

enable the Governor at any dissolution of the House of Assembly to declare vacant the seats of one-third of the members of the Legislative Council. It would not be competent to introduce a Bill for that purpose again during the present session, but a Bill could be introduced for amending the Constitution in other respects.

The Hon. J. HODGKISS had not expected to address the House on a subject so important as this that day. He firmly believed that an alteration of the Constitution was necessary, and if the proposal of the Chief Secretary and the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Fisher were to be put to the Council he thought it would be in accordance with the views of the Council generally and especially those members who had that day taken their seats, if the debate were adjourned for a week. He had spoken to the Chief Secretary, who, however, wished the question decided that day, so that he would be compelled—

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. Morgan) expressed his own wish that the question should be decided, but would have no objection to the adjournment of the debate if hon. members desired it.

The Hon. J. HODGKISS was obliged to the Chief Secretary. He was quite prepared as far as he was concerned to offer the objections he had to the Bill, but would rather have had time to put them in a more concise form. He did not wish to support the Bill nor did he care to support the amendment, as he thought the latter if carried would have the effect of shelving the question for the remainder of this session. He believed that the amendment of the Constitution proposed would be no improvement, but that it would be fraught with as great difficulties as were experienced at present; and carrying the Hon. J. Fisher's proposal would simply be to burke the question. He saw one way out of the difficulty, and that way was to move the adjournment of the debate. They would then have an opportunity on a future day of expressing their opinions. (An hon. member—"You can't if you wish to speak again.") As he read the preamble, it meant that the members to be asked to retire should be those longest in the Council; and these might be the six best men, and the return of these would not end a deadlock. He therefore thought it undesirable that the Bill should be passed in its present form. As it did not interfere with the elections, which now took place every four years, it might happen that two elections would take place in one year—a thing that would be most undesirable. This Bill did not provide for the proper reform of the Council or making it more amenable to public opinion; and he would rather see the question put off till another session than that the Bill should be passed as the Government proposed.

The Hon. C. B. YOUNG moved that the debate be adjourned till the following Tuesday.

Carried.

HOLDFAST BAY RAILWAY BILL.

The time for bringing up the report of the Select Committee on this Bill was extended for a week.

BRANDS BILL.

Second reading.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. Morgan) said this Bill had originated—as another had originated in 1877—from a large and influential deputation of stockowners waiting upon the Government and asking for legislation upon the subject to prevent the stealing of cattle and sheep. The Bill did not provide that there should be a system of branding sheep, but it authorized the registration of sheep brands by persons who liked to use them, and provided against the cutting off of the ear of the sheep to destroy the ear-mark, which was known in New South Wales as the rogue's mark. There was no compulsion as to the registration of sheep brands, but in the case of cattle and horses there would be a system of branding. The provisions of the Bill had been copied from the Act which had been in operation for some years in Queensland and had been found to work well. In New South Wales the Branding Act had not been a success as they had allowed all kinds of brands, but under the Bill a brand would consist of a letter and two numerals, and by the manipulation of these a very large number of brands could be provided. There were at present 13,000 registered in Queensland, and 7,000 more could be made up. There were also in the Bill provisions as to pounds and as to

the keeping of registration books. A book of brands would be compiled at certain periods and between these newly registered brands would be advertised in the *Government Gazette*. He looked to hon. members who had a knowledge of the requirements of stockowners in this direction to assist him with the Bill, and would move that it be now read a second time.

The Hon. A. HAY would support the second reading of the Bill, but he thought clause 6, which provided that every registered brand should consist of not more nor less than one letter and two figures or of one sign or character and two figures, was likely to lead to cruelty in the animal being covered with brands. In New South Wales it was provided that there should be one letter and that the brands should be distinctive. It was optional whether more than one letter was used. The process for the transfer of brands appeared to him to be very fair. Every facility should be given for the transfer and registration of brands. He believed one reason why the New South Wales Act had not worked smoothly was the difficulty experienced in reference to those matters. If the Bill were modified in a few particulars on going into Committee he thought it would be desirable to pass it.

The Hon. J. CROZIER also supported the second reading, but the Bill would have to be altered before he could consent to its passing. It was provided that the last registered brand should be that of the owner. He thought it would be better if it were the breeder, who might give a receipt to the person to whom he disposed of the animal. There were 220,000 head of cattle in the colony, and their hides were valuable, but their value would be greatly decreased if they were branded in many places. He was not sure that there was a great deal of cattle or sheep stealing in the colony. The only case of any importance that he had heard of lately occurred in the Western District of Victoria. The Bill was very absurd in some particulars, and clauses 7 and 9 were absolutely contradictory. The seventh clause provided that a person might use as many distinctive brands as he thought proper, while the ninth clause said no one was to use a distinctive brand unless he had a registered brand. The provision that drovers should have a waybill was a very good one. The Queensland Act had not been in operation long enough for them to say whether it was a useful measure or not. The Act which we had for the last 35 years had almost been a dead letter. He should do all in his power to help the Chief Secretary in making the Bill as complete as possible. It appeared to him that it had been very badly drawn, inasmuch as some of the clauses were mixed up together, and there were several contradictions.

Sir H. AYERS did not profess to have any practical knowledge on the subject, but he agreed with the last hon. member that the Bill was very badly drawn. In 1875 a similar measure was before the Council, which provided for the branding of cattle and the ear-marking of sheep. He believed the present Bill limited the branding to cattle and horses, although there were provisions having reference to sheep. He had no doubt the measure would receive the careful consideration of those hon. members who had a practical knowledge on the subject, and he trusted that a workable and satisfactory measure might be passed. He did not wish to cast any reflections upon the other House, but he certainly thought that the Bill had not been so carefully considered as its importance demanded. It was bad enough to receive a first print of a Bill so badly drawn, but it was worse when it had been passed as proposed law.

The Hon. H. SCOTT supported the second reading of the Bill, although there was a diversity of opinion among stockholders as to how general the benefit arising from it would be. He had no doubt that those hon. members who were stockowners would give the Chief Secretary the full benefit of their practical knowledge and unbiassed opinions. He certainly agreed that several alterations were necessary in the Bill; but he trusted that if only a portion of the Bill was good those who were opposed to the Bill as a whole would allow the valuable portion to become law.

The Hon. H. KENT HUGHES also supported the motion. The Chief Secretary had told hon. members that the Queensland Act had been a success, but he had not told them how long it had been in operation. There were some things that he thought would affect the higher class of sheep-farmers. In clause 33 it was provided that no

person should brand with any mixture of a red colour; and clause 36 provided that no person should crop or cut off more than one-fourth of the ear, or cut the ear straight across, or slice off by a straight cut or otherwise any part of the ear of any sheep. He knew cases in which for years the red brand had been used where the owners had been in the habit of cutting off portion of the ear of the sheep. He hoped the Chief Secretary, while wishing to limit the size of the slices, would allow the tip of the ear to be slit. He should be happy to assist the Chief Secretary in perfecting the Bill.

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. Morgan), in reply, said he was much obliged to hon. members for their promises of support. His desire was to make the Bill as workable as possible. Such a Bill he thought hon. members would admit was necessary. Regarding Mr. Hughes's question why a red brand could not be placed on certain portions of the sheep, he pointed out that the place was left to be branded with a distinctive red brand in accordance with the provisions of the Seal Act. He was led to ask the same question, but he saw the reasonableness of the explanation. He would also point out to the hon. member that the Queensland Act had been in operation five years—sufficiently long he thought to have proved whether it was an imperfect measure or not. He understood that it was working very well. With regard to the New South Wales system of branding, as referred to by Mr. Hay, he believed it had proved a failure. Regarding Mr. Crozier's objection that cattle might be branded all over and thus the hides injured, he pointed out that there was no obligation to brand, but if a brand was used it had to be registered. That was a very proper provision. He could not agree with the hon. member that clauses 7 and 9 contradicted themselves. Their intention was that they should work towards the same object. He should pay very great attention to the suggestions which might be brought forward.

The motion was carried.

The Bill was then formally taken into Committee, after which the Council resumed and the Committee obtained leave to sit again next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council adjourned at 3.26 till 2 o'clock next day.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

Mr. GLYDE presented a petition from 161 persons resident in the neighbourhood of Terowie and Pichirich, representing 73,000 acres of land, asking that the Terowie Railway Bill might be referred to a Select Committee.

Received and read.

Mr. WARD presented a petition signed by 21 pastoral lessees of the Crown and others asking that in the Land Act Amendment Bill a clause might be inserted for the repeal of clause 50 of the Crown Lands Consolidation Act, or to provide that it should not apply to pastoral lessees of the Crown.

Received and read.

THE VACANT JUDGESHIP.

Mr. ROSS asked the Treasurer whether he had any statement to make with regard to the appointment of a Third Judge for the Supreme Court.

The TREASURER (Hon. J. P. Boucaut)—I have no statement to make with regard to the appointment. I may say that the Government will make the appointment as soon as possible—probably it will be decided on by the Executive to-morrow. I am sure hon. members will agree that such an appointment ought not to be lightly offered or lightly accepted until the question is definitely settled. I feel sure hon. members will not expect me to make any definite statement. (Cheers.)

HARBOUR ACCOMMODATION.

Mr. ROSS asked the Treasurer whether a Com-

mission had been appointed to enquire into harbour accommodation, and if the Commission had been confined in their enquiries to Largs Bay, Glenelg, and Marino.

The TREASURER (Hon. J. P. Boucaut) said that the Government had refrained from appointing a Commission, but a Board of Advice had been appointed to advise the Government with respect to Largs Bay, Glenelg, and Marino. There would be no objection on the part of the Government to lay the letter of instructions on the table.

Mr. ROSS gave notice for the production of the letter of instructions.

THE MAIL SERVICE.

Mr. WARD asked the Treasurer whether he had received any information from the Victorian Government with respect to South Australia being included in any future mail service.

The TREASURER (Hon. J. P. Boucaut) said that he had received no further information from the Victorian Government beyond the telegram he received last week which he had forwarded to the newspapers as the House was not sitting at the time. He regretted to see in that morning's papers a statement to the effect that some of the members of the Victorian Cabinet had doubts as to whether our port should be a port of call. Now that there were so many rival lines of steamers running it would be the duty of the Government to see that the proper geographical position of South Australia was protected, and he was sure that in that they would receive the support of the House. (Hear, hear.)

SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION AT KADINA.

Mr. ROSS drew the attention of the Minister of Education to a report of the proceedings of the Council of Education on the previous day in reference to school accommodation at Kadina, and asked him whether he had any explanation to make respecting the matter.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION (Hon. N. Blyth) said that he was sorry he could not give the hon. member any information, as since his attention had been directed to the report he had not had an opportunity of conferring with the President of the Council. He could assure the hon. member that the matter would not escape his attention. The Government, on the pressure of the hon. member and from the expression of opinion given by the House, had decided that a school should be erected in the locality in question. He had not the slightest wish to go back from the assurance he had conveyed on a former occasion, and as far as he was concerned the school should be built.

RIVERTON SCHOOL.

Mr. BOSWORTH asked—"What progress has been made towards granting extra accommodation to the school at Riverton?"

The MINISTER of EDUCATION (Hon. N. Blyth) replied—"Arrangements have been made with the District Council to exchange a road. When exchange is completed the work decided on will be carried out."

POLICE STATION AT EUDUNDA.

Mr. MOODY asked—"If it is the intention of the Government to erect a Police Station at Eudunda; if so, when?"

The COMMISSIONER of PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. G. C. Hawker) replied—"A sum has been placed on the Estimates for police cottages and cells at Eudunda, and the work will be commenced as soon as parliamentary sanction is obtained."

RAILWAY SHEDS AT NORTH-WEST BEND.

Mr. MOODY asked—"Why tenders were not sooner called for goods and engine sheds at the North-West Bend?"

The COMMISSIONER of PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. G. C. Hawker) replied—"Tenders were not called sooner for the goods and engine sheds at the North-West Bend—1. Because it is more economical to defer the erection of the buildings until after the rails are laid instead of carting the materials 50 miles. 2. Because the positions could not be fixed until arrangements had been made for the extension of the existing wharf. 3. Because the goods sheds would have been materially injured by the blasting operations necessary for the removal of the cliff at the rear of the building."