and allowing the other two clauses, on which all were agreed, to pass.

Mr. TUTHILL said he would also ask the Government to seriously consider the advisability of confining the Bill to the enfranchisement of lessees. It was questionable whether clause 3 would meet what the Government desired. The clause provided that riparian owners should not interfere with that portion of the water which was brought into a stream from the national head-works. Could the Attorney-General say whether a riparian owner's rights did not extend to all the water brought into a stream once it had mingled with the water originally in the stream? Once water was brought into a stream he thought it became a portion of the stream, and subject to all the rights appertaining to the stream. No riparian owner had a larger right than that of using the water without interfering with the user of others. If water was brought into a stream, the riparian owner had no greater right over the extra quantity than he had over the original quantity. The object which the Government wished to accomplish—namely, to be able to draw from a stream the quantity of water added to its natural flow by the water sent down from the national head-works—was perfectly right and proper; but, instead of dealing with the rights of riparian owners, would it not be simpler and better to frame a short clause providing that the Government or trust might draw from a stream as much water as was brought into it from the national works, leaving riparian rights just as they were? The question as to how the quantity of water was to be gauged was a very difficult one, as not only the quantity sent out from the head-works, but also the quantity lost by evaporation and other causes, would have to be taken into account; but still he did not say it was impossible to meet it. In any case, he thought it would be much better to confine the present Bill to its main purpose—that of enfranchising lessees. If the Government intended to press the important clause dealing with riparian rights, he was afraid they would find it hard to pass the Bill that night. He did not think honorable members would feel inclined to allow such an important question to be dealt with in a thin House, hardly a quorum being present.

Mr. BAKER said he noticed that those honorable members who were opposed to clause 3 were mainly gentlemen who represented districts which were blessed with a good supply of water—which had deep rivers that were flowing from January to December without let or hindrance. Of course, any legislation which would interfere with such streams would be a very serious matter. But he would ask those honorable members to consider that some of the large storage reservoirs about to be constructed were for the supply of water to country where there really were no channels—where channels would have to be cut. Hence there was no ground for the alarm which those honorable members had shown. No doubt it was necessary to have a law to give the Government the right to conduct water which might be stored in reservoirs to localities where it was needed for irrigation purposes, and there to sell it to the best advantage both to the State and to individuals; but, inasmuch as another Irrigation Bill awaited the consideration of the House, he would suggest that, rather than imperil clauses 1 and 2, which empowered Crown lessees to vote in the election of irrigation trust commissioners, clause 3 should be transferred to that other Bill.

Mr. DEAKIN observed that the chief objections which had been urged to the Bill were susceptible of an easy answer. The reason why clause 3 was not included in the Bill authorizing the construction of national works was that that was a Money Bill. The proper place for such a clause was a Bill to amend the Irrigation Act, and this Bill was an amendment of the Irrigation Act. The reason why the clause had not been placed in a separate Bill was that it was just as urgent as the other two clauses. He was somewhat astonished that the honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) did not see that the passing of clause 3 was just as important to the district he represented and the trusts in which he was interested.
as, if not a great deal more than, the other two clauses. The best possible body of trust commissioners might be elected, but, unless they had water with which to carry out their irrigation scheme, what possible use was there in electing them? The passing of clause 3 was a matter of extreme urgency. For want of such a clause he had only been able to provisionally accept tenders for a large storage weir on the Loddon River. He could not finally accept those tenders until a clause of the kind had been passed into law. Without such a clause, no national works could be undertaken in any part of the colony. Works on the Loddon, the Avoca, the Wimmera, and indeed every other river would have to be at a standstill. It would be perfectly idle to expend large sums of money in the construction of works for the storage of what at present were waste waters — for the storage of those waters from the season when they were worthless until the season when they were beyond all price — unless there was in force a law to prevent them being diverted by any person who might chance to have land abutting on a stream, but who did not contribute one single farthing towards the cost of the works. The State undertook to build the works on the guarantee of irrigation and water supply trusts, and of private individuals, that they would take the water and pay for it; and therefore it was necessary to guard against the possibility of the water being diverted on its way from the head-works to the irrigation areas. The clause contained a provision protecting the riparian owner in the enjoyment of whatever water flowed in its ordinary natural course; more than that, when a stream was dry, the riparian owner would be allowed to take, without payment, so much of the water that came from national works as he might need for domestic and stock supply purposes. Thus the riparian owner would acquire advantages which he had never possessed before, and which he could not possibly acquire without the expenditure proposed by the State on national works. (Mr. Bosisto—"Supposing the riparian owner wants water for a manufacturing industry?") He would be permitted to take it on undertaking to return it to the stream. There would be no objection to a man using the water as a motive power so long as the supply was not diminished. The object of the clause, so far from depriving any one of what belonged to him, was to prevent any one depriving persons who paid for water stored at the expense of the State of the full enjoyment of that water. This would be rendered perfectly clear by means of certain amendments which he proposed to ask the House to allow to be made in clause 3, after the Bill had been read a third time.

Mr. HARPER remarked that he was a little surprised at the line of argument adopted by the Attorney-General and the Minister of Water Supply with regard to clause 3. As to the plea of urgency, it was rather inconsistent with the position which the Government had previously taken up. More than a fortnight ago the Government were requested to introduce a Bill to enable a certain class of people to vote in the election of irrigation trust commissioners. The proposal was not entertained, but suddenly, on Wednesday last, this Bill was introduced, and, although it had not been circulated, the standing orders were suspended to enable it to be passed through almost all its stages. It was then found that the Bill was of a most trenchant character — that it dealt not only with the election of trust commissioners, but also with the very large question of riparian rights. So much for the Ministerial plea of urgency. The Attorney-General had talked about riparian rights in a scornful sort of fashion, as if they were something outrageous, and did not deserve one moment's consideration. The honorable gentleman also spoke about the "honesty" of people who presumed to take water out of a water-course which was in any way connected with national works. But the question ought to be discussed in the light of rights—undoubted legal rights—which already existed, and into which no question of honesty or dishonesty came in any shape or way. What was it that was proposed by clause 3? That national rivers and water-courses and channels should be utilized to convey water from national works to irrigation trusts. He did not know that any one would seriously object to that provision. But it should be recollected that many of those water-courses had been utilized for years by the owners of land on their banks, and the question arose whether those owners were to lose their right to the water which they had hitherto enjoyed without check because an overflow from national head-works or irrigation trust works might come down the channel, unless, as the honorable member for Creswick (Mr. Wheeler) had put it, they were to become defendants in order to establish their right? If that were so, it would be a most serious change in the law. The Attorney-General had stated that the question of riparian rights

Mr. Deakin.
was settled in the principal Act. It was settled to the extent that those whose rights were interfered with were to get compensation. But there was nothing of that kind in this Bill. So that it would appear that riparian rights would be seriously interfered with, if not taken away, and this without compensation to the owner. It had been said that the regulations which would be framed under the Bill would not be inconsistent with the principal Act; but the matter was one which should not be dealt with rashly or hurriedly. He objected to the House being taken by surprise. Amendments which the Minister of Water Supply intended to make in clause 3 had been put in his hands, but he had had no time to master them, and he considered that the matter was one which should not be dealt with rashly or hurriedly. Moreover, he objected to things which ought to be disassociated being tacked together in one Bill. The Minister of Water Supply had stated that clause 3 could not be introduced into the other Bill which was on the paper—the Irrigation and Water Supply Loans Bill—because it was a Money Bill. But the title of that measure was as follows:

"A Bill to sanction the issue and application of certain sums of money as loans for irrigation works and water supply in the country districts and for other purposes."

But what were the "other purposes"? There was nothing in that Bill except a vote of money. Why, then, should not this clause 3 have been included in it? True some difficulty might be raised in another place; but that only showed that the clause ought to form a separate measure. Certainly this Bill ought to be confined to the matter for which it was ostensibly introduced.

Mr. JONES stated that, from time immemorial, rain must have fallen in the arid districts, and, for want of storage, must have run away without benefiting the localities through which it ran. The community were now called upon to construct storage works. Without those storage works, the water would continue to run away as it had run away from time immemorial. The community had the right to claim, through Parliament, that there should be some security, when the public money was expended on the construction of storage works, of a return being made to the State for the use of that water. The residents of the arid districts would then have a better chance. They would have a greater assurance of continuity of supply under the new conditions than they had ever had in the past; and although there might be exceptional hardship in some cases, the general advantages that would be gained would altogether and completely transcend whatever individual wrong might be done. Besides, Parliament could always deal with exceptional wrongs, and no doubt Ministers would always be ready to bring them forward. Hence honorable members might fairly agree to dispose of the larger issue now, and to leave individual cases to be dealt with as occasion arose. Upon the whole, the House would be consulting the interests of the community at large if it carried the third reading of the Bill.

Mr. ANDERSON (Villiers) observed that the Bill would apply to the whole colony, whereas there were in many localities streams which ran the whole year round. What he feared was that wherever the Government constructed head-works, riparian rights would be greatly interfered with, if indeed their very existence was not imperilled. In some respects the Bill appeared to strike at the very foundation of such rights. If that was allowed to be done, what would become of the advantages people paid for when they gave extra prices for river frontages? He was prepared to admit that, under the Bill, there might be a more abundant supply of water in different streams, and also that riparian owners had no right to more water than the natural supply of the streams to which their riparian ownership extended. He would also acknowledge that the Government had done their utmost to meet the objections to which their proposals were open. But why should not matters be left as they were before? Why, if riparian rights were taken away in any case, should not compensation be given? He was anxious to see the Bill go through, but he was equally anxious to see existing rights fully conserved.

Mr. WRIGHT thought that some honorable members were raising an unnecessary
difficulty by concerning themselves on behalf of rights which did not exist. Riparian rights were limited by law to a supply for domestic and stock purposes, and they could not possibly be construed by riparian owners into a right to divert water for irrigation purposes. Therefore no difficulty whatever, especially since artificial supplies of water ought to arise in connexion with the Bill, could always be gauged within a very fair percentage of accuracy. It would always be possible to distinguish tolerably closely between the natural and the artificial supply in any particular stream. On the other hand, the need for the Bill to become law was very great.

Mr. VALE stated that experience in connexion with the Clunes waterworks clearly proved that there need be no difficulty in gauging the difference between the natural supply of water in a stream and the amount that might be artificially sent along its course.

The motion was agreed to.

The Bill was then read a third time.

On the motion of Mr. DEAKIN, clause 3 (see p. 1,692) was amended so as to define "national works" to consist of "reservoirs, weirs, dams, channels, flumes, or works of any other description whatsoever," by the introduction before the 1st subsection of a sub-section limiting the right of riparian owners or occupiers (unless they were purchasers of water) to the use of only an amount of water equal in quantity to that available to them before any supply was derived from national works; by the addition to the 1st subsection of words providing that all regulations under the clause should be framed to preserve the existing rights of intermediate riparian owners and occupiers to "so much water as they would have enjoyed from the waters of such river, stream, or water-course previously to and independently of such national works"; and by the substitution for the proviso to the clause of words providing, inter alia, that the power of making regulations under the section should not be exercised until the Chief Engineer of Water Supply had reported that the regulations proposed to be made were reasonably necessary to secure the transmission of the water supplied from the national works to purchasers.

On the question that the Bill do pass,

Mr. WHEELER said he begged to enter his protest against the Bill being passed into law. He did so on the ground that it would place upon riparian owners and occupiers the onus of defending themselves in every case of dispute. At the same time, he was quite sure that the result of calm discussion in another place would be that the Bill, in its present objectionable form, would never find its way to the statute-book.

The Bill then passed.

TRUSTEE COMPANIES BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of Mr. DEAKIN, was read a first time.

The House adjourned at twelve minutes before midnight.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, November 4, 1888.

Supply: County Court Judges: Magistrates: The late Mr. Warburton. Corrs: Coroners' Inquests: The Elmore Case—The "Cup" Day: Adjournment of the House—Electoral Districts Alteration Bill.

The SPEAKER took the chair at three o'clock p.m.

MR. P. KERR.

Mr. NIMMO laid on the table papers (ordered by the House on October 23) relative to the recommendation of the Parliament Buildings Commission for a gratuity to be granted to Mr. P. Kerr, the architect of the Houses of Parliament.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Mr. PEARSON presented a return to an order of the House (dated September 18), relative to salaries paid to teachers in Australasia, Europe, and America.

COUNTY COURT JUDGES.

The House having resolved itself into Committee of Supply,

Discussion (adjourned from October 24) was resumed on the vote of £14,233 to complete the vote (£26,433) for County Courts, Courts of Insolvency, Courts of Mines, and General and Petty Sessions.

Mr. GRAVES stated that, a few weeks ago, he drew the attention of the Attorney-General to what appeared to him to be a very great wrong in connexion with the County Court at Benalla. In July, a constituent of his was summoned for the amount of a solicitor's bill of costs, the hearing being appointed to take place at the Benalla Court in October. But a month before the holding of the court, the defendant was served with a notice, signed by the clerk of courts at Benalla, requiring him to attend
at the Judge's chambers, in Melbourne, to defend the case. The explanation of the Attorney-General was to the effect that the proceeding was authorized by an Act of Parliament passed at the instance of his predecessor in office. But it was through an act of administration on the part of the present Government that such an injustice was rendered possible, because they had gazetted the County Court Judges to be Judges for the entire colony.

Mr. WRIXON said the case referred to was an exceptional one; and rules which were now being framed by the County Court Judges, and would soon be promulgated, would obviate anything of the kind in the future.

Mr. HUNT called the attention of the Attorney-General to the delay which had taken place in the appointment of magistrates in country districts. He submitted that the circumstances under which some appointments were made were susceptible of improvement. He was informed that it was the practice to ascertain from ordinary policemen whether certain persons were eligible for the commission of the peace. No doubt the police were a deserving body of men, but he considered that for policemen to practically nominate magistrates was something disgraceful. There were two or three places in his district where magistrates were required. Some considerable time back he called the attention of the Minister of Justice to the necessity for some appointments, and he certainly thought that, when vacancies occurred in the commission of the peace, they should be filled up as quickly as possible. It was no uncommon thing for persons in his district to travel 40 miles to make a declaration before a magistrate with respect to a lease or some other matter under the land law.

Mr. TUTHILL said he understood that formerly it was the rule in the Law department to submit the names of intended justices of the peace to the police magistrates, but he knew of his own knowledge that, during the last few years, justices of the peace had been appointed behind the backs, and even contrary to the opinion, of police magistrates. He knew of a police magistrate recommending a certain gentleman in a certain district for the commission of the peace, and the recommendation being ignored, and a man totally unfit for the position appointed. He hoped that some effort would be made to secure good appointments. Certainly the men who were selected to sit on the magisterial bench should be men who stood well in the estimation of the public, and particularly in view of the fact that, in many instances, the courts of petty sessions were composed only of honorary magistrates. It was not difficult to obtain the services of a good class of men. In the smallest centres there were men who enjoyed, to a large extent, the respect of their neighbours, and whose characters were above suspicion.

Mr. GRAVES observed that when he was first returned to Parliament, twelve years ago, there were 29 magistrates in the Delatite electorate. Now there were only 16. Magistrates were called upon to act not merely in a judicial capacity but also in an administrative capacity. Scarcely an Act of Parliament was passed which did not contain some provision relating to declarations. In fact, legislation bristled with provisions as to declarations. Nothing could be done in connexion with the Lands department without a declaration. He knew of men having to come to Euroa, from places 30 miles distant, to get declarations signed by a magistrate. It was also within his knowledge that Mr. Harriman, the Secretary of the Law department, in one of his reports, dwelt upon the tendency of legislation to insist upon declarations being made about almost everything, and the great inconvenience which the public must be subjected to in consequence unless more magistrates were appointed.

Mr. WHEELER stated that he was very glad that this matter was being pressed upon the Attorney-General's attention. Petitions for the appointment of magistrates at Ballarto and other places in his electorate had been forwarded to the Law department, a gentleman being named for the position in each case, but had received no attention. He considered some respect should be paid to the representations of local residents about matters of the kind, of which they were fully competent to judge. About a year ago, the police magistrate for the district recommended that a justice of the peace should be appointed at Glenlyon, but that recommendation had been ignored. Daylesford had the misfortune to lose one of its most worthy magistrates about the same time, but the vacancy had not yet been filled up, although the number of magistrates was so small that frequently it was a most difficult thing to form a bench. This should not be the case while the district contained men who were fully qualified to act as justices.

Mr. McLellan said he must protest most strongly against the doctrine laid down
by the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill) that, before a justice of the peace was appointed, the appointment should be recommended by a police magistrate. Police magistrates were mortal, and had their prejudices like other men, and, because they were prejudiced against any person, was that a reason why that person should not be made a justice of the peace? Four or five justices in his district had died within the last few years, but their places had not been filled up, although petitions for new magistrates had been forwarded by the local residents. He had presented two petitions from the outskirts of his district asking for the appointment of magistrates, and highly respectable gentlemen had been recommended for the position, but, as yet, without result. Magistrates in such localities were much wanted, because it was a great inconvenience to a working man to have to submit to the loss of a day's work in order to come to Ararat to get a simple document certified by a justice. There should be no difficulty in filling up vacancies in the commission of the peace, because every part of Victoria which had been settled for any length of time could supply a few highly respectable gentlemen who would be a credit to the magisterial office. He had no hesitation in saying that if a number of the present magistrates were removed from the commission of the peace, and their places taken by more active spirits, it would be better for the country. A large number of the present justices were never heard of or seen in connexion with magisterial business, except when some particular thing had to be done.

Mr. Vale remarked that it would appear that the Ministry had determined that the County Court Judges should reside not in the districts to which they were attached, but in Melbourne. Thirty years ago, places like Beechworth, Castlemaine, Sandhurst, and Ballarat, each had its resident Judge, and four or five practising barristers; and the people of those districts could not understand why the whole of the legal business of the colony should now be transacted in Melbourne. As the honorable member for Delatite had shown, instead of justice being taken to every man's door, if a man desired justice he had to come to Melbourne, and see Melbourne barristers. With regard to justices of the peace, he considered it was about time that there was some definite understanding as to how they were to be appointed. Not long since, he desired, from representations which were made to him, that three gentlemen should be appointed magistrates. He was doubtful about recommending three, and so he got a friend who sat behind the Ministry to take charge of one of the three. The one so taken charge of was appointed; but the two recommended by him (Mr. Vale) were not appointed, and yet, for position and character, they were equal to any residents of Ballarat. He was unable to understand why they were not appointed unless it was a political reason on the part of the Ministry, or a personal reason against the junior member for Ballarat West. It was not creditable to the administration of the affairs of the colony that he should be compelled to make such a statement.

Mr. Langdon observed that the want of additional magistrates had been repeatedly pressed by him upon the attention of the Government. He was surprised that the Government did not fill up gaps as they occurred in the commission of the peace. He knew many instances of magistrates dying or leaving the districts in which they had acted for years, and no one being appointed to supply their places. This omission caused much inconvenience to the public. He hoped the Ministry would see their way clear to appoint magistrates from time to time, instead of waiting until they could appoint a batch of some 200 or 300, which appeared to be the rule at present.

Mr. Wrixon said he could assure honorable members that it was the wish of the Minister of Justice to meet the wants of the public, in the various districts of the colony, as far as was possible; but it had been found undesirable to be always appointing magistrates, and in consequence the practice had grown up of allowing certain intervals to elapse, and then creating a sufficient number of justices to satisfy public requirements. At present, the Minister of Justice was engaged in compiling a list of justices which would soon be gazetted. It should be borne in mind that, when magistrates were appointed, they were appointed for higher purposes than the mere taking of declarations to which some honorable members had referred. A justice, once appointed, was appointed for all purposes pertaining to the magistracy. He had often wished that some officers could be appointed, like commissioners of affidavits, merely to take declarations. It seemed a waste of power to appoint a judge—because a magistrate was a judge—merely to take declarations. The honorable member for Kilmore was under a delusion when he said that lists of persons likely to be appointed were submitted to the police. (Mr. Hunt—"I did not say 'lists.'"") The
honorable member said "names," which amounted to the same thing. (Mr. Langdon—"I know it has been done in my district.") The whole thing was a mistake. No magistrate was appointed except on the recommendation of the Minister of Justice with the full assent and knowledge of the Cabinet; but, before any appointment was made, information with regard to the appointee was sought wherever it was obtainable. In the first place, the advice of the honorable members who represented the district was first taken. (Mr. Tuthill—"Not always.") The rule was to seek for information first from the members for the district. (Mr. Gaunson—"I have never been consulted yet.")

The honorable member for the Avoca (Mr. Langdon) would admit that the greatest attention had been paid to his recommendations. (Mr. Langdon—"Yes.") The Government paid as much attention to recommendations from members on one side of the House as to recommendations from members on the other side. Then the Government availed themselves of the information which they could obtain from police magistrates and other sources. But the notion of names being submitted to police magistrates or policemen before justices appointed was perfectly illusory. (Mr. Hunt—"Policemen are sometimes asked for information.") They might be asked. (Mr. Gaunson—"Is that a wise thing?") It all depended upon the circumstances. The inspector of police in a locality might be one of the most suitable persons to obtain information from. The honorable member for Ballarat West (Mr. Vale) seemed to be aggrieved because certain nominations made by him had not been acted upon; but the honorable member might rest assured that, in the compilation of the list of new magistrates, the greatest respect would be paid to his recommendations.

Mr. Vale said he had nominated gentlemen for the position of magistrates, but the names he had sent in had never even been submitted to the Minister of Justice.

Mr. McIntyre remarked that he had made recommendations which had been ignored, and other gentlemen of whom he knew nothing had been appointed magistrates instead of those whom he nominated. He, however, did not object to the gentlemen that were appointed, because they were good men. When Members of Parliament recommended gentlemen for the position of magistrates, the Government ought, at least, to consult the members making the nominations. The fact that he was not consulted regarding the gentlemen whom he nominated was perhaps due to an oversight. He had several times called attention to a great hardship inflicted upon Messrs. Hornsby and Oswald, two justices who dealt with a case at Maldon according to the advice of the clerk of the bench. They were threatened by the defendant with an action for £500 damages, and, on being advised that the case would go against them, they settled the matter by the payment of £150. Application was made to the Government to reimburse them the amount, but the request was refused on the plea that they ought to have allowed the action to go for trial before the Supreme Court. One of the gentlemen had become so disgusted that he had resigned his office of magistrate. As they both acted in the matter bona fide, it was the duty of the Government to take care that they did not suffer pecuniary loss.

Mr. W. Madden suggested that bank managers and shire secretaries were two classes of persons who ought to be appointed magistrates. They were always to be found, and would always be ready to perform the duties of the position. For some reason, however—perhaps because they were subject to removal from one district to another—the department did not care to place them in the commission of the peace. He had mentioned to the Minister of Justice that it might be advisable to appoint gentlemen as magistrates for a certain district so long only as they resided within that district, and that when they ceased to reside there they should no longer be on the commission. He would again urge the adoption of a rule of the kind, with the view to the appointment of bank managers and shire secretaries as magistrates.

Mr. Gaunson expressed the hope that bank managers would not be made magistrates under any circumstances. The other suggestion of the honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Madden) was a most valuable one, namely, that gentlemen who were placed on the commission of the peace should be retained on it only so long as they resided in the bailiwick for which they were appointed magistrates. At present, the names of magistrates were retained in the commission after they had left the bailiwick for which they were appointed, and the consequence was that the list was unduly swelled by the retention on it of the names of a lot of persons who were what might be termed dummy magistrates; and this system also prevented other gentlemen being appointed magistrates. No doubt it was the fact that
many magistrates did useful work, in the way of taking declarations, although they might not very often officiate in court; and, from this point of view, he thought that the Government ought not to be chary in appointing justices. He would be glad if the Government could see their way to lay down the rule that they would select the best men they could find for the position, whether they were opponents or friends of the Ministry; but he was sorry to say that experience went to show that these appointments were universally made from the friends of the Ministry of the day. With respect to the Government consulting policemen as to whether certain gentlemen were fit and proper persons to be appointed justices of the peace, there were great objections to following that course. If a practice of the kind was known to prevail, gentlemen who were eager to be justices would be found kowtowing to the police. It might be quite right that the Government should consult the officer of police in charge of a district as to the propriety of appointing a certain gentleman as a magistrate, but that they should ask the opinion of ordinary foot or mounted policemen on such a matter was highly objectionable. He thought that something like a record of the attendances of the magistrates in court should be kept, and that those who were found to be continually absent from the bench should be removed from the commission of the peace. It was unfair to the country at large that gentlemen, after getting the title of "J.P.," should not do the work attaching to the position. He would make another suggestion. At present a person might be summoned to appear before a court of petty sessions in a distant part of the country to answer a claim against him for a small sum of money. The claim might have no foundation, but it might be cheaper for him to pay the sum demanded, rather than go to the trouble and expense of defending the case. To obviate this kind of thing, it was desirable that clerks of petty sessions should be directed to take care, as far as they could, to be satisfied that a prima facie case existed before issuing a summons for debt against a person who did not reside in the locality in which the summons was applied for.

Mr. GORDON remarked that magistrates were supposed to be appointed in the interests of the general public, but the general public knew nothing about the appointments which were made until the names of the justices were published in the Government Gazette. The persons best qualified to judge of the suitableness of any gentleman for the office of magistrate were his neighbours and friends; and it seemed desirable that some means should be adopted whereby the people of a district would have a voice in the selection of the justices for that district.

Mr. McINTYRE took exception to the suggestion of the honorable member for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gauzon) that justices who did not act on the bench should be removed from the commission of the peace. At all events, a rule of the kind ought not to be made to apply to gentlemen who had been magistrates for many years, but had not for some time past officiated in court. He (Mr. McIntyre) had been a magistrate for over 30 years. For the first 20 years he constantly and regularly attended to his duties, but for the last 10 years he had rarely sat on the bench. He would again call the attention of the Attorney-General to the case of Messrs. Hornsby and Oswald, and ask the honorable gentleman if he would see that they were recouped?

Mr. WRIXON intimated that he would bring the matter under the notice of the Minister of Justice.

Mr. TUTHILL said the Attorney-General was mistaken in supposing that before a gentleman was appointed a justice of the peace the Members of Parliament for the district were consulted. (Mr. Bent—"The recommendation of some magistrates means disqualification.") Of his own knowledge, he could assure the Attorney-General that it was not the fact that Members of Parliament were consulted.

Mr. WHEELER stated that the remuneration of the County Court bailiffs, who were paid by fees, was inadequate. Many of these officers were compelled to keep a horse in order to travel over their districts, and, in some cases, the fees they received during a whole year were not sufficient to cover the cost of their horse feed. He had represented the matter to the department, but nothing had been done to remedy the cause of complaint. He would ask the Attorney-General to make a note of it, with the view to some slight salary being allowed in cases where the fees were inadequate to remunerate the bailiffs for the duties which they performed.

Mr. LEVIEN observed that if Members of Parliament were consulted at all with reference to the appointment of justices of the peace, their recommendations ought to be carried out; but he did not think that the Attorney-General intended to convey the
impression that Members of Parliament were consulted in the matter. In his (Mr. Lef- 
ven's) opinion, many more magistrates should be appointed, and he hoped the Go-

ernment would consider the propriety of appointing a greater number.

Mr. HUNT said it had been objected that the appointment of any large additional 
number of magistrates would inflate the roll, but at the present time the roll was inflated by 
the retention on it of the names of persons who had left the colony. Two magis-

trates in his district had left the colony—one of them had been in Queensland for the 
last three or four years—and, though the facts had been officially brought under the 
notice of the department, the names were still retained on the roll. He dared say that 

there were many cases of a similar character. (Mr. Gaunson—"The roll should be revised 
every twelve months.") The names of all magistrates who had left the colony should 
be at once expunged from the roll.

Mr. SHIELS stated that he believed that not one-fourth of the magistrates who were 
on the roll attended regularly to their duties.

When complaints were made as to the absence of justices from courts of petty sessions, 
the answer invariably made was that a very large number of magistrates had been ap-

pointed. He had himself brought under the notice of the Minister of Justice the 

fact that several times courts had lapsed because sufficient magistrates were not in 
attendance. The neglect of magistrates to attend to their duties amounted in such 
cases to an absolute denial of justice. It caused expense and inconvenience to suitors 
and inflicted great hardship upon a large number of persons. He remembered one 

case, involving a dispute as to a few pounds, in which about a dozen witnesses were sum-

moned, some of them having to come from a considerable distance, and the hearing 
could not be proceeded with because there was only one justice present. It was only 
right that gentlemen who were appointed magistrates—a position which many persons 
sought for the sake of the dignity attaching to it—should be expected to fulfil the duties 
pertaining to the office. There ought to be some arrangement by which, after a certain 
number of absences from the bench, a magistrate would be called upon to explain his 
non-attendance. By this means the idea would be conveyed that the Government 
expected justices to fulfil their duties belonging to their position. There certainly 
should be some process of weeding out, without casting any indignity upon them, 
those magistrates who habitually neglected to attend to their duties in court.

Mr. ZOX remarked that the duties of justices of the peace were not confined merely to sitting upon the bench. They had other magisterial functions to perform. He agreed that the Government should exercise more care as to the class of men that were appointed justices; but he did not think that compulsory attendance at court 
should be insisted upon. He desired to call attention to the condition of the City Police-
Court, which was not at all adapted for the purpose for which it was intended. There 
was scarcely a police court in the whole colony which was in a worse condition. Not 
only was the accommodation afforded by the court itself inadequate, but the rooms for 
the use of the officials were far too small. He had also received many complaints that 
a perfect nuisance was caused to the occupants of the adjoining office palace by the 
noise created by the prisoners confined in the watch-house during the night, and by 
the stench arising from the police stables. The property, he believed, had been sold by 
the Government, and he would like to know what was intended to be done with it.

Mr. JONES said it seemed to him that in this colony the system of appointing jus-
tices of the peace—if there was any system at all—was of a drifting character. In 
the old country a justice was usually a man of supposed respectability—one who was 
"In fair round belly, with good capon lin'd, 
With eyes severe, and beard of formal cut, 
Full of wise saws and modern instances."

Whereas in Victoria he might have "eyes 
severe," but he seldom had any wise saws, 
and his modern instances had better be 
avoided. Now in the United States the 
justice was an elected officer—elected to 
serve for two years—and dependent upon 
his fees for his maintenance. Moreover, he 
was entitled to marry couples, which was 
frequently a considerable source of income. 
He (Mr. Jones) was scarcely inclined to 
suggest that in this country justices should 
hold a similar position, but certainly a bet-
ter system of appointment ought to prevail. 
He also agreed with the honorable member 
for Namoi that when a justice had neg-
lected his duties for a series of months, 
without having any good excuse for his 
innovation, his name ought to be removed 
from the roll. It appeared to be assumed 
in this community that every man who had 
been useful to a Minister or to a staunch- 
Ministerial supporter in connexion with 
his election was entitled to be made a.
justice, but surely it did not follow, because a man was a capable electioneer, that he was exactly fit for the magistrates' bench. Some method more creditable to the colony, and more acceptable to the Legislature, ought to be adopted.

Mr. OFFICER stated that he had risen to support the complaint made a few minutes back, to the effect that it was very difficult to get justices of the peace appointed when they were required. Several times he had interviewed the Law department in order to get justices appointed for different localities, but, although it was admitted on each occasion that he had made out a good case, no appointment ensued. No doubt it was an honour to be made a justice, but it was not a one-sided honour, for he had to do work which otherwise would have to be done by a paid man. Why, under the circumstances, should the Law department be so reluctant to appoint justices? Certainly the fact that a sufficient number of such appointments were not made was often a source of great public inconvenience. Frequently people in remote parts of the country, who wanted the services of a magistrate, had to travel very considerable distances before they could find one. As for the honorable member for Normanby's suggestion that when a justice was not regular in his attendance at court his name should be taken off the roll — (Mr. Shiels—"I only said that his attention should be called to the fact of his non-attendance.") Nevertheless, the honorable member must have meant that if the justice did not give a satisfactory explanation he should be removed from the commission. But what harm would be done by letting him remain in the commission? (Mr. Shiels—"He would keep others from being appointed.") Was not that a most unwarrantable position to take up? Why should his remaining a justice prevent other justices from being appointed? Members of Parliament who were justices could not, generally speaking, attend to their court duties during the session; but ought they, on that account, to cease to be justices? (Mr. Gaunson—"Members of Parliament ought not to be justices at all.") He (Mr. Officer) thought differently. He was himself a justice, although he did not often attend court, his own district being far away, and the court in Prahran, where he lived while Parliament was sitting, having always an ample supply of local magistrates. At the same time, magistrates were often very useful in other ways than in performing their court duties, and he did his full share in that respect. He hoped the Attorney-General would take these matters into consideration.

Mr. LAURENS said that, in former years, he devoted much time to his court duties as a magistrate, but he did not, as a rule, attend court now. Why, however, should his name, on that account, be taken off the roll? There were plenty of other justices to take his place in court. In fact, when he did drop in upon the local bench, he was rarely able to find a seat. What particular bench had the honorable member for Normanby in his mind? Certainly he could not have alluded to the North Melbourne bench, because that was presided over by a gentleman who ranked as second to no police magistrate in the colony.

Mr. A. YOUNG expressed the opinion that the honorable member for Normanby had spoken on a subject he knew very little about. For example, he (Mr. Young) could say, as a magistrate of fifteen years' standing, that a justice had often to do as much work off the bench as on it. As for the paucity of magistrates in the country districts, it was at the present time so great that last Tuesday his performance of his parliamentary duties was seriously interfered with by the fact of his having, for the want of any other magistrate ready to act, to remain in the country in order to hear a case against two prisoners. In short, the appointment of more magistrates for the inland districts was something that could no longer be delayed without the public interest suffering. The Law department ought really to attend to the requests that were continually being made for more justices. Perhaps, when the honorable member for Normanby was Minister of Justice, he would act differently, but, for himself (Mr. Young), he would by no means think it right to take a justice out of the commission simply because, after twelve or fifteen years' good service, he ceased to attend regularly at court.

Mr. PEGUSON remarked that justices of the peace in Melbourne might fairly be expected to attend courts, but in remote country localities men were often appointed justices to do other useful work—such as witnessing and signing legal documents—than merely ornamenting a bench. Why, frequently a justice, who was of immense service to the community in which he lived, would have to travel 30 miles before he could attend a court of petty sessions. On what ground ought magistrates of that stamp to be reflected upon in the way the
Supply. [November 1.] Magistrates.

When a few extra magistrates attended at the city bench, what was always the cry? "Oh! what a packed bench." Once he (Mr. Bent) attended the South Melbourne bench, and the Age of the next day described it as a special visit for a special purpose. Honorary magistrates often did splendid service to the country without attending court, and it would be insulting them to write and ask them why they did not so attend. Upon the whole, the justices of the colony committed very few mistakes, and as long as they were in the commission they ought to be free from departmental interference. The Law department had no business to write to any justice in the way of interference unless he had acted contrary to law. If anything like proper discretion was exercised, there need be no fear of having too many justices. It was a common case to find an honorary justice even better qualified for bench work than a police magistrate. He sincerely hoped that Parliament would always uphold the unpaid magistracy in an independent position. Again, if a number of justices were old gentlemen who did not care to attend court regularly, what harm could come of keeping them on the roll? They had done good service to the community, and they ought to be treated accordingly.

Mr. McLEAN begged to endorse the remarks of the honorable members who had complained of the difficulty experienced in procuring the appointment of magistrates in localities where their services were urgently needed. He knew of several places in North Gippsland where, if a man needed a magistrate's signature to a formal document, he had to ride fifteen or twenty miles to get it, with the chance of the magistrate being from home, and of having to either lose the day, or else travel further. Unquestionably great care should be taken to make sure of the intellectual and educational qualifications of every gentleman nominated to be a justice; but it was monstrous to practically refuse to a district the advantages of a resident justice simply because the Law department imagined that, if a particular gentleman was appointed, he would not be a regular attendant at court. In short, the Law department indulged in such peculiar views in this direction that, the other day, a highly competent gentleman who was offered a justiceship felt compelled to decline to be sworn in, on the ground that he would be unable half his time to attend court, and that his having been appointed would be held by Government to be a bar to any one else being appointed. Why should there be this dread of appointing any

hONORABLE MEMBER FOR NORMANBY HAD REFLECTED UPON THEM?

Mr. BENT observed that some years since there was a strong disposition on the part of honorable members to apply for the appointment of more police magistrates to serve here and there in different districts, but he was glad to notice that the cry had changed, and that what was asked for now was that more justices should be appointed. For his part, his experience led him to regard an honorary magistrate as in most cases quite as good as a police magistrate. As for court duties, was that all a justice was appointed to do? Why he (Mr. Bent) witnessed at least 60 affidavits a week. As for Members of Parliament being justices, how was it that some honorable members were in the commission and others not? He thought that a man who was considered good enough to be elected by a constituency was good enough to be made a justice, whatever the press might say to the contrary. (Mr. Gordon—"Might not the honour be offered, and declined?") He would admit that might be the case, but he was only looking at the general principle of the thing. He understood the Attorney-General to assert that he attended to recommendations made by honorable members with respect to the appointment of justices, but let honorable members take his (Mr. Bent's) case. In the first place, two justices had been recently appointed for the Brighton district without any knowledge on his part that they had even been nominated. When he was asked, the other day, to move in a particular direction he was compelled to reply—"No, I have nominated two good men to be justices, and, until they are appointed, I will nominate no others." The case of Mr. Jamieson, a justice of Cheltenham, who was highly respected, and who formerly attended the local bench most regularly, but who had lately removed to Brighton, was a most glaring instance. To say that there were already too many magistrates at Brighton was just to offer no reason at all. In the first place, most of those magistrates were practically city men. Besides, was not Cheltenham practically in the Brighton district, and was not the Brighton district increasing in population every day? He quite agreed with the view of the honorable member for Dundas. Supposing the rule recommended by the honorable member for Normanby was laid down, and every justice was required to attend court at least once every three months, what would happen? Why there would not be room on the bench for all the sitting magistrates.

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but the smallest possible number of justices? Honorary magistrates did not cost the State anything, and the more their services were available the better. About a year ago Mr. McLean introduced a deputation to the Minister of Justice, its object being to ask him to appoint magistrates to certain localities where they were sorely wanted. Well, the honorable gentleman admitted the urgency of the case, and took down a number of names, but he did nothing more, nor could subsequent application on the subject induce him to do anything more. No doubt some different system of appointment was absolutely called for.

Mr. Hall stated that he could not conceive why the Government should hold themselves back from appointing justices for country districts where their presence and assistance were greatly wanted. What was to be gained by such reluctance? Why should the urgent applications on the subject which were continually being made by public bodies, or through honorable members, or in other ways, be so continually set aside? In one large town in Moira there was only one available justice, and, although it had been a frequent request to the Government that another should be appointed, such an appointment had never been made, with the result that court sittings had often to be put off. He (Mr. Hall) could not see why, when a vacancy arose, it should not be filled within the next month. An honorable member had suggested that nominations of gentlemen to be made justices should be submitted to the local police magistrate, but to that sort of thing he (Mr. Hall) greatly objected. In many instances the police magistrate could not possibly be fully aware of all the circumstances of the case. Besides, the recommendations of such an official could not always be relied on. He (Mr. Hall) knew of a police magistrate calmly saying, with respect to a strong request for an additional justice, that there was no necessity for one. Was it possible for a police magistrate to know the wants of a particular district better than the district itself? Mr. Shiels—"Yes." How could that be proved? He (Mr. Hall) could cite plenty of cases in which a police magistrate had shown that he knew nothing of the matter remitted to him. On one occasion a police magistrate condemned an application which had been recommended by the people of the locality interested. Mr. Shiels—"And rightly so." Most wrongly so. And the police magistrate was afterwards shown to be utterly mistaken. The Attorney-General would doubtless remember how a police magistrate once represented a particular individual to be a drunkard, when, in fact, he had been a teetotaller for thirteen years. At another time a police magistrate said that a certain person was illiterate and could not sign his own name, when, in fact, he had himself written letters to the Law department, and was, in truth, a very fair scholar. More than that, he had already acted as a justice, having been made one by virtue of his position as shire president. The arguments offered by the honorable member for Normanby were most astonishing. Were good men likely to consent to become magistrates if it was made the rule that any justice might be taken off the roll although it could not be shown that he had done anything to unfit himself to remain upon it? Because a justice, who had actively served the country for years, had grown old, was he therefore entitled to be disgraced? Why should he not be allowed to keep the honour he had done so much to deserve? If justices were not in future appointed at a faster rate, the interests of the community, especially in the country districts, would greatly suffer.

Mr. Shiels remarked that it was well known to the House that the honorable member for Moira (Mr. Hall) had no great love for a particular police magistrate. Indeed, so much was that the case on his part that other honorable members had often had to rise to defend that police magistrate from the unchivalrous and unjust attacks persistently made upon him in his absence, although his exculpation was as clear as the sun at noon-day. It would be most unfortunate if the Attorney-General listened to the advice of the honorable member. What would happen if individuals were to be appointed magistrates solely on the recommendation of Members of Parliament, and without any inquiry into their fitness, character, and their repute in their respective districts? Why the honour of the unpaid magistracy of the colony would be often utterly betrayed. He (Mr. Shiels) had known deputations introduced by honorable members urge the Law department to place on the bench men who would, had they been appointed, have soon brought the honorary judiciary of the colony into contempt. Besides, the jurisdiction of courts of petty sessions having been recently enormously enlarged, it more than ever behoved the authorities to be cautious before they selected a man to be a magistrate. Was it not according to the nature of things that a police magistrate
who went round the country so very much, and attended so many courts, should have more experience than an ordinary local justice? He (Mr. Shiels) only wished that the circumstances of the colony would permit of a police magistrate being a necessarily constituent member of every court of petty sessions. Unquestionably, such courts would give greater satisfaction, and the public would be better served, if that was the rule. In his practice as a barrister, he (Mr. Shiels) had often known the utmost wrong done by ignorant local magistrates disregarding the legal technicalities of a question in order to do what they deemed to be common-sense justice, the result generally being that the litigant whom they thought they were befriending eventually became the sufferer. Therefore it was all the more essential that skilled men should be appointed. He had never suggested any such drastic proceeding as that honorary magistrates who did not attend the courts of petty sessions should be struck off the roll, but he certainly thought that, when a magistrate in a country district had not attended to his public work for a considerable length of time, a reminder should be sent to him from the Crown Law offices asking for an explanation. He could quite endorse the statement that the Government were too dilatory in filling up the vacancies which occurred in the magistracy. In one case it took him over eighteen months to obtain the appointment of a gentleman who, as president of the shire, had previously presided over the courts in his district for several years, although the police magistrate strongly recommended the appointment. This arose from the objection of the Government to making special appointments. No doubt the roll could be unduly inflated, and improper appointments made. Improper appointments had been made in the past through the representations of Members of Parliament, and if honorable members had only an opportunity of looking through the recommendations which had been made from time to time by Members of Parliament, and seeing the subsequent reports on the persons recommended, they would be very much astonished. He hoped the Government would not depart from the principle of finding out something about men who were recommended for the position of justice of the peace before the appointments were made, as disaster was sure to follow. Within his own knowledge, a Government did depart from the confidential sources of information of which all previous and subsequent Governments had availed themselves, and that Government, on the admission of the Attorney-General of the time, made most serious mistakes by adopting the recommendations of Members of Parliament without seeking outside sources of information. He thought that, if the Attorney-General would look up the records of the time he alluded to, the honorable gentleman would see reason why the Government should not rely solely on the recommendations of Members of Parliament. He (Mr. Shiels), for one, did not want to have cast upon him the onerous duty of making such recommendations, even with regard to his own constituents. He remembered one case in which he was surprised to learn that a gentleman who had obtained a petition in favour of his appointment as a magistrate had been several times fined by the bench of which he sought to become a member. If he (Mr. Shiels) had been asked to recommend that gentleman he might, in his ignorance of this fact, have done so. He hoped the Attorney-General would bring under the notice of his colleague, the Minister of Justice, the difficulty of carrying out the proper administration of justice in the country districts, owing to the want of sufficient magistrates. There were too many magistrates in Melbourne and too few in the country, and the undue number of magistrates in Melbourne prevented the country districts from having appointments made which were really suitable and necessary. He was aware that a portion of the Attorney-General's own district had suffered from the want of sufficient justices. He trusted that the result of the discussion would be to press on the Minister of Justice the necessity of looking more to the wants of the country districts, and that he would not be afraid to make appointments in the country because the roll was unduly inflated as far as Melbourne was concerned.

Mr. WRIXON observed that there had been a very full discussion of the matter, though not too full, as the subject was undoubtedly a very important one, and he hoped it would now close. He would take care to consult with his honorable colleague, the Minister of Justice, and to bring under his notice the different points which had been referred to in the discussion. It was not the fault of his honorable colleague that the list had not been got out before this. The Minister of Justice had had a new list of magistrates nearly completed for some time, but it was under careful review by the whole Cabinet before being finally passed. He

hoped, however, that it would be issued before long. With reference to the remarks of the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox), he might state that provision had been made on the Estimates for a new police court in Melbourne, but he was afraid it could not be erected this year, owing to the financial scheme of the Government not having been carried through.

Mr. COPPIN said it was universally acknowledged that there was a scarcity of magistrates throughout the country, and why the Government had hesitated so long in making fresh appointments he could not understand. He presumed, however, that new appointments would be made very shortly. It had been stated by an honorable member that there were too many magistrates on the roll, that those who did not attend to their duties should be struck off, and that the Government should fill up the vacancies thus caused. He thought, however, that it would be very unjust to remove any magistrates from the roll, even although they did not now attend the courts. He might instance his own case. Upwards of 30 years ago, he was chairman of the bench at Richmond, and attended to the duties of his office for many years. He thought it would be rather ungracious to sweep him off the roll because he did not attend to magisterial duties at the present time, except when he went to Sorrento, where there were very few justices. A large number of magistrates were in a similar position, and it would be treating them most ungrately to strike them off the roll. He might make a practical suggestion on the subject to the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice. In order to clear the way for making appointments, let them have an exempt list of magistrates who had filled the office for a large number of years, and also another list of working magistrates; and in making their appointments let them be guided only by the number on the working list, taking no notice of the exempt list at all. He thoroughly endorsed the opinion which had been expressed by some honorable members, that the honorary magistrates of Victoria were a credit to the colony.

Mr. McCOLL observed that a new departure was made in the last batch of magistrates, by appointing several working-men candidates for the bench. He hoped the same course would be followed in the new list. In cases relating to mining and other technical matters, it had been found of great service to have skilled men on the bench, and the working men who had been appointed justices had filled the positions very creditably and usefully.

Mr. BAKER stated that no district in the colony suffered so much from the want of magistrates as the Wimmera. Several of the gentlemen formerly appointed magistrates had left the district, and in some places it was impossible to open the courts for want of justices. People in the district frequently abandoned small debts rather than take out summons, owing to the difficulty of having the cases heard. This matter had been frequently brought under the notice of the Crown Law department without effect; but he hoped that, after this discussion, it would not be again necessary to call attention to the want of magistrates in the country districts. Too much importance should not be attached by the Government to the opinions of stipendiary magistrates with regard to persons recommended for appointment as justices, as they were not always seized of the whole facts. In one case a gentleman recommended for appointment by a public meeting was reported against by the police magistrate, on the ground that he was only an ordinary selector, whereas he owned 2,000 acres of land and a fine flock of sheep, and was a well-educated, respectable, and intelligent man. There was no necessity for creating additional magistrates in Melbourne at all, as 30 or 40 could be found on the bench in a case where one of their friends was interested, but in the last list issued there were nearly as many magistrates created in Melbourne as in the rest of the colony. As to the attendance of justices, unless there was an exempt list as suggested by the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin), he thought magistrates should feel bound either to take their fair share of the work or else to retire from the commission of the peace.

Mr. A. HARRIS stated that time after time he and his honorable colleague had pressed on the Minister of Justice the necessity of appointing a few justices of the peace in parts of their district where they were urgently required. On the last occasion that they went with a deputation on the subject, they were given to understand that the urgent appointments required would be made long before this. Wherever the fault lay, the delay was not creditable to those concerned. It was a shame that populous localities should be made to suffer from the want of resident justices, and this was the case in different portions of his district. It was to be hoped that the
Government would lose no further time in attending to the matter, otherwise it would be necessary to move some resolution expressing dissatisfaction at the course pursued.

Mr. BROWN said he had had to bring under the notice of the Minister of Justice the urgent necessity for the appointment of additional magistrates in his district, and also in Rodney. He hoped the expression of opinion which had been given by honorable members would prevent further delay in providing for the efficient administration of justice in the country districts.

Mr. GAUNSON observed that the Attorney-General had stated that, in the appointment of justices, it was the practice to consult Members of Parliament. Without wishing to reflect in the slightest degree upon the appointments which had been made in South Melbourne, he desired to say that he was never consulted in regard to any one of them. A very valuable suggestion had been made by the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin), and he now wished to make a further suggestion. Before doing so, he desired to recant the opinion he had previously expressed about Members of Parliament being made justices of the peace. Not that he thought they were unfit to be justices, but he felt it was undesirable that they should mix up their parliamentary duties with judicial duties. As a member of the Executive Council, he was entitled to be a justice of the peace for life; but he resigned that position absolutely, and therefore he thought he was entitled to say that if Members of Parliament were to be made justices because they were Members of Parliament the position should be offered to every man in the House without exception. Was it a proper thing that some members should be appointed justices of the peace and others not? The suggestion he had to make was that every man who was elected to a municipal council should be ex officio, during his term of office, a justice of the peace, and that there should be no other new justices. If this plan was adopted it would relieve honorable members from being placed sometimes in an awkward position, in being asked to recommend the appointment of gentlemen who considered themselves fit for the position of justice of the peace. It would also tend to exalt the position both of councillor and justice, and to create and maintain public spirit in a marvellous way. At the same time, it would be a graceful recognition of the labours of a large number of gentlemen who did a great deal of work for nothing, whereas Members of Parliament were paid £300 a year. It would have the further good effect of rendering the ratepayers extra careful in the choice of councillors, because every voter would know that he was possibly placing his liberty in the keeping of the man for whom he voted. If an alderman of the city of London was considered by virtue of his office fit to be a magistrate, he did not see why the same principle should not apply to local councillors in this colony. Moreover, every mayor and every shire president was ex officio a magistrate, and any councillor might be appointed mayor or president. He believed that his suggestion was an excellent one, and that if acted upon it would work extremely well.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he wished to bring under the notice of the Attorney-General and the Minister of Justice the case of the late Mr. Warburton Carr, who served the colony as a police magistrate for 34 years. It was stated that at a period of political disturbance in the colony, having to give up his office for a time, he was obliged to leave off paying the premiums on an insurance which he had effected on his life for the benefit of his family. It was also stated that the very hard work which he had to do at the close of last year as a licensing magistrate, in addition to his other duties, was probably one of the causes which brought about his sudden decease. He devoted himself very strenuously to his duties as licensing magistrate, and in one day, when ill, visited between 30 and 40 houses. Under the present arrangement, the widow of the late Mr. Carr would only get nine months' pay as compensation. He (Sir B. O'Loghlen) would ask whether, in view of Mr. Carr's long and faithful services, the Government could not see their way to place a further sum on the Additional Estimates to increase this amount? His long and excellent service, and the fact that he was working actually up to the time of his death, entitled his case to special consideration. He was an admirable officer, and discharged his duties to the great satisfaction of every district to which he was appointed. If the Government could not give the widow one month's pay for every year of her late husband's service, they might at least allow her two-thirds of that amount—say 22 or 24 months' pay. (Mr. Coppin—"Why does she only get nine months' pay?") That was, unfortunately, the construction put, some years ago, on the Civil Service Act. He believed it was.
the intention of Parliament to grant a month's pay for every year of service, but that intention was not conveyed in the words of the Act, and, on a legal opinion, the practice had sprung up of only allowing one month's pay for each year up to nine years. It had been usual in any case where exceptional circumstances were shown to exist for the Government to place an extra sum on the Estimates, and he thought that this was one of those cases in which that course should be followed. There had been two or three cases recently in which this had been done. He understood that the widow and family were left in the reverse of good circumstances.

Mr. Wrixon said he had had a discussion with his honorable colleague, the Minister of Justice, about this case, and had intended to discuss it further with him that day, but the Estimates came on rather unexpectedly. He would take an opportunity of further consulting with his colleague on the subject; but, at the same time, he must remind the committee that there was considerable difficulty in ascribing to applications of this kind. It certainly seemed to him that some rule should be laid down and adhered to. If Parliament meant to give more than nine months' pay, it should give it in every case, and not give it in some and deny it in others. The position was that the widow of a public servant had not a right to anything according to law, but, under Act No. 160, when an officer was constrained to leave the service, after serving less than ten years, on account of bodily infirmity, the Governor in Council might grant him a gratuity not exceeding one month's pay for every year's service. From that, a practice had grown up of allowing widows of deceased public servants a gratuity equal to nine months' pay. If Parliament did not think that was a sufficiently liberal provision, it should adopt some other rule. His personal feeling was in favour of dealing most liberally with old public servants and their families, because he believed such treatment was calculated to procure for the State good service. But they should not make a rule for one public servant, and an exception for another. (Mr. Outtrim—"You are doing it in these very Estimates.") There were special reasons in each case where the rule was departed from. He knew that exceptions had been made under peculiar circumstances, and, on the other hand, that a similar concession had been refused when the circumstances appeared equally hard. For instance, in the case of the widow of a late police magistrate, Mr. Wheeler, who lost his life in travelling in winter over the Gippsland mountains, an application for an increased gratuity was made to the last Government, and it was refused. Although he would further discuss this case with his colleague, he could not conceal his own belief that some rule should be laid down which would apply to the widow of the humblest clerk or labourer, as well as to the widow of the highest officer.

Mr. Outtrim considered that the duties which police magistrates had to perform were, in value, far and away in excess of the salaries they were paid. Take, for example, the district which he represented, and to which the late Mr. Warburton Carr was attached. Mr. Carr had to attend courts at Avoca, Maryborough, Talbot, Majorca, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Inglewood, Wedderburn, St. Arnaud, and Donald, some of which places he could reach by railway, while others could be travelled to only by road. Some of these courts Mr. Carr could not attend more frequently than once in six or seven weeks. In addition, he had to perform the duties of coroner and gold-fields warden, and also act in the Licensing Court. When he left his home on Monday morning he rarely expected to return until Saturday, and his remuneration was no more than £650 a year. Seeing that this gentleman had such arduous duties to perform, and that the best years of his life were spent in the service of the country, it was to be hoped that some more generous provision than a gratuity equal to nine months' pay would be made for his family, who were left in anything but a good position. He might mention that the Postmaster-General's division of the present Estimates provided for a gratuity equal to one month's pay for each of thirty-three years of service. He desired to add that the Minister of Justice would only be studying the interests of the country districts by appointing three or four additional police magistrates.

Mr. Tuthill expressed his satisfaction that the case of the late Mr. Warburton Carr had been brought under the notice of the committee. He quite agreed with the Attorney-General that it was not advisable to go contrary to the provisions of an Act of Parliament; but there were exceptions to every rule, and cases would arise when it was necessary, as an act of justice, for the Assembly to depart from the strict letter of the law. Mr. Carr was one of the victims of the political proceedings of 1878, and
while he was out of the service—having as much as he could do to provide the necessities of life for himself and his family—he failed to pay the premiums on the assurance of his life, and, in consequence, the policies lapsed. Thus the family were deprived of a provision which would have spared them the necessity for appealing to Parliament. It should be recollected that Mr. Carr was a faithful servant of the State for thirty-four years, and that he died in harness.

Mr. BAKER stated that he had been requested by several of his constituents to impress upon the Attorney-General the necessity for doing something more for Mr. Carr’s family than granting them a gratuity equal to nine months’ pay. He was in a position to know that the family were not by any means in the comfortable circumstances which surrounded them during Mr. Carr’s life-time.

Mr. GAUNSON contended that the additional gratuity asked for on behalf of Mrs. Carr should be conceded on the ground of simple justice. The Attorney-General had stated that some rule ought to be laid down in connexion with such matters. Parliament had laid down a rule, and the rule was that there should be no such grants. Then all the more necessity for applying to Parliament to consider each particular case on its special merits. The circumstances in favour of the Carr case were exceptional, and very strong. As had been stated, Mr. Carr served the country for thirty-four years; he died in harness, and he had exceptionally ill treatment meted out to him at a time when the colony was, politically, almost in a state of revolution. Moreover, the Attorney-General should consider the underlying reasons why gifts of the kind were made. Why was it that a grant of money or a title was conferred on the able warrior or statesman of the old country? Not merely to recompense or honour him, but also to cause other men in the public service to follow in his footsteps and emulate his deeds. He considered that this case ought to be dealt with in the same spirit that was observed in connexion with the families of the late Mr. Odgers and the late Mr. Agg.

Mr. SHIELS urged that the Ministry would do no more than was due both to the State, which had lost a good servant, and to those whom Mr. Warburton Carr had left behind, by giving every consideration to the case which had been brought forward by the honorable member for Belfast. Certainly the fact that some years ago, when Mr.

Carr was dismissed on account of the political complications of the time, he was compelled to abandon paying the premiums on his life assurance policy, took the case out of the ordinary run of cases, in support of which only long and faithful service could be pleaded.

Mr. BAILES called attention to the fact that the amount set down for travelling expenses for County Court Judges had increased from £900 to £1,500. A few years ago, when the wave of decentralization was passing over the country, a large deputation that waited on the Premier was assured that in all cases, where possible, the County Court Judges would be called upon to reside in the districts to which they were attached. Had that promise been given effect to, there would have been no necessity for a large provision for travelling expenses. Not only had it not been given effect to, but the number of County Court Judges had been reduced.

Mr. WRIXON explained that an arrangement had been made with the County Court Judges, under which it was understood that, if four of them did all the work outside Melbourne, they would be allowed the sum for travelling expenses which was included in the vote.

Mr. L. L. SMITH called attention to the want of additional magistrates in the Mornington district, and particularly at Hastings. The want had been represented over and over again to the Law department, and repeated promises had been made that new magistrates would be appointed, but the promises wanted fulfilment. Mornington contained some very bad roads, and it was considered a hardship to travel seven or eight miles along such roads to find a magistrate. More than that, it operated as a hindrance to justice. Men preferred to submit to a grievance than to travel that distance to obtain the issue of a summons whereby the grievance might be redressed. He considered that all the present magistrates who did not attend to their duties, and there were a great number of them, should be wiped out of the commission of the peace.

Mr. BURROWES stated that he was surprised to hear from the Attorney-General that the Ministry had entered into a contract whereby four Judges were to do all the County Court work outside Melbourne. But, considering how much of the time of every County Court Judge was occupied in connexion with the Licensing Courts, it could not be said that there were
four Judges, to do the County Court work outside Melbourne. The small number of Judges accounted for the way in which business was transacted in his district. A County Court Judge attended Sandhurst and sat for a day and a half or two days, when—although the whole of the cases listed for hearing had not been dealt with—he was off to Echuca, to hold a court there. This thing had occurred over and over again.

Sir B. O'LOGHLLEN remarked that the difficulty which had arisen in connexion with the transaction of County Court business was attributable to the fact that the number of Judges had been gradually reduced. At one time there were nine; now there were only five—one for Melbourne, and four for the country districts. And yet increased duties were thrown upon the County Court Judges every year. Whenever anything had to be done by an independent authority, Parliament at once provided that it should be done by a County Court Judge. There was no doubt that more County Court Judges ought to be appointed. He considered that the police magistrates should not be subject to the Public Service Act, but be provided for in an Act of their own, as were the Supreme Court Judges and the County Court Judges. The police magistrates should have a more or less independent tenure, and their salaries should be arranged on a different principle from that which was observed at present—they should be regulated according to the work which had to be done. He understood that the Government had a Bill in contemplation, and he would like to know whether that was the fact?

Mr. WRIXON said the Bill to amend the Public Service Act, which was before the Assembly last session, dealt with the case of the police magistrates.

Mr. GAUNSON concurred with the honorable member for Belfast that the County Court work of the country could not be performed satisfactorily without an increase in the number of Judges. There ought to be at least two more Judges. It was a scandalously unjust thing that suitors in the country districts, whose grievances ought to be redressed locally, should be driven to Melbourne. At present, the Judges were called upon to travel over too much country. The time was consumed not so much in holding courts as in travelling. With regard to affording the police magistrates an independent position, considering the enormous jurisdiction now given them, he was of opinion that something ought to be done in that direction.

Mr. WRIXON said, as far as he was aware, the County Court Judges were able to fully cope with their work; but there was no use disguising the fact that the railways were bringing everything, including litigation, to Melbourne. The result was that court after court was held in the country districts without any business having to be transacted. However, the suggestions which had been made would receive consideration. He was not aware that there was a want of Judges; but if the amount of business demanded an increase in the number, the country could well afford to pay for it.

The vote was agreed to, as were also the following:—£9,690 to complete the vote (£18,690) for police magistrates and wardens, and £12,917 to complete the vote (£22,167) for clerks of courts.

CORONERS' INQUESTS.

On the vote of £3,840 to complete the vote (£7,200) for coroners,

Mr. L. L. SMITH called attention to the amount of remuneration paid to surgeons for post mortem examinations. The fee of two guineas was altogether too low, and the allowance for travelling expenses—1s. per mile and only one way—was altogether inadequate. It should be recollected that the men intrusted with this duty were men of undoubted talent, and that the duty could not be performed without some risk. In fact, the deaths of several medical men were traceable to post mortem examinations. In his opinion, a fee of three guineas was quite little enough, and there ought to be an increase in the allowance for travelling expenses.

Mr. BROWN submitted that out of the £1,500 which the vote placed at the disposal of the Minister of Justice for jurors' fees something more than a paltry 16s. per day should be paid to the jurors who acted on the inquest at Elmore in the recent murder case. Those men were engaged for thirteen days in assisting the Government in the administration of justice, during the whole of which time they were debarred from carrying on their ordinary business; and the shutting up of their shops meant the entire suspension of business in the township. He considered that the fee should be one guinea per day. The Ministry might think that, in view of the Act passed last session, they had not the power to increase the fee, but that measure provided that in exceptional cases there should
be exceptional treatment. He might mention that his representations in this matter were concurred in by his two honorable colleagues, both of whom were loyal supporters of the Government.

The vote was agreed to.

The resolutions were then reported to the House.

THE "CUP" DAY.

Mr. JONES asked the Premier if it was his intention to move that the House, at its rising, should adjourn until the following Wednesday, so that honorable members might have a holiday on "Cup" day? It was desirable that the matter should be definitely settled at once. One reason why he asked the question was that he would like to see some consideration shown to the officers of the House. He believed that usually the messengers worked about fifteen hours per day during the session, but during the prolonged sitting which occurred the previous week they must have worked about twenty-four hours one day. He also understood that during the last four months there had been an actual want of additional assistance, and apparently no adequate endeavour had been made to obtain the additional assistance required.

The SPEAKER.—I must request the honorable member to confine himself to asking the question.

Mr. JONES said he would simply express the hope that, if the House adjourned until Wednesday, the officers would get some benefit from the holiday.

Mr. GILLIES stated that, as there seemed to be a general desire not to sit on "Cup" day, he would move that the House, at its rising, adjourn until Wednesday, November 7.

Mr. BENT suggested that the Premier should undertake to see that the officers of the House would be allowed to participate in the holiday.

The SPEAKER.—If it is desired that, in the event of the House adjourning until Wednesday, the officers of the House shall have a holiday, I will take care that the wishes of honorable members in the matter are given effect to.

Mr. MUNRO observed that he had always opposed the motion to adjourn over "Cup" day, and, under ordinary circumstances, he would do so on this occasion. (Mr. Jones—"It is to go down the Bay.") He had never been down the Bay with the Young Men's Christian Association, nor had he ever gone to the races. He had, however, always opposed the motion for adjourning over "Cup" day, but, on the present occasion, if he thought that he could get any support, he would move, as an amendment, that the House adjourn until Christmas, or, at least, for a month. The business which honorable members were doing was of such a valueless character—in fact, of such a mischievous character—that the less they did of it the better.

The motion was agreed to.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ALTERATION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this Bill.

Mr. COPPIN said that, the previous evening, the Premier was good enough to postpone the consideration of the proposed boundaries of the Melbourne electorates to afford the members representing those constituencies an opportunity of meeting together, for the purpose of ascertaining if the boundaries could in some way be altered so as to make them more acceptable to the residents in the respective districts. The honorable members who represented East Melbourne, West Melbourne, North Melbourne, Carlton, and Richmond were present at the conference held that morning, but he regretted to say that, after considering the matter for an hour and a half, during which time two or three propositions were made, no definite decision was arrived at that would be at all likely to be acceptable to the Government. The meeting, therefore, ended without any practical result. The members for the districts concerned were disappointed that Mr. Hart, the officer of the Government Statist's department who was principally responsible for the compilation of the population statistics submitted in connexion with the Bill, was not present at the conference. It had been arranged, with the consent of the Premier, that Mr. Hart should be present, with the plans and figures, for the purpose of giving information. Not only did he not put in an appearance, but during the morning he took away plans from the House, so that the members who met together were unable to get information which was really indispensable to enable them to carry out what they wanted to do.

Mr. LAURENS stated that it was quite true that Mr. Hart was not present at the conference, as it was expected he would be, and that, in the absence of Mr. Hart and the plans and figures, it was impossible for the members present to arrive at any definite
scheme to prevent the manifest wrong that was being done by cutting up the electorate of North Melbourne in the way proposed by the Government. Therefore, in military parlance, it was a case of "as you were." The problem still had to be solved. He did not see how the committee could feel itself justified in sanctioning a proposal to take population away from the municipality of North Melbourne in order to add it to other districts for electoral purposes.

Mr. GILLIES interposed to say that the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) was not in order. The honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Coppin), with the leave of the committee, had been allowed to make a statement as to the result of the conference, but the honorable member for North Melbourne was now discussing a subject which would come before the committee when the North Melbourne electorate was dealt with.

Mr. LAURENS said he had no desire to speak out of time or out of place, and he would therefore reserve his remarks until the North Melbourne electorate was before the committee.

Mr. MUNRO stated that he desired to make a suggestion to the Premier, namely, that one half of Smith Ward, in the city of Melbourne, should be placed in the electoral district of East Melbourne, and the other half in the electoral district of West Melbourne. If that was done, he believed that the views of nearly all parties concerned would be met, and there would be no necessity to cut up the municipality of North Melbourne, which would be a manifest injustice if it could be avoided. He hoped that the Premier would consider the suggestion.

The committee then proceeded to consider the postponed subdivisions of the 2nd schedule—the schedule of boundaries of electorates.

On the 9th subdivision, describing the electorate of Beechworth,

Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment with the view of including the asylums at Beechworth—the lunatic asylum and the benevolent asylum—in the Beechworth electorate instead of the Bright electorate, and striking out a portion of the Everton district. The effect of including the hospitals in the Beechworth electorate was to transfer a population of about 400 from the electorate of Bright to that of Beechworth, and that would be equalized by taking a portion of the Everton district from Beechworth and adding it to the electorate of Bright.

Mr. TUTHILL said he was obliged to the Premier for the alteration he proposed to make, but it did not meet the objections to the Government proposal which had been brought under the honorable gentleman's notice by resolutions passed at various public meetings held throughout the Ovens district. It went part of the way towards meeting them, but not the whole way. The proposal of the Government, as contained in the Bill, was to divide the present constituency of the Ovens into two electorates, one to be called Beechworth and the other to be called Bright; and the boundary line had been drawn so as practically to run through the town of Beechworth, which was really the centre of the Ovens electorate. On the question of dividing the Ovens into two separate electorates there was a difference of opinion, some portions of the district being in favour of retaining the Ovens as a double-seated constituency, and others being in favour of dividing it into two single electorates. As indicating the wishes of the people, he intended to refer only to resolutions passed at public meetings, or by representative bodies, and not to any of the numerous communications which he had received from individual electors. At a public meeting held at Beechworth resolutions had been passed expressing opposition to the proposal to divide the constituency of the Ovens into two electorates, and urging that, if the Premier could not see his way to continue that electorate as a double constituency, the boundary line between the new electorates of Beechworth and Bright should be drawn so as to include the township of Stanley within the electorate of Beechworth, instead of attaching it to the electorate of Bright, as proposed by the Government. Stanley was a suburb of Beechworth, being only four or five miles distant from that town, whereas it was about 40 miles distant from Bright. There was a far greater community of interest between Stanley and Beechworth than there was between it and Bright. The towns of Wodonga and Chiltern, which were to the north of Beechworth, were in favour of single electorates, but had expressed no opinion on the question of whether Stanley should be in Beechworth or in Bright. A resolution had been passed at a public meeting at Myrtleford, which was placed in the Bright electorate, requesting that Stanley should be placed in the Beechworth electorate, and the township of Bright, as well as the township of Stanley, had made the same request. In fact, it might be said to
be the unanimous wish of the Ovens district that, if the present constituency was divided into two single electorates, Stanley should be in the Beechworth electorate. Under the circumstances, he would feel bound to move an amendment to carry out the wishes of his constituents in that respect, if the Premier could not see his way to comply with the request. The population that would be taken away from Bright by placing Stanley in the Beechworth electorate could be made up, as suggested at the meeting held at Myrtleford, by taking a portion of Upper Kiewa from Benambra and a portion of the parish of Whorouly from Delatite, and putting them in the Bright electorate. This could be done without reducing the population of either Benambra or Delatite below the requisite number. The division of the present Ovens electorate in the way proposed by the Bill was in every respect a division which suited both himself and his honorable colleague. It gave him, whether he liked to offer himself for Bright or for Beechworth, four or five centres of population, and a nice compact area, and practically made his election secure; and the same remark would apply to his honorable colleague. The Premier had shown no unkindness whatever to him or his colleague, but, on the contrary, had shown them a good deal of kindness. As a representative of the Ovens constituency, however, he could not ignore the resolutions which had been passed at various public meetings and forwarded to the Premier; and, no matter how far his seat might be jeopardized in the future by altering the boundaries as proposed in the Bill, he was bound to endeavour to give effect to the wishes of his constituents. He would therefore ask the Premier to include Stanley in the Beechworth electorate, and to make such other consequential amendments as might be necessary in the Bright electorate, by adding to it a portion of the area comprised in the proposed boundaries of the electorates of Benambra and Delatite. This would be in conformity with the wishes of the people of Bright. A request had also been forwarded to the Premier from the Chiltern Shire Council that the name of the "Beechworth" electorate should be altered to "the Ovens," and the Beechworth Council had consented to that alteration being made. (Mr. Ferguson—"No.") When he (Mr. Tuthill) received a copy of the resolution of the Chiltern Shire Council, he asked the president of the Beechworth Council if he had any objection to the proposed alteration of name, and that gentleman replied that he had not. Unless some public body in his constituency had passed a contrary resolution, he (Mr. Tuthill) felt it his duty to try and get effect given to the resolution of the Chiltern Shire Council in favour of calling the proposed Beechworth electorate "the Ovens."

Mr. FERGUSON remarked that changing the name of the proposed electorate of Beechworth to "the Ovens" was originally suggested by the Chiltern Shire Council, and other names had also been mentioned. He, however, would suggest "Bogong"—the name of the county—as the proper name. If the name of "the Ovens" was adopted at all, it ought rather to be given to the proposed Bright electorate, through which the Ovens River ran for twenty miles, whereas it could hardly be said to run for any distance through the proposed Beechworth electorate. Would it not create confusion between the two electorates if the name of "the Ovens" was applied to either? For himself, he was not wedded to the idea of representing the proposed Bright electorate. In fact, it was still a question in his mind for which electorate he would offer himself. His honorable colleague had referred to a resolution passed at a particular public meeting which he attended, but he omitted to mention the resolutions passed at other public meetings held in that part of the country. For example, it was unanimously agreed, at a public meeting held at Harrietville, that the electors there warmly approved of the Electoral Bill as a whole, and copies of the resolution expressing that approval were ordered to be sent to the Premier and the members for the district. No division of the Ovens constituency different from that proposed by the Government was even alluded to. Another public meeting held at Wandiligong strongly approved of the boundaries proposed in the Bill. As for the Myrtleford meeting, what was carried there was the following:

"That the electors of Myrtleford approve of the formation of the electorate of Bright, and that if any alteration of the boundaries is found necessary, it is suggested that the country on the Upper Kiewa, to the west of Buffalo River, and on Whorouly Creek he added to Bright in lieu of the country around Beechworth which might be taken from the Beechworth electorate."

The next thing was that a deputation from the Ovens and the Buffalo River districts waited upon him (Mr. Ferguson) to urge that the present proposed boundaries should be maintained, or, if possible, extended to Whorouly Creek, but by no means was the Beechworth electorate to be allowed to include
Stanley as suggested. As for the Stanley meeting, it was simply a got-up one. Was it right for the honorable member for Delatite to promote an electoral agitation in a constituency not his own? But he (Mr. Ferguson) would not prolong the discussion. He was perfectly content with the proposed Bright boundaries, and so were the people in the proposed Bright district, generally speaking. At least they had not expressed themselves differently to any extent. He therefore thought it unadvisable to make any change.

Mr. GRAVES stated that he was quite content with the Delatite boundaries as they were, for he believed that they gave satisfaction in his district. Upon the whole, he felt relieved, by the way things had gone, from a great responsibility.

The words proposed to be omitted from the subdivision having been struck out, Mr. TUTHILL stated that he wished to move an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN.—The question before the chair is “That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted.” If that is negative, the honorable member can then propose his amendment.

Mr. TUTHILL said that in that case his amendment was practically blocked.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am simply following the course that has been adopted all through with respect to the Bill.

Mr. TUTHILL remarked that other honorable members had moved amendments on which divisions had been taken.

The CHAIRMAN.—The honorable member is misinformed. The divisions have been taken on a question similar to the one I am about to put, and in no other way.

Mr. BENT said he would like to know how matters stood. The Age of that morning stated that honorable members had been “mollified” with regard to the Bill, yet now it was being “stone-walled” from the Ministerial side of the chamber. Two supporters of the Government were opposing each other in the most vicious manner possible. He hoped, however, that they would, for goodness sake, let the Bill be dealt with. The honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill) had better take care, or he would be told once more to walk over to the opposition benches.

Mr. TUTHILL stated that it ought to be understood, in connexion with the forthcoming division, that the honorable members who voted for the Premier’s amendment voted for the exclusion of Stanley from the proposed Beechworth electorate.

The committee divided on the question “That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted”—

Ayes ... ... 38
Noes ... ... 16

Majority for the amendment ... 22

The 16th and 17th subdivisions, describing the boundaries of the Bright and Brighton electorates, were also amended, and agreed to.

On the 25th subdivision, describing the boundaries of the Dandenong electorate, Mr. GILLIES moved an amendment bringing the boundaries into nearly general accordance with those of the existing electorate of South Bourke.

Mr. BENT said that, as president of the shire of Moorabbin, he would like to know what portion of it would be included in this electorate.
Mr. GILLIES said the honorable member could ascertain from the map. The amendment was agreed to. On the motion of Mr. KEYS, the name of the electoral district was changed from "Dandenong" to "South Bourke." The subdivision, as amended, was agreed to.

On the 32nd subdivision, describing the electoral district of Eastern Suburbs, Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment in the boundaries which, he stated, was rendered necessary by an alteration proposed in the Brighton electorate. The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. MUNRO said he did not know why the Government had decided to call this electorate "Eastern Suburbs." Could they not have found some less awkward and inconvenient name?

Mr. GILLIES stated that he had no objection to change the name to Boroon­dana. (Mr. Munro—"I was going to suggest that.") He would propose the alteration on the report.

The subdivision, as amended, was agreed to, as was also the 46th subdivision (Hawthorn).

On the 56th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Melbourne, Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he strongly objected to the creation of this electorate, because it would be a district pre-eminently open to plural voting. On the 16th October the Argus published an article in which it gave the approximate number of plural votes in West Melbourne at 1,840. In the Government estimate of population, no allowance was made for plural voters, but, as a matter of fact, the great majority of those who would have votes in the proposed electorate of Melbourne had votes also in the different suburbs in which they resided. Was the Assembly going to give an additional member to the southern suburbs of Melbourne, because that was what this proposal really came to? Was the House content to create an electorate with the name of the chief city of the southern hemisphere, and hand it over to gentlemen who had already votes in St. Kilda, Toorak, South Yarra, or elsewhere? Was the House going to emphasize the system of plural voting, which was proposed to be abolished by another Bill, but which Bill they all knew to be a sham? The country might be very apathetic now, but a day of reckoning would come, soon or late, and then this electorate would be pointed out as the greatest exence in the electoral arrangement proposed by the Government and the greatest blot on this Bill. Were they going to hand over to the owners of bricks and mortar the representation of this electorate? Was that an act for a democratic country to commit? Were they so far slaves of money, of respectability, of the Argus, as to sanction this proposal? The Age, on the plural-voting question, had partly gone right except that it backed up the sham proposal of dealing with plural voting in another Bill. "Let us leave plural voting as a question to be determined by the constituencies, and let the House pass the Electoral Bill." That was the proposition of the Age, and that was a sham. However the Age might denounce plural voting, it was a weak and misleading guide to the politicians of this country. The Age's views might be right on plural voting. (Mr. Gaunson—"It has no views on anything except cash.") He believed the views of the metropolitan newspapers were not what might be called political views, but the views that suited them for the time. (Mr. Gaunson—"Newspapers are nothing but mercantile speculations.") Every one knew they were mercantile speculations, and they were a credit, as mercantile speculations, to the colony, but their politics were entirely wrong, and their grasp of power over the politicians of this country was to be decried and opposed to the utmost. He would put it to the Assembly that there was a great objection to handing over this electorate as an appanage to the south suburban constituencies. He had contested four elections in West Melbourne, and he knew the number of plural voters who poured up from the Flinders-street station in the morning to record their votes before going to business. The system of plural voting would be in full swing at the next election—because, as he had said, he looked upon the Bill to abolish plural voting as a perfect sham—and this electorate would be pre-eminently the plural voters' electorate. The actual resident electors would be outnumbered at least three to two; if not two to one, by the plural voters; and the representation of an electorate bearing the name of the principal city of Australia would be settled by a clique of some 20 or 30 gentlemen in a bank parlour or club-house. He did not know that it was worth his while wasting his breath over the matter, in view of the unholy compact which had been arrived at between the Government and their supporters. Still he stood to uphold what was the professed policy of a large number of gentlemen on
the Ministerial side of the House, although they had voted against the abolition of plural voting being included in this Bill, and had allowed themselves to be deluded by the sham proposal of the Government. He desired to put his protest on record, so that hereafter, when a political Nemesis overtook those gentlemen who were now going to vote for this electorate, they would not be able to say that they did not know what they were doing. They did know what they were doing, and they were relying on a broken reed if they entertained the idea that plural voting was going to be abolished by the other Bill. Ministerial supporters who were in favour of plural voting viewed the other Bill with perfect complacency because they knew it was a sham. Under the present proposal every resident elector in the proposed electorate of Melbourne would be disfranchised, and yet this was a Bill to remove anomalies! The liberals on the Government side of the House, by supporting this proposal, would be permanently depriving the liberal party of one seat, if not two, for it must be remembered that there was a time when West Melbourne returned two liberal candidates election after election, even though they were opposed by a powerful party, and by such an upright and personally popular man as the late Mr. J. G. Francis. At two elections two liberals were returned against that gentleman even with plural votes behind him. It was not so, however, at the following elections, when 2,000 more plural votes had been added to the roll. It was easy to increase plural votes when there was a political organization at work to aid plural voting. The Government supporters were going to vote for the disfranchisement of the resident electors of Melbourne proper, and to hand its representation over to non-resident plural voters. Let them do it; the name of every member who voted for such a proposition would be recorded, and sooner or later the inevitable political Nemesis would overtake him.

Mr. ZOX remarked that the previous night there was a great amount of argument in reference to the metropolitan constituencies. That day there was a conference held of the metropolitan members on the subject, and the members present desired certain information in the shape of maps and documents in order to enable them to arrive at a conclusion which might be generally satisfactory. Unfortunately the maps and documents were not at hand, and no arrangement was arrived at. He did not say that if the information had been available it would have made any very material difference, but it was to be regretted that, when honorable members met to settle an important question, all the evidence they required was not supplied to them. The honorable member for Belfast had spoken of plural voting, and of the owners of blocks and mortar having votes in West Melbourne. He (Mr. Zox) did not think that this was the proper time to argue the question of plural voting. When the Chief Secretary submitted the Bill dealing with that and other matters, honorable members would have an opportunity of expressing their opinions on it. He was bound to say, however, that none suffered less from plural voting in West Melbourne than the honorable member who now represented Belfast. The honorable member, when contesting West Melbourne, had an antagonist who was highly respected, yet, in spite of all the commercial, social, and political influences supporting that gentleman, the honorable member defeated him. (Sir B. O’Loghlen—That was in the whole district of West Melbourne.”) He could tell some reasons why the honorable member was successful, but as it was a thing of the past, and he desired to let bygones be bygones, he would not enter into the matter. He desired to ask the Premier a question. In the Bill, representation was based upon population, and he wished to know from the Premier whether the population basis included those who resided in a district temporarily? (Mr. Gillies—The basis is the census.”) Supposing a man occupied a house or office in West Melbourne in the day-time, but slept out of town, would he be taken as one of the population under this proposal? (Mr. Gillies—No.”) Exactly. Therefore the whole representation was based upon the population who slept in the locality.

Mr. MUNRO said the electorate of Melbourne had nothing like the population—12,820—mentioned in the Government estimate, on the basis of those who slept in the district.

Mr. GAUNSON said it was an absolute untruth to state that Melbourne had the population the Government estimated if the basis of residence at night was adopted.

Mr. ZOX stated that at all events he had asked the honorable gentleman in charge of the Bill, and such was his statement. He presumed that the Premier’s sources of information were as much to be relied upon as the statement of the honorable member for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gaunson). As to plural
voting, if a man had two votes, one for Brighton, where he resided, and one for Melbourne, was the statement about plural voting not just as applicable to that man voting in Brighton as it was to his voting in Melbourne? (Mr. Mirams—"A man ought to vote only where he lives.") No doubt that was the honorable member's view of the question.

Dr. ROSE observed that the electorate now under consideration was one of the greatest contradictions that could be conceived to the Premier's proposition that the Bill was based on population and the representation of individuals. Information had been sought as to the basis upon which the Premier had endeavoured to estimate the population for the different districts; but, so far, no satisfactory explanation on the subject had been afforded. Any person acquainted with the proposed electorate of Melbourne would deny that it had the population represented in the Government returns, namely, 12,820. He challenged the Premier or any one else to prove that to be the genuine population of the Melbourne electorate. The population of that portion of the city of Melbourne which lay to the south of Bourke-street was extremely small. The buildings consisted chiefly of hotels, warehouses, and offices. If the population of the area were correctly stated, he very much doubted whether it would be more than 8,000 at the outside. That being the case, how could it possibly be formed into a new electorate, especially in view of the statement of the Premier, which must be taken as bona fide and not as a mere farce, that the Government intended to provide for the abolition of plural voting? With plural voting abolished the Melbourne electorate would not have a population approaching that of the lowest electorate in the country. Was that fair? Certainly it was not. It seemed to him that the Melbourne electorate had been created simply to secure a permanent seat for the conservatives. Hitherto, the elections for West Melbourne had been closely contested. Sometimes victory was on the one side, and sometimes on the other. Occasionally the district returned one conservative and one liberal. Recently the liberal party had been gaining power in West Melbourne, and there was every probability that, if the district had remained undisturbed, the future representatives would be liberals; but, by the creation of the new electorate of Melbourne, the liberal electors of West Melbourne would virtually be disfranchised. The Bill could be regarded only as a most dishonorable transaction so far as the Melbourne electorate was concerned.

Mr. PEIRCE remarked that the honorable members who represented the city electorates met in consultation that day in order to impress their views upon the Premier, and the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) had at command some valuable statistics by which to show the unfairness of the arrangements proposed by the Bill, but no maps were available, and therefore the honorable member's remarks had not the force which otherwise they would have possessed. A great deal had been said during the discussion about not looking so much at the way in which particular constituencies were constituted under the Bill, but at the broad principle upon which the measure was based. However, he found that honorable members forgot all that kind of advice when their own personal interests came in question. He was compelled to oppose the subdivision now before the committee for the reason that the proposed new electorate of Melbourne would take from West Melbourne a large section of the liberal electors that voted for him at the last election. In the St. Mary's division he polled more than 500 votes, of which upwards of 300 were plumbers, and in the Railway division he polled more than 600. Well, under the Bill, more than half of the St. Mary's division, and a large portion of the Railway division would be taken from West Melbourne. Therefore he considered that he was being badly served. The result would be that the liberal element in the present electoral district of West Melbourne would be altogether unrepresented.

Mr. LAURENS stated that, according to the figures which the Government had circulated, the electoral district of West Melbourne, as it stood, contained a population of 18,820, and, for the purpose of giving two members to that district under the Bill—the one to be called the member for Melbourne, and the other the member for West Melbourne—the Government proposed to cut up the district of North Melbourne in a way that no third party of impartiality and intelligence would think of countenancing. The present electorate of North Melbourne, which embraced the municipality of the same name—formerly known as Hotham—contained a population of close upon 32,000, or 5,000 or 6,000 more than were required, according to the standard fixed by the Government, to return two
members. The Premier had told the committee, time after time, that, in his re-adjust-ment of the electorates, he had taken the greatest care to infringe upon municipal boundaries as little as possible; that, in other words, he had endeavoured, as far as he could, to make electoral boundaries coter-minous with municipal boundaries. Yet here was a municipality which had been in-cluded in the electorate of North Melbourne for the last thirty or thirty-five years— which, for electoral purposes, had never been dis-scovered—now cut up in order to supple-ment the population of a sectional part of another municipality. At the conference of metropolitan members held that day, three possible courses were pointed out, the adoption of any one of which could save North Melbourne from the injustice con-templated by the Bill. Those courses, he desired to state, were suggested by the hon-orable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro). One was that East Melbourne, with a popu-lation, according to the Government figures, of only 15,000, should have but one mem-ber; and that so much of the population above the number entitled it to one mem-ber should be added to Jolimont. Under that arrangement there would be no occasion to add population from another electorate to East Melbourne, and everything would then come right for West Melbourne, North Mel-bourne, and Carlton. Unfortunately the hon-orable members who met in conference did not get, as they were led to expect they would, the assistance of Mr. Hart, of the Government Statist's office. In view of these facts, he thought that a fair case had been made out for further consideration; and he hoped that the Premier would allow the subdivision before the committee to stand over for a day or two, so that an opportunity might be afforded for making some arrangement which would prevent a portion of the municipality of North Melbourne being taken away from the electoral district of North Melbourne. He was perfectly prepared to submit the case to the verdict of any impartial tribunal. There was no other electorate in the colony which had been treated in the same way as North Melbourne. The alterations made in its boundaries had been wantonly made, so to speak, for there was no necessity for them. He wished to put one important fact plainly before the committee, so that it might not be misunderstood. Victoria-street was eminently a boundary street, for it divided the municipalities on the north side of the city from those on the south side. North Melbourne and Carlton, which were on the north of Victoria-streets, had a popu-lation of upwards of 58,000, who were suf-ficient, with 2,000 or 3,000 to spare, to be entitled to return four members, but the Government allotted them only three mem-bers, while to the electoral districts of Melbourne, West Melbourne, and East Melbourne, on the south side of Victoria-street, which consisted only of sectional parts of the municipality of Melbourne, and had a population of only 30,000, they allotted four members. Was that even-handed justice? Was that defensible from any point of view whatever? He asserted that it was not. Could it be said that his figures were wrong? (Mr. Gillies—"That is not the question.") It was very easy to say—"That is not the question"; but could the Premier show that he was wrong in regard to any of his facts or figures? If the present proposal was carried by force of numbers, he could understand that the elec-tors in his district would be so irritated that they might rise en masse, and demand that their members should use all the forms of Parliament to stop the Bill from be-coming law. (Mr. Gillies—"Any other district might do that.") If he got a man-date from the electors of his district to adopt that course, what was he to do? It would be a mandate not to waste time, but to prevent a manifest injustice being per-petrated. (Mr. Gillies—"Stuff.") The Premier might say that the statement was "stuff," but the electors would be able to judge to what that remark best applied. Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said that, as he understood there was no amendment before the chair, he would, to test the feeling of the committee, move that "Melbourne" be struck out, with the view of changing the name of the electorate to "Plural Voters' Electorate."

Mr. JONES remarked that he believed the desire of honorable members was that there should be no bogus representation. They wished the country districts to be fairly represented, and they wished the cities and towns also to be fairly represented. The proposal to establish one electorate to be called "Melbourne" was, he contended, a distinct attempt to create a bogus electorate—an electorate which would not represent resident voters, but one that would practi-cally be the electorate of plural voters, and therefore an electorate which the Assembly ought to set its face against most de-cidedly. Presuming that the Bill to abolish plural voting passed both Houses, the result must necessarily be that the electorate of
Melbourne would not have 1,000 voters and probably not 750. He proposed to ask honorable members to follow him while he traced only a portion of one street in the proposed electorate of Melbourne, to show that the great majority of the supposed electors were persons who did not, and could not, live in the district. He did not wish to create angry feeling, but simply to let the electors of Ballarat West, whom he represented, and the electors in the country districts, see how flagrant an effort was being made to create a bogus constituency in order to give Melbourne a grip upon the administration of the colony, even greater than it had at the present time. He would commence with No. 1 on the north side of Collins-street west. [The honorable member proceeded to read a list of names from the Melbourne Directory.] From the names given as the occupiers of the first seven places of business on the north side of Collins-street, commencing at the corner of Elizabeth-street, it would appear that those few premises alone furnished between 30 and 40 voters for the constituency, not one of whom was resident in it. He believed that on one side of Collins-street, between Elizabeth-street and Spencer-street, there were over 800 plural voters. Honorable members could judge from this what a bogus electorate was being constituted by the proposal at present before the committee. Temple-court was represented by 90 voters, only one of whom—the caretaker—was resident; and No. 97 stood for fully 20 voters, not one of them being resident. Surely honorable members would take time for consideration before they decided to let one street in Melbourne, with scarcely 500 residents in it, out-represent either Belfast or Warrnambool. He, for his part, had no wish to prevent the Bill becoming law, but he wanted to strike out of it the glaring anomalies and inequalities created in it. Were these metropolitan constituencies going to be rammed down the throats of the community in their present shape? Honorable members in opposition had shown themselves to be in earnest in giving the Bill an opportunity of becoming law, but they were equally in earnest in their hatred of plural voting, for they knew why plural voting had in the past been recourse to. They knew that by means of plural voting the conservative party aimed at putting a drag on the wheels of democracy, and they did not wish to see any drag whatsoever on the democratic wheels. The proper way to deal with the democracy was to educate it, and make it fit for self-government. Plural voting had been used as a means of cheating the people out of the influence which they were entitled to exert, and honorable members on both sides of the House ought to consider carefully what could be brought to bear in order to procure the utter abolition of every plural vote in the country. He did not want to baulk the Bill, but he wanted to baulk the present flagrant attempt at injustice, and he thought it would be best intercepted by his moving—as he begged to do—that the Chairman report progress.

The CHAIRMAN put the question, and declared that the "Ayes" had it.

A division having been called for, Mr. GILLIES suggested that the question should be put again.

The CHAIRMAN.—Does any honorable member object to my putting the question again?

Mr. GAUNSON said he objected. The committee divided—

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Mr. Anderson (C.), Mr. McLean,
" Anderson (V.),       " McGellan,
" Andrews,            " W. Madden,
" Bailies,            " Mirams,
" Bosisto,            " Munro,
" Bourchier,          " Murray,
" Brown,              " Nimmo,
" Burrows,            " Outtrim,
" Cameron,            " Patterson,
" D. M. Davies,       " Pearson,
" Deakin,             " Dr. Quick,
" Derham,             " Mr. Reid,
" Dow,                " Russell,
" Field,              " Shieds,
" Ferguson,           " C. Smith,
" Finik,              " Staughton,
" Forrest,            " Uren,
" Gillies,            " Vale,
" Gordon,             " Walker,
" Groom,              " Wheeler,
" Hall,               " Wright,
" A. Harris,          " Wrixon,
" Hightett,           " Zox.
| TELLERS         |              |          |
| Mr. Anderson (C.), | Mr. McLean,  |
| " McCallum,       | " Russell,    |
| " L. L. Smith     | " Shieds,     |
| " TELLERS        |              |          |

Mr. BENT thought it was only right to let it be known that the division just over was simply called for, in the first instance, in order that honorable members might be
got together to hear the remarks which the honorable member for Williamstown was about to address to the committee. As a matter of fact, there were at the time only seventeen members in the chamber. But when the division was actually taken the honorable member for Williamstown quietly deserted those who had been trying to assist him. It was hardly fair for the Premier, under the circumstances, to insist upon any division.

Mr. GILLIES said he was forced to insist upon the division because the Chairman had declared that "the 'Ayes' had it," and was not allowed to put the question a second time. Had a division not been taken, the Chairman would have had to report progress.

Mr. BENT stated that the Opposition had arranged not to have a division. They had endeavoured all through the week to assist the Government in getting on with the Bill, but complications had arisen, to which, however, he had been no party. He heard it stated some hours back—"Oh! there will be a block." He did not know that the honorable member for Ballarat West (Mr. Jones) was going to speak on plural voting; but still there had, at present, been only fair debate. As for "stone-walling," there was no use in the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) trying to do it. He was not good enough for that sort of thing. (Mr. Zox—"Why should there be any 'stone-walling'?") Well, he (Mr. Bent) for one, did not want to stop up late to hear anybody's speech, not even the speech of the honorable member for Williamstown. He was not going to render himself, by sitting up all night, unfit for business next day. What the Opposition had done had caused the Bill to become quite a different measure in many ways, but it was impossible to satisfy everybody. So, having performed his duty so far, he gave fair warning for the future. If the Premier liked to rush the Bill through, he might do so for anything he (Mr. Bent) would say. Everything had been carried on in a friendly spirit until now, and if the Premier chose to report progress well and good; but if he chose to go on, go on he might so far as he (Mr. Bent) was concerned. All he wanted was fair play and justice. It must be thoroughly understood all round that the division just taken was taken under a misunderstanding.

Mr. PEIRCE said he thought the Premier misunderstood the statement of the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens). The honorable member said that most likely a meeting would be held in his constituency which would ask the members for the district to use the forms of the House to block the Bill. The constituency which the honorable member represented had been extremely kind to him for a number of years, and if the honorable member's constituency said to him "You are to do a certain thing," he would be justified in doing it. If his (Mr. Peirce's) constituents, who had also been kind to him, stated to him that he should adopt a certain course, whose wishes should he study if not theirs? (Mr. Gillies—"Then if they told you to go to Hong Kong you would go there straight?") That was a different thing.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he desired to mention two facts. The first was that, according to the document issued by the Government, there were, on the general roll of West Melbourne for 1886—7, 1,883 voters, whereas on the general roll for 1887—8 there were only 518. The manhood suffrage roll thus showed a falling-off of 1,315 voters. (Mr. Gillies—"That is caused by the expiration of the period for which electors' rights are issued.") The other fact was this: St. Patrick's division of West Melbourne was to be part of the new electorate of Melbourne, and he found, on looking through the roll of ratepaying electors in that division, that out of 1,826 voters only 120 odd resided in the district, leaving a balance of 1,700 plural voters in that one division. Was he not right in calling the new electorate of Melbourne the "Plural Voters' Electorate"? With the leave of the committee, he would withdraw his amendment.

The amendment was withdrawn, and the subdivision was then agreed to.

On the 57th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Melbourne West,

Mr. GILLIES proposed an amendment in the boundaries. The alteration, he stated, was a very slight one of a technical character, with a view of shortening and simplifying the boundaries on the North Melbourne side of the electorate.

Mr. LAURENS remarked that, if the Government were determined to carry this proposal, of course he could not prevent them. He hoped, at all events, they would agree to pass it in a modified form.

Mr. GILLIES stated that if the honorable member could show any alteration by which the population could be maintained and the change rendered more agreeable to all parties, he would not have the least objection to accept it. (Mr. Laurens—"Am
The amendment was agreed to, and the subdivision, as amended, was adopted.

On the 88th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Melbourne East,
Mr. ZOX remarked that he knew it was
not of the slightest use occupying the time
of the committee in making any observa-
tions on the electoral boundaries laid down
for this district. He acknowledged that
the Government had had a very difficult
task to perform, but he thought a more
satisfactory arrangement might have been
made. His great cause of dissatisfaction
was that, when an alteration of the bound-
aries of East Melbourne was made, Jolimont
was not added on to that constituency. He
considered that a wrong and an injustice
had been done to East Melbourne, and he
desired to enter his protest against it. As
he knew there was not the slightest chance
of having the boundaries altered at present,
he would only ask the Premier whether, in
the event of any alteration being arranged
between this and the reporting of the Bill,
he would consider it?

Mr. GILLIES replied that he certainly
would.

The subdivision was agreed to.

On the 69th subdivision, describing the
electoral district of Melbourne North,
Mr. GILLIES asked whether there
was any reason why the municipality of South
Melbourne should return two members
and should be bounded by Victoria-street,
Elizabetb-street, and the Sydney-road to
Park-street, and by the western boundary
of the present electorate. This would leave
all Carlton outside the electorate, the
boundary not going further east than the
Sydney-road. Carlton could then return
two members.

The CHAIRMAN. — The honorable
member will not be able to submit his
amendment unless the amendment of the
Premier is negatived.

Mr. Gillies' amendment was carried with-
out a division.

The subdivision, as amended, was agreed
to.

On the 67th subdivision, describing the
electoral district of Melbourne South,
Mr. GAUNSON asked whether there
was any reason why the municipality of South
Melbourne should be treated differently
from Richmond? Why should the Govern-
ment refuse to allow it to be divided into two
electorates only, one returning two members
and the other one, as in the case of Rich-
mond? The people in public meeting as-
sembled had objected to single electorates
altogether. He did not believe in in-
creasing the number of members of the
Assembly at all—he held that the proposal
was vicious and corrupting to the best in-
fluences at work in parliamentary govern-
ment—but, as the Government were insist-
ing on thrusting more members on the
country, he would take his share for his
district. But he wanted to know on what
ground the Government proposed to act
against the wishes of public meetings, and
with no resolution of the local council? At
the very public meeting which his honorable
colleague, the Minister of Public Works,
attended, a resolution was passed denouncing
single electorates, and the South Melbourne
Council, as a council, had never consented to
single electorates.

Mr. GILLIES inquired whether the hon-
orable member wished to contend that the
question of single electorates was to be de-
termined by the decision of a few municipal
councillors?

Mr. GAUNSON said he did not, but
when the Premier stated that he would re-
spect the feelings of a constituency he ought
to be as good as his word. The Premier said
that wherever there was a desire for a double
electorate he would not thrust single elec-
torates on the people, and the people of
South Melbourne did not want single elec-
torates at all. The short point was whether
the Premier insisted upon thrusting three single electorates upon the people of South Melbourne. Why could not the people of South Melbourne be treated like the people of Richmond? Why should there not be one constituency returning two members, and the other returning only one member? He would move that two members be assigned to South Melbourne. (Mr. Gillies—"That will make four in all.") No; because there could be a re-adjustment of boundaries on the report.

Mr. Baker stated that he was led to believe, last week, that the Premier would not object to such an arrangement as the honorable member for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gannson) advocated.

Mr. Gillies said he did not understand how the honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) had been led to such a belief.

Mr. Gaunson stated that he would challenge the Minister of Public Works—and he would like the challenge to appear on the records—to state whether he opposed or approved of the proposal that the electorate now before the committee and the balance of the municipality of South Melbourne should return two members. He would also challenge the Minister to give his authority for saying that the local council of South Melbourne were in favour of single electorates.

Mr. Nimmo said he willingly accepted the challenge. He was in favour of single electorates. He stated so publicly at the last election. As to the other point, there were two members of the South Melbourne Council against single electorates, but the mayor stated distinctly, in the presence of his honorable colleague and himself, that the council adhered to the policy of the Government.

Mr. Gaunson said what was stated in his presence by the mayor was that the council did not consider themselves at liberty to have any voice on the Government policy—not that they adhered to it, which was a very different thing. (Mr. Nimmo—"That is a quibble.") It was the Minister of Public Works who was quibbling. The council called a meeting of ratepayers, and, at that meeting, a resolution was passed denouncing single electorates.

Mr. Bent asked whether there would be any objection to this subdivision being reconsidered on the report?

Mr. Gillies said he would have no objection.

The amendment was negatived, and the subdivision was agreed to.

On the 71st subdivision (Sandhurst), Mr. Gillies stated that a considerable amount of difficulty had arisen in connexion with the Sandhurst and Mandurang electorates, and he intended to propose that the two districts should retain the same number of members that they had at present, namely six. After much consultation with the honorable members interested, and careful consideration of the requirements of both districts, he had come to the conclusion that the best course to pursue was, while leaving Sandhurst proper with two members, to create a new electorate which would embrace a portion of the present Sandhurst electorate and the southern portion of Mandurang, and call it "Sandhurst South," and assign it one member. With one member assigned to Eaglehawk, and one member for each of the electorates into which the northern portion of Mandurang was divided—Bendigo and Gunbower—the total number of members for Sandhurst and Mandurang would be six, as at present.

Mr. Bailes asked whether the northern boundary of the Sandhurst municipality would be the boundary of the Sandhurst electorate?

Mr. Gillies replied that it would, as nearly as was possible.

Dr. Quick observed that the decision of the Government to continue to the electoral districts of Sandhurst and Mandurang the representation which they at present enjoyed, and of which the Bill proposed to deprive them, had given general satisfaction.

The subdivision, amended to carry out the arrangement indicated by Mr. Gillies, was agreed to.

Mr. Gillies then proposed a new subdivision describing the boundaries of the electorate of South Sandhurst.

Mr. McIntyre suggested the excision of a corner of the territory included in this new electorate, in order that it might be added to Maldon, which would then have population sufficient to entitle it to one member. In order to test the feeling of the committee on the question, he would move the omission from the subdivision of the words "High-street."

Mr. Gillies remarked that the adoption of this amendment meant the addition of another member to the number proposed by the Bill, and that addition the Government did not feel justified in acceding to unless a strong opinion in favour of it was expressed by the committee. Indeed, the Government
had been challenged for increasing, instead of diminishing, the number of members. For his own part, he considered the number of members quite sufficient. If he could have seen his way to reduce the number he would have done so. From the first, the great stumbling-blocks in the way of the rearrangement of the electorates were the districts of Sandhurst, Mandurang, Castlemaine, and Maldon. All through, the Government had realized the desirability of not absolutely blotting out any existing electorate, and, therefore, they added territory both to Castlemaine and Maldon in order that the representation of those districts should not be disturbed. But the result of that arrangement was to reduce the number of members for Sandhurst and Mandurang. He fully appreciated the force of the objections which the honorable members who represented those districts had offered to that course. Unquestionably, Sandhurst and Mandurang, between them, had sufficient population for six members, and, therefore, the protests of their members on this subject were entitled to the greatest weight and consideration. At the same time, Maldon, as the Government proposed to re-adjust it, would not have sufficient population to entitle it to one member. Under these circumstances—as Castlemaine would have a population of about 10,000, and Maldon about 8,000—the Government proposed to join Maldon to Castlemaine, and assign two members to the united district. He knew this arrangement was strongly objected to; but he did not see what other arrangement was possible, without increasing the number of members provided for by the Bill.

Mr. O'UTTRIM asked whether the rejection of the amendment moved by the honorable member for Maldon would have the effect of wiping out Maldon as a distinct electorate?

Mr. GILLIES said the rejection of the amendment would be taken by the Government as an expression of assent on the part of the committee to Castlemaine and Maldon forming one electorate, returning two members.

Mr. O'UTTRIM said, in that case, he would vote for the amendment.

Mr. McCOlll objected to the amendment. If it were carried, the effect would be to add to Maldon a district, the people of which, with the exception of a very few, had the strongest possible objection to the union. This he had ascertained when travelling through the district a week or two ago.

Mr. McINTYRE admitted that the people of the territory which, under the amendment, would be added to Maldon, were not favorable to him with regard to certain public questions; but, unless the amendment was carried, one of the oldest electoral landmarks in the colony would be obliterated.

Mr. ANDERSON (Creswick) suggested that the Premier should give the committee a precise idea of the whole situation. At present the number of members returned was, by Sandhurst, 3; by Mandurang, 3; by Castlemaine, 2; and by Maldon, 1; making 9. The new proposal of the Government was that the number of members should be as follows:—Sandhurst, 2; Sandhurst South 1; Mandurang, 3; Castlemaine, 2; Maldon, 1; making 9. Where did the additional member come in?

Mr. GILLIES stated that the Bill provided that Mandurang and Sandhurst should have five members between them, and that Castlemaine should have 2, and Maldon 1; making 8. But if Sandhurst and Mandurang had six members between them, and Castlemaine still retained 2, and Maldon 1, there would be 9.

Mr. REID remarked that Maldon and Castlemaine had hitherto always returned good men to Parliament, and therefore he would be sorry to see anything done which would destroy either of those constituencies.

Mr. GAUNSON said that, if he could bring himself to consent to any increase at all in the number of members, he would willingly support a proposal for increasing the number of country representatives by one. He was, however, opposed to any increase of members, and, on that ground, he reserved to himself the right to throw out the Bill if he could.

Mr. WHEELER expressed the belief that the irrigation works which were being carried out in the district of Mandurang would shortly attract a large population to that district, and warrant the additional member which would be secured by the adoption of the proposal of the honorable member for Maldon. He would rather see the proposal carried than that Maldon should either be wiped out or attached to Castlemaine.

The amendment was carried without a division, and the subdivision, as amended, was adopted.

On the 12th subdivision, describing the electoral district of Bendigo.

Dr. QUICK moved that the name of the electorate be changed to "Mandurang." The amendment was agreed to.
Mr. BROWN appealed to the Premier to consent to this electorate being united with Gunbower, in order that the two might be formed into one double electorate instead of being two single electorates. Both districts had the same interests, and the opinion of the people, as expressed at all the public meetings which had been held on the question, except at Kerang, was in favour of amalgamating the two electorates. If a double-seated constituency was good for the Minister of Public Instruction and the people of East Bourke Boroughs, it was good for the people on the Plains. What was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander.

Mr. GAUNSON asked the Premier if he refused to accede to this request? (Mr. Gillies—"Yes.") There were now twelve double constituencies under the Bill, and he could not understand on what principle the Government could object to the suggestion of the honorable member for Mandurang (Mr. Brown), when such districts as Sandhurst, Castlemaine, and East Bourke Boroughs were allowed to be double-seated electorates.

Mr. BURROWES stated that he knew, from conversations which he had had with residents of Bendigo and Gunbower, that a large number of the electors were in favour of the electorates being amalgamated.

Mr. BROWN inquired if the Premier absolutely refused to adopt the suggestion? (Mr. Gillies—"Yes.") He hoped the fact would be placed on record.

On the 19th subdivision, describing the electorate of Carlton South, Mr. GILLIES moved that the subdivision be omitted, as it had already been determined that it should form part of the electorate of Melbourne North.

The subdivision was struck out.

The 20th subdivision (Castlemaine) and the 54th subdivision (Maldon), the former to return two members, were agreed to, with consequential amendments.

The 31st subdivision (Eaglehawk) was agreed to with a consequential amendment, and the 44th subdivision (Gunbower) was also agreed to.

Mr. GILLIES moved—

"That the various sub-schedules be arranged alphabetically and numbered consecutively."

The motion was agreed to.

The title of the Bill was altered from "a Bill to amend the Electoral Act 1865" to "a Bill to provide for the alteration of the boundaries of certain electoral districts and for other purposes."

The preamble having been agreed to, the Bill was reported with amendments, and with an amended title.

Mr. GILLIES said he desired to thank honorable members for the great amount of work they had done in connexion with the Bill. He felt sure that, when they had an opportunity of considering the matter calmly, they would be satisfied that the measure was the best that could have been passed in the interests of the country.

The House adjourned at twenty-one minutes to one o'clock a.m., until Wednesday, November 7.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, November 7, 1888.


The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock p.m.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Mr. A. YOUNG asked the Minister of Railways whether he was aware of the long continued delay in paying the annual increments, due on the 1st of July last, in the various branches of the Railway department?

Mr. GILLIES said that the delay in the payment of increments in the Railway department had been occasioned by pressure of business. Every effort was being made to get the matter dealt with.

CHARGES AGAINST MESSENGERS.

Mr. COOPER asked the Chief Secretary when he proposed to deal with the reports re the charges made against the doorkeepers of the House? The charges to which he referred had been hanging over the doorkeepers, or messengers, of the House for a long time, as honorable members were aware, and he had a very strong feeling that
the matter ought to be dealt with thoroughly and publicly.

Mr. DEAKIN said that the charges against the messengers of the House alluded to in the question of the honorable member for Creswick (Mr. Cooper) had been dealt with, and dealt with most explicitly. A board had been appointed to inquire into the charges, and the finding of the board had exonerated the messengers from the charges made against them, and no stain rested upon them. The report of the board, and the evidence adduced, had been laid on the table of the House. He did not feel called upon, as Chief Secretary, to take any further action in the matter.

Mr. JONES stated that he desired to direct the Chief Secretary's attention to the fact that, along with the report of the board, there was printed a letter from Mr. Gregory, the contractor of the Refreshment rooms, which was a re-hash of the charge that he made in the first instance. That letter called for action on the part of the House, and it must be dealt with in some way.

Mr. McLELLAN remarked that the whole of this matter seemed to be a very unfortunate affair—in fact, it was a wretched scandal from beginning to end—and it ought never to have been brought before the House. The sooner it was allowed to drop, the better for the credit of Parliament and all concerned.

CLUB-HOUSE (MELBOURNE) ELECTORS.

Mr. DEAKIN, pursuant to order of the House (dated October 8), laid on the table a return of the number of electors claiming to vote as qualified by virtue of membership in the club-houses in Melbourne.

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

The resolution passed in committee on October 10, authorizing the expenditure of a sum of £200,000 under the Land Act, No. 812, and the Loan Act, No. 845, in connexion with railway construction, was considered and adopted.

PUBLIC OFFICERS EMPLOYMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the resumption of the debate on Mr. Wrixon's motion for the second reading of this Bill (adjourned from October 10),

The SPEAKER put the question—"That this Bill be now read a second time?"

The motion was carried without a division.

The Bill was then read a second time, and committed.

Discussion took place on clause 1, which was as follows:—

"In this Act 'officer' shall mean any officer to whom the Public Service Act 1883 applies, and shall include members of the board appointed to carry out that Act."

Mr. MUNRO said that if the clause had stopped at the word "applies" it would have been all right; but the subsequent words simply meant repudiation of a contract which had been fairly and honestly entered into. (Mr. Graves—"Is the clause retrospective?"") Of course it was. If the Government would say that it was not to be retrospective—that it was to apply only to future appointments—he would not offer any further remark; but there could be no doubt that it was intended to be retrospective. What it meant, therefore, was a deliberate repudiation by the Government, which Parliament was asked to endorse, of a contract fairly and honestly entered into. He challenged the Premier to deny that this was what the clause amounted to. There was a special provision in the Railway Commissioners Act which prohibited the Railway Commissioners from engaging in any occupation outside their official duties, but there was no such provision in the Public Service Act with respect to the members of the Public Service Board; and the Premier knew that the chairman of the board accepted his position on the distinct understanding that he was not prevented by the Act from doing outside work.

Mr. McLELLAN remarked that apparently the contention of the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) was that the whole of the public servants were to be prohibited from engaging in private employment—that they were not to be at liberty to do any work outside their official duties—but that the three gentlemen who controlled the service were to be allowed to employ themselves as they pleased; and to compete with professional men outside the service. If that was the honorable member's opinion, it was not his (Mr. McLeLLan's). He wished no injustice to be done to Colonel Templeton, the chairman of the Public Service Board, or to any one else, but he solemnly protested against any distinction whatever being made in this matter between Colonel Templeton and the meanest person in the employment of the Government. He trusted that honorable members would insist upon
maintaining that position. If any injury was done to any one by passing the Bill, there was Parliament to appeal to, and Parliament would always recognise any claim which was established to its satisfaction. As for the contract which the honorable member for Geelong said had been entered into with Colonel Templeton, was there not in Hansard the record of what Mr. Service stated took place when Colonel Templeton accepted the position of chairman of the Public Service Board? By no possibility could it bear the construction of being a contract of the kind alleged. Mr. Service had emphatically repudiated the idea of there being any contract or any understanding whereby Colonel Templeton was to be at liberty to perform work outside the public service.

Mr. GRAVES observed that every member of the Assembly, and also the community at large, were firmly determined that no officer in the public service should be allowed to compete with private individuals by engaging in private practice or following any occupation outside the duties for which they were paid by the State. If, however, there was one thing more than another upon which Englishmen prided themselves it was that they would not set aside or destroy a contract. Existing rights should be preserved. There ought not to be any retrospective legislation. He did not agree with the honorable member for Ararat that no contract was made with Colonel Templeton, when that gentleman accepted the office of chairman of the Public Service Board, which implied that he was to be at liberty to do outside work. The honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) mentioned, on a previous occasion, that Colonel Templeton, who consulted him before taking the appointment, accepted the position on the understanding that he would be at liberty to do other work besides his official duties; and another strong piece of evidence in favour of Colonel Templeton's view of the question was the conversation which he had, prior to his appointment, with Colonel Sargood, who was a member of the Government by whom the appointment was made, Mr. Service being the Premier. Colonel Sargood drew Colonel Templeton's attention to the fact that, while the Railway Commissioners Act contained a provision expressly prohibiting the Railway Commissioners from engaging in any occupation outside the duties of their office, there was no provision in the Public Service Act to prevent the members of the Public Service Board engaging in private practice. There was also the further evidence that when Colonel Templeton asked Mr. Service what his duties would be, Mr. Service replied—"Read the Act; you will find your duties set forth there." One of the strongest facts of all in corroboration of the position taken up by Colonel Templeton was that, from the time that he accepted the position of chairman of the Public Service Board up to the present moment, he had engaged in private practice with the knowledge of the Government. If Colonel Templeton was not entitled to engage in private practice, the Government could have, and ought to have, put a stop to his doing so. He (Mr. Graves) desired to repeat that every honorable member, and, in fact, every man in the country, was determined to set his foot down against officers of the public service entering into competition with the outside public. In all countries, even in America, civil servants were prohibited from engaging in private employment. Nevertheless, it would be unfair and un-English to break a contract which the Government had entered into, or to do anything that would amount to an act of repudiation. It seemed to him that the clause before the committee took away, by implication, the rights which Colonel Templeton possessed under the contract that had been entered into with him by the Government. (Mr. Burrowes—"He has his remedy.") What remedy had he? (Mr. Burrowes—"An action in the Supreme Court.") If the Bill would not operate as a bar to the rights which Colonel Templeton possessed, he (Mr. Graves) was content; but he would be sorry to see the Legislature destroy any contract—either an actual or an implied contract.

Mr. JONES said that if there had been a contract with Colonel Templeton it had certainly, up to the present time, been concealed from the public at large. He could not understand a public servant having a contract with one member of a Government, and concealing that contract from everybody in the community except that one person. On the one side, Colonel Templeton asserted that there was a contract; on the other side, Mr. Service stated that there was no contract. On the one side, Colonel Templeton said that he was to do just as he pleased—that he was to be an exception to every other person in the Government employment; on the other side, there was the statement of Mr. Service that Colonel Templeton took the appointment on the understanding that he might continue to
discharge certain duties, and no others, in connexion with one insurance company with which he had been identified from its formation. Looking at all the circumstances of the case, he (Mr. Jones) did not see why Parliament should be called upon to decide as to the rights or wrongs of Colonel Templeton’s claims. There was the Supreme Court to deal with that question. The Bill did not propose to take away any man’s rights. (Mr. Munro—“Yes.”) The measure could have force only from the time it became law. If Colonel Templeton had any claim against the Government, he could bring an action to recover compensation. The sooner the Bill became law the better.

Mr. MUNRO thought that the honorable member for Ballarat West (Mr. Jones) surely could not really believe that a gentleman who was in the receipt of a salary of about £2,000 a year, and in very comfortable circumstances, left that employment and entered into the public service without any contract at all. That, however, was what the honorable member’s remarks meant. (Mr. Jones—“No.”) The honorable member said that if there had been any contract it had been concealed. Did not that imply that there was no contract? (Mr. Jones—“I don’t think there was a contract.”)

Would the honorable member leave a position in which he was getting £2,000 a year to enter upon another appointment, without an agreement of any sort? Would any sane man do such a thing? When Colonel Templeton asked what his duties as a member of the Public Service Board were to be, he was referred to the Public Service Act. Two Acts were passed shortly before the members of the board were appointed. The one for the management of the railways contained an express provision that the Railway Commissioners should not be allowed to engage in private practice; but the other Act contained no such restriction with respect to the members of the Public Service Board. Would any one say that Parliament did not deliberately leave out of the Public Service Act a provision similar to that which it inserted in the Railway Commissioners Act?

Mr. GILLIES stated that, when the Public Service Bill was introduced, it was contemplated that the Commissioners of Audit would be appointed the members of the Public Service Board, and that was the reason why the measure did not contain a special clause prohibiting the members of the board from engaging in private practice.

Mr. MUNRO said Mr. Service admitted that he referred Colonel Templeton to the Public Service Act, and told him that he would find his duties there; and the Act did not prohibit him from engaging in private practice. He (Mr. Munro) would say no more about the matter if the Government would state authoritatively that the Bill did not deprive any one who had entered into a contract of his civil rights. (Mr. Gillies—“What civil rights?”) The right of compensation for repudiation was a civil right. If Colonel Templeton was dismissed by the Government from his appointment as a member of the Public Service Board on the ground that he did work outside the duties of his office, he would, under the existing state of things, have a civil remedy; but the Bill was brought in for the purpose of depriving him of that civil remedy. No Parliament was ever guilty of a more disgraceful act. After Colonel Templeton had occupied the position of chairman of the Public Service Board for a period of about five years, a Bill was brought in to deprive him of the right to private practice, although he was undoubtedly entitled to engage in private practice, and had done so ever since he accepted the appointment. The whole thing was a disgrace to the Ministry. It was a dishonorable proceeding for a Government to enter into a contract which they did not intend to carry out.

(Mr. Gillies—“Cannot you use some stronger word?”) If a party to a contract refused to carry out the agreement, he did not know any word which would more fitly describe such conduct than the word “dishonorable.” Either it was intended that Colonel Templeton, when he was appointed chairman of the Public Service Board, should be in the same position as every other public servant, or it was not intended. If it was intended, then the permission, which up to the present time had been given to Colonel Templeton to do outside work, was an improper permission, and ought not to have been given at all. (Mr. Gillies—“There has been no permission.”) Did the Premier not know that Colonel Templeton had acted as an actuary during the whole of the time that he had been chairman of the Public Service Board? Did the honorable gentleman not know that for a long time after he accepted the appointment he acted as actuary to the friendly societies? (Mr. Gillies—“I don’t know.”) Then the honorable gentleman ought to know. Colonel Templeton was actuary to the friendly societies, without any objection on the part
of the Government, until, at the request of the societies themselves, an officer in the civil service was appointed actuary. Moreover, at the present time Colonel Templeton was actuary to some of the building societies. If the Government did not intend that he should occupy a different position in regard to doing outside work from that of an ordinary civil servant, they ought to have prevented him from engaging in any private occupation as soon as they found that he did so. If he was bound by the contract entered into with him by the Government not to engage in private practice, the Bill was not wanted. If Colonel Templeton was breaking his contract with the Government, let the Government take the necessary steps to remove him from his position as a member of the Public Service Board. They had the power to do so. Colonel Templeton could be dismissed on a resolution passed by both Chambers. (Mr. Gillies—"The Bill does not strengthen that power.") No; but it repudiated the existing agreement. (Mr. Gillies—"That is assuming there was an agreement.") If the Government would proceed in accordance with what they themselves thought was the contract, namely, the Public Service Act, he would not say a word; but, instead of proceeding in accordance with that Act, they brought in a new Bill to deprive Colonel Templeton of the position which he now occupied. That was repudiation, and he (Mr. Munro) did not want to be a party to it. He wished to protest against it. Such a thing had never before been done by the Parliament of Victoria, nor by any legislative body which had any regard for its own honour.

Mr. ANDERSON (Villiers) remarked that an unusual amount of warmth, for which there was not any necessity, had been imported into the discussion. A doubt existed as to the terms on which Colonel Templeton held his appointment as chairman of the Public Service Board, and the Bill had been introduced to set the matter at rest. Parliament was led to believe that when he was appointed it was agreed that he should be allowed to finish certain work which he was then doing in connexion with an insurance company of which he was the managing director, but that, with that exception, he was to be in the same position as any other public servant—that he was not to be allowed to engage in private practice. Clause 2, however, covered the whole ground. Under that clause the Governor in Council had power to allow any public servant to do outside work; and if Colonel Templeton could show that an agreement was entered into with him by the Government under which he was to be at liberty to engage in private practice, the Governor in Council could grant him permission to do so under clause 2. At the same time, Colonel Templeton would occupy a false position altogether if, while filling the office of chairman of the Public Service Board, he could increase his emoluments by doing outside work. The same rule which precluded ordinary civil servants from engaging in private practice ought to apply to the members of the Public Service Board.

Mr. JONES observed that if Colonel Templeton was to remain a member of the Public Service Board, and also to continue his connexion with insurance companies, most assuredly the companies with which he was associated would enjoy an advantage in general esteem in competing with other companies for the business of life assurance amongst Government officers. It was within the knowledge of honorable members that Professor Irving, one of the members of the Public Service Board, before being appointed to his present position, was chairman of the Australian Mutual Provident Society, one of the best insurance companies, not merely in this colony, but in the world. That gentleman considered that his position as a member of the Public Service Board was incompatible with his continuing to be a director of that company—an office which he had held for years. No immediate pressure was brought to bear upon Professor Irving to compel him to give up the office of director of that company, because he felt that the position was incompatible with that of a member of the Public Service Board. If there was a private bargain made between Mr. Service and Colonel Templeton as to the terms on which the latter should be appointed chairman of the Public Service Board, it could not bind any one except the two persons who entered into it; for Mr. Service was certainly not authorized by Parliament or by the Government to offer special conditions to Colonel Templeton. If Colonel Templeton had any rights or any claims in equity to engage in private practice while occupying the position of chairman of the Public Service Board, he must vindicate his rights elsewhere than in Parliament. His (Mr. Jones') opinion was that Mr. Service did not make any such bargain as that which it had been contended he did; but, whether he did or not, Colonel Templeton should be left to seek redress elsewhere.
Mr. C. SMITH said he thought that, before passing a Bill of this description, honorable members ought to ascertain the exact nature of the arrangement which was made between the Government of the day and Colonel Templeton as to the terms on which that gentleman was to be appointed chairman of the Public Service Board. He (Mr. Smith) quite agreed with the opinion that members of the public service ought not to be allowed to engage in private practice, but Colonel Templeton seemed to have accepted his appointment under special conditions. There was evidently a considerable amount of force in the memorandum which he wrote to the Premier on the 25th June last, in which he stated that he accepted the appointment on the understanding that he was to be perfectly free to employ his spare time in any way he liked, and that his attention was specially directed to the fact that the Public Service Act did not contain any provision similar to the one in the Railway Commissioners Act prohibiting the Railway Commissioners from engaging in private practice. He (Mr. Smith) could not agree to the Bill unless justice was done to Colonel Templeton while declaring that in future private practice, on the part of the members of the Public Service Board, as well as of all other persons in the public service, should be abolished.

Mr. BURROWES remarked that, when the House passed the Public Service Act, it was undoubtedly the impression of honorable members that neither Colonel Templeton nor anyone else in the public service would have any right to engage in private practice. If an error had crept into the Act by which Colonel Templeton was able to take private practice contrary to the intentions of Parliament, was that to be permitted to go on for ever? The House had taken exception to Colonel Templeton taking outside employment, and the Government having brought down this Bill to put an end to that practice, honorable members should assist them to pass it. Surely it was not the wish of the Assembly that this kind of thing should be allowed to continue. For his part, he thought the Government might, without any Bill, have given Colonel Templeton notice that he would not be permitted to engage in private practice; and then, if he continued to do so, he would have had to take the alternative. As the Government, however, had thought it necessary to deal with the matter by a Bill, he felt bound to support the measure. The large majority of honorable members had over and over again expressed their opinion that public servants drawing large salaries should not be allowed to do outside work for payment.

Mr. TUTHILL said that Colonel Templeton either had the right of engaging in private practice, and receiving payment therefor, or else he had no such right. If he had that right, was Parliament going to do him the injustice of taking it away without compensating him for its loss? On the other hand, if he had not the right, where was the necessity for the Bill? (Mr. Munro—"None whatever.") The issue was a very simple one, and resolved itself into the smallest possible point, namely, whether Colonel Templeton had the right to take private work or not. If an arrangement was entered into with Colonel Templeton, in order to induce him to join the public service, that he would be allowed to do outside work and receive pay for it, he (Mr. Tuthill) questioned whether Parliament was acting rightly now in breaking that engagement and doing what appeared to be an act of injustice. There had been several discussions on the question, and the statements of Mr. Service and other gentlemen who were Ministers at the time of Colonel Templeton's appointment, and who were, to a certain extent, parties to his engagement, had been quoted as to what was the arrangement entered into. Some of those statements were favorable to Colonel Templeton's view, and, in addition, there was the unqualified opinion of Dr. Madden, the most eminent lawyer at the bar, that the Public Service Act did not prohibit Colonel Templeton from performing outside work. Under these circumstances, it was hardly fair for the Government to ask Parliament to pass a Bill to at once kill Colonel Templeton's right, if he had any, and absolutely prohibit him from engaging in private practice for the future. At the same time, he (Mr. Tuthill) was decidedly of opinion that no man in the employment of the State as a public servant should be allowed to engage in outside work. (Mr. Gillies—"That is inconsistent with what you said just before.") Not at all. While he considered that no public servant should give any portion of his time to work outside the public service, he was clearly of opinion that if any man had already entered the service under an engagement with the Government which allowed him to do outside work, his rights should be protected. While he thought the Bill should pass, he also thought it should contain a provision protecting existing rights, if there
were any. (Mr. Brown—"There cannot be any under the Public Service Act.") If that was so, then there was no necessity for the Bill, and why should the time of a moribund Parliament be occupied in passing unnecessary legislation? On the other hand, if the Bill was necessary to prevent private practice in the future, vested rights should be protected, so that no injustice might be done.

Mr. OFFICER said he thought the point raised by the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill) was of sufficient importance to deserve an answer from the Premier. He (Mr. Officer) was considerably exercised in his mind as to how he should vote on the Bill. It had been stated that Colonel Templeton had no rights, but if he had no rights, where was the necessity for the Bill? No doubt, it was only right and proper that all members of the public service should be put on a footing of perfect equality as regards private practice. (Mr. Gillies—"And this is the only way that can be done.") He thought some explanation should be given by the Premier on that point, as he (Mr. Officer) objected strongly to anything that looked like retrospective legislation.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that he was under the impression that the principles of the Bill were pretty fully discussed on the second reading. In view of the discussions which took place on this question earlier in the session, the Government thought the Assembly were unanimous in the opinion that a rule should be laid down to the effect that no person in the public service should be permitted to do private work, whether that person was a member of the Public Service Board or not, without the sanction of the Governor in Council. (Mr. Officer—"I thought that was the existing law.") Some said it was the existing law, while others said it was not, so far as the members of the Public Service Board were concerned. (Mr. Tuthill—"What does the Attorney-General say?") He believed the Attorney-General was inclined to think that, if the matter was tested, it would be found that the prohibition did not apply to members of the Public Service Board. The Government, however, desired Parliament to say that the rule should apply to every officer in the public service in future. (Mr. Munro—"Stick to the future.") The Bill only dealt with the future, and, as soon as it became law, no person in the public service, whether he was a member of the Public Service Board or not, would be able to perform private work outside the service without the consent of the Governor in Council. Did the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) mean to contend that for the rest of his natural life any member of the Public Service Board should be allowed to take private practice as much or as little as he liked? (Mr. Munro—"Nothing of the sort.") Then in what way could the matter be absolutely determined, except by an Act of Parliament? Surely honorable members would not ask the Government to take a violent course—to assume that the present law absolutely prohibited members of the Public Service Board from taking any outside practice at all. Seeing that there was a conflict of opinion on the subject, the Government would not be justified in asking Parliament to remove any of these gentlemen from his office—Colonel Templeton or any other—if he attempted to take any private practice. (Mr. Munro—"Why not?") Because, in view of the difference of opinion as to the state of the law, that would be an arbitrary proceeding, and one which he would not ask Parliament to sanction. But if that doubt was set at rest, and Parliament provided by this Bill that no person in the service, whether a member of the Public Service Board or an ordinary public servant, should be allowed for the future to do work outside his connexion with the service, the matter would be in a totally different position. He would be very sorry to do any member of the Public Service Board any injustice, and if it could be shown that any injustice was done by passing the Bill he had not the slightest doubt that Parliament, if appealed to, would be quite prepared to do justice. (Mr. Munro—"How?") The honorable member knew perfectly well that the way in which Parliament was always asked to make reparation for any injustice was by granting a sum of money equivalent to the injury done. (Mr. Brown—"Do you think any injustice is done to Colonel Templeton?") He could not enter into that question or express an opinion on it now. All he could say was that honorable members might rely that the Parliament of this country would not do any one an injustice knowingly. He believed that this Bill was the only way of settling the question that every officer in the service, including the members of the Public Service Board, should be precluded from doing outside work.

Mr. TUCKER observed that, as a member of the Government which appointed Colonel Templeton, he could assure the committee that he never heard a word of
any such bargain being made between Colonel Templeton and Mr. Service as had been allowed to by the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro). Mr. Service and Colonel Templeton were both business men, and he could not believe that two of the best business men in the colony would enter into such a slip-shod arrangement. He believed that when Colonel Templeton asked Mr. Service what his duties would be, the latter handed him the Public Service Act and said—"Your duties are there." Colonel Templeton, having read the Act, accepted the appointment, and, even supposing the alleged conversation did take place after that, it could not alter Colonel Templeton’s position under the Act. (Mr. Munro—"And he only asks the Government to stand by the Act.") He had no doubt that if Colonel Templeton could show that he was misled in any way into accepting his position, which he had certainly filled with great ability, Parliament would deal generously with him; but it would be a scandal to allow the members of the Public Service Board to pass a regulation prohibiting every other officer from engaging in private practice, and at the same time to allow them to do private work themselves.

On clause 2, prohibiting every officer except with the express permission of the Government, signified by Order in Council published in the Government Gazette, from engaging in duties unconnected with his office,

Mr. TUTHILL asked if it was advisable to make any exception? He thought the Bill should be a complete bar to any public officer engaging in private practice.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he had known several cases of the kind.

Mr. MUNRO said he could mention a great number of cases. If the Bill was passed in the form desired by the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill) it would do a great injury to the friendly societies. Those societies were scattered all over the colony, and branches and lodges existed in places where there was no other person qualified to take the position of secretary except an officer in the public service. (Mr. Tuthill—"Are they paid?") Sometimes a very small payment was made. (Mr. Gillies—"Very often there is no pay at all.") In most cases there was a very small salary attached to the office, in order to make the holder responsible in case of fraud. If the amendment suggested was agreed to a large number of lodges would have to be shut up.

Mr. McINTYRE expressed the hope that the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill) would not insist on his suggestion. The responsibility of granting permission would rest on the Government, and he was quite sure that, after the case of Colonel Templeton, no Government would grant an officer permission to do private work except in a case which could be fully justified. One point on which he wished to be satisfied was whether the clause would be sufficient to place Colonel Templeton in the same position as regarded doing outside work as any other public servant from the day on which the Bill became law? (Mr. Gillies—"Yes.") Then he was content. Whatever rights Colonel Templeton might have, they could be dealt with in another way.

Mr. JONES remarked that he could mention a case which showed the necessity for the exception provided for in the clause, and probably it was only one of many. A young man who had depended upon him his mother, two sisters, and a younger brother, had an income from the Government of £80 a year. By permission of the Governor in Council, he was allowed to assist at a night school, for which he got £20 a year, so that the family were kept from absolute penury. It would be very unwise if, in such a case, the Governor in Council had no power to allow an officer to do work outside the public service.

Mr. TUTHILL intimated that he was satisfied with the explanation which had been given as to the desirability of passing the clause as it stood.

Mr. BAILES inquired whether, if the Bill became law, those public servants who
now filled the position of secretaries of friendly societies would have to apply to the Governor in Council for permission to continue to hold the office? (Mr. Gillies—"Yes"). He hoped there would be no objection to the permission being granted.

The Bill, having been gone through, was reported without amendment.

On the motion of Mr. GILLIES, the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

VISITOR.

Mr. GILLIES mentioned that Sir Maurice O'Rorke, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, New Zealand, was within the precincts of the House, and moved that he be accommodated with a chair on the floor of the chamber.

The motion was agreed to.

SUPPLY.

The House then went into Committee of Supply.

The following votes were agreed to:—
Treasurer, £19,474 (total vote, £32,774); Public Service Board, £1,318 (total vote, £2,768); Premier, £5,801 (total vote, £918); Office of Estates of Deceased Persons, £918 (total vote, £1,648).

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

On the vote of £35,841 to complete the vote (£75,554) for the Government Printer, Mr. BAILES said that, some time ago, he brought under the notice of the Premier the fact that the "doc" system had been introduced into the Government Printing-office, against trade usage. The Premier led him to understand that such was not the case; but since then he had become possessed of evidence which showed conclusively that the system was being carried out in the office at the present time, and entailed a very large expenditure quite unnecessarily. He would, therefore, like the Premier to give some assurance that he would make inquiries into the matter, with the view of ascertaining whether there was any advantage of introducing this system, and, if there was not, of abolishing it. He (Mr. Bailes) believed it was simply a system of private detectivism, carried on over the employees without any benefit to the State, while the expense of keeping it in operation, as far as clerical assistance was concerned, was something that would stagger honorable members if they were aware of it.

Mr. GILLIES observed that he certainly was not aware of any system such as the honorable member described being in operation. The proper checks were, of course, always kept, but he was not aware of any system existing which involved the idea of spying. (Mr. Munro—"What is the 'doc' system?") He did not exactly know what it was.

Mr. BAILES stated that he was not aware that the vote was coming on that afternoon, otherwise he would have been prepared with the documents which he had on the subject. The "doc" system was simply this. When a man took up a certain piece of work, he had marked down on a "doc" given to him the time when he commenced. Then, when he had finished, the time of completion was marked down, and also the quantity of the work. It frequently happened, however, that although a man started with one piece of work, he could not go on continuously with it, but before he had set up more than a few lines he was taken away and put to do some other work. Thus, while the "doc" purported to show that, from the time the printer commenced a piece of work until the time he finished it, he had been engaged on that work, the fact might be that he had not occupied one-twentieth part of the time over it. A large portion of the time of the printers was taken up in filling "docs" for every piece of work they did. The idea was that these "docs" were required to show whether a compositor worked honestly or not; but such an idea was quite erroneous, as any overseer—and there were several in the Government Printing-office—could tell quite well whether a compositor was doing the work for which he was paid, or whether he was humbugging. He (Mr. Bailes) had a list of 50 or 60 "docs" in the Government Printing-office at the present time, and the use of the system entailed the employment of several clerks without any real benefit to the Government.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that among the numerous complaints made to him from time to time with respect to different points of management in connexion with the Government Printing-office, the particular complaint urged by the honorable member had never been even mentioned.

Mr. MUNRO stated that he served a seven years' apprenticeship to the printing trade, and he worked at it for a number of years afterwards, but his experience had been different from that of the honorable member for Sandhurst (Mr. Bailes). Whatever he (Mr. Munro) always found was that every printer on weekly wages—he was
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usually called a "stab" hand—had to send in, at the end of the week, a memorandum of the work done by him. It was generally the amount of the work done, rather than its particular nature, that had to be given in. Surely such a system was even more necessary in a large establishment than in a small one. What was gained under it was that it could be seen whether a man did sufficient work for the money he got. He remembered, with respect to himself, that putting down his own work in this way generally increased his wages by several shillings per week.

Mr. Jones mentioned that in some of the best printing-offices in the United States each compositor had, to "pull" a duplicate of every piece of work done by him, and to send in, at the end of the week, as showing what he had earned. This constituted a practical record which involved no clerical work whatever, and possibly the system might be beneficially introduced into the Government Printing-office. He (Mr. Jones) would take the present opportunity of calling attention to the printing of duty stamps in order to suggest that the use of embossed instead of adhesive stamps would be an excellent guard against the frauds which had been indulged in within the last few years.

Mr. GILLIES stated that the question whether embossed instead of adhesive stamps should be used for stamp duty purposes was under the consideration of the Postmaster-General.

Mr. VALE drew attention to the way in which men were appointed to permanent positions in the Government Printing-office. Over twelve months ago a number of individuals, in response to an advertisement issued by the Public Service Board, applied to be appointed on the staff of this establishment. They paid the fees demanded of them, and passed the examination, and some of them were selected; but ever since then those fifteen men had been waiting in vain to be taken on. Meanwhile a number of supernumeraries had been promoted. This was scarcely fair play. What were the intentions of the Government in the matter?

Mr. GILLIES said he thought that, on a former occasion, he fully explained the present system with respect to appointments in the Government Printing-office. The difficulty arose with respect to the men in the office who had been taken on as journeymen supernumeraries under the promise that if they performed their duties properly they would be placed on the permanent staff as vacancies arose. When the Public Service Act was passed the claims of those supernumeraries were overlooked, and it would require an amendment of the Act to place matters on a right basis. In the meantime the Government felt bound to observe the promise which was made, and in consequence they had declined to appoint any one to the permanent staff until they were in a position to appoint those most entitled to be chosen. It did not follow because certain candidates had passed a certain examination that they were entitled to the first vacancies. A Bill to amend the Public Service Act would probably be passed next session.

Mr. McColl remarked that whatever might be the claims of the supernumeraries, justice should also be done to the men who, acting on the invitation issued to them to compete for appointments in the Government Printing-office, paid the fees demanded of them, and passed the examinations imposed upon them, with the result that they were finally selected by the Public Service Board. He personally knew of men in this position, who had been kept hanging on in vain for over twelve months.

Mr. Hunt said he would urge the Government to consider whether they ought not to have the new electoral rolls printed at the various local printing-offices of the colony rather than at the Government Printing-office. He was perfectly satisfied—speaking from practical knowledge—that by following this plan the work would be performed with more economy and accuracy than was possible otherwise.

Mr. GILLIES stated that the Government would be glad indeed, if they could adopt such a course. Certainly they had no desire to see the Government Printing-office any larger than it was, nor did the Government Printer want any increase to his work. He (Mr. Gillies) would do what he could towards getting the rolls printed in private establishments.

Mr. Hunt observed that a similar course was adopted some 30 years ago, and the outcome was general satisfaction.

Dr. Quick thought that the suggestion made by the honorable member for Kilmore deserved most serious attention. The fact that, a number of years ago, all the electoral rolls of the country were printed at private printing-offices was sufficient to show that the same thing could be done again. (Mr. Gillies—"The question is whether the time is not too short.")
shorter the time, the greater the reason for distributing the work. Another point was that, under the present system, the rolls were often most inaccurately printed. (Mr. Gillies—"That is not the fault of the Government Printer.") At all events, it showed that no advantage was gained by having the work done in Melbourne.

Mr. BAILES expressed the hope that the Premier would carry out the idea just conveyed to him, because there could be no doubt that, if the rolls were printed locally, the work would be done more cheaply, expeditiously, and accurately than before. The municipal rolls were always printed at private offices, and assuredly they were turned out as well as ever the electoral rolls were. They were generally printed within ten or eleven days after the lists were handed in. Moreover, inaccuracies on the part of electoral registrars would be more easily detected in a local printing-office than they could possibly be in the Government Printing-office, and the result of securing accuracy would be to save a lot of bother in identifying electors. As for what had been said by the Treasurer with respect to the rights of supernumeraries in the Government Printing-office to permanent appointments there, it afforded a very poor excuse for the fact that a number of men had been put to the trouble of making applications and passing examinations in order to procure similar appointments, only to find that they had gone through a farce. He (Mr. Bailes) would also mention that he had been supplied with a statement regarding the "doc" system which he would read to the committee. (Mr. Gillies—"May I see the document?") He could not allow it to go out of his hands.

Mr. GILLIES stated that it would never do for an honorable member to read out a document as authoritative, and then to refuse to allow it to be seen by the Government or any one else. To what might not such a practice lead in the case of documents written by persons in the Government service? If the honorable member for Sandhurst (Mr. Bailes) had any complaint to make, and would submit it in a specific form, he (Mr. Gillies) would have it inquired into. He would ask the Government Printer to send in a special report on the subject.

Mr. BAILES said he would accept the Treasurer's offer.

Sir B. O'LOGHLIN observed that it would be well to have some statement from the Government Printer as to how long it would take to turn out the new electoral rolls. There was a rumour abroad that five or six months would be required for the purpose.

Mr. GILLIES stated that there would be no delay of the kind. A clause would, however, be inserted in the Electoral Bill providing that, with respect to the first election under it, the rolls need not be made up until about a month after the usual time—that was to say, until about a month after the beginning of December. Thus the date for bringing out the printed rolls, which would, under ordinary circumstances, be about the 12th February, would be postponed until the 12th or 13th March. Under this arrangement the rolls would be in the hands of the returning officers before Parliament was dissolved. Parliament would expire by effluxion of time on the 15th March, but it would probably be dissolved on the 14th—the day before. The law would be strictly complied with.

Mr. ANDERSON (Villiers) asked whether there would be any extension of the date at which the registration of electors had to be brought to a close. Under the Act it was fixed at the 1st December.

Mr. GILLIES replied in the negative. Mr. McINTYRE thought the Treasurer ought to promise to take steps at once to have the work of printing the rolls distributed among the various printing-offices of the country.

Mr. GILLIES said the only promise he would make on the subject was to the effect that if he could see his way to having the rolls locally printed, he would have them so printed. Inasmuch as he was responsible for the work being done properly, and in good time, he would make no arrangement with regard to it which he was not perfectly satisfied could be carried out. As he had said before, having the rolls printed locally would, if it could be done properly and in time, suit both the Government and the Government Printer.

Mr. JONES thought that inasmuch as four months would elapse between the 1st December and the date of the general election, provision should be made for the issue of a supplementary roll.

Mr. GILLIES said he would inquire whether that could be done.

Mr. BROWN submitted that the public ought to get extra notice to the effect that the registration of voters would, so far as the next general election was concerned, terminate later than the 1st December.

Mr. GILLIES observed that the law made clear provision as to what public notice should be given in the matter.
Mr. JONES said he would take the opportunity, in connexion with the present vote, to complain of the great delay in the bookbinding department of the Government Printing-office with respect to the binding of newspapers and magazines.

Mr. GILLIES said he would have the matter inquired into.

The vote was agreed to.

GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING.

On the vote of £2,900 to complete the vote (£6,000) for advertising,

Mr. TUTHILL said he wished to call attention to the injury done to the public interest by the money voted for Government advertising being either very insufficient, or else very improperly distributed. For example, he had often known tenders for works to be carried out in remote country districts advertised for in the Melbourne papers, and not in any local paper. Complaints on this subject had been over and over again made to the Government Printer, who had the distribution of the vote for advertising; but what had been his invariable reply? That the money at his disposal was too small for him to do more with it than he did do. He (Mr. Tuthill) would mention, by way of illustration, a particular case which occurred within the last six months. Tenders for repairs to certain public offices at Beechworth were called for, but no advertisement on the subject appeared in any local paper. No doubt, when attention was directed to the omission, it was immediately rectified; but, had no notice been taken, nothing of the kind would have been done. The truth was that while £5,000 was sufficient for advertising purposes some years ago, it was not sufficient now. There were at the present time more public works to be executed, and very many more country district newspapers than there used to be. On the other hand, it should be remembered that when public works had to be carried out, money was almost always saved by calling for tenders in the most public way possible, because the more people there were to tender the lower would their prices probably be. Again, the other day a job had to be done at a railway station in the Ovens district; but instead of it being executed by local labour, which would have cost £1 or so, men were brought from elsewhere to do it at the cost of several pounds. It was likewise a matter of common occurrence that meetings of land boards and also land sales were either not advertised at all, or else the advertisements were published in the wrong papers. For instance, a few weeks back an intended meeting of the Wodonga land board was advertised only in a Melbourne paper. At all events, not until the eleventh hour, and after he had interfered, did the advertisement appear in any local journal. Surely there should be some rectification in this direction. Could not the Treasurer see his way to increase the vote for advertising?

Mr. GILLIES remarked that all he could say was that if the vote was insufficient it was not his fault, for it had never been represented to him that the amount was too small. Unquestionably, all tenders for public works ought to be advertised for in the local papers of the districts concerned, and that was the rule adopted by the Government, the Government Printer being left to carry it out. Had it ever been reported to him (Mr. Gillies) that the vote for advertising was too small, he would have at once entertained the question whether it should not be increased.

Mr. TUTHILL observed that complaints of insufficient advertising with respect to such matters as calling for tenders, the sitting of land boards, and so on, had been made often enough, but they did not appear to have ever been taken much notice of. Once, having noticed that a land board sitting at Tallangatta was insufficiently advertised, he discovered that the option of advertising it rested with the district surveyor. Well, he complained about the matter to that officer, who replied that the advertisement appeared in a paper published in the district from which the bulk of the applicants came. But what about other applicants? Were they to know nothing of the affair? It was to be hoped this state of things would be remedied.

Mr. FERGUSON said he could thoroughly corroborate the statement of his honorable colleague. He could, for instance, mention that a land sale, held at Bright the other day, would have brought in twenty times the money actually realized had it been properly advertised.

The vote was agreed to.

IMPERIAL PENSIONS.

On the vote of £220 to complete the vote (£400) for "Paying officer of pensions,"

Mr. BROWN said he believed that this was an Imperial expense, and he did not see why it should be borne by the colony. Ought not the Imperial Government to provide its own paying officer of pensions?
Mr. GILLIES explained that the expense was borne by the Imperial Government, although the paying officer in question was an officer of the public service of Victoria.

The vote was agreed to.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

On the vote of £60,000 to complete the vote (£120,000) for charitable institutions, Mr. BURROWES called attention to the claims of the Sandhurst Hospital for a grant in aid of buildings and an increased grant for maintenance. Without some additional aid from the State, it would be impossible for the institution either to keep out of debt or to afford accommodation for all who sought relief within its walls. He believed the Sandhurst Hospital had at present a greater number of patients than any other institution of the kind outside Melbourne. It was the fact that many of the inmates of the charitable institutions of Victoria were persons who arrived in the colony in 1852 and 1853, and who, through improvidence or misfortune, had become reduced in their old age; and it became a question whether the vote in aid of those institutions was sufficient to meet all the legitimate demands upon it.

Mr. GILLIES stated that the vote had been increased by £10,000 during the last few years. If it was found not large enough to satisfy all reasonable claims upon it, he would take into consideration the propriety of asking the Assembly to supplement the amount.

Mr. LAURENS observed that he was glad to be able to bear testimony to the very liberal way in which residents in the metropolis had recently subscribed the handsome sum of £10,000 towards the liquidation of the debt, on maintenance account, of the Melbourne Hospital; but he was bound to remind the Treasurer that that large overdraft on account of maintenance was caused, to a large extent, by the fact that, although the vote for charitable institutions had been increased by £10,000 during the last two years, the grant to the Melbourne Hospital had been curtailed. (Mr. Gillies—"I have not reduced it.") Although the maintenance overdraft had been wiped out, the Melbourne Hospital was still some £5,000 or £6,000 in debt on account of buildings. During the last fifteen years some £18,000 or £19,000 had been spent on buildings, towards which the State had contributed no more than £700, which the Treasurer was good enough to allot last year or the year before. That was a sum not at all in proportion to the State contribution in aid of buildings connected with other hospitals.

Mr. LANGDON asked the Treasurer on what basis would the vote be allocated? Would it be allocated according to the number of beds made up by each institution?

Mr. GILLIES said the basis of allocation had always been the necessity for the time being.

Mr. BAKER remarked that there were three or four hospitals in his district which needed special help with regard both to building and maintenance. He would call particular attention to the institutions at Nhill and Swan Hill. Those institutions, situate as they were in hot districts, to which population was flocking, required considerably more help from the State than institutions which were situate in cooler regions.

The vote was agreed to.

MUNICIPAL ENDOWMENT.

On the vote of £85,000 to complete the vote (£310,192) for the subsidy to municipalities, Mr. BROWN said he wished to call attention to the desirability of this subsidy being distributed on a more equal basis. At present, certain shires—most of them were in Gippsland—received £3 from the State for every £1 raised locally, while others were endowed only to the extent of little more than one-third of that amount. Among them were the shires in the northern parts of the colony, which were at a great disadvantage owing to the absence within their borders of road-making material, and the large expenditure they had to engage in for the extermination of vermin. No doubt, some years ago, the Gippsland shires needed special consideration, but that need was passing away—the land in that part of the colony was increasing in value every year, and, as the value of land increased, so must the rates—whereas the northern shires had now as much trouble to contend against as ever they had. Under these circumstances, it was only reasonable to expect that the Treasurer, if he was able to do so, would amend the distribution of the municipal endowment in favour of the northern shires.

Mr. TUTHILL observed that, while some 15 shires were endowed to the extent of £3 for every £1 raised locally, all the other shires, although they were entitled to £2 for every £1, received only 22s. or 23s., simply because the total endowment did not exceed £310,000, and as that was not sufficient to allow of £2 being paid to each shire for every
£1 raised locally, the subsidy had to be proportionately reduced in each case. He did not wish to interfere with all the shires that received £3 for every £1, because he believed that some of them were justly entitled to that consideration; but there were other shires which no longer were entitled to it, because they no longer required it. A condition attached to the vote was to the effect that it should be distributed—

"On the basis provided by the Local Government Act of 1874, subject to an allowance of £3 for £1 on annual rates for the following shires:—Alberton, Alexandra, Avon North Riding, Bairnsdale, Baln Baln, Howqua, Narracan, Omeo, Towong, Traralgon, Tambo, Walhalla, Warragul, Yackandandah, Yea."

And he intended to move the omission from this list of certain shires which, as far as he could ascertain, no longer required such a subsidy as £3 for £1. (Mr. Gillies—"You cannot deal with the question in that way.") He admitted that it was dealing with an important principle on what might be called a side-issue; but it should be re-collected that the subsidy of £310,000 was not now granted in pursuance of an Act of Parliament. The provision relating to the subsidy contained in the Local Government Act of 1874 expired some time ago, and since then the subsidy had been voted annually on the Estimates. He would propose that the provision with respect to giving £3 for £1 should apply only to the shires of Alberton, Alexandra, Howqua, Narracan, Omeo, Towong, Traralgon, Tambo, and Yackandandah. (Mr. Gillies—"This would require a message from the Governor.") Then he would move that the entire condition be struck out.

The CHAIRMAN.—What the honorable member calls a "condition" is a direction as to how a certain portion of the vote shall be applied; and it is not competent for the committee to alter the destination of a vote except in pursuance of a message from the Governor.

Mr. TUTHILL remarked that, in that case, the Government could put whatever shires they liked in the £3 for £1 list. (Mr. Munro—"Of course they can.") But was that right? (Mr. Munro—"No.") He wanted it altered. (Mr. Munro—"You cannot alter it until you get a majority against the Ministry.") Why, the terms of the vote were not correct. It was set forth that the money was to be distributed "on the basis provided by the Local Government Act of 1874." But it could not be so distributed, because that basis had gone, included in the list of £3 for £1 shires were shires that contained land which, to his knowledge, had been sold recently at £100 per acre. Among the shires which were not included was the shire of Bright, which embraced a territory of 400 square miles.

Mr. GILLIES admitted that the present mode of distributing the municipal subsidy was not altogether satisfactory. The fact was that a Bill to amend the Local Government Act ought to have been passed before this, and it was in connexion with such a Bill that the question of allocation should be considered and finally determined. No doubt some modification of the present system was necessary, but it would have to be deferred until next year. (Mr. Tuthill—"Will you propose it next year?") He would do so either in connexion with the Estimates or by Bill.

Mr. BAKER said that he was disappointed with the way in which the vote was submitted to the committee, because deputations that had waited upon the Treasurer had been assured that some change would be made this year. There were a large number of shires in the Wimmera electorate, several of which were as much entitled to receive from the State £3 for every £1 raised locally as the shires who were in the enjoyment of that amount of subsidy. He might mention the Swan Hill shire, which spent no less than £12,000 in one year on rabbit extermination. With such a large expenditure on the extirpation of vermin, it was impossible for local bodies, unless they received special assistance from the State, to carry out all the ordinary municipal works which were necessary. The shires named in the vote were no more entitled to £3 for £1 than several shires in his district, which really did not get the money to which they were entitled. It was an unfair arrangement that certain shires should get £3 for £1, and that the other shires had to be content with what they might obtain under a division pro rata of the balance of the £310,000.

Mr. KEYS observed that when the arrangement was made that the Gippsland shires should receive £3 from the State for every £1 raised locally, the other shires in the colony received 32s. for every £1. Since then the subsidy to those shires had been gradually reduced until last year, when it was barely 20s. for every £1. He considered that a fair and reasonable way of meeting the difficulty would be to provide that the shires named in connexion with the
vote should receive only £2 instead of £3 for every £1 raised locally. Would he be in order in moving the substitution of "£2" for "£3"?

The CHAIRMAN.—I think the honorable member would not be in order.

Mr. McLEAN remarked that honorable members who had spoken had made out a good case for a substantial increase of the grant to municipal bodies, but when they spoke of the new shires mentioned in connection with the vote as not having any special claims over old shires, they spoke, he thought, without a full knowledge of the country they were referring to. One of the new shires—Tambo—was about 150 miles long, and included some of the roughest country in Victoria for road making. The main channel of traffic from New South Wales to Victoria ran through the heart of that shire. The population was very scattered, being confined to the valleys of the various rivers, and roads had to be provided to connect these scattered settlements, and roads had also to be maintained for the accommodation of stock on their way from New South Wales to the Melbourne market. The greater portion of the main roads in these new shires were still unformed, and would any one tell him that such shires had no more claim upon the State than old-established shires, whose roads were formed at the public expense long before the new shires came into existence, and only required maintenance to be kept available for traffic? This matter had been considered over and over again by Parliament in connexion with the Estimates, and the fact that the new shires had special claims had been generally admitted. He sincerely trusted the Treasurer would consider the matter well before proposing the reduction of the subsidy to new shires. There should be no reduction until the principal works, in the shape of main roads, had been formed.

Mr. FEIGUSON stated that the subsidy to some of the shires, including Bright-shire, had been cut down to such an extent that it now amounted to no more than 18s. or 19s. for every £1 raised by local rate, and this, while other shires continued to receive £3 for £1. That was where the grievance came in. He considered that Bright-shire was as much entitled to receive £3 for £1 as any of the shires mentioned in connexion with the vote. That shire embraced a large area, not of level and dry country, but of mountainous and wet country, in consequence of which the cost of road making and maintenance was something enormous. One work which Bright-shire had to maintain was the road across the mountains which formed the connexion between Gippsland and the Murray. He considered that the fairest way of dealing with the matter was to do away with the £3 for £1 arrangement, and allocate the money in proportion to the rates collected, providing by special vote for those shires which might need additional assistance.

Mr. STAUGHTON observed that not only was Tambo-shire subsidized to the extent of £3 for every £1 which it raised locally, but it received extra grants for special works. A few years ago it received some £5,000 or £6,000 in that way; and, under the Estimates for the present year, it would have £1,750. The way to meet exceptional cases was by special grants, not by giving to certain shires a larger proportion of the municipal subsidy than was given to others. The injustice of the present unequal distribution of the subsidy was patent to every one. Surely those shires which had difficulty in obtaining material for road-making ought not to be treated with less consideration than shires which had such material at hand.

Mr. LANGDON considered it was time that the £3 to £1 business was done away with. There were shires in the northern parts of the colony—shires like Gordon and Swan Hill—which were as much entitled to receive £3 for £1 as the shires in Gippsland. Gippsland was a Garden of Eden compared with the northern districts, where stone was not available for the making of roads, and where selectors had to contend with enormous difficulties.

Mr. W. MADDEN said he regretted that the Treasurer could not see his way to do this year what he had promised to do next year. It had been pointed out that, when it was determined to give certain shires £3 for every £1 raised locally, the other shires were receiving 32s. 6d. for every £1. This subsidy had since been reduced to £1 for £1, although the favoured shires continued to receive their £3 for £1. It had also been pointed out that those shires which were paid £3 for £1 received the bulk of the money which was voted in the shape of special grants for road-works and bridges. Yet those shires had at command the material—timber and stone—which they needed for road-making, whereas the shires in the Wimmera district had neither timber nor stone. Those shires had exceptional difficulties to contend with—such difficulties indeed as would justify the
Assembly in showing them special consideration. Therefore he hoped the Treasurer would review the whole situation with a view to the allotting of the municipal subsidy on a fairer basis than it was allotted at present. The matter had been brought before the Treasurer, three or four times, by the North-Western Municipal Association; but it would appear that the recommendations of that body had not received the consideration they deserved.

Mr. LAURENS asked the Treasurer whether the vote before the committee was the balance of £310,000, which had hitherto formed the amount of the municipal endowment, or whether it was the balance of £400,000, to which, according to the Budget proposals, the endowment was to be increased? (Mr. Gillies—"It is the balance of £310,000.") Were there any serious or weighty reasons why the larger amount should not be voted?

Mr. GILLIES said there were very weighty reasons against that course. The increase of the municipal endowment was a substantial portion of the financial proposals of the Government, the whole of which had been withdrawn.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said there could be no doubt that the present system of distributing the municipal subsidy was unequal, and that it must be altered. From personal knowledge of some of the shires which received a subsidy of £3 for £1 raised by local rates, he was convinced that the shires to which this subsidy was given needed all the assistance they obtained from the State, but he thought the other municipalities were entitled to a larger subsidy than they received under the present system. The Treasurer, indeed, admitted that such was the fact. He would, therefore, suggest that the honorable gentleman should consider the propriety of placing a sum of money on the Additional Estimates sufficient to increase the subsidy to those municipalities to 2s., 3s., or 3½s. per £1, or to whatever amount the honorable gentleman thought they were fairly entitled. The Assembly would certainly not grudge the expenditure of any reasonable sum—say from £40,000 to £70,000—that might be required for the purpose; and, as the revenue was in a flourishing condition, the amount could be easily spared.

Mr. McCOLL remarked that, after the general expression of opinion on the part of honorable members, it was to be hoped that the anomaly which existed in the distribution of the municipal subsidy would not be continued after the present year. The shires in the northern district, and especially a shire like Swan Hill, deserved quite as much consideration as the Gippsland shires. Swan Hill shire had an area of about 10,000 square miles, and unlike Gippsland shires, which contained excellent land, it comprised a great deal of poor land; in fact there were millions of acres of mallee, which harboured rabbits, and thereby entailed great expense on the shire council.

Mr. LEVIEI said he had been in hopes that the present vote would not be submitted in such an extremely unsatisfactory manner. When the Assembly agreed to certain shires receiving a subsidy of £3 for each £1 raised locally, it never intended that that subsidy would be made a first charge on the total endowment every year, and that the less favoured municipalities would be liable to a pro rata reduction. He had been very much annoyed at the discovery that the shires in the district he represented were receiving less than one-half of what they got some time ago. He understood the Treasurer to promise that the present mode of distribution would be altered next year, but that was only partially satisfactory. He thought that the Government, in view of the strong feeling which they knew existed on the subject, ought not to have continued the system this year in such a manner as to make those local bodies which received the smaller subsidy obtain less than they were entitled to, in order that those which were allotted £3 to £1 might be paid in full. What satisfactory explanation could honorable members who represented districts where the municipalities received less than they were entitled to give for their being so treated?

Mr. GROOM stated that he could sympathize with the feeling entertained by honorable members representing districts where the municipalities obtained a smaller subsidy than they were led to expect, but he thought the shires which were allotted £5 to £1 had strong claims to be paid that subsidy without any deduction. The district which he represented—South Gippsland—had received no special grants for the purpose of clearing roads, and the cost of the work was exceedingly heavy. In Warragul-shire the cost of forming roads was about four times as much as in almost any other part of the colony. Though the shire council had been ten years in existence, there were only about five miles of metalled road in the shire. In some parts it cost £600 or £700 per mile to clear, the timber and form a road. If
honorable members could only realize the difficulties which had to be encountered in making a few miles of road, in order to enable the settlers to get to and from their homesteads, they would admit that the £3 to £1 subsidy, instead of being reduced, ought to be increased. In the shire of Warrangul hundreds of miles of roads existed only on paper, and half the traffic was carried by pack-horses. Some two years ago a man was burnt to death in the bush in one part of South Gippsland, and, in order to convey his corpse a distance of twelve miles, it was necessary to double it across the back of a horse, as there was no road in the locality which any vehicle could traverse. This would afford honorable members a very good illustration of the condition in which three-fourths of the country he represented was in as to roads. Many of the roads which were made were only cor­duroy roads, and the shire councils were constantly being "shot" at for damages. The demand for road-making was every year becoming more pressing, owing to the increase of population, and the local councils could make good use of a much larger subsidy than they at present received.

Mr. HARPER observed that while the newly-formed shires were no doubt entitled to special consideration, there were other districts which had also special claims to consideration. The shires of Heidelberg and Whittlesea had to maintain some 21 miles of main road which was constantly needing repair owing to the heavy traffic along it and from the Yan Yen water­works, and the local bodies were greatly dissatisfied with the amount of the subsidy which they at present received. The Minister of Public Works himself informed a deputation that 1,600 tons of iron pipes were carried along that road within a certain period, and there was also a large quantity of stone, sand, and other building material conveyed in connexion with the construction of the new aqueduct. As tolls were abolished, there was no means whereby the local bodies could obtain any revenue from this traffic to assist them in keeping the road in repair. The Treasurer ought to recognise the case of the shires in question as entitling them to an extra subsidy. He (Mr. Harper) did not claim that they should get £3 to £1, but he submitted that, as long as this exceptional traffic continued, they were entitled to greater consideration than they had hitherto received.

Mr. OUTTRIM said that he sympathized with the position in which the shires in Gippsland were placed owing to the want of roads, and he believed that honorable members would be willing to make large special grants to them to assist them to construct roads. At the same time a manifest in­justice was done to other shires and to boroughs by their subsidy being reduced in consequence of £3 to £1 being paid to the Gippsland and certain other shires without regard to the total amount of the endowment. The roads in the district which he represented were greatly cut up owing to the heavy timber traffic upon them in connexion with the mines, and the local bodies were placed in a very awkward posi­tion by the smallness of the sum that they obtained out of the amount appropriated for municipal endowment. He believed that the subsidy was only about 13s. in the £1 for boroughs and 19s. in the £1 for shires, which was very much less than they ought to receive. It was to be regretted that the Treasurer could not see his way to make an alteration this year in the distribution of the subsidy. As a portion of it had already been paid, he (Mr. Outtrim) presumed that the rest of it would have to be distributed on the same basis; but something should be done to remedy the injustice which would be suffered by other local bodies owing to certain shires being paid in full at the rate of £3 for £1. He hoped that this was the last occasion that honorable members would be called upon to discuss the matter, and that in future the subsidy would be dis­tributed in the manner in which it ought to be distributed, namely, £2 to £1 for shires, and £1 to £1 for boroughs, with a special grant for local bodies in such districts as Gippsland.

Mr. GRAVES remarked that some hon­orable members appeared to take exception to certain shires receiving a subsidy of £3 for £1, but there was one aspect of the matter which ought not to be overlooked. The roads which had been opened up by the local bodies that had had the advantage of a subsidy of £3 for each £1 raised locally had led to the selection of large tracts of land under the Land Act 1884, which would not otherwise have been selected owing to the difficult nature of the country in which the land was situated. He believed that on inquiry it would be found that, by the facilities afforded for land selection through the expenditure of this money, four or five times the amount had gone into the coffers of the State.

Mr. TUTHILL urged that some de­termined effort ought to be made to remedy
the anomalies in connexion with the distribution of the municipal subsidy—anomalies which had been discussed on previous occasions and had been brought under the notice of the Treasurer by various deputations. He thought that the suggestion by the honorable member for South Bourke, that the subsidy of £3 should be reduced to £2 was a very fair one. To test the feeling of the committee as to the desirability of making some alteration, he would move that the vote be reduced by £1. If the amendment was carried, he desired that the Government would accept it as a direction to bring down some other plan for distributing the vote.

Mr. ANDERSON (Creswick) said it was evident, from the discussion which had taken place, that there was a consensus of opinion that the present distribution of the municipal subsidy was upon a very unsatisfactory basis. At present the shires were divided into two classes, but it must be patent to honorable members, who had any experience of the working of local government, that it would be better if they were divided into three classes, which might be distinguished as new shires, full-working shires, and old shires. Shires in districts like Gippsland, which had great demands on their resources for road-making and other purposes, were certainly entitled to more consideration than others; but the present arrangement, whereby they received £2 to £1 in full, and the balance of the endowment, whatever it might be, was divided amongst the other municipalities, caused a great deal of heart-burning. All the local bodies should share and share alike upon some pro rata basis. It was to be hoped that the Treasurer would consider the suggestions which had been thrown out by honorable members, and devise a scheme for the more satisfactory distribution of the endowment in future.

Mr. A. HARRIS expressed the hope that the committee would not agree to the amendment proposed by the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill). If the amendment was carried, it would involve a re-arrangement of the distribution of the endowment, and that would cause confusion. Honorable members ought to be satisfied with the promise given by the Treasurer that, next session, he would introduce an amending Local Government Bill, which would deal with the whole question in a fair and reasonable way. He was sorry that the proposal which was contained in the Treasurer's Budget to increase the municipal subsidy by the sum of £140,000 had not been carried out. The specially endowed shires had exceptional difficulties to contend with, and, therefore, they were entitled to the extra consideration which was given to them. In fact, it would be impossible for the councils of those shires to make and maintain roads, and carry out other works which were absolutely necessary, if they received any smaller subsidy than £3 for £1. In the shire of Wallalla it had cost £2,500 to make about two and a quarter miles of main road. In that shire there were 82 miles of main roads to maintain, and 160 miles of driving roads. Both in Wallalla and other shires in North Gippsland the making of metalled roads was exceedingly expensive, and the roads, particularly those going round mountain ranges, were very costly to maintain. If honorable members insisted upon reducing the grant to the specially endowed shires, the result would inevitably be that a great deal of territory would fall back into the hands of the Government, for no municipal council would carry on the work of local government in such districts with a smaller subsidy. In addition to the subsidy of £3 for £1, special grants ought to be made by the State to assist shires which had such difficulties to contend with as the Gippsland shires had.

Mr. UREN said that many shires, which were supposed to be getting a subsidy of £2 to £1, but were actually receiving less than £1, ought to obtain much greater recognition at the hands of the State. There were shires in the districts represented by the honorable member for Villiers and Heytesbury, the honorable member for Polwarth, and the honorable member for Mornington which were entitled to equal consideration with the Gippsland shires. He hoped that the Treasurer would give an assurance that, while not reducing the amount to be given to those shires that were allotted £3 to £1, there would be an increase in the amount available for distribution amongst the other municipalities.

Mr. BROWN asked the Treasurer to give some information as to what he proposed to do.

Mr. GILLIES said that he recognised the peculiarity of the situation, owing to the fact that, in consequence of the £3 to £1 allotment being paid in full, the other local bodies suffered a reduction in the amount of their subsidy. The whole question of the distribution of the municipal endowment was a difficult one to deal with, and required a great deal of careful
consideration. As he had already stated, he intended to submit a proposal on the subject, in a Bill to be introduced next session, which, he hoped, would meet the views of honorable members. He felt that the shires which were getting the £3 to £1 subsidy were entitled to its continuance, as they had made their arrangements for the year on the faith of receiving that amount, and, therefore, he could not consent to the amendment proposed by the honorable member for the Ovens (Mr. Tuthill). At the same time, he admitted that many honorable members had probably been under the impression that the whole endowment was distributed pro rata, instead of the £3 to £1 shires being paid in full, and the balance divided amongst the others. He did not know what extra amount would be required in order to pay the other shires in full, according to the scale on which they were supposed to participate in the endowment; but he would have a calculation made, and, if he could see his way to do so, he would be very glad to provide the extra sum necessary for that purpose. (Mr. Tuthill—"This year?") Certainly. (Mr. McLean—"Not at the expense of the £3 shires?") No; he did not intend to make any reduction in the grant to those shires which were subsidized at the rate of £3 to £1.

Mr. TUTHILL said that, after the promise given by the Treasurer, he would withdraw the amendment.

The amendment was withdrawn, and the vote was agreed to, as was also the vote of £2,200 to complete the vote (£4,000) for "transport, samples, and marine insurance."

UNFORESEEN EXPENDITURE.

On the vote of £2,500 to complete the vote (£5,000) for unforeseen and accidental expenditure.

Dr. QUICK remarked that when letter-carriers were promoted to the position of sorters and stampers, the salaries to which they became entitled, under the regulations framed by the Public Service Board, did not equal what they were promised when they were originally appointed letter-carriers. He understood that it was intended to take their case into consideration, and he desired to know whether, if it was decided to pay them extra, the amount required for that purpose would be taken out of this vote?

Mr. GILLIES said that this vote was not used for payments that would recur from year to year, but only for unforeseen and non-recurring expenditure. If there was any unforeseen increase of salary it was generally paid out of the Treasurer's advance, and there was afterwards a special vote provided on the Estimates, so that the accounts could be re-adjusted. The letter-carriers who claimed to be entitled to higher salaries were not legally entitled to any increase, but the Postmaster-General was considering whether, under the circumstances of the case, Parliament ought to be asked to provide for their more liberal remuneration.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN called attention to the phraseology of the vote:

"Unforeseen and accidental expenditure, including provision for increasing appropriation for salaries by reason of transfers from one department to another, or by promotions in grades in one department through vacancies occurring in another, or other operation of Act No. 773."

He would like to know what reason there was for all the rigmarole after "unforeseen and accidental expenditure"?

Mr. GILLIES said there was no special reason why the vote should be worded in this way. It was only following precedent.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN stated that he was not aware that there was any precedent for such phraseology. The vote used formerly to be described simply as "unforeseen and accidental expenditure," which description was quite sufficient.

The vote was agreed to.

THE LATE MR. A. J. AGG.

On the vote of £8,987 to complete the vote (£9,455) for miscellaneous purposes in the Treasurer's department,

Mr. VALE called attention to an item of £3,125 (exclusive of £1,125 previously voted) for the widow and children of the late Alfred J. Agg, Commissioner of Audit and Railway Commissioner, and asked whether Mr. Agg received any compensation when he ceased to be a Commissioner of Audit on being appointed a Railway Commissioner?

Mr. GILLIES stated that no compensation was paid to Mr. Agg on resigning his office as Commissioner of Audit.

HUGH DOUGHERTY.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN directed attention to an item of £63 for "pension to Hugh Dougherty, late sergeant-instructor of the local forces, disabled in the execution of his duty," and expressed the hope that Dougherty would not be removed from the position he at present occupied.

Dr. QUICK said Dougherty had received the appointment of a messenger at the Law
Courts, but, being 60 years of age, he was apprehensive that he might be removed from the position.

Mr. GILLIES intimated that it was not likely that Dougherty’s services would be dispensed with before he was 65 years of age.

The vote for “Miscellaneous” was agreed to, as were also the following votes:—£37,138 to complete the vote (£51,888) for salaries and contingencies in the Defence department; £44,774 to complete the vote (£76,767) for the survey, sale, and management of Crown lands; £12,060 to complete the vote (£20,681) for State forests and nurseries; £4,072 to complete the vote (£7,008) for public parks, gardens, and reserves; £8,401 to complete the vote (£9,281) for Botanical and Domain gardens; and £804 to complete the vote (£1,392) for expenses of carrying out the Land Tax Act.

RABBIT EXTIRPATION.

On the vote of £26,105 to complete the vote (£45,420) for the extirpation of rabbits and wild animals,

Mr. McLellan drew attention to the item of £420 for “allowances to bailiffs and other officers partially employed in connexion with the extirpation of rabbits.” He was informed that while the Crown lands bailiffs in some districts were employed in this work, those in other rabbit-infested districts were not. He thought that all should be treated alike, and intrusted with the work of rabbit extirpation in their respective districts.

Mr. Jones asked the Minister of Lands whether any improved system was now in force in the department to prevent the looting of the treasury in connexion with rabbit extermination? Some few years ago there were robberies in the branch of the Lands department which had to do with rabbit extermination, and it was more than suspected than a second attack had occurred recently.

Mr. Dow stated that a careful examination of the accounts showed that the total defalcations recently amounted to not more than £320 or £330, and as the Premier mentioned the other evening, steps would be taken to prevent, as far as possible, irregularities occurring in the public service generally in future. Honorable members would notice that there was a small increase in the vote for this year. The explanation of that was that the Government intended, with the approval of Parliament, to take over the whole supervision of the work of rabbit extermination, which was now partly under the control of the local bodies, because it was believed that the work would be more effectively and economically carried out by the officers of the Lands department. It was hoped that opportunity would be found for carrying the necessary legislation into effect for this purpose before the close of the session. Although the vote was increased this year, it was believed that the effect of the proposed system would be to reduce the expenditure.

Mr. Langdon expressed the opinion that, if the work of rabbit destruction were let out by contract over the colony, the Government would save half the money it was now expending. A number of the hands employed by the Government performed their duties in a very lax manner, and without proper supervision, so that a large amount of the money expended was completely lost. He desired to know in what manner the Government proposed to expend the sum of £15,000, which was set down for “vermin-proof fencing, including loans”? A number of shire councils had been very anxious to obtain some benefit from this money, but a misunderstanding as to how the Government intended to allot it had led to the non-execution of many works which were very desirable.

Mr. Dow observed that the vote for wire fencing was placed on the Estimates in response to a generally expressed wish that the department should turn its attention as far as possible to the construction of wire netting fences. The experience of the department was that money could not be more profitably employed in connexion with rabbit extermination than on the erection of rabbit-proof wire fencing. There had been a suggestion made by several deputations that, if selectors and other private landowners were provided with wire netting by the Government, they would erect wire fences instead of the usual fences, and by that means subdivide their lands, and prevent the incursions of rabbits. The Government did not see its way to lend money to private individuals for the erection of wire fencing, on account of the difficulty of collection, but there were three or four patches of mallee country—one in Gladstone, one near Dimboola, and another somewhere else on the border of the mallee—which it would be very desirable to fence round, because the land was of very little use to the Crown at present, and it entailed considerable expense in keeping it free from rabbits. The fencing would relieve the Government of this expense, and also prevent the rabbits from...
spreading to the surrounding settlements. The Government had determined to offer to lend shire councils money for wire fencing if they would take the responsibility of executing the work of erecting the fencing on private lands, and collecting the interest from the owners. The Government would look to the local bodies to be recouped in such cases, but it could not deal with individuals over whom it had no hold as it had over local councils.

Mr. LANGDON asked whether the Lands department had arrived at any arrangement with the Railway department with regard to erecting wire netting along the Swan Hill Railway?

Mr. DOW said the matter had been settled.

Mr. BOURCHIER remarked that it was useless for the Government to offer to advance money to the shire councils as the latter would not apply for it. A number of the members of the shire councils were large landowners who had no interest in protecting the selectors. What was wanted was that the Government should give the selectors on the mallee fringe, where the rabbits were growing worse, wire netting for fencing, if they would themselves undertake to pay the interest. Some of his constituents had actually offered to give security on their holdings for the purpose of getting this fencing erected. He desired also to draw attention, as he did last year, to the fact that, while some persons were allowed 15s. per week for the use of a horse and trap in connexion with the extermination of rabbits, others only received 10s. per week. He thought no such distinctions should be made, and that the former amount was certainly small enough in all cases.

The vote was agreed to.

THE LATE J. MORTON.

On the vote of £7,113 to complete the vote (£8,863) for “Miscellaneous” in the Lands department,

Mr. J. HARRIS drew attention to an item of £41, “gratuity to the widow of the late J. Morton, late employed in the Botanical Gardens.” He understood that Morton was killed while engaged in loading hay, and his widow was left totally destitute. The sum of £41 was only what the widow would have been entitled to under ordinary circumstances, and in view of the fact that the man, who was a sober and steady workman, lost his life while in the execution of his duty, he (Mr. Harris) certainly hoped that the Minister of Lands would see his way to largely increase the gratuity on the Additional Estimates.

Mr. BAILES stated that he had a long acquaintance with the late Mr. Morton and his family, who were formerly in good circumstances. Misfortune overtook Mr. Morton, and he had to become a labourer in the Botanic Gardens, where he met with the accident causing his death. The widow, who was a very old lady, was entirely destitute, and he would join in the hope that something more should be granted to her.

Mr. GAUNSON observed that he had supported the claims of the widow of a very high officer, and he could equally see his way to support the claims of the widow of a labourer. The claim seemed to be founded on the exceptional circumstance that the late Mr. Morton was killed while in the performance of his duty, and that was a proper ground for exceptional consideration to the widow.

Mr. ANDERSON (Villiers) expressed the hope that the grant would be increased, as the case was a very deserving one, and the sum placed on the Estimates exceedingly small.

Mr. JONES considered that there must be some mistake, as it was hardly credible that the Government only valued the life of a workman who was the stay of his wife and family, and who was killed while in the performance of his duty, at £41.

Mr. LANGRIDGE supported an increase of the grant on the ground that, if Mr. Morton was killed while performing his duty, his widow was entitled to special consideration.

Mr. PEIRCE said he hoped the Minister of Lands would signify his intention of acceding to what was evidently the general feeling of the committee.

Mr. DOW said he was not aware of the circumstances of the case, but if they were as stated by honorable members, he would recommend the Government to place an additional sum on the Supplementary Estimates. The present vote was equal to one month’s salary for each year of service.

KERANG LAND OFFICE.

Mr. BROWN said he desired to congratulate the Government on increasing the salary of Mr. Morrah, as that gentleman was undoubtedly one of the most efficient officers in the service. He also wished to ask the Minister of Lands what decision he had come to with regard to the repeated requests which had been made by the Kerang people that a land office should be opened there?
The Swan Hill Shire Council had frequently urged the necessity for establishing a land office at Kerang, which was the centre of an important district where irrigation and other works were going on. Reference was often necessary to parish and other plans, and great inconvenience was experienced from the want of a land office.

Mr. DOW said the Public Service Board had inquired into the request for the opening of a land office at Kerang, and they found that there was not sufficient business to justify such a step. The new cases last year only averaged about two per week. There was a receipt and pay office at Kerang, and it was arranged that all inquiries should be answered by the officer in charge of that office. The land officer from Sandhurst also visited Kerang at least once a week, and sometimes oftener. In the Kerang district selection had pretty well ceased, and he believed that no real inconvenience was felt. (Mr. Brown—"Then you do not believe the shire council.") He had been in communication with them recently, and he understood that matters were going on smoothly now.

Mr. BROWN stated that the president and several members of the Swan Hill Shire Council were actually in town now for the purpose of urging this matter, and he hoped the Minister would reconsider the question.

Mr. McCOLL observed that it was not asked that a regular land officer should be placed at Kerang, but that some clerk should be sent up who could attend to the people who visited the receipt and pay office for information. The paymaster had sometimes to be absent visiting other places, and if he had an assistant, the difficulty would be met.

Mr. LANGDON suggested that if locality plans were lodged at the Kerang receipt and pay office, and a junior officer who was conversant with plans was made available to supply information, the people would be satisfied. He noticed that there was in the vote an item of £2,500 for "making wells in the mallee country." Such a sum was a mere bagatelle for the purpose of making wells, and he would like to have some explanation of the meaning of the item.

Mr. DOW intimated that the amount was really for experimental boring preparatory to the sinking of wells. He would propose to consider the suggestion of the honorable member for Mandurang (Mr. McColl) with regard to placing a junior clerk at the Kerang office.

The vote was agreed to, as were also the vote of £31,667 to complete the vote (£56,667) for the Public Works department; the vote of £11,763, to complete the vote (£24,763) for Melbourne Water Supply (salaries, &c.); and the vote of £540 to complete the vote (£1,600) for "Miscellaneous," in the Public Works department.

YARROWEE CHANNEL.

On the vote of £303,286 to complete the vote (£543,286) for works and buildings.

Lt.-Col. SMITH drew the attention of the Minister of Public Works to the necessity for something being done in connexion with the Yarrowee channel at Ballarat. As the honorable gentleman recently visited Ballarat, and saw the channel, he must be aware of the bad state in which it was. Part of the land belonged to the Defence department, and he hoped the Minister would communicate with that department with the view of placing a special sum on the Estimates. When the Chief Secretary was Minister of Public Works, he agreed to do something towards making a wooden channel, but that would be of no earthly use.

Mr. NIMMO observed that he visited the Yarrowee channel in company with the members of the local council. It was undoubtedly in a very bad state, and would require thorough re-forming altogether. He quite agreed with the honorable member that to line it with wood would not be a desirable plan to adopt. There was a bend towards the end of the channel which impeded the progress of the water, and it was his intention to take steps for improving this portion of the channel, and also to communicate with the Minister of Defence with regard to the re-forming of the portion of the channel within the territory of the Defence department.

Mr. RUSSELL expressed the hope that steps would be taken to have the work carried out without delay. The Ballarat East Council had given, on a 99 years' lease, at 1s. per annum, land to the Defence department, for which the council could get £150 or perhaps £200 per annum.

Mr. NIMMO intimated that there would have to be a consultation of engineers of the two departments as to the best means of forming the channel.

Mr. MURPHY said he was glad the Minister of Public Works had promised to see that this work was carried out as it was urgently required.
COURTHOUSES.

Mr. Burrowes asked the Minister of Public Works when he expected to be in a position to call for tenders for the erection of the new court-house at Sandhurst? Courts were now being held in three different buildings, and great inconvenience was caused by people having to go from one building to another.

Mr. Nimmo said the plans had been in preparation for some time. He could not speak definitely as to when tenders would be called for, but he would take care to push the matter on.

Mr. Langdon remarked that a court-house had been promised at Boort for a long time, and also a post-office. He would like to know what was the state of progress with regard to the erection of the buildings.

Mr. Nimmo stated that as soon as the Public Works department got authority from the Law department for the erection of a court-house the plans were put under way.

The vote was agreed to, as was also the vote of £69,000 to complete the vote (£174,000) for defence works and buildings.

ROAD WORKS AND BRIDGES.

On the vote of £68,576 to complete the vote (£104,576) for road works and bridges.

Mr. Tuthill observed that a considerable time ago a deputation from the shire councils of Bright and Oxley waited on the Minister of Public Works to urge the desirability of the Government granting assistance towards the erection of a bridge over the Buffalo River at a crossing between the two shires. The Minister received the deputation very favorably and promised to consider the matter, but no item for the work appeared on the Estimates. If the Minister would place £300 or £400 on the Supplementary Estimates, the two shires would join together to pay the rest of the cost.

Mr. Ferguson stated that the previous week he presented a petition very numerously signed to the Minister of Public Works on the subject. The Minister had indicated in response to the petition that he would either place a sum on the Supplementary Estimates, if such Estimates were brought down or, if not, he would grant the amount next year.

Mr. Nimmo said it was quite true that the deputation referred to waited upon him, but insomuch as he then asked each of the bodies represented to state in writing how much it would contribute to the cost of the work in question, he had naturally done nothing since with regard to it save look for communications from them on the subject. Up to the present, however, he had received none. When he was fully informed with respect to the matter he would, he believed, be able to give it every consideration in connexion with next year's Estimates. Probably the Government would as usual provide one-third of the cost.

Mr. Munro drew attention to the item of £500, to assist in the construction of a storm-water channel in the borough of Geelong West, from Coquette-street to Thomas-street, the borough council to expend £250 additional, and asked that provision should be made on the Supplementary Estimates for resuming to the council the portion of the £250 appropriated by it to the work which it had had to expend in the purchase of land for the purposes of the drain? The Public Works department refused to allow for this amount, and the council, which had a revenue from taxation of only £1,200 a year, could not afford to lose the money.

Mr. Nimmo remarked that £2 to £1 having been voted specially to assist in the construction of the drain, of course no account could be taken of money spent in the purchase of land.

Mr. Donaghy stated that when the Minister of Public Works visited the site of the intended drain, he personally assured the Geelong West council that the Government were willing to give every assistance they could to the work.

Mr. Nimmo said he would make a note of the request.

Mr. Shackell called attention to the item of £750 to assist the Sherridan and Rodney shires in constructing a road between Mooroopna and Shepparton, the councils to spend £1,500 additional, and urged that the grant should be altered so as to put the affair on a £1 per £1 basis. He contended that, as much as the road would be part of the main artery of communication between the eastern and western portions of the colony, the work ought to be regarded as a national one.

Mr. Langdon begged to remind the Minister of Public Works of the many requests made by the borough council of Inglewood for Government assistance in requiring their storm-water channel. This matter was of great importance, for the health of the borough was largely dependent upon the channel being kept in good order, and Inglewood had recently been the scene
remark that the State schools round about the metropolis were of the most magnificent and costly character, while in other districts of the colony the case was the very reverse.

Mr. PEARSON stated that no new school was erected except upon the recommendation of the proper departmental officers. In the first instance, estimates relating to new schools were prepared, and these were, to a certain extent, revised by the Treasurer. The designs were always furnished by the architects of the department. In every case the question of what ought to be done was decided simply in the public interest.

At this stage, the time for taking business other than Government business having arrived, the discussion was adjourned until the following day.

The resolutions passed by the committee were reported to the House.

CAPE PATTERSON AND KILCUNDA JUNCTION RAILWAY.

The amendments made by the select committee of the Assembly in this Bill were taken into consideration.

Mr. WRIXON said that the amendments recommended by the Government having been agreed to by the select committee, Ministers had no objection to the Bill passing its remaining stages. True, it had one blemish, for clause 6 needed to be struck out, its purpose being effected by another clause; but the honorable member in charge of the Bill had promised that this should be done in another place.

The amendments were adopted.

ZOONOLOGICAL AND ACCLIMATISATION SOCIETY'S ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of Mr. OFFICER, this Bill was read a third time and passed.

NORTH MELBOURNE LANDS BILL.

The amendments made by the select committee of the Assembly in this Bill were taken into consideration.

Mr. WRIXON said the Government had no objection to the Bill. There were several trifling inaccuracies in the schedules, but he understood that they would be remedied in another place.

The amendments were adopted.

On the motion of Mr. LAURENS, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

The House adjourned at twenty-one minutes to nine o'clock.
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
Thursday, November 8, 1888.


The Speaker took the chair at three o'clock p.m.

POPULATION STATISTICS.

Mr. PIELD asked the Premier if he would lay on the table a return showing the population of the electoral districts of Sandhurst, Castlemaine, Maldon, and Mandurang, as re-arranged to give to those districts one member in addition to the number originally provided for by the Electoral Districts Alteration Bill?

Mr. GILLIES said he had no objection to supply the information. (Mr. Field— "Before the Bill is again gone on with?") He was afraid that would not be possible.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Dr. QUICK asked the Minister of Public Instruction the following questions:—

"1. How many vacancies for pupil teachers or otherwise are there at present at the State school at Sandhurst (No. 877), of which Mr. Burston is the head teacher?

"2. How long have such vacancies existed?

"3. When will the necessary appointments be made?

"4. What has been the cause of the delay?"

Mr. PEARSON replied as follows:—

"1. At the present time, there is actually only one vacancy, the appointment of a pupil teacher having left the office this morning.

"2. The position just filled has been vacant since 14th August last. The existing vacancy since the 1st inst.

"3. One appointment has this day been made; the other will be made as soon as the necessary sanction of the Executive Council can be obtained.

"4. There being more than one candidate, the district inspector had to hold a competitive examination as soon as practicable. Subsequently, the certificate of the Public Service Board and the sanction of the Executive Council had to be obtained."

DEFALCATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE.

Mr. JONES asked the Treasurer whether any additional returns had been called for by the Commissioners of Audit or the Treasurer since the perpetration, a few years ago, of the frauds in the public service for which certain persons were now undergoing punishment; and, if so, what additional precautions had been taken in the departments in which defalcations had recently been discovered?

Mr. GILLIES said he had some difficulty in realizing the effect of the question. If it were desired to ascertain whether, after the defalcations which took place in the Lands department, a few years ago, any steps were taken to render frauds of the kind more difficult—(Mr. Jones—"Yes.") —he begged to say that steps in that direction were taken. Alterations were made in the regulations under which additional returns were required by the Treasury, and these returns, and the extra checks subsequently devised by the Audit Commissioners, reduced to a minimum the opportunities for the perpetration of fraud. With reference to the two recent cases of defalcation, he might mention that he had received from the Audit Commissioners a short report which he would be glad to read to the House but for the fact that he did not consider it prudent that it should receive publicity at present. However, he could assure the House that the matter was receiving the closest attention of the Ministry.

Mr. MUNRO inquired whether the audits went back to the original documents or not?

Mr. GILLIES replied that, in all cases of receiving and disbursing money, the original documents were submitted to the Audit Commissioners.

POLICE MAGISTRATES.

Dr. QUICK asked the Attorney-General what arrangements had been made for the appointment of a resident police magistrate, warden, and coroner, at Sandhurst?

Mr. WRIXON replied that Mr. Wyatt had been appointed, and he would reside at Sandhurst.

LOCAL OPTION POLLS.

Mr. MUNRO called attention to the fact that the Supreme Court had decided against the objections raised to the local option polls which had been taken in various localities, and asked the Attorney-General whether he intended to institute proceedings with the view of enabling the wishes of the people of those localities to have proper effect?

Mr. WRIXON stated that the Government were anxious to do everything they could to give effect to the local option polls.
An amending Bill, which it would be necessary to pass, was ready for submission to the House. (Mr. Munro—"When will it be introduced?") At the first opportunity.

CONSERVATION OF TIMBER BILL.

Mr. WOODS asked the Minister of Lands whether he was prepared to go on with the Conservation of Timber Bill next week? He hoped that some measure of the kind would find its way on to the statute book this session, even if it was imperfect, and had to be amended next session.

Mr. DOW said, as he had already intimated, the Bill was ready, and would be proceeded with at the first possible opportunity.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE.

Mr. JONES asked the Minister of Public Works whether the Parliament Buildings Committee had yet come to any decision with regard to the statuary necessary for the ornamentation of the exterior of Parliament House?

Mr. NIMMO said the whole of the facts would be brought under the consideration of the Parliament Buildings Committee at their next meeting.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BOUNDARY.

Mr. LANGDON asked the Minister of Lands whether he would lay on the table the reports which had been received relating to the boundary fence between Victoria and South Australia?

Mr. DOW replied that he would be happy to do so.

IRRIGATION.

Mr. BROWN asked the Minister of Water Supply when he proposed to call for tenders for the construction of the Kow Swamp section of the Loddon irrigation works? It seemed to him that provision for the carrying out of this scheme was not made in the Irrigation and Water Supply Loans Bill.

Mr. DEAKIN said the works referred to were included in the schedule to the Bill. The necessary surveys had been completed, and plans were now being prepared. As soon as they were ready, tenders would be invited.

Mr. BROWN inquired whether the Government proposed to introduce, during the present session, a Bill to enable irrigation trusts to acquire works constructed by the old water trusts at their present value?

Mr. DEAKIN said the question had but recently been raised, and very inferentially; and he was not in a position to say what the Government were disposed to do in the matter.

DEFAULTING BANK TELLER.

Mr. RUSSELL asked the Chief Secretary whether he would cause the papers relating to the commutation of the sentence passed on Thomas Henry Doolan to be placed in the Library?

Mr. DEAKIN intimated that he would be happy to do so.

JAMES McLEAN.

Mr. JONES called the attention of the Treasurer to the case of the young man, McLean, which was inquired into, last session, by a select committee, with the result that the committee recommended the payment of £100; and asked whether the necessary provision would be made on any further Estimates which might be brought down?

Mr. GILLIES said the provision would be made on the Additional Estimates.

KOONDROOK AND KERANG TRAMWAY.

Mr. BROWN called the attention of the Premier to a paragraph published by an Echuca newspaper relative to the quality of the rails which had been sent to Echuca for the purposes of the Koondrook and Kerang Tramway. The rails were stated to be old and rusty.

Mr. GILLIES said he did not know anything about the matter, which was a mere business transaction between the tramway company and the Railway Commissioners.

Mr. BROWN observed that the understanding was that new rails would be supplied. He was inclined to think that old rails had been sent by mistake. He was in attendance at the Railway department that day about the matter, but he was unable to see the commissioners.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he would make some inquiries into the case.

PETITION.

A petition was presented by Mr. Langdon, from residents of Boort, Leaghur, Merriang, Dartagook, and Kerang, complaining of the allotment of the Loddon waters, and praying for inquiry to be made into the matter.

BANKING LEGISLATION.

Mr. ZOX asked the Premier whether, in view of the progress made with business at
the last few sittings, he would endeavour to bring the Banks and Currency Bill and the Banking Companies Registration Bill under the consideration of the House during the following week?

Mr. GILLIES said he hoped that both Bills would shortly be under the consideration of the House.

WHITTLESEA RAILWAY.

Mr. TUCKER observed that a question was put to the Minister of Railways, the previous week, with reference to the extraordinary delay which had taken place in connexion with the construction of the Fitzroy and Whittlesea Railway, and he understood that the Minister then promised to make inquiries into the matter, and to press the contractors to greater diligence. He (Mr. Tucker) had been along the works within the last week or so, and he was utterly surprised at the stagnation which prevailed throughout. Certainly the works were not progressing at the rate to be expected on a railway the opening of which ought to take place a few weeks hence. The firm to which the railway contract was let had recently floated itself into a company. He hoped the Railway department would bear in mind that no amount of penalty to which the contractors might be subjected would compensate the public, who had waited for the line so long, for the inconvenience to which they had been put.

Mr. GILLIES said in consequence of what transpired in the House, the previous week, with regard to this matter, he communicated with the Railway Commissioners, who were of opinion that the construction of the line from Fitzroy to Whittlesea had been unreasonably delayed. The commissioners had been pressing the contractors to get on with the work rapidly, and, whatever other course they might take, their chief object would be to secure the completion of the work in the shortest time possible. He quite concurred with the honorable member for Fitzroy (Mr. Tucker) that no amount of penalty that could be enforced would compensate the public for the loss and inconvenience they had sustained through the line not being opened within something like a reasonable time.

CHARGES AGAINST MESSENGERS.

Mr. JONES said he desired to call the attention of the Chief Secretary to a letter written by Mr. Gregory, the Refreshment-rooms caterer, printed with the matter which was recently referred to the Refreshment-rooms Committee, and which the committee declined to have anything to do with. This unfortunate affair arose through a rather loose tongue indulging in statements with respect to the messengers of the Assembly—statements which, being repeated in the House, led to a request that the President of the Legislative Council and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly would inquire into the matter. The result of the inquiry was a decision that Mr. Gregory’s statement had utterly broken down—that his evidence had utterly failed to approach the matter which he undertook to prove as against the messengers. Notwithstanding this, in June last, Mr. Gregory wrote the following letter to the Premier:

“Dear Mr. Gillies,—In the absence of Mr. Deskin will you kindly allow me to request that, prior to the evidence already taken being decided upon, I may be permitted to put certain questions to my witnesses, who tell me that they were prepared to give sworn evidence as follows:

1st. That they saw certain officials—who had a crown on the collar of their coats—in the possession of champagne, notably one who had two bottles sticking out of his pockets behind, and that he drew the man’s attention to the fact, telling him that he would make a bad thief.

2nd. That they can identify these men if dressed as they were then.

3rd. That during the short time that they were called away to help the other waiters in clearing the main hall, the whole of the wine that was on the tables had been removed.

“These witnesses were strangers to me. I had never spoken to them, and was not aware of the evidence they were prepared to give, so could not ask any questions at the time they were being examined.

“I would, with your kind permission, suggest that, in justice to myself, the whole matter should be placed before the joint committee of the Refreshment-rooms, to whom I am responsible for the way in which I conduct the catering, and to whom I naturally look for protection from injuries which I may receive, and which I claim that I have received, from some of the messengers of the House, who seem to think that they can do as they like.

“I am, dear Mr. Gillies, Yours respectfully,

“E. H. GREGORY.”

This was a more deliberate attack upon the messengers than the original one. It was made after the inquiry which proved that Mr. Gregory’s charge had actually broken down. He considered it was incumbent upon the House to do something, not by way of inquiry into the character of the messengers, because the character of the messengers had already been vindicated, but to teach Mr. Gregory that such abominable
charges ought not to be made against any
one, especially after he had completely failed
to substantiate anything he had said.

Mr. DEAKIN observed that he quite
agreed with the honorable member for Balla­
rat West (Mr. Jones) that the letter just read
could not be regarded, particularly after the
evidence which had been adduced, as weighing
in any sense against the messengers. In
that letter, the enterer appealed to the
Refreshment-rooms Committee for justice.
To the Refreshment-rooms Committee the
papers were sent; and it appeared to be the
opinion of the committee that justice con­
sisted in doing nothing.

Mr. JONES remarked that the letter
ought not to have been printed.

Mr. DEAKIN said he was not aware
that it was printed.

MINING ACCIDENTS (INQUESTS)
BILL.

Dr. QUICK moved, by consent of the
House, for leave to introduce a Bill to
make better provision for the conduct of
inquests concerning fatal mining accidents.

Mr. WOODS seconded the motion, which
was agreed to.

The Bill was then brought in, and read a
first time.

STATE SCHOOLS.

The House having resolved itself into
committee of Supply,

Discussion (adjourned from the previous
day) was resumed on the vote of £90,000
to complete the vote (£60,000) for the
erection of State schools, the money to be
recouped from a future loan.

Mr. PATTERSON said he desired to
explain himself a little further with respect
to this vote. In the first place, the finances
being so flourishing, ought not the colony
to erect its State schools out of its
general revenue? Were it even to become
necessary to impose a little extra taxation
for the purpose, would not that be a wise
policy to adopt? He could not see why
Victoria, having so much money, should
want to go to English capitalists for more
in order to carry out its educational system.
Had not the borrowing principle, in this
direction, been practised long enough? In
his opinion, the community ought to be too
proud to look to the capitalists of the mother
country for any help in the matter. Besides,
were it to use its own funds for the erection
of its schools, it would probably be more
careful with regard to the expenditure than
it was at present.

Mr. BAKER stated that in many locali­
ties in his electorate—Nhill and Kaniva for
example—the school buildings were alto­
gether inadequate to the number of children
to be accommodated. In fact, they were
often so overcrowded that, practically, the
children’s lives were endangered. Could
not some steps be taken to enlarge them,
as had been so frequently promised? Again,
before voting funds for the erection of new
schools, he would like to know who would be
responsible for the distribution of the
money? Had not the country districts as
good a right to consideration in the matter
as the town districts? (“Oh!”) Town
members might cry “Oh!” but there was
no getting away from the fact that the
schools of the metropolis were large, palatial,
and convenient, while inland the reverse was
the rule.

Mr. FEILD said he thoroughly depre­
cated the way in which some honorable
members seized every opportunity of raising
the cry of country versus town. For him­
self, he might state, as chairman of the
Collingwood Board of Advice, that each of
the schools of his district was originally
intended for only 900 or 1,000 scholars,
whereas they had each to accommodate from
1,200 to 1,500 scholars. In fact, the
Education department had had, in many
instances, to hire adjacent buildings for
school purposes. In one case all children
under six years of age were refused. He
strongly protested against the absurd
country versus town feeling.

Mr. ZOX remarked that he had absolu­
tely protested against the country versus town
cry, for he was afraid that it would lead, someday,
to a dangerous combination. Why was it
raised at all? Certainly the town members
did not deserve to have it raised against them,
for they did all they possibly could on behalf
of the country districts. Then look, for
example, at the district he represented? It
was the fact that the East Melbourne elec­
torate had, from end to end, but one school
in it. That school was called the Model
school; but what, independent of the teach­ing
impacted there, was it a model of? The
land might be valuable, but the buildings
were wretched beyond description. They
would be a disgrace to any civilized com­
munity. They did not contain a single
decent room. Briefly, the difference between
such a town member as himself and such a
country member as the honorable member
for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) was that
when, outside their respective districts, they
came across any handsome public building
the (Mr. Zox) always viewed it with pleasure, while the honorable member seemed to always view it with jealousy. Country members generally professed to strangers that they were proud of the metropolis, but in the House they were eternally indulging in some miserable complaint against it.

Mr. JONES expressed the opinion that both the honorable member for Collingwood (Mr. Field) and the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox) must have had very little to occupy their minds when they rose to protest against country members crying out that their districts were not getting proper attention. Was it not perfectly natural and right that the country districts should be the first to receive attention, and were not country members simply doing their duty to their constituencies when they contended that that attention should be given? Were they to advocate their districts' claims only in bated breath and whispered humbleness, for fear the honorable member for East Melbourne would sit upon them? As for the particular vote before the committee, it was time Victoria began to build its schools with its own money—without going to England to borrow money. With the large revenue the colony had, for it to seek to raise loans for any purpose of the kind was simply disgraceful.

Mr. PEARSON thought that a short statement of very simple facts would convince country members that they had by no means the reason they seemed to think they had for crying out that too much attention was given to town interests and too little to those of the inland districts. He had not had much time, since the previous evening, when the honorable member for Castlemaine (Mr. Patterson) raised a question with respect to new schools, to get a full report upon the matter, and he particularly regretted the absence of one return he expected; but he had obtained some information with regard to the school accommodation at Brunswick and at Castlemaine, which would, he thought, be found instructive. For instance, in Brunswick, which, being in his district, he had tried not to neglect, the four local schools were only adequate to the wants of 2,094 scholars, whereas the average attendance was 2,371, which showed the accommodation to be about 300 short of what it ought to be. On the other hand, there were in the Castlemaine district seventeen schools, only one of which—the Harcourt school—had kept up its numbers. The total accommodation of the seventeen schools was adequate to the wants of 3,317 scholars, and the average attendance was 1,567. (Mr. Patterson—'But what kind of accommodation?') The Castlemaine State school was one of the best of its kind at the time it was erected. (Mr. Patterson—'Not five out of the seventeen are worth calling schools.') Some of the most indifferent—take, for instance, the schools at Castlemaine North, Guildford, Fryerstown, Chewton East, and Taradale—were quite equal to the 200-scholar schools in any other part of the colony. (Mr. Patterson—'Some of them are fifteen miles apart.'). The wants of the population were provided for as much as possible. If the school accommodation which the Castlemaine district had over and above its wants could be transferred to the thinly populated town districts it would be an immense convenience. He would endeavour to explain why there was this difficulty about the town schools. In the metropolis the population was increasing very fast indeed, but building new schools to supply accommodation for the increase in the children was necessarily a work of time. In fact, the Education department was not quite able to keep abreast of the increase. In the first place, before a new school could be built, the local board of advice had to be negotiated with—and such negotiations generally took a long time. Then a further long time was generally expended in getting a suitable piece of land at a reasonable price. It should be remembered that suitable provision must be made for a play-ground. Besides, there were other delays, such as that involved in obtaining information as to probable future requirements, on which the architects of the department could base their plans. Finally, tenders had to be called for, and a contract entered into. He appealed to the metropolitan members generally, no matter whether they represented Collingwood, Fitzroy, Richmond, South Melbourne, or any other suburban district, to bear witness to the way in which the population there had outgrown its school accommodation, and to the difficulties in the way of keeping up with the requirements. Now, in the country districts, the difficulty was not so much the want of schools as the want of teachers. The honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) could say something as to the troubles the Education department had to encounter in this direction. It was a common occurrence that, when a strong case had been made out for a small school in a sparsely peopled district, the department had to pause before granting it, because of
the obstacles that must be surmounted before a proper teacher could be obtained. When a deputation came to him (Mr. Pearson) applying for a school, he had constantly to press them on the point of what accommodation there would be in the locality for a lady teacher, and, although they generally put the best face possible on the business, they were too frequently compelled to acknowledge that there would be difficulties in the way. Then they would try and make some arrangement, but often and often the affair was found to be not at all so simple as it appeared to be at first sight. He would try to explain to honorable members in what manner a decision with regard to the erection of a new school was come to. In the first instance, the department got reports from its inspectors stating in what districts new schools were likely to be soon wanted, and also the places where they were actually required. Then the Secretary sent in a report to Mr. Bastow, the head of the building department, who regularly kept up a list of about 200 new schools as those which would probably be needed during the next two or three years. Occasionally the department would deal with the case of one of these schools from their own information, and without being moved in the matter by any deputation. Very often a deputation came to the department only to find it already fully supplied with all possible information with regard to the new school they came to ask for. It would have maps showing the location of the population, and figures showing the number of children in each house, so that he (Mr. Pearson) could generally, after a conference with the Secretary, have his decision ready before the deputation came. Whenever information was given by a deputation which showed a new development of affairs, an inspector was sent to report. If, as would sometimes happen, the inspector had one opinion, the local board of advice another, and the majority of the residents another (sometimes residents complained of not being represented on the local board of advice), he (Mr. Pearson) visited the place himself, and tried to settle the difference as best he could. In such cases he was always largely guided by departmental advice, and he did not think he often failed. The real difficulty in such matters arose where population was shifting—where it had, apparently, not made up its mind as to which way it would go. In such instances it was no wonder to find the schools sometimes overcrowded and sometimes half deserted.

No doubt, the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox) was so far correct that some of the finest schools in the colony were erected in the country towns; and the honorable member might have stated, in addition, that in many of these fine schools—take the Sebastopol and Beechworth schools as examples—the attendance had so fallen off that the teachers had had to be put to the heavy expense of leaving them. So that it was sometimes a question whether a good man would or would not take a school of the kind. Then, as to the point of policy—whether the money for building new schools should be taken from the general revenue or from loans—unquestionably there was a great deal in what the honorable member for Castlemaine said on that topic, which was one well worthy to be brought before the House and the country. He (Mr. Pearson) hoped the day would soon come when the whole expense of the educational system of the colony would be borne out of current income. It was true that the revenue of the colony had been very large during the last year or two, but, on the other hand, the population had increased in proportion. Besides, there had been migration. Look at the migrations the colony had already known—first to the gold-fields, next to the agricultural districts, and next, to a large extent, towards the towns, notably the metropolis. Thus it was that in one district the school accommodation would be found superabundant, and in another deficient. These were matters of difficulty which the Education department had to meet.

Mr. LANGDON said he regretted the warmth of feeling displayed by some metropolitan members with reference to the natural claims of country districts. Were not country members simply doing their duty when they got up and mentioned the grievances of which their constituents complained, and pressed that they should be remedied? Was it a mere trifle that children attending school had to travel three or four miles each way, through dust in summer and mud in winter, and that the school building accommodation was miserably inadequate? Honorable members in whose districts the schools were amply provided with lavatories, good water, and every convenience, did not quite understand the trouble of children whose washing accommodation was limited to a bucket and a towel behind the door. At the same time, in many cases, buildings a little above the rank of huts would be endured if only the teaching was of the right character.
Mr. PATTERSON observed that a very good argument why new schools should be constructed out of revenue rather than out of loans was afforded by the Minister of Public Instruction himself when he spoke of palatial schools having been erected in localities from which the population had since migrated. At the same time, taking the country districts generally, there were very few schools there fit to compare with the buildings to be found nearly everywhere round about the metropolis. Unquestionably, one of the chief reasons why it was so difficult to get good teachers for country districts was the wretched accommodation which teachers had so frequently to put up with there. How would a public servant, accustomed to spend from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon in a perfectly appointed apartment, like to work in an ordinary merchant's office? Not at all. The place in which one worked—it being comfortable and pleasant to work in or the other thing—frequently made all the difference. In the case of country schools fitted with every convenience the Minister of Public Instruction had by no means the difficulty in getting good teachers for them that he generally had in the case of schools in connexion with which all manner of discomforts—to go no further—had to be encountered. In his (Mr. Patterson's) humble judgment the day was not far distant when the educational system of the colony must be decentralized—he carried on through local management—and if the committee would only be plucky enough to strike out all reference to this £60,000 having to be recouped from loan money it would take a splendid step in that direction. At all events, it would make a determined stand in favour of the colony relying upon its own resources for means of expenditure which ought to come out of no pocket but its own, and that would of itself be sufficient to greatly strengthen the position of Victoria in the London money market. He, for one, would be very glad to see a division taken on this point. Moreover, he was certain that if, when it was taken, honorable members happened to be in the temper they were sometimes in, they would vote with one accord for Victorian schools being erected from year to year out of money taken from the Victorian revenue.

Mr. VALE said he had been greatly amused at the remarks of some metropolitan members, who seemed to think that when a residence was provided for a country teacher he could scarcely ask for more. But what about a teacher with a family—sometimes teachers had large families—being crowded into a house of three or four rooms, each from 8 to 10 feet square, with no verandah or anything but wooden boards to keep off the heat in summer or moderate the cold in winter, and no accommodation of any kind for a domestic? Was it any wonder to hear of dissatisfaction with that sort of thing? Had not the country districts every reason to be jealous of Melbourne, when from 50 to 75 per cent. of the public works of the colony were for the benefit of the residents within 10 miles of the Melbourne Townhall? (Mr. Zox—"You are joking.") He was not joking. On the contrary, he spoke from a personal examination of the figures. He considered that the complaints of the country districts were perfectly justified, and also that country members were warranted in every way in always insisting upon a thorough explanation as to the intended expenditure of every penny the distribution of which would be more or less at the discretion of a Minister. Why was not the expenditure of this vote for new schools so scheduled that every honorable member could see at once the exact destination of the money, and that every pound was earmarked? Why should an honorable member be required to go down on his bended knees to any Minister in order to secure for his district the expenditure it was entitled to? For an honorable member whose district was in need of a school to have to ask for it as a matter of personal favour rather than as a right was to turn the free representation of the people into a degrading farce. And then metropolitan members presumed to turn round and lecture country members. All he could say was that, if country members had a proper sense of their own importance and of what was due to their self-respect, they would have long ago put a stop to this system of plundering the country districts.

Mr. BAKER said that, whenever he had waited upon the Education department, he had always received the utmost courtesy, and all the information he could possibly expect; but that sort of thing did not go very far in supplying the educational wants of his district, which were of the most pressing kind. He begged to remind the Government and honorable members generally that, for some years past, but for the assistance rendered in connexion with a number of small Protestant churches in his electorate, a very considerable proportion of the children there would have had absolutely to do without any schooling whatever. Not less than
20 or 30 of those churches—be alluded to the buildings—were at the present time rented by the department for school purposes. There was an unequal expenditure of the money allocated to the erection of State schools, from the fact that Melbourne members could unite together and bring strong influence to bear on the Government, whereas, in connexion with places like the Wimmera, the Avoca, or Moira, there were only a couple of members to fight the battles of a very large district. He did not complain of the erection of nice schools anywhere, but what he complained of was that the children in portions of his district had no schools to go to at all. If the department would even provide portable accommodation, the people would be satisfied until they could get something better. There were hundreds of children now in the Wimmera growing up—many of them from 13 to 16 years of age—who had never seen the inside of a school since they had been in the district, and had never received one hour's education at the hands of the Government of this country. This was a matter upon which parents were constantly writing to him, and he sincerely hoped that, out of the abundance in the treasury, the Premier would be able to afford a little money for the erection of schools in districts where they were indispensably necessary, if the Education Act was to be carried out. Why should the children in one part of the country be educated at the expense of the State, and those in another part left to wander about as they pleased? Could any one wonder at the discontent which existed in his district when a large number of children were being left altogether without education, and the only answer of the department, when appealed to, was—"We have no money"? With a surplus of £800,000 it was outrageous that a few schools, which could be supplied for something like £100 each, should not be provided in those districts which were left absolutely without any means of education for the children. At places like Kaniva and Serviceton, where there were schools, the accommodation was altogether insufficient for the number of children attending, a large number of children being packed into a little box of a place where the atmosphere was unbearable. In important agricultural localities like these, where the population was never likely to fall off, the Government should make some attempt to provide sufficient accommodation. He desired to know whether the money for school buildings this year was all to be spent in the towns, or whether some of it was to go to the country?

Mr. NIMMO stated that, during the last eighteen months, there had been five schools erected in the country to every one erected in the towns. (Mr. Baker—"One town school may cost as much as 40 country schools.") The honorable member must recollect that there was a larger population in Melbourne than in any similar area of land in the colony. The position occupied by the Public Works department with respect to the erection of schools was simply that of an executive department which carried out the instructions of the Education department as to the erection of schools in certain places. As to the question whether State schools should be erected out of revenue instead of out of loan, that was a question of State policy which he did not propose to discuss. He might say, however, that personally he sympathized to a great extent with the remarks of the honorable member for Castlemaine (Mr. Patterson). In the country in which he was born he had known the poorest families starve themselves to educate their children. It was a pride and pleasure to the heart of the poorest Scotchman to furnish the means of education for his children. He thought that far more attention should be paid by parents in this colony to the education of their offspring, and that they should feel it a pleasure to contribute towards that important work.

Sir B. O'LOGHEN considered that the statements of the honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) called for more attention from the Government than they had received. The case laid down by the honorable member was that in several parts of his district there were no schools at all. The question was not whether the district was to have grand schools like those in Melbourne, but whether it was to have any school accommodation at all. Metropolitan members, therefore, like the honorable member for Collingwood (Mr. Field), and the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox), were not justified in charging the honorable member for the Wimmera with raising the cry of country against town because he brought this matter before the Assembly. It was only on an occasion like the present that an honorable member had an opportunity of impressing the wants of his district on the House. The fact mentioned by the honorable member that 30 Protestant churches in his district were used as school-houses showed that sufficient
schools were wanting, because he (Sir B. O'Loghlen) apprehended that the Education department would not use such buildings as schools except in the absence of other accommodation. In addition to that, there were places in the Wimmera where there were no schools of any kind, and therefore the honorable member was quite justified in calling the attention of the Government to the position of his district.

Mr. HALL said he thought the honorable member for East Melbourne (Mr. Zox) was not altogether opposed to the country districts getting what they required, but was only afraid that the country would take too much away from the town. To a large extent the country in the past had occupied the position of Lazarus and Melbourne that of the rich man Dives. The country districts had had to be content with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, and to be thankful for small mercies. While there were very handsome school buildings in Melbourne, those in the country were often too small, unsuitable, and inconvenient, and in many places where schools were required there were none at all. Could the honorable member for East Melbourne point to any instance in which people in Melbourne or the suburbs had presented the Education department with a block of land for a school-house and grounds? In the country districts probably 50 per cent. of the blocks of land on which State schools were built had been presented by people of the district. More than that, if the school was removed from the land so presented, the department did not return the land to the donor, but sold it and kept the money. He thought that when country people in this way showed the earnestness of their desire to get schools, it was not too much to ask that when a block of land was presented to the department, the department should fence it in for the convenience of the school children.

Mr. STAUGHTON observed that the real secret of the trouble in connexion with education in the country districts was the refusal of teachers to leave the towns and go into the country. The difficulty would not be met until there was a radical change in the law by which teachers would be compelled to go to schools to which they were appointed, provided that, in the case of females, suitable accommodation was available. Teachers clung to the towns, where they rose and got promotion, not by their own industry or ability, but really by the force of circumstances, and they objected to give up town pleasures and associations. So long as they were allowed to have their own way in this respect, the wants of the country would never be satisfied.

Mr. BENT remarked that there was no need for any alteration of the law. He was informed that there was a large number of teachers who had just attained the age of 60 years, and who were being cleared out by the department, and that many of these gentlemen were prepared to accept appointments in country schools at moderate salaries. Such men, with their wives and families, would be a help to remote neighbourhoods, and why could they not be utilized to supply schools in such places as the Wimmera? The state of things depicted by the honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) was not creditable to the administration of the Education department. It was not, however, confined to the country. The honorable member for the Wimmera had mentioned that Protestant churches were used in his district for schools. In Brighton, only nine miles from Melbourne, if it were not for Roman Catholic buildings, the people would be almost as badly off for schools. But how could the education system be expected to be carried out properly when the Minister of Public Instruction said he would not take the opinion of the boards of advice, elected by the people, but would follow his own opinion?

Mr. PEARSON said the honorable member for Brighton was mistaken if he thought the (Mr. Pearson) said that he always, or even often, went against the opinion of the boards of advice. What he said was that there was often a difference of opinion, the board of advice sometimes taking one view, the inhabitants another, and the departmental inspector a third; and that, in such a case, he (Mr. Pearson) came in as umpire, and, after visiting the place, settled the matter. He did not know any other plan that could be pursued when each party was tenacious of its view. With regard to employing old teachers, he might state that, since the Assembly expressed a strong opinion against officers being compelled to retire at the age of 60, no teachers had been obliged to retire at that age, except in cases where they were unfit for work. (Mr. Bent —"I am told that there are 80 now prepared to go to the country.") Last year a plan was proposed by which the department sought to tempt a number of these gentlemen to go into the smaller schools under a particular system; but he would point out that if the department had to send them to quite small schools, they would have to be
half-time schools, which involved a great deal of physical labour—more than every man of 60 would like to undertake. He could assure the honorable member that the idea of employing these teachers had been before the department for some time, and he hoped that it would find some way of giving effect to it. The honorable member for Moira (Mr. Hall) was entirely mistaken in stating that when land was given to the department, and it was not wanted, the land was sold, and the department kept the money. If such a thing had ever happened, it was only because the donor did not claim the money. So far from disregarding the claims of districts which assisted the department by granting land for school purposes, he had always respected the rule with regard to fencing in such cases. To say, however, that, if a district gave an acre of land worth £2 the department should spend £10 in putting a fence round it, was really a bargain that would not be quite fair to the public. Progress was being made each year with the fencing in of school grounds in the country, and the boards of advice were assisted in the matter, as far as possible, with the funds at the department's disposal.

Mr. PATTERSON said that, in order that the discussion might not be wholly wasted, it would be satisfactory if the Premier would give an assurance that, so far as he might have the control of the matter, the vote for school buildings would not appear in the same form again. The question being a matter of policy, he (Mr. Patterson) did not like to move an amendment on the present vote, but the words "to be recouped from a future loan" should not appear on any future Estimates. The colony was now quite strong enough to stand on its own feet in the matter without resorting to loans.

Mr. GILLIES observed that there was one feature in the case which would impress itself on the attention of honorable members who had held office, and who had had the responsibility of proposing to Parliament the expenditure of money for this and other public purposes. It would be plain to them that times might arise when, although the necessity for erecting school buildings would be no less than at present, the capacity of the Government to provide funds out of the annual revenue for the purpose might be very much smaller. What would happen then was evident. The country districts would not have their wants met and would have to go without schools unless Parliament was prepared to adopt a totally new policy from what it had adopted in the past.

He did not think it would be wise, at the present stage of affairs, for Parliament to express its opinion in any way contrary to the old practice. He had no doubt that many suggestions could be made as to the way in which money might be raised for the erection of school buildings, but he thought it was not desirable to enter upon that matter at present. Next year, he had no doubt, in view of the construction of railways and other public works, the Government would find it necessary to propose a loan, and then would be the time to determine the question whether in future schools or any other public buildings should be erected out of loan money at all. He himself did not like the idea of asking Parliament to provide for the construction, out of loan, of any other public works than those which were of a reproductive character. He believed that it was a sound rule for the colony when it went to borrow money to be in a position to show that in nearly all cases the works for which the money was asked were really reproductive works which would pay for themselves. At the same time, it must be remembered that the colony had been severely handicapped in many respects. Within the last 30 years it had constructed many very important and extensive public works—works which did not belong merely to this generation, but to future generations—and the reason why Parliament had somewhat departed from what might be considered good sound lines was plain to every one, namely, that there was no justification for placing the whole responsibility of all the great new works of the country, even if they were non-reproductive, on the existing generation. The Parliament buildings, for instance, were not yet completed, and in view of what the present generation had paid, he considered that it was perfectly fair to charge a portion of the cost of those and other buildings on the future. If the colony started a totally new policy with reference to the erection of schools, it would be very difficult to provide for the whole of the school buildings required throughout the country out of revenue. The people would be obliged either to tax themselves severer or else to pinch themselves in some other direction. The policy advocated by the honorable member for Castlemaine (Mr. Patterson) he approved of generally, but it should be left until next year for Parliament to determine whether in future loans should be confined strictly to works of a reproductive character.

Mr. J. HARRIS expressed the opinion that if, when the present Education Act...
came into force sixteen years ago, sufficient areas of land about Melbourne had been reserved as an endowment for the education system, the department would have been now almost independent of annual votes. There was still some valuable land on the banks of the Yarra belonging to the Government, and it was too late to take a step in this direction. The honorable member for the Wimmera (Mr. Baker) had referred to the want of schools in the country as compared with Melbourne and the suburbs. Prahran and St. Kilda, however, which had a population of 60,000, felt very much the want of sufficient schools. In Prahran alone, although there were three or four schools, the accommodation was not equal to the requirements, and hundreds of children had to be refused admission. The honorable member for the Avoca (Mr. Langdon) had also referred to the superior comfort of the metropolitan schools, but he (Mr. Harris) was told that in some of the school buildings in Prahran there was no fire-place, so that the children suffered much from cold, while, owing to the absence of blinds, in summer the heat was very oppressive, some of the buildings being of wood. The children in the country therefore were not much worse served than those around Melbourne. He hoped the Premier would see his way to withhold some of the Government lands proposed to be sold, in order to establish an endowment for the State school system.

Mr. BROWN said he regretted that the Estimates did not contain a sum of money sufficient to provide for the fencing of State schools in country districts. The Government did not practice what they preached. They went home to the old country to borrow money, but if a board of advice in a country district wanted a fence round the school grounds, they were told that the Education department would only grant half the amount, and the rest would have to be raised locally by a concert or bazaar, or some other means. From Englehart application had been made over and over again for fair consideration in this matter, but without effect. At Koondrook, where thousands of cattle and sheep crossed the Murray, there was a school-house on the roadway; but although the people asked for the school ground to be fenced in, it was not done. The same remark applied to Kerang and other places. He was sorry the Government did not pay greater attention to the wants of the country districts.

Mr. VALE remarked that there seemed to be a general opinion that there were a large number of schools required in the country districts immediately. In view of the large surplus, therefore, he would suggest that the Government should place on the Supplementary Estimates a sum of £30,000 or £50,000 out of the revenue for the erection of schools in outlying districts. Considering the expenditure on the Exhibition in Melbourne, he thought that this was not too much for the country districts to ask. He believed the cost of the Exhibition, before it was over, would approach half a million of money. (Mr. Munro—"Nothing of the kind.") The least return that could be made to the country districts was to place a sum of money on the Supplementary Estimates for the erection of 50 or 100 additional State schools in those districts. He believed that 100 schools could be built for about £50,000.

The vote was agreed to.

**METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY.**

Discussion took place on the vote of £86,000 to complete the vote (£138,000) for the following works in connexion with Melbourne water supply:—

"1. Towards a new 36-inch wrought iron main from Yan Yean reservoir to Preston, with outlet works, including labour, purchase of land, pipes, and other material, fencing, &c. (total estimated cost, £82,000) . . . . £41,000.

"2. Towards a new 30 and 24-inch wrought iron main from Preston to South Melbourne, with branches therefrom, including labour, purchase of land, pipes, material, &c. (total estimated cost, £92,000) . . . . £40,000.

"3. Extension of reticulation, including purchase of land, pipes, and other material, like-wise labour, &c. . . . . £49,000."

Mr. FEILD said that, last session, he and the honorable member for Fitzroy (Mr. Tucker) urged upon the Minister of Public Works that an effort should be made to reduce the charge for the Yan Yean water below a rate of 8d. in the £1, but nothing had yet been done in that direction. Since last year the valuation of rateable property in the metropolitan district had greatly increased. In Collingwood alone the increased valuation was £40,000. The water-rate might now fairly be reduced to 6d. in the £1. A 6d. rate would yield as much revenue as an 8d. rate produced some little time ago.

Mr. LAURENS observed that, at the time when there seemed to be an immediate prospect of the establishment of a Metropolitan Board of Works, he did not think it was advisable that the Yan Yean water rate should be reduced, because a reduction would curtail the funds at the disposal of the board for carrying out drainage works.
At present, however, the creation of that body seemed to be almost as distant as ever it was, while the valuation of property in the city and suburbs had lately greatly increased. Under these circumstances, the time had certainly arrived when the question of reducing the water rate should be taken into serious consideration.

Mr. DENT stated that, last session, when the vote for works in connexion with the Yan Yean water supply was under consideration, he submitted a proposition to the effect that the water rate should be reduced from 8d. to 6d. in the £1, but he withdrew it on a promise being given by the Minister of Public Works that a reduction in the rate would be made this year. Although no more water from the Yan Yean was consumed now, or very little more, than was consumed last year, the public had to pay a great deal more for it, owing to the enormous increase in the value of property. There was no justification for maintaining an 8d. rate. He would, therefore, move that the following words be added to the vote:—"On condition that the charge for water be reduced to 6d. in the £1 on the rateable value of the property assessed."

Mr. PEIRCE remarked that, last session, he strongly contended that the Yan Yean water rate should be reduced to either 6d. or 4d. in the £1, and he understood the Minister of Public Works to promise that a reduction would be made this year. The rateable value of property in the district of West Melbourne had so greatly increased that people occupying premises there were now compelled to pay two or three times as much for water as they paid a year or two ago, although the quantity they consumed was not greater than usual. In view of the large revenue derived from the Yan Yean, he thought that the water rate might easily be reduced even to 4d. in the £1.

Mr. ZOX said that the proposition of the honorable member for Brighton appealed to the sympathy of honorable members generally, and was worthy of serious consideration. The Government had an overflowing treasury, and it was prognosticated that the revenue, instead of falling off, would continue to increase. Under the circumstances, it was high time that something was done in the direction of reducing the Yan Yean water rate. A far larger return, in proportion to the capital invested, was derived from the Yan Yean works than from the railways. What did the Government intend to do with their large surplus? Usually when the general revenue of a country showed a considerable surplus, the first thing done was to reduce taxation; and there could be no more appropriate article on which to make a reduction of taxation than water, which was an absolute necessary of life. The Yan Yean rate was a very heavy tax on a large number of people. The enormous increase which had lately taken place in the value of property in Melbourne and the suburbs was of itself a strong reason why the water rate should be reduced. In some cases property in East Melbourne, as well as in other parts of the metropolis, had recently increased in value seven-fold. (Mr. Graves—"You pay on the increase, although you don't use more water.") The honorable member was quite correct. The water rate was levied on the increased value of the property, but no more water was used. The other day a constituent told him that he was rated so high for the premises he occupied that it would really be cheaper for him to wash his hands in milk than to have to pay for the Yan Yean. He (Mr. Zox) hoped that the Government would acquiesce in the proposal to reduce the water rate to 6d. in the £1.

Mr. NIMMO said he thought that if honorable members considered the position in which Melbourne and the suburbs were placed in regard to water supply, they would not be so ready to urge the Government to reduce the water rate forthwith. It was true that the Yan Yean service was paying very well. It was also true that property was increasing in value. But the population was increasing at the same time, thus causing greater demands upon the resources of the department than formerly. The department had had to initiate a great many large and expensive works to meet the growing demands for water supply from the Yan Yean, and those works were not yet paid for. He would give a few plain facts for the information of honorable members. In 1885—6 the revenue from the Yan Yean service was £139,000; in 1886-7 it was £155,000; and in 1887-8 it was £175,000. The expenditure on construction up to the 30th June, 1888, amounted to £2,445,000; the liabilities were £241,000; further proposed expenditure, £223,000; interest on money, £760,000; making, in all, £2,669,000. To produce a revenue of 5 per cent. on this expenditure the sum of £183,000 per annum would be required, whereas the revenue last year was only £175,000. When the honorable member for Brighton, last year, brought forward the question of the reduction of the water rate, he (Mr. Nimmo) promised to lay the whole
of the facts before his colleagues, with the view of having the charge reduced. He stated at the time that he was in favour of a reduction of the water rate, and he promised to recommend that a reduction should be made as soon as possible. After making careful inquiries as to the demand which would be likely to ensue from extended reticulation, and also as to the extent the revenue would suffer by a reduction of the rate, he submitted the whole matter to his colleagues, and, after considering the question, it was not deemed advisable, for various reasons, to make any reduction at the present juncture. The first reason for this decision was that any reduction might hamper a possible Metropolitan Board of Works in its operations in the event of it obtaining the control of the Yan Yean water supply. The second reason was that, although the Yan Yean revenue was increasing year by year, a relative capital expenditure was still going on for the general improvement of the supply, and extensive works, involving a still further expenditure, were under consideration. The third reason was that the system of distribution was not yet completed, and provision being made for the reticulation of some 90 miles of streets during the current financial year. Further, a reduction in the water rate from 8d. to 6d. in the £1 would involve a loss of about £50,000 per annum. These were the reasons which induced his colleagues, after due consideration, to refrain from reducing the water rate.

Mr. BENT asked the Minister of Public Works whether he was aware it was the fact that there were houses in South Melbourne, Brighton, and other suburbs that were now rated at £150 a year which in 1885 were rated at only £85 or £100, and that the occupants consumed no more Yan Yean water now than they did in the former year?

Mr. NIMMO replied that he was quite conscious that the case put by the honourable member for Brighton was the fact.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he could not agree with some of the figures quoted by the Minister of Public Works. The honourable gentleman stated, on the authority of some officer of the department, that a reduction of the Yan Yean water rate from 8d. to 6d. in the £1 would involve a loss of £50,000 per annum; but it was impossible to conceive how that could be the case, inasmuch as the total revenue derived from the works last year was only £175,000, and the reduction of the rate to 6d. in the £1 would not affect the amount paid for the quantity of water which was charged for by meter at the rate of 1s. per 1,000 gallons. The gentleman who made the estimate ought to be sent to school for a week, to learn the rule of three. Honorable members were told to wait until the Metropolitan Board of Works was established; but when would that be? One or two other reasons were given why the water rate could not be reduced at the present time. One was that money was being expended on reticulation. It was a curious argument that, because reticulation was being extended, the rate charged for the water already supplied could not be reduced. Why, the fact was that the extension of reticulation would bring in increased revenue. The estimated revenue from the Yan Yean for the current year was £175,000, whereas, a few years ago, it was thought very satisfactory if it reached £120,000 or £130,000. (Mr. Gillies—"What is the extra expenditure?") The expenditure for the present year was put down at £22,600, so that there was a net profit of £152,000, which would pay 4 per cent. interest on a capital of nearly £4,000,000. In order to vamp the expenditure on the Yan Yean works to over £3,000,000, a sum of £760,000 for interest was included. There was no reason why the charge made for the water should amount to more than 4 per cent. on the expenditure, whereas, at present, according to the figures which the Minister himself had supplied, it came to nearer 5 per cent. There ought to be no objection to giving the public the benefit of any reduction beyond a charge that was necessary to yield 4 per cent. on the outlay. Any profit in excess of that return ought to be devoted, not to posterity, but to the benefit of the citizens of the present day.

Mr. NIMMO stated that he had been under the impression that honourable members were unanimously in favour of the establishment of a Metropolitan Board of Works. (Mr. Langridge—"No,"") For a dozen years or more there had been talk as to the desirability of establishing a body similar to that of the London Metropolitan Board of Works. (Mr. Langridge—"That board has been a failure.") He did not think it had been a failure; but, at any rate, a strong desire had been expressed that the Melbourne Water Supply department should be placed under the control of a few gentlemen who could undertake its entire supervision and carry it on with the greatest success. The metropolitan water supply system.
was extending every year, and was becoming more complicated and more expensive. In addition to the new works already decided upon, it would be necessary before long to construct another large reservoir in the neighbourhood of Healesville at a cost of nearly a million of money, in order to provide for the requirements of an increasing population residing in an area extending from Mordialloc to Moonee Ponds in one direction and from the sea-board to a distance of ten or eleven miles inland on the other. It was important that the residents in Melbourne and the suburbs should be placed in a position of absolute safety in regard to water supply—that they should have an abundance of water even in times of drought, which occurred in all countries, and especially in hot countries. In view of the extensive works which had still to be undertaken, it behoved the Government to consider seriously before reducing the water rate. Moreover, if a Metropolitan Board of Works was to be established, it would be an ungraceful act to reduce the rate just before the water supply system was handed over to the board. He would be glad, however, to give the question further consideration. He certainly did not desire to stand in the way of a reduction of the rate, if it could be safely and fairly made; but what he specially desired was that the whole metropolitan area should be properly reticulated, and that there should be an abundant supply of water for baths and all household requirements at all seasons of the year.

Mr. LANGRIDGE remarked that he was surprised to hear the Minister of Public Works use the arguments which he had advanced against the reduction of the Yan Yean water rate. No one was better seized of the whole facts of the case than the Minister himself, and the honorable gentleman ought to have distinguished himself by effecting a reduction in the rate this year. Instead of doing so, he had brought forward what he called a few plain facts and figures as a reason why there should not be any reduction; but the facts and figures which had been adduced proved, if they proved anything, that the reduction asked for should be made. As regarded the establishment of a Metropolitan Board of Works, honorable members might be sure that if the Yan Yean was handed over to any such body there would be no reduction of the water rate. One of the great objects of the board would be to utilize the profits from the Yan Yean in order to carry out certain works for the drainage of Melbourne. As to the cost of the Yan Yean works, no other works of the kind in the colony—indeed, no other works carried out by the Government—had paid so well; and the return which they yielded at the present time justified a reduction in the charge made for the water, especially as the general revenue was in a flourishing condition. With respect to another large storage reservoir, the Minister must be aware that it was not likely that such a work would be needed for a long time to come. At the present time the Yan Yean reservoir was full almost to overflowing, and when the Watts River scheme was completed, there would be a supply of 50,000,000 gallons a day if requisite. He (Mr. Langridge) would support the proposition of the honorable member for Brighton if the committee went to a division upon it. Certainly the Government ought to take the question of the reduction of the Yan Yean rate into serious consideration. There was no reason why the residents of Melbourne and the suburbs should be compelled to go on year after year paying the same rate that they were now charged.

Mr. BURROWES stated that the arguments of the Minister of Public Works were really in favour of a reduction of the charge for the supply of the Yan Yean water. No doubt water ought to be supplied to the consumer at the lowest possible cost. He quite agreed with the opinion that if the Yan Yean was handed over to a Metropolitan Board of Works the people of the metropolis would never get a reduction of the water rate, and therefore the question of lowering the rate ought to be settled before any such body was established. But even under existing circumstances the residents in the metropolis were supplied with water much cheaper than people in the country districts. In Melbourne and the suburbs the charge was 8d. in the £1, whereas people supplied by such schemes as the Coliban had to pay a 1s. rate. The other day a deputation waited upon the Minister of Water Supply to endeavour to get a reduction of the charge for water supplied from the Coliban for domestic purposes, but their request was not complied with, and they were also unsuccessful in getting a reduction in the charge made for the supply of water to mining companies. The present charge was particularly hard upon struggling mining companies, and it ought to be reduced.

Mr. REELS observed that he did not consider that members who represented metropolitan constituencies were to blame for
trying to get water as cheaply as possible; but he held that, in estimating the value of the metropolitan waterworks, the value of the immense catchment area connected with those works should be taken into account.

He knew of a saw-miller who tried to obtain a saw-mill licence for a site in the Victoria Forest, quite outside of the catchment area of the metropolitan water supply, but he was not allowed to do so, on the ground that he had not gone far enough away. The man went further away, and still a saw-mill licence was refused him, and now it turned out that the Government had resolved upon reserving the whole forest, extending from Ferushaw to Wood's Point, for Melbourne water-supply purposes, although the water ran the other way—into the Goulburn. He considered that the value of the timber in that country should be taken into account; and that, if it was reserved for the benefit of Melbourne people, Melbourne people should be taxed for it. As a country member, he would not support any reduction in the water rates until fair play was dealt out to those persons who wanted to make profitable use of the immense tract of country he referred to.

Mr. Harper said it seemed to him that the Minister of Public Works had really proved the case of those who alleged that something ought to be done towards reducing the Yan Yean water rate. It was not quite fair for the honorable member for Grant (Mr. Rees) to drag into the question something about forest and country interests. There was no necessity for importing any town versus country feeling into the discussion of the matter. The honorable member for Grant, as representing the "country party," had received very good support from town members, and therefore it was ungracious for him to resort to a far-fetched argument to meet the well-grounded complaint which existed with regard to the Yan Yean water rates. Why should the treatment of the public with respect to the premier waterworks of the colony—the great Yan Yean—be different from that which was adopted in connexion with the new waterworks which were being constructed throughout the colony? Public expenditure on national works in country districts, which were not expected to pay in the first instance, had been sanctioned ungrudgingly; and why should not the same measure of liberality be exercised with respect to the original works for the supply of water to the great city of Melbourne? He was glad at the way in which the announcement of the Minister of Public Works as to his grand extensions was received by the committee; and he was convinced that any expenditure in that direction would receive the approval of Parliament. But what had that to do with the amendment? The Minister spoke as if the cost of all these improvements would be met out of revenue; but the fact was that they would be met out of loan money. The Minister as the head of the Yan Yean department proposed to extend his business; and he should do as a merchant, or as the Railway department, would do—not seek to deduct the cost from present profits, but to look to future profits to recoup him the interest on the additional expenditure. As the metropolis went on extending, additional waterworks would be necessary, and did the Minister of Public Works mean to tell the committee that until those works were completed, the water rates could not be reduced, although it could be shown that a reduction might fairly be made? With regard to the extraordinary document which the Minister of Public Works had read to the committee, it had already been pointed out that, to the whole cost already incurred and the whole of the anticipated expenditure, the honorable gentleman had added £700,000 for interest. That, he presumed, was interest from the beginning. Was that so? (Mr. Nimmo—"Yes.") That was how the Minister's total of £3,700,000 was made up. But what about the revenue which had been received? The document was simply absurd. Taking the actual expenditure at £3,000,000, even if the rates were reduced as proposed, the return would be equal to 5 per cent., and no other public works in the colony yielded such a return. With regard to the mode of assessment, he would call the attention of the Treasurer to the manifest unfairness of appraising the water rate, not on the basis of the consumption, but on the value of the property, consisting of a dwelling house and land in the neighbourhood of Melbourne, was let for £500 a year, and it had been assessed at £750 a year, which he considered excessive, but this year the assessment had been increased to £1,750, and, if that assessment was upheld, the water rate would be increased from £25 to £58 a year, although the consumption of water was limited to household purposes, and had not increased by one gallon. (Mr. Tucker—"How much
land is attached to the house?') He did not go into the question of land. (Mr. Tucker—"Generally the land is valued separately.") Many people were not aware of the fact, or, at any rate, they did not take the trouble to see that the valuator put down so much for the land, and so much for the house. When that precaution was taken, the water rate was paid simply on the value of the house. If, however, it was not taken, and no appeal was lodged against the assessment, the rate, whatever it was, had to be paid; the Minister of Water Supply had no power to make any reduction. He (Mr. Harper) believed that the present discussion might do good. It would lead people to look into the matter. He considered that the rate for water ought not to be charged irrespective of the use made of it. The water supplied from country waterworks was paid for by the farmers on the basis of what they used. (Mr. Brown—"They pay for what they get.") No one in Melbourne would object to pay for the water which he consumed; and why should not some such system be adopted in Melbourne? Certainly something ought to be done in the direction of altering the way in which the rates were assessed. With regard to the charge for water used for industrial purposes, he believed it was 1s. per 1,000 gallons. That might be a fair charge for a small consumption; but for large concerns, in connexion with which a great quantity of water was used, it was altogether too much. Shipmasters whose vessels were supplied with water at the wharf complained that the charge was excessive, and apparently there was no power on the part of the Public Works department to make any difference between the charge for water required for exceptional purposes, and the charge to the ordinary consumer. He hoped that the whole question would receive attention, and that the Government, if they were not prepared to reduce the rates, would go into the matter with the view of arriving at an equitable means of assessing people fairly according to the water they consumed, and not according to the fanciful valuation of a municipal officer.

Mr. TUCKER remarked that up to the present time he had understood the Minister of Public Works to be favorable to a reduction of the Yan Yean water rate; but, on this occasion, the honorable gentleman had read to the committee what he was pleased to call "facts and figures," but which, in his (Mr. Tucker's) opinion, was a most misleading return, intended to show anything, that an increase of the water rate was what the department desired. The Yan Yean was a grand paying concern, and, if the returns which it had yielded year after year were properly set out, the "facts and figures" would bear a very different complexion from that which the Minister had been pleased to place upon them. The reduction asked for in the water rate—2d. in the £1—was a very small one indeed, in view of the fact that the revenue, this year, was no less than £175,000. When the Yan Yean works were first initiated, the idea was to supply Melbourne and the suburbs with water at a nominal cost, when once the waterworks were completed and paid for; and he considered that the department ought not to take advantage of the exceptional rise in the value of property to increase the revenue at the cost of the consumer. No doubt as the supply of water during the summer months was uncertain, the House would gladly vote the sum necessary for works to enable people to get the article which they paid so largely for. He would say to those country members who had erined strong feeling with regard to this matter that they never found town members cavilling at any expenditure on water supply for country districts. With regard to the proposal for the creation of a Metropolitan Board of Works, if he had the honour of a seat in the Assembly in the next Parliament, he would do all he could to prevent the adoption of such a proposal until the reduction now sought in the water rate was accorded to.

Mr. VALE stated that the amendment now before the committee meant giving to the metropolis a million and a quarter of money. The reduction of the Yan Yean water rate from 8d. to 6d. in the £1 would entail a reduction of the annual revenue by £50,000, and that, at twenty-five years purchase, would be £1,250,000. The honorable member for East Bourke had referred to the railways; but what would be thought of a proposal to reduce the fares on certain lines of railway, and on those only because they paid better than other lines, of which they were part and parcel? (Mr. Harper—"The Yan Yean is not part and parcel of other waterworks.") In his opinion the Yan Yean was part of the scheme for providing the towns of the colony with water supply; it was part of a work undertaken by the general Government for those towns; and he objected to the picking out of the Yan Yean, simply because it was profitable, in order to make an enormous difference in
the charge for water as between Melbourne consumers and up-country consumers. Up-country districts were just as much entitled as Melbourne to be charged 8d. in the £1 for water, but they were charged 1s. in the £1. Honorable members overlooked the fact that the Yan Yean had saved Melbourne property a considerable amount in the shape of fire assurance premium. He presumed the difference in fire assurance rates between the period before the construction of the Yan Yean works and the subsequent period, was the difference between 50s. and 2s. 6d. per £100. Why should there be a less charge for water in Melbourne than there was in country districts? There was as much sense in an inequality over such a matter as there would be in a different postal rate. As to the proposal for the creation of a Metropolitan Board of Works, he thought, if honorable members who advocated it were only to take the trouble to read the evidence laid before the committee of the House of Commons that inquired into the proceedings of the London Board of Works, they would prefer, bad as they might think Government administration in Victoria to be, to let things remain as they were than to adopt such a proposal. For his part, if the water rates in Melbourne were reduced, he would claim the vote of every country member for the reduction of the water rates in Geelong, Sandhurst, Ballarat, Mary­borough, and Ararat. In his opinion, the whole waterworks revenue should be placed in one fund. There should be no picking out of places merely because one set of works paid, and another did not. It had been stated that the farmers in irrigation districts would have to pay only for the water which was supplied to them; but if ever there was a cast-iron measure the Irrigation Act was one, because under that Act every irrigation district was mortgaged up to the elbow to guarantee payment not for water supply, but for the cost of works other than the so-called national headworks. He felt certain that no country member would dare face his constituents who voted for the reduction of the Melbourne water rates, unless it was accompanied by an equal and corresponding reduction to country districts, which were paying rates far in excess of those paid in the metropolis, not only in amount, but in minimum charge and in every other direction. The honorable member for East Bourke had spoken of the cost of water for manufactures, but was he not aware that as much as £40, £60, and even £100 per month was being paid for water by mining companies that had not begun to declare dividends? (Mr. Langridge—"Many of the shareholders being Melbourne men.") No doubt. But he was not raising the question of country as against town. He was simply contending that in this matter of reducing water rates all parts of the colony should be placed on a level. (Mr. Bent—"What about the Ballarat Water Commission?") It was one of the biggest shams in existence. If the Ballarat works had been in the hands of the Government, the people of the district would have had more concessions, and a better service.

Mr. ANDREWS said he did not think this question had been placed before the committee in a sufficiently plain way to enable them to deal with it properly. The statement of the Minister of Public Works, in which interest payable on loan was strangely mixed up with capital, was somewhat confusing and misleading. It did not show what had been the actual outlay on the Yan Yean. Nor did it show what percentage the revenue bore to the expenditure on works of construction. As far as he could understand, the Yan Yean was a grand scheme of water supply, which was now not merely on a payable footing, but yielding a very handsome profit. Under these circumstances, and considering the enormous increase in the value of rateable property in Melbourne, it seemed only reasonable that the reduction in the amount of water rate now asked for should be granted, particularly in view of the fact that a large proportion of the citizens did not use the water for which they paid. He looked upon the Yan Yean as a business scheme which should be dealt with entirely by itself, and be considered that the sooner it was detached from the Public Works department the better, because it was clear that, with the other duties which the Minister who presided over that department had to discharge, it could not receive adequate supervision from him. That being the case, why should not the Yan Yean system be placed under the control of commissioners similar to those who had charge of the Railway department? He was satisfied that, if an arrangement of that kind were brought about, the water rate would soon be reduced. Some honorable members had contended that Melbourne, with regard to water supply charges, should be placed on the same footing as country districts. What was that footing? Water trusts were called upon to guarantee 4 or 4½ per cent. on the outlay, and also to make
annual provision for a sinking fund, which increased their liability to, say, 5 or 5½ per cent. Well, it was admitted that if the Yan Yean water rate were reduced to 6d. in the £1, it would yield a revenue equal to 5 per cent., or a little more on the expenditure. So that he did not see what honorable members who represented country districts had to complain about. With regard to those districts, he might mention that Ballarat had received very generous treatment from Parliament. The construction of the waterworks for that place was intrusted to the people of the locality, and the scheme was endowed by the State; and, when the local commissioners got into difficulties, Parliament, at the instance of the Service Government, gave them the necessary relief. He regretted to hear a member for the district speak very poorly of the Ballarat water supply scheme. He had always thought it was a grand scheme. (Mr. Russell—"So it is.") Certainly there ought to be no feeling on the part of the representatives of Ballarat or any other provincial centre against the people of Melbourne getting their water supply on the most reasonable terms possible. There could be no doubt that the Yan Yean revenue was sufficiently elastic to allow of the reduction in water rate sought by the amendment. One matter about which he had to complain was the letting of large contracts for waterworks without any reference to Parliament until after the contracts were entered into; and he hoped that the practice in that regard would be amended.

Mr. LAURENS observed that the committee had been informed that the Yan Yean revenue for 1887-8 was £175,000, but they had not been informed that that revenue was based on the municipal valuation of 1886-7, when the municipalities had not dreamt of raising their assessments at all in proportion to the increased value of property in Melbourne and the suburbs. If a property was valued this year at twice the amount at which it was valued last year, the water rate in respect of that property would be doubled, and yet no more water would be consumed. According to the Minister of Public Works, the expenditure on works of construction, up to the 30th June, 1888, amounted to £2,445,000. The interest on that sum, at 5 per cent., was £122,250, and it should be recollected that the last loan was floated at 4 per cent.—or, deducting the premium, at 5½ per cent. (Mr. Nimmo—"For how many years did we pay 6 per cent.?"") The colony paid 6 per cent. on its first loans, but all those loans had been redeemed, and now it obtained money at 4 per cent. One item in the Minister’s statement of expenditure was—“Interest, £760,000.” What did that mean? Supposing he borrowed £1,000 at 5 per cent., and if, during the currency of the year, the money returned him 5 per cent., had he any right to speak of the interest as “expenditure?” He could not understand why such an item should appear under the head of expenditure. Did it mean the interest which was not met by revenue during a series of years in which the Yan Yean did not pay? Surely the committee were entitled to some explanation on the point.

At this stage, progress was reported.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ALTERATION BILL.

The amendments made in this Bill in committee were taken into consideration.

Mr. GILLIES moved that the amendments be agreed with.

Mr. BENT moved, as an amendment, that the Bill be recommitted. He said the Premier seemed to have forgotten the promise he gave, the previous week, that the Bill would be recommitted for the purpose of considering the amendments made in different subdivisions of the 2nd schedule, notably those relating to South Melbourne.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he made no such promise. All he said was that an opportunity of reconsidering the amendments would be given on the report.

Mr. BENT begged to assert, with all due respect, that the Premier did promise that the Bill would be recommitted. In common justice it ought to be recommitted, seeing that it was to all intents and purposes a new measure. How could the enormous number of amendments which had been made in it be properly considered with the Speaker in the chair? Besides, look at the highly material character of many of those amendments. Why, under some of them, population to the extent of 1,500 had been shifted from one electoral district to another, as though the difference involved was of the most trifling description. And how many honorable members, not to speak of the people most concerned, were aware at the present time that such changes had been effected? The Premier talked loudly of the alterations being only technical, but these so-called technical amendments comprised the whole thing. For example, in the Bill as originally proposed, he (Mr. Bent) found that the
boundaries of his district ran down to the St. Kilda Town-hall, and subsequently he was told that, on the other side, they extended to Mordialloc, and included a population of 14,000. Now, however, he found that some one had gone behind his back to the Premier, and caused Mordialloc to be taken away. At any rate, without his knowing that such changes were being made, his district was at present defined as covering over four miles of country, and containing a population of 17,000, as against ever so many other electoral populations of only 8,000. Ought not amendments of this character to have full consideration, and how could that full consideration be given if the subdivisions in the 2nd schedule were dealt with in globo? As a matter of fact, he was at present really unacquainted with the alterations that had been made in the Bill, and he did not wish to see it carried into law until he knew exactly what they were.

Mr. GILLIES said he was utterly surprised at the proposal of the honorable member for Brighton, because, however important the amendments might be, they must be considered by the House, and agreed to, or disagreed with, as the case might be, by the House. Let the Bill be recommitted ever so often, that result must accrue at some time. Of course a Bill could be recommitted in order that it might be considered afresh, but that it should be recommitted in order that the amendments already made in it might be considered again was something unheard of. As for any promise from him (Mr. Gillies) that the Bill should be recommitted, it was really impossible for him to have given any pledge of the kind. What could he have made such a promise for? What he did say was that if, in order to consider the question of plural voting in connexion with a particular clause, the House pressed for the recommittal of that clause, he would agree to it being done. (Mr. Bent—"If you admits that, I am satisfied.") But what difference could that promise make now, seeing that the honorable member for Belfast had given notice that he would bring up the question of plural voting on the third reading of the Bill? Under no circumstances, until that notice of motion was withdrawn, could the matter be discussed in committee.

Mr. McINTYRE thought the Premier misunderstood the position taken up by the honorable member for Brighton. What the honorable member wanted was that honorable members should have a thorough knowledge of the alterations in the Bill before they were called upon to adopt them in full. On this ground he (Mr. McIntyre) was of opinion that the Bill should not be gone on with until maps, showing what electoral boundaries had been decided upon, were upon the table.

Mr. BURROWES stated that, on the previous Thursday evening, he and his colleagues had an interview with the Premier, when the honorable gentleman promised that certain alterations should be made in the Sandhurst electorate. In consequence, certain alterations were made, but it now appeared that they were not the alterations which were agreed upon. This circumstance placed him (Mr. Burrowes) in a rather awkward position. For example, he found that a number of old residents of Sandhurst, who lived a quarter of a mile from the post-office, were actually excluded from the electorate, while others living three miles and a half way were dragged into it. Of course he could not consent to a scheme of that sort. Would not the Premier amend the subdivision in question in accordance with the understanding come to on Thursday?

Sir B. O'LOGHLLEN said he would support the proposal of the honorable member for Brighton in order that both the Electoral Bills might be dealt with in committee at the same time. Besides, the amendments in the present Bill were of such importance that they ought to be reconsidered in committee in the light of plans or maps showing the exact nature of the alterations affected.

Mr. WOODS remarked that nearly every honorable member was in the dark as to the true character of the amendments made in the Bill. Why, therefore, seeing that no obstruction in the matter need be anticipated, should not the Government consent to the alterations being carefully revised, a process which could only be carried through when the House was in committee? When that was done, the report would, of course, be adopted at once. In any case he, for one, intended to vote against the third reading of the Bill.

Dr. QUICK expressed the opinion that the Bill ought to be recommitted. One reason why this should be done was that, although the constituencies of the country had become aware of the nature of the electoral districts first proposed, they knew very little of the alterations that had been made since. Yet it was of great importance that they should understand what those alterations were, and also that their views with respect to them should be consulted.
As for the changes made with respect to his own district, he repudiated all responsibility in connexion with them, because the Premier was alone answerable in the matter. He (Dr. Quick) wished to be particular in saying this, because the question was one affecting his constituents rather than himself. Still, if the alterations were adopted without further discussion in committee, the Sandhurst electors might possibly attach some blame to him. The Bill ought to be recommitted now, and the report considered on Tuesday. In any case, some fresh arrangement of the White Hills district ought to be made.

The House divided on the question that all the words after "That," in the motion "That the House agree with the committee in these amendments" (proposed to be omitted, with the view to insert "the Bill be recommitted"), stand part of the motion—

**Ayes.**

Mr. Anderson (C.), Mr. Langridge, Mr. Langridge, Mr. McColl, 42

" Anderson (V.), " McLean, " McLellan, 42

" Baker, " Murray, " Nimmo, 25

" Bourchier, " Officer, " Outtrim, 25

" Cameron, " Pearson, " Pearson, 25

" Clark, " Reid, " Reid, 25

" Coppin, " Stoughton, " Stoughton, 25

" D. M. Davies, " Tucker, " Tucker, 25

" Deakin, " Walker, " Walker, 25

" Denham, " Wright, " Wright, 25

" Dow, " Wrixon, " Wrixon, 25

" Ferguson, " A. Young, " A. Young, 25

" Gardiner, " Zoë, " Zoë, 25

" Gillies, " 25

" Gordon, " 25

" Graham, " 25

" Groom, " 25

" Hall, " 25

" A. Harris, " 25

" J. Harris, " 25

" Keys, " 25

Tellers. Mr. Russell, Mr. Shackell.

**Noes.**

Mr. Andrews, Mr. Mirams, 25

" Bailes, " Munro, 25

" Bent, " Murray, 25

" Brown, " Sir B. O’Loghlen, 25

" Burrowes, " Mr. Peerce, 25

" Donaghy, " Dr. Quick, 25

" Duffy, " Lt.-Col. Smith, 25

" Gaunson, " Mr. Tuthill, 25

" Harper, " " Vale, 25

" Hunt, " " Woods, 25

" Langdon, " Tellers, 25

" Laurens, " Mr. Jones, 25

" McIntyre, " Dr. Rose, 25

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said he wished to move that the first amendment in the Bill, namely, the one relating to its change of title, be disagreed with.

The SPEAKER.—If the honorable member desires to propose an amendment disagreeing with the title of the Bill as altered in committee, he will have an opportunity of doing that when the motion before the chair is disposed of. The House having decided that "the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question," the only form in which the honorable member could propose his amendment at the present stage would be as an addition to the question "That the House agree with the committee in these amendments."

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said he would move, as an amendment, the addition to the motion of the words "except in so far as the title of the Bill is altered." What he desired was that the House should deal with the alteration of the title by the committee now.

Mr. MUNRO said he wanted to be a little clear as to how matters stood. He understood that the Government did not intend to recommit the Bill, but to go into committee on the divisions of electorates which were to be added to the Bill. But if the House was to go into committee on the divisions, it must either go into committee on the Bill or else on a new Bill, because the proposed divisions had never yet formed part or parcel of the Bill which was submitted by the Government.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said he would briefly state the object of his amendment. The Bill left the House after the second reading entitled "a Bill to amend the Electoral Act 1865,” and it now came back from committee with another title, namely "a Bill to provide for the alteration of the boundaries of certain electoral districts, and for other purposes."

Mr. STAUGHTON rose to a point of order. The honorable member for Belfast had already addressed the House twice on this subject, and was not in order in speaking again.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said he had not spoken on the amendment, but merely on the question of order.

The SPEAKER.—The honorable member for Belfast rose to submit an amendment, and I pointed out to him the difficulty in connexion with the matter. The honorable member only spoke previously on the question of order raised by the chair.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN said the new title of the Bill was settled in committee, and he proposed to disagree with the committee in the new title and leave the old title as it stood. The reason for this would very soon
appear. The 1st clause of the Bill provided that "this Act may for all purposes be cited as the Electoral Act Amendment Act 1888." Thus the Act was to be cited in all courts of law, in Parliament, and in legal documents by a different title from the title which had been fixed on in committee.

Mr. GILLIES said that, after the motion before the chair was carried, the honorable member for Belfast could proceed to do what he was now desirous of doing.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN observed that of course the House could alter the title again at a subsequent stage, but he desired that the House should disagree with the action of the committee in altering the title. The committee left the title of the Bill in the 1st clause unaltered, and yet they altered the title of the Bill itself. The Act passed in 1876 was called the Electoral Act Amendment Act 1876, and there the citation of the Act as provided for in the 1st section followed the title of the Act; and the same was the ease with all other Acts of Parliament. The committee altered the title of this Bill for a certain purpose, but apparently they did not perceive the title given in the 1st clause, and therefore committed the blunder of, while altering the title of the measure, providing in the 1st clause that it should be cited by a different title from that which they decided on. The title of the Bill should be left as it was when it was committed to the committee, namely, "an Act to amend the Electoral Act 1865," and then honorable members would see what position the Bill was in. If the Bill was a Bill to amend the Electoral Act 1865, he submitted that the committee travelled out of their functions in taking the course they did, and that the House should disagree with the committee, and adhere to the old title.

Mr. GAUNSON said he would really suggest to the honorable member for Belfast that, as every one who had any notion of politics at all looked upon the Bill as a fraud upon the people, which the majority of the House were determined to ram down their throats, the honorable member would save himself a great deal of trouble by not bothering his head about the matter. They knew the Bill was a fraud of the worst description, and they believed it would be the most hurtful measure to the interests of the people of this colony that had ever yet been passed. Under the pretence of reducing large country electorates into single electorates, on the ground that they were so unwieldy as to make the work of representing them drudgery and slavery to the sitting members, the Bill destroyed other electorates against which no such reason could be alleged—to wit, Ballarat, Sandhurst, and Geelong—in connexion with which neither the electors nor the representatives complained, and where the treble-electorate system had worked capitaly for a quarter of a century. Again, double electorates which were entitled to be treble electorates, such as Emerald Hill and Richmond, were, to serve some personal object of the Premier and the Minister of Public Works combined, to be destroyed and turned into single electorates, which were made too small. The character of the House had been deteriorating steadily, and the deterioration would be intensified by the small petty constituencies created by the Bill, so that hereafter, instead of members being returned by particular districts to represent the colony at large, which was the proper function of Members of Parliament, there would be members returned to represent streets. The electorate of Emerald Hill, the whole of which a person could walk round in a couple of hours, was to be cut up, to please the Minister of Public Works, and out of some personal vindictiveness by the Premier towards him (Mr. Gaunson), into three small parts, so that a member for one of those electorates in future would represent a few streets. What style of representative would there be in the future? What style of representative was there now? Looking round the House could it be said that the people were represented by the intellect and intelligence of the colony? He could not admit it; and under the new Act the state of things would be worse. Instead of getting the best men to represent the people of the colony, there would be a small pettifogging class of men in the Assembly. "Oh," said the Premier, "single electorates are most desirable because there ought to be some means of enabling the constituents, when they are satisfied of the character of their representative to give him the chance of a walk-over." So that the whole consideration was not what was best for the people, but best for the sitting members. A more miserable, pitiable argument was never used in a representative Chamber than fell from the lips of the Premier in favour of the destruction of treble electorates and the creation of single electorates. Single electorates were to be preferred simply because they gave honorable members a chance of a walk-over! And so this fraud was to be worked on the people in order to give the Premier and others of the same stamp the chance of a walk-over. No one
had done more to degrade public life in this country than the Premier.

The SPEAKER.—The honorable member is not in order in making that statement.

Mr. GAUNSON regretted that he was out of order. He could not help having his belief, though he might not be at liberty to express it. Was the Premier not degrading public life when he introduced a Bill which should be scouted by every honest representative—a Bill which was a disgrace to the Assembly and to the country? The Bill was so utterly degrading that he (Mr. Gaunson) was astounded that honorable members could be found to support it. Honorable members, however, had made up their minds. They met in camera, and, not having seen the Bill, swore on their corporeal oaths to swallow it.

Mr. HARPER remarked that, as it was evidently the desire of the House to go on with the Bill and deal with it, he would appeal to the honorable member for Belfast to withdraw his amendment. He could see nothing to be gained by pressing the amendment.

Sir B. O'LOGHLEN said he had no objection to withdraw the amendment.

The amendment was withdrawn.

The motion for agreeing with the amendments made in committee was adopted.

Mr. BENT said he desired, in connexion with clause 8, to remind the Premier that he promised that North Melbourne should have two members. (Mr. Gillies—"That will come on the schedule.") Clause 8 regulated the whole of the schedule. There were other districts which desired to remain double or treble electorates. Some of the people of St. Kilda considered that it should be a double electorate. That way in which the district of Brighton had been cut up by the Bill was most peculiar, and he hoped the people would understand that he had had nothing to do with it. If it was the desire of the Premier to join together interests which were directly opposed to each other, he had been most successful.

Mr. FEILD remarked that he saw by the newspaper reports that, late on Thursday night, it was decided in committee to add another member to the 94 originally proposed in the Bill. He regretted that he left that night at half-past eleven o'clock, not expecting anything of the kind to be done. He had attempted to obtain a return with respect to the population in the five new electorates more particularly concerned, but he had not yet got the information. He hoped the Premier, in doing away with existing anomalies, was not creating new anomalies by the Bill.

Mr. GAUNSON moved, as an amendment, the addition of the following words to clause 8, providing that the colony should be divided into electoral districts, each of which should return the number of members assigned to it in the 2nd schedule:—

"Except South Melbourne, Richmond, Ballarat West, Sandhurst, Geelong, and Mandurang, which shall have three members each, and North Melbourne and Ballarat East, which shall have two members each."

He said he submitted this amendment with the view of testing the feeling of the House, and especially of those members who were now representing treble-seated constituencies or double-seated constituencies which ought to have an additional member, turning them into treble-seated constituencies, such as Richmond and Emerald Hill. Of course, if the amendment was carried, the subdivisions in the 2nd schedule would be altered accordingly. The arguments which the Premier gave on the second reading for the destruction of treble-seated constituencies had no application to the town constituencies mentioned in the amendment.

He said—

"The area over which members have to travel, in the event of a contested election, is so great as to severely tax, not only their mental, but also their physical capacity."

How did that apply to Emerald Hill, over which he (Mr. Gaunson) could travel in two hours? How did it apply to Richmond, Sandhurst, Geelong, or Ballarat? It might apply to Mandurang, but the members for Mandurang were content with their lot, and so were their constituents. Then the Premier said that, if large districts were divided into single electorates—

"The labour cast upon the representatives would be much less, and the work would be more satisfactorily performed."

This was laying down the doctrine that representatives were to be mere working agents for their constituents—a doctrine which had been denounced over and over again as lowering the true position of a representative of the people in Parliament. Another ground on which the Premier opposed treble electorates was that, in such constituencies, "it rarely, if ever, happened that there was a walk-over at a general election." But why should a representative have a walk-over? Why should a man's constituents not have the right to put him on his trial? The Premier also said that he believed that single electorates "would be equally satisfactory to the electors," but in his (Mr. Gaunson's)
district two public meetings had denounced single electorates. Yet Emerald Hill was to be cut up into three single electorates; and this was what the Premier called paying respect to the wishes of the people! What was the history of representation in this country? The first representation was six members for one constituency, called Port Phillip, in the Legislature at Sydney. The next change was a nominee and representative House, in which there were three members for Melbourne; that was the only treble electorate. Under the next change there were a few treble electorates; then the Act of 1865 provided for three treble electorates; and in the Act of 1876 there were five treble electorates. In 1885, the Premier himself brought in an Electoral Bill which proposed to increase the number of treble electorates to nine, making Emerald Hill, North Melbourne, Richmond, and St. Kilda treble electorates. What reason had the Premier shown for his change of opinion now on the question of treble electorates? None whatever, except the low, miserable reason that in single electorates there was a greater chance of members having a walk-over.

Dr. QUICK supported the amendment. Speaking for his own district, he could say that there was no public demand whatever for an alteration in the existing mode of its representation in Parliament; and he failed to see that any satisfactory reasons had been adduced by the Premier, or during the debate on the Bill, in support of the abolition of treble electorates. It was to be regretted that in the minor struggle in regard to boundaries the main question—the question as to whether single electorates were more desirable than double electorates and treble electorates—had never yet been thoroughly discussed by the House. It was only very briefly alluded to during the second reading debate, and the House had not pronounced its deliberate judgment upon the question. As had been pointed out by the honorable member for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gauason), the Premier himself, only a very short time ago, proposed the extension of the treble electorate system; but now the honorable gentleman had suddenly discovered that treble electorates were antagonistic to the interests of the country. Whatever arguments might exist in favour of single electorates amongst scattered populations extending over wide districts could not possibly apply to large aggregations of population in cities and towns. He felt quite convinced that the experiment of establishing in this colony 72 single electorates would prove one of the greatest political mistakes that had ever been made in the way of electoral reform. It interfered with what had hitherto been the basis and foundation of the electoral system in this country, and also in England, namely, that electoral representation should be based, not upon population alone, and not upon locality alone, but upon population aggregated and localized, or organized; in other words, that an electoral body could not be properly constituted merely by population, but it must represent population having distinct and identical interests, and a uniform community of interest. If honorable members examined the electoral districts proposed by the Bill, it would be found—in fact, it was generally admitted—that, as a rule, they had not been framed upon any such principle as that, but merely upon the numerical basis of population, which was an absurd principle to go upon. He believed that the single electorates would result in great disaster—that they would fail to send to Parliament an accurate and proper representation of the views of the people. They would result, he thought, in the creation of a large number of what might be called class constituencies, having antagonistic interests one with the other; and this would lead to the return to Parliament, not of men having large and broad views on national questions, but merely of men sent there as representatives of parochial communities, or parish vestries—representatives sent merely to discuss questions of roads and bridges. He desired to read extracts from some speeches made in the House of Commons in December, 1884, when the question of single electorates was discussed. Mr. Courtney said—

"The principle of single electorates was a new principle, fraught with grievous consequences to the character of the House and to the political life of the country. It would derogate from the position of a Member of Parliament. It would fail altogether in obtaining the judgment of the people. It gave no security that the majority of representatives would not be returned by a minority of the voters:"

In the same debate Mr. Goschen remarked—

"Let us beware that the single-member constituencies do not develop into one-class constituencies, whose members will come here feeling themselves responsible, not to the whole people of the country, but to the particular class living in the district by which they are returned."

He also stated that—

"The cutting up of big towns into single-member districts has nowhere been a success. The result has been that these great towns, although they have been prominent in the politics
of the country, have not redeemed their position as intelligent capitals of the countries in which that system prevails."

Sir John Lubbock, during the same debate, said, in reference to the arbitrary splitting up of large towns into small electorates—

"There is all the difference in the world between a constituency which is whole in itself and another which is a mere fragment of a larger body. We might just as well compare an animal taken as a whole with the limbs and fragments torn from a living being."

Reference was made in the course of the debate in the House of Commons to the experience of the United States, where the system of single electorates prevailed for many years. A report was brought up from a select committee of the Senate of the United States, some time in the year 1869, emphatically condemning the system of single electorates. Speaking of that report, Sir John Lubbock said—

"One great evil of the American system is that members are never secure in their seats. The single-seat system has carried the idea of local representation to excess. Insecurity of seats prevents members from devoting themselves to public business with zeal or confidence. They are engaged in a perpetual struggle for existence. Their time is expended on personal objects."

The report itself stated that—

"Many of the best men in the country must be deterred from entering upon a Congressional career, continuing in which requires such sacrifices to an evil system, so much of unpleasant effort, attended with uncertainty and probable mortification."

The select committee also said that the single-seat system "has not securities for the fair representation of political interests." Such was the experience of the United States. Mr. John Bright, in an address to the Eighty Club, during a discussion in England on the same question, in 1884, "condemned the proposal to divide the big towns into wards, because it would produce a degradation of the members returned."

Some remarks were made by the late Sir John O'Shanassy on the 26th August, 1873, during a debate in the Legislative Council on a Single Electorate Bill, which were worthy of the consideration of honorable members. On that occasion, Sir John O'Shanassy said—

"Let us ask ourselves whether the division of the country into 90 single electorates, coupled with the inducement that belongs to payment of members, will not encourage so many candidates to stand that we shall have in many cases five, eight, and ten of them coming forward to contest the representation of a single electorate, and whether the result will not almost certainly be that he who gets the support of the small compact minority of 200, 300, or 400 voters which is to be found in nearly every constituency will be returned? If that should happen in the majority of these 90 electorates, will you not have a Parliament representing the most illegitimate minority conceivable?"

That was going to be the result of the present Bill. Already, since the project of single electorates had been before the country, candidates had been heard of in every direction; and there would probably be half-a-dozen candidates for each single electorate, every one of them thinking it a grand opportunity to get into Parliament. In each case the man returned would undoubtedly, as shown by actual experience in the case of single electorates, represent a minority of the votes actually polled. Sir John O'Shanassy further stated—

"I am astonished that this danger has been so long overlooked. It would not be possible under the French law, which refuses to acknowledge the election of a representative who does not receive the votes of one-fourth of the electors. Thus, such a parochial system as that I now indicate is not thought of as tolerable, and I take it no intelligent nation would ever fall into so grave an error as to practically hand over the representative power to the minority that happened to be the most compact and the most active. I have seen enough of this country to know that the effect of carrying this measure, and of establishing under it the proposed system of equal electoral districts, each represented by one member, would probably be that the rule would pass to just such a minority as I describe."

Whatever might be the result of the present Bill he (Dr. Quick) desired to place on record his strong protest against the extension of the principle of single electorates. So far as his own district was concerned he objected entirely to the proposal to take away from it its representative power as a treble electorate—an electorate returning three members—which it had possessed for ten years. The people of the district had never asked for the alteration, and they were absolutely and totally opposed to the system of single electorates. Having said this, he would leave the responsibility of the matter with the House.

Mr. ANDREWS said that, in supporting the amendment, he would take the opportunity of bringing before the House the claims of Geelong to be continued as a treble electorate, which he had not an opportunity of doing in committee. The claims of Geelong, as a provincial centre, were not fairly met by the Bill. The measure would disintegrate political power in the provinces.
There could be no question that the multiplication of single electorates would reduce the provincial power in the Legislative Assembly. Districts returning two or three members not only represented their own interests, but were looked up to by the surrounding localities to represent their interests also; and from that aspect, as political centres, they had an influence in Parliament which would be utterly destroyed under the Bill. There might be reasons why single electorates were desirable in densely populated districts like the metropolitan districts; at the same time, there could be no doubt that the division of the city of Melbourne and its suburbs into single electorates would multiply plural voting to an extent never contemplated before, and would give a power to the metropolis, as against the country districts, which would be to the disadvantage of the people all through the colony. No one wished to deprive the metropolis of its legitimate influence in Parliament, but it must be patent that the cultivation of the power of the provincial centres was very desirable, especially in view of the extreme power given to the metropolis. The existing electoral system threw a large amount of power into Melbourne and its suburbs, but, under the present measure, that power would be increased almost tenfold. In fact, the multiplication of single electorates in the metropolis, and the consequent increase of plural voting, was a menace to the political influence of the provincial centres. On this ground, he had a strong objection to the fundamental principles of the Bill. He was also opposed to the measure for other reasons. He was opposed to it because it manipulated and split up districts in such a manner as to destroy all community of interest. Geelong had been very badly treated, for, in order to reduce its representation to two members, nearly two square miles had been taken away from it and added to the electorate of Grant. The Government had retracted their proposal to divide Geelong into single electorates, but, apparently, they did not consider that it had sufficient population, even if the boundaries of the present electorate were maintained, to warrant it continuing to have three members. The Government calculations as to population were, however, based on returns which were eight or nine years old. The population of Geelong had of late largely increased, and was still steadily increasing. The advantages which it offered in the shape of a fine climate, beautiful scenery, and facilities for sea-bathing were attracting many persons there, building operations were being carried on to a great extent, and an era of prosperity had dawned upon the town. And this was the time which the Government had selected for diminishing its representative power! The effect of single electorates upon the political power of the provincial centres would be very serious. It was scarcely possible to over-estimate the disastrous consequences which would probably result. Instead of having national questions dealt with upon national lines, the proceedings of Parliament would be reduced to parish vestry business, and parochialism in its worst form would prevail. The men returned to Parliament would be those who were mainly interested in frequenting the back offices of Ministers in order to get crumbs of political patronage and favours bestowed upon their constituents. Geelong, he repeated, had been very badly treated. Not only had its legitimate claims been ignored, but the Government had gone out of their way to injure the town, and to destroy the political influence which it had exercised in the past. Geelong had hitherto been regarded as a political centre by the whole of the western district. Many of the railway lines intended to meet the requirements and serve the interests of that district had been wrung from unwilling Governments in a great measure by the efforts put forth by Geelong and its representatives. All the scattered populations throughout the western district had commercial relations with Geelong, whose influence had always been exercised for their benefit, but now its power as a political centre was to be destroyed, because the Premier had set his foot down upon treble electorates and was determined that they should be wiped out. There was no reason why they should be abolished. The experiment contemplated by the Bill was a dangerous one. It had never been called for by the people of the colony. It had never been agitated for in any district; on the contrary, it had been denounced in many places. There had not been a single demonstration in favour of the proposals of the Government, except where an additional member was granted. It was patent that certain districts had been "mollified"—districts whose representatives hung round the Government. (Mr. Bailes—"Sandhurst has not been mollified.") He considered that both Sandhurst and Ballarat had been badly used, as well as Geelong. Although the area comprised within the present electoral

Mr. Andrews.
districts of Ballarat and Sandhurst would return the same number of members as hitherto, the way in which the electorates had been re-arranged was a blow aimed at the political power which they had hitherto exercised as political centres, and which power was necessary for the well-being and prosperity of the colony. Many honorable members who voted for the second reading of the Bill were opposed to its principles in their inmost souls. No honorable member had any objection to giving increased representation to districts like Gippsland, Moira, and the Wimmera; but why should that be done at the expense of provincial centres? Why should it be done at the expense of the “country party”? Why should the city of Melbourne be cut up so that its present wonderful power and political influence would be added to and increased? On the second reading of the Bill, he expressed his hostility to the measure, and he had heard no argument to warrant him in giving it any support whatever. No statesmanlike grounds had been put forward in support of the principle of single electorates; and no reasons had been adduced why the present treble-seated electorates should be abolished. Honorable members should hesitate before they committed themselves to the destruction of the provincial power to which he had referred. The coalition Government had sat like a wet sack upon political principles and political representation. The key-note originally struck by the Premier at Echuca had been rigidly adhered to, namely, that the Ministry would have nothing to do with questions involving important political principles. The coalition Government had acted as a sort of refrigerating process, to dry up and kill anything like political life. He admitted that as far as administration was concerned, they had done their level best. He believed that they had been honest in the administration of their departments. There had been no charge of anything like corruption against the Government, and they were entitled to credit for the way in which they had administered the departments. But, he repeated, they had sat like a wet sack upon political principles. He thought that the coalition business was about played out. He must protest against the power of the provincial centres being extinguished as they would be by this horrible Bill. If it was burnt or annihilated in some other way he was sure that honorable members would be pleased. A more simple measure could then be introduced to meet the claims of Gippsland, Moira, and the Wimmera—in fact, merely to rectify existing anomalies. He was sure that there had never been any expression of opinion to justify such proposals as the Government had submitted. His constituents could not be expected to support the Bill. It would be political suicide for them to do so. He was bound to oppose it to the utmost. He was glad that the objection to single electorates had been respected so far as Geelong was concerned, but he pleaded for the maintenance of the existing treble electorates. They were a power in the State which ought to be recognised and continued. The representative power of the country would, under the Bill, be handed over almost entirely to Melbourne; and when the metropolis had got the power in its grasp it would be bound to exercise it to the detriment of the provinces. The provincial centres, in fact, would be dried up, and Melbourne would become the sole dictator. There might as well be a Russian form of Government at once. He must again emphatically protest against the action of the Ministry as far as his district was concerned. Geelong seemed the only district which the Government had refused to recognise or to “mollify” in any way. He had never asked for the privilege of having the boundaries arranged to please himself, because he had relied upon the honour of the House to see that justice was done to Geelong. The influence which it had exercised for the last 25 or 40 years should not be destroyed by this iniquitous measure. He appealed to honorable members to deliver the constituency from the power of the Government, and to give it something like fair play by allowing it to continue to have three representatives. The representatives of Geelong had assisted all the country members in times past to get the just requirements of their respective constituencies conceded; and they had never opposed the legitimate claims of the metropolis. Geelong had from the first assisted in the political development of the colony to an extent which merited special consideration, and it would be for the good of the whole community if it was able to exercise the same power and influence in the future that it had done in the past.

Mr. JONES remarked that it was supposed that when a Bill was before the Assembly it would have a succession of consideration from honorable members—that it would advance from the first reading to the second reading, from the second reading to
the report, and then to the third reading, without any person interfering with the steady flow of legislation. In connexion with the present measure, he wished to show that the steady flow of legislation had been interfered with in a manner that the House could not possibly approve of. On the previous Thursday, when the proposed electoral district of North Melbourne was under consideration, the Premier said—

"He desired to propose an amendment, the object of which was to join the two proposed districts of North Melbourne and South Carlton into one electorate, returning two members. His only reason for submitting the amendment was to endeavour to meet the views of the honorable members for North Melbourne as far as possible, and if they did not approve of it he would adhere to the sub-schedule as it appeared in the Bill."

The Premier subsequently proposed the amendment to which he referred, and it was carried without a division. He (Mr. Jones) had before him the Bill with its schedule containing a description of the boundaries of the electoral district of Melbourne North, and assigning to the district two members. He had also before him a list of the proposed divisions of electorates, and he found that the arrangements were made for cutting up the electorate of Melbourne North as it had passed the committee. But he would like to know how the Premier or any other person had the right to interfere with what the committee had decided? What right had a little committee that assembled in the back parlour of an honorable member who resided in Carlton to interfere with a decision arrived at by a committee of the whole Assembly? Whoever the person might be that presumed to interfere with what had been done in the High Court Parliament did wrong. It was arranged, the previous week, that the electorates of Melbourne North and Carlton South, as they were set out in the Bill originally, should be brought together; and now it was understood that, without consulting honorable members who were consenting parties to that arrangement, the arrangement was to be broken through because of a hole-and-corner meeting held in a back parlour in Carlton a few nights ago. But he was inclined to think that the House was not disposed to allow itself to be overridden by hole-and-corner meetings. As to the amendment before the chair, he fully agreed with the honorable member for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gaunson) that there could be no disadvantage, and a great many advantages might accrue, from the continuance of a few treble electorates. He could not see any particular good that was to be secured by single electorates. Where, as in the case of Creswick, an electorate was absolutely too large, he saw no reason why it should not be cut into three, as that electorate appeared to have been cut with the full consent of the present representatives; but what reason was there for destroying treble electorates when the local residents had expressed no dissatisfaction with the constitution of those electorates? Was there to be change merely for the sake of change? Ballarat West had hitherto been well represented by three members. Why should that electorate be cut up? Granted that a few more people might be wanted to entitle the district to three members, let it be recollected that the "few more" was a matter which depended very much upon whim. The unit of representation depended very much upon the district that had to be satisfied and served. If it was Geelong, 26,000 persons would not suffice for three members. If it was Castlemaine, 14,000 persons could have two members. In West Melbourne, 8,000 would do for one member. So that he could not see where the unit of representation came in. No doubt it was well that there should be some single electorates; about double electorates there was no difficulty; and he did not see why there should not be a few treble electorates. Why should not Ballarat West and Windermere be united, so as to form one treble electorate, instead of, as the Bill proposed, one single and one double electorate? He believed there were people in Ballarat East who would be very glad to see the two electorates of Ballarat East and Warrenheip rolled into one. As to Geelong, Geelong had given very good reason why it should have three members; certainly as good reason as could be offered for giving two representatives to Castlemaine. As to Sandhurst, that electorate had been represented for many years by three members. The change proposed by the Bill would make no difference in the number of members for that district, but why should not Sandhurst and its environs be brought together once more —why should not interests that were related continue to be related, and to be represented by men that had represented them in the past? There was no necessity for prolonging the debate, but honorable members ought to say a few weighty words as vigorously as they could, and let this question be relegated.
to the people, as eventually it must be, with the
total protest of those who objected to a
system of gerrymandering. Let their pro-
test be given in such a way that the people,
at the next general election, might be able
to say whether this question had been dealt
with in a public spirited way by Ministers,
or whether it had been handled, as he feared it had been, with a view to the
gratification of certain individual interests
—to the satisfaction of some few persons
who preferred considering themselves to the
electorates which they were supposed to
represent.

Mr. BAILES observed that while he was
ready to admit that there might be treble-
seated constituencies which, owing to the
existence of conflicting interests, it would be
well to divide, in the case of a district like
Sandhurst, where a community of interest
prevailed, where there was no clashing of
mining with agriculture, there was no reason
at all why the treble-electoral system should
be abolished. He believed it was the fact
that no request for the abolition of treble
electorates had proceeded from any part of
the colony. If any such requests had been
made, there would have been some justification
for the framers of the Bill providing for
the abolition of treble electorates, but no
desire of the kind had been expressed. The
reason given by the Premier, when moving the
second reading of the Bill, for the abolition
of treble electorates, was that the dis-
tricts were too large, and the work alto-
gether too heavy for the members represent-
ing them, who broke down physically and
mentally under the strain to which they were
subjected. But neither of the present re-
presentatives for Sandhurst objected to the
existing state of affairs. They were per-
fectly prepared to take all the risks of
breaking down physically and mentally
through having to sit for a treble electorate.
Of one thing he was certain, and that was
that the Sandhurst people would never think
of returning to Parliament members who
were likely to be brought to an early grave
by the arduous character of their public
duties. Indeed, Sandhurst would be one of
the first places in the colony to protest
against the continuance of treble electorates,
if treble electorates were at all likely to be
attended by results such as had been de-
picted by the Premier. In order that Sand-
hurst might conform to the conditions of
the scheme advocated by the Premier, it
had been cut and carved about in a
most extraordinary fashion, with the
effect of making "confusion worse con-
ounded." Instead of taking territory
away from Sandhurst with the view of
reducing the population to a number that
would entitle the district to only two mem-
ers, it would have been the simplest thing
in the world to add to Sandhurst a portion
of an adjoining district which was identified
with it, and so have given it sufficient addi-
tional population to entitle it to retain its
present position as a treble electorate. The
Premier laid it down as a rule that the
average population for one member should
be, in metropolitan constituencies, 13,000;
in provincial cities and towns, 11,000; and
in all other districts, 9,000. Now Sand-
hurst had a population of over 27,000, and
if to it had been added the mining portions
of the shires of Marong and Strathfieldsaye
—the population of which were identified
with Sandhurst in every particular—the
population of the electorate would have been
32,000, the present representation could
have been retained, and all parties would
have been satisfied. The Premier had urged
that one effect of the redistribution of seats
provided for by the Bill would be to prevent
any further clashing of the mining and
agricultural vote; but he ventured to say
that under the amended proposals of the
Government with regard to the Sandhurst
district there would be one of the greatest
clashings of the agricultural and mining
interest that had ever occurred in the colony.
A large portion of South Sandhurst had
been taken away, and added to the shire of
Strathfieldsaye and part of the shire of
Marong. Now a large portion of Marong
and Strathfieldsaye was mining; and it was
reasonable to assume that the electors in
that territory would join with the electors
of South Sandhurst in a solid vote on the
mining ticket. But the remaining portion
of the area which would be embraced in the
future electorate of South Sandhurst was
agricultural; and the result would be that at
every election, the weaker section—whether
agricultural or mining—would be virtually
discharished. It had been admitted on all
hands—even by the Premier himself—that
the population of Sandhurst and Mandu-
rang was large enough to be entitled to six
members; and if the mining sections of
those two districts had been grouped to-
gether and assigned the number of mem-
bers to which they were entitled on the
population basis, the other members being
given to the agricultural sections, every-
things would have gone on smoothly. As it
was, a large portion of Sandhurst was tacked on to an agricultural district with which it had no political sympathy. Another reason why he considered that the present treble electorates should be continued was that he was afraid that to supersede them by single electorates on the principle laid down in the Bill was inimical to the political interests of the country. As he pointed out during the debate on the second reading, on every occasion when more than two candidates stood for a single electorate, the successful candidate was returned by a minority of the voters—and, in some cases, a minority so small that it was a farce to say that he represented the district.

Mr. DONAGHY remarked that the people of Geelong wanted their district to remain a treble electorate as it had been for years. Geelong was the second oldest town in the colony. He admitted that for some years after the opening of the railway to Ballarat its commercial interests were to some extent interfered with; but, subsequently, things improved, and the improvement had gone on to such an extent that, within the last twelve months, the value of property in Geelong had increased fully 25 per cent. It should also be recollected that Geelong was the port for the whole western district, and that the shipping which frequented it was increasing year by year. Geelong was likewise the site of the first established and largest woollen manufactories in the colony. Tanning and other industries were carried on there. Under these circumstances it was indeed hard that Geelong, just as it was on the turning point to prosperity, should be deprived of one of its members. It seemed strange that, at such a time, the Ministry should seek to put their heel on Geelong, and deprive it of its representation to which it was entitled. In his opinion, the Bill ought to find its way to the waste-paper basket. It was neither useful nor ornamental. It was a disgrace to the Government who brought it in, and to those honorable members who supported it.

Mr. LAURENS stated that it was his intention, when the portion of the 2nd schedule describing the boundaries of North Melbourne was reached, to propose an amendment. He would then endeavour to show the injustice attempted to be done to the district he had represented for many years. Meanwhile he would mention that, on the 2nd October, a public meeting of the electors of North Melbourne was convened by the mayor, and at that meeting the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"That, in the opinion of this meeting, the electors of North Melbourne should protest against the Bill, at all events so far as it proposed to turn Ballarat East into a single electorate. Ballarat East was one of the oldest gold-fields electorates in Victoria; it had always hitherto had the privilege of returning two members, and he did not see why it should be treated in the way it was intended to treat it. Let it be remembered what Ballarat was, and what it had done. Ballarat as a whole had a population of over 50,000, it had won from the soil over £60,000,000 worth of gold, and its great fame had attracted to it the cream of the civilized world. Moreover, the community of Ballarat was the first in the southern hemisphere to stand up for the liberties and privileges which were now enjoyed by the whole community. He would ask honorable members all round if it could possibly be right to take from those who fought the battle of 1854 nearly a clear half of the electoral privileges they now possessed? Again, why should Ballarat East, with its population of 23,000, be a single electorate, while Castlemaine, with a population of only 14,000, would be able to return two members? The proposed deprivation was simply a monstrous outrage, and he would be cowardly if he hesitated a moment in placing the transaction in its true light. What did the Ballarat Star say on the subject? In spite of it having
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hitherto constantly supported the Government, it expressed itself, in its issue of that morning, as follows:—

“We do not know of any reason why Castlemaine and Maldon are entitled to three members any more than Ballarat East is to two, or Geelong—with slight modifications of boundary—to three. And when the demands of both these electorates were imperiously refused, it is something more than an injustice to them to grant similar requests coming from elsewhere. The Government will find it difficult to convince their friends that they have not, in this matter, weakly trifled with their avowed principles, with the Assembly, and with the country at large.”

In addition, the town council of Ballarat East, some few weeks since, unanimously adopted the following resolution:—

“That this council disapproves of the proposed alteration in the present boundaries of the electoral district of Ballarat East.”

And he had that day received the following telegram from the town clerk of the municipality:—

“Sub-committee of the town council, consisting of His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Williams, and Councillor Gale, on behalf of the town council, decidedly object to a single electorate for the town of Ballarat East.”

This was sufficient to show the local feeling on the subject. He might state that, on Friday last, the Ballarat East Council authorized a select committee to draw up a petition to the Legislative Council praying it to remedy the injustice the district was apparently about to suffer.

Sir B. O’LOGHLEN remarked that he was still unable to see why Villiers and Heytesbury should have had meted out to it treatment so different from that meted out to Sandhurst and other favoured localities. Possibly, however, some explanation of the arrangement might be found in the proceedings of the Chamber on Thursday last, after he left it. Certainly what took place then had entirely converted him to the view that a treble electorate as a rule possessed far more power than three single electorates. What could it be save the peculiar force wielded by the double electorate of Castlemaine, and the treble electorate of Sandhurst, backed up as they were by the exertions of the honorable member for Maldon, which procured for them the alterations in their favour which were made almost at the last minute? Had half-a-dozen single electorates banded themselves together in the same way, they could never have exerted the same influence. They would have been killed in detail. What was bound to be inferred from the transaction to which he alluded? That some grossly undue favouritism had been practised. It was evidently a strong sense that that was the case that moved the municipal council of Ballarat East to determine to petition the Legislative Council against the injustice it was proposed to do to that district. Why, the bare thought of conceding an additional member to any less powerful combination of representatives would have driven the Government into hysterics. Under all the circumstances, he would have no hesitation in supporting the amendment.

Mr. RUSSELL thought that it devolved on him to offer a few words with respect to the Ballarat East electorate, and he would do so without looking at the matter in the light of any personal interest. For himself, indeed, he could assert that he would be perfectly satisfied were the existing boundaries maintained. One thing he had to mention was that, when he was absent with the Minister of Public Works, his honorable colleague tried to “get at” the Ballarat East Council by endeavouring to make it appear that he (Mr. Russell) was unwilling to adhere to the old boundaries. Now, he had told his honorable colleague beforehand, and he fully meant what he said, that he wanted the old boundaries maintained. Moreover, the honorable member got the council to believe that he (Mr. Russell) did not wish Ballarat East to be a double electorate. Now he had previously distinctly assured the honorable member that he (Mr. Russell) would go in for a double electorate if the Gordons portion was cut off. Allusion had been made to the sub-committee appointed by the council, and to the decision it arrived at; but what did Councillor Gale say to him on Saturday? He uttered this remark—“Russell, I am in favour of a dual electorate, but it must not be with Bangars.” That indicated what Ballarat East really wanted, namely, a community of interests in its electorate. The mayor himself had pointed out what a very different state of things would arise if the Gordons district was brought into Ballarat East. Taking the Bill on its merits, he (Mr. Russell) would vote for it, but he would not vote for it if it was altered in the fashion now proposed. What did the Opposition do? They went to the Premier, and, if they could have managed it, they would have “sold” the Ballarat East constituency altogether. Reference had been made once or twice of late to the last public meeting.
held at Ballarat East. Well, it was not a bad meeting, although the attendance was not much over 150 people. But when it declared for a dual electorate, what sort of dual electorate did it ask for? That the municipal boundaries should be kept intact, with the addition of Mount Clear and Little Bendigo. Such an arrangement would bring in a population of some 10,000 or 20,000, and it was agreed unanimously. He (Mr. Russell) told his honorable colleague that he would try all he could to carry out the wishes of the constituency, and he brought down the most astute financial man Ballarat East had to interview the Premier in order to get those wishes conceded. It was rather an odd thing that neither his honorable colleague nor the Opposition generally had ever, in all their dealings with the Premier, asked him straight, as he (Mr. Russell) had over and over again urged them in every way he could to do, that the Ballarat East electorate should embody a community of interests. As for that electorate being made a double one, including Gordons as well as Bungaree, and so on, he would never consent to it. Not that he had personally anything to fear from such an arrangement. The first time he stood, the forest gave him 60 votes, next time it gave him 80, next 180, and at his fourth election he polled 250 forest votes. If his honorable colleague could say that he had ever tried to get the existing Ballarat East boundary pure and simple, let him make the assertion. The people of Ballarat East wanted Ballarat East represented, and that was what he (Mr. Russell) had all along gone for.

Dr. Rose remarked that the reason why honorable members on the Ministerial side had not joined in the debate was obvious. It was that the legislation they were seeking to carry was being pushed forward not so much within the chamber as outside—in the lobbies and by-ways of the House. What had the speeches on the Bill proved? That all the grievances connected with the Bill lay with the Opposition, and, moreover, that those grievances were so genuine in their character as to make it perfectly plain that a shameful system of unfairness, injustice, and bribery was being practised. What had been the course followed by the Government with regard to the Bill? In the first place they professed to lay down certain definite principles, but those principles were based upon a most imperfect foundation; and such as they were, they had not attempted to carry them out faithfully. For example, having begun on the line of single electorates, how had they followed it? To suit the Premier they had retained Rodney as a double electorate, and, for the sake of another Minister, they had turned what was formerly a single electorate into a double one. In short, the idea had been to serve the interests, not of the public, but of Ministerial members—to make things easy for Ministerial candidates at the next general election by giving them walk-overs, instead of honest and fair election contests. Another principle professedly laid down was that municipal boundaries should be constituted electoral boundaries, so that the individual interest of particular centres should not be overlooked. But in many instances that principle had been absolutely departed from. Why? Because the localities concerned were represented by opposition members. Look at the district of North Melbourne, where the people were most anxious for such fair and honest representation, according to population and municipal boundary, as they would have in effect if two members were given to the North Melbourne constituency and two to the Carlton constituency. An arrangement of that sort would be most just, but what justice could be expected from Ministers? What did the Government propose to do with this most important portion of the metropolis? In order to favour particular interests, they had cut and carved it about so that now the original constituency of North Melbourne was utterly disintegrated—utterly deprived of the grand political influence it had for so many years in the past been able to exert. In the whole of the district known as North Melbourne not a single municipal line of demarcation worthy the name was to be used for electoral purposes. The fact was that, because its tendencies were unmistakably liberal, a conservative Premier had found it necessary to divide it as much as possible. The electorate of North Melbourne, from being a double one, was to be turned into a single one—for what reason? Because certain gentlemen, not in any way authorized on behalf of the public, had asked that that should be done—that there should be one member for a constituency to be called North Melbourne and another for a constituency to be called South Carlton. He (Dr. Rose) was informed that the whole business was arranged at a meeting, held in a certain room, between a number of private individuals and a number of Ministerial
The Premier also laid down the principle that there should be no increase of members, but had it been adhered to? On the contrary, although a large majority of the House were anxious that the number of members should be kept to 86, the Government had wanted from the beginning to increase it to 93, and at a late hour the other night they managed to bring it up to 95. No doubt the particular district interested in that increase deserved to have three members instead of two, but none the less were Ministers guilty of a violation of principle. Besides, why, if Sandhurst got justice, should not North Melbourne also get justice? When the Bill, in its altered state, went before the people of Victoria, it would carry with it a tale of injustice which would assuredly attract public attention, and excite public feeling is no common way.

Mr. MUNRO said he did not at all understand the position taken up by honorable members on the Ministerial side of the House, or their sense of indifference with respect to the unfairness and injustice the Government were practising. He did not object to the alteration, made the other night, which involved the creation of an extra member; but why, when justice was done to a certain section of the population of the colony, was it not agreed to do similar justice to the larger population of Geelong? It could not be said that Geelong was going down, because, on the contrary, its affairs were prosperous, and the number of its inhabitants was increasing. Under these circumstances, why should it suffer the reduction of its representation from three members to two? He would appeal to honorable members to deal fairly and equitably with constituencies which were similarly placed. If there was any justification—and he did not deny that there was justification—for old established places like Maldon and Castlemaine having three members, there was no justification for treating Geelong differently. He thought the proposal now before the House that Sandhurst, Ballarat West, Geelong, and Mandurang should be retained in their present position was a very reasonable one. Not a single complaint had been heard from those constituencies or their representatives with regard to the inconvenience of their being treble electorates, and, such being the case, why should the House interfere and cut up the electorates in the way proposed? The amendment was a just and equitable one, which must appeal to the sense of justice of honorable members of the Assembly if they had any sense of justice. There was one strong reason why he would strongly impress, on the liberal members of the Assembly especially, the advisability of supporting the amendment. He had never, under any circumstances, directly or indirectly, appealed to the other Chamber to alter the decision of the Assembly. He was not a party to such a course now, but he knew that in his own constituency the people had given up all hope of obtaining justice from the Assembly, and were going to appeal to the other House. He thought it was greatly to be deplored that any grounds should be given for such a course, because it was calculated to weaken and injure the Assembly in the estimation of the people. But in Geelong he heard his constituents saying, "It is perfectly hopeless to appeal to the Assembly; it is under the control of the Government, and they are going to injure Geelong; we must appeal to a Chamber where we may expect to get justice." He objected to that. He believed this was the Chamber where the people of the country should be fairly and honestly represented, but he maintained that if the Assembly, while granting to another portion of the colony with an equal or less population three members, insisted on depriving Geelong of one of its members, it could not justify such a proceeding on any ground of equity or justice. Under such circumstances it would be no matter for surprise if the people of Geelong appealed to the other Chamber for justice, although he had not recommended and would not recommend such a course. Talk about public meetings! A public meeting was held at Geelong the other day—not a party meeting, but a meeting at which every shade of political opinion was represented—and instructions were given to the members for the constituency to use every means in their power to prevent injustice being done. He was now appealing to the Assembly to do justice. He did not ask for any special favour, but merely that Geelong should continue to have its present representation, and he was justified in claiming that on the ground that it had a larger population than other places which had been granted three members. As to North Melbourne, he knew that what one of the honorable members for that constituency had stated was perfectly true—that the town of North Melbourne proper was cut up in such a way that 7,500 of the people of that constituency
were going to be overruled by 8,000 of
the people of another district. This was
depriving them of their rights and pri-
ileges—of their political power—and for
what reason? To increase the conservative
influence in the Assembly, and to destroy the
liberal influence. He was really surprised that
men whom he knew to be thorough liberals
should be found voting to destroy liberal
constituencies. Surely support of a coal-
ition Government to-day was not of sufficient
importance to justify the destruction for all
time of the political influence of liberal con-
stituencies. Whatever side of the House he
might sit on he would not, as a liberal, see
a liberal constituency destroyed in such a
way, without rhyme or reason. There was
not the slightest occasion for it, because the
whole thing could be arranged in such a
way as to give North Melbourne the fair
representation it ought to have. For all
these reasons, he felt bound to support the
amendment of the honorable member for
Emerald Hill (Mr. Gannson). He did not
say that the amendment was the best
way in which the matter could be put, but
honorable members whose constituencies
were unjustly treated were bound to do
something to bring the unfair position in
which they were placed formally before the
House.

Mr. C. SMITH observed that the only
argument he had heard put forward in favour
of triple electorates since the amendment
was moved was that used by the honorable
member for Belfast, namely, that an electo-
rate would have more political power with
three members than it would have if cut up
into three single electorates. He thought
that, however, would not be an unmixed
benefit, because a Ministry might sometimes
be called upon by the representatives of two
or three triple electorates to do something
which was not exactly proper. Although
there had been few arguments, there had
been a good deal of mud-throwing at certain
members on the Ministerial side of the
House. One honorable member said there
was nothing but injustice done to the
members of the Opposition, and that the
Bill as regarded members on the Ministerial
side was bribery. When such a charge was
made, a great deal depended upon who made
it; and, in view of the quarter from which
the charge came that evening, he did not
think that any honorable member on the
Ministerial side of the House felt sting by
it in the slightest degree. His chief object
in rising, however, was to put himself right
in regard to the vote he intended to give.

The amendment of the honorable member
for Emerald Hill (Mr. Gannson) was that
Richmond should have three members, and
he (Mr. Smith) wanted to have it clearly
understood that it was the electoral district
of Richmond, not the municipal district,
that the honorable member meant, because
he could see how this could be played upon
hereafter. The electoral district of Rich-
mond was given three members by the Bill,
and he could state unhesitatingly, from what
he knew of his constituents, that they were
better satisfied to have one dual and one
single electorate than to have three members
for the present electoral district of Rich-
mond in one constituency. Having put
himself right on this point, he would vote
against the amendment.

Mr. L. L. SMITH stated that he was
not at all satisfied with the Bill. His
constituents had instructed him to inform
the House that they required two members.
They also stated that the manner in which
the district had been cut up was something
altogether disreputable. The Berwick people
were extremely dissatisfied at being annexed
to Dandenong, and the Cranbourne people
considered that the boundaries in that di-
rection were altogether unnatural and arti-
ficial. The arrangement his constituency
would have desired was that the district
should have been divided into two separate
portions, one taking in the whole of the
sea-board, and the other the inland country.
The latter was altogether a farming district,
and its interests were entirely different from
those of the people on the sea-board. He
represented to the Ministry the views which
the Cranbourne Shire Council desired him
to place before them, but he found that it
was useless. The Ministry had too many
straight supporters behind them who were
being nicely provided for for any member
of the Opposition to hope to make any
alteration in the Bill. He considered that
the Bill was being rushed altogether too
hurriedly through the House. It should
have been sent to the various constituencies
so as to enable them to hold meetings and
pronounce in what manner they desired the
different districts to be cut up. On behalf
of his constituency he protested against
the arbitrary and artificial divisions which
had been made.

Mr. TUCKER remarked that if any hon-
orable member had ever implied a threat to
appeal to another place to deal with the rep-
resentation of the Assembly, the honorable
member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) had done so that night. He believed such a threat would be scouted throughout the length and breadth of the colony. No doubt another place did, on a certain occasion, throw out an Electoral Bill, but what was the consequence? There was an appeal to the country at once, and that was the commencement of the reform agitation which lasted so many years. He ventured to think that the other House as now constituted would never dream of interfering with the representation of the Assembly. (Mr. Munro—"They have thrown out another Bill since.") Notwithstanding all that had been said about the objections of constituencies to the proposals in the Bill, his own belief was that there was a very large amount of apathy on the question in the country—that the constituencies were really not in the chronic state of insubordination that some members made out. (Mr. L. L. Smith—"Meetings have been held all over the country condemning the Bill.") He was not one of those who thought the Bill was perfect. On the contrary he thought it had some radical faults, and he considered that one of the mistakes committed by the Government was in trying to make a sort of compromise at the beginning with members for the country districts, and particularly those who represented districts where the population was not equal to the ordinary average required for representation. A mistake was made in assuming that 10,000 people in the country should have more representation than 10,000 people in the town—that 10,000 people, if they came to town, should not have the same political rights as they had enjoyed in the country. He thought also that a mistake was made in increasing the number of members of the Assembly, and certainly it was a most weak movement, the other night, to allow still another member to be added for a district notoriously short of population. The present number of members should not have been increased, and the unit of representation should have been uniform throughout the colony. In that case his own constituency would have had three members. (Mr. Gaunson—"Yet you support the Bill.") With all its imperfections he supported the Bill, because he would look forward with grave apprehension to another Assembly elected on the same basis as the present dealing with the large questions which would have to be settled in the next Parliament—notably the incidence of taxation; involving a change in the Tariff.

In fact, he objected himself when the Government introduced their Tariff to the present Assembly dealing with the question, on the ground that it was incompetent to do so, because it did not truly represent the people. His own constituency had been cut and carried by the Bill, and a piece of it cut off. (Mr. Zox—"You vote for it being retained, and I will support you.") He was surprised at the honorable member looking with such apprehension at the part of Fitzroy proposed to be added to East Melbourne. He could assure the honorable member that the people in that locality were quite as respectable as any in East Melbourne, and he was extremely sorry to lose them. He regretted very much that Fitzroy could not be left intact owing to the necessity for altering the boundaries all round. He could only say, however, that when persons in his own constituency had objected to the alteration, and he had asked them to supply an alternative, they had been utterly unable to do so. If it had been possible for Fitzroy to have had three members, he would have been extremely glad. It was simply owing to the lenient way in which the Bill was drawn up—the large amount of voting power given to the country beyond what it could fairly claim—that Fitzroy had to be content with two members instead of three.

The House divided on Mr. Gaunson’s amendment:

**Ayes**...

**Noves**...

Majority against the amendment 20

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**Ayes.**

Mr. Andrews,

" Bailey,

" Bent,

" Brown,

" Burrowes;

" Donaghy,

" Gaunson,

" Graves;

" Hunt,

" Jones,

" Langdon,

" Laurens,

" McIntryre,

" Munro,

" Murphy,

Sir B. O’Loghlen,

Mr. Peirce,

Dr. Quick,

Mr. L. L. Smith,

Toogood,

Vale,

Tellars,

Mr. Baker,

Dr. Rose.

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**Noves.**

Mr. Anderson (C.),

" Anderson (V.),

" Bourcher,

" Coppin,

" D. M. Davies,

" Deakin,

" Derham,

" Dow,

" Field,

" Ferguson,

" Fink,

" Gardiner,

" Gillies,

" Gordon,

" Graham,

" Groom,

" Hall,

" A. Harris,
Mr. J. Harris, Mr. Russell,
" Keys, " C. Smith,
" Langridge, " Stoughton,
" McColl, " Tucker,
" McLean, " Tuthill,
" McLellan, " Uren,
" Murray, " Wright,
" Nimmo, " Wrixon,
" Outtrim, " A. Young,
" Patterson, " Zoë,
" Pearson, " Tellera,
" Rees, " Mr. Cameron,
" Reid, " Shackell.

Mr. BENT asked the Premier how far it was intended to go with the Bill before the House adjourned? He would suggest that only the amendments of which notice had been given should be disposed of that night, leaving the insertion of the divisions of the various electoral districts and the third reading of the Bill to stand over until Tuesday. If this suggestion was agreed to, he thought it was very probable that the Bill might be got out of the way on Tuesday.

Mr. GILLIES said he thought the arrangement suggested by the leader of the Opposition was a reasonable one, and he would be very happy to fall in with it.

Amendments in the 2nd schedule, describing the boundaries of the several electorates, were then considered.

Mr. HUNT proposed an amendment in the description of the boundaries of the electorate of Anglesey. The object of the amendment, he explained, was to transfer a population of about 200 from the electorate of Anglesey to the electorate of Evelyn. Personally, he had no objection to the electors whom the amendment affected remaining in Anglesey, but it was their desire to be placed in the electorate of Evelyn.

Mr. MUNRO, in supporting the amendment, stated that the locality which it was desired to include in the Evelyn electorate was the eastern portion of the shire of Healesville. The effect of the alteration would be that the whole of that shire would be included in the electoral district of Evelyn.

Mr. GILLIES expressed the hope that the amendment would not be pressed, because the effect of its adoption would be to create a disarrangement in the county of Evelyn. There was really no necessity for making the change, inasmuch as the people in the locality in question would be just as well represented by the member for Anglesey as by the member for Evelyn.

The amendment was negatived.

Mr. GILLIES moved that the name of the electorate of Armadale (originally Toorak) be amended by the insertion of the words “Toorak and” before “Armadale.”

The amendment was agreed to, and a technical alteration was made in the description of the boundaries of the electorate.

Mr. GILLIES moved an amendment in the description of the boundaries of the electoral district of Ballarat East, so as to strike out territory that formed a portion of the existing electorate of Ballarat West, in accordance with the arrangement that had been come to that it should be included within the new electorate of Ballarat West, instead of being placed in Ballarat East.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. MURPHY proposed an amendment to provide that Ballarat East should remain as at present constituted, and continue to return two members. The people of Ballarat East were very desirous that the present electorate should not be interfered with. It was one of the oldest and most important electorates in the colony, and the feeling of the inhabitants ought to be consulted in this matter. The district was growing in population.

Mr. JONES supported the amendment.

Mr. RUSSELL supported the amendment.

Mr. RUSSELL supported the amendment.

Mr. GILLIES said he could not consent to the amendment, although, from his former connexion with Ballarat, he would be very glad to do anything he could to forward the interests either of Ballarat East or Ballarat West. Ballarat East was divided by the Bill into two single electorates, so that it really did not lose a representative. (Mr. McIntyre—“Cannot the two electorates be amalgamated?”) The greater portion of one of them—Warrenheip—was a purely agricultural constituency, and the people there did not desire to be joined to Ballarat East, which was a mining district.

The House divided on the question that the words proposed by Mr. Murphy to be omitted (with the view of inserting other words) stand part of the subdivision describing the electorate of Ballarat East:—

Ayes ... ... ... ... 34
Noes ... ... ... ... 17

Majority against the amendment 17
Mr. TUTHILL moved that the name of the electorate of Beechworth be amended by substituting for "Beechworth" the words the "Ovens." He submitted this amendment by the request of the Chiltern Shire Council. His honorable colleague had suggested that the name should be "Bogong" which was the name of the county, but one reason why that name should not be adopted was that another electorate was called "Borung," and with names so similar confusion might arise.

Mr. GILLIES stated that he would have no objection to the electorate being called "Bogong." The district which was really entitled to be called "the Ovens" was Bright.

Mr. FERGUSON considered it would be a monstrous proceeding to give the name of "the Ovens" to the Beechworth electorate. Why the Ovens River did not come within 14 miles of that electorate, whereas it ran for 70 miles through the centre of the shire of Bright.

Mr. TUTHILL said as his honorable colleague objected to the amendment he would not press it, but would propose instead that the name of the electorate be "Bogong."

This amendment was agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. FERGUSON, the name of the electorate of Bright was altered to "the Ovens."
be joined together under the name of "Melbourne North" and return two members, he intimated that he did so presuming that there were no objections. Since then objections had arisen from many sources. The principal objection was to the South Carlton portion being called Melbourne North.

Mr. LAURENS remarked that, under the present proposal, the municipality of North Melbourne would be deprived of a portion of its territory on the east—of an area which had nothing to do, in a municipal sense, with Carlton, and which not a soul in Carlton had expressed a wish to have added on to it.

Mr. GILLIES stated that if the honorable member for North Melbourne (Mr. Laurens) would show him how the proposed boundaries could be altered in the way of improvement, without interfering with the proper constitution of the electorate, he (Mr. Gillies) would try his utmost to meet his views. He was ready to do anything reasonable.

Dr. ROSE considered that the Premier was acting most unfairly. North Melbourne was being knocked about not only in the most shameful manner but also in a way utterly contrary to the wishes of the population. It seemed as though, because certain back-door influences had been brought to bear, the whole constituency was to be utterly mutilated.

Mr. GARDINER stated that for many years past there had been a strong agitation in favour of Smith Ward being separated from the North Melbourne constituency; and there could be no doubt that this separation had at different times been advocated by both the members for the district. For example, one of them (Mr. Laurens) spoke with respect to the Electoral Bill of 1885 as follows:—

"I would have been glad had this Bill proposed a general scheme of redistribution, if the portion of the electorate of North Melbourne on the Carlton side had been separated from it. There is no community of interest between the two portions, and there is a feeling that they ought to be severed."

Well, that, except with regard to the small portion of Holm which lay between the Sydney-road and Peel-street, was exactly the plan the Government were now carrying out.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. GILLIES drew attention to the subdivision relating to the electorate of Clunes, and moved an amendment of the boundaries which was, he stated, of only a consequential character.

Mr. ANDERSON (Creswick) said he would like, if it was possible to do so, to move an amendment which would carry out the wishes expressed at a public meeting recently held in the Clunes district.

Mr. GILLIES explained that the only change contemplated in the amendment was placing a portion of the Allandale district in the Clunes electorate and a portion of the Stawell district—a purely agricultural one—in the Creswick electorate. The question raised at the meeting the honorable member for Creswick (Mr. Anderson) alluded to could be dealt with in no other way.

The amendment was agreed to, as were also consequential amendments in the subdivisions referring to the Collingwood, Creswick, and Delatite electorates.

Mr. GILLIES drew attention to the subdivision relating to the electorate of Eaglehawk, and moved an amendment technically altering the line dividing it from the Sandhurst electorate.

Mr. BAILES moved a further amendment adopting "the northern boundary of the city of Sandhurst" as the line of division.

Mr. GILLIES stated that the Government had, with the consent of honorable members, practically given the district of Sandhurst three members, and in that way virtually brought up the representation of Sandhurst and Mandurang to six members. So far they had done everything they could to comply with the wishes of the honorable members representing that portion of the colony. The only question remaining was the best method of division, which had given all the more trouble, because the honorable members concerned were not agreed among themselves. (Mr. Bailes—"The Chief Secretary promised me that the boundary I now propose should be adopted.") The Chief Secretary promised that, if possible, the northern boundary would be taken as the line of division between Eaglehawk and Sandhurst, but it was found that that could not be done. If the whole of Long Gully was taken into Sandhurst by running the boundary line in the way now proposed, the character of the constituency of Eaglehawk would be totally changed, and it would have to go north into Mandurang. It should be remembered that Eaglehawk was essentially a mining constituency, and that...
to make it include agricultural population would be a very incongruous arrangement. He did not think that, considering how the Government had given way, there ought to be any objection offered to their proposal. Had he thought the honorable members for Sandhurst would have been so hard to satisfy, he would have scarcely been so willing to meet their views.

Mr. BURROWES contended that the amendment ought to be accepted by the Government, because it would really carry out the arrangement entered into the previous Thursday. Besides, it would never do to leave Quarry Hill out of the city electorate.

Mr. BAILES said there could be no doubt that, upon his complaint that the boundaries proposed by the Government would cut Long Gully in two, the Chief Secretary distinctly promised that the line of division between Eaglehawk and Sandhurst should be the northern boundary of Sandhurst proper.

Mr. Bailes' amendment was negatived, and the amendment proposed by Mr. Gillies was then agreed to.

The subdivision relating to the electorate of Fitzroy was technically amended.

Mr. MUNRO called attention to the subdivision describing the electoral district of Geelong, and said that he desired to make a last appeal to the Premier that the electorate should be allowed to continue to return three members. The other night, or rather in the small hours of the morning, the House, in a generous mood, granted two members to Castlemaine and one to Maldon. Geelong, however, had a larger population than those two districts combined, and therefore it was fully entitled to the same share of representation. The population of Geelong, as put down in the statistics circulated by the Government for the information of honorable members, was not correct, inasmuch as the whole of the shipping interest and the population in Corio Bay had been excluded. (Mr. Gillies—"That is also the case with respect to Hobson's Bay.") But there had been no attempt to take away representation from any constituency on the shores of Hobson's Bay. The population of Geelong was not diminishing, but, on the contrary, increasing. He hoped that the Premier would consent to place Geelong on the same footing, as regarded representation, with Castlemaine and Maldon. A very sore feeling would be created if the Bill became law in its present form, whereby Castlemaine and Maldon would return three members, while Geelong, with a larger population than those two districts combined, would have only two members. He would ask the Premier to move that "two" be omitted with the view to insert "three," so that Geelong might continue to return three members.

Mr. GILLIES said he could quite understand the honorable member advocating as strongly as possible the claims of the constituency he represented to continue to return three members, but he would put it to the honorable member whether he really thought that Geelong, which was a town with a little over 20,000 inhabitants, was entitled to have three representatives? (Mr. Munro—"I believe the population is 26,000.") He could not agree with the honorable member. The greatest care had been taken in estimating the population, and he believed that the number put down in the statistics published by the Government was correct as nearly as possible. (Mr. Munro—"The population of Geelong is as large as that of Castlemaine and Maldon added together.") The population of the Castlemaine and Maldon electorates was estimated at 26,700, and they were essentially country districts, extending over a large area. Several of the metropolitan constituencies which were to return only one member each had a considerably greater population than was necessary to entitle them to return one member. For instance, the proposed electoral district of St. Kilda had a population of 14,000, and that of Essendon and Flemington had a population of 15,000. When districts with such large populations were to return only one member each, the honorable member for Geelong (Mr. Munro) would strongly oppose any proposition to allot three members to a district with a population of a little over 20,000 if that district were any other than Geelong.

Mr. MUNRO mentioned that when he represented North Melbourne he supported a proposition that Geelong should continue to have three members.

Mr. GILLIES remarked that he would be glad to serve the interests of Geelong as far as he possibly could, but he felt that he would not be justified in consenting to it being allowed to continue to return three members.

Mr. DONAGHY considered that his honorable colleague (Mr. Munro) had made out a very fair case for Geelong to have three members allotted to it under the Bill.
He hoped that the Premier would give the matter further consideration before the measure was finally disposed of.

Mr. MUNRO expressed his regret that the Premier seemed determined to oppose the suggestion that Geelong should continue to have three members.

Mr. GILLIES moved an amendment in the description of the boundaries of the electoral district of Maldon.

Mr. McIntyre stated that the amendment scarcely carried out the arrangement arrived at the other evening, when it was determined that Castlemaine should have two representatives and Maldon one. A portion of the present electorate of Mandurang was added to Maldon. Personally, he had not the slightest objection to this accession of territory, but, in his opinion, it was totally unnecessary, and therefore he hoped the Premier would agree to strike it out.

Mr. GILLIES said that the territory alluded to by the honorable member was included in the electorate of Maldon because it formed a convenient boundary line. The only effect of it was to place about 200 additional people in that electorate. (Mr. McIntyre—"Has the district asked for it?"") Yes, the district had asked for it.

The amendment was agreed to, and a consequential amendment was made in the subdivision describing the electorate of Mandurang.

Mr. PEIRCE proposed that the subdivision describing the electorate of Melbourne should be amended by substituting "two" for "one." His object was that the proposed electorates of Melbourne and Melbourne West should be amalgamated and return two members, instead of being separate electorates, returning one member each. They would then occupy a similar position to the electorate of Melbourne East.

The amendment was negatived.

Mr. GILLIES moved the following amendment in the subdivision describing the electorate of Melbourne North:

"That the words 'to Leicester-street; north by Leicester-street to Pelham-street; east by Pelham-street and a line passing through Argyle and Lincoln squares to Rathdowne-street; south by Rathdowne-street to Queensberry-street; east by a line in continuation of Queensberry-street to Nicholson-street; north by Nicholson-street to Palmerston-street; west by Palmerston-street to Keppel-street; north-west by Keppel-street to College-crescent; north-west by Chapel-street to College-crescent and Cemetery-road to the Sydney-road; north by ' be omitted with a view to insert in place thereof the words 'Peel-street North by Peel-street and.'"

He explained that the effect of the amendment would be to include the Hotham Townhall in the electorate of Melbourne North.

The amendment was agreed to, and a further amendment was made, allotting one member to the electorate instead of two members.

Mr. LAURENS asked whether he could propose, after the third reading of the Bill, the amendment which he had intimated his intention of moving in regard to the electorate of Melbourne North?

Mr. GILLIES replied that the honorable member could do so.

Mr. LAURENS intimated that he would postpone his amendment until after the third reading of the Bill.

The title of the electorate of Donald was amended by the addition to "Donald" of the words "and Swan Hill."

Mr. GILLIES moved that the name of the Talbot electorate be amended by the addition to "Talbot" of the words "and Avoca."

Mr. BOURCHIER said that a portion of his constituents desired that the old name of Avoca should stand first, by calling the electorate "Avoca and Talbot." He thought it was only right that the names should be placed in alphabetical order.

Mr. GILLIES stated that there was an objection on the part of some of the electors to "Avoca," having precedence of "Talbot" in the designation of the electorate.

Mr. FINK observed that, as far as he was concerned, he was quite willing to leave the naming of the electorate to the Premier.

Mr. O'UTTRIM expressed the opinion that the proposal of the Premier was a very good one. As Talbot was the name of the county, it ought to have precedence of Avoca in giving the title to the electorate.

The amendment was agreed to.

On the motion of Mr. GILLIES, formal amendments were made in the description of the electorates of Footscray, South Gippsland, West Gippsland, Grant, Rodney, Sandhurst, Sandhurst South, South Yarra, St. Kilda, and Wanganatta and Rutherglen. The further consideration of the report of the committee was adjourned until the following Tuesday.

The House adjourned at thirteen minutes past one o'clock a.m., until Tuesday, November 13.
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