

Clause 89—Cancellation of amalgamation :

HON. Z. LANE moved as an amendment,

That Subclause 2 be struck out.

Too much was left to the discretion of the Minister. The Colonial Secretary had stated that the Bill was to be re-committed for the purpose of reconsidering a previous amendment, and if the amendment referred to was struck out it would be necessary to have this subclause struck out too.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : This clause provided for transferring amalgamations from the present Act to the Bill, so that there would not be two sets of mining laws referring to the same holdings. Where any amalgamation was *bona fide* there was absolutely no need to be frightened over the clause. No objection was taken by the Mines Department to amalgamation as a whole, but the amalgamations registered under the present Act would be registered under the Bill.

HON. Z. LANE : If that was so, why not say it in the clause ?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : It could not be said plainer.

HON. A. G. JENKINS : It was not fair to those who had amalgamated leases under the old Act to have their amalgamation cancelled.

HON. J. T. GLOWREY : The clause took away the rights of certain persons. There was no undertaking on the part of the Mines Department that a company would again receive amalgamation, it having been cancelled under the old law. While the present Minister was administering the department there was nothing to fear, but one could not tell who might be Minister for Mines in a year or two.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : According to the Minister for Mines there existed in this State the amalgamation of leases held by different owners which had been obtained in some cases by fraud. A *bona fide* amalgamation had nothing whatever to fear from the provisions of the Bill.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result :—

Ayes	8
Noes	10
Majority against				2

AYES.
Hon. J. D. Connolly
Hon. C. E. Dempster
Hon. J. T. Glowrey
Hon. A. G. Jenkins
Hon. Z. Lane
Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. J. W. Wright
Hon. A. Dempster
(Teller).

NOES.
Hon. E. M. Clarke
Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. J. W. Hackett
Hon. W. Kingsmill
Hon. H. Laurie
Hon. W. T. Lotou
Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. J. E. Richardson
Hon. J. A. Thomson
Hon. B. C. O'Brien
(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 90—agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half-past 6 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly.

Monday, 14th December, 1903.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: Alterations in Railway Classification and Rate Book.

By the PREMIER: Report of Government Gardens Inquiry Board.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

ELECTION RETURN, NELSON.

The SPEAKER announced the return of writ for the election of a member for

Nelson, showing that Mr. John Russell Walter had been duly elected.

QUESTION—RAILWAY ENGINE-DRIVER REDUCED.

MR. PIGOTT, for Mr. Moran, asked the Minister for Railways: Why Driver J. H. Winzar is kept at Fremantle, at reduced wages, when he has been certified by medical experts as being thoroughly competent to do the work for which he was engaged.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Winzar has had numerous trials and has failed at the lot. In order that there should be no possibility of complaint he had his mate with him at the later trials, and had to give up; he failed to distinguish between red and green at 300 yards, and other similar tests. The safety of the public demands that where a man's vision is defective he should not be employed in any position where such defective vision might cause a mishap.

QUESTION—GOVERNMENT GARDENS INQUIRY.

MR. DAGLISH asked the Premier: 1, Whether the inquiry into the administration of the Government gardens has yet been completed. 2, If so, whether he will lay the evidence and report upon the table of the House.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, I now place on the table the file referred to.

QUESTION—FREMANTLE DOCK, FLOATING.

MR. HIGHAM asked the Minister for Works: Whether, in the event of no site for the Fremantle dock west of the railway bridge meeting the approval of the experts, and in view of the immense expenditure on account of new bridges and railway improvements necessary if the dock is to be placed east of the present bridges, the Minister will obtain a full report from the experts as to a floating dock adequate for the requirements of the port for many years.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes. The question of a floating dock has already received considerable attention, and the data now in the possession of the department will be brought under the consideration of the experts referred to.

COLLIE-NARROGIN RAILWAY BILL.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

JANDAKOT RAILWAY BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. FOULKES in the Chair; the MINISTER FOR WORKS in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Deviation:

MR. HOLMES: Had the Government paid any attention to the suggestion to fix a terminus, or was the railway to be allowed to wander among the sandhills looking for a terminus? In default of a definite proposal from the Minister, he (Mr. Holmes) would move the amendment tabled by the member for the Murray (Mr. Atkins).

THE CHAIRMAN: Questions dealing with the route could not be discussed under this clause, but under the schedule only.

MR. MORAN: The length of the line was six miles, and the clause sought a right to deviate for eight miles. The line should start from Robb's Jetty and should follow the Forrest road, thus serving the thickly-settled portion of the district instead of going through vacant paddocks. Was it wise to run right down the coast to Woodman's Point because there was a magazines dépôt and a contagious diseases hospital there? If the line had not been made as far as Woodman's Point there would have been no suggestion of starting there. No one would deny that by constructing a line on the route suggested it would pass through two or three large paddocks.

THE CHAIRMAN: The line had already been made to Woodman's Point, therefore he ruled that the route could not be discussed. The clause dealt with the deviation, and the route could not be discussed at the present stage.

MR. MORAN: If members could not discuss the route of the railway under the deviation clause, then they could not discuss the branches.

THE CHAIRMAN: Members would be able to discuss the route on the schedule.

MR. MORAN: No starting point was mentioned in the Bill; it was a Jandakot railway.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: This question had received attention. In con-

sidering the matter he had asked the Inspector for Engineering Surveys whether it would be necessary to deviate from the present terminus for the Jandakot railway in consequence of the ultimate extension of the line; and were there any reasons why the present terminus common to either line if extended to Armadale or Mundijong? Was it purely for engineering reasons, to obtain suitable grades, that the wavy line had been located as shown on the plan. Mr. Muir reported that the present proposed terminus would be common to an extension either to Armadale or Mundijong, and the wavy line as shown on plan would be necessary to obtain a ruling grade of 1 in 60, and would save expensive earthworks. The route as shown on the plan was the best the present surveys had shown, but it was hoped to be able to do better than that. That was why so extensive a limit of deviation was given in the clause. The suggestion of the member for West Perth would be taken into serious consideration, and he admitted there was a good deal in what the member said; but that had already occurred to the Government and had been pointed out by the Inspector of Engineering Surveys. With the information at present before the Government the route as shown was the best one from an engineering standpoint, according to existing information, but farther inquiry would be made, and with the limit of deviation provided in the Bill it might be possible to obtain a better route without deviating to the extent of four miles.

MR. MORAN: Would the clause allow the Minister to start the line at Robb's Jetty if thought necessary?

THE MINISTER: Yes.

MR. JACOBY: Could not members discuss the route, as the Government had power to deviate from the starting point?

THE CHAIRMAN: The line of route could be dealt with on the schedule.

MR. JACOBY: Strong opinions had been expressed in the House that something farther should be done in connection with the line, and unless the scope of the discussion could be widened, it would be difficult to arrive at a decision. It was debatable whether the line should not start considerably closer to Fremantle.

THE CHAIRMAN: The starting point was fixed in the schedule, which stated that the starting point should be the Fremantle-Woodman's Point railway. The question of the route could be dealt with when the schedule was reached.

MR. JACOBY: The Government should have had sufficient information at present to come to a decision as to the exact route of the line. It was hardly much longer than a siding, and had been reported on very fully, therefore the Government should have come down with definite information as to the route.

THE CHAIRMAN: The route could not be discussed now.

MR. JACOBY: A definite route should have been fixed instead of allowing a four-miles deviation. Surely the route could be discussed on the clause.

THE CHAIRMAN: No; it could be dealt with on the schedule.

MR. JACOBY moved as an amendment—

That in line 4 the word "four" be struck out and "one" inserted in lieu.

He was not anxious to tie the hands of the Government as to the exact spot where the line should be put but with a short line the Government should propose a definite route.

MR. HIGHAM: The four miles deviation would allow what the hon. member wanted.

MR. JACOBY: Members should not be expected to vote for a line the exact location of which they did not know. Under the clause the line could be taken a great distance on one side or the other. It was a bad principle to lay down in a Bill. The Government should have had full information at their disposal to have decided on the best route to take. The four-mile deviation would lead to a tremendous amount of route pulling and would upset the different districts. Interested parties would require the line to be built four miles one way or four miles another way. It would lead to dissatisfaction in the district. He was prepared to go with the Government if they said the railway which he preferred and which was a direct route, should be fixed in the Bill.

THE PREMIER: When addressing the electors he, on referring to this question, indicated that in the opinion of the Government a line between Fremantle

and the South-Western Railway would shortly become an absolute necessity from a railway point of view. If in the meantime, by commencing the construction of a portion of the line we could relieve a body of settlers deserving consideration, that portion should be constructed. In giving instructions to the engineer for the survey of the line, the Government in no way interfered. They said their object was to have the most efficient communication from Fremantle to the South-Western line, and to ascertain what route should be followed for the short distance contemplated. They were informed by Mr. Muir, one of our most competent surveyors, that the line should run as indicated on the map. He did not like that wavy line, and would have liked a more straight route. For that reason the Government provided that by this Bill they should have a right of deviation, his determination being that fuller and farther examination should be made before we fixed upon the route. He wished to provide a sufficient area to secure the best route.

MR. HOLMES: There should be direct communication between Fremantle and the South-Western Railway. The suggestion thrown out by the member for West Perth was a good one, and if what was proposed would allow the Government to take advantage of a different starting point we should, he thought, congratulate ourselves upon it. He would point out, however, that this Bill gave the Government practically the right to send the line wherever they chose, and in allowing that the Committee was perhaps establishing a dangerous precedent. If, as suggested by the member for the Swan, the Government had had the fullest information in connecting this line, they had been very badly advised. He could not understand why, nor could he get anyone who understood the country to tell him why, they had been wandering about in this aimless manner around trees and sandhills looking for a terminus.

THE PREMIER: If we went in a straight line we should have to do more embankment.

MR. HOLMES: It would be an injustice to Fremantle to penalise it to the extent proposed by this Bill. The Smelting Works had been drawing their wood supplies from Jarrahdale, and paying for

a railage of 43 miles, whereas if they could draw direct from Jarrahdale into Robb's Jetty the distance would be only 22 miles.

MR. PIGOTT: The deviation required was only needed for engineering purposes. By the present Bill the Government were asking permission to build a line six or six and a-half miles. If they intended to build this as part of a line eventually to connect with the South-Western, they should have made up their minds definitely, before coming to the House and asking for this authority, as to where the line was eventually to join the South-Western. If they took the whole line into consideration no doubt this line would be a straight one from the starting point to its junction with the South-Western. He could not see why they should not agree to hold the Bill over, but as they were determined to go on with it they should, before the matter was finally settled, come to a conclusion as to the direct track, and not request permission to build a railway six miles long and then ask for power to deviate from the centre of the line four miles on either side. If we passed this Bill in its present form we should be giving the Government power to build this short line of six miles in any track they thought fit. Apparently the Government thought the line should be built, and had their reports from the engineers and responsible officers saying that the best track for it was this zig-zag track shown by the plan, but the Government at present were not prepared to accept that. If we passed the Bill unaltered the Government would not build the line on that track, but where they thought fit, and it might be on a track which would not suit the engineering department. The Government had made a mistake in bringing down the Bill without fully making up their minds as to the route. He hoped the House would bind the Government down by limiting the power of deviation, for then the Government would be compelled to build the railway along the track recommended by their engineers, or none at all.

MR. HIGHAM: All were agreed on the necessity for a connection between Fremantle and the South-Western Railway, and that the section proposed to be built to Jandakot should be the first

section of such a junction railway. We could, therefore, deal with the section to Jandakot on its merits. He was inclined to think that the route shown on the plan was not the best available; but if the Government used the powers of deviation, they could get a more economical route, which would be better. Should we tie the hands of the Government by refusing to allow a deviation up to four miles, we deprived them of the power of getting a more economical route. The fact that members were opposed to the circuitous route proposed, and were of opinion that the starting point was so far south as to lengthen the distance, and that the route was not the best, should induce the Government to find a better route, even if they came back to Owen's Anchorage as a starting point. It was wrong in saying that the proposed route ran through paddocks. On the other hand, it ran from the north end of Coogee through small closely-cultivated holdings, with the exception of one paddock slightly touched. Members would do well, though they might not agree with the principle of allowing so much discretion to the Government, to pass the clause in the interests of the railway to connect with the South-Western railway, because it would probably start from a point nearer to Fremantle.

MR. JOHNSON: Those who thought that the proposed route was not the most desirable would defeat their object by supporting the amendment. He thought the Government were only justified in building a line to connect the South-Western railway with Fremantle, and that the Government had not adopted the best route for so doing. Consequently he felt inclined to oppose the Bill, and had the leader of the Opposition stuck to his guns and forced a division he (Mr. Johnson) would have supported the previous amendment.

MR. JACOBY: Why did not the hon. member call for a division?

MR. JOHNSON: That was the duty of the leader of the Opposition, who evidently was afraid of his own party. A more desirable route could be adopted, and therefore we must give the Government power to deviate from the route now proposed, and must trust the Government to adopt a better route. Should the Government not do so, the matter

would be heard of during next Parliament. It would be suicidal to limit the Government to a one-mile radius, because the Government would not then have an opportunity of adopting a better route.

MR. ATKINS notified his intention of moving an amendment to the schedule so as to secure another route, and asked whether any definite survey had been made of the proposed route.

THE MINISTER: A survey was made, but not a permanent survey. The Inspector of Engineering Surveys was asked to supply the best route he could give for a railway from Woodman's Point to junction with the South-Western railway *via* Jandakot, and that officer said that the present proposed terminus would be common to an extension either to Armadale or Mundijong, and that the route would save extensive earthworks. The line as shown on the plan was the line recommended by the engineer as being the best that could be obtained with the starting point then given. If it was possible, by altering the starting point and coming back a little under the power given in the clause to get a straighter line, it would be done. The amendment was very strange. The leader of the Opposition said: "We want the best route possible; therefore limit the power of deviation so the Government cannot get the best route possible." It was obvious that the greater power of deviation given the greater the chance of getting a good line. He hoped the power would not be reduced in any way, and that the Committee would understand that, no matter whether the ultimate point of junction be Armadale or Mundijong, we were assured by the Inspector of Engineering Surveys that Jandakot would be common to both routes.

MR. ATKINS: By fixing the Inspector of Engineering Surveys to a certain starting point we put that officer rather "in the bag." If the officer had been allowed to start from any point between Woodman's Point and the smelting works he would probably have been able to get a better grade and a more direct route for the ultimate junction with the South-Western Railway.

THE MINISTER: That power was given by the clause.

MR. ATKINS: The engineer was not given any latitude. By starting nearer to the smelting works the railway would get through the sea hills by a much better grade on the skew than by going from Woodman's Point across them on the square, and the railway would be approximately following a direct line to either Mundijong or Armadale, and would go through new country. The Woodman's Point route was good enough for the settlers at Coogee.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the question of deviation.

MR. ATKINS: If there was any probability of the line going forward, he would be satisfied with the deviation, but he did not see how it would do much good if the line went so far south. Hon. members should realise that it was better to have latitude in deviation as long as it was in the right direction.

MR. HOLMES: Evidently Mr. Muir had been incorrectly instructed to the effect that the railway was only a branch line and not a section of a main line ultimately to be constructed. Hence, to avoid expenditure, the suggested route wandered round the sandhills. If instructions for a direct main line had been given, the proposed deviation would have been unnecessary. He (Mr. Holmes) would sooner see the Bill thrown out than accept the proposal to penalise Fremantle and the South-West by a route 10 miles longer than was needed.

MR. MORAN: A four-miles deviation permitted the engineer to alter his starting point. Could he alter the finishing point also?

THE MINISTER: The route was detailed in the schedule, and commenced by a junction with the Fremantle-Woodman's Point railway, not necessarily at Woodman's Point, and terminated near the intersection of the Forrest and Beenup roads. It had to finish in the Jandakot Area, not necessarily at the Jandakot Hall, though there was no intention to terminate anywhere else. To alter the starting point might be found advisable.

MR. JACOBY: Any deviation made should shorten the route from the South-Western line to Fremantle. Only to secure connection with the existing railway would he and other members vote for the line. Keep the proposed line as short

as possible, secure the most direct route, make the line capable of carrying heavy traffic, and do not spare a few pounds. He withdrew his amendment.

Amendment withdrawn, and the clause passed.

Clause 4—Power to Governor to compulsorily purchase land within twelve miles of railway:

MR. MORAN: What application could this clause have to a short suburban line? In the ultimate continuation of the line it would be of advantage, but it should not be provided till required.

MR. HIGHAM: The clause seemed unnecessary, both now and for the future. The greater part of the route traversed an agricultural area already cut up into comparatively small blocks; and a proposal to resume such lands for subdivision was absurd. The majority of the blocks were already in use; and on no section of the route were there large blocks, except in that through which the line would pass if continued to Mundijong.

THE MINISTER: A similar clause was in the Collie-Narrogin Railway Bill; and though the conditions here were different it was hardly consistent to give the power in one Bill and not in another. The clause was not likely to be applied to the first section of the line; but in addition to providing for resumption of eight miles on each side of the railway, power was taken to resume within a radius of eight miles of the terminal point.

MR. ATKINS: Why disturb the minds of Fremantle and suburban landholders by fear of compulsory purchase?

THE MINISTER: Any land taken must be certified by the Minister as suitable for closer agricultural settlement under the Lands Purchase Act. Lands in and around Fremantle could not be affected. The clause would apply to none but large blocks suitable for settlement, of which no use was made.

MR. ATKINS: Would it be fair to resume such a block as the Davilak property?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The land could not be taken for nothing. The Government must pay fair compensation fixed by an arbitration board. The clause was inserted to prevent the landowner getting any advantage in the transaction by reason of the railway enhancing the value of his land. He (the Minister)

would consider whether small settlers could be exempted from the operation of the clause.

MR. ATKINS: If it were proposed to have power to take land only for a short distance from the railway, he could understand it; but when there was another railway within a radius of 18 miles and a second railway within a radius of three miles why should power be given to take land within a radius of eight miles of this line? The deviation would extend to the beach on one side of the railway and eight miles towards the South-Western railway on the other side. That was not fair to the people living in the country and one could not say that the Government always would do what was fair. If it was provided that the land could be taken within a radius of four miles that might be agreeable, but the proposal was to build a railway for six miles, and then power was given to take land for eight miles on either side of that line of railway.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Four miles would be accepted.

MR. PIGOTT: The eight-mile provision had better be retained.

MR. DIAMOND: What the object of the clause was one could not see. The limit of eight miles would give the Government the right to purchase land eight miles from the terminal point and right up to Rocky Bay.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: On either side of the actual line.

MR. DIAMOND: In a northerly direction it would enable the Government to purchase the Davilak estate and would include the land right up to the Swan River. It was not fair to give the Government this power. The Government would have the right to purchase land eight miles south of the railway. He did not believe the Government would be a party to any jobbery, but he would not trust any Government with such a large power. If it could be shown that the clause was not inserted to enable the Government to enter into any land transaction he would not object to it, but he could not see why the Government would require to purchase land eight miles north of the railway. He could understand such power in connection with a country line but not in regard to

this suburban line. Personally this proposal would benefit him.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The object of the clause was that where lands were unimproved within an area served by this or any other railway, the Government should have the power to purchase that land when it was required by the Agricultural Department and was certified to by the Minister for Lands as suitable for closer agricultural settlement. He moved to add at the end of the clause the same words as were added in a similar clause in the Collie-Narrogin Railway Bill:—

Provided that no land shall be compulsorily purchased until the land purchase board has reported thereon.

MR. MORAN: It was not wise to tinker with large principles. This was a very small tinpot way of dealing with the problem of land taxation, and seemed absurd on the face of it. On the Eastern Railway line, which had been built for 20 years, the Government had allowed people to own large estates abutting on the railway. The people had done nothing with the land, and the Government proposed to do nothing to make the people use the land. In the case of the Collie-Narrogin Railway and the railway before the Committee people had gone on without railway communication for years, and now they were going to get it they were to be penalised, while those persons who had had a railway for 20 years would still go scot free. The principle to be dealt with was how were we to make people who ought to use their land, use it? An unimproved land tax could be put on and would apply all over Western Australia to those who were holding land, and who had held it unjustly and were obtaining the unearned increment. We should go in for a great principle that would bring us into line with the other States. This was patchy legislation which must beget a feeling of injustice being done to some people.

[Sitting suspended for 10 minutes.]

[MR. QUINLAN took the Chair.]

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for West Perth had argued that if it was desirable to apply the principle involved in this clause to land near this railway it should apply in all such cases.

To a great extent he agreed with the hon. member. We sought last session to enact the betterment principle, but failed in doing that; and as we must make a beginning, this was a beginning.

MR. MORAN: In the right direction, but in the wrong place.

THE MINISTER: It was to be hoped the Committee would allow the proposal to stand. He did not see that any injustice could be done by the adoption of this principle, but on the contrary possibly on occasions a great deal of good might arise.

MR. HASTIE: The other day the Government took power to buy land within 12 miles of the railway then under consideration, whereas in this instance they limited it to eight miles; why was that?

THE PREMIER: There was the ocean on one side, and on the other a railway.

MR. HASTIE could see no reason for limiting the power in this case, and if it were so limited the Narrogin people would consider the measure very unfair.

MR. HOLMES: We had established a principle in connection with the Collie Railway Bill, and that being so, although not liking this clause, it would be a fair thing to follow out what the House decided on the other night. In regard to this particular railway, very little harm would be done, if the clause remained as it stood. Any good land along the proposed line had been largely taken up and used, with a couple of exceptions. If there was one person whom the clause would catch, it would be himself. The line would not put him in any better position. He was opposed to the line going through his property, and if what he advocated were carried out, the line would go south.

MR. HASTIE: There was a principle at stake here, and the Government having already declared they should take compulsory powers of purchase regarding the land within 12 miles of a railway, why should we depart from that distance and make it eight miles? We did not want to take part of the sea, but there were some portions of land 12 miles away which it would be wise for the Government to purchase to encourage closer settlement. Surely it would do no harm to fix the distance at 12 miles.

THE PREMIER: Between this line and the South-Western Railway so far as the Government knew there were only one or two places that could be purchased which offered any chance of agricultural development; and those were in the eight-mile limit. If we took a 12-mile limit we should be going into an area that would be served not by this railway but by the existing South-Western Railway. Where we were building a railway we should not give the holders of unimproved land, land capable of closer settlement, an advantage from that railway. If the distance were made 12 miles, the area would in some instances, he believed, overlap the South-Western. That was not what the Government intended. Where land would be benefited by the construction of a line the Government should have the right to purchase that land, and at a price unenhanced by the construction of the line. The land capable of closer settlement along the proposed line was not much. At Jandakot we had a great number of small holdings which although nominally coming within the purview of this clause would not be affected by it. All we could deal with were the large holdings, and the large holdings capable of closer settlement which would be served by this railway were well inside the eight-mile limit prescribed by the Bill.

MR. HASTIE: If the Premier's argument held good, the clause we put into the Collie-Narrogin Railway Bill was wrong because there was considerable land within 12 miles of the railway at Collie or Narrogin, and we had specifically given the Government power to purchase that land. The principle, however, adopted in that Bill was a wise principle, and should be adopted in this Bill. No one would think that the Government would take undue advantage of the power. The Public Works Act provided that the Government could buy the land at its value before the advent of the railway, with an addition of 10 per cent., so that the people would not be benefited through the sale of their land by the building of the railway. There was no harm in the 12-mile radius, and if we once adopted the principle in two Bills it would practically become the law and practice of the State.

MR. ATKINS: Did the Premier inadvertently mention unimproved land? If so, it would satisfy the people to know what course was to be pursued. The Government might tell a man who had improved his land to an extent he thought sufficient, that the improvements were not sufficient, and might compulsorily buy the land.

THE PREMIER: It all depended on the definition of "unimproved."

MR. ATKINS: It would be a safeguard to specify unimproved lands.

THE PREMIER: It was necessary to have the land reported on by the Lands Purchase Board before purchasing.

MR. ATKINS: A man owning 500 acres might be gradually improving his land, and might only be able to cultivate 100 acres. The board might say he had not improved his land because he had not cultivated the other 400 acres, and might take his land from him. That would be unfair. There were many people struggling to hold on to their bits of land, expecting year by year to cultivate the whole of their block.

THE PREMIER: What would the Government want with 500 acres for closer settlement purposes?

MR. ATKINS: People did not want more than 50 acres of certain land at Jandakot for close settlement. It would be better to put in the word "unimproved," and fight the question out afterwards.

MR. DIAMOND: The country did not want a man who only cultivated 100 acres out of 500. Did the deviation clause refer to the objective point of the railway, or could the Government deviate four miles in any direction?

THE PREMIER: That was the object of the clause.

MR. MORAN: By the proposal the Government could purchase land at South Perth or could come eight miles back along the coast and purchase land towards Fremantle. The Premier argued that there was a chance of overlapping the radius of another railway, but we were only tinkering with the principle of unimproved land taxation. There was no reason why we should buy the Jandakot man's land, and not buy the land of the man at York. The time had arrived when we wanted a properly thought-out system of compulsory tax-

ation for improvement purposes. As it was now, we merely penalised the man whom we should penalise the least. In other words, the man who had a railway for years and did nothing with his land, should be penalised before the man who had no railway. In fact the Government were beginning at the wrong end.

MR. HASTIE would be glad to penalise the man who had a railway, and would do his best to get a land tax imposed. It was no argument, however, to say that because we had been making peoples' land valuable for 20 years by the expenditure of public money, we should go on with that system for ever. The argument was offered against every form of restriction and taxation.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member's argument was lopsided. He (Mr. Moran) was in favour of a land tax and income tax, and in favour of compulsory purchase for closer settlement; but he would deal with the people as a whole, and not in this fashion.

Amendment negatived, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 5—Purchase money to be determined under Public Works Act, 1902:

MR. MORAN: The Government had never purchased estates without due allowance for every factor that made for its value. The whole value of an estate might arise from its proximity to a railway; and this subclause was not fair in saying that "no regard should be had to any increased value occasioned by the railway." Such increased value had been allowed for in every estate previously purchased for closer settlement, but no such allowance was to be made in regard to those persons who held land along this small railway. There was no equity in that.

MR. JACOBY: The Government would be in an anomalous position if the principle of this clause were applied to land adjacent to this railway; and yet compensation was to be allowed for the increased value of land adjacent to other railways when such land was purchased compulsorily for closer settlement. Did the Government propose to go on purchasing estates throughout the country, and allowing compensation for the increased value caused by their nearness to a railway?

THE PREMIER regretted that he could not tell the hon. member what the policy was, but in due course the country would know it. We were dealing simply with the clause applying to this new railway, and no doubt there were objections to the application of the principle for the first time. Such objection was always urged against new legislation. Whatever might have been the practice in the past, the State now contemplated the building of a railway between point A and point B, and by constructing the railway the land adjacent to it would be considerably enhanced in value on either side of the line. For the purposes of the State it needed the land through which the railway was to pass, in order to promote closer settlement. By the Public Works Act of last year we made a provision enabling the Government to take land required for the construction of a railway, and at a valuation irrespective of that work. Why should not the same principle apply not only to land required for the construction of a work, but also to land required by the State for a purpose equally urgent in the securing of closer settlement? No amount of phraseology in an Act could prevent the arbitrators from considering the fact of a railway being there, in assessing the value of land. Why should we say in this case that the owner of the land had an inherent right to obtain the value of the land, *plus* increased value resulting from the construction of a railway through or near it? He had that right so far as it was given him by existing legislation. The betterment principle was equally an infringement on the right to which the member for West Perth referred, because it applied only to a railway that was proposed to be constructed, and did not apply to a railway already constructed. So it might be urged there was not equity in those cases, and that some owners were deprived of a right which was given to other owners. Wherever the State constructed a railway, it should reserve the right to acquire land for the construction and to acquire land for closer settlement, at a price not enhanced by reason of the State work. Any general principle would be open to the same objection in its first application. In New South Wales, for instance, during the last year or two the legisla-

tion provided that in building a railway the land on either side should bear an increased burden of land taxation. Therefore might not those owners complain that they were chosen as the first to whom the increased burden should be applied? In applying the principle of this clause the hardship would not be so much in the proclamation of the principle as in applying it to particular cases. Persons might say they were treated very harshly by having the principle applied to their land, and the same principle not applied to all other land. The betterment principle implied an increase of taxation on those lands benefited by public works. This clause embodied a new principle, and one well worthy of consideration. Perhaps the most scientific way would be by means of increased land taxation, if we had that taxation in operation; but not having that tax, presumably the hon. member would agree we could not create the machinery of land taxation merely for the limited purposes of such a clause as this. If he as a private individual were going to do a work, why should he not have the right to lay down the terms upon which he would do it? Why should he give to a man an enhanced value by work which he was doing? If he did not build the railway, that man would be no worse off. There had been no conceivable scheme yet enabling us to apply the betterment principle so consistently that we could make every person who benefited contribute something. If these clauses were passed, that would be a distinct advantage, and would enable us he hoped not to do an injustice, but to prevent all the benefit arising from the construction of public works from going to private people in those instances where the Government thought the land they deemed it desirable to purchase capable of being used beneficially for State purposes.

MR. MORAN: It would be a great surprise to him if the radical principle alluded to went through without due notice being taken of it. He was fully convinced of the necessity for introducing radical changes in the taxation system of Western Australia, and his views on the point had been well defined for years. He believed the State should get a share of all unearned increment, but he was a great enemy to singling out any particular

section of the community and penalising it. We should pass a law which would apply to the whole. A man who had property where roads leading to a station met might get more out of the construction of a line than another man who lived a quarter of a mile nearer. The Premier was not justified at the present time in penalising people in this little area, and allowing men who lived in the vicinity of an old line to go scot-free.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6, 7—agreed to.

Schedule:

MR. ATKINS moved as an amendment—

That all the words after "thence," in line 2, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"Going (as straight as engineering difficulties will allow) about two miles south of the Forrest Hall and thence as straight as possible to connect with the South-Western Railway at Mundijong, with allowance for deviation of one mile on each side."

By what he understood from the Minister for Works, this amendment was not as needful as he had thought.

MR. HIGHAM: Was not the hon. member out of order in discussing a railway other than that included in the schedule? The ruling at the last sitting was that any discussion on a railway going beyond what was included in a Bill read a second time would necessitate the Bill being laid aside and the introduction of a new measure. The same principle applied to the amendment now before the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the amendment were passed, it would necessitate the withdrawal of this Bill and the introduction of a new one.

MR. ATKINS: At present there was a right to deviate to the extent of four miles, and if he moved his amendment allowing for a deviation of one mile, that would not oblige us to drop the Bill.

MR. HIGHAM: The line the hon. member advocated was one of 20 miles, instead of one of six and a-half miles.

MR. ATKINS: As far as he understood, the Minister wished practically to do what he (Mr. Atkins) wanted, to make a railway in as direct a line as possible to the South-Western line, somewhere between Mundijong and Armadale.

THE MINISTER: That was what was intended.

MR. ATKINS: If that was so, he would be willing to withdraw his amendment.

THE MINISTER: If the hon. member asked him to commit the Government either to Mundijong or Armadale, he could not do that.

MR. ATKINS: All he wanted was an assurance that the line would go in a direction as straight as possible towards the South-Western Railway, so that eventually the railway would shorten as much as possible the distance between Fremantle and some point on the South-Western line. He would like it to go to Mundijong; but people could not get everything they wanted. By going a short distance back we should get a railway to the Agricultural Hall at Forrest Road in the same distance or less than the route proposed.

THE MINISTER said again that the Government wished to go as straight as engineering difficulties would allow.

MR. DIAMOND: This Bill was for the construction of a line from Robb's Jetty to the Agricultural Hall at Forrest Road. Having received the assurance of the Premier that the objective point would be the Agricultural Hall, it did not matter whether the line started from Robb's Jetty or Woodman's Point, and he was sure it did not matter to the people of Fremantle. [MR. MORAN: Nonsense!] The hon. member did not know what he was talking about. The people of Fremantle would prefer the line to start from Robb's Jetty. He was assured by the Premier that the Agricultural Hall at Forrest Road was the objective point.

MR. HOLMES: If the Premier assured the hon. member what had been stated on that point, the hon. gentleman created an altogether different impression when discussing the matter with him (Mr. Holmes).

MR. MORAN: What he gathered was that the objective point was to be the Agricultural Hall at Forrest Road.

MR. HOLMES: The great and only justification for this line was to bring the South-Western Railway into direct communication with Fremantle. As to what Fremantle and South Fremantle wanted, he did not know that the member for South Fremantle was an authority to speak for the whole of Fremantle. The whole of the Fremantle

members were agreed, with the exception of the member for South Fremantle, that the shortest route was the best route for the railway, and was the route that should be adopted.

MR. DIAMOND: That was not correct. The member for Cockburn Sound was pledged to Armadale.

MR. HOLMES: The only justification for the railway was to bring the South-Western line into direct communication with Fremantle. To give the Government the right to deviate four miles on either side, and then to provide that they should finish at a given point, would reduce the deviation clause to an absurdity. The Premier assured him that the Government were not bound to terminate at the Agricultural Hall; otherwise the best route could not be selected. By building the railway *via* Jandakot we would penalise Fremantle to the extent of 10 miles in the traffic from the South-Western Railway, and we would establish the fact that we were making a cabbage railway instead of a trunk railway, while we would afterwards discover that it was of no use for the purpose for which it was intended. In addition to penalising the people of Fremantle, we would penalise the people settled on the land farther back. It looked as if the Government, in trying to please everybody, pleased nobody. He would not go so far as to say that the route was chosen for political purposes. The only way to shorten the journey to the South-Western railway was to carry the line south of Jandakot and go to Mundijong, which was a Government township, as against Armadale, which was a privately-owned township, whose owners were waiting to sell their land on the arrival of the railway and to reap every advantage from it.

MR. JACOBY: That was hardly accurate.

MR. HOLMES: Was Armadale not a privately-owned township?

MR. JACOBY: Not altogether.

MR. HOLMES: Mundijong was shown as a township on the plan, but very little of the State land was yet sold. A direct line to Mundijong would shorten the route from Mundijong to the Smelting Works by 13 miles. On the other hand there was already a good metalled road from Fremantle to Jandakot Agricultural Hall, and no one could be convinced that the Jandakot settlers, after

carting their produce to the hall, would then send it to market by rail. They would drive their teams to Fremantle along the metalled road in preference. In the South-West agricultural settlement was rapidly developing, and a railway should be built to shorten the journey of the produce of the South-West to Fremantle. As far as the produce of Jandakot was concerned, one train load a year would bring in the whole of the cabbages grown in the district. The Mundijong people desirous of going to Fremantle had at present to travel 41 miles or 43 miles to the Smelting Works, whereas a direct line would bring Mundijong within 21 miles of the Smelting Works. If the Mundijong people had to go around *via* Armadale and Jandakot, another 10 miles would be put on to the journey.

MR. MORAN: By building the railway to Jandakot Agricultural Hall no difference would be made, in either the Armadale or Mundijong routes.

MR. HOLMES: If the Government were met with the obstacle that they must finish at the Jandakot Agricultural Hall their hands were tied for all time.

MR. MORAN: There must be an objective point for the railway.

MR. HOLMES: If the Government were allowed to decide the starting point, they should be allowed to decide the finishing point. Fremantle members were agreed that the shortest route was the best.

MR. DIAMOND did not agree to that.

MR. HOLMES: Probably because Jandakot, by the Redistribution of Seats Bill, was thrown into South Fremantle electorate. The distance from Mundijong to Fremantle over which the timber company had to send timber was 41 miles.

MR. HASTIE: No timber was sent to Fremantle.

MR. DIAMOND: The timber was sent to Rockingham.

MR. HOLMES: The length of the private railway from Mundijong to Rockingham was 17 miles, and timber was shipped at Rockingham because of the distance of the journey to Fremantle. The difficulty, however, was that the timber company could only load a portion of their ships at Rockingham, and had to lighten the balance of each ship's cargo up to Fremantle. By shipping

their timber at Fremantle they would avoid these lightering charges, and would only pay 3s. 6d. per ton for wharfage. This would mean an increased revenue at Fremantle and would justify the great expenditure on the harbour.

MR. JACOBY: Would the Armadale traffic have to go *via* Mundijong?

MR. HOLMES: The Armadale people had a direct route to Perth.

MR. JACOBY: It did not look very direct on the map.

MR. HOLMES: Armadale cabbages had a market in Perth. Fremantle derived its cabbages by road from Jandakot. There were great possibilities in regard to fruit in the South-West. Within the next five years it was possible that the mail boats would be loading apples at Fremantle. Should the people opening up the country in the South-West be penalised to the extent of 10 miles in the distance they had to send their produce to port, in order to satisfy a few cabbage growers at Jandakot? As long as he (Mr. Holmes) was a representative of Fremantle he would sooner lose the Bill than agree to the proposal set forth—that of a railway wandering about in a wavy direction among the sandhills, as the Minister called it, or in a snake-like direction as the member for the Murray called it. The only justification for the railway was to carry it in a direct route, so as to bring the traffic of the South-West to Fremantle. Otherwise there was no need for it, and he would sooner lose the Bill.

MR. ATKINS: The hon. member should not think that the timber company would pay 3s. 6d. wharfage at Fremantle and the extra charges on the railway.

MR. HOLMES: The company paid more for lighterage now.

MR. ATKINS: The company would sooner blow up the pinnacles in the Challenger Passage, and thus open up the best harbour in the country at Rockingham.

MR. McDONALD was satisfied with the assurance of the Minister for Works that the railway would start from a point near the smelting works and go in a straight line to within half a mile of Jandakot Hall. The route after that point could be fought out by a future Parliament. Settlers in the district were quite satisfied with the proposal.

MR. HOLMES: The Government had the right to start or finish within four miles of the route shown in the Bill.

MR. McDONALD: The Minister gave the assurance that the objective point of the railway would be near the Agricultural Hall. If the objective point were within a mile or so of the Agricultural Hall the settlers there would be satisfied, and if it were decided afterwards that Mundijong shall be the point of junction with the South-Western Railway, the settlers in that district would be well accommodated.

MR. HIGHAM was satisfied with the Minister's assurance that he would take advantage of the deviation as far as necessary, and would terminate the line as close as practicable to Jandakot Hall. He and other members for Fremantle were pledged to the Jandakot Hall as the objective point.

MR. JACOBY: The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) had been careful to reiterate and misstate the real railway problem in connection with this Bill. That problem was not, as he would make it appear, the shortening of the transit by a mile or two, but it was to save the congestion in the railway yards at Perth, and that was why those who were concerned in railway traffic were in favour of the construction of a railway from Fremantle to junction with the South-Western line. If the main object was to shorten the distance in transit, why not alter the route of several other railways for the same reason—for instance the Great Southern Railway, where a saving of about 60 miles might be made by a direct route? If this Jandakot line was ultimately to junction with the South-Western line at Jarrahdale Junction, there would be the objection that the line would not only run through country which was said to be sandy, but would run parallel a considerable distance with the South-Western line. If Armadale were made the point of junction, the line would serve far more people and would attract more traffic. It would also pass through the Government township at Jandakot, and the State land could be sold at enhanced prices. He agreed that the Jandakot line would be useless unless it was ultimately to junction with the South-Western line, for that should be the real object, and the point of junction should

be determined absolutely on the merits in regard to each place. By junctioning at Armadale the line would traverse country suitable for closer settlement, and where many people had taken up land in small blocks with the expectation that railway communication would become available. By joining at Jarrahdale Junction the Armadale traffic would be shut out, and that traffic was considerable. Gravel and stone could be brought from Armadale for road-making at Fremantle and in the Jandakot Area. There was also a timber mill which in this instance happened to be out of the combine, and why did the member for East Fremantle wish to penalise one of those small mills struggling against the combine?

MR. FERGUSON: That timber did not come to Fremantle.

MR. JACOBY: Why should the timber of this mill-owner be shut out? In addition to that, traffic came from the Williams district in the shape of agricultural produce and wool, and all that wool came to Armadale. As a convenience to excursionists from Fremantle who wished to get to the hills, also for serving the greatest number of people between Jandakot Hall and Armadale, for serving the Government townsite at Jandakot, and for giving the whole benefit of the line to the people at Armadale without shutting out their traffic, he considered that the junction at Armadale was the one most desirable in the interests of the State. He wanted Armadale Junction to be considered on its merits. If he found that Mundijong should in the interests of the State be made the junction, his vote would be given, with some reluctance but honestly given, for Mundijong; but he hoped that if those now advocating Mundijong found that Armadale could reasonably be accepted and be made the junction, the claims of Armadale should be fully taken into consideration.

MR. MORAN: Robb's Jetty was the natural landing place for large goods which had to be taken straight through to the South-West; for goods of a dangerous character, and for heavy stock. He was in favour of starting the line from Robb's Jetty. Last year he showed that Woodman's Point was objectionable from every standpoint—from the Mundijong standpoint, the Armadale

standpoint, and the Jandakot standpoint. The Woodman's Point line was a spur line open for the purpose of quarantine and explosives, and we did not want a line which would feed the Great Southern Railway to lead near a place where diseased animals were confined or where there was a powder magazine. He took it that this line would spring off, therefore, somewhere about the Smelting Works or Robb's Jetty and go straight as far as it could to somewhere about Jandakot Hall. This discussion about whether it should go to Armadale or Mundijong was out of court at the present moment. That would have to be discussed later on. It seemed to him we were proceeding upon a well-defined plan, that being to make use of Robb's Jetty for heavy goods to go straight away to the point of consumption. He was certain the line would go as direct as possible to a point in the direction of the Jandakot area near the Agricultural Hall. The Minister ought not to be afraid of a cutting or two, seeing that not only was the line going to serve the Jandakot settlers, but that ultimately, and very soon, too, it would be carried on to connect with the South-Western. He hoped that next session we should have a Bill to continue the line, because it was a bit ridiculous to finish it at Jandakot, and if the line stopped there it would never pay.

MR. DIAMOND: As to the question of routes after the line reached the Agricultural Hall at Forrest Road, the Fremantles generally should support the Government in their effort to get a line made to the Agricultural Hall. That broad principle he was prepared to accept, leaving the question of the future portion of the railway to be settled later. As the point had been raised, however, he was satisfied that by far the greater part of the people at Fremantle would, if a poll were taken to-morrow, vote for having the line taken to Armadale. There were three points in its favour, one being the shortening of the distance between the South-Western Railway and the wharves at Fremantle, another relieving the congestion in Perth, and the third serving the settlers on the route. If the line went through the settled area, it would help a large number of men who, as he

had said on a previous occasion, had given hostages to fortune. Nine-tenths of the men had signed a petition asking the Government to put the line in a certain direction. He was, however, prepared to sink that issue. If the Government chose to take the line in a more direct route than from Woodman's Point, if they preferred to take it from Robb's Jetty, or near Robb's Jetty, he was perfectly agreeable. He believed he was speaking generally in conjunction with the member for Cockburn Sound and he hoped the member for North Fremantle. He thought they were speaking for the people of Fremantle generally, when they said they wanted this line to go in the best possible direction to the Agricultural Hall, Forrest Road, and they would leave the battle of the route afterwards to be fought out by the new House.

[MR. FOULKES took the Chair.]

MR. FERGUSON: The second reading of the Bill was supported by him on the assurance of the Minister for Works that the present terminus was merely the end of a section. The statement of the hon. gentleman to-day had, however, rather disturbed his ideas on the subject. The Minister pointed out that the engineer had been instructed to survey the line from near Woodman's Point to a point on the South-Western Railway. Naturally the engineer took the nearest point, and his survey was nearly direct from Woodman's Point towards Armadale. He (Mr. Ferguson) was opposed to having the termination at Armadale. He agreed with the member for East Fremantle with regard to the line being used by the Jandakot settlers. He did not know any market gardeners within eight miles of Fremantle who would use that railway.

MR. DIAMOND: They had said they would, and had signed a petition.

MR. FERGUSON: It was contended that the building of the line from Armadale to Fremantle would relieve the traffic in the Perth goods yard; but seven-eighths of the traffic that came from the South-Western Railway came from beyond Armadale, and two-thirds of it from beyond Mundijong. No doubt Armadale might get some passenger traffic from Fremantle if the place was to be considered as a sanatorium for Fremantle; but at present people could

reach Armadale by a few hours' journey, so the contention did not amount to much. It was a fact, however, that the journey from the South-Western Railway to Fremantle would be very considerably increased if Armadale was the junction. There would be a saving of 17 miles on the present journey by making Mundijong the junction, and there would be a large amount of traffic for a railway from that point to Fremantle, the traffic which would relieve the Perth goods yard. The member for the Swan alluded to a timber mill at Armadale, but none of the produce of that mill ever reached Fremantle.

MR. JACOBY: What about the Armadale brickyards?

THE TREASURER: The hon. member had never heard of them.

MR. FERGUSON: The great bulk of the traffic would come from the South-West beyond Mundijong. He was not prepared to go as far as the member for East Fremantle and say he would rather lose the Bill than see the railway wandering about the country and not getting to Mundijong in the end; but he hoped the Government would start the railway from Owen's Anchorage, and make the terminal point somewhere south of the Agricultural Hall.

MR. JACOBY: Would six miles make any appreciable difference on long-distance traffic?

MR. FERGUSON: It made a considerable difference between Mundijong and Fremantle.

MR. JACOBY: Freight was paid on the zone system now.

MR. FERGUSON: Not yet.

MR. JACOBY: The system was coming, and the six miles would make no difference in the freight.

MR. FERGUSON: The junction of the future railway with the South-Western Railway was not the question before the Committee. He hoped that the terminus of the Jandakot railway would be south of the Agricultural Hall, with a view to carrying the railway on to Mundijong.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Schedule put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendment, and the report adopted.

PERMANENT RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from 10th December; MR. FOULKES in the Chair.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Change of purposes of Portion of Reserve of 4228 A:

On motion by the MINISTER FOR LANDS, the words "portion of Swan Location P" struck out, and "Swan Location 2032" inserted in lieu.

Clause as amended agreed to

Clause 3—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendment, and the report adopted.

ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. FOULKES in the Chair.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Closure of portion of William Street (Perth):

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that the clause be struck out. He thought by doing this he would be removing the only contentious clause. He understood, however, that the matter of closing Ord Street was to be opposed.

MR. MORAN: The House refused to close it last session.

THE MINISTER: Hon. members could discuss the matter in the schedule.

Amendment passed, and the clause struck out.

Schedule:

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS, in reply to remarks made by members, explained in detail the reasons for closing streets in various towns and districts as set forth in the schedule.

Item—In the city of Perth, closing that portion of Ord Street lying between the eastern side of Havelock Street and western side of Harvest Terrace:

MR. MORAN: The closing of Ord Street, which ran through a main portion of the city towards the enclosed ground now occupied by the new Parliament Houses, was objected to by all the residents in that street. That had been a street for many years past, and the Government should not press this part of the schedule, but allow the Perth Council to consider it thoroughly. He moved that

the portion of the schedule "in the city of Perth" be struck out.

MR. PURKISS seconded the amendment. It was a serious thing for Parliament to close a main artery.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: This street which was proposed to be closed was not in use at the present time, nor had it ever been used. It was an impassable piece of road. There was another street called Wilson Street which it was proposed to widen for giving an imposing access to the grounds of Parliament Houses. Ord Street ran up to the enclosure of Parliament Houses and finished with a dead end.

MR. MORAN: That was not so. It ran into Harvest Terrace, which bounded the upper side of the enclosure of Parliament Houses.

THE MINISTER: The proposal to close this street was referred to the advisory committee in connection with the new Parliament Houses, and the committee, of which Dr. Hackett and Sir George Shenton were members, approved of the closing of this street, and approved of the widening of Wilson Street to give a good entrance to those grounds. The extra width gained by closing the end of Ord Street would be added to Wilson Street.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

Amendment (to strike out) put and passed.

Schedule as amended agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council; and, on motion by the MINISTER FOR MINES, read a first time.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from 10th December; MR. FOULKES in the Chair.

LANDS DEPARTMENT (Hon. J. M. Hopkins, Minister).

Vote—Agricultural Bank, £2,040:

MR. MORAN: The Government should take into consideration the necessity of

housing this bank and the Savings Bank in a suitable building.

Vote passed.

Rabbits, £33,635 :

MR. MORAN: It was rather unfortunate that a motion of want of confidence came in right on top of these discussions, which should have been carried to a conclusion independently of a motion of want of confidence. He was not responsible in any way for that motion, but at the moment it looked as if the House was very evenly divided as to whether there had been some mal-administration in the department. Perhaps it was not the fault of the Minister, but of officers in the hon. gentleman's department. We heard that some officers were to be drastically dealt with in connection with this rabbit question. Unfortunately poor Mr. White, one of the hardest worked men in this State, had been let go. Although a certain amount of praise had been heaped upon the Minister, he (Mr. Moran) still thought an injustice had been done to Mr. White. Touching Mr. Morton Craig, he had not been satisfied with the explanation given either by the Premier or the Minister for Lands for getting rid of this officer, who was an old and valued servant against whom there had never been a word. Touching the question of rabbits he heartily wished the present Minister great success. He hoped something might yet be done to show Mr. White that in this country, in these modern days, a case such as his would not be allowed to be dropped at its present stage, and that some arrangement would be come to between Mr. White and the Government, so that this officer would not have to sue them in the courts of law—and in his (Mr. Moran's) opinion, win—for what was his undoubted right. If Mr. White was to leave, it ought to be in peace and quietness, and he should at least have his character restored and some travelling allowance given him. Only the other day the department would go to law in connection with a public works matter, although the Crown Solicitor advised them not to do so, and it cost them double what it would have cost to settle it.

MR. DIAMOND: Though he indorsed the action of the Minister for Lands, it

was possible Mr. White might have been indirectly hardly dealt with, and he commended that officer to the reasonable, fair, and proper consideration of the Minister.

MR. HASTIE: The Minister should make a statement with regard to the condition of the Rabbit Department. Was the Secretary now Chief Inspector? Were all the rabbits killed this side of the fence? Had a start been made to erect a new fence?

MR. HOLMES: The Minister should give some explanation in regard to ex-inspector White, who had been harshly treated, though at fault and apparently badly advised in his treatment of the Minister. The Minister should see that justice was done.

MR. BATH urged the Minister, when he secured an opportunity, to make an inquiry into the conduct of the department in Perth. He (Mr. Bath) was informed that the secretary, previous to the recent debate in Parliament, declined to give employment to a certain experienced rabbitier, and that after the recent debate the secretary informed the same man that he was just the sort of man the department wanted.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The department had completed 370 miles of fencing, and the fencing of 95 miles was in progress, making a total of 465 miles, starting from the south coast. In addition, country for 119 miles was surveyed, and contracts were being prepared for this portion, giving a total of 584 miles. The supervision of the whole of the construction work was now in the hands of the Public Works Department—a change which would be amply justified. In connection with the 119 miles balance, he did not think it would be wise to consider the question of day labour; but that question might be taken into consideration in connection with the balance of the fence to be erected to the north-west coast. Six rabbitiers were engaged—three of them at £5 per week, and the other three at £4 per week, each man providing his own horse. These men would finish their engagement at the end of the week, for horses would be no longer of any service on this side of the fence. It would be absurd to say that all the rabbits this side of the fence were eradicated, and he would not take the

responsibility of saying it. It was proposed now, and he thanked the Director of Agriculture for the help given in this regard, that the present secretary to the Rabbit Department should go out and take charge of one of the parties, either of supervision or of construction. He (the Minister) intended to inquire very carefully into the Rabbit Department and into the work of the present secretary (Mr. Wilson). Until he could do so Mr. Wilson would remain in the head office.

MR. HASTIE: Was Mr. Wilson now Chief Inspector?

THE MINISTER: Yes, but at present he was in the head office. Parties of rabbiters were sent out, but in order to get supplies of food they had to leave their districts and come into Boorabbin or other places, thus being away from their work for several weeks. It was now decided to place one man in charge as an inspector, who would keep the rabbiters supplied with food and water, and would be able to exercise a capable supervision over the parties. The presence of the rabbits at Wyola was due to the fact that rabbits had the habit of following a track or clearing. Probably they came down the railway line where the feed was good, and were hurried on by locomotives. Breaks were being made across the railway lines with pits under the rails, and railway gangers would be entrusted with the supervision of these yards, the Commissioner of Railways having been good enough to offer these facilities. Settlers could have wire-netting at £24 10s. per mile, and the question of advancing wire in urgent cases was under consideration. The fence so far constructed was under inspection, and money was held back in connection with one contract. So soon as information was available it would be placed at the disposal of the House. Mr. Ponton, of Eucla, paid a visit to the Rabbit Department during the day and purchased 40 miles of netting, showing that he had not lost faith in the Eucla country. Mr. Ponton stated that the rabbits had done no harm so far. It showed the faith of pastoralists in that district when Mr. Ponton would not take advantage of the 20 years' terms extended to persons wanting netting, but paid cash. All appointments were made by the officers of the Rabbit Department,

or by the officers of the Stock Department in the absence of the officers of the Rabbit Department. He (the Minister) would be only too anxious to inquire into the work of the department, but no opportunity of doing so had been provided up to the present. If Mr. White would formulate an appeal he (the Minister) would be only too pleased to take it into consideration; but it was not to be expected that he (the Minister) should submit an appeal to Mr. White.

Vote put and passed.

Stock, £5,398 6s. 8d.:

MR. WALLACE: Some little time ago the Minister announced that on the retirement of Mr. Morton Craig it was his intention to appoint a veterinary surgeon as Chief Inspector of Stock, and that the majority of the stock inspectors would be qualified veterinary surgeons. It was not always wise to place a man in charge of the Stock Department merely because he was a veterinary surgeon. Mr. Pentland, late Chief Inspector of Stock in Victoria, recently pointed out that the district staff in Victoria was composed of practical men experienced among stock and accustomed to country life and the ways of the bush; that the Victorian department had been successful in stamping out scale and in keeping down pleuro; that the primary object of the department was to keep infectious and contagious diseases out by land and sea and to stamp them out; and that, besides the experienced men, there were attached to the department six veterinary surgeons in private practice, whose services were sought after in special cases, and who were called upon in conjunction with the inspectors of stock to inspect imported stock. This showed that the experience of Victoria was that it was not always wise to have a qualified veterinary surgeon as Chief Inspector of Stock, but that it was necessary in the interests of stock to have these veterinary surgeons attached to the department. We had not benefitted by the appointment made by the Minister. Mr. Weir was a gentleman whom he (Mr. Wallace) held in the highest esteem as a veterinary surgeon, and throughout the State Mr. Weir was held to be a thoroughly qualified man in his profession.

MR. MORAN : He was not held so by everybody. That opinion was not held by a good many cattle men.

MR. WALLACE : The Minister was convinced that Mr. Craig made serious blunders. He (Mr. Wallace) could say that Mr. Weir had made blunders since being placed in charge of the department. Mr. Craig made the first experiments in dipping cattle in this State. The present Minister had put on Mr. Craig the whole blame for the condition into which the quarantine ground at Fremantle had got. It should be observed that Mr. Craig made experiments which Mr. Weir, as the veterinary surgeon of the department, had opportunities of witnessing ; and after Mr. Craig was removed from the charge of the department, Mr. Weir, as the acting chief inspector, began to experiment on his own account and increased the strength of the dip to such a degree that it killed a number of bullocks. He did this notwithstanding the experience of Queensland in the dipping of stock ; and having made this serious mistake, he then adopted the dip which Mr. Craig had been using. Since he did that, the Minister spoke of the improvements made in the dipping of stock at Fremantle, and gave all the credit to Mr. Weir. As to detecting pleuro in cattle, it was known that a practical stockman was more competent to ride through a herd and detect an unhealthy beast than would be a veterinary surgeon. Then as to tick and tick fever, we were told by the Minister that certain bullocks in the quarantine ground at Fremantle developed tick fever ; but he (Mr. Wallace) affirmed that the Minister could not prove that any beast died there from tick fever. A medical man did supervise the *post-mortem* examination of one beast that died, and his opinion was that there was no indication in the intestines of the animal that it had died from tick fever ; yet the Minister announced in this House that tick fever had developed in the quarantine ground at Fremantle and one beast had died. Mr. Craig having proved the efficacy of the dip he was using when in the charge of the department, what necessity was there for experimenting in a stronger dip, and making it so strong that bullocks actually died ? Mr. Weir in the last annual

report of the department referred to tick fever, and recommended the same precaution that he (Mr. Wallace) had previously stated to this House, that if after dipping it was found safe to release ticked cattle from the quarantine ground, they should not be distributed indiscriminately on the goldfields for grazing, but that a certain line should be drawn beyond which those beasts should not go. One passage in the report said : " No tick-infested cattle should be allowed farther north, even under quarantine, than Menzies." So Mr. Weir realised that there was a risk in allowing ticked cattle to roam about the State indiscriminately. Mr. Weir was largely responsible for all the trouble that arose in connection with the permit given by the Stock Department for a particular mob of cattle to be removed to the goldfields. It was admitted that those cattle did not go to the goldfields for slaughter. They were inspected by Mr. Weir, and he gave a permit for the cattle to go out of the quarantine ground ; so he must have known they were so low in condition that they could not be going to the goldfields for slaughter. He (Mr. Wallace) believed he saw the same mob of cattle, and many of them were so poor that they were not fit to walk out of the yard. He would not be surprised if some of them had to be carried into the railway trucks. They were too poor for stores, and certainly too poor for slaughter ; but notwithstanding their low condition Mr. Weir gave the permit for those cattle to be sent to the goldfields. It would not be surprising if some of them died as soon as they got to a pasture. Mr. Weir was no more free from error than was the late chief inspector ; and he was more to blame, for the whole trouble in connection with those cattle sent to the goldfields arose through him. These facts created a suspicion amongst members and others that if Mr. Weir was to remain in charge of the Stock Department, either the regulations would be too laxly carried out or too harshly administered, because he had shown he was not thoroughly acquainted with the handling of stock. It would be unwise, therefore, to place the department in charge of a veterinary surgeon unless he also had a practical knowledge of stock. It was doubtful whether Mr.

Weir had had any experience outside of Western Australia.

THE MINISTER: He was one of the board of six examiners in Melbourne.

MR. WALLACE: Was it desirable that the officer who held the position of veterinary inspector should also hold the post of stock inspector? The stock industry was worthy of all support and care of the Government. He wished to refer later to the great absence of consideration in regard to the pastoral industry as a whole. It had been pointed out that last year there was a falling off in cattle to the number of 2,600 imported into the State. If that decrease was likely to continue, it spoke well for the local production in this State, but that would necessitate a heavier drawing on our own resources in the North, and consequently there would be more risks in bringing down stock. In order to get the number on board people would have to slip in several beasts which were not in a fit condition to mix with healthy cattle. A period of about ten days elapsed between departure from the port of shipment and arrival at the port of discharge, during which time many beasts which left Wyndham would contract disease, consequently our yards at Owen's Anchorage would become a hospital for stock. It was desirable to have some system of inspection at the port of shipment in order that cattle which were not fit for slaughter should not be allowed to come down—except under special regulations for the purpose of introducing store stock—and that dealers should not be put to the trouble and expense of bringing down cattle which, when they reached Fremantle, should be condemned. Even if dealers did that at their own risk, they did it also to the risk of the people down here. He remembered the Minister speaking about establishing a quarantine area at, he thought the hon. gentleman said, Hine's Hill. The pasture on the goldfields, especially this side of Menzies, did not last any great length of time, and was it possible to fence in a sufficient area to maintain cattle there all the year round?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes.

MR. WALLACE: That was a statement with which he did not agree. The greater part of this country south of the Gascoyne had to depend—and he ques-

tioned whether the Gascoyne also had not to do so—on the underground supply of water. All round Yalgoo and the Murchison district were wells from six to sixteen feet, and during the years he had lived there people had very large stock, consisting of horses and cattle. The member for Cockburn Sound queried the carrying capacity of 100 acres to one bullock. It would, however, take more than that in the case of land fenced round year after year, but if the majority were worked on the system he (Mr. Wallace) thought they should be, the carrying capacity should be much larger. He was referring to the question of the quarantine area at Hine's Hill; he had not been to Hine's Hill that he knew of.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That idea had been abandoned.

MR. MORAN: A resolution had been carried against it.

MR. WALLACE had no recollection of that. Feeling was very strong in regard to establishing a quarantine area in order that store cattle from Kimberley should be fattened for the local market. That brought him to the question of the amount of secrecy which seemed to surround the actions of the Minister for Lands and his officers in connection with the Stock Department. It was due to the public that not only should every publicity be given to the existence of disease, but where members or other persons were desirous of visiting the quarantine yard and seeing those cattle, and if possible being present during the time any experiments were made, such opportunities should be given. He did not say this for the purpose of reflecting on the Minister, but on two or three occasions he had asked the hon. gentleman to let him know when experiments would be made. He had received a promise that he should be advised, but he had not been so advised, and he knew that experiments had been made since. He was desirous of seeing these stock in their first stage of sickness, visiting them periodically, and then attending any *post mortem* examination that might be held in order that he might gain a knowledge of the indications of these particular diseases and disseminate that knowledge. The Minister should endeavour to obtain as early as possible a number of copies of

the pamphlets on tick and tick diseases, and have those distributed to the different offices—police offices he might suggest—throughout the whole of the State, where they could be seen and perused by every person interested in stock, in order that he might be seized of the knowledge which would guide him to locate the disease in a beast. The Minister should consider the importance of the introduction of an amendment of the Brands Act. The member for the Gascoyne went to considerable trouble last year to prepare a Brands Bill, but pastoralists were so conservative that they would not accept anything that had a suggestion about it of doing away with family brands. At a recent conference pastoralists spoke against doing away with the brands their fathers had used, and one gentleman objected because of the cost of a new brand.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Vested interests in brands were sometimes great.

MR. WALLACE: In an article in one of the agricultural journals, a lady who took a great interest in stock matters pointed out that in one station in the North the owners had "ooo" for a brand. If another man came in and registered "oooo," he would have a very beautiful business if he were alongside the station where the brand was "ooo." In the next Parliament there were bound to be one or two members who took a deep interest in stock, and they would assist the Minister to pass an amending measure to establish a proper system of brands to be arranged in catalogues, as in Queensland. It was prescribed that the inspector of brands should place before Parliament each year a return showing the number of brands registered each year, but not a single return had been made as yet, because it was too costly to the State to provide the type with which to print the various brands in existence. It was pointed out during last Parliament that two persons were registered for the one brand. It was necessary to do away with this state of affairs and, at the same time, to do away with the cattle luggers, of whom he believed there were a few in the State. The Minister could ask his officers to give some little attention to the Brands Act, and they would find assistance from the Bill brought forward last session by

the member for the Gascoyne. The Minister should also consider the question of the importance of the breeding of horses. In the southern part of the State one could see a number of ill-bred animals driven in handsome carriages and sulkies, which animals were probably turned out loose at some later stage and became responsible for breeding of horses which had no value whatever. A friend of his purchased three horses, a sulky and harness for £19.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Did he get two more horses thrown in as discount?

MR. WALLACE: People had spoken to him with regard to the question of taxing stallions. It was intended to introduce such a tax in Queensland, and a start should be made here in this direction. It was not too early for the Government to make a start. Care should be taken, because numbers of persons owning horses kept them in their paddocks and got an enormous amount of work out of them. There was no desire to inflict a hardship on these persons. A law existed by which stallions found at large could be destroyed, but no one cared to resort to this practice. Complaints, however, were numerous about these stallions running at large, and it was wonderful to see the number of ill-bred horses drawing handsome carriages. Some people did not care what class of a horse they drove as long as it had four legs, and they interfered in this way with the desire of those who wished to improve the breed. It was no use people introducing well-bred horses. The Government did not get very much revenue from the beautifully-bred horse they imported, and people in the eastern farming districts complained that, notwithstanding they charged low fees for the services of their well-bred imported horses, these services were not availed of. The pastoralists throughout the North recognised the value of importing well-bred stock for the purpose of enlarging the horse raising industry, but it was no use taking up the question in the North while we flooded the market in the South with ill-bred horses. People would have cheap horses, but they would find that by buying a horse with a little quality they would get a better bargain than by buying them at £8 or £10 a dozen.

Very recently a deputation waited on the Minister for Lands asking that the regulation dealing with the dipping of sheep should be cancelled.

[**MINISTER FOR LANDS:** In their application to one district.] If sheep tick did not exist in that district, there was no intention that the regulation should apply to it, but if people in that district exchanged sheep with people in districts in which the tick did exist, the regulation should be made to apply. The Chief Inspector of Stock, in reporting that the sheep tick continued to be a source of trouble to owners, recommended the continuance of dipping. This recommendation was made prior to the 30th June last, and afforded opportunity to run off sheep to the dip after shearing, and thereby to ascertain whether tick existed. He had been told by people of experience with tick in New South Wales that it impoverished the animal; hence the order in question should have been strictly enforced against those who had the warning in time for shearing. The Minister said the quarantine system had been abandoned. He (Mr. Wallace) would move to strike out the item for quarantine.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The intention was to make the item read "Quarantine depôts, dipping and veterinary experiments, £3,000."

MR. WALLACE: That was satisfactory. Some time ago he asked when abattoirs would be erected, and was told the work would be taken in hand immediately. What was meant by "immediately?" Next session he hoped the Minister would announce that a start had been made with abattoirs, especially at Fremantle. If the goldfields people did not continue to agitate for goldfields abattoirs, that was their fault. He challenged contradiction of anything he had said. If he had spoken harshly of anyone, that was not to heap contumely on him, but to point out errors with a view to their remedy. He hoped the Minister would consider whether it was better to appoint veterinary surgeons rather than men with a practical experience of stock.

MR. HOLMES congratulated the preceding speaker on the numerous subjects he had raised for discussion, many of them deserving of consideration. A Brands Bill should have been long since introduced, and ought to be placed early

in the list of Bills for next Parliament. He disagreed with the hon. member's remarks as to the importation of stud horses. This should not be undertaken by the Government. Much could be done, however, to exterminate "weeds." The attempt at State horse-breeding some time ago raised a howl from all parts of the country that vested interests were interfered with; and the stallion was quietly disposed of.

MR. WALLACE: Horse-breeding by the Government was not advocated, but a tax on stallions, so that a man with a mongrel stallion would not preserve him in that state.

MR. HOLMES disagreed with the hon. member's recommendation that "practical men" instead of veterinary surgeons should be employed as stock inspectors. An inspector should combine scientific training with practical experience. Failing such a man, let us have one with scientific training. Much had been said indirectly about Mr. Weir, the Acting Chief Inspector of Stock. Mr. Weir was an able man, with much experience in the old country and the Eastern States, and had done good work in his present position. Mr. Craig, who had been removed, was no doubt a good officer, but was a peculiar and vindictive officer to have any dealings with. So long as one kept on the right side of Mr. Craig, one could do exactly as one liked.

MR. MORAN: So long as one obeyed the law.

MR. HOLMES: Yes. Mr. Craig would give one a concession, but if one took a concession without asking for it, Mr. Craig became one's enemy to the end of the chapter. Personally he (Mr. Holmes) had been on good terms with Mr. Craig; but he knew of others who had got into trouble with that officer, and who were perhaps less guilty than he (Mr. Holmes), he having approached Mr. Craig in a reasonable way. Mr. Craig had not been harshly dealt with; for, though entitled to a pension of only £220 a year, the Government had given him £250.

MR. WALLACE: Why?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Act provided for it, and a precedent had been established.

MR. HOLMES: For 10 years ticked cattle had been arriving at Fremantle, and until the last six or eight months

nothing definite had been done to prove whether dipping did destroy the tick or was ineffective.

MR. MORAN: Wrong! Dipping was carried out and proved successful by Mr. Craig, particularly under the supervision of Mr. Haley, a Queensland expert.

MR. HOLMES: Then why were not the dipped cattle liberated?

MR. MORAN: Because Mr. Craig's advice to that effect was not accepted by the Ministry. Mr. Craig advised liberating after three dips.

MR. HOLMES: Then the cattle had been allowed to starve in the yards after dipping, though they might have been liberated and sent to pasture. The Minister said that tick fever had developed at Fremantle, and that there was a beast with a temperature of 104·2. That might be so; but the facts were that two miserable, half-starved calves, 12 months old, were given to the Government for experimental purposes, because the Government would not buy healthy animals. The calves were placed in open yards in the hot sun, just after they had endured a voyage across the Australian Bight. Mr. Copley gave them to the Government to experiment with. They were put in a yard with 200 wild North-West bullocks, and remained there in the hot sun. Occasionally an officer went to take the temperature of the beasts. He galloped in amongst the 200 wild cattle, and though it was not known how he took the temperature, he said the actual temperature was 107.

THE MINISTER: It should have been 101½, but it was 106·2.

MR. HOLMES: After the galloping process it was discovered that there were ticks on the calves, which were washed down with a solution. A bucket of the solution one day happened to be standing in the paddock, and one of the calves drank the poisonous solution and next day it was discovered dead. Then it was declared the calf died from tick fever. Simultaneously with this the Government brought in 200 bullocks that had been dipped twice. They were inspected and found to be free from tick, and the same day that the calf died these bullocks were inspected, passed as clean, and trucked to the Irwin country, and there they were now roving about in the pastures of the Irwin, and said to be clean. If tick

could live at Fremantle or live in the southern areas at all, these cattle should not have been released under any circumstances, but the Government should go on experimenting. His conviction was that tick would not live at Fremantle or in the southern areas, and consequently cattle should be liberated.

MR. WALLACE: That was contrary to Mr. Weir's report.

MR. HOLMES: The cattle were sent to the Irwin, and from inquiries made that day he found the cattle were doing well and that there was no sign of tick on them. After eight or ten years' experience he said that every facility had been given to distribute the tick in the southern areas. Cattle had got away, had been led away, and had been taken away, and every opportunity had been given for distributing the tick, but with no result. After two dippings it was found that cattle could be liberated and were clean, and when sent to the Irwin they were doing well. Yet we had the statement of the Minister that a calf died of tick fever at Fremantle. If tick fever would flourish in the southern areas cattle should not be liberated at all. There had been tick found in the cattle trucks. The Minister told members that trucks coming back from the goldfields, right through the agricultural areas, were literally alive with tick, and no doubt tick had been distributed all over the southern areas, but there had been no ill effects. If the Minister's statement was correct that tick would breed here, then the Government should put a stop to cattle being liberated. The Government should go on experimenting and try a couple of healthy calves or bullocks and not a couple of half-starved animals. If the Government were not prepared to buy a couple of healthy bullocks, then he thought the people in the trade would be prepared to give a couple of healthy cattle to the Government. He urged on the Minister the necessity of following up the experiments in connection with the dipping of the cattle at Fremantle, so that it could be finally decided whether tick would exist in the southern areas. These experiments should be carried out during the next six months so as to be ready for the next Kimberley season. If any risk was attached to liberating the cattle he was prepared to take back all

he had said, but if it could be proved there was no possibility of the tick existing, by all means liberate the cattle without the absurd restrictions being carried out.

MR. WALLACE: Ticked cattle which had been dipped had been sent to the Irwin. Mr. Muir speaking on this matter in his report said: "More liberal regulations were now being prepared for dealing with tick-infested fates on the Eastern Goldfields. A quarantine area, which would include Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder, would be fixed and placed under official supervision, where the stock would be allowed to graze for slaughtering purposes. Later on a smaller quarantine area would be arranged for at Menzies." But in his opinion "no tick-infested cattle should be allowed farther north, even under strict quarantine, than Menzies." He also said: "The beef supplies for the smaller mining centres could either be slaughtered there or obtained from clean herds; the object being to guard against any infection being brought too near the herds of the Murchison or Gascoyne districts." Here was a recommendation by the Chief Inspector of Stock that it would not be wise to let cattle go farther north than Menzies for fear of infecting the herds of the Irwin and the Murchison.

MR. CONNOR: The tick question ought to be relegated to the past, and it was to be hoped this would be its funeral to-night. Cattle with tick on them had been brought from East Kimberley and distributed over all parts of the country for the past eight years. Two hundred and fifty to 350 head of cattle heavily tick-infested were put in paddocks around Northam and depastured there, waiting for a market on the goldfields. That was within the knowledge of the Stock Department. Tick cattle had been sent to Albany and Bunbury and landed at Geraldton, and the butcher at Geraldton eight years ago sent him (Mr. Connor) a letter stating that the cattle were heavily infested with tick. If that were so, and he knew it was, why put in force the restrictions preventing cattle being brought here and distributed through the country? Every restriction and every regulation put on the importation of cattle, and every fence built to prevent ticked cattle being distributed, made beef

dearer to the consumer. The restrictions were a farce, for ticked cattle had been distributed all over the country with no evil result. He (Mr. Connor) did not want to discount what the inspector said about the steer that died in the cattle-yards at Fremantle the other day, but there was no need to be frightened about it, because there was another steer in the yards which was put in there at the same time as the one that died, and it was all right. Possibly if there were clean cattle in those yards, and cattle with tick were brought from the northern parts to those yards, and the ticks dropped and attached themselves to the clean cattle, those ticks might produce tick fever; but the next generation would not do so. We had had an experience extending over eight years, and it had been proved up to the hilt that the second generation would not only not produce tick fever, but would not live, because if they would have done so they would have been here in millions. Moreover, on the goldfields cattle thickly infested with tick had been in the same yards as clean dairy cattle, and the tick had not spread. It was time that these tick regulations were put an end to. Take the case of the Fremantle yards. Cattle were swum ashore, and in the last few years hundreds of these cattle covered with tick had got away, and it would be impossible to hold them. They went between Fremantle and Rockingham and got into the bush, and most of them were lost.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That system of swimming cattle ashore had been terminated.

MR. CONNOR: We should remove these absurd and unnecessary restrictions, which only tended to harass the people who dealt with cattle, and made purchasers pay more. If the tick was going to be propagated here, it would have been in existence by now. There was not a day in the week in which dairy cows, all round the yards at Fremantle, where tick infested cattle existed, were not putting their heads underneath the fence to get fodder. Ticks would not live here, and it was a cruel and great shame to keep on unnecessary regulations.

MR. ATKINS: What would benefit the country more than any other system would be to establish freezing works at

Wyndham, and freeze the cattle, ticks and all, before bringing them down.

MR. MORAN: Regarding Mr. Craig, the evidence about allowing cattle to go to the goldfields showed that was done under the superintendence of Mr. Craig; farthermore, that Mr. Weir was veterinary surgeon under Mr. Craig, and Mr. Weir allowed rotten cattle to go to the goldfields, specifically for consumption, but really for pasturing purposes. That was admitted by Forrest, Emanuel & Co., according to the file.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was not so.

MR. MORAN: The Minister for Lands had made statements, and the Premier had drawn sufficient red herrings across the track to fill a barrel. They would not allow the House to get at the truth in connection with these matters, and the intervention of a motion of want of confidence gave members who would have supported an endeavour to obtain an inquiry an opportunity to go back. About that time the House was about to carry a motion of censure on the Government, through this Stock Department, or to direct that the Government should give a select committee. Half-a-dozen members on the Government side of the House promised him to vote for a motion for a select committee of inquiry. They were not satisfied that Mr. Craig had a fair show; but it was another matter when a motion of want of confidence against the Government was launched. Mr. Craig had not had a fair trial, and his dismissal did not reflect credit upon any impartial Government or Parliament in Australia. The Minister was not correct in saying that no successful dipping experiments were made prior to his advent, for three highly successful experiments had been made, and the cattle which were dipped were found to have no tick upon them, while clean cattle were placed in the yards time after time as an experiment. In one case a couple of clean bullocks were placed in the yards for six months, and they did not contract tick fever. In spite of all these facts, Mr. Craig never advised the Department to run tick cattle loose without dipping, always holding, on the authority of the highest expert in the world, that whenever tick would propagate the fever would be found prevalent. Dipping was found

effective in Queensland. The Government should proceed carefully in the matter of erecting freezing works in the North.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was only proposed to keep them going for half a year.

MR. MORAN: Such an arrangement would make the working very costly. He understood there was enough pasturage around Wyndham to allow the works to be carried on the whole year round, but the question was whether the supply of stock was sufficient. No doubt the flocks in the North were increasing, and we would soon be able to face the world as a market. The two great features of the successful management of freezing works were sufficient market on a regular trade route, and regularity of supply. The suggestion was made that we might kill the cattle and place them straight away into the freezing chambers on the steamers. That experiment had been carried out successfully in other parts of the world, but the plan might not be suitable for Kimberley. However, we could make a start on a small scale, the Government either carrying out the works themselves or subsidising some private individual or company. In the meantime the Minister should get all the statistics he could lay his hands on with regard to this matter. He (Mr. Moran) had no desire to go into Mr. Morton Craig's dismissal at any length, because he did not think any good would be done to Mr. Craig, and because the knowledge of the matter would not get to the country, and again because he could not excite members into any action. It was sufficient for him to say that the Premier deliberately avoided the main point at issue between Mr. Morton Craig and Messrs. Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. Mr. Craig laid a charge against this company for shipping cattle from Fremantle for depasturing purposes on the goldfields when there was no section in the Act allowing them to do so. Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. admitted that the cattle went to the fields for depasturing, and the Crown Solicitor said that it was a flagrant breach of the regulations; but the Premier prevented Mr. Craig from taking action against Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. half a dozen times, as was proved by the files, and instructed Mr. Craig to proceed against

Mr. D'Arcy Uhr, not for the original breach of the Act at Fremantle, but for taking the stock from Coolgardie to some soak, this being a minor charge altogether. The Premier refused to allow Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. to be brought to book over this matter.

MR. HOLMES: Store cattle went to the goldfields for years.

MR. MORAN: And Deeming was not the only person who murdered a woman. There was a flagrant breach of the regulations, but Forrest, Emanuel, & Co. were the private clients of the firm to which the Premier belonged, and were protected from prosecution. It was this people did not like, and what the House would not have liked had the discussion been proceeded with instead of being merged into a want of confidence debate. The Minister for Lands dawdled 28 days over the inquiry, and papers were taken from Mr. Roe's office without his knowledge. Mr. Roe said that he had time to hold the inquiry, and did not know why the papers were taken away from him. He (Mr. Moran) would not rake up all the details now, but he intended to place the matter before his constituents for their judgment, and to ask them what they thought of a Minister taking up an invidious position at the request of his chief who could not, on account of his own humanity, have failed to have some sort of a wish to see his valued clients come through unscathed. The Minister for Lands, proud to be a Minister, took up the inquiry, but he should not have done so. He (Mr. Moran) only accused the Minister of not being in the position to bring a calm and judicial mind to bear on the inquiry. Mr. Craig said that the main issue was obscured by minor points being debated at great length, and he felt that injustice was being done to him. He (Mr. Moran) did not think a civil servant should be dismissed in this questionable manner, and especially one against whom nothing could ever have been said. Mr. Craig feared nobody, and sought no favour. Cattle king or no cattle king, he did his duty, and was above any suspicion. The Minister for Lands should give attention to the Brands Act, and to the question of dealing with stallions, which was not beneath the dignity of any Government, as horses were a valuable Australian

asset. The Minister should look far and wide before he permanently filled the position of Chief Inspector of Stock. The gentleman appointed should be one in whom everybody could have confidence; one with no record of failures, and one who would be free from any cliques in Western Australia.

MR. F. CONNOR: As far as the acting Chief Inspector of Stock was concerned there was no one more capable, or no one more eligible.

MR. MORAN: The officer inoculated cattle so that their tails dropped off.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was a common occurrence after inoculating.

MR. CONNOR: It sometimes occurred. Mr. Weir was a capable, painstaking, and hard-working man, and was thoroughly straightforward and honest. The Government brought forward a proposal in connection with the establishment of freezing works in the North, and they promised to go into the question of establishing works at Wyndham. Then a private person said he would erect the works, but did not. The establishment of freezing works would benefit East Kimberley, and as member for the district he (Mr. Connor) advocated their immediate establishment. As to whether they would pay he would not express his private opinion; but the works would be necessary in the not distant future. Speaking in his public capacity, he said that in the course of two or three years a concession must be given to a private company or the Government must undertake the business. Probably the latter course would be better, because the Government could subsidise mail steamers to carry frozen beef. However, it was not on record anywhere that freezing beef alone would pay. Beef freezing must be combined with mutton freezing, and there were no sheep in East Kimberley. In England steamers were now being built with abattoirs on board for the Argentine trade, the stock being driven on board at the port, killed, and stored in the refrigerators, either frozen or chilled or both, whatever would not keep chilled being frozen. The Government might be justified in subsidising a London company or a local company which would build a steamer on those lines, to carry mails also and call at the ports *en route*, bringing beef from Wyndham and filling

up with sheep on the way south. He did not absolutely advise the adoption of this scheme, but recommended it for consideration.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was always pleasant to reply to the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Wallace), who, though perhaps expressing opinions with which one could not agree, was generally sincere. Did it follow that a veterinary surgeon should not be at the head of the Stock Department because the presence of veterinary surgeons had been criticised by Mr. Pentland, of Victoria, who was himself a practical man, and who, to maintain his own position, must necessarily condemn any proposal to replace him with a scientific man? Did we allow a practical hospital wardsman to control the Medical Department? Had we not an astronomer controlling the Observatory?

MR. MORAN: And a farmer at the head of the Lands Department?

THE MINISTER: In the Lands Department were two branches, each in charge of an expert. Surely there was not in Australia a better authority on land settlement than Mr. Clifton. It was regrettable that the gentleman's physical strength was not equal to his mental capacity. Even Mr. Pentland had the assistance of six veterinary surgeons, but to account for this he said they had a right to outside practice. He (the Minister) did not care for the services of men who were under public rather than departmental control. Such an officer might be required by the department to inspect the stock of a valuable client, and private considerations might influence the report. In the United States the department was entirely controlled by scientific men. Mr. Edgar's stud was well known in this State. If one of his valuable animals sickened, were we to send him a practical man like himself, who knew no more than he, or a scientific man probably capable of working a cure?

MR. MORAN: And what would the department do in the absence of the head?

THE MINISTER: It had not been uncommon for the Stock Department to be controlled for extended periods by a shorthand writer and typist. None would accuse Mr. Norman Malcolm of being a practical man; yet he had more than once

been placed for a long time in control of the department. It was hardly worth while to endeavour to deal again with the stock inquiry. With due respect to the member for West Perth, he (the Minister) did not waste 28 days on that inquiry. These were days of arduous toil, and the inquiry necessitated much overtime to keep office work up to date. No doubt if the hon. member were given a week in which to create the world, he would do the work in three days and have a four-days holiday. He (the Minister) would be pleased at all times to permit any member to attend at departmental experiments. He was sorry the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Wallace) had assumed that he would be rung up and asked to attend. He (the Minister) had awaited the hon. member's convenience. A Brands Bill had been prepared some time ago with a view to its introduction this session; but this the congested state of the Notice Paper would not permit. Early next session he hoped to introduce it. Here as in other countries people who had for many years used one brand well known in the wool markets of the world did not like to change it. That difficulty had hitherto prevented the passing of a Brands Act; but he hoped to overcome it, and at the same time to introduce effective regulation and control of brands. Personally he favoured a tax on stallions, with the provision that an animal up to the Government standard should be exempt from taxation. Why should a good animal be taxed? The difficulty of enforcing such a provision was not obvious, for it was enforced on the Continent. A deputation relative to the Victoria district had waited on him as to the compulsory dipping of sheep for tick. An inspector was now examining the flocks there, and if such an attractive piece of country were found to be free from tick the owners would not be harassed by being compelled to dip. But experience in other countries had induced stock-owners to dip sheep off the shears, whether or not there were complaints; and those who in New South Wales and Queensland had tried dipping continued it because of its good results. As to Mr. Morton Craig, little need be said to remove the supposition that he had been harshly dealt with. Although the opinion

of the Government, no doubt influenced by his (the Minister's) recommendations, was that Mr. Craig should not remain for a long period at the head of the Stock Department, and though Mr. Craig was retired, yet he, in recognition of good work said to have been performed in the past, was granted his pension, about £220. Mr. Spencer, who had been retired from the Lands Department, was under the Public Service Act given an increase of his pension, and, as was only just, the same consideration was extended to Mr. Craig. He (the Minister) did not suppose he would be wrong in saying that Mr. Craig was as capable an officer as Mr. Spencer. Perhaps with another Minister not quite so generous as himself, the result might not have been so satisfactory. He believed that tick fever did develop in the case of the two steers at Owen's Anchorage: Mr. Weir's reports were clear on the point. The temperature of the bovine ranged at about $101\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, and the temperature ran from 103° to 106.2° ; that in itself was serious. One of the steers, whose temperature reached a very high stage, was found dead; a *post-mortem* examination was made, and the stomach was analysed, also the serum taken from the carcase. There was absolutely no trace of arsenic, and the *post mortem* established the fact that the symptoms were such as might be expected from an animal dying from tick fever. It was not intended to stop at the present stage. There never was a vote for this purpose previously.

MR. CONNOR: The Government bought cattle, and kept them in the yards for twelve months.

THE MINISTER: Members would see that the Government were making provision for such experiments as might appear necessary. If clean cattle were put in the yards the same thing might occur again, but we should go on finding out what the next generation of ticks would do. Members who had been engaged in the cattle trade for years felt strongly the convictions which they held, and it was not his (the Minister's) idea to endeavour to refute those convictions, but the Government were willing to continue the experiments they had started, which would be the means of aiding a proper solution of the difficulty.

He had promised members that an inquiry would be made into the erection of freezers at Wyndham: inquiries had been made, and it was only within the last few days that he indorsed the files back to the Agricultural Department to have their view on the question as it now appeared. It seemed that the Government could not anticipate the erection of freezers at Wyndham unless the Government had the loyal and hearty co-operation of the people interested in the cattle industry of the State.

MR. CONNOR: What was the probable cost?

THE MINISTER: About £50,000 a year to freeze 500 head of cattle a day. The large number was fixed on the assumption that it would only be possible to freeze for six months in the year: that naturally showed that we were in the early stage.

MR. MORAN: Did the estimate include ships?

THE MINISTER: It covered everything. If the people interested in the trade, and he wished to appeal to them, took the question up to see if they could go into the matter on a co-operative principle, the Government would take into consideration the granting of a subsidy to them: it would be a distinct advantage to the community.

MR. JACOBY: Did the estimate include boats?

THE MINISTER: By no means. He would be only too pleased to have any literature of the kind mentioned by Mr. Wallace placed at the disposal of members. Referring to the question of swine fever: up to the present time there had been nine inspectors at work in connection with the outbreak, and there was satisfaction in knowing that with two exceptions the fever outbreak had been confined to the districts in which the outbreaks originally occurred.

MR. MORAN: It was pretty widely separated.

THE MINISTER: Not particularly. He gave the particulars of the places the other day in speaking on the introduction of the Estimates. Except at Bridgetown and Geraldton, the Stock Department were convinced, with the precautions taken, they would in a short space of time be able to announce that swine fever

had been practically eradicated. That was gratifying, and showed what loyal effort had been put forward by the Stock Department, a deal of which was due to Mr. Weir for the experiments he had carried out successfully, although in the Eastern States and in other countries there was considerable doubt and difficulty as to the experiments.

MR. CONNOR: All must give credit to the Stock Department and to the Minister for doing their best to eradicate swine fever. According to the *Government Gazette* published last Friday, it was proposed within the quarantined area, which was a very large slice of the country, at any rate the most important swine breeding part, that no pigs should be removed for six months.

THE MINISTER: Not exceeding six months.

MR. CONNOR: That meant six months. Would the Minister allow pigs to be removed from a farm where there had been no fever, if within six weeks from the issue of the *Gazette* notice there was no trace of fever on that farm? The restrictions gazetted were too severe.

THE MINISTER: It was not intended that the pigs should be kept for six months on the farm, nor was that the legal interpretation of the *Gazette* notice.

MR. CONNOR: Would pigs be allowed to be shifted from a farm where no disease had occurred, if no disease was discovered within the next six weeks?

THE MINISTER: It was not to be expected that he could give a definite assurance that within six weeks the pigs might be removed. The matter must first be dealt with in the ordinary course by the Stock Department, the responsible officers of which would advise him. If necessary the period would be curtailed. When one considered the loss which occurred in England in 1899 of £400,000 by the ravages of swine fever, one could see the great risk which the country ran. Drastic action should be taken to prevent the spread of such a severe disease. Without any undue hardship to persons, means would be found to overcome the difficulty.

MR. MORAN: Were the trucks that carried diseased pigs disinfected?

THE MINISTER: Every care was taken in the matter of disinfecting; even the officers were instructed to disinfect

their boots and clothes after making an inspection of a piggery where swine fever existed.

MR. MORAN: If inquiry were made it would be found that the trucks conveying infected pigs were not disinfected in the first stages of the outbreak.

MR. CONNOR: In the quarantine area extending a great many miles along the coast, and a great many miles inland around Perth, no one particular farm was exempt, but everybody had to comply with the regulation. He wished to know why the same thing did not apply in the Bridgetown district, where Mr. Arthur Blechynden's piggery was situated. Why was that piggery alone quarantined, and the rest of the piggeries in the district not?

THE MINISTER: Mr. Blechynden's nearest neighbour was not within two or three miles.

MR. CONNOR: There were lots of clean piggeries more than three miles from others, and yet they were all quarantined.

MR. JACOBY: Many piggeries in the hills had been declared absolutely clean. Did the Minister say the proprietor should not be allowed to sell?

THE MINISTER: For the time being the removal of swine was prohibited, and according to the experts of the world such a course was necessary.

MR. CONNOR: Would it not be fair that, in all those districts which had not had the disease, owners should be allowed to shift their stock, if they required to do so, six weeks after the proclamation was issued?

THE MINISTER: It would take a big army of inspectors. Every day the disease was being eradicated, and we heard less of it.

MR. CONNOR: This protection was wanted for people whose pigs had not had the disease. The time which he had mentioned and six weeks which had elapsed would make a total of 12 weeks' quarantine.

MR. JACOBY: Some of the places he had in his mind were just as much isolated as the piggery which the hon. member mentioned. In some cases the owners of pigs were absolutely dependent on the industry for their livelihood. As these piggeries were situated comparatively close to Perth, there should be

some means by which they could carry on their business, if their places were absolutely clean; and these places were declared clean.

THE MINISTER: They were not debarred from any return, but this was only putting it off for a day or two; the pigs were growing all the time.

MR. JACOBY: It would be well if the Minister would endeavour to meet some of these special cases.

THE MINISTER: It was always more pleasant to grant permission than to refuse.

MR. CONNOR mentioned the case of Mr. George Stubbs, who had brought out from England pigs of a special breed.

THE MINISTER: The case of Mr. Stubbs was being inquired into by the Stock Department.

MR. MORAN: It was to be hoped that what had occurred would be an object lesson to the department. In the past Mr. Weir denied the existence of swine fever; but swine fever was known to exist, and was brought under the notice of prominent people six weeks before he (Mr. Moran) spoke in the House on the subject. He had a copy of a letter from a well-known man who wrote to a paper which refused to publish his letter.

MR. WALLACE asked for information as to salaries of various officers referred to on the Estimates.

THE MINISTER said the Chief Inspector received £550 per annum. The clerk had last year £275, the amount this year being £150. There was one veterinary surgeon paid at the rate of £300 per annum, and Mr. Haley, in the Kimberley district, drew £435.

MR. WALLACE asked for information relative to an amount of £884 for veterinary surgeons.

THE MINISTER replied that immediately we established an abattoir at Kalgoolie we should want to have a veterinary surgeon there. There were horse troubles, more particularly in the Kimberleys, and we wished to deal with them. This could only be done by means of veterinary surgeons. Mr. Glen received £284 10s.; Mr. Knight, Albany, £50, and officers at Roebourne, Eucla, and Esperance each £12 per annum. Sums for labourers occasionally employed

totalled £225. The saving this year in salaries ran out on the present basis to £982, as compared with last year.

MR. MORAN: Was there any provision on the Estimates for establishing and maintaining a quarantine for tick-infested cattle at Coolgardie and Kalgoolie?

THE MINISTER: Such provision had been made for some months past. Glen was the officer who carried out that duty.

MR. MORAN: Were there any expenses except that officer's salary?

THE MINISTER: No.

MR. MORAN: Was there anything on the Estimates as salary for Inspector Taylor, in the South-West District?

THE MINISTER: Yes; item (a) £380 had reference to it. The appointment would terminate in two months.

MR. MORAN: Was there anything on the Estimates for Mr. Craig's retiring allowance?

THE MINISTER: That was on the list of pensions; it had gone through the Executive Council, and had been approved of. He should think it went through about a month ago.

MR. TAYLOR: A man named Wood was dismissed at Robb's Jetty.

THE MINISTER: We were on the items now.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Wood said he was dismissed in order that a friend of the Minister's, named Fitzgerald, might fill his position. He was only receiving about £3 a week. [**THE MINISTER:** That was correct.] Mr. Wood said he was in the position for a considerable time.

THE MINISTER: He was not there very long.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Wood claimed that no fault was found with him except that he did not get on too well with people whose cattle were in quarantine.

THE MINISTER: That was the first he (the Minister) had heard of it.

MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Wood said the manager of a certain firm boasted that four officers in the Stock Department would be dismissed. Three of them were dismissed, and Mr. Wood said the fourth, named Malcolm, was likely to go at any time.

THE MINISTER: The man must have guessed that.

MR. TAYLOR: It was hard that a representative of a private firm could say that any man was to be dismissed.

THE MINISTER: There were one or two more. The hon. member might have put them in.

MR. TAYLOR: It was said this gentleman boasted of being able to get four men dismissed.

THE MINISTER disputed the statement, and hoped the hon. member did not give credence to it.

MR. TAYLOR made the statement as it was given to him. The Minister should make it clear. It was unfortunate for a man to say the Minister had dismissed him to put a friend on, knowing his dismissal was urged by the representative of a company. The man said that it was a friend of the Minister who was to take his place.

THE MINISTER: Yes; that was the statement—a relative first and a school-mate afterwards.

MR. TAYLOR: If it was correct, the Minister deserved censure.

THE MINISTER: Quite right.

MR. TAYLOR: No Minister should dismiss a faithful servant in order to place his friend in the position.

THE MINISTER: Hear, hear.

MR. TAYLOR: It was not honest.

THE MINISTER: If it were true.

MR. TAYLOR: *Prima facie* it was true, if a manager of a company could say that four men were to be dismissed, and we found that the four were dismissed. The only disease the late Chief Inspector of Stock did not understand was the disease of political jobbery. That was the talk of the man in the street. If a man in a private company could get men dismissed any time he liked, it was time the Minister was dismissed.

THE MINISTER: The opportunity was afforded a few days back.

MR. TAYLOR: Some explanation was needed from the Minister. It was well known that this private individual was trying to get the dismissal of these officers for years, until the present Minister came into office. This man Wood was badly treated because he had to "buck" against the company with which this individual was connected.

THE MINISTER: The hon. member did not believe that was true.

MR. TAYLOR would believe it unless the Minister made it clear.

THE MINISTER: The hon. member should sit down and give him (the Minister) the opportunity to do so.

MR. TAYLOR: The Minister was treating the matter very lightly.

THE MINISTER: The unbiased observer would say that, if the hon. member desired information, he should ask for it and then make his attack, but that he should not make his attack without having any foundation for it. Mr. Wood was not long in the service of the department. No person spoke to him (the Minister) about the man, whose retirement was brought about because of the reorganisation of the department rendered necessary after careful inquiry by himself (the Minister). The man Fitzgerald, who was old enough to be his (the Minister's) grandfather, was variously claimed to be his relative and his schoolmate. He was neither a school-mate, nor a personal friend, nor a relative. The idea was altogether too absurd. Mr. Wood was a very decent old man, but altogether unsuited for handling stock; and Mr. Fitzgerald, who was a man of considerable experience, was placed in the position. After all it was only a casual appointment with a salary of £3 a week.

MR. TAYLOR: The Minister inferred that Mr. Wood was too old to handle stock.

THE MINISTER did not infer anything of the sort.

MR. TAYLOR: But he was not old enough to be the Minister's grandfather. Mr. Fitzgerald knew nothing about what was to be done, and Mr. Wood was asked to stay on three or four days to show him what there was to be done. The Minister had not explained the matter, and had left a more genuine jingle of truth about the statement Mr. Wood made.

Item — Quarantine Depot for tick cattle, Hine's Hill, £2,000:

THE MINISTER moved that all the words after "quarantine" be struck out, and "depôts for dipping and veterinary experiments, £2,000" inserted in lieu.

MR. MORAN: This was no small item. What quarantine dips were to be

established, and how were we going to spend the money?

THE MINISTER: First of all there would be purchase of stock for the dipping experiments at Fremantle. There would also probably be the erection of another yard in order that we might put certain tick cattle in it to give the tick an opportunity of reproducing themselves.

MR. MORAN: They would never reproduce themselves in a sandpatch.

THE MINISTER: Because they became smothered with the sand—that was the contention. It was proposed to select another site, on which straw or some similar covering would probably be provided. The necessity for dips at Wyndham and on the Hall's Creek road was being considered, as well as a proposal to send a veterinary surgeon to West Kimberley to inquire into the disease affecting horses. Stock-owners wished to co-operate with the department, and would doubtless pay fees in order to have the necessary experiments made. These were necessary, and could not be undertaken without funds. If funds were not provided, the department could not be blamed.

MR. MORAN: When last in West Kimberley he travelled extensively through the country, and the horse disease was talked of on every station. The losses were very severe. Mr. Weir had visited the district; and Mr. Collins, of Oscar Downs, told him (Mr. Moran) that Mr. Weir's advice was so valuable that whereas before Mr. Weir's advent Mr. Collins and Mr. Edgar had lost £2,000 by the disease, they had since lost comparatively nothing, and that, were Mr. Weir's advice followed by other station-owners, the mortality among horses would become normal. It was pleasing to be able to do justice to any public officer. Mr. Weir's treatment principally consisted of burning patches of grass late in the season to catch the last rains; and Mr. Collins had always patches of green sward when his neighbours had only dry grass. Mr. Collins now bred for sale horses in the pink of condition.

THE MINISTER: At other stations the treatment had not been so successful. It had not been determined who was to visit them.

Amendment passed, and the vote as amended agreed to.

Woods and Forests, £4,240 :

MR. JACOBY: Had nothing been done to obtain an efficient Conservator of Forests? In discussing last year's Estimates members favoured the appointment of an expert. What would be done with the plants? Surely there was a definite end in view. In the old country and the United States forestry was every year being given greater prominence, and in the sister States Forestry Departments were under competent control; yet we, with forest reserves superior to those of any other State, were not following suit. We had enormous areas of comparatively useless country growing nothing but small scrub. These might be utilised for pine-planting, for which the Minister said recently there was prison labour available. Pine-planting was likely to be profitable; for in South Australia the first cutting of pines planted 20 years ago yielded £200 per acre, or £10 per acre per annum gross return since the trees were planted—a handsome profit. The whole of the expenses of the Forestry Department could be defrayed if the work were in the hands of an expert.

THE MINISTER: The necessity for conserving our forests so as to endeavour to make the timber industry permanent became apparent to him when he took office; hence a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate forestry. Though he was justified from the reports of the commission in saying that a Conservator of Forests would be appointed, to find a capable man would be difficult; but an expert would if possible be procured, and the department placed on a scientific basis. The Premier and he (the Minister) had considered the matter, and one of the first measures introduced next session would be a Bill to deal with State forests.

MR. TAYLOR: How much longer did the Government intend to allow the Royal Commission to sit? Gum-trees had started to grow all over the gold-fields since the appointment of the Commission; and they had had ample time to grow since the appointment. It was time the Commission reported. Even Government supporters had frequently characterised such commissions as white-washing machines. Could the Minister

give an idea of the approximate cost of the Commission to date? They were travelling all over the State, even to Leonora. He (Mr. Taylor) would like to speak strongly about the Commission, but would await the Minister's explanation.

THE MINISTER explained that he did not control the Royal Commission on Forestry. The impressions of that Commission appeared to be such that they would be of permanent and lasting benefit to the State. From the reports to hand already ample indication was given that the Commission had done valuable work for the State. A good deal of time and thought had been bestowed and the information supplied was valuable; information which would enable the Government to regulate the cutting of timber on the State forest in a manner which would conserve to the country a permanent industry. That was of great importance when one realised how easily it might happen, by allowing things to drift, that the timber industry would be demoralised in a few years.

MR. TAYLOR: Statements had been made in the House by Mr. Yelverton, Mr. Teesdale Smith, and Mr. Hayward, in regard to the timber industry before the Commission was appointed, as to how the forests of this State could be conserved. If the Commission had pointed out how jarrah and tuart forests could be started on the goldfields, good would be done. The members appointed on the Commission had no great experience in timber. A commission was not required to tell the Government how to conserve jarrah in the jarrah districts. It was about time the Commission ceased operations.

MR. MORAN: The Commission had brought before the Government the information that for the next 10 or 12 years Collie coal would not be required on the goldfields. That information should have been sufficient to prevent the introduction of the Bill for the construction of a railway from Collie to the Great Southern line.

THE CHAIRMAN: There was an item on the Estimates "Expenses Royal Commission £2,000." The discussion as to the Royal Commission would have to take place on that item.

MR. MORAN: Attention was being called to the report of Forest Ranger Kelso. If consideration had been given to that officer's report the Bill for the construction of a railway from Collie to the goldfields would not have been introduced. Could the member for Kanowna tell the Committee how the Commission had dealt with the question of the firewood supply on the goldfields?

Vote put and passed.

[This completed the votes for the Lands Department.]

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT (Hon. C. H. Rason, Minister).

Vote—*Public Works*, £350,845 4s.:

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at twelve minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council, Tuesday, 15th December, 1903.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Municipal By-laws of Perth, Albany, Victoria