

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said, that there being but little business in the paper for the following (this day), and as there was little hope of getting an average attendance, owing to the prevalence of the influenza, he would move (with permission) that the House adjourn till Tuesday next, the business of Friday (this day) to take precedence on Tuesday.
The Motion was carried and the House adjourned at 10 minutes to 5.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Our readers will agree with us, we are sure, in thinking that, in these stirring times, we are not justified in locking up our columns by the publication of long detailed reports of the debates in the Legislative Council. Were that body in reality what it pretends to be, a legislative assembly of the representatives of the people, it would be entitled to the privilege usually accorded to such bodies, of being reported in full. While it continues as it now is, a ridiculous mockery of representation, it has no right to expect any such compliment, and we therefore limit our reports of the proceedings, to a carefully prepared summary of what is done, accompanied occasionally by the remarks of the most able and influential members.

Thursday, 11th November.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 17 minutes past three, previous to which time a quorum of members had not arrived.

Present—The Attorney-General, the Chairman of General Sessions, Messrs Mercer, Wilkinson, Murphy, Splatt, Nicholson, O'Shanassy, Westgarth, and Anderson.

Dr MURPHY, (with permission of the House, not having given notice,) moved for a return of all townships in the Colony, exclusive of Melbourne and Geelong, of which the number of inhabitants exceed fifty, stating the population of each, and the districts in which they are situated, distinguishing private from public townships. His reason for making the motion was, that he could not obtain the information in any other way, as the last census only gave the population in the several Police Districts.

The motion having been seconded, was put and carried.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL gave notice—

That on Tuesday next, he should move for leave to bring in a bill for the better prevention of horse and cattle stealing; also, for leave to bring in a bill to enable the Corporation of Melbourne to alter the streets and thoroughfares in Fitz Roy Ward; also, for leave to bring in a bill to amend and consolidate the laws relating to Steam Navigation.

Dr MURPHY stated it was his intention to ask this day, if any steps were about to be taken by Government, to render advantageous to the community generally, the map of the Colony, which had been sent home to be engraved by Arrowsmith, and had now arrived out; also to draw the attention of the Government to the system of making reserves near towns for the recreation of the inhabitants, particularly that situated near the Eastern Hill, Melbourne.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Special Constables' Laws amendment Bill. The bill had been introduced on the request of a large number of magistrates, who found that many persons were willing to volunteer in the apprehension of offenders, and the suppression of crime. The bill empowered any two justices of the peace to swear in such persons as special constables, either in anticipation of an outbreak or where the regular police were insufficient for the district. The bill was almost a transcript of the English Act, except that the fund from which rewards or compensation were paid to the special constables, would have to be provided from the General Revenue by a vote of the Council.

The SOLICITOR-GENERAL seconded the motion.

Mr O'SHANASSY had much pleasure in supporting the bill, as one which was calculated to benefit the community. If it had been introduced into the House last session, some of the outrages which had been committed in the city and throughout the Colony might have been prevented. If a number of special constables were appointed, it would have the good effect of rendering the enrolment of a large body of police unnecessary, and thus relieve the colony of a burden. He thought that special constables ought to be paid for their services, and there were many mechanics and artisans in the city who might make such an occupation a means of assisting their income. He therefore cordially supported and hoped it would soon pass into law.

The bill was then read a second time, and the House went into committee; the clauses were gone through, and the report being brought up, its consideration was fixed for Thursday next.

On the order of the day for the second reading of the Police Regulation Bill,—

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he was almost in doubt whether to move the second reading of this bill or not, seeing such a very thin House. The bill differed very widely from the present Act, and there was one clause in it to which he was individually opposed, he meant that providing a superannuation fund by vote of public money.

Mr NICHOLSON would not oppose the second reading, but he objected to the proposed appointment of a chief police magistrate, as he held it to be of the utmost importance that the Executive and judicial functions of police should be kept entirely separate. He should oppose that part of the bill in Committee.

Dr MURPHY apprehended it was not the intention that the chief police magistrate should sit on the Bench on ordinary occasions. There would be a stipendiary magistrate appointed for that purpose.

Mr O'SHANASSY suggested the postponement of the second reading, not only as there was so thin a House, but as the report of the Select Committee on which the bill was founded had not yet been considered by the House.

Mr RUTLEDGE objected to any postponement. If everything were postponed in this manner, the business would never be got through.

Mr MERCER thought the bill might as well be read a second time now, as at any future time.

Mr JOHNSTON was for a postponement.—Postponements were doubtless very inconvenient, but here was a bill involving the appointment of a Police Magistrate, who, they were told, was not a magistrate at all, and other weighty considerations, and he thought it advisable the bill should not be proceeded with. With 120 £ for the Chief Police Magistrate, 1000 £ for the Mayor, and 700 £ for a Stipendiary Magistrate, there would be an expenditure of nearly 3000 £ a year for the performance of the duties of the City Bench alone.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL observed, in reply to the remark from Mr O'Shanassy, that it was not intended to submit the report of the Police Committee for the adoption by the House, but the Bill and the Estimates were founded on that report.

The order of the day was then postponed till Tuesday next.

On the Motion of Mr JOHNSTON, (Mr Fawcner being absent from illness) the following motion was carried—

That the Petition of S. Rochfort, Barrister-at-Law, be referred to a committee of five members, viz:—Mr Pohlman, Mr Michie, Mr Miller, Mr Johnston, and the Mover, to inquire into the same, and report to the Council their decision thereon.