

which the Government intend to use for the purpose of workers' homes, and for which they are going to charge the occupants three per cent., making the State pay the balance of one per cent. or more.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Crawley was never dedicated to pleasure.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I mentioned at the outset that although this Crawley reserve was not a Class A reserve, it was definitely understood by everybody at the time it was purchased that it was intended as a public pleasure resort. I know of no place, not excluding King's Park, more admirably suited for the purpose. I know of no action on the part of any Government which was more welcome than the purchase of Crawley; because the public realised that it was an ideal pleasure resort, and would be extensively used on all holiday occasions. I cannot support the motion as worded, because I do not know any part of King's Park which can be suitably used for the purpose of a university. As Sir Winthrop Hackett mentioned, the site at the corner overlooking the river would be an ideal one, but no edifice raised by human hands could represent other than an act of vandalism on a spot like that. It must be protected for the people. I do hope that other members, who will inevitably tell us what a wicked thing it is to take away the public parks of the people, will realise exactly what has been done.

On motion by Hon. R. G. Ardagh debate adjourned.

## BILL—LANDLORD AND TENANT.

*Second Reading postponed.*

Order of the Day for second reading read.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY moved—

*That the Order of the Day be postponed till the next sitting of the House.*

The PRESIDENT: I think the leader of the House has charge of the business.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am not interfering with the leader of the House.

This is Mr. Moss's Bill, and I have moved the motion at his request.

The PRESIDENT: I thought it was a Government Bill.

Question put and passed.

## ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) moved—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 10th September.*

Motion passed.

*House adjourned at 8.54 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly.

*Wednesday, 4th September, 1912.*

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

## QUESTION—STATE HOTEL, DWELLINGUP, APPOINTMENT OF MANAGER.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: 1. Has his attention been drawn to a report in yesterday's *West Australian* of a

speech delivered by the leader of the Opposition? 2, Has he noticed that the leader of the Opposition implied that corrupt methods were adopted in connection with the recent appointment of manager of the Dwellingup State hotel? 3, Will the Premier give the leader of the Opposition an opportunity to prove his charge by means of a Royal Commission, or otherwise?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 2, and 3, . As the speech was made in the evening and in the precincts of a club, it neither warrants serious consideration nor the appointment of a Royal Commission.

#### QUESTION—LIQUOR LICENSE GRANTED TO JAPANESE.

Mr. GARDINER asked the Attorney General: 1, Is he aware that a gallon license has just been granted to a Japanese named Muramoto at Cossack? 2, Does this meet with his approval? 3, If not, is he prepared to cancel the license and deal with those responsible for granting the same?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, No such license has been issued. 2 and 3, Muramoto is a naturalised British subject, and had the Licensing Court issued a license (which it did not) the Government could not have interfered. (See Licensing Act, Section 27, Subsection 3.)

#### QUESTION—OLD MEN'S HOME, DISEASE AMONG INMATES.

Mr. FOLEY asked the Honorary Minister (Mr. Angwin): 1, Has his attention been called to a report now circulating that a loathsome disease is prevalent among some patients of the Old Men's Home? 2, If so, has any action been taken? 3, If not, will he cause fullest inquiries to be immediately made? 4, Is the general medical supervision efficient at this institution?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, 2, and 3, There were two cases of syphilis in the Old Men's Home, Claremont. One case was discovered on the 19th August, and, being considered an in-

fectious case, was within a few hours transferred to the Perth Public Hospital. The other case is one which had been in the Perth Public Hospital from the 17th May to the 23rd July when, as it was a tertiary case of syphilis and not considered infectious, it was transferred to the home. 4, The District Medical Officer visits twice a week regularly and at any other time he is sent for.

#### QUESTIONS (2)—LAND RESUMPTIONS.

##### *Appointment of Valuators.*

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Premier: 1, Have valuers been appointed to act for the Government in the West Perth land resumptions? 2, If so, who are they? 3, Have valuers been retained by the Government? 4, If so, who are they, and what fees are being paid?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Messrs. Gardiner, Grundy, Learmonth, Milner, Nelson, and Stronach. 3, See No. 2. 4, No retaining fees. Chamber of Commerce rates.

##### *Commissions to Purchase.*

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Premier: 1, Was any person or persons commissioned to buy for the Government prior to resumption of West Perth properties? 2, If so, who were the parties, and what were their commissions, and how much property was bought by each? 3, What remuneration was paid or agreed to be paid for such services?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Wm. Clements. Chamber of Commerce scale; amount of property £9,733. 3, Chamber of Commerce scale.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: 1, Return showing the number of members in each industrial union registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1902. 2, Annual Report of the Trustees of the Public Library, Museum, and Art Gallery.

# **BILL—COAL INSPECTION AND DEVELOPMENT.**

Introduced by Mr. A. A. Wilson and read a first time.

# **BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.**

Report after recommitment adopted.

# **BILL—PEARLING.**

Report after recommitment adopted.

# **BILL—SHEARERS AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS' ACCOMMODATION.**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 28th August: Mr. Holman in the Chair, Mr. McDonald in charge of the Bill.

Clause 6—Sufficient accommodation in other building: [Mr. Foley had moved to add a new paragraph, which had been amended to read as follows:—"The employer shall provide in each compartment a suitable stretcher for each and every shearer. Each mattress to have a removable cover that can be taken off and washed."]

Mr. MONGER: Would the Chairman explain where this amendment would come in.

The CHAIRMAN: It was proposed that the amendment should be paragraph (3) of Subclause 2 of Clause 6. It would be a new paragraph. Two amendments had already been made to that paragraph.

On motion by Mr. MALE the amendment was amended by striking out the words, "each mattress to have a removable cover that can be taken off and washed."

Amendment as amended agreed to.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Paragraph 9 of Subclause 2 said, "A sufficient supply of good drinking water shall be provided." What did the hon. member in charge of the Bill mean by a supply of "good drinking water"? The station owner could only supply the best water to be found in the locality.

Mr. Underwood: If it does not kill anybody it is good drinking water.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: On some stations the only water available would not be called in Perth good drinking water.

Mr. TURVEY: The paragraph was a reasonable one, and it was only right to provide that the men should be supplied with water fit for human consumption.

Mr. FOLEY: After listening to the member for Northam one would gather that some agriculturists and pastoralists had at times to use water which had to be boiled before drinking. In such circumstances, it was only reasonable to ask that the water should be boiled before being given to the men, and that would render it fit for human consumption. On some of the stations there might be water close handy which the men did not think fit to drink, whilst somewhat further away there might be a supply of good water which the owner was not prepared to cart. The Bill should make it clear that the best water available should be given to the men.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: After all, it would rest with the inspector to say what was good water. So far as he knew the men were given the best water that could be obtained in the locality in which they were working.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What was required was a sufficient supply of good water.

Hon. J. Mitchell: And I am with you in that.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Even now if the station owner offered water that was not fit to drink the men would not drink it. The paragraph could do no harm.

Clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 7—Buildings other than shearing sheds to be kept clean by shearers:

Mr. MALE moved an amendment—

*That in line 5 of Subclause 1 the following words be struck out:—"the inspector shall give to the employer a notice in writing to that effect, and."*

In the North where the stations were far apart it would be almost impossible to have an inspector at each station, and there being no inspector present it would be impossible for the inspector to give the employer a notice in writing.

Mr. Dooley: It is a very innocent looking amendment.

Mr. MALE: If the hon. member could suggest a more reasonable way of making the clause workable his suggestion would be accepted.

Mr. DOOLEY: It would be difficult to get an inspector to visit all the stations and notify the owner, but if the amendment was carried there would be no responsibility on the owner whatever. If the clause was amended in the direction of inflicting a penalty on the employers at any time when the inspector found the premises unclean it would be much more effective.

Mr. Male: Let the employer make the penalty a charge on the men. He has no control when the men are in these buildings unless he has an order from the inspector.

Mr. DOOLEY: Let the employer be responsible for keeping his premises clean.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If the amendment was not agreed to the Bill would be a dead letter, because there would not be enough inspectors to go round the stations more than once in a year. No penalty could be inflicted, and no action taken by the employer until the inspector had given him notice in writing that the buildings were in a dirty condition. If the amendment was carried the clause would be made effective, and would achieve the object which the member for Gascoyne desired.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: The member for Geraldton wished to place the onus on the employer. The amendment would place the onus of keeping the place clean on the employer but he could recover from the shearers the cost of doing so; the responsibility should rest on the shearers themselves. If the words were left in the clause the provision would become a dead letter because nothing could be done until the inspector came along.

Mr. MALE: The difficulty might be overcome if, instead of striking out the words, there were added after "and" in line 7 of Subclause 1 the words, "and where no such inspector is available." If no inspector in the district was available

the owner would have an opportunity of coming in.

Mr. McDOWALL: As there was a possibility of an inspector not being available, he would agree to such an amendment.

Mr. MALE asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. MALE moved an amendment—

*That at the end of Subclause 1 the following words be added:—"Provided that where no inspector is available the employer may take such action without notice."*

Amendment passed.

Mr. MALE: In regard to Subclause 3, if the wages had been paid, and no amount was due to the shearers there was no provision as to how the fine could be obtained. He moved an amendment—

*That after "such shearers" in line 6 of Subclause 3 the words "or may recover in any court of petty sessions such cost as a debt due to him from such shearers jointly" be inserted.*

These words were taken from the Victorian Act.

Mr. Hudson: The hon. member did not propose to deviate from the provisions of the clause that the amount of the fine should not exceed £5?

Mr. MALE: The wages might be paid and nothing would be due from which to deduct the cost.

Mr. Hudson: It was an alternative method of recovery?

Mr. MALE: Yes.

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

Ayes ..	..	..	16
Noes ..	..	..	26

Majority against	..	10
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# AYES.

Mr. Brown  
Mr. Dooley  
Mr. Harper  
Mr. Hudson  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Male  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. Moore

Mr. Nanson  
Mr. A. E. Plesse  
Mr. A. N. Plesse  
Mr. S. Stubbs  
Mr. F. Wilson  
Mr. Wisdom  
Mr. Layman  
(Teller).

## NOMS.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Bath	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Walker
Mr. Lander	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Heltmann
Mr. McDonald	(Teller).
Mr. McDowall	

Amendment thus negated.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Why was it proposed to limit the amount that a pastoralist could recover from a shearer to £5 if the shearer committed damage to the accommodation provided for him?

Mr. McDONALD: With few exceptions £5 would probably cover all the accommodation provided for a shearer.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: As the hon. member declined to give the explanation, he moved a further amendment—

*That in line 7 of Subclause 3 the words "or be otherwise compelled to pay" be struck out.*

If this amendment were carried, he intended to further amend the clause to make it read that no shearer should have deducted from his wages more than £5 in respect of the cost of any such work done on any one occasion; also that execution of any judgment recovered should not be limited.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment would be contradictory. It would be unjust, after stipulating a limit of £5, to say that, in the event of judgment being obtained, more than the limit provided by the Bill could be recovered.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Did the Minister assert that the owner should not be able to recover the full amount of the damage done?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The proposition was to limit the amount that might be deducted from wages, but to leave it to the owner to recover in other ways the full amount of damage done.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What would the damage be that would cost over £5 per

head of the shearers in the house? For wilful damage, such as burning down the house, the owner could proceed under other Acts, and the measure before the Committee would not protect the shearers; but the subclause was dealing with matters such as breaking a window or a stretcher accidentally.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Would the Attorney General explain whether the common law rights of the pastoralists would be affected by this subclause?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The subclause dealt with occupants who, by lack of cleanliness or negligence, did injury to the pastoralist's building, and this had no relationship to the ordinary torts provided for under common law or other statutes. The shearers could not be expected to become insurers against all loss or damage to the building. If a shearer deliberately set fire to the building, he was guilty of arson, and this subclause would not prevent his being put on trial or paying the penalty. If there were malicious destruction of property, there were statutes and common law both providing for punishment. The Bill did not touch on the common law rights, but enabled the owner of the building to recover for any damage done by careless occupancy. It was almost similar to a lease of a house. Where a lease was granted, the house had to be kept in tenable repair with reasonable wear and tear.

Hon. J. Mitchell: But there is no limit to the amount there.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The subclause simply provided that the shearer should make good any damage during his occupancy. The owner would have to make special covenants with regard to insuring the house from fire.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was gratifying to know that the pastoralists' common law rights would not be interfered with, but still he could not understand why the amount was limited to £5.

The Attorney General: Because it is thought to be ample.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The member for Kimberley had sought to add words to the clause which would make it clear that

the owner could have recourse to law, but the amendment had been rejected.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause as previously amended put and passed.

Clause 8—agreed to.

Mr. MONGER: It had been intended to move an amendment to Clause 8.

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 8 had already been agreed to and we could not now go back.

Clause 9—Proper accommodation to be provided:

Mr. BROWN: It was his intention to move that the whole of Part 3, comprising Clauses 9 to 13, be deleted.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not move in that form, but could only vote against the clauses.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS moved an amendment—

*That the words "Where part of the stipulated remuneration to be paid to such labourers is in the form of accommodation" be added to the clause.*

As the clause stood it was not clearly specified that it should not apply to those paid a straightout wage without regard either to board or lodging.

Mr. HEITMANN: Like the member for Beverley, he would like to see the whole of Part 3 struck out.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could only vote against the part clause by clause.

Mr. HEITMANN: Perhaps it could be arranged to take a division on the first clause and let the division decide the fate of the whole of Part 3.

The CHAIRMAN: The same end could be better obtained by moving that all words after a certain word in the clause be struck out, and let that question be taken as a test.

Mr. HEITMANN: Most certainly the part should be struck out. There had not been any call for legislation of this description in respect to the agricultural industry. There were very few if any members who had any desire to harass the agricultural industry more than was absolutely necessary. Although the Bill might not perhaps affect very many, yet it would

be against the interests of the industry generally.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It will affect thousands in this State.

Mr. HEITMANN: No necessity had yet been shown for this part of the Bill, and he had a shrewd suspicion that there was no desire on the part of the majority of members that Part 3 should be passed.

Mr. McDonald: But there is a big desire on the part of the farm labourers to have it passed.

Mr. HEITMANN: Although on odd occasions he had heard complaints as to accommodation, those complaints had been more or less in the abstract, and he had not had any definite information as to the necessity for this part of the Bill. The agricultural industry in this State had not yet reached that stage where such legislation was required. After all, the farmer was but an average man and, therefore, had no desire to deal unfairly with his employees. Undoubtedly there was a demand on the part of shearers for this legislation, but he thought the hon. member should be satisfied if we were to give those parts of the Bill applying to shearers' accommodation a fair trial, after which he (Mr. Heitmann) might be prepared to assist the hon. member to apply the measure to the agricultural industry.

Mr. BROWN: The clause would have his opposition. The time was not yet ripe for a law of this kind. It would not interfere with the man who had capital or the man who was able to find accommodation for his employees because in most instances employees already had good accommodation. It was where new settlers were taking up land that employees had not decent accommodation, and naturally the law would interfere mostly with the men who were just going on the land. The Government should not place any obstacle in the way of inducing land settlement, but to pass such a Bill would interfere with those taking up land. The employee should be satisfied with the accommodation which the employer had. The measure would tend to do away with a certain number of employees because new settlers would do without labour as long as they could rather than be put to

the expense of providing the requisite accommodation. He had not heard any complaints. In the old settled districts fair accommodation had been provided, and the Bill would only interfere with the new country.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Have you seen men sleeping in strippers?

Mr. BROWN: Even a stripper was a good place to sleep in.

Mr. S. STUBBS: If the clause became law it would do more harm than Mr. McDonald realised. Hundreds of men had come from the goldfields and taken up land and they had little capital. They were living in bush huts, tents, and hessian houses, in some cases with their wives and families. If Mr. McDonald visited the Great Southern district he would realise what effect the Bill would have in that part, unless a proviso was inserted to give such men time to get on their feet. A large number of settlers would be driven off the land; the law would probably affect thousands of people in Western Australia.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Employers or employees?

Mr. S. STUBBS: Employers; many storekeepers had carried farmers on their back for two years to keep them on the land.

Mr. Green: For a consideration.

Mr. S. STUBBS: Yes, sometimes a second or third mortgage.

Mr. Underwood: It is a business proposition.

Mr. S. STUBBS: Where were those men to get the money to provide accommodation? They would have to increase their liability or get further into the storekeeper's debt. If a good season was experienced farmers would provide all the accommodation necessary; if another bad season came what was the use of harassing them by insisting on such conditions. It would be better if the whole of Part III. were struck out. At present farmers were doing their level best to provide accommodation for the men working for them. Isolated cases might be cited against individual employers, but a vast majority were as anxious as Mr. McDonald to see fair play and to give better conditions to their employees.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Everyone was imbued with the idea of seeing the land settled, but the question was whether we should assist one section of the people by placing the hardship on another section. While looking after the men who were settling on the land, we should do something in the interests of agricultural employees. The hard-working men from the goldfields would do the major portion of the work themselves and not employ labour.

Mr. Brown: They cannot do without labour.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Many people who were taking up land were living in the town, and putting labour on their farms.

Mr. S. Stubbs: That is the bogey.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Such people were not justified in accruing wealth by getting their labour done by people who had to put up with all the hardships imaginable.

Mr. Brown: All such men let their work by contract.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: That was not his opinion.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Ninety per cent. of the work is let by contract.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Many were doing it by day labour.

Mr. Monger: He is a very foolish farmer who does that.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: At the same time he could not see the logic of exempting a shearing shed employing less than eight hands and not making an exemption in this case. Instead of the amendment, it would be preferable to exempt settlers employing say less than three hands.

Mr. Monger: Make it eight.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It would be a fairly large farmer who employed eight hands, whereas a fairly small shearing shed would employ that number of hands. Any farmer in a position to employ more than three men should be able to provide suitable accommodation for them.

Mr. Brown: These men already provide suitable accommodation.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: If they had suitable accommodation there was no objection to putting it in the Bill.

Mr. Brown: Why have a Bill which you do not want to use?

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It might be necessary to rise it.

The CHAIRMAN: Some members had expressed their intention of voting against the whole of the clause. It would not be necessary to defeat any amendment if it would make the clause better. Even though the amendment was accepted, if the members desired to vote against the clause they could vote against the whole of the clause including the amendment. He made that explanation so that members would not vote against an amendment which might improve the clause.

Mr. MONGER: Would he be in order in asking the member for Gascoyne whether, in view of the speech made by the Minister for Lands on the second reading of the Bill, that hon. member would be prepared to delete Part 3 of the measure, which referred to agricultural labourers? The member for Gascoyne might well adopt the suggestion made by the Minister. If members had to combat every clause in Part 3 it would take a considerable time.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the hon. member dealing with the amendment or the clause?

Mr. MONGER: It was only his desire to urge the member for Gascoyne to withdraw that portion of the Bill which was objectionable to the Minister for Lands, and some other members, and at the same time to express his pleasure at the prospect of sitting on the same side of the House as the Minister for Lands when the division was taken.

Mr. TAYLOR: It was indeed strange in this Chamber when any question dealing with agricultural labourers or those who were engaged in the pastoral industry came forward, to find those sitting in opposition opposing legislation that aimed at giving those people some share of protection. The House had tried repeatedly to deal with agricultural labourers in other measures, but had failed. We were now dealing with the measure referring to the pastoral industry, and the Opposition was as strong against the agricultural labourer being protected as the feeling was last year against offering pro-

tection to employees engaged by pastoralists.

Mr. Brown: The agricultural labourer has not asked for it.

Mr. TAYLOR: There was a great need for Clause 9 and Part 3 of the Bill. In this regard there seemed to be something exciting the hon. members who represented agricultural areas. We had heard by interjection from those members that the Bill would only affect a few people, because provision had already been made in most of the agricultural areas for the housing and looking after of the employees.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It will affect hundreds.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It will affect thousands of new settlers.

Mr. TAYLOR: And in the wisdom of the hon. member who had introduced the Bill he had safeguarded those thousands by providing that any community of people could be exempted from the operations of the Bill. Was not that safeguard sufficient? Ever since he (Mr. Taylor) had been in Parliament, covering now a period of 12 years, his experience was that the House had been too zealous in protecting the interests of the agriculturists and pastoralists from legislation which affected their employees. It was therefore with pleasure that he found the member for Gascoyne introducing in his Bill provisions dealing with agricultural employees. Was there an industry in the State which had been helped by the Government to the same extent as agriculture?

Mr. Harper: The country is dependent upon agriculture.

Mr. TAYLOR: That was admitted. At the same time the industry received from the Government considerable assistance, and no other industry had received as much, but when we desired to see those engaged in performing laborious duties protected, there was opposition immediately. The Bill was opposed in the previous session, when it dealt with shearers alone.

Hon. J. Mitchell: No.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Nothing of the sort.



Mr. TAYLOR: There was strenuous opposition to it now from members opposite.

Mr. Nanson: And your own side also.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Bill was going to do something for the employees in the agricultural districts, and it would put the employer to some little inconvenience to prepare the necessary accommodation which the Bill stipulated for. It was like holding a red rag to a bull to make this suggestion to hon. members opposite, and the position was exactly similar when an effort was made to bring agricultural workers under the Workers' Compensation Act on a previous occasion.

Mr. Brown: The Bill will put the country to unnecessary expense.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Bill would put a large section of workers on the footing they should have occupied years ago, and it would not work any great hardship on those whom members opposite were endeavouring to protect. It was to be hoped that the member for Gascoyne would not agree to Part 3 being deleted.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Committee would do well to vote against this clause, and the four succeeding ones. It was peculiar that while the member for Gascoyne should have given exemption on pastoral holdings to all pastoralists who employed less than eight shearers, he had given no exemption to the farmer or small settler who only employed men for a fortnight or three weeks once a year. Part 3 of the Bill, if carried into effect, would apply also to the suburban householder who employed a man for a few days, unless the amendment just carried prevented it having that effect. The bulk of the settlers in Western Australia were still in the pioneering stage, and even in the Eastern States, where agriculture was far more advanced, and working under more settled conditions, no such legislation as this had been placed on the Statute book.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Nor is it necessary.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: When farmers had got beyond the pioneering stage, it might be necessary; but in regard to the bulk of the settlers in Western Australia,

it was not warranted at the present time. Many settlers lived with their wives and children in tents or hessian houses, or at any rate buildings which could not be described as much better than huts, and it was too much to expect of all these people that they should provide for casual employees better accommodation than they could afford for themselves. In this State we had attempted to put men on the land with less money of their own than had been required in any other part of Australia. Many of the settlers relied almost entirely on the Agricultural Bank, and he hoped the Committee would hesitate before passing this clause which showed no knowledge of or practical sympathy with the settlers.

Mr. McDonald: The sympathy is with the men, and not with the settlers.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The majority of the men were employed in clearing, ring-barking, water conservation, or fencing, and it was hard indeed on a settler to have to provide this accommodation for men who might not be employed more than once. In years to come, when the land was cleared and the farmers had enough money to crop their land every three years, and graze and fallow it in the meantime, legislation of this kind might be necessary. He regretted that the member for Gascoyne had not accepted the amendment of the member for Northam that settlers should be given five years' exemption after selection. Three years' exemption was absurd, because after three years a new settler was usually harder pressed than at any time in his history. He hoped the Committee would not pile up the Statute-book with useless legislation which would never be enforced, even if it was passed. Many settlers who had been three years on the land were still 30 and 40 miles from a railway, and it would be unjust to ask those men to provide this accommodation. He hoped the member for Gascoyne would not persevere in these further imposts on the struggling settler.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: One aspect of this matter had not been touched upon by those who had urged the desirability of this measure. He desired to

dissociate himself from the idea that it was a legitimate thing for an employer to make, as part of the contract with the labourer, the provision of accommodation a portion of his remuneration, and then cheat him of his remuneration by providing disgraceful accommodation.

Mr. Monger: How do you deal with them?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: By paying a straightout wage and allowing my employees to provide for themselves.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Tents.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They provided whatever accommodation they chose. They were in a position to decide whether that straightout wage was fair remuneration or not, but if, on the other hand, they obtained employment at so much per week and board and lodging, and they were given insufficient food and improper accommodation, they were being defrauded of portion of their remuneration.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Who does that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was a practice from which one desired to dissociate one's self. The remedy, however, was not being provided by this Bill. The payment of portion in wages and the remainder in the form of board and accommodation was, after all, only another form of the pernicious truck system which in so many other directions had been abolished throughout the British dominions. If the employees in the agricultural industry were being improperly treated, the proper solution of the difficulty was for Parliament to provide means for them to have a fair wage determined, and then to allow the employee, as a free agent, to determine what was a fair amount to pay for board and accommodation, and if he was provided with board and accommodation, he could determine for himself whether the amount he paid for such was proportionate to what he received.

Mr. Nanson: Supposing your employee wishes to live in a house, how do you propose to meet that difficulty?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That had been already explained to the Committee.

Mr. Nanson: You leave it to his choice, but he cannot get a house.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He was entirely a free agent.

Mr. Nanson: Free to walk to the next place, or free to lose his job.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Definitely not. If the labourer asked for accommodation and the only accommodation that could be provided was a tent, the labourer could say he would pay only a certain amount for that accommodation.

Mr. Nanson: You are no better than the capitalist.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Infinitely better. The man should be paid a fair wage representing the labour he gave, but wherever the wage paid was £1 or £1 5s. a week, allowing a most liberal interpretation as to the value of the food provided and accommodation received, the employee was receiving under what was recognised as a fair wage in Western Australia to-day. If, on the other hand, where the ordinary labourer received 8s. or 9s. a day, provision was made for the employee in the agricultural industry to go before the Arbitration Court, the same as other employees, in order to secure a fair wage, then it entirely rested with the agricultural labourer as to his disposition of that wage, and that portion he regarded as a fair contribution for board and accommodation. That was the only reasonable way out of the difficulty. If the labourer could not get house accommodation then he received full wages, just as the employee in the building trade was not given house accommodation but received wages. The object of the hon. member introducing the Bill would best be obtained by moving in the direction of seeing that the employees in the agricultural industry could secure full remuneration for their labour allowing them the disposition of their own earnings.

Mr. HARPER: It was pleasing to see there were some members on the Government side in favour of deleting Part III. Having travelled through Western Australia as much as any other man, he had heard no serious complaints about the accommodation provided for agricultural

labourers. The employees in the agricultural districts were men with the average amount of intelligence, and they could look after themselves. There was no need for the law to provide a statute for every man earning his living by the sweat of his brow. The scarcity of labour and the law of supply and demand enabled all the workers in Western Australia at the present time to demand fair accommodation and fair remuneration.

Mr. McDonald: Thirty-five shillings a week for married couples!

Mr. HARPER: While not advocating that rate, a married couple might have a good home and make a comfortable living and save money on that wage, but the hon. member was probably speaking of some exceptional case. The employees could make the conditions for themselves. We should not interfere with the spirit of freedom. Agriculturists in Western Australia had poison to clear and land to clear, and in some parts of the State the climate was not the most favourable, nor was the soil the most favourable. We should encourage the farmers as much as possible, and not hamper them by restrictions of this sort. This part of the Bill was quite unnecessary and should be deleted.

Mr. GREEN: The solid array of talent on the Opposition side was always fairly combined in opposition to giving the ordinary labourer decent conditions. All that the clause asked for was that every employer should provide proper, adequate, and sufficient accommodation for the agricultural labourers employed by him. One member said the farm labourers were fairly intelligent men, and well able to look after themselves, yet when the farm labourers tried to form themselves into a rural workers' union to better their conditions, a howl of protest came from the farmers all over the State. When hon. members claimed that the men were getting fair conditions already, their attitude towards the Bill was illogical. The objection that most of the farmers were in their pioneering stage was met by the fact that there was an exemption provided in the Bill of three years, while in Clause 18 in special circumstances the Minister could

exempt any employer from the operation of the Bill; also we knew that advances could be made from the Agricultural Bank for the building of houses. As a matter of fact farmers often made the initial mistake in housing their own families under conditions that were not fair for sheltering human beings. Labour Ministers were always sympathetic, and the only way to protect the farmer and worker alike was to see that the Labour Administration continued. It was a duty to help the farm labourer. The fact that in the past the farm labourers had said nothing was not to say that the conditions in which they worked were suitable or just. As a matter of fact the average farm labourer was afraid to join a union. Just as Hodge in the old country still pulled his forelock to the squire, so these transplanted Tories represented in the House—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in referring to hon. members in the way he has.

Mr. GREEN withdrew the words. These gentlemen wished to continue the conditions that for centuries had existed in the old country, while he, as a member of the Labour party, wished to see that the farm labourer had a fair chance. He trusted the member for Gascoyne would stand by the clause.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The most said against the clause was said from the Government side of the House. As the Minister for Lands pointed out, the time was inopportune to put Part III. of the Bill into operation, and the Minister's amendment was moved to make that part of the Bill inoperative. The Minister had explained that where a man was paid a daily wage it did not include food and the farmer was not liable to provide accommodation, but no member of the Opposition could have put forth the argument advanced by the Minister. Members of the Opposition realised that when a man was paid a weekly wage it was the duty of the farmer to provide accommodation. This accommodation was provided in the older settled districts.

The Minister for Lands: You count that as part of the wages.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, the farm labourer had house rent free from him. There was probably not a land owner in the House who charged the farm labourer rent for the cottage the latter occupied.

The Minister for Lands: But if so he does not pay more than 25s. a week.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was not to his knowledge any man working for 25s. a week for any member on the Opposition side of the House. His object in rising was to disassociate himself from the idea put forward by the Minister for Lands. With other employers he believed the Minister was entirely wrong in his contention that a farmer had done his duty when he agreed to pay a man 8s. 4d. a day. Urban workers had opportunities of living in boarding-houses or of renting cottages, but the farm labourer was dependent on the owner of the land for the space in which to pitch his tent.

Mr. Taylor: All the more reason for this clause.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Whilst disagreeing entirely with the Minister for Lands he was in accord with those speakers who had said it was an inopportune time to include agricultural workers in the Bill. True, Clause 18 gave the Minister power of exemption; but in respect to an employer only, and not in respect to a district. He had not come across a single farm labourer who had a valid complaint to make. He ventured to say the farm labourers were very much more comfortably housed than were the men working in the mines.

Mr. Green: Your labourers have to get in with the pigs.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If his labourers had to live with the hon. member the statement would be justified. He had never heard any employer in the House refuse to provide fair and adequate remuneration for the worker, or to provide satisfactory conditions of employment; yet Mr. Taylor would have the Committee believe that the rural workers had been badly treated. As a matter of fact there was a most excellent feeling existing between the employers

and the employees in the agricultural industry, a far better feeling indeed than that which existed in the gold mining industry.

Mr. Green: You are a typical country squire.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Just the same he worked a bit harder than did the hon. member. In his opinion it was only right that within a reasonable time every farmer should provide sufficient accommodation for his workers; but it was unnecessary at this stage to include agricultural workers in the Bill. The clause itself was an unworkable one. He agreed with the Minister for Lands that when an award came to be sought in the Arbitration Court conditions would be imposed which would meet the wishes even of the hon. member who had introduced the Bill. The Rural Workers' Union had not proved very successful, for the reason that the farm labourers had shown no desire to join it, notwithstanding that members of the House had been round the country endeavouring to induce men to become unionists. In its application to agricultural workers the Bill was premature, and it would be quite time to introduce such a measure when the Rural Workers' Union was soundly established, or when some section of the farm workers had shown an indication that a measure of this kind was necessary.

Mr. Taylor: Do you think Clause 9 goes too far?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Clause 9 did not go too far if the time were ripe for it. He hoped the Committee would refuse to agree to Clause 9 and the remaining clauses in Part 3.

Mr. FOLEY: With other hon. members he was entirely opposed to the deletion of Part 3. Many hon. members had declared that in the pioneering stages the farmers should be assisted. Since he had been in the House he had heard little else but agricultural legislation. Farmers were being spoon-fed in every direction at the expense of other industries responsible for their birth. The Agricultural Bank furnished the farmer with all

the money he required. Most of the members who had spoken on the clause declared in favour of a fair rate of wage. The trouble was in reconciling a marked difference of opinion as to what was a fair rate of wage. During the pioneering stage a man was exempt, and he could be further exempted if he proved to the satisfaction of the Minister that exemption was necessary. We had been told that some of the huts on the goldfields were worse than those in which farm labourers lived. That was true, but that was no reason why farm labourers should continue under the present conditions.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Why not include miners in the Bill?

Mr. FOLEY: Because they were moderately well paid for what they did. Provision was also made that contractors should be responsible for the accommodation of their employees. Some members desired to strike out the reference to air space.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question was Clause 9.

Mr. FOLEY: As other members had spoken on the other questions, he thought he could do the same.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in making that remark.

Mr. FOLEY: In that event he withdrew the remark. In a letter received by Mr. McDonald from the secretary of the union, a request had been made that the Bill for shearers should include agricultural labourers. Rather than the amendment, he would have preferred the clause, because it was one of the most vital in the Bill.

Clause as amended put and negatived.

Clause 10 put and negatived.

Clause 11—Act not to apply in certain cases:

Clause put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes .. .. .	16
Noes .. .. .	21
	—

Majority against .. 5

# AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Collier	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Dooley	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Foley	Mr. O'Loghlin
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Green	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Lewis	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. McDonald	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
	(Teller).

# NOES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Monger
Mr. Bath	Mr. Moore
Mr. Broun	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. Gill	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Heltmann	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. Layman
Mr. Male	(Teller).

Clause thus negatived.

Clause 12—Sleeping accommodation for agricultural labourers:

Hon. J. MITCHELL moved an amendment—

*That the following subclause be added:—“(2.) When agricultural labourers are employed in harvesting operations or in preparing a grown crop for market, sleeping accommodation may be provided for them by the employer in tents, and such accommodation, if in other respects adequate and sufficient, shall be deemed proper, adequate, and sufficient for the purposes of this Act.”*

The CHAIRMAN: This clause was about to be put as a matter of form, but seeing it referred to sleeping accommodation, and there was no sense in it, he ruled as a consequential amendment on a previous amendment carried by the Committee that Clauses 12 and 13 be struck out.

Clauses 12 and 13 omitted consequentially.

Clause 14—Extension of shearing sheds and buildings:

Hon. J. MITCHELL moved an amendment—

*That in line 5 after “Inspector” the words “who shall be a police constable” be inserted.*

A constable was the most suitable man to act as inspector, and to appoint anyone else would mean additional expense.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the amendment was inserted it would mean that only when an inspector happened to be a constable he would be able to inspect all buildings or make his annual report to the Minister. The proper place for the amendment was in Clause 5; at the same time it would be undesirable to specifically provide in the Bill that only police constables should be appointed inspectors. It might be possible to utilise other officers in the Government service who were not police constables and the amendment would preclude the possibility of that being done.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The desire was only to get an expression of opinion from Ministers, and what he wanted was that only Government officials should be appointed to act as inspectors. If the Minister for Lands would assure the Committee that the country would not be put to any great expense by appointing outside people as inspectors, but that the services of police constables or other Government officials would be used whenever it was convenient to do so, he would withdraw the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 21—agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. H. B. LEFROY moved—

*That the following be added to stand as Clause 7:—"Notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, the requirements of paragraph (ii.) of Sub-section (2) of Clause 6, shall be deemed to have been sufficiently complied with if the shearers are provided with tent accommodation to the satisfaction of the inspector or shearers employed."*

The Victorian Act, which came into force only on the 1st July last, contained a provision similar to this, and if it was good enough for Victoria it should be good enough for Western Australia. There seemed to be some reason for having it inserted in the Victorian Act. Victoria was in a much better position with regard to pastoral affairs than Western Australia.

It was a smaller country, its homesteads were older, and the accommodation was sufficient, without need for special legislation on the subject, but there were cases in the northern part of this State where the stations, perhaps, were only now being formed and where it would take some time for the settler to get his homestead into proper condition. In many instances the men employed on stations would prefer to have a good tent supplied to them rather than be put into a room with three or four others. The clause, it would be noticed, set out that the tents should be provided to the satisfaction of the inspector and the shearers themselves. He had put in "shearers themselves" because it might not always be easy to secure the services of an inspector. The North-West areas of this country were very large and the stations far apart, and it might at times be difficult to have the measure properly enforced if it became law. Therefore, it was well to make it as easy as possible for all parties concerned. Hon. members should disabuse their minds of the idea that employers were not concerned about the welfare of their men. All employers studied the interests of those who were in their service and they often pointed with pride to the accommodation which they provided.

Mr. McDONALD: The people he represented had put their feet down strongly against tent accommodation either in the North, North-West, or South West. They would have no tents; they wanted proper accommodation, and that was not to be obtained by the use of tents. He was sorry he could not accept the amendment, and it would be patent to every member that the inclination of that amendment would have the effect of stultifying every preceding clause in the Bill.

Mr. MALE: The new clause was most reasonable and he failed to see that it would in any way interfere with the other provisions in the Bill, as the member for Gascoyne had stated. It was fairly well safeguarded, because tents had to be provided to the satisfaction of the inspector, and failing the inspector, to the satisfaction of the shearers; that was a sufficient safeguard. There were portions of the

State in which many shearers would be better pleased with good tent accommodation than to be confined in a stuffy hut.

Mr. McDonald: But they are to have 360 cubic feet of air.

Mr. MALE: That could be 360 feet of very hot air in the tropics. In the tropics people slept in the open air and not in rooms, and for his own part he would infinitely prefer an airy tent to a stuffy room. Seeing that there was the safeguard that the accommodation must be to the satisfaction of the inspector or the shearers, he could not see why the hon. member should not agree to the new clause.

New clause put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	16
Majority for			1

#### AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. Moore
Mr. Bath	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Broun	Mr. A. E. Plesse
Mr. Collier	Mr. A. N. Plesse
Mr. Harper	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Johnson	Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Male
Mr. Monger	(Teller).

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Dooley	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Foley	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Gardner	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gill	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Green	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hudson	(Tellers).
Mr. Lewis	

New clause thus passed.

The CHAIRMAN: As all reference to agricultural labourers had been deleted throughout the Bill, the striking out of the definition of "agricultural labourer" would be a consequential amendment.

Title:

The CHAIRMAN: As the Committee had decided that agricultural labourers should not be dealt with in this Bill it would be advisable for the hon. member in charge to move that the Title be amended.

On motion by Mr. McDONALD the Title was amended by striking out the words "and agricultural labourers."

Title as amended agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

On motion by Mr. McDONALD Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clauses 1 and 6.

#### Recommittal.

Mr. Holman in the Chair; Mr. McDonald in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title and commencement:

Mr. McDONALD moved an amendment—

*That in line 3 "January" be struck out with a view to inserting "April" in lieu.*

Amendment passed.

Mr. McDONALD moved a further amendment—

*That "April" be inserted.*

Mr. MALE: To bring the Act into force in April would not allow sufficient time for the measure to be circulated throughout the State and for people in distant portions to become conversant with its provisions sufficiently early to prepare the required accommodation. A similar Bill in Victoria, a State small in area and fairly well settled and opened up with roads and railways, was introduced on the 24th October, 1911, and was not to be brought into operation until the 1st July. If in Victoria it was considered necessary to give eight months' notice, the logical reasoning was that it would require even longer notice in this State. He desired to amend the amendment by striking out the word "April" and inserting the word "July."

#### Point of Order.

Mr. Nanson: On a point of order, I think this discussion on the recommittal of the Bill at this stage is not in order. Under Standing Order 294, when a Bill is reported without amendments, the adoption of a report may be immediately moved. Now this Bill has been very extensively amended, the whole of one part having been taken out. Standing Order

295 goes on to say that on the motion for the adoption of a report the whole of the Bill may, on motion, be recommitted. The Speaker did not put any motion for the adoption of the report, and it is only when a motion for the adoption of a report is put that an amendment should be moved for the recommitment of the Bill, but even had an amendment been moved at that stage for the recommitment, it could not then have been accepted for immediate debate, because the recommitment of a Bill could not take place at the same sitting as the Committee stage, unless the Bill had been passed through Committee entirely without amendment.

The Chairman: What the hon. member should have done was to have taken exception to the Speaker's ruling when the matter was brought before him. It is an impossibility for me, as Chairman, to alter or disagree with, or accept any motion, disagreeing with the ruling of the Speaker. The hon. member should have taken exception when the recommitment was moved before the Speaker.

Mr. Nanson: Do you rule then that the recommitment stage is properly before you?

Mr. Taylor: With reference to the point of order, and according to your ruling, the Bill is properly before this Committee, because exception was not taken when the Speaker was in the Chair. I hold that the Bill is not properly before the Committee, and if an error occurred when the Speaker was in the Chair, I think the Committee would be wise, or you would be wise to refer the matter to the Speaker. By those means the Speaker could deal with the matter. I hold that the Bill is irregularly before the Committee, and it is well that it should be put right. I take it that is the only course open.

Hon. J. Mitchell: If any member objects to your ruling. I think the proper course is to move to that effect, in order that the matter may come before the Speaker.

The Minister for Lands: The matter would be expedited if the member for Greenough made a formal dissent to the decision, and then immediately the matter would be referred to the Speaker.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We have already suggested that.

Mr. Nanson: I am waiting for the Chairman to decide.

The Chairman: Under our Standing Orders the matter is not very clearly laid down as to when a Bill can be recommitted. Standing Order 294 referred to by the member for Greenough states that when a Bill is reported without amendments the adoption of the report may be immediately moved, but it does not deal at all with the question of recommitment. Standing Order 295 states—

On the motion for the adoption of the report, the whole of the Bill may, on motion, be recommitted, and further amendments made; but a subsequent day to that on which the second report is brought up shall be fixed for moving the adoption of such second report.

That does not deal with the question of the recommitment. As the matter was dealt with before the Speaker I think it is necessary I should report to the House and let the matter be discussed before the Speaker, whereas the Bill was recommitted. *May* says a Bill may be recommitted several times, or as often as necessary, but fails to say at what stage it can be recommitted, and as the Bill was recommitted from the House I consider it my duty to report to the Speaker and let the matter be fully debated there if necessary.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

The Chairman: I have to report that on the recommitment of the Bill the member for Greenough drew attention to the fact that by Standing Orders Nos. 294 and 295 the recommitment of a Bill can only be made on a motion for the adoption of the report. As the recommitment of the Bill was ordered by the House I considered it my duty to report to you, that this point might be discussed in the House instead of in Committee.

Mr. Speaker: The objection taken by the member for Greenough holds good. The passage of the motion to recommit the Bill was an informality. There is one way in which it can be got over, and that is for the House by vote to annul the informal proceedings.



Mr. Nanson: Can a motion for the adoption of the report of the Committee be put at this sitting, seeing that the Bill passed through Committee with amendments? I take it that the proper course is to move that the consideration of the Committee's report be fixed for another day.

Mr. Speaker: That is so, but before that can be done the informality must be annulled.

The Premier: In order to comply with the correct procedure, I move—

*That the order for the recommitment of the Shearers and Agricultural Labourers' Accommodation Bill and the subsequent proceedings of the Committee be annulled.*

Question passed.

On motion by Mr. McDonald consideration of the Committee's report on the Bill be made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 11th September.

### MOTION—RAILWAY VIADUCT THROUGH PERTH.

Debate resumed from the 21st August on the motion of Mr. Gill:—"That before any further expenditure is incurred in the construction of bridges over the railway between West Perth and East Perth stations, it is advisable that a thorough inquiry be made as to the practicability of carrying the traffic through Perth by means of a viaduct."

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. P. Collier): The question embraced in the motion is one that has received a good deal of consideration during the past 16 or 17 years. As far back as 1896 an agitation for increased facilities at the level crossings of Melbourne-road and William-street was brought before Parliament, with the result that a motion was carried appointing a joint select committee of both Houses to inquire into the matter. That committee met and after considerable investigation recommended that a viaduct be constructed from West to East Perth at an estimated cost of some £400,000; but to that report was attached an ad-

dendum by a majority of the committee which recommended that in view of the important issues involved a Royal Commission should be appointed to further investigate the matter. That was done, and a Royal Commission consisting of members of both Houses was appointed. That Commission also investigated the matter and also recommended that a viaduct be constructed rather than the alternative proposal which was then before the country, of overhead bridges, but not a viaduct as laid down by the select committee. That recommended by the Royal Commission was estimated to cost something like £190,000, and no doubt in the light of the knowledge they then had some 16 years ago it was thought that such a viaduct would be adequate for all requirements. The members of that Commission could not possibly apprehend the development that has taken place in Perth and suburbs during the intervening period; and, therefore, a good deal of their recommendation is not of much value at the present time in the light of the knowledge we now possess. In fact it is safe to say that the viaduct which the Royal Commission recommended is at present altogether out of the question, inasmuch as it would not get over the difficulty which has existed for so long at the level crossing at Melbourne-road. Their scheme provided for the carriage of the passenger trains and through goods trains overhead, but also provided that the present system of managing the goods traffic at the Perth yards should continue. Therefore, so far as Melbourne-road is concerned, we should have the overhead line and the low level line also, as it exists at present; and that, as hon. members know, is not getting over the difficulty. We should have gates at the crossing, and all the inconvenience now experienced would continue. Therefore, the question resolves itself into the recommendation of the select committee at an estimated cost of £400,000. or the only other alternative, the provision of overhead bridges. I think I am safe in saying that the cost of £400,000 has been considerably underestimated. Since then the cost

of the material which would be necessary for the construction of this overhead road, and wages and the cost of all the other requirements have considerably increased; and, moreover, it has been found that the traffic has increased to such an extent that the double line that scheme merely provided for would not be sufficient now. I think I am safe in saying that a viaduct which would meet all the requirements at the present time and for generations to come would cost something in the region of three-quarters of a million pounds sterling. I think members will agree that an expenditure of that amount at the present juncture is altogether out of the question. In addition, since the report of that Commission there has been something like £50,000 spent in the erection of overhead bridges at William-street and Barrack-street, which, of course, would have to be destroyed and their cost added to the loss. Therefore, taking all things into consideration, I think the member for Leederville will see the wisdom of not persevering with his motion. In addition to what I have mentioned, resumptions of land have taken place in the City and out to East Perth during the past 12 months at an enormous cost; and while a considerable portion of that land will be required for any scheme, even for a viaduct, still much of it would not be required for such a purpose, and we would in addition have to resume considerable areas in order to provide for the scheme.

Mr. Allen: You would make it rent-producing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some of it would be rent-producing but the resumptions which have taken place in the last 12 months have been based on an entirely different scheme, and it is not difficult to realise that the land required for the proposals now in hand would not be suitable for an altogether different scheme. Therefore it is considered by the railway officers, who should be in a position to know, that we would have to resume a considerable area of land in order to provide for this proposition. The expert officers who were examined by the Royal Com-

mission to which I have referred were by no means unanimous. It is true Mr. Davies, who was then General Manager of the railways, supported the proposition recommended by the select committee, which was really that put forward by Mr. Thompson, now the Engineer-in-Chief but then the engineer in charge of railway construction; but Mr. Speight, who, I think, all will admit was a gentleman of very considerable experience in these matters, as he at one time held the position of Chairman of Railway Commissioners in Victoria, was most emphatically against the proposal recommended by the select committee. He said when under examination:—

In the elevated scheme the removal of the goods station to another place is absolutely necessary, and the nearest points mentioned are Subiaco or East Perth. In either case the additional haulage would be at least one mile, the extra cost of which could not be less than one shilling per ton. The tonnage of to-day is equal to nearly 340,000 tons, and at the rate above-named, the extra expense involved is equal to £17,000 per annum. This would be subject to increase as the traffic grew, and is an expense which would probably be objected to. I do not think that any private railway company would disadvantage itself by giving up the central position now occupied in Perth by the Government railways, nor do I think, other difficulties being overcome, that such a removal would conduce to the advantage of the department from a traffic, or to the public from an economic point of view.

The serious objection to the adoption of any such scheme would be the removal of the present goods yard from Perth to Subiaco or, at the nearest, to East Perth or beyond. Having regard to the amount of goods going through the sheds, it would be altogether impracticable to expect the people concerned to journey out to Subiaco or to East Perth in order to obtain their goods. There is no getting away from the fact that the adoption of any such scheme would entail the removal

of the present Perth goods sheds. I believe that Mr. Thompson, who was asked to make an estimate and go into the matter, if he were asked to-day to deal with it in the light of the experience gained since that time, would not make the recommendation he did then. I find also that the Royal Commission consisted entirely of laymen. There was not one professional man upon it or a man with engineering experience, and the only witnesses called were Messrs. Speight, Muir, Thompson, and Davies, and there were two, Mr. Speight and Mr. Muir, who were favourable to the principle of overhead bridges as against the viaduct, while Mr. Davies and Mr. Thompson were on the other side. The hon. member, in moving the motion, expressed the opinion that the cost of overhead bridges between East Perth and West Perth yet to be erected would probably amount to £250,000. An estimate has been prepared of the cost of the two bridges which will be quite sufficient for many years to come; that is, one at Melbourne-road, and one between Barrack-street and East Perth on a site yet to be selected; and the estimate is that they will cost under £100,000. Somewhere in the vicinity, I think, of £80,000 would provide sufficient overhead accommodation for the traffic for many years to come so far as Perth is concerned.

Mr. Gill: Does that include resumptions of land at Melbourne-road?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think there would be a great amount of land required for an overhead bridge at Melbourne-road. That was the estimated cost of two bridges, and I think it included an amount for resumptions as well; in any case whatever value there might have been in the proposal ten or fifteen years ago—and I believe this might have been adopted with advantage at that time—the period has now gone when the matter can be seriously considered. First of all it would delay for a considerable time the increased accommodation that is contemplated in the Perth yards. Plans have been prepared and, in fact, some of the work has been going on, and to drop the whole matter at this stage and to make the necessary inquiries and investigations,

would only cause further years of delay. Seeing that whilst at that time when the matter was recommended to Parliament by a select committee, nothing was done, and seeing also that the cost would be enormous, certainly not less than half a million pounds, and I believe more than that—taking all these facts into consideration, I think it is rather too late now to seriously consider the proposal submitted by the hon. member. I trust, therefore, he will see the wisdom of not proceeding further with it.

Mr. GILL (in reply): It is very evident that no other hon. member desires to speak on this matter. I would like to say in reply to the Minister that I have no intention of pressing the motion. I brought it forward thinking it of sufficient importance to ventilate on the floor of the House, believing as I did, and as I still believe, that the proposal for a viaduct is the best, not only in the interests of Perth, but in the interests of the State. The Minister has pointed out some objections to the proposal and emphasised one with regard to the question of financing the construction of the viaduct. He has stated that the select committee estimated the cost at over £400,000 and that that amount would not meet the case to-day. Possibly it would not; I am not in a position to say that it would. However, I do not think the cost to-day would very much exceed the estimate of fifteen years ago. The chief material to be used in the construction of a viaduct would be bricks. In those days bricks were considerably higher in price than they are to-day, and anyone who has had experience of building in Perth knows that it was a difficult matter to get bricks in those days, and when they were supplied they were of poor quality and high in price. That being the case, I do not think the estimate of the cost would be much greater at the present time. It may be possible, of course, that other materials have increased in value. Mr. Speight undoubtedly did raise objections to the proposal for a viaduct, but his objections were based mostly on the ground that he did not consider the expenditure was warranted at that time. If Mr. Speight had looked

forward, and if he had had any idea that the traffic was going to increase in the manner that it has done, and in the way it is likely to continue to increase within the next few years, I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that Mr. Speight would have strongly supported the report of the select committee. However, as I have said, I have no desire to discuss the matter further. I am still of the opinion that the proper and best method to overcome the difficulties there, will be by the construction of a viaduct. By erecting bridges we will be spending a good deal of money which will be absolutely wasted, owing to the fact that we will yet have to construct a viaduct to overcome the difficulties which are bound to confront us.

Mr. Lewis: Build a line on the other side of the river.

Mr. GILL: I have no desire to press the matter further, and, with the permission of the House, I desire to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### MOTION—ABATTOIRS AND CHILLING WORKS AT GERALDTON.

Debate resumed from the 21st August, on the motion of Mr. Dooley: "That this House is of opinion that in the interests of the health and convenience of the public of Geraldton, and for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the farmers, fruit growers, and pastoralists of the surrounding districts, the establishment of abattoirs and chilling works at the Port of Geraldton is an immediate necessity."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath): The member for Geraldton in bringing forward this motion made reference to the capabilities of the district which constitutes the hinterland of that port. I can cordially endorse his remarks in regard to the fertility of the district and the excellent prospects of increased production in the near future. I have had the opportunity of personally visiting that district and spending some considerable time in inspecting the centres which constitute the rich wheat and stock raising district which has Geraldton

as its natural outlet. My visit convinced me that it is one of our most fertile districts, one which is bound to increase in production to a great extent in the near future, and with the influx of new settlers, and the change to vigorous development which has characterised the efforts of recent years, the port of Geraldton will not only benefit by that, but must also be provided with those requisites which are necessary at a port of that kind. This question with which the hon. member more particularly concerns himself, that of the erection of abattoirs and chilling works with a view of developing an export trade, has already been given attention by the Agricultural Department and the matter has been brought under my notice and I have had inquiries made. I am quite satisfied that the time will come, and that too in the near future, when these requisites will have to be provided. At the present time, however, there are two considerations which must receive attention before the House can commit itself to the statement that these conveniences are an immediate necessity. The fact of there being a certain number of sheep in the Geraldton district does not necessarily mean that there is a supply of lambs suitable for export. The experience of the Eastern States and of New Zealand is that this export trade, in order to be maintained on a successful basis, must be developed on lines in which a considerable amount of attention is devoted to the breeding of a particular type of lamb, and in New Zealand so solicitous are they for the good name of the article which is exported in such large quantities to the Home markets, that a very rigid system of inspection and of marking is carried on. The same thing is receiving attention in the Eastern States, and for some years past the Department of Agriculture in New South Wales has been conducting a large amount of experimental work at the State farms of Wagga, Bathurst and Cowra, for the purpose of determining the particular type of cross-breed most suitable for the export trade. That experimental work has been going on for a number of years past and exhibits have been made at the annual

shows held in Sydney in order that those interested in the stock trade, particularly in the export trade, might be able to observe from time to time the result of this work and to criticise it. In this particular direction the work of the Agricultural Department of New South Wales has received great commendation from the organisation representing the stock raisers of that State. Of course the experience of New Zealand, Victoria and South Australia and work such as that carried on in New South Wales, will be of immense assistance to us. The action taken by the department in this State has been to communicate with those who have been more particularly interesting themselves in this question of export facilities, and we hope to ascertain just what supply there is of lambs suitable for this export trade, and at the same time the Commissioner for the Wheat Belt is in communication with firms engaged in this trade in the Eastern States, in order that we may be armed with the fullest information. I propose to continue that work in the future, and as far as possible to utilise the services of the officers of the department, and more particularly the services of Mr. Sutton, the Agricultural Commissioner for the Wheat Belt, in order that those interested in developing this export trade may, at the earliest possible moment, turn their attention to breeding the particular type of cross-breeds which will supply the best type of lambs for this export trade. As a result of our investigations we have not been led very far forward by those who have expressed their desire for the provision of these facilities, and I have come to the conclusion that we will only secure that information—which I submit must be preliminary to expenditure on these proposals—we are only likely to secure that information by specially detailing some officer in order to get it on the spot. But even urging the contention, as I do, that this preparatory work is necessary if the export business is to be established on a sound foundation, there is another and greater consideration which operates at the present juncture, namely, that it is useless for us to talk of exporting mutton

either in the shape of matured mutton or of lamb, when at the present time the local supply is entirely inadequate. If hon. members will study the prices realised for fat stock, they will see that there is no need at the present juncture and not likely to be any need for some considerable time to come, for the growers of fat stock in Western Australia to worry about a market abroad. Our consumers are in need of all that the growers can supply, and owing to the very regrettable fact that drought conditions have prevailed over a considerable area of our sheep-raising country, particularly on the Murchison and Gascoyne districts and the country between, I am afraid that the difficulties and the shortage of supply will be serious for at least the next twelve months. Under these circumstances we cannot complacently undertake proposals for exporting what we need so very much in Western Australia at the present time. Since I have been occupying the position of Minister for Agriculture, I have taken up that attitude right through, and so far as the proposal for export facilities at Fremantle is concerned, I have contended that we must provide adequate supplies for our own consumers before undertaking export, and the works at Fremantle are being designed with that end in view. The abattoirs as erected will be part of a complete scheme for export work, but, as abattoirs, they will be utilised for the slaughtering, under proper conditions, of stock for our own requirements, and ultimately, when local consumption is adequately provided for, when we have a surplus of marketable stock suitable for export, then and then only will the export work be undertaken. The hon. member is on surer ground when he deals with the question of abattoirs from the point of view of the local consumer. By that I mean the consumer in and around the Geraldton district. I am quite satisfied that from that point of view he has made out a case for the erection of abattoirs. But I want to point out that the complaints which are so constantly urged in regard to the first abattoirs which we have erected in an inland district, namely those at Kalgoorlie, have led us to hesitate

before undertaking them elsewhere unless there is a genuine demand that those abattoirs should be provided by us, and under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture. As a matter of fact where a municipality expresses a keen desire to provide for the erection of municipal abattoirs, we are willing that they should be permitted to do so, so long as the abattoirs comply with the requirements of the Abattoirs Act, and are approved by the Department of Agriculture, which administers that Act.

Mr. Dooley: Is it not a practicable scheme to take the two together, with the object of establishing chilling works in a small way?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No, I cannot agree that there is any immediate need or justification in the present state of the market for the erection of chilling works at Geraldton; because as a matter of fact there are no insuperable difficulties in the way of bringing live stock from the Geraldton district to where the consumers are crying out at the present time. As a matter of fact hon. members will probably know that during the past month or two the butchers have been selling mutton in some instances at less than it costs them, and then making up their deficiency by the profits derived from other portions of their meat supply, on beef, for instance. Owing to the very high cost of mutton in the market butchers have had to pay as high as 30s. and 32s. for fat stock for butchering purposes, and I believe that only to-day fat stock brought 23s. and 24s. So long as those prices can be realised by stock raisers in Western Australia they have not very much need to worry about the export trade. Under the circumstances while I am willing to discuss with the local authorities the question of the erection of abattoirs, and willing to meet them in order to determine whether they are desirous of providing municipal abattoirs, or whether, as at Kalgoorlie, they are anxious the department should do it; and while, of course, those abattoirs, if erected, would be designed with a view ultimately, when circumstances warrant it, of slaughtering for export purposes,

I cannot at the present time agree with the hon. member that the erection of chilling works at the port of Geraldton is an immediate necessity, and by so doing commit the Government to acquiesce in any proposal to erect chilling works for export purposes at Geraldton at the present time. Whilst we are prepared, and intend to provide those works when the local consumption has been provided for, and when there is a marketable surplus of suitable types, I propose, at the present juncture, to ask the Committee to amend the motion. I move an amendment—

*That in lines 7 and 8 the words "an immediate necessity" be struck out and "desirable" inserted in lieu.*

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 5th September, 1912.*

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

### QUESTION — WICKPIN - MERREDIN RAILWAY SELECT COMMITTEE.

*Cost of Country Trip.*

Mr. GREEN asked the Chairman of the Select Committee on the deviation of the Wickpin to Merredin railway: 1.