

Trades Hall site. Reference to University

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN REGISTER, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1889.

THE PARLIAMENT.

THE MINISTRY.

Premier and Chief Secretary—Hon. Dr. Cookburn.

Treasurer—Hon. F. W. Forder.

Attorney-General—Hon. B. A. Moulden,
Commissioner of Crown Lands—Hon. T. Burgoyne.

Commissioner of Public Works—Hon. J. H. Howe.

Minister of Education — Hon. J. H. Gordon.

President of the Council, Sir H. Ayers.

Speaker of the Assembly, Hon. J. C. Bray.

Chairman of Committees, Mr. E. Ward.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 2 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

By the Hons. J. V. O'LOUGHLIN and J. WARREN in favour of female suffrage.

DOG BILL.

The Hon. A. R. ADDISON moved the second reading of this Bill as received from the Assembly. Carried; Bill passed through all its stages without amendment.

CROWN LANDS BILL.

Consideration of Assembly's message. The Assembly's amendments on the Council's amendments were agreed to. The Hon. J. H. GORDON moved That the Council's amendment to strike out clause 46 "Preference to applicant who agrees to reside" to which the Assembly had disagreed should not be insisted upon. The Hon. J. H. ANGAS moved that the amendment be insisted upon. The Council had already decided not to give a preference to personal residence. The Hon. J. V. O'LOUGHLIN trusted the amendment would not be pressed. The Hon. A. HAY hoped the clause would be struck out. It was decided not to insist upon the amendment on the following division.

AYES, 10—Hons. Messrs. Bright, Campbell, Cotton, Darling, Martin, O'Loughlin, Salom, Simpson, West-Erskine, and Gordon (teller).

NOES, 9 — Hon. Messrs. Angas, Baker, Bosworth, Hay, Ramsay, Simms, Tomkinson, Warren, and Addison (teller).

The Hon. J. H. GORDON moved that the Council do not insist upon its amendment to strike out clause 53—"Resumed park lands not to be alienated in fee simple." The Hon. R. C. BAKER said if the Government wished to have certain powers to deal with certain park lands they should define those park lands. (Hear, hear.) The clause applied to park lands around every township, and it was monstrous to let the Government have the power to alienate them. The Hon. J. V. O'LOUGHLIN hoped the clause would be restored. It was to meet special cases. The Hon. W. A. E. WEST ERSKINE said a very great injustice might be done to private individuals if the clause were passed. The Government might resume what they liked so long as they had not power to deal with them afterwards. It looked very much like a case of special legislation, which they should oppose. The Hon. G. W. COTTON said that one of the park lands referred to was the township of Hilltown, which was situated in the middle of the Hill River estate. The

southern half of the township of Hilltown was sold long ago, but the northern half had remained unsold. The park lands comprised about 360 acres. Also the township of Endowina, with 400 acres of park lands, was situated in the centre of the Bungaree estate. No single allotment of that township has ever been sold. Now a number of working men desire to have small holdings on these unused park lands, which are merely used to be grazed over by the cattle of these large landholders. Several members opposed the clause, and it was decided to insist upon the amendment by 13 to 6. The Council decided not to insist upon their other amendments to which the Assembly had disagreed.

CHINESE IMMIGRATION BILL.

Returned from the Assembly disagreeing to the amendment of the Council to insert a new clause that the Bill should not apply to the Northern Territory. The Hon. S. TOMKINSON moved that the Council insist upon their amendment. The matter had been fully debated, and it had been decided that coloured labour was absolutely necessary in the Territory. Sir H. Parkes had not the slightest intention of legislating on the lines the Council were asked to do. The Hon. R. C. BAKER hoped members would stick to the deliberate opinion they arrived at last night. It was decided to insist upon the amendment on the following division:—

AYES, 12—Hon. Addison, Angas, Baker, Bosworth, Bright, Darling, Murray, Salom, Simms, Warren, West-Erskine, and Tomkinson (teller).

NOES, 9—Hon. Dr. Campbell, Cotton, Hay, Dr. Magarey, Martin, O'Loghlin, Ramsay, Simpson, and Gordon (teller).

GLENELG RAILWAY BILL.

Returned from the Assembly with amendments, which were taken into consideration and agreed to.

NORTHERN TERRITORY LAND BILL.

The whole of the Assembly's amendments were agreed to with the exception of No. 25, which was to leave out clause 82 and substitute another in lieu thereof. This amendment, on the motion of the Hon. D. MURRAY, was disagreed with, but clause 82 was amended by all the words after "section 65 of this Act" being struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof—"And shall be allowed a seven years' extension of the term of his lease, and shall hold his lease at the minimum rent stated therein for seven years longer than the term allowed by such lease."

ESTATES DUTIES BILL.

The Hon. J. H. GORDON moved the second reading as received from the Assembly.

The Hon. R. C. BAKER did not think the Council should be asked to consider the Bill. (Hear, hear.) It was an absolute farce to ask them to consider a Bill involving a new principle which was not the law in any part of the British Dominions when they had not even had the opportunity of considering the measure. The Bill as presented to the Council was, as a matter of fact, not drafted until the previous night, and he guaranteed that not a single member had read it. He would not move an amendment that the measure be read a second time that day six months, because he was not sure that he did not agree with some of its principles, but there were others that required consideration. Any necessity for the Bill had disappeared when the Education Bill was dropped. The

Bill did not impose any fresh taxation upon property, because the Treasurer had said it would not raise any increased revenue. He strongly objected to subsection C of clause 7.

The Hon. A. M. SIMPSON moved as an amendment that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. It was absolutely impossible for the Council to consider the Bill so late in the session, and one of the reasons why he submitted the amendment was as a protest against measures being sent up to the Council at so late a period. (Hear, hear.)

The Hon. J. DARLING seconded the amendment.

The Hon. G. W. COTTON supported the Bill, which was a simplification of the present law. The estates of those persons who had accumulated large fortunes should contribute more towards the revenue than they had in the past.

The Hon. J. V. O'LOGHLIN fully recognised the objection of Mr. Baker. It was unfair to ask the Council to consider the Bill at that stage, and he hoped the second reading would not be pressed to a division. If it were he would have to vote with the Minister, as he had seconded the motion.

The second reading was lost on the following division, and the amendment carried:—

AYES, 3—Hons. Cotton, O'Loghlin, and Gordon (teller).

NOES, 17—Hons. Addison, Angas, Baker, Bosworth, Dr. Campbell, Darling, Hay, Dr. Magarey, Martin, Murray, Ramsay, Salom, Simms, Tomkinson, Warren, West-Erskine, and Simpson (teller).

HOURS OF VOTING BILL.

Received from the Assembly, and on the motion of the Hon. Dr. MAGAREY read a first time. Second reading next day.

THE TRADES HALL BILL.

The Hon. J. H. GORDON moved the second reading as received from the Assembly. He said it was not a new departure so far as the legislation of the colonies was concerned, as the New South Wales Government had given £6,000 towards a similar purpose, and in Victoria a site had been set apart. The whole history of legislation for the past fifty years in England had been in favour of the middle class, because they had possessed the franchise, but in South Australia the franchise was possessed by the labouring class. They had the power, and it was only the natural outcome of human nature that they should insist upon exercising their powers for their own benefit. The State was a big partnership, and the minority could not object to the majority getting their will. The working men were only asking what they had a right to, as they held the balance of power in their hands. They were not begging anything. There were precedents for the action proposed by the Bill, both in other countries and Australia. He failed to see any difference between giving a grant of land for the promotion of any industry such as agriculture by the grant of a Show ground and the donation of a site of land for the fostering of special training such as would be acquired in the Trades Hall. Labour was not a class in the ordinary sense of the word. Education and many other things received assistance from the Government. The lawyers were helped in grants being made to the Supreme Court Library—their tools were in part found for them. The whole functions of the State

so far as its luxuries went were founded on the exclusion of the working men, who paid for them. The working classes had been most unselfish. The University had got its grant from the State, and was maintained by enormous grants of State lands—to educate the sons of gentlemen. The fees would not suffice to keep going a galvanized iron provisional country school. As they had precedents in the grants of land to particular sects and communities they should give the grant for the Trades Hall. Even if the hall would be used in opposition to capital it was simply one of those opposing forces by which every relation in the world was kept in order. The erection of the hall would prevent those trade turmoils and business crises which from time to time convulsed the world, so it would be absolutely beneficial to capital. As the labouring classes were to be the ruling classes in the new Australian countries it was expedient to go some way and recognize its powers. It would save irritation and admit its right to be recognised in the State. After all they were giving away very little, and he hoped the question would be fairly considered from the point of its expediency.

The Hon. A. M. SIMPSON said he had heard that the Victorian Government had recently given a site for a Trades Hall at Ballarat. There were, however, precedents in the colony. The Government had subsidised the Sailors' Home to the extent of £4,500, the Bushmen's Club to the extent of £3,500, and the University had also been subsidised, although they were for special sections of the community. The land had not been dedicated for any purpose, and if they gave it they would not miss it.

The Hon. G. W. COTTON said that the working men were beginning to make their influence felt, and it was for them to magnanimously and with dignity give the land or have it taken by force. Other classes had received concessions, and as that proposed was just and right the Bill should be passed.

The Hon. S. TOMKINSON opposed the Bill as unnecessary class legislation. It looked as if Dr. Cockburn, not being able to carry any useful measures, had determined to do as much mischief as possible before he left office. No other member of the Cabinet but Dr. Cockburn would introduce such a measure. He was surprised at the hurtful remarks of the Minister of Education. The land was promised to a strong political body in one of Dr. Cockburn's many weak moments, and he regarded it as a piece of disgraceful political corruption. It was proposed that they, as the keepers of the nation's property, should give way a valuable block of land to a small section of the community. The working men had lately ruled the country too much. In recent strikes they had proved a wealthy body, and there was no need for them to sue for the land *in forma pauperis*. If it was given as a recognition of their power he would like to know where their demands would stop. The benevolent, philanthropic, and religious bodies in the community had as much right to ask for a grant of land as the Trades and Labour Council, and he asked the Council not to do a grave wrong by passing the Bill. If the measure were passed it would be the first step towards plundering the colony. The men would not be satisfied, and as the rejection of the Bill would affect no

one but Mr. Cockburn he hoped it would be thrown out. The Trades and Labour Council, he knew, would have no difficulty in raising sufficient funds to purchase a site for a Trades Hall. The Government had no land for the purpose; it was not long since the Government had had to buy some land in Victoria-square, and before long the Government would have to extend the Local Court, and if they parted with the site proposed they would soon have to buy another. He moved that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

The Hon. R. C. BAKER would sooner have had ten Trades and Labour Councils receive ten sites for a Trades Hall; he would sooner that the Government had paid £100,000 in the direction sought by the Bill, than have listened to the Socialistic doctrines and inflammatory speech of the Minister of Education. He hoped in the interests of South Australia that he had not expressed the opinion of his colleagues. If he had the Government next session should bring in a Bill to divide up the whole of the colony amongst the working men. He had attempted to show that people were justified in exercising to the fullest extent and in any degree any power they had. His sentiments were such as they might expect from the leaders of a Paris mob standing up to his elbows in the blood of innocent victims. His principles were the same as those that actuated the people who murdered the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Paris, and was calculated to inflame the working men at the next election. The Trades and Labour Council would not advocate such views, and whether or not they passed the Bill was an insignificant matter as compared with the utterances of the Minister of Education. He characterized the introduction of the Bill as an electioneering dodge by the Premier. The late Government were urged to introduce a similar measure, and Mr. Kingston (the then Attorney-General) was in favour of the proposal, but his colleagues would not let him do it. They posed as the representatives of the working men, and when they went out of office the present Government determined to go one better with a view to getting the votes of the Trades and Labour Council men at the next election. (Hear, hear.) He knew if he again sought re-election for the southern district that his utterances would cost him many hundred votes, probably his election, but he felt it was his duty to oppose the measure. (Hear, hear.) The site they were asked to give away to a class, who only represented a small section of labour, would undoubtedly be wanted for public purposes. (Hear, hear.) It was not correct to say that the people represented by the Trades and Labour Council were in the majority. If the Bill were rejected he was quite willing to give the working men £50 himself towards a site for the erection of a hall, and he would guarantee to collect for the same purpose £1,000 from members of Parliament, and if he failed to do so he would make up the balance himself. (Hear, hear.)

The Hon. G. W. COTTON—They would not take it.

The Hon. R. C. BAKER—Why not? Because they were too well off. He opposed the Bill.

The Hon. Dr. CAMPBELL thought the question of a Trades Hall site might have been discussed without the introduction of

such general and sweeping principles. (Hear, hear.) He would enunciate but one principle, which the community of South Australia through its Government had recognised. It was that when a suggestion was made to the Government for assistance towards some object which would be beneficial to the community at large it was the duty of the Government to grant it. One instance which he regarded upon the same basis as that under discussion was that of the Adelaide University. The origin of that University was a gift of two gentlemen, equivalent to £50,000, subsequently extended to £90,000. That amount was handed to a number of gentlemen who considered the establishment of a University of great importance to the community. What did they do? They asked for a valuable grant of land to the value of £55,000, and they got it, but in addition they got £17,000 for building purposes, and were now in receipt of £5,000 a year to carry on the work of the University. He would be told that the University was open to every one, but it was not open unless persons receiving education paid for it. The Trades and Labour Council were of equal importance to the community as the University. The labour movement was a great movement, which was increasing. He claimed that the introduction of the Bill was a political dodge. The Assembly had passed the Bill, and they must be given credit for the intelligence and views they held.

The Hon. J. G. RAMSAY said the doctrine enunciated by the Minister of Education was the doctrine of every bandit chief. He admitted that the working classes were in the majority, but the Bill had only been introduced by the Premier to get the support of a very influential class at the next elections. It seemed to him that the Government were willing to do anything for popularity. He believed in Trade Unions, which did a great deal of good, but he never knew of their going to the Government for assistance. When he was connected with them they wanted to be left alone, and it would be a bad day for the colony if they sapped the spirit of independence by toadying to any particular class. The Manchester Unity of Oddfellows, Foresters, Hibernians, Orangemen, and similar organizations were as numerous as the working men, and had an equal right to a grant of land. If they gave a site in Adelaide they should as well give one in every township in the colony. It was a sad thing for the colony that its destinies should be in the hands of the Premier—who had recently invited the Friendly Societies to ask the Government—and the Minister of Education. He thought it had been a mistake to subsidize the University as it had been, but because they did wrong once that was no reason why they should do it again. The State should coddle no class, but let each work out its own salvation. The taxpayer would have to bear the burden of the gift. He would subscribe to the purchase of a site, but could not agree to give away the public estate, and he hoped the Council would show the Ministry what they thought of their Bill. (Hear, hear.)

The Hon. M. SALOM supported the Bill, but, before doing so, he wished to place on record his dissent from the speech of the Minister of Education. Hitherto he had admired the Hon. J. H. Gordon, but that day he had been pained to hear such an inflammatory and dangerous speech. If his

mind had not been made up that speech would have induced him to oppose the Bill. He did not think the request in the Bill was more extraordinary than others made. Since he had been in the Council hundreds of thousands of pounds had been conceded to the farmers, pastoralists, and in the cause of higher education. The University had received many concessions, and other institutions, such as the Sailors' Home and Bushmen's Club, designed for particular classes, had been granted assistance. The time had come when the Trades and Labour Council, representing a large number of colonists, had become a constituent of the body politic, and they were as much entitled to consideration as farmers and pastoralists. If they had done something for one class of the community they should do it for another. He did not think the matter was worth so much discussion, and the speech of the Minister would do more harm than twenty such grants as asked for. The importance of the working classes was forced on him by the last eight-hours demonstration, and they must consider them. He believed in Trades Unionism unless it tyrannized over free-born subjects.

The Hon. R. C. BAKER—What do they do now?

The Hon. M. SALOM objected to the Trades Unions saying a man should not work or they would not work with him. There was no free education for the class they were legislating for. The majority of them paid the fees.

The Hon. Dr. MAGAREY said his inclinations were all in favour of granting the site asked for in the Bill, but his sense of duty prevented him doing so. They were instituting a dangerous precedent. A large benefit would accrue to those represented by the Trades and Labour Council in having a hall of their own in which they could meet, but that was no argument for the Government giving the site. The labouring classes could if they liked easily erect a Trades Hall of their own, and he believed the agitation for a site had been started by the Government. He had no objection to concessions to sections of the community, but they were not justified in giving a political body such a concession. The very strength of the body should induce them to hesitate to do anything that would increase its power. The South Australian Alliance, the Licensed Victuallers' Association, political bodies, were as much entitled to ask the Government for a site for a hall as the Trades and Labour Council. (Hear, hear.)

The Hon. A. HAY expressed his surprise at the utterances of the Minister of Education. The labour class was in South Australia a numerous body, but they should be honest, and not use their power to do wrong. He objected to the attempt of the Ministry to set class against class. The concession asked for in the Bill was putting in the thin edge of the wedge. There was no parallel between the assistance given to the education system and the proposal to give a site for a Trades Hall. The former was for the public universally. The Sailors' Home was established as a national institution. (Hear, hear.) It was not for any particular class, but for foreign sailors as well as those in their own colony. The farmers and squatters were tenants of the Crown, and concessions had been made to tenants, whether Crown or

not. The land proposed to be given as a site was laid out for a particular purpose, and it should not be devoted to the Trades and Labour Council. There were numerous other organizations who had an equal right to portions of that land. But it was wrong, and he had no doubt that when the Trades Council looked into the question they would admit it. If the request were granted they would have the Minister coming down and asking for a site for other sections of the community. It was all bosh. Any Government that gave way to gain popularity were doing wrong. (Hear, hear.) There was nothing more contemptible than men changing their opinions to keep their seats. (Hear, hear.) It was not honourable. He opposed the Bill as initiating a system that would do a great deal of harm to the community.

The Hon. J. H. ANGAS disapproved of and regretted the speech of the Minister of Education, which would not improve his position in the Council. He had not helped the cause which he was advocating. As regards the Bushmen's Club the Government never gave the £3,000 referred to by Mr. Simpson, but it was simply a loan without interest. The land for the Sailors' Home was given and money subscribed, and that the Government subsidized, which they had a right to do. He should be happy to assist Mr. Baker in subscribing £1,000 for a site for the Trades Hall by giving £100. (Hear, hear). And he trusted the Trades Council would regard that as a testimony to their willingness to assist them. He, however, could not consent to vote away a site which had been reserved for public purposes. The Government gave nothing at all to the University until Sir W. W. Hughes and Sir T. Elder had come forward with large sums, and it would have been a disgrace to the Government had they not then subsidised the money. If the Bill were thrown out the Trades and Labour Council would not suffer.

The Hon. J. V. O'LOGHLIN said the impression made upon him by the speech of the Minister of Education was not the impression created in the minds of other hon. members. The Trades and Labour Council represented one-sixth of the entire adult population of the colony, which was 60,000, they having 10,000 members. It was better to deal with organized bodies than with isolated bodies, as instanced in the late dispute between the railway employes and the Commissioners. In speaking on the Government policy he said he would have preferred to have seen a Working Men's College, but he had since ascertained that that would not meet the views of the Trades and Labour Council. He did not advocate any radical doctrines in supporting the Bill. Without speaking on behalf of the members of the Trades Council he thought the subscriptions promised by hon. members would not meet the case. They wanted nothing in the way of public charity, but only what they had a right to. There was no essential difference between that grant and grants made over and over again to Societies in South Australia.

The Hon. J. DARLING regretted the Bill had come before the Council. They should take care of the weak in their legislation. What about those classes in their working community who were not bound up with the Unions? Were they not to be protected? (Hear, hear.) The Bill had been placed before them at a very inopportune time.

They had comparative peace between capital and labour at the present time. Then the city and suburbs only had had opportunities of discussing the question; it had not been submitted to the country. The Government were the custodians of public property which they held in trust, and they had no right to tender to a portion of the community part of that estate. It was political power that was aimed at by those seeking to secure the grant. (Hear, hear.) If the Societies were strong and wealthy, as they represented themselves to be, they could easily put their hands in their pockets, and they would receive assistance outside from those who sympathized with them. Suitable blocks of land in the city for a hall had recently been disposed of at sums ranging from £500 to £750, and it was pauperizing 10,000 men to appeal to Parliament for that amount. But they came to Parliament to show their power. The Bill was a very dangerous one. Let them have a Trades Hall and Employers' Union under one roof, the building being utilized for conciliatory measures.

The Hon. J. WARREN opposed the Bill, and expressed regret at the speech of the Minister of Education, which was unwise. The Trades and Labour Council did not represent a majority of the colony. He did not believe the labouring classes were so selfish as the Minister of Education had represented them to be. The grants given to the Agricultural Society had been an advantage and a benefit to the whole community, but the same remark was not applicable to the grant proposed in the Bill. It had been said that nothing had been done for the working men, but useless works had been undertaken merely to find work for the unemployed.

The Hon. D. MURRAY said that in no single case had the Government of South Australia subsidized institutions which were not educational or benevolent. The benevolent institutions had been started by contributions from the colonists themselves, and had only been subsidized by the Government subsequently. The same remark was applicable to educational institutes. If the Trades and Labour Council could come before the Government as an educational institute, seeking a subsidy on their own subscriptions, then he should vote in favour of it being granted. The Minister's remarks, however, were almost in the shape of a threat, and that the men demanded what was their right. He regarded the request from the Trades Council as being made to show their powers. Such a body had no claim upon the Government. He opposed the Bill.

The Hon. A. R. ADDISON would vote against the Bill, because if they gave way now where were they going to stop? (Hear, hear.) It was known that the Ministry were not going to stop at that grant, as evidenced by the Premier's remarks at a recent demonstration. He (Mr. Addison) was opposed to granting a site of land to a small section of the community. Even if the Bill passed the land asked for would be wanted for increased Courthouse accommodation. The Bill would not have been introduced but for electioneering purposes. Still he did not blame the Government for that, but was introduced mainly owing to the strong support accorded to it by a member of the Opposition. He

regretted the inflammatory and dangerous speech of the Minister of Education, who had followed in the footsteps of his Premier. He would not be surprised now at anything the present Ministry would do. At the next Eight-hours Demonstration they might expect to see the Premier and the Minister of Education leading the procession with a banner, on which might be inscribed—"No labour—equal division of property." (Laughter.)

The Hon. W. K. SIMMS supported the Bill. Similar grants had been made to other bodies. The measure would be the means of bringing capital and labour together and prevent strikes, which were so much to be regretted. The proposed site, however, was the wrong one, it being required for public purposes. He would vote for the Bill to establish the principle, but would oppose the site.

The Hon. J. BOSWORTH opposed the Bill because the feeling of the country was against it. If the Bill were passed many similar demands would be made in future.

The Hon. W. A. E. WEST-ERSKINE could not imagine a more inflammatory speech than that of Mr. Gordon. Such speeches caused the French Revolution 100 years ago. Mr. Gordon's speech would drive more capital out of the country than any number of bad seasons. The public estate should not be alienated for a Trades Hall. Those who proposed the alienation should put their hands into their pockets for the necessary money. People were now sending capital away from the colony because they distrusted the Government. The working men had great power, but they should use it wisely.

The Hon. J. H. GORDON said he had been misunderstood by Mr. Baker and others who took their cue from him. There was nothing inflammatory in his speech, in which he simply stated a fact that the working men were becoming the ruling power, and that the Government recognising that fact met them fairly by conceding the site for the Trades Hall. It might not be as a right that the site was to be granted, but it would tend to conciliate the two classes rather than to inflame them. The second reading was negatived on the following division:—

AYES, 7—Hon. Dr. Campbell, Cotton, O'Loughlin, Salom, Simms, Simpson, and Gordon (teller).

NOES, 12—Hon. Addison, Angas, Baker, Bosworth, Darling, Hay, Dr. Magarey, Murray, Ramsay, Warren, West-Erskine, and Tomkinson (teller).

PAIR—Aye—Hon. J. Martin. No—Hon. H. E. Bright.

The amendment of the Hon. S. Tomkinson, that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, was then carried.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS BILL.

Returned from the Assembly, disagreeing to the suggestion of the Council; to be considered next day.

LOCAL COURT FOR MORPHETT VALE.

The Hon. J. G. RAMSAY moved for the establishment of a Local Court of limited jurisdiction at Morphett Vale. Carried.

NEW POLLING PLACES.

The Hon. A. R. ADDISON moved for a proclamation declaring Union, Howley, and Maude Creek in the Northern Territory.

On the motion of the Hon. S. TOMKINSON the debate was adjourned until next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 12 minutes past 10 the Council adjourned till next day.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2 o'clock.

PETITIONS.

By Mr. GLYNN (for Mr. Rounsevell), from thirty-six residents of the Burra in favour of female suffrage. By Mr. SOLOMON, from 160 ratepayers of St. Peters in favour of the Adelaide and Payneham Tramway Bill.

ELECTORAL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. STIRLING brought up the report of the Select Committee on the Electoral Bill, and gave notice for next day of a motion for its adoption.

NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA.

Mr. KRICHAUFF—What steps have been taken with respect to the reservation of large areas for the preservation of native flora and fauna? The Hon. Dr. COCKBURN—The Surveyor General is engaged in preparing a report upon the claims advanced by the Society for the Protection of the Native Flora and Fauna. Their claims were so extensive that the Government could not possibly grant all of them, and the Surveyor-General is now seeing how much of them can be fairly granted.

MACDONNELL RANGE GOLD REEFS.

Mr. STIRLING—What instructions have been given to carry out the promise made by the Minister of Education to obtain a water supply at the goldreefs in the MacDonnell Ranges? The Hon. T. BURGOYNE—A party is now on its way in order to obtain the necessary information.

YORKE'S PENINSULA SALT MINES.

The Hon. T. BURGOYNE, to Mr. BARTLETT—The salt lakes near Yorketown have already been examined by the Inspector of Mines in reference to the suggested existence of salt mines in that locality. His report is in preparation.

SIR J. DOWNER AND THE BARROSA WATER-SCHEME.

The Hon. A. CATT, on a formal motion, called attention to statements of Sir John Downer at Gawler on Friday last. There was little opportunity now for a definite discussion regarding the Barossa Water Commission, but as Sir John Downer had made scandalous statements at Gawler in reference to the Commission something should be said in reply to them. He did not wish to be offensive in any way, but Sir John had charged the Commission with conduct which would be unpardonable if true, and it was altogether unfair to the Commission as well as scandalous for a gentleman occupying so high a position in the House and in the country as Sir John did to lend himself to such assertions. The remarks referred to were quoted in both daily papers. The *Register* of December 3 said: "He (Sir John Downer) was astonished, however, that after taking evidence at forty-one meetings—evidence which strongly supported the Barossa proposal, and when it seemed inevitable that the report must be favourable to the scheme, when the Engineer-in-Chief brought up a report of the Happy Valley scheme—he was astonished that without having heard anything of this proposal before, or without taking a single word of

evidence, the Commission forgot their forty-one meetings, and quietly and comfortably adopted it." If any one had a right to be astonished it was the Commission, because of such utterly scandalous and unwarranted observations being made. The *Advertiser* report read:—"He was surprised that after 41 meetings, in which they took evidence which he thought pointed most strongly in favour of the Barossa scheme, that almost at the last meeting a scheme was brought forward that had never been heard of before when the work of the Commission was over. Without taking one single word of evidence about the new proposal—they forgot the 40 meetings held—the Commission made a *tabula rasa* of their memories and adopted the new scheme. To him it was astounding." To him it was more than astounding that such a statement should be made by an hon. gentleman who should have made himself acquainted with the facts. The discussion of the motion on the paper had been adjourned twice for the convenience of Sir John Downer, who had plenty of time to acquaint himself with the report. At the first meeting held the Commission took important evidence from the Engineer-in-Chief with reference to the Onkaparinga, as well as the other schemes. All through the evidence in various places the Onkaparinga and Reynella schemes were prominently before the Commission. At the first meeting at which evidence was taken (that held on January 30) according to the minutes it was resolved—"That it be an instruction to the Engineer-in-Chief to make surveys and estimates of cost, to be furnished to the Commission, in reference to the scheme for water supply from the Onkaparinga, mentioned by him in his evidence." The Engineer in Chief at once commenced operations in compliance with the resolution. From that time forward men were working at the place to get the details of the information necessary. At the meeting held on January 31 it was resolved that Mr. Moncrieff should include in his comparative statement relative to the Barossa, Sixth Creek, and Onkaparinga schemes, an alternative estimate of the cost of the same if made on the "rock fill" or "rip rap" systems, and also obtain particulars of the cost of cement pipes.

Mr. GLYNN—Did you give Sir John Downer notice that you intended to take this action?

The Hon. A. CATT—No.

Mr. GLYNN—It is unfair.

The Hon. A. CATT said the hon. member should be in his seat, though he very seldom was. (Hear, hear.) It was not his fault that Sir John was not present like other members. (Hear, hear.) On April 24 five or six members of the Commission paid a personal visit to the Onkaparinga to see what work was being done, and whether it was a place where water might be obtained to supply the city and suburbs. On May 27, July 17, and August 13, the minutes of the proceedings of the Commission contained references to the scheme, and throughout the evidence there were numberless questions asked concerning the Onkaparinga and Happy Valley schemes. It was unfair to the Commission who had gratuitously devoted so much