

## GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

### PROPOSED NEW SITE.

### A HEATED DEBATE.

The proposal of the Government to acquire another site for the Governor's residence has created general interest. Last week Mr. Bice, in the Legislative Council, urged strongly that the Government should do nothing finally in the matter before Parliament had had an opportunity of discussing it. In speaking to a motion, to that effect, Mr. Lucas caused quite a stir by some remarks he made in regard to several property deals the Government had carried through. The debate was resumed in the Council on Wednesday afternoon.

The Chief Secretary referred to the statements of Mr. Lucas, when previously speaking on this motion. Mr. Lucas had suggested that in purchasing Dr. Hynes' sanatorium in Flinders-street over the head of the Liberal Union, the Government had used the taxpayers' money to defeat the aims of an opposing political organisation. The Minister of Agriculture had referred to that suggestion with a term that was described as unparliamentary. Personally he did not think he could have correctly designated the suggestion, either, and still kept within the standing orders.

Mr. Lucas—I am prepared to repeat them again. I stuck to facts that cannot be controverted.

The Minister of Agriculture—Your statements were absolutely untrue.

Mr. Lucas—They will be given preference to yours, anyway.

The Chief Secretary said there was not an atom of truth in Mr. Lucas' suggestion, and if Mr. Lucas repeated it he would himself be tempted to use unparliamentary language. (Laughter.)

Mr. Styles—He will not come again after that. (Laughter.)

The Chief Secretary said the Government would not stoop to such a petty and miserable action as Mr. Lucas had suggested. The Government had purchased the buildings as a matter of expediency.

Mr. Lucas—Was it a matter of great urgency?

The Chief Secretary—It was. The Federal authorities were anxious to get into the old Education offices without delay.

The Minister of Agriculture—He is the smallest-minded man in the Chamber.

Mr. Lucas—It was unfortunate that it came at the time it did.

The Minister of Agriculture—Get your facts before you speak next time.

Mr. Lucas—I quoted facts.

The Minister of Agriculture—No, you did not.

Mr. Lucas—May I ask you, Mr. President, to ask the Minister of Agriculture to allow the Chief Secretary to proceed with his speech.

Mr. Styles—Accept the position of President yourself.

The President—Order.

The Chief Secretary said provision was made on the Estimates for the expenditure of £20,000 for the purchase of a site for the new Government House. It had been recognised for some time that the land now occupied by Government House must sooner or later be used for other purposes, particularly in connection with education buildings. The area occupied by the University and the other buildings of that nature, even with the removal of the Destitute Asylum and the police barracks, was not sufficient for future requirements. Government Houses in the other States were not usually in the heart of the city, but away from the dust of the traffic, as they should be.

Mr. Howe—Ours is an ideal spot for Government House.

The Chief Secretary said the site would have to be changed sooner or later.

Mr. Moulden—Has the Governor complained?

The Chief Secretary did not think that had anything to do with the matter at all. The Governor was only a temporary official, and the matter of the Government House site was one for the Government to decide. It was not, however, so much a matter of whether the present site was suitable as whether the land could be better utilised for other purposes.

Mr. Cowan did not think the present site of Government House would ever be required for other purposes, certainly not so far as they could see. If the opinion of the people could be obtained on the question, he had no doubt they would denounce the Government's proposal. A similar action by the Queensland Government had had the most unsatisfactory results, and the Sydney people had vehemently refused to sanction a similar scheme. He did not agree with Mr. Lucas that the Government had had as its object in purchasing Dr. Hynes' sanatorium the defeating of the aims of the Liberal Union, but he nevertheless thought that building was unsuitable for the purpose for which it was acquired. It would have been better if the Government had devoted the money towards completing Parliament House. The Legislative Council would then be better accommodated, and there would be room for more Government offices. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Duncan complained that the statement by the Chief Secretary that the matter was provided for on the Estimates had the effect of giving the House of Assembly an opportunity to discuss the proposal and refusing an equal right to the Legislative Council. He urged the Government to reconsider their action and give them fair treatment in this important matter. Let them withdraw the line from the Estimates and bring it down in the form of a Bill. (Hear, hear.) He must be an ambitious man and the Government must be an ambitious Government that desired a site better than the one Government House now occupied. They could travel the whole world, and they would not find another site that was its superior. (Hear, hear.) It was admirable from its central position. They could not better the position in regard to its accessibility to the general public, and to the members of the Government and of Parliament. (Hear, hear.) South Australia, by reason of its geographical position, had more distinguished inter-State and international visitors staying in her capital than any other State, and with that fact in view a central site was essential. (Hear, hear.) It was absurd to think of moving his Excellency—the King's representative—into the metropolitan back-blocks. They did not want to fight the Government on the matter, but, speaking for himself, he would use every possible opportunity that occurred or that he could bring about to defeat the Government on this proposal in whatever shape it came before the Council. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Addison was not sure that Government House should not be shifted. If the Government decided to do away with a Governor from England and place Mr. Lundie in his position, the farther they put him away from the city the better—(laughter)—but so long as they had an idea of appointing a gentleman from the old country, he hoped they would continue to use the present residence, for there could not be any more desirable site. He disagreed with the policy of the Government of buying little properties here and there for Government offices. (Hear, hear.) The money that had been expended in that way in the last few years would have been sufficient to complete Parliament House.

The Minister of Agriculture said it was about time the Government adjourned the House of Assembly and considered their position. (Hear, hear.) They could anticipate the usual majority to stand behind this motion. (Hear, hear.) It was a motion of censure, and consequently it might be just as well for the Ministers to retire and consider their position. Because the Government were disposed to do something quite in the interests of the general community, members were endeavoring to heap opprobrium upon them. He was sorry Mr. Lucas had left the Chamber, because he would have liked to say what he was about to say to that member's face. What Mr. Lucas had said was beneath any ordinary man's contempt. That term at least was parliamentary. Mr. Lucas had, in his opinion, and in the opinion of every other member, given a demonstration of political bias and narrow-mindedness that showed characteris-

tics no other individual in South Australian politics possessed. No other member would or could think so pettishly of the Government policy in regard to the purchase of a certain building as Mr. Lucas had thought. Although Mr. Lucas had attempted to put up something of an argument in favor of the Liberal Union, the members of that union would not thank him for his petty, narrow-minded expressions in that Chamber.

Mr. Styles—He is a member of the executive of the Liberal Union.

The Minister of Agriculture—That showed the kind of man that occupied an executive position in those political organisations. Had such statements emanated from a member of the Labor Party they would have been regarded as absolutely sacrilegious and deserving of the scorn of every right-thinking man. The Government would never stoop to such petty meanness as to buy over the heads of a political organisation to prevent them securing a property, and he did not think petty meanness could descend farther than to suggest that they would. Speaking to the motion—(hear, hear)—he did not think the surroundings of Government House were in keeping with the progress of the city. A high brick wall was suitable while the convict stain remained in Australia, but now it was nothing but an unsightly eyesore.

Mr. Duncan—Then remove the wall.

The Minister of Agriculture said the site at present occupied by Government House was of great commercial value—too much so for it to be devoted to use as a Governor's residence.

Mr. Pascoe—But you don't intend to make any commercial profit on the removal.

The Minister of Agriculture said the Government were doing what they thought was in the best interests of the taxpayers as a whole, and so far all their actions had been endorsed by the electors. Their agricultural policy had given satisfaction to the whole country.

Mr. Addison—Nonsense!

The Minister of Agriculture—It was not nonsense. He was prepared to contest any electorate in South Australia with Mr. Addison, and he did not think he would come off second best.

Mr. Addison—I will take that on any day you like.

The President—Order! The matter before the Chair has to do with the purchase of a new Government House site. This discussion is not relevant.

The Minister of Agriculture said he did not agree with the suggestion to fill up the corner adjacent to Parliament House with Government offices. If he had his way he would complete the building on its original design, and build the ground floor so as to form a great auditorium or theatre, in which the public might gather together in thousands or tens of thousands. At present they had not a single decent hall where any number of people over 4,000 might meet together. (Hear, hear.) There was no State in Australia that could provide so many beautiful and suitable sites for Government House. At the foot of the hills they could establish an ideal Governor's residence, and that was where he would like to see Government House situated. The present Government House was only a fourth or fifth-rate gentleman's residence.

Mr. Addison—That is an exaggeration.

The Minister did not think so. The building was ill-ventilated, and entirely without architectural beauty. It was just a square or oblong box, cut up into rooms, with windows that he would have expected to find in Noah's Ark. The whole building was old and antiquated. It was a structure that no member would thank his architect for designing for him.

Mr. Warren—There are some beautiful pines in front of the building. (Laughter.)

The Minister said they wanted more of them. Even if the residence was not removed, it would be necessary before long to pull down the present building and erect one more sanitary and more convenient. It would also be necessary before long enormously to increase the University accommodation, and he looked forward to the time when not only the police barracks, Destitute Asylum, and Government House, but the parade ground also, would be absorbed into one big University property, with beautiful gardens surrounding the buildings, which would be a place of beauty and pleasure. The electric car service was now so convenient and so complete that there would be no inconvenience to the public whatever if the residence