

either. The very nature of the work of these men on construction is such that their camps have constantly to be moved, and it would be difficult to erect anything in the shape of permanent buildings for them. The Premier does not break promises as the member for Forrest has suggested. His time is well occupied.

Mr. O'Loghlen: He would say the same about you.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has remained a bachelor and has only himself to think of, whereas the Premier has not only his household affairs to look after, but a tremendous amount of State work as well. Had the hon. member wished the Premier to accompany him I am quite sure it could have been arranged if he had seen the Premier about it. The House may depend upon it that action will be taken in accordance with the judgment of the Premier. I think the debate will have done some good. It has dealt with one aspect of the conditions of the working man, who, the employers have found out, must be looked after. The difficulty is, as stated by previous speakers, in connection with the struggling farmer, who has but little capital and only his own strength to rely upon. To force upon him all the conditions laid upon him in the Shearers' Accommodation Act will be asking him to do something more than he can afford to do. I do not think it will be necessary to force the matter in this direction in the way that has been indicated. The South-West farmer has a very hard time. Some of them are doing well, and others will do better in the future. They have to live a long time down there before they can see any results of their labours. The winters are severe, although this may be said to be one reason why better accommodation should be provided for the employees. If it is found that the workers are given accommodation as good as that enjoyed by the employers, and that the latter cannot afford to give any better accommodation, I am sure the House will not penalise the farmers by insisting that they should do that which they cannot afford to do. If the House did insist upon this the small farmer would not be able to employ labour, or be able to put forth the best of his energies in developing his holding. Taking the employers right through I am satisfied that they look after their men well as far as their means will permit.

On motion by Mr. Teesdale debate adjourned.

BILL—LOCAL AUTHORITIES SINKING FUNDS.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 30th September, 1920.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS—MR. MCGIBBON AND THE WHEAT BOARD.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [4.34]: I move—

That there be laid on the Table of the House all papers relating to the appointment of Mr. S. J. McGibbon to the Australian Wheat Board and to the dispensing with Mr. McGibbon's services.

I look upon this motion as almost formal, and I hope the Honorary Minister will not raise any objection to it. On that assumption I shall make my remarks brief. Let me call to mind a statement made in this House giving the reasons why Mr. McGibbon's services as representative of the West Australian growers on the Australian Wheat Board were dispensed with. There was one point in particular at issue between the Honorary Minister and Mr. McGibbon. In my opinion it is the points at issue between the Honorary Minister and Mr. McGibbon that the people interested want to see cleared up, and the only means of clearing them up is by having access to the papers. The statements of the Honorary Minister and of Mr. McGibbon on the same matters are strongly in conflict. Mr. McGibbon and the Honorary Minister seem to put quite different interpretations on the same matters. Mr. McGibbon was appointed as representative of the West Australian wheat growers by the Honorary Minister. On or about the 2nd April, 1919, the Honorary Minister stated that Mr. McGibbon had been appointed because he was well informed on wheat matters and had taken a keen interest in all the pools. The Honorary Minister has also said that Mr. McGibbon at the time of his appointment was a wheat grower and had wheat in all the pools. My own belief is that Mr. McGibbon still has wheat in all the pools. Towards the end of last year, however, Mr. McGibbon sold his farm and thus ceased to be a wheat grower. A peculiar point is that although Mr. McGibbon ceased to be a wheat grower towards the end of last year, the Honorary Minister has said that Mr. McGibbon's appointment to the

Wheat Board did not terminate until the 2nd April of this year, at which date, according to the Honorary Minister, it expired by effluxion of time. In spite of that fact, the Honorary Minister permitted Mr. McGibbon to attend a conference of the Australian Wheat Board held in Melbourne on the 13th April. I wonder whether Mr. McGibbon went there knowing that he was only permitted to do so as a matter of grace? There is another contentious point in this matter, a point which involves the interests of the State. Only when we see the conditions under which Mr. McGibbon's appointment was made shall we be able to determine what Mr. McGibbon's position really was. Mr. McGibbon contends that he was on the board as a representative of the wheat growers of Australia. The Minister, on the other hand, contends that Mr. McGibbon was appointed to the board as the representative of the wheat growers of this State. In my opinion there is a big difference between the two standpoints. I believe that the members of both Houses of this Parliament were under the impression that Mr. McGibbon went to the Melbourne conference to represent the wheat growers of this State, and that, although he had no power to bind the State, he would give the interests of the Western Australian wheat growers the fullest and most careful consideration.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It all depends on the terms of the appointment.

Hon. H. STEWART: Quite so. When we get those terms we shall be able to make up our minds what the position actually was. Although Mr. McGibbon sold his farm last year, the Honorary Minister was not officially aware of that fact; he tells us that he had not been informed of it. As late as February of this year the Honorary Minister, at a largely attended conference of Western Australian growers, made a statement eulogistic of Mr. McGibbon's services. Yet, to judge from the statement made by the Honorary Minister in this House, by that time things had occurred which did not meet with the Honorary Minister's approval, things which he has since advanced as the reasons for Mr. McGibbon's dismissal. There are other considerations which enter into the question, and in referring to these I shall in no way touch upon the matter of the sale of wheat to New South Wales. That sale does not enter into the question arising out of the statements which the Honorary Minister made in this House. I do not propose to ask that the papers concerning that sale, a matter which may be of the utmost importance to the wheat growers of this State, shall be laid upon the Table. The matter is one which may come into the courts, and I shall treat it as sub judice, and therefore as a matter on which I must not touch at present. I wish hon. members to realise fully that the sale of wheat to New South Wales does not enter into this question at all. I am asking for nothing but the papers relating to the terms of Mr. McGib-

bon's appointment, and to the reasons for his dismissal. Other instances in which there is a great difference between the statements of the Honorary Minister on the one hand and of Mr. McGibbon on the other are the commission in connection with the sale of wheat and the losses by weevil and mice during storage. In connection with those losses an amount of £522,000 was allotted for payment to the different States. Western Australia got none of that amount. The Minister claims that we ought to have got some of it. The wheat growers' representative, Mr. McGibbon, was opposed to the Minister on that point, was opposed to Western Australia getting any portion of that sum. Mr. McGibbon of course gave his reasons for that attitude, and it is desirable that those who are interested should be able to judge the matter for themselves when such conflicting opinions are put forward by the Honorary Minister and Mr. McGibbon. Then there was a resolution carried at the April conference in Melbourne which Mr. McGibbon supported, and which the Honorary Minister opposed. I think the Honorary Minister was the only member of the Wheat Board who did oppose it. That was the resolution, "That the quota which each State should supply under the British Government contracts should be such as would leave in all the States similar unsold carry-overs in proportion to the various populations of the States." The Minister says this resolution means that Western Australia will get credit for the unsold wheat in the pools only on the basis of population, and not on the basis of the quantity of wheat which the wheat growers of this State put into the pool—the latter being, the Honorary Minister contends, the only proper business basis. In fact it seems that dealing with the matter on a population basis would entirely alter the position as regards the amount of money coming to Western Australia. On the other hand, it seems to me that although a reason can be given for subdivision on the basis of population, that is not the right basis on which to divide the proceeds. Another matter on which information is desirable is the payment of commission to the London agents. The Honorary Minister pointed out that Mr. McGibbon voted for a payment equivalent to £10,000 to the London agents. That proposal apparently was defeated. It was a proposal to pay commission less rebate. Then he voted against a lump sum payment of £20,000 and his explanation was that he would not vote for a lump sum as he did not regard it as a business basis on which to pay. The Minister and Mr. Dunn, of New South Wales, proposed that the London agents should be paid £20,000 and contended that they would be adequately remunerated, but Mr. McGibbon voted for what was finally carried, namely, a payment of £38,000. I have given some reasons why it is desirable to produce these papers. I have brought the matter forward when the Honorary Minister is present. The notice has been on the paper for some

time. I have brought forward no new information to support it and I see no reason why the Minister should ask for an adjournment or why he should object to the motion being dealt with to-day. I hope members will support me in attempting to bring this matter to a finality.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [447]: I desire to direct attention to the question. I asked the Honorary Minister in the early part of the session. I asked whether there were any reasons why Mr. McGibbon was not re-appointed. As this motion merely asks for the production of the papers in connection with the appointment of Mr. McGibbon, and exempts all papers the production of which might prove prejudicial to the interests of the State in its dealings with other States, I contend that the motion should be agreed to. We have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the replies given to the Honorary Minister, but contradictory statements have appeared in the Press from time to time and it would be as well if we could see the papers for ourselves.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [448]: I do not intend to traverse the grounds previously explained to the House. I gave the reasons in detail for Mr. McGibbon's retirement and Mr. Stewart has dealt mainly with the different reasons which I gave at that time. The hon. member stressed one point that is quite new, namely, that the Minister allowed Mr. McGibbon to continue in office after the date on which his appointment actually terminated—some time in April. That in fact did happen and the reasons are very clear. Mr. McGibbon had made every preparation to attend the April conference, and as it took place nine or ten days after his appointment would have expired, I did not feel disposed to tell him then that his appointment would be terminated. Mr. Stewart said Mr. McGibbon was the representative of the growers of Australia. Mr. McGibbon was appointed to represent the growers of Western Australia, not of Australia. Had he recognised that, possibly he might have adopted a different attitude. I contend that no case has been made out for further publicity. I gave the whole of the reasons some time ago in connection with Mr. McGibbon's appointment and those reasons can be read in the pages of "Hansard." It would be ridiculous to again go over the whole of the ground. I took members into my confidence on that occasion and gave them the whole of the reasons, and I do not think much good can be done by further dwelling upon those reasons. Since then, the growers in this State have not made any representations that Mr. McGibbon should be re-appointed and, as they have not moved in that direction, and until such time as they do move in that direction—

Hon. H. Stewart: Whom do you mean by the growers?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The wheat growers.

Hon. H. Stewart: How could they communicate with you? Through what body or in what way?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If they had any request to put before me as Minister controlling the wheat scheme, they would very soon have found a way.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Have they any representative now?

Hon. H. Stewart: I believe the organised wheat growers of the State have communicated with you.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They have not approached me. The motion which was carried at the meeting of farmers in this State was laid before me, but that was carried prior to my making public the reasons for Mr. McGibbon's retirement, and since then they have not urged me in any way to re-appoint Mr. McGibbon. In a matter of this kind, where personalities have been and will be raised, it is not reasonable to ask that the papers should be laid on the Table. I do not care to say anything more at present. I dealt very fully with the reasons for Mr. McGibbon's retirement. Those reasons are on record in "Hansard" for members to peruse for themselves, and I consider that the papers should not be laid on the Table. I oppose the motion.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [452]: I support the motion. Mr. Stewart has put up a very good case. I have no desire to harass the Minister in charge of the wheat scheme.

The Honorary Minister: You are not now harassing me.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have no desire to put any difficulty in his way, but there is a doubt as to whether Mr. McGibbon was the representative of the wheat growers of Australia or the wheat growers of Western Australia. Mr. McGibbon says he was the representative of the wheat growers of Australia. The Honorary Minister says Mr. McGibbon was the representative of the wheat growers of Western Australia. The production of the papers will settle that point. The very fact that we have two conflicting statements convinces me of the necessity, in justice to the Minister and to Mr. McGibbon, for tabling the papers. I have no other interest except to clear up that one point. If the papers bear out that Mr. McGibbon was the representative of the growers of Australia, then I consider he acted in the interests of the whole of Australia. If he was the representative of the growers of Western Australia, then I consider he did not live up to his appointment. That is the point I wish to have cleared up.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [455]: I am rather surprised that the Minister should oppose the motion because we must realise that the whole of the wheat growers in this State are particularly concerned and interested in this matter. They undoubtedly are

aware of the opinion expressed by Mr. McGibbon and of the opinion expressed by the Honorary Minister. As there is a conflict of opinion it is quite reasonable that members should have an opportunity to peruse the papers and form their own judgment. We support our Minister right up to the hilt because he has taken such a very great interest in this matter. I feel sure he considers he has made out a good case, and that the case he has presented is the only one which can be made out. If we soon have to consider a Bill dealing with the further pooling of wheat, we shall want to know at least the circumstances under which the grave charges and counter charges have arisen in connection with the wheat board. It would certainly be of very great interest to us to know Mr. McGibbon's position as growers' representative and why he was discharged. Various statements have been made and we should see the papers in order to get at the facts. The question is whether Mr. McGibbon was the representative of the growers of this State, or of the farmers of the whole of the Commonwealth. Probably sufficient safeguards were not adopted in connection with his appointment, but we should certainly have the papers. I hope the Minister will not seriously oppose the motion.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East—in reply) [4.58]: I was surprised to hear the Minister's statement which conveyed the impression that no one representing the wheat growers had communicated with him regarding Mr. McGibbon's re-appointment since the last conference. I felt pretty confident that communications had reached the Minister's hands, but after his statement I cannot affirm that they have. I believe, however, that attempts have been made to communicate with him on matters bearing on this question. I do not believe that the Minister as Minister in charge of the wheat scheme, or as the Hon. C. F. Baxter, would offer any opposition to the tabling of these papers. I think he is acting as a member of the Government, and I fail to understand why the motion should be opposed. I do not think the Minister himself feels there should be any opposition to the laying of the papers on the Table. There is another matter also that could be touched upon and it is the question of the dispensing of the services of Mr. McGibbon.

The PRESIDENT: I would point out that this motion does not deal with the propriety or impropriety of the dispensing of the services of Mr. McGibbon. It refers to the laying of the papers on the Table of the House.

Hon. H. STEWART: I was endeavouring to keep within the four corners of the subject of the motion, and was simply bringing forward reasons which had been mentioned in the controversy that had taken place, and I was referring to matters which the Honorary Minister mentioned in connection with the dispensing of Mr. McGibbon's services.

One of these matters had reference to accounts, and in that connection the Minister pointed out—I am using my own words—or the interpretation put on the position by the Minister was that the way in which the accounts for expenses were made up was reprehensible or unseemly. Then a peculiar thing happened, that when the account was referred to the Australian Wheat Board they paid the growers' representative more than the amount the representative submitted to the Minister of this State. In fairness to all concerned, therefore, it is desirable that the papers should be laid on the Table of the House.

The HONORARY MINISTER: May I be permitted to make a personal explanation?

The PRESIDENT: Yes, so long as it is a personal explanation. The hon. gentleman can explain something that he has said, or anything arising out of what an hon. member has said, but he must not enter on any fresh matter.

The HONORARY MINISTER: With regard to the reappointment of Mr. McGibbon, I may not have made myself sufficiently clear. I did receive a communication but it was more in the nature of opposition to the appointment of Mr. Paynter temporarily for the last meeting of the board, and also putting forward the motion which was carried prior to my making known the reasons for Mr. McGibbon's retirement.

Question put and passed.

BILL—ROTTNEST ISLAND.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Parliament (Qualification of Women.)
- 2, Roads Closure.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—WESTRALIAN MEAT WORKS.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; Hon. J. W. Hickey in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Authority for directors to proceed to allotment.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 after "company" the words "so soon as 50,000 shares have been applied for" be inserted.

The amendment will meet with the wishes of hon. members and will enable the company to get to work actively without any delay.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th September.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Sub-urban) [5.10]: This is a Bill which lends itself to a discussion in Committee more than on the second reading. There is very little doubt that the House will be in agreement with the main motives underlying the Bill, and I congratulate my colleague, Mr. Duffell, on bringing it forward. I believe Mr. Duffell is affectionately known amongst his friends as "Uncle." I have no doubt that after the Bill is passed, he will be known amongst dumb animals as "Grand pa." I fancy some of the clauses will require to be carefully looked into. There is a clause, for instance, dealing with the hours that a horse shall work, and I think that perhaps will give rise to a certain amount of discussion. I am not sure whether we should not go the whole hog and give horses the right to apply to the Arbitration Court. But the clauses in which I am particularly interested are those dealing with the question of vivisection, and I would like to have the assurance of the leader of the House that those clauses have been brought under the notice of the responsible health authorities in the State. I see that persons employed in vivisection are exempt from the operation of the measure, provided they have a license from the Government. I speak open to correction, but I do not know what authority at present exists for licensing anybody to perform vivisection. I do not know that there is anything in the nature of vivisection or anti-vivisection legislation in this State, and I am not sure how anybody is to receive a license. Then, undoubtedly some of the provisions seem to me to be far too drastic. Paragraph (g) of Clause 5 exempts any operation of the nature of an inoculation or of a feeding experiment. It therefore seems to me that the Bill defines inoculations and feeding experiments as operations. A subsequent clause says "An animal which has suffered one operation shall not be subjected to another." I do not know whether the intention of the mover is that if an animal has received one inoculation, or has been subjected to one feeding experiment, it shall not undergo another. But in any case, even supposing that is not the intention, and that the paragraph will not bear that construction, I think the clause goes too far when it says that an animal which has suffered one operation shall not be subjected to another. Many of these operations are of quite a trivial nature, and I do not think that there is any reason, provided the experiments are carried out without pain and the animal is suffering no inconvenience, why another operation should not be performed.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Would shoeing a horse be an operation?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Not under the Bill. It is not vivisection. I think members will agree that those engaged in experimenting

on animals in the interests of science are as humane as are any other section of the community, and I am sure all those experiments are, as far as possible, carried out without the infliction of any more pain than is unavoidable. Where possible those experiments are performed under an anaesthetic. That brings me to another clause, which provides that an animal subjected to an operation shall, during the whole of the time thereof, be so under the influence of some anaesthetic as to be insensible to pain. That should be made a little clearer. There are not only general anaesthetics, but local anaesthetics. In general surgery on the human subject we frequently do considerable operations under local anaesthetics. I should like it to be made clear that the use of a local anaesthetic is not debarred in an experiment on an animal. These points should be definitely cleared up before we reach the Committee stage. In the meantime I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

BILL—CARRIERS.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the debate from the previous day.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 5.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 30th September, 1920.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.