**VERMIN BILL 1895**

**Legislative Assembly, 14 November 1895, pages 2172-3**

Second reading

The TREASURER in moving the second reading of this Bill for the Commissioner of Crown Lands, said it would not be necessary to speak at length on the subject, because it debated fully last session. It was stated in the Act of last year that the whole of the funds of the vermin boards were to be utilised for the construction and maintenance of vermin- proof fences, and the House refused to permit any portion to be used for vermin destruction. The Government did not believe these funds should he used for the destruction of rabbits, nor did they think that money contributed by the State by way of loan should be so used; but they did believe that the rates collected by the boards should be used if the boards so desired for the destruction of wild dogs. Clause 1 provided power to expend any portion of the rates in payment for the destruction of wild dogs, and the board would be empowered to employ men to entrap, poison, or otherwise secure them. Rabbits were not included. The Government had brought forward the Bill in response to a request made by Messrs. Poynton, Foster, Moule, and others, and he hoped no serious objection would be raised to it. Clause 2 provided for the repayment of loans in 20 annual instalments instead of 10. In the case of the Anabama district it was found that the board would not be in a position to repay the sum required to be expended in ten years, and therefore they had been unable to do anything. If they could repay the amount in 20 years their rates would be sufficient to warrant the loan, and they would have no difficulty in connection with the construction of the fence, its maintenance, or the repayment to the Government. In clause 3 there was a provision which made it lawful for district councils to expend any portion of their rates in paying for the destruction of wild dogs and foxes. In some cases, notably in his own district, the vermin difficulty was a very serious one, and the district councils would be glad if they could levy an additional rate with a view to obtain funds out of which they could pay for the destruction of vermin. Clause 4 gave power to levy a special rate not exceeding 3d. in the pound for the destruction of wild dogs and foxes. No district council would be obliged to adopt this course, but if they desired to do so it was well that they should have the necessary authority. The only other clause was one which incorporated the Bill with the Vermin Act of 1894 and the District Councils Act of 1887. He hoped the measure would soon secure the approval of both Houses.

Mr. GILES secured the adjournment of the debate till next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 10.20 p.m. adjourned till next day next at 2 p.m.