

WENTWORTH ELECTORATE SUB-DIVISION BILL.

Legislative Council's amendments in this bill agreed to.

House adjourned 12:24 a.m. (Thursday).

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 22 December, 1887.

Special Adjournment—Torpedo Defence of the Colony—Tattersall's Club Bill—Bulli Colliery Disaster Fund Bill—Inland Waters Fisheries Bill—Adjournment (Production of Papers)—Leichhardt Municipal Council (Mortgage) Bill (second reading)—Consolidated Revenue Fund Bill, No. 1 (second reading).

The PRESIDENT took the chair.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT.

MR. SALOMONS: The date of the adjournment having been altered in the Legislative Assembly, I beg to move, with the consent of hon. members:

That, unless otherwise ordered, this House at its rising to-day do adjourn until Wednesday, the 5th day of February next.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

TORPEDO DEFENCE OF THE COLONY.

Motion (by Mr. CREED, *with concurrence*) agreed to:

That leave be given to the Select Committee on the Torpedo Defence of the Colony to sit during the special adjournment of the Council after the 4th of January, 1888.

TATTERSALL'S CLUB BILL.

Bill presented by Mr. Thornton, and read the first time.

BULLI COLLIERY DISASTER FUND BILL.

Bill referred to select committee on motion by Mr. G. A. Lloyd (for Mr. Lackey).

INLAND WATERS FISHERIES BILL.

Bill read the third time.

ADJOURNMENT.

PRODUCTION OF PAPERS.

Mr. CREED rose to move:

That the House do now adjourn.

He said that he wished to call the attention of the Vice-President of the Executive Council to a matter relating to a return of correspondence respecting military

accounts, which was laid upon the table of the House on the 14th of December, in response to an order of the House of the 10th of November. The correspondence included communications between several military officers, the paymaster, the Auditor-General, and the Treasury. Many of the letters produced were of absolute unimportance; but the whole of the correspondence moved for was not produced. Some very important letters between the commandant and officers of the pay office, and between officers of the Treasury and the paymaster had been omitted, and it was very necessary that the House should have them. This was not the first time that an order for the production of papers had been complied with in a perfunctory manner by the same department—he would not say with the object of concealing important correspondence; but, at any rate, in a way which called for the severest condemnation. He held in his hand a series of papers which were ordered to be laid on the table of the Assembly by an order of the 27th of January, 1871. One portion of the return was furnished on the 9th of February, 1871; another portion on the 2nd of May, 1871; a third portion in August, 1872; and the last portion on the 14th of February, 1873; so that it took two years, two extra motions, and a number of inquiries, and a great deal of complaint before the return to the order could be fully obtained. The hon. and learned member would see, therefore, that the complaint he was now making was no new one. He hoped the hon. and learned member would send such a reminder to the department that the same dilatoriness would not be allowed to occur again.

Mr. SALOMONS: Of course I know nothing of the letters which my hon. friend alleges to have been overlooked in preparing the return; but I shall do myself the pleasure of drawing the attention of the proper department to it, and I hope to have an opportunity of affording an explanation to the hon. gentleman for the omission.

Question resolved in the negative.

LEICHHARDT MUNICIPAL COUNCIL (MORTGAGE) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. G. A. LLOYD rose to move:

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said : This is a very short bill, and it has a very simple object in view. The Leichhardt Municipal Council at present meet in a room, which is not in their own municipality. They have not a chamber in their own municipality in which they can assemble. They have bought at a cost of £2,420 land for the purpose of building a town hall, and they have entered into a contract for the erection of the building at a cost of £5,500, and they wish to borrow the money to enable them to pay the contractor for the building. The application is unanimous, all the aldermen having signed the petition, and no objection has been raised on the part of any of the ratepayers. There is a party ready to advance the money as soon as Parliament has passed this bill. There is evidence to show that the rents derived from the building will be more than sufficient to pay the interest on the amount borrowed. The bill has been passed by the other Chamber, where it underwent examination by a select committee ; so that it has everything to recommend it to the favourable consideration of this House.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time, and reported without amendment ; report adopted.

CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND BILL (No. 1).

Bill received from the Legislative Assembly, and read the first time.

Standing orders suspended to permit of bill being passed through all its stages at one sitting of the Council.

SECOND READING.

Mr. SALOMONS rose to move :

That this bill be now read the second time.

He said : I regret, of course, that the force of circumstances has compelled the Government to form a precedent to which they are absolutely opposed ; but it is impossible to avoid bringing in a bill of this kind. The bill applies out of the consolidated revenue fund a total sum of £864,900, of which the sum of £530,000 is for the ordinary expenses of the service of the colony for the month of January and the following month, and a sum of £334,900 is for the purposes set forth in the schedule annexed to the bill ; namely,

£127,000 towards recouping the Colonial Treasurer's advance account for payments made therefrom in 1887, and a sum of £107,900 for the erection of a rabbit-proof fence from Bourke to the Queensland border, and to meet claims for subsidies. There is also a sum of £100,000 to be placed to the credit of the Colonial Treasurer's advance account. I may state that the sum of £530,000 is based upon the rates of expenditure sanctioned for the year 1887, but subject to the rate of any reduction that may hereafter be made in the expenditure of the year 1888.

Question proposed.

Mr. G. A. LLOYD : I regret exceedingly that there should be any necessity to bring forward a monthly supply bill. We were promised—and we fondly hoped—that this session would close at the end of the present year ; that the estimates would be passed, and that the expenditure would be carried on in a reasonable and rational way. As we all know, these supply bills are open to serious objection, because they anticipate the revenue, and the money is spent without the authority of Parliament, excepting as given in this way. There is no knowing how many more of these supply bills will follow. I do not know whether I am in order in referring to what takes place in the other branch of the legislature ; but I would say that if the needless talk that goes on there continues, the probability is that we shall be sitting during the whole of next year, instead of the session coming to a close about the end of this year, as was anticipated. I regret also that the finances of the colony are in such an unsatisfactory state. No longer ago than the 31st of March last we were promised a surplus of £910,000. That surplus has vanished, and we have instead a deficiency of £156,000 ; and not only that, but the Colonial Treasurer has added £100,000 to the original deficit, so that the finances of the country are certainly in an unsatisfactory state. I cannot help saying that the Colonial Treasurer is to a great extent to blame for the position in which we are placed. He takes credit for £330,000 of additional estimates and £345,000 which ought to have been paid this year, but which has been spread over other years in order to assist the pastoral tenants and

purchasers of Crown land. But the hon. gentleman seems to forget that the bills which appropriated this £330,000 were brought in by himself, and also that the bill to give easier terms to squatters and purchasers of land was brought in by the Government, and he ought, therefore, to have explained to the House that if those bills were passed his surplus would vanish. Under these circumstances, I think the Colonial Treasurer himself is very considerably to blame. We are relieving the squatter and the purchasers of land from payments which ought to have been made this year; and we are to have a property-tax to raise the money, so that we are punishing ourselves to benefit the squatters. I think it is quite time that that kind of thing was put an end to, and I do sincerely hope that the days of deficits are past and gone. I hoped that when this Government came into office we should have heard no more about a new deficit. It was bad enough to have the old deficit around our shoulders. It seems absurd that this country, with a revenue of over £8,000,000, cannot be governed for that sum. Those of us who have been in Parliament a few years know that it is only a few years ago that the country was governed for £5,000,000 annually, but now we cannot govern the country for a considerable amount over £8,000,000 sterling. I have always had confidence in Sir Henry Parkes ever since he entered public life—in fact we made our maiden speeches on the same platform in connection with the anti-transportation movement—but my confidence in him will cease if he allows these deficits to continue. There must be an end to them, or the country will never prosper. I trust that means will be taken to ensure that the expenditure will be brought within the income, and that we shall see no more of deficits. I have no intention to offer any opposition to the bill, but I thought it right to make these few remarks in order that the country may see that this House protests against this system of deficits and this system of monthly supply bills.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read the second time, and passed through all its remaining stages, without amendment or debate.

House adjourned at 5.10 p.m.

[*Mr. G. A. Lloyd.*]

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 22 December, 1887.

Commission appointed to Inquire into Civil Service—The Attorney-General—Rabbit-proof Wire-netting—Spread of the Rabbit Pest—Alleged Irregularities in the Public Accounts—Expenditure in the Post and Telegraph Department—Expenses of Executive Commissioner at the Adelaide Exhibition—Gulcher Machine—Special Adjournment—Centenary Celebration Act Amendment Bill—Personal Explanation—The Attorney-General's Fees—Wilson v. Pritchard—Potato Plague—Adjournment (The State House)—Mining on Private Property Bill—Church and School Lands Bill—Fireworks in the Domain—Mr. District Court Judge Docker—Centenary Celebration Act Amendment Bill—Centenary Celebration Act Amendment Bill (No. 2)—The Duckenfield Colliery—Order of Business—Parliamentary Reporting Staff—Adjournment (Gulcher Machine)—Inland Waters Fisheries Bill—Government Railways Bill—Financial Statement (Fifth Night's Debate)—Alleged Irregularities in the Public Accounts—Inland Waters Fisheries Bill—Adjournment (Name of the Colony—Railway Rates for Inland Produce—Appointment in Crown Solicitor's Office—Coroner at Ryde—Fireworks in the Domain—Use of Diamond Drills).

The SPEAKER took the chair.

COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. H. TAYLOR (for Mr. McCourt) asked the COLONIAL SECRETARY,—(1.) Is the royal commission recently appointed to inquire into the civil service intended to represent New South Wales? (2.) Are not all the gentlemen appointed residents of Sydney; and what is the reason that no representatives of the northern, southern, and western districts have been nominated for seats on the commission?

Sir HENRY PARKES answered,—I do not think it can be admitted for a single moment that localities should be represented in the appointment of a commission of this kind. The first consideration ought surely to be to obtain persons of special fitness for conducting the inquiry without reference to any other consideration; at all events, I cannot recognise either the justice or the propriety of representing particular districts in the country in such an appointment.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Mr. MELVILLE asked the ATTORNEY-GENERAL,—(1.) Did the Attorney-General appear on behalf of the Crown in the following cases:—Bowles *versus* Commissioner for Railways, Mahoney *versus* Commissioner for Railways, Mahoney *versus* Commissioner for Railways, heard in the