

Queensland



Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Council

WEDNESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 1880

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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, 8 September, 1880.

Post Card and Postal Note Bill.—Leave of Absence.—
Rabbit Bill—committee.

The PRESIDING CHAIRMAN took the chair at 4 o'clock.

POST CARD AND POSTAL NOTE BILL.

A message was read from the Legislative Assembly, announcing that this Bill had been agreed to by that House with amendments, and was now forwarded to the Legislative Council for their concurrence.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the House be put into Committee to consider the amendments of the Legislative Assembly.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he knew that any proposition made by the Hon. Postmaster-General in that Council at that moment was law, or tantamount to law, and it was very little use opposing it; but the present proposition was one of the most extraordinary he had ever heard. He was not there to question the proceedings of another place, but he did not hesitate to say that this was the only instance where a Bill was passed through committee with amendments and then read a third time in another place and be sent up to that House on the same day, to be as rapidly and improperly subjected to careless observation. The least they had a right to demand was that they should receive the Bill with the amendments before they were asked to consider it, and not at the time they were asked to do so, which was generally done. The invariable practice was that when Bills were amended by the other Chamber they were sent to members of the Council with the amendments marked in italics. But such was the indecent haste of the Government—hindering one part of their business and hurrying on another—that hon. members were now called upon to accede, without any notice or anticipation whatever, to the extraordinary proposition of the Postmaster-General. The only conclusion he could arrive at was, that under the management of the Postmaster-General the proceedings of the Chamber had become a farce—an absolute farce. It pained him to say so, but his conviction was that the way they were conducting business must sooner or later end in the sweeping away of a Chamber that transacted business in the way it was being done at that moment. It was the most extraordinary proposition he had ever heard to ask them in that Chamber, where, usually, dignity and steadiness governed their proceedings, to take into consideration and discuss a measure that had not been one minute in the House. He would take no part in the discussion, but he was doing what he felt to be his bounden duty in protesting against such indecent original parliamentary proceedings.

The HON. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR said the Postmaster-General asked to have the amendments at once considered in committee, and although he (Mr. Murray-Prior) agreed with the Hon. Mr. Walsh, he thought that it would have been better if fewer adjectives had been used by that hon. gentleman. He trusted that the Postmaster-General would delay the consideration of the amendments for some little time, so that hon. gentlemen might have an opportunity of considering them. That was the usual course.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he had no desire to indecently hurry that or any other measure through the House; but as he found that the amendments made in the other House were immaterial, and not likely to create discussion, and that hon. members would be prepared to accept them, he thought there was no harm in having them considered that day. There certainly was one new clause inserted, but it was only one extending and amplifying powers already possessed.

The HON. W. H. WALSH rose to a point of order. The Hon. the Postmaster-General was speaking a second time, and saying what he ought to have said in the first instance, and there was no chance of answering him. The hon. gentleman was telling them of alterations that had been made in the Bill in the other Chamber, and hon. members had no possibility of reply. They were, in this second speech—which was entirely irregular—getting a description of alterations which they were now hurriedly called upon to consider.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL thought he was in order in replying to a motion he had moved himself. He was merely making preliminary remarks in order to enlighten the Hon. Mr. Walsh, and he presumed that if that hon. gentleman got up in the House and made observations on his (the Postmaster-General's) proceedings, he was entitled to the courtesy of a reply. He had already stated that there was nothing in the amendments of the Assembly—

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he again rose to a point of order. The Postmaster-General had no business to make a statement of this kind; he should have done that in his first speech. He told them there was nothing important in the amendments of the other Chamber; that might be his idea, but it did not show why they should go with indecent hurry into committee. The Postmaster-General had no business in his secondary statement to introduce new matter. If he was going to do that, every hon. member would necessarily have to speak several times. The hon. gentleman had better accept the advice given by the Hon. Mr. Murray-Prior, and let the matter go on in a formal, and not hurry it in an informal, manner.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he would insist on saying what he was going to say, unless he was ruled out of order by the Chairman. He would insist on his right to explain any action he had taken when an hon. member had raised a protest against it. He had no intention of pressing on the consideration of the amendments that day. He had already stated that they were unimportant; and he was prepared to accept them, and he was sure the House would be also. He had received complaints from many hon. members that they were brought down to the House day after day when there was no business to transact, and he knew it was the desire of certain hon. members that they should not sit unless there was a fair amount of business to be proceeded with. For instance, there was no business, that he was aware of, worth sitting for in that House to-morrow, and he thought that these amendments, not being important, might be disposed of at once; but as the Hon. Mr. Walsh had taken objection to that being done, he (the Postmaster-General) was prepared to withdraw his motion and let the House consider them to-morrow. He thought that hon. gentleman should not get up and speak in such indignant terms. He might have asked him (the Postmaster-General) to postpone the Bill without using the language he did, which certainly did not tend to promote harmony. He (the Postmaster-General) did not take advantage of his position in that House in any way whatever, but was always ready to meet members on either side in every possible way; and it was very unfair of the Hon. Mr. Walsh to get up and make a succession of indignant, not to say outrageous, speeches every time he spoke.

The HON. G. SANDEMAN said he only wished to observe that, whatever motion was before the House, it was desirable to put an end to what they had seen on that occasion. He thought, however, hon. members ought to have a little time allowed them to consider the Bill with amendments. He himself had not had an opportunity of considering the subject at all, from having been absent when the Bill was passed; and he merely suggested, in all kind feeling to the Postmaster-General, that they should have time to consider it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL moved that the consideration of the amendments should stand an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY thought that on the grounds that were advanced by the Postmaster-General a few minutes ago, they ought to postpone the matter till Wednesday next. It was scarcely worth while to bring members there to-morrow if that was the only work to be done.

The HON. F. T. GREGORY said that the postponement would only prolong what might be disposed of to-night in a few minutes. After the Postmaster-General stated his intention to withdraw his motion he (Mr. Gregory) did not rise to speak, but he thought it would have been better if they had gone into Committee, and if they then found the amendments of sufficient importance to justify a further postponement they could adopt that course; but, as they were informed by the Postmaster-General that the alterations were very non-essential, they might as well have cleared them off at once. However, as the question had been withdrawn from that day, he could not see the use of postponing the matter till next week when, as every hon. member must be aware, many members would be absent at Toowoomba. In fact, it was his intention, if the Postmaster-General did not do it himself, to move that when the House adjourned they should not meet at all next week, as he knew there were many members who wished to attend the opening of the Roma Railway and the Toowoomba Show; so that it would be only postponing the matter indefinitely and uselessly to defer it until next week, and he hoped it would be dealt with to-morrow.

The HON. W. H. WALSH pointed out that if the Hon. Mr. Gregory anticipated the Postmaster-General in moving that the House should not sit next week, he would be adopting an unconstitutional course, and he thought it would be a pity if the hon. gentleman entrenched upon the proceedings of the Postmaster-General. The Standing Orders would have to be suspended unless such a motion was moved by the Postmaster-General, who seemed to think that unless they asked him to come to some friendly agreement before they went on with business he was to be the law. He (Mr. Walsh) had heard great complaints made by some of the supporters of the Government in the other Chamber about this Bill. They were dissatisfied with the iron-handed way in which it was forced on last night, although they had been obliged to give their allegiance to it from party motives. Even if they postponed its consideration for a fortnight it would be better for them, better for their character as statesmen and for the country, to have time to consider it, than to rush into the matter in the hasty way that was proposed. What was there in the Bill that it was absolutely necessary to engage their attention or call them together on that day? Honourable members seemed to him to consider that every little petty thing asked for in the name of the Government must be acceded to because it was so asked. He saw nothing in the Bill that made it necessary for them to come to-morrow if it was the only business for them to discuss, nor did he see that there was any necessity for it coming on next week, but he did see the necessity to warn hon. members that they could not move the adjournment of that Chamber beyond the proper day without doing so in a formal way. He hoped the Hon. Mr. Gregory was not such a thick-and-thin supporter of the Government that he, like them, thought that he could do anything he chose. He did not think the matter was of such grave importance that it might not be left for members and the country to digest for the next fourteen or twenty-one days, and then, perhaps, they could get more information from members of the other Chamber, who he believed regretted the part they had taken. He believed that hon.

member was the best friend of the House who stood by its rules and orders.

The HON. K. I. O'DOHERTY considered that the Hon. Mr. Walsh had scarcely shown sufficient grounds to postpone the question beyond to-morrow. The only grounds he had urged were that there might have been some objections to the Bill in the other House. His own impression was that the Hon. Mr. Walsh was on the warpath, and objected to doing any business. He scarcely coincided with that gentleman in a matter of that kind, and thought it was a great pity that the Postmaster-General had been induced to withdraw what was almost the only business before the House. He wished he could persuade that hon. gentleman to withdraw his present motion, so that the Bill might be dealt with at once.

Motion put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of the HON. J. S. TURNER, leave of absence was granted to the Hon. Wm. Graham for a fortnight.

RABBIT BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the motion of Hon. F. J. IVORY, the House was put into committee to further consider this Bill.

On clause 1—"Live rabbits not to be introduced into the colony"—

The HON. J. S. TURNER said he hoped the hon. member in charge of the Bill would see his way to accept the amendment suggested by the Postmaster-General. With some such amendment he thought the Bill was a desirable measure. Clause 1 appeared to him to be needlessly stringent, and, moreover, inconsistent with the rest of the Bill. The Bill itself did not profess to contemplate rabbit extermination, though he had little doubt that the promoters of it had that end in view. There was a good number of rabbits in the colony already, and the Bill contemplated their continuance under certain restrictions; and so long as they were in the community, children, whose instinctive love of pets went out in that direction, and whose parents were willing to afford them that reasonable pleasure, and that was tantamount to say they would always be kept. Provided that they were kept under the restrictions proposed in the Bill he could not see the slightest danger to the future of the colony. Another view of the matter was that, if the rabbits already here or to be produced here might be kept in confinement, he failed to see why others could not be introduced and kept under similar restrictions. However, owing to the trouble and expense involved in their introduction very few would be likely to be introduced, and these would be only the finest kinds, as to the custody of which the owners would be sure to be very careful; and, as previously pointed out, if they happened to get away they would be almost certain to perish. He fully approved of the general scope and intention of the Bill, but thought its provisions were too stringent, and hoped the Postmaster-General would press his amendment.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said, in moving his amendment the other day, he thought it was hard that persons should be allowed to have rabbits in their possession, and still should not be allowed to import one of a specially valuable kind. He therefore moved an amendment to the effect that rabbits should not be imported into the colony unless secured in a certain manner. As soon as, however, he had moved that amendment he came to the conclusion that the feeling of the House was strongly in favour of

prohibiting the introduction of rabbits in any form, and he thought that as further discussion would not alter the opinion of the House it would be as well to save time by withdrawing his amendment. For his own part he did not think it was very material, because, as the hon. Mr. Turner had pointed out, it would be so expensive to introduce rabbits after this Bill became law that really no danger might be apprehended. The matter was in the hands of the House, and, as he understood that another amendment was to be proposed to carry out the object he suggested on Thursday, he thought it would be as well to proceed with that amendment.

The Hon. F. J. IVORY said he was particularly averse to altering the first clause of the Bill. There had been no reason assigned whatever by which the community could be benefited by the amendment proposed by the Hon. Mr. Turner; and there was a very strong reason why he should press the Bill as it came from the other Chamber, and that was that if they made amendments upon a Bill such as this it was quite probable that when it was returned to the other Chamber it would be put so low upon the list of private business that it might not pass at all this session. The question was simply whether they should pass a Bill which was acknowledged to be one that would benefit the community to a very large extent, or risk its passing for the sake of a mere sentimental idea about keeping pet rabbits. He thought they should leave sentiment on one side altogether on an important matter of this kind. Only to-day the following extract from the *Horsham Times* had been handed to him:—

"I am told that Lake Albacutya Station has literally gone to the dogs, or rather to the rabbits, and the men who were employed there have received notice that their services will no longer be required after shearing. The sheep will be removed, and this will make matters worse for the poor selectors, for there will be no check whatever on the dogs and rabbits, and the nuisance will be fearful. It may be added this run is the centre of the mallee country, and that immense losses have of late years been incurred by the lessees of it, although it has always been reckoned one of the best runs in that part of the colony. This adds another to the long list of mallee runs abandoned within the last few years."

In the face of that he maintained that no facilities whatever ought to be offered for the introduction of rabbits. It was quite true, as Mr. Turner had pointed out, that some persons might wish to introduce rabbits of a particular kind; but if the door was once opened for their introduction, it would be equally open for the introduction of the other sorts which might prove hurtful to the colony. He considered that, under these circumstances, they should not risk the Bill falling through by making amendments upon it, and he should press the clause as it stood.

The Hon. T. L. MURRAY-PRIOR thought the objection of the Hon. Mr. Turner was quite answered by the fact that there were already a large number of rabbits in the colony, and as this Bill did not propose to destroy those animals children might have pets from the rabbits now here, and it would not be necessary that more should be imported. They were all aware that a great deal of harm had resulted from rabbits having been imported into the other colonies; and, although at the present time there were no wild rabbits in Queensland, still it was quite possible that persons having rabbits might allow them to escape, and if the country happened to be of a favourable character there was no knowing that they might become wild and increase, and result in very serious injury to the colony. For his part he would like to see every rabbit in the colony exterminated, because then they should be perfectly sure that there would be no danger of the pest. As for the sentiment that children should be allowed to

keep rabbits, he thought there were many substitutes for those animals, such as guinea pigs, which would do no harm whatever and were quite as entertaining to children as rabbits. It should also be remembered that it was not so much the outside stockholders who would be so seriously injured by the increase of rabbits as the farmers in the inside districts. They were the people who would suffer most; and he thought it would be far better to pass the Bill as it stood than to send it to the other Chamber with amendments, and run the risk of losing it altogether.

The Hon. C. S. MEIN said he had no sympathies either for or against rabbits, but he had not been convinced by the arguments adduced by any of the speakers to-night that there was any necessity for the first clause of the Bill. It was too frequently urged upon them in that Chamber not to amend Bills, for fear that the other branch of the legislature would be disinclined to accept their amendments; but, he would ask, what were they there for? They were there to assist and take part in the legislation of the colony, and if they were to be debarred from interfering with measures sent to them from the other Chamber simply through fear that the other branch of the legislature would not co-operate with them, the sooner the Upper House was done away with the better. That argument, he was sorry to say, had been more than once urged by the representative of the Government in that House, but he had not introduced it on this occasion. He (Mr. Mein) would never be influenced by what might happen in any other place with regard to any amendment he thought necessary to propose in any measure that came before the House. If he believed that an amendment was in the interests of the public, he should never be prevented from insisting upon it being carried if that House was in favour of it; and the argument in this instance refuted itself. The hon. gentleman urged as a ground for not amending the Bill that it was of great importance to the community, that it would benefit them to a considerable extent, and remedy a crying evil; and were they to presume, or assume, that the other branch of the legislature would not act in the interests of the country, and, even if the Bill were sent down to them at the eleventh hour with amendments, that they would not deem it worth while to consider these amendments and discuss them? He had a very much higher opinion of the other branch of the legislature than that. He was sure they would be glad to discuss dispassionately any amendments that House might incorporate in a Bill that had been sent to them for consideration; and he maintained that the members of that House were bound from a sense of duty to do their utmost to make the Bill go back to the Assembly in such a form that it would be most beneficial in the interests of the general public. It had been remarked that this Bill would be of great benefit and remedy a crying evil, but it had been admitted by the introducer, and every hon. member who had spoken in favour of it, that it was simply an experimental measure—in fact, the strongest argument in favour of it was that prevention was better than cure. It was argued that, because they found in the other colonies that rabbits had done a great deal of injury, therefore in this colony they should exterminate all rabbits, for fear they might become a nuisance; but if that principle were to apply generally there would not be a rabbit in the world. The Hon. Mr. Walsh, by his ingenuity and research, had shown that in some countries rabbits were of great commercial value to the inhabitants—that they formed the basis of certain industries, and were not injurious on certain soil; and what had been the experience in this colony, which had been in existence for twenty

years? It had been shown that even if rabbits were scattered broadcast over the country they did not propagate to any appreciable extent or do any injury to pastoralists or agriculturists; and he had no doubt that if the truth were discovered it would be found by naturalists that there were indigenous enemies in the country which prevented rabbits from propagating with the celerity they did elsewhere. He certainly thought that rabbits might be allowed to be introduced, provided proper precautions were taken to prevent them spreading all over the country. Why should they penalise anyone who introduced a rabbit, surrounded by these precautions? He should be very sorry to assist in encouraging a pest in any way; and for the purpose of testing the feeling of the Committee he would put the proposition of the Postmaster-General into a tangible shape, and propose that in line 7, after the word "seas," the following words be inserted—"unless it is securely confined within a hutch or box constructed of hardwood timber, and not less than half-an-inch in thickness, one side of which is enclosed with strong wire netting with a mesh not exceeding one inch in diameter." If that were carried he should move a further amendment at the end of the clause, and also in clause 2, to make the clauses symmetrical and grammatically correct.

The Hon. F. J. IVORY said the Hon. Mr. Mein misunderstood his argument. He (Mr. Ivory) did not say he objected to any amendments being made in the Bill for fear the other House would not pass it; but he pointed out that, as the Bill was in the hands of a private member, if it were amended and sent down to the other Chamber it might get such a place on the notice-paper that the end of the session might arrive before it could be proceeded with, and it would go off in the slaughter of the innocents.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill should certainly have taken some notice of the amendment moved by the Hon. Mr. Mein, and state whether he was prepared to accept it or not.

The Hon. F. J. IVORY said perhaps the hon. gentleman would give some reasons for supporting it.

The Hon. W. H. WALSH said he did not think this was legislation at all. It was simply trying to pass a measure *sub silentio*. Hon. gentlemen seemed afraid to express their views upon the subject, and they were expected to swallow a Bill like this for whatever reasons they might have. Hon. gentlemen might disclaim the individual views they were charged with, but until they stated what their views were the public, at any rate, would not credit them for their disclaimer. He thought it was perfectly absurd to pass a Bill of this kind, which absolutely prohibited the introduction of a most innocent, and in certain circumstances one of the most valuable, animals in the world, simply because a peculiar kind of rabbit in the other colonies, which did not exist in this, had been denominated a pest. Since the last meeting of the House he had seen several gentlemen who had endeavoured to propagate these animals in a wild state and had failed; and he maintained it was not worthy of that House to attempt to pass such a measure as this. The thing was really absurd that a lot of old gentlemen should become panic-stricken about the introduction of an animal which at that moment was 1,000 or 1,500 miles away, and which all their efforts to colonise had so signally failed—that a lot of old gentlemen in solemn conclave were so actually panic-stricken, and not only panic-stricken but so begotten of fear, that they would not allow any amendments to

be made in the Bill lest it should miscarry in another Chamber.

Question—That the words proposed to be inserted be so inserted—put.

The Committee divided :—

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The Hons. C. S. Mein, J. Pettigrew, W. H. Walsh, J. Swan, J. S. Turner, and F. H. Hart.

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The Hons. G. Sandeman, T. L. Murray-Prior, L. Hoop, F. J. Ivory, G. Edmondstone, F. T. Gregory, W. F. Lambert, and C. H. Buzacott.

Question resolved in the negative.

Clause 1, as read, put and passed.

"On clause 2—Manner in which live rabbits are to be kept and confined"—

The Hon. J. S. TURNER asked the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill whether he considered it advisable to retain the peculiar phraseology of this clause? It seemed to him rather absurd that a number of gentlemen calling themselves legislators should be called upon to decide whether owners of rabbits should keep them in hutches of a particular kind of wood and of certain dimensions. It seemed to him that it would be a very proper amendment if the clause were altered so as to provide that rabbits should simply be kept secure. There was a penalty attaching to letting rabbits get astray, and he thought that would be sufficient to make people very careful that they were kept secure. He would like, also, to say that if he had understood that the Postmaster-General had not proposed the amendment in clause 1 he should never have said a word about it. The hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill said he (Mr. Turner) proposed it; but that was a mistake. He (Mr. Turner) certainly understood the Postmaster-General to do so, and, at any rate, if he thought that hon. gentleman did not intend to support it he should not have wasted his breath in saying anything about it, because he knew it would be perfectly useless, seeing the majority there was of a different opinion. The Postmaster-General certainly led the Committee to believe that he was in favour of the amendment, and therefore he (Mr. Turner), as a subordinate member, thought he might very fairly support it.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL said he was sorry that the Hon. Mr. Turner seemed hurt at his apparent want of sincerity, but he (the Postmaster-General) explained as clearly as he could, when the Committee opened this evening, that although he had moved an amendment calculated to attain the object desired by that hon. gentleman, still, when he found the feeling of the House was so opposed to it, he withdrew it, and said he was perfectly prepared to give the amendment, if proposed in another form, fair consideration. He thought it was very desirable that the Bill should come into operation, and he knew from experience that there was great risk of a Bill like this, that was being carried through by a private member, not receiving the Royal assent. For instance, if anything happened in the other House—supposing the Government were defeated, and the House were dissolved—of course this Bill would be relegated to the limbo of departed innocents with all other Bills; and seeing that the other House had passed it, and that on the whole it was acceptable to members of that House, he thought it should be allowed to pass in its present form.

The Hon. J. S. TURNER pointed out that the explanation of the Postmaster-General would have had equal force if it had been given at the outset of the proceedings. He (Mr. Turner) certainly should not have wasted his time over the amendment if he thought the hon. gentle-

man did not intend to support it. He should be sorry if the Bill did not pass, but he thought they should amend it so as to make it as perfect as possible.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said there was another observation arising from the remarks of the Postmaster-General which it was well hon. gentlemen should take notice of and weigh well, and that was whether when the Postmaster-General moved an amendment upon a friend's Bill he was sincere in doing so, or whether it was done for a certain object to mislead hon. gentlemen. He (Mr. Walsh) did not mean to say that that was the hon. gentleman's intention, but the whole outcome of it tended in that direction. The Postmaster-General also said that he withdrew his amendment, and it would appear that he had become such a potent power in that House that whatever he did, or said, or thought, hon. gentlemen must be prepared to acquiesce in it. He (Mr. Walsh) knew the hon. gentleman withdrew his amendment although properly he had not the power to do so, because it was the property of the Committee, and he could not withdraw it except by the consent of the Committee. The Postmaster-General might just as well tell them that he made an Act of Parliament. He had no more power to do one than the other. All he could do was to submissively ask for permission to withdraw his amendment; but he did not do that but got it withdrawn by an accident—by not preserving the forms of the Committee. He certainly thought it should not go forth to the world that the Postmaster-General had power to withdraw an amendment once it was placed in the hands of the Committee.

The HON. C. S. MEIN thought there was a great deal of force in the Hon. Mr. Turner's objection to clause 2. He did not see why they should restrict a man to a particular form of hutch or box in which rabbits were to be kept. A man might wish to keep rabbits within a stone wall and allow them to run about within a certain area, and he thought it was quite unnecessary to restrict owners of rabbits to the use of a particular kind of timber or wire netting. All they had to do was to guard against the possibility of these animals getting away. To meet the difficulty, he proposed to alter the clause so that it should read: "No person shall have in his possession, or keep on his premises, any live rabbits, unless they are so securely confined that it would be impossible for them to escape from such premises." He must again repeat his argument against the objection raised to making amendments in the Bill. That was a matter which should not affect them in the slightest degree. If the Bill was a matter of public utility—no matter whether it was in the hands of a private member or of the Government—it would be the duty of the Assembly, and it would be their interest and desire, to pass it whether it was amended or not. The argument of the Postmaster-General, with regard to the Assembly being dissolved, had no force whatever, because in that case all other Bills, whether public or private, would be in the same position: they would be all lost for that session. He thought they might rest assured that if the Bill was a valuable one the Assembly would pass it.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said surely the hon. member in charge of the Bill should state whether he intended to accept the amendment or not. If he did not do so he would tacitly consent to it, and was bound to vote for it. That was proper parliamentary practice, and he (Mr. Walsh) maintained that the hon. gentleman was bound to inform the House whether he acceded to the amendment or not.

The HON. F. J. IVORY did not know whether the hon. gentleman was afflicted with deafness; but if he had listened in the early part of the discussion he would have heard him (Mr. Ivory) state that he would oppose every amendment, upon the ground that it would risk the passing of the Bill.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said the position taken up by the hon. gentleman was this, that he had introduced the Bill, and, knowing that he had a majority in favour of it, on proposing to go into committee he stated that he would not admit any amendment, for fear that if there was a single amendment made it would not pass in the other Chamber. He (Mr. Walsh) said that, if that was the manner in which legislation was to be carried on, and that was the style of argument they were to have adduced, if he could get support he should not allow the Bill to pass through this session. He would call upon hon. gentlemen who were old legislators to say if that was the kind of argument that would weigh with them? If the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill had got up in an urbane way, and stated that he was not satisfied with the arguments—that nothing had been done to induce him to accept any amendments—it would have been different; but when he got up and said that he would not accept any amendment, he assisted in a tenfold degree to make a laughing-stock of that Chamber.

Question—That the word "so," proposed by the Hon. Mr. Mein to be inserted in line 13, be so inserted—put and negatived.

Clause 2 put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 were passed without discussion.

On clause 5 being moved—

The HON. C. S. MEIN objected to the Bill being scamped through in such a hurried manner, simply because the hon. gentleman in charge of it said he would not accept any amendments. Clause 2 had been passed in an ungrammatical form, and the Bill was being rushed through so fast that he did not know what clause was under discussion.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he did not think it was quite within the practice to refer to a clause that appeared to have been passed; but he would point out that the 4th clause provided that any person who let loose a rabbit—

The HON. F. J. IVORY rose to order. They were now dealing with clause 5, and not clause 4, which the hon. member was discussing.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he wished to show the bearing of one clause upon the other.

The CHAIRMAN said he understood the hon. member was speaking on clause 5.

The HON. W. H. WALSH said he was speaking upon clause 5, but he was referring to clause 4, and wished to point out that if they did not mind what they were about any man who turned loose a rabbit would have to take all the responsibility—

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL rose to a point of order. The clause which the Hon. Mr. Walsh was discussing had been adopted by the Committee, and he was out of order.

Clause 5 put and passed.

The remaining clauses of the Bill, and the preamble, were agreed to without discussion; and the House having resumed, the Chairman reported the Bill without amendment, and the third reading was made an Order of the Day for to-morrow.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes to 6 o'clock.