**RENMARK IRRIGATION TRUSTS LOAN BILL 1896**

**Legislative Council, 26 August 1896, pages170-1**

Second reading

**The CHIEF SECRETARY** rose to move the second reading of this Bill.

The Hon. E. WARD rose to a point of order. It would spare the Chief Secretary some time and trouble. Clause 2 said:—“ The Treasurer may, out of the public moneys, advance to ‘ the Renmark Irrigation Trust, No.1 hereinafter called the Trust, the sum of £3,000.” The point of order was that this was undoubtedly a money Bill, and unless there was a certificate that the Bill originated in another branch of the Legislature in the manner specified by the Constitution Act, were they not wasting their time in proceeding with it?

The PRESIDENT—That has nothing to do with the Bills that arrive here, except so far as the provisions of the Bills themselves are concerned. If they are money Bills there has to be a certificate on them. That is so in this ease. The certificate attached to this Bill is— “ This public Bill originated with the House of Assembly, and the purposes for the appropriation of the revenue have been recommended to the House of Assembly by the Governor during the current session.”

The Hon. E. WARD happened to know that when this Bill originated in the House of Assembly it was not a money Bill. It had been made a money Bill in that place since. Would that invalidate the Bill if they passed it?

The PRESIDENT—Certainly not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said the Bill had two purposes—one to extend the powers of “ The Renmark Irrigation Trust, No. 1,” constituted by the Renmark Irrigation Trusts Act of 1893; and the second was to empower the Treasurer to advance that Trust £3,000. It was a Trust created at Renmark to take charge of certain irrigation works there. The Trust had power to levy rates, but had no power to raise a loan. The Bill enabled them to raise a loan on the security of their rates, and the Government to advance £3,000 to the Trust, to be repaid in instalments extending over twenty years to be raised by the Trust, the Government having the security of their rates. The powers given in the Bill were not more than those already possessed by Corporations and District Councils. It was no new departure, but rather a remedy of an oversight at the time the Bill of 1893 was passed, and that power was not given. Some members might think that because Chaffey Brothers had failed it would injuriously affect the irrigation colony of Renmark, but under the Act of 1893 full powers were given for the Trust to carry on certain works. Those powers were in conjunction with Chaffey Brothers, who had been doing the work which it was provided in this Bill the Irrigation Trust should raise money to carry on—to supply pumping machinery, keep what was there in repair, and to cement the channels. The report of the Select Committee of members of the other House appointed to enquire into the matter contained the evidence of Mr. Jones, the Conservator of Water, and others, who said that the expenditure of £3,000 to supply better machinery and have the channels cemented would enable the Trust to save a very considerable amount annually. It was admitted by the Conservator of Water that the amount to be saved through carrying out these works would be sufficient to pay the installments and interest required under the Bill. There need be no doubt on the part of the members as to the security which the Government held for advancing the sum of £3,000. The Trust had power to levy a rate of 10s. per acre half-yearly. That was the power to levy £1 a year, and there was also power to levy a special rate of 5s. per acre under the provisions of the Act of 1893. That security was ample, and the Government had full power over the rates, and they had full security of all the rating power of the Trust. (The Hon. D. M. Charleston—“Have the debenture-holders any claim over the rates.”) No. That was guarded against in the Act of 1893, and there was no possibility of the debenture-holders or Messrs. Chaffey Brothers taking any of the money advanced by the Government. The power to rate amounted to somewhere about £2,600 per annum, and the £3,000 was advanced over a period of twenty years, and involved a half-yearly repayment of £114 10s. It would therefore be seen that the security was so absolute that there could not be any danger of any loss. Clause 3, which embodied the provisions, was as follows: —‘‘The said sum of £3,000, with interest thereon at the rate of four and a half pounds per centum per annum, shall be repayed by the Trust by half-yearly payments of £114 10s., extending over a period of twenty years, such payments to be made on the first days of March and September in each year during the said period, the first of such payments to be made on the first day of March, 1897, and the sums to be so paid shall be a first charge on all rates declared by the Trust until the loan and interest is paid off. Provided always that the Trust may at any time during the said period of twenty years pay off the whole amount of said loan then unpaid with the interest accrued due to the date of payment.” It provided not only for the security, but also that the Government advance should be a first charge upon the rates. Repaying the sum and interest in twenty years made it about 7 per cent. Clause 4 provided that the State Bank was to conduct the business and receive the instalments. (The Hon. D. M. Charleston—“Is there any charge for it?”) No. It was considered convenient to have the matter placed under an independent Board. If members would turn to the report and evidence of the Select Committee they would find that all the recommendations were embodied in the Bill. The Bill was the result of the visit of the Committee to Renmark and a joint consultation between the Government who framed the Bill, the people of Renmark, and the representatives of the Trust, and their requests had been framed on such lines as the Government thought safe. The Government were anxious to have the Bill passed through with as little delay as possible, for the reason that it was only during the winter months that the requirements of the settlers could be carried out in the way of cementing the channels. During the summer months the channels were continually full, but when there was rain the people could dispense with them to a great extent, and the channels were free. They were nearing the end of winter, and that was the reason the Government wished to push on with the measure. There was another matter that was suggested in another place so as to give additional security. It was mentioned too late to introduce it there, so he would move in Committee to add to the end of clause 5 the words “and no consent of a ratepayer shall be required to a special rate.” The Bill was a short one. He had a suggestion to make which he had spoken to some members about. He only wished to suit the convenience of members. If they would pass the second reading, take the Bill through Committee, and suspend the Standing Orders to pass the third reading that day, it might not be necessary to sit at all next week.

The PRESIDENT—This is a Money Bill, and if a suggestion is made to the House of Assembly, cannot be read a third time to-day. There will have to be a message sent to the Assembly.

The CHIEF SECRETARY said his suggestion could not then be carried out. He hoped they would make such progress that the Bill would be passed next week. (The Hon. D*.* M. Charleston—“What about those members who are away understanding that we would not sit to-day?”). A majority of the Council had decided that there was no such understanding. He asked them to make such progress as to enable him to carry the Bill next week.

The Hon. W. HASLAM secured the adjournment until Wednesday, September 2.