MR. MARMION: Should it not be "discoverer or discoverers?"

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The plural includes the singular.

The clause was then put and passed.

Title and preamble—agreed to.

Bill reported.

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

The House adjourned at a quarter to ten o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 9th August, 1886.

Police Station eastward of Mt. Clere—Mail service Gingin to Moore River—Masters and Servants Bill: recommitted—Land Regulations: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

POLICE STATION EASTWARD OF MT. CLERE.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, asked the Acting Colonial Secretary whether the Government had any intention of establishing a police station eastward of Mt. Clere, in the Gascoyne District; and if so, at what spot? He had heard that the Government had received a petition from the settlers up there, asking for police protection, as depredations were carried on to a great extent by the natives in this locality.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the Government did not propose establishing a police station eastward of Mt. Clere at present, as funds were not available, but the matter would not be lost sight of. In order, in a measure, to meet the requirements of the settlers in that locality, provision would be made on the Estimates for 1887 for an additional constable to be stationed at Beringarra.

MAIL SERVICE BETWEEN GINGIN AND MOORE RIVER.

MR. BROCKMAN, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address "be presented to His Excellency the Gov- "ernor, praying that he would be pleased "to place on the Estimates for 1887 the "sum of £50 for a mail service between "Gingin and Moore River." He might state for the information of hon. members that at present the settlers on the Moore River got their mails once a month, and that there were fourteen householders who would be accommodated by this mail service, all farmers and graziers, besides the small population connected with them. This £50 would probably give them two more mails within the month. As the House had sanctioned a telegraph line between Gingin and Dandaragan some hon. members might think there was no necessity for increasing the mail service, but he would point out that this telegraph line would not benefit the Moore River settlers at all. Not only would this mail service benefit the local settlers, it would also be very useful to Northern stock-owners, whose stock were sent overland by this route.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said he had no doubt whatever that this mail service would be of great benefit to the residents of the Moore River district, and, really, if the Government felt that the necessary funds were available they would be only too happy to give them this service; but there were so many applications for mail communications throughout the colony that it was impossible for the Government to entertain them. The sum asked for in this instance was a small one no doubt; still a number of these small items soon amounted in the aggregate to a large sum. The estimated expenditure in connection with the Postal Department for the ensuing year would show a very considerable increase, and it was quite out of the power of the Government to make any further increases.

MR. VENN said he knew nothing personally about the necessity of this

service, but he took it that no hon. member would ask for a vote of this kind unless he considered it was a reasonable request to make; and he was very sorry to hear the leader of the Government say that they really could not afford such a small sum as £50. All he could say was, if such was the case the colony must be in a very poor way indeed. Knowing what a boon mail communication was to settlers in country districts, the motion would have his support.

Mr. WITTENOOM quite concurred with the hon. member for Wellington as to the great advantages which country people derived from regular mail communication. Not only was it a great boon to them, but it also was a source of great expense and inconvenience to them when they had no such communication afforded them; and, looking at the very modest sum which the hon. member asked for, he hoped the House would not hesitate in supporting the address.

Captain FAWCETT said if the financial position of the colony was really so bad that the Government could not afford to spend £50, he must oppose the motion, for if every little district in the colony were to make the same application, the country would soon be in a state of bankruptcy. They wanted improved postal facilities in the Murray and Williams district very much, but really if the colony was in such a dreadfully poor state he had not the heart to ask for any increase of expenditure.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) hoped the hon. member would not press his motion. He had informed the hon. member why the Government were not in a position to accede to these demands for increased postal facilities, and he thought it must be recognised that the reasons he had given were valid reasons. The vote for the Postal Department for next year was already so large that it was impossible for the Government to accede to all these fresh demands.

Mr. GRANT would be the last to throw any obstacles in the way of country districts obtaining mail communication, but when they were told that this service would only accommodate fourteen settlers, he thought it was rather too much of a good thing, especially when they considered the large pastoral districts at the North which had no mail communication provided for them.

Mr. MARMION said, without any desire to oppose the motion, he thought the settlers themselves might perhaps do something towards assisting one another by carrying each other's letters and newspapers. Our postal service now cost the colony a very large sum in excess of the revenue derived from it. When the settlers increased in number and our revenue admitted of these extra demands being made upon it, he should have much pleasure in supporting the hon. member's motion for assistance.

Mr. BROCKMAN said, as the Acting Colonial Secretary told them that the Government could not afford it, it was no use his pressing the motion. Perhaps the Government would be in a position to accede to his request at some future date; and he trusted they would bear in mind the claims of the district in question.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): I can assure the hon. member that we shall bear it in mind, and that, when we are in a position to do so, provision will be made to give the settlers this postal service.

Mr. BROCKMAN thereupon moved the Chairman out of the chair.

Question put and passed.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS BILL.

On the order of the day for the third reading of the bill,

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the bill be recommitted. His attention had been directed to the fact that no date was mentioned for it to come into operation, and it might be very inconvenient if the bill were to become law as soon as the Governor assented to it—which would be the case unless a clause were inserted postponing its coming into operation. It would take some little time before magistrates in country districts became aware of the fact that the law as affecting masters and servants had been altered, and it might invalidate a great number of convictions. He therefore proposed to recommit the bill, so as to introduce a clause providing that it shall not come into operation before the 1st January next.

Mr. PARKER said he was perfectly willing to adopt the hon. and learned

member's suggestion; in fact it was he who had drawn the hon. member's attention to the desirability of making this motion, for it had struck him that very possibly country magistrates who might be unacquainted with the law as now altered might be sending men to prison for breach of contract.

The bill was then recommitted.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following New Clause be added, to stand as Clause 5: "This Act shall come into "operation and take effect on and after "the first day of January, 1887."

Agreed to.

Bill reported.

LAND REGULATIONS.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the Land Regulations.

Clause 48 (reverted to): "For the "encouragement of planting vineyards, "orchards, or gardens, the Commissioner "may dispose of land, in the South-West "Division, in blocks of not less than ten "acres, provided that not more than one "block shall be granted to any one "person:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he moved the other evening, when this clause was read, that the words "in the South-West Division" should be struck out. He afterwards asked to withdraw his amendment, and progress was reported. He now proposed to adhere to the proposition he made the other evening, and to add some other words to the clause, reducing the minimum area, and inserting other conditions. The object, as he said the other evening, of making this clause general in its application, rather than limiting it to the South-West Division, was to encourage the planting of vineyards, orchards, or gardens all over the colony; but he did not notice, at the time, that if they struck out the words referred to the clause would be inconsistent with Clause 41, and he therefore asked the committee to allow him to withdraw his amendment, in order that he might have an opportunity of further considering the matter and of consulting with his colleagues as to the best means of attaining the object in view. It was not done with the view of withdrawing the amendment absolutely, but simply in order that he might have further time to consider the effect of the amendment in its bearing upon the other clause. It had been said that he had in a measure deceived the House by not following out some compact which it was said he had made with the hon. member for Wellington. He was not aware himself that he had entered into any compact with any hon. member. He was not in the habit of entering into compacts with any hon. members. What he said or did, he said and did openly. He had his duty to perform, and he did not go about asking hon. members for their support to this or that proposition. Any amendment he proposed, he should endeavor to carry out without bringing any pressure to bear upon any hon. member, or entering into any compacts. If he ever said anything to the hon. member for Wellington to mislead him in any way, or to mislead the House, he should be happy if the hon. member would say so.

MR. VENN said the facts were simply these: just before the House went into committee on this question the other evening, he went round and spoke a few words to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and the hon. gentleman then told him that he intended to make certain alterations in this clause, and, from what the hon. gentleman told him of his proposed amendments, he could see that they would in every way meet the amendments which he (Mr. Venn) himself had on the Notice Paper, but that he thought he should prefer moving the clause which he had himself given notice of; at the same time he might probably be prepared to withdraw it, after hearing what the Government intended doing in the matter. True to this, the hon. gentleman got up and moved that the words "in the South-West Division" be struck out. If hon. members would compare the clause with these words struck out, and the amendment of which he had given notice, they would see that they were very similar, and that it would be needless for him to move his amendment; and when the hon. gentleman moved to strike out the words, he (Mr. Venn), on his part, withdrew his amendment. He was therefore surprised—and he thought every member in the

House was surprised—to find that the moment his amendment was withdrawn, the hon. gentleman wished to withdraw his own amendment, to strike out these words; and those who were disposed to support his (Mr. Venn's) amendment immediately found—at any rate he found himself in a complete hole, inasmuch as having withdrawn his own amendment he could not again bring it before the House. He did not say that he had been deceived—he did not know that would be the proper word, but he certainly had been disappointed, and he believed other members had expressed the same feeling. He said so now again, that he was disappointed when the hon. gentleman withdrew his amendment. No "compact" was entered into that he was aware of, but he certainly thought it was an understood thing that if the hon. gentleman moved his amendment he (Mr. Venn) would not bring forward his amendment. That was all he had to say in the matter. He was waiting now with some degree of anxiety to see what amendments the hon. gentleman intended to make, on the part of the Government, in this clause.

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said that all that was stated on the subject was stated in the House openly, and if any hon. member did not understand the position he was sorry for it. He now moved that the clause be struck out, and the following inserted: "*Clause 48.*—For the encouragement of planting vineyards, orchards, or gardens, the Commissioner may dispose of land in blocks of not less than five acres, except in special cases approved by the Commissioner, nor more than twenty acres, at not less than Twenty shillings per acre, subject to the same terms and conditions as specified by clause 47, sub-sections *c* and *d*, of these Regulations; provided that not more than one block shall be granted to any one person, and that, except in the South-West Division, the selection shall be within a special area or within 10 miles of a declared site of a city, town, or village."

Mr. VENN thought they ought to have the new clause before them in print before proceeding to discuss it, and that in the meantime they might go on discussing the next clause.

Mr. LOTON concurred. His chief objection to the new clause, so far as he at present understood it, was that it limited the area that could be taken up to twenty acres. He thought there was a large proportion of land that would be taken up for these particular purposes, in the Ranges, that could not be taken up under other conditions. He often heard it said that if this colony was fit for anything it was for viticulture, and he failed to see why we should limit the area that a man could take up for this purpose to twenty acres. If the wine growing industry was going to be made of any real service, and an export trade created, we must have much larger areas than twenty acres, for it would be futile to attempt growing different varieties of vines upon such a small block of land as twenty acres. He should like to see the maximum area increased considerably, so long as the conditions were fulfilled.

Mr. LAYMAN said there was nothing to prevent a man taking up 100 acres of land for vineyard purposes under the Special Occupation regulations.

Mr. MARMION was inclined to think that the strongest objection to the clause was that it allowed a man to pick out the choicest bits of land, surrounded with springs, and in that way reduce the value, or render entirely valueless, the surrounding country, for a considerable area. As the clause said that the land was to be taken up under these easy conditions for the "encouragement of planting vineyards, gardens, or orchards," would it not be fair and reasonable to make it a condition that the land so taken up shall be so planted? Merely to compel a man to spend 10s. an acre upon the land would not ensure the land being devoted to the growth of vines. He thought those who took up land under this clause should be compelled to cultivate and plant a certain portion of it—not a very large portion perhaps, say one-tenth of it—within a certain period. If that were insisted upon, it would remove the objections which he now had to the clause.

Mr. BURGES said it appeared to him it would be a very dangerous thing to extend the application of this clause to all parts of the colony, spoiling large areas of pastoral country, though the proviso limiting the range of selection to land situated within ten miles of a de-

cleared site of a town removed to a considerable extent that objection. But he certainly thought, if they were going to allow people to take up these choicest bits of land for the purpose of a vineyard or a garden, they ought to insist upon the land being devoted to that purpose and no other; and he hoped an amendment to that effect would be introduced.

MR. LAYMAN was of the same opinion as the hon. member Mr. Burges, that there ought to be a condition attached, compelling those who took up land under this clause to cultivate and plant a certain proportion of it, so as to show their *bona fides*.

MR. SCOTT looked upon this clause as one of the most important clauses in the Land Regulations, for this reason: building railways as we were now, a great deal of the land alongside the lines must be devoted to viticulture, which he believed would yet become an important industry, and he hoped to see a large extent of land taken up by vignerons. To ensure that, however, we must make these regulations as liberal as possible as regards this class. He objected to the proposal to limit the number of blocks which any person could take up under this clause to one block. People could not take up very large tracts of land suitable for this purpose, and he saw no reason why a man should not be allowed to take up three or four small blocks, for this particular kind of culture.

MR. WITTENOOM was very pleased to find the Commissioner introducing this amended clause, for the clause as it originally stood seemed to open up the whole question of free selection, and in a worse phase than before. If the suggestion of the hon. member for Perth (Dr. Scott) or of the hon. member Mr. Loton were adopted, giving the right of unlimited selection under this clause, they would have free selection in its most objectionable form, and they would be bound to have a great deal of dummyism. It might work to the interest of the leaseholder, for there would be nothing to prevent him putting in three or four men to buy up all the choice blocks on the run, and thus ultimately secure for himself all the springs and water-holes. He saw no objection whatever to the suggestion that a condition should be attached, compelling those who took up land under this clause to show their *bona fides* by planting a certain portion of it within a specified time.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) did not see why we should bind down the people too tightly. A similar clause had been in existence up to the present, and it had not worked much hardship, or caused any injury to leaseholders. The clause provided that the Commissioner of Crown Lands "may" dispose of land for these purposes: it was discretionary, and the Government would exercise some discretion in granting these small blocks, and they would only be granted in places suitable for such purposes. The price of the land would not be less than £1 an acre, to commence with; the owner would have to fence it within three years, and to spend 5s. an acre in improvements upon it for seven years. He thought a man who did that would be fairly entitled to his bit of land by that time; and he would advise hon. members to let the clause pass as it stood, without imposing any further restrictions. As a rule, he believed the land would be taken up for the purposes contemplated. As to the objection to limiting one block to one person, they must be careful that the clause was not made use of for other purposes than that contemplated, and contrary to the spirit of the regulations. His own opinion was that it would be better to leave the clause as it was.

MR. VENN said he differed from the hon. gentleman. If these blocks were allowed to be taken up for a stipulated purpose only, he failed to see why they should not stipulate that the land shall be made use of for that purpose. The amendment which he had withdrawn the other day, when the Commissioner introduced his amendment (subsequently withdrawn), would in his opinion answer the purpose much better than this new clause, and was as follows: "For the encouragement of planting vineyards, orchards, and gardens, the Commissioner "may dispose of lands, in blocks of not "less than five acres nor more than twenty "acres, at not less than 20s. per acre. "Provided that within two years from "the date of survey the land shall be "fenced on the surveyed boundary lines, "and at least one-quarter part be planted "with vines or fruit trees, or otherwise

"cultivated as a vegetable garden; and "provided that these conditions have "been complied with to the satisfaction "of the Commissioner, the Crown grant "shall issue." He thought unless they insisted upon these conditions the clause would be absurd in various ways. He failed to see what they wanted the clause at all unless they made it a stipulation that the land shall be planted. Altogether he was still of opinion that it would be better to postpone the consideration of this clause, until they saw the new clause in print.

Mr. MARMION thought the object which the hon. member for Wellington had in view might be attained, and the *bona fides* of a man shown if they were to reduce the area to be planted within the two years, say one-tenth of the area within two years, and one-fourth within five years. He thought if they did that they would do all that was necessary.

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) pointed out that the clause was not a compulsory clause; it was within the discretion of the Commissioner to dispose of the land, with the view of encouraging particular industries in places suitable for the cultivation of such industries. The clause was not intended solely for the encouragement of these cultures only, but that they might be prosecuted if a man wished to do so, and was prepared to take up the land on certain conditions.

Mr. GRANT could not think of anything more pernicious to the colony than that they should perpetuate a system of selection which the Commissioner himself acknowledged had spoilt the country in the past. It appeared to him that this clause would, in fact, intensify the evil more than ever, inasmuch as it reduced the size of the blocks that might be taken up. If all these choice bits of land were to be picked out, what was to become of the rest of the country? He was afraid, unless they were very careful, it would lead to all the evils of dummyism which our neighbors cried so much about in the other colonies. There might be no more than four or five waterholes or springs on a man's run, and if all these waterholes or springs were taken by vignerons and by gardeners—possibly by a lot of Chinamen—what was to become of the main industry of the colony, the pastoral industry, upon which the hopes of the country were centred? They might as well give up the country at once, and let the Chinese pick out the eyes of it for market gardens.

Capt. FAWCETT thought they could not do too much in the way of encouraging vine-growing. He would be prepared to give away the land if they could make sure that it would be devoted to this purpose, and lead to the settlement of the country. What was the good of the land without population upon it? He did not see why the squatters should have the whole country for themselves, making a huge sheep-walk of it, and leave every other industry to languish or perish. Surely if these small gardeners did pick out the waterholes, they would not be so selfish as to deprive the sheep-farmer from making use of them. They would not debar their neighbors' sheep from getting a drink. He ventured to say he could bribe any of these men with a bottle of wine to let his sheep have a drink at their waterholes. He would make the conditions under this clause as encouraging as possible. It was all nonsense for the hon. member for the North to say that the pastoral industry was the only industry which the colony had to look to. He thought the wine industry would yet be one of the finest industries in Western Australia, and everything they could do to develop it ought to be done.

Mr. VENN said he also objected to the clause of the Commissioner, because it limited the number of blocks which any man could take up to one block. Why should they limit a man, or a company of wine-growers, to one small block, so long as each small block carried its own conditions of improvement and cultivation? The colony would get all it asked for, and what did it matter? Unless we wished to encourage the very poorest class of vine culture it would be absolutely necessary to allow people to take up more than one small block. It was just possible that a man who wished to embark in this industry might want a variety of soils: he might like to take a small piece of land near Guildford, another about Bunbury, and another about Pinjarrah, or some other part of the colony; and why should they debar a man from doing so, and hamper what

they considered—or pretended to consider—a very valuable industry. As to picking out the eyes of the country, and monopolising all the waterholes, he presumed the Commissioner of Crown Lands would take care not to allow that to be done, for, as the hon. gentleman himself pointed out, it would be discretionary on his part to allow any land to be disposed of under this clause. He begged to move that the consideration of the clause be postponed until after the consideration of the remaining clauses of the regulations.

This was agreed to.

Clause 49.—"*Conditional Purchase.*—"The Governor in Council may define "and set apart any Crown land in the "South-West Division as an Agricul-"tural area, and may declare any such "Agricultural area as open to selection "under the provisions of these regu-"lations, and may withdraw any such "land from being so open. Before any "land is so declared open for selection it "shall be surveyed under the direction "of the Commissioner, and divided into "lots of convenient area for selection, "with proper roads and reserves for "public purposes, and such lots shall be "marked on the ground:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved to insert after the word "Division," in the third line, the words "of not less than two thousand acres." The object of the amendment was to provide that no agricultural area should be thrown open for selection that comprised less than 2,000 acres.

THE HON. J. G. LEE-STEERE said that he had listened very patiently to the debate that had been going on, night after night, with reference to these Land Regulations, and he had heard a great deal said by many hon. members with regard to these proposed agricultural areas; but he must say that nothing could expose the fallaciousness of the proposed system in a colony like this more than the proposal now made by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, that these areas shall not be less than 2,000 acres in extent. Could there be anything more ridiculous than setting out agricultural areas of only 2,000 acres? Did not that fact alone show how unfit the colony is for such purposes? It would be far better to declare the whole of this South-Western division an agricultural area. There would be some sense in that. But, with areas of 2,000 acres, the result would be this: we should have to pick the best of the land that was now left for these areas, and, so far from settling a population upon them, it would just have the contrary effect, for these 2,000 acres would probably be taken up by two or three persons, and the rest of the land would not be fit for settling upon. He did not approve of agricultural areas himself; but, if the system was to be introduced at all, these areas certainly should not be less than 10,000 acres in extent, and they should be so surveyed in blocks that there should be some good and some bad land in them, and not in such small blocks as now proposed, which would necessarily contain the pick of the land; and this, as he had already said, would be taken up by two or three persons possessing means.

MR. VENN was strongly inclined to think the same way. Having once intruded upon the principle of these special areas, he would ask the House whether it would be advisable to have special areas at all? As they had departed from the limited principle of free selection originally intended, and now proposed to have unrestricted free selection all over this South-West division, he thought that 2,000 acres would be absurdly small areas, and a mistake altogether.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said that in Queensland no limit was specified, it being left to the discretion of the Government as to the size of the areas, and the Government here would have no objection to adopt that principle; but it was thought it would be to the advantage of the pastoral leaseholder that the minimum should be fixed at no less than 2,000 acres, rather than have these areas set apart in 200 or 300 acres. As to the apprehensions of His Honor the Speaker, that probably only two or three persons would settle upon these areas—though, if we were to be guided by past experience, it was not at all likely that people would take up so much as 1,000 acres for agricultural purposes—even that amount of settlement would do good for the

colony,—very much more good than if the land was used for pastoral purposes only, as at present.

The amendment upon being put was passed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) also moved a further amendment: that the following words be added to the clause, "Provided that no more than 1,000 acres within any one area shall be held by any one person under any conditional rights of purchase at one and the same time." The object of this amendment, hon. members would see, was to prevent a man holding more than a thousand acres within a declared area, under three different clauses—49th, 50th, and 53rd clauses—which would be possible unless they restricted him in some way. He might take up 1,000 acres under direct purchase; 1,000 acres under the residential clause; and another 1,000 acres under the non-residential clause. He was not quite sure whether his amendment clearly carried out the intention of view, but no doubt his hon. and learned friend the Acting Attorney General would see that the phrase was properly worded when he came to go through the regulations and put them in strict legal form.

MR. LOTON was entirely opposed, as he had said more than once, to a person being limited to 1,000 acres, provided he was able to carry out the prescribed conditions of improvements. Two or three persons might take up 600 or 800 acres of land within these areas, and if one of them might afterwards have to give up his selection and perhaps leave the district, and he wanted to put his land in the market, the probability was that the most likely customer to give him a fair price for the land would be the holder of the neighboring property; but that man would be debarred from taking up the land, as he would then hold more than 1,000 acres, and in this way the value of the land would be unnecessarily and unfairly handicapped. He should not attempt to labor this question any further; his own opinion all through was that they were making these land regulations absurdly restrictive, and that they would not see this part of the colony make that progress which they wished to see it make if they passed such regulations into law. They would be twice as difficult for any person to work under, with or without capital, as the regulations now in force, crippling as they did a man's energies at every step.

MR. SHENTON failed to see why the Government should limit a man to 1,000 acres. Our object was to get the public estate improved and settled upon, and, so long as we attained that object, why should we restrict the holder of land to this quantity? The result of such a policy would be simply to retard the progress of the colony, by limiting the energies and the enterprise of men who were likely to become a most desirable class of colonists.

MR. SCOTT said he cordially agreed with the two hon. members who had last spoken,—as to the inexpediency of limiting a man to one thousand acres.

MR. SHOLL said he cordially disagreed with the two hon. members as to limiting the quantity. He did not think that throughout the whole of Western Australia there was one solitary instance of a farm of 1000 acres under cultivation. [MR. MARMION: Not one.] If they were going to have all this first-class land—for it would only be the best of the land that would be set apart for these areas—kept for a sheep walk, as in the past, the main object of these land regulations would be defeated altogether. One thousand acres was as much as any man could farm and cultivate profitably, and he took it that that was the object of declaring these areas. They had divided upon this question once before, and it was useless arguing the matter any further, but he thought they had much better pass the clause as it stood.

MR. VENN said: Not a bit of it. If a thing was worth having at all it was worth fighting for, and, if no one else would do it, he would divide the committee upon the subject. The hon. member for the Gascoyne told them that 1,000 acres was quite enough for any man to hold and cultivate. Who ever said it wasn't? Did the hon. member expect a farmer to cultivate every bit of land he occupied? He could tell the hon. member this—and he spoke not without some knowledge and experience on the subject—that agriculturalists in this colony as a rule were not in the habit of tilling every inch of their land, nor would it pay them

to do so. They wanted some of their land for other purposes, such as running stock upon it. To some men 1,000 acres might prove sufficient for their requirements, and for the exercise of their energies and the capital at their command; but, to other men of less limited resources, 1,000 acres would not be sufficient. He felt all along—and the more they went into them the stronger he felt on the subject—that these land regulations, throughout, aimed at restricting the utilisation of what the colony stood most in need of—enterprise and capital; and he felt that in his opposition to them he was expressing the voice of the country.

MR. SHENTON said as to there being no large farms in the colony, he was himself interested in some of these farms, and the secret of the success of those who occupied them was to be found in the fact that their holdings were sufficiently large to enable them to combine a little stock raising with cultivation.

MR. MARMION: Will the hon. member mention the size of these farms?

MR. SHENTON thought the largest of them were close upon 1,000 acres.

MR. BURGES wished hon. members to bear in mind that they were now dealing with the South-West division of the colony, and they must not lose sight of this fact—that all the land best fitted for agriculture had already been alienated, and that the land now to be brought under cultivation would require the expenditure of a large amount of capital to make it of any use. Therefore they should take care that in framing regulations dealing with these peculiar circumstances of the case they did not place any unnecessary check upon the expenditure of capital, for utilising the land. No one travelling from Guildford to Beverley and seeing the large extent of land that remained unutilised to this day, although held in fee simple for the last forty years, could fail to see the evil of placing people on the land without the means of utilising it. All this land had remained in a state of nature simply because the owners could not afford to cultivate it. It would cost them at least from £2 to £3 an acre to clear the land, to say nothing about fencing it; so that it must be quite plain that capital was required; and the people we wished to see upon our land now were men who if they had no capital themselves were backed by capital, without which they could not hope to succeed. He maintained it would be altogether bad policy to limit the quantity of land which any man could hold under this clause to 1,000 acres, so long as a man was prepared to comply with the conditions as to clearing and fencing the land. If he had his own way, he would also compel every man to cultivate a portion of his land.

MR. CROWTHER said it had just struck him, after hearing the last hon. member talking about capital, that capitalists had had a show in this colony now for the last fifty years, and that this particular section of the land regulations was intended for other men, who were not capitalists. Hence the cry of capital being a *sine qua non* condition did not apply. He thought that bone and sinew was what was wanted to carry out the conditions of this portion of our land regulations, rather than capital. The hon. member Mr. Burges spoke of nearly the whole country between Guildford and Beverley being still in a state of nature; but they all knew that nine-tenths of the owners of that land were men of capital. [MR. BURGES: Very little capital.] He did not know the state of their banking account, but the man who held 14,000 acres of land close to a railway and the centres of population, and who could afford to let that land lie idle, receiving a nominal rental for it, could not be regarded as a very poor man. The best of our land was already gone; there was a no gainsaying that. The very choicest went in the earlier days of the colony, and afterwards people had to put up with second class land. That also ran out. They then had to put up with third class land, and that had all been taken up; and now they had come down to the fourth estate—and, God knows, that was low enough. He submitted that, with all the restrictions with which it was now proposed to surround the taking up of land, the unfortunate man who had to put up with this fourth class land had to pay a great deal more for it than those who had the pick of the land in days gone by at £1 an acre. Let a man have as many thousand acres as he liked, pro-

vided he had the means to comply with these conditions. It had been said that 1,000-acre farms were very scarce in this colony. He knew of one or two farms about that size, and those who held them were tolerably well off—thriving he might say. He knew of dozens of others who tried to farm with not more than about 100 acres, and the majority of them were not worth their salt. They were not living, but vegetating. Who were the class of men for whom these conditional purchase regulations were intended? Some of them were men whom we brought out here from England with plenty of bone and sinew, perhaps, but with very little capital of their own; and, to put one of these men upon a 200-acre block, without a house, a well, or a bit of it fenced, and to tell that man to "go in and prosper" was only a polite way of telling him to go in and starve. We must extend the time for carrying out these improvements, and we must let people who had the means expend their means in helping those who hadn't.

Mr. MARMION, while agreeing with the earlier portion of the remarks of the hon. member for the Greenough, was still of opinion that it would be wise to restrict the maximum quantity for one man within these agricultural areas to 1,000 acres. The hon. member for Wellington was great upon the question of capital and great upon the question of large areas, and great upon the question of the man of capital spending his capital, and great upon the question of settling a thriving population upon the land. Now with every desire to refrain from being personal in these matters—and he hoped the hon. member would excuse him, but the hon. member had held himself up as a sort of authority, as one who had set an example of what could be done with land,—he hoped the hon. member would excuse him, if he referred to the hon. member's own position as regards this point. They found the hon. member in possession of a large and valuable estate, one of the most valuable probably in the southern districts, embracing about 30,000 acres of freehold land—an estate capable of the highest state of cultivation, and which if sub-divided into small holdings would settle a numerous and prosperous population. But had the hon. member done this with his estate? No. Nor did he blame the hon. member, who had a perfect right to do what he thought was most beneficial for himself with his estate. So also was it the duty of the Crown, as the owner of the public estate, to impose such conditions as were calculated to prove most beneficial to the community at large, and only part with the land on such terms and in such quantities as would tend to a settlement of the soil.

Mr. VENN said he could only regard the remarks of the hon. member for Fremantle, so far as the hon. member's personal allusions to himself went, as (to use a mild term) the height of impertinence. The hon. member was simply guilty of the height of impertinence in referring in that House to any man's personal affairs. The hon. member's conduct reminded him of the man who having knocked another man down and robbed him of his purse, then apologised to the man whom he had insulted. What did the hon. member know about his (Mr. Venn's) private affairs? Or what had his private affairs, or any man's private affairs, to do with the question before the House? Suppose he were to follow suit, and refer to the private affairs of other hon. members in that House, perhaps the hon. member would not like it. The hon. member would find his tongue pretty sharp he could tell him. He was not going to stand his impertinence; he would tell the hon. member that, and all other members. What had his private affairs, or his management of his property to do with the argument before the House? It did not strengthen the hon. member's own position in any way, and he would advise the hon. member to let his private affairs alone, for he was not going to stand his impertinences, nor any other member's impertinences.

Mr. MARMION was sorry to have developed so much warmth of feeling on the part of the hon. member. The hon. member accused him of having been guilty of impertinence towards him. If so, he would be most happy to withdraw any remarks which the hon. member regarded as impertinence. They were not intended in that light, but simply to illustrate the fallacy of the hon. member's own argument.

MR. WITTENOOM said that after a storm there came a calm; and, to descend from the emotional to the plain matter-of-fact, he must once more and for the last time say that personally he was in favor of agricultural areas throughout the South-West division, but he was not in favor of the conditions and the restrictions with which it was proposed to surround the system. He did not think that this limitation of 1,000 acres was at all necessary, nor a good one to make. His policy would be this: let every man be at liberty to take up as much land as he could work with profit to himself and benefit to the community.

MR. HARPER expressed himself thoroughly in accord with the proposal to limit the area to be taken up by individual holders. The hon. member Mr. Loton said he would not cripple the energies of any man; but those who thought with him (Mr. Harper) contended that if they did not limit the area which one man should be allowed to take up they would be crippling the energies of many men. The hon. member for Toodyay and the hon. member for the Greenough told them that they knew of farms of 1,000 acres the occupiers of which had succeeded and prospered. That appeared to him a strong argument in favor of limiting the area to 1,000 acres; for, if a man could live, and thrive and prosper on that quantity, it was unnecessary to permit him to occupy a larger area. As to capitalists taking up land, and putting their own tenants upon it, he thought that was an undesirable way of settling the land. What we wanted was an industrious population working and cultivating their own land, and not the land of other people. The hon. member for Wellington told them that he believed he was speaking the voice of the country when he spoke of not limiting the land to be held by individual holders. He did not know where the hon. member gathered that he was speaking the voice of the country, but he would tell the hon. member this—the voice of the whole of the Australian colonies was against him as regards the acquisition of large estates by individual holders.

MR. SCOTT said that what he looked at was the absolute necessity for a farming man having some land upon which to run a little stock of his own; and so long as the man cultivated a portion of it he thought they ought to be satisfied. Unless they had Commonages on which to run their stock he thought it was absolutely necessary that they should have land of their own; and it was for this reason that he was opposed to limiting the quantity to a hard and fast line of 1,000 acres.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said it appeared to him that the opponents of the Government as to limiting the area were determined to fight the question at every stage. They had already fought it with reference to limitation at the North, and subsequently as to limitation of land to be taken under direct purchase, within agricultural areas, and now it had been fought again over this conditional purchase clause. He could not believe that those who were continuing to fight the question at every stage could imagine that the result would be different, and he failed to see what they could expect to gain by opposing the Government on this point. These regulations after all were quite as much the regulations of that House as of the Government, and what was the use of fighting the same thing over and over again? As to the statement that all the progress which the colony had ever made had been made under the regulations previously in force, that was merely a parrot cry. Of course all the progress it had ever made must have been made under the regulations that were in force at the time. When the hon. member for York spoke of representing the views of the whole of Australia, he thought it would be as well if, as regards this land question, they were not to ignore altogether the teachings of other countries, and especially the teachings of some of those Australian colonies, as to the monopoly of large estates, and the pernicious effects of such monopoly upon settlement. Were we wiser than our neighbors in this matter, or were we too vain to be guided by their experience? He believed himself that the maximum here proposed would be found quite sufficient for anyone who wished to settle upon the land and make a home for himself.

The question—that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted—was

then put and, upon a division, the numbers were—

Ayes	...	...	15
Noes	...	...	8
Majority for		...	7

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. M. S. Smith	Mr. Brockman
Hon. S. Burt	Mr. Burges
Hon. J. A. Wright	Mr. Crowther
Capt. Fawcett	Mr. Loton
Mr. Grant	Mr. Scott
Mr. Harper	Mr. Venn
Mr. Layman	Mr. Wittenoom
Mr. Marmion	Mr. Shenton (*Teller.*)
Mr. McRae	
Mr. Parker	
Mr. Pearse	
Mr. Randell	
Mr. Sholl	
Hon. J. G. Lee Steere	
Hon. J. Forrest (*Teller.*)	

Clause 49, as amended, was then put and passed.

Clause 50—"Every such area shall be "gazetted in the *Government Gazette*, and "be disposed of under the following "conditions:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved to insert after the word "and" the words "with the exception of those portions applied for and held under Clause 47 and Clause 53 of these regulations shall." This was necessary in order to make the clause consistent with what the committee had already done, in dealing with direct purchase without residence, and also in dealing with the clause affecting conditional purchase without residence.

The amendment was then put and passed; and it was decided to consider the sub-sections *seriatim*.

MR. VENN remarked that he had several amendments on the Notice Paper, but, in view of the decisions already arrived at, he did not see the use of moving them.

Sub-section (*a.*)—"The land within "an agricultural area shall only "be disposed of after survey "under conditional purchase, "with residence and improve- "ment as prescribed by these "Regulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said this sub-section was not necessary now, and he moved that it be struck out.

Carried.

Sub-section (*b.*)—"The price of land "within agricultural areas shall "be fixed by the Governor in "Council, but shall not be less "than ten shillings an acre, "payable in twenty yearly in- "stalments or sooner, as pre- "scribed by these Regulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved, without comment, that the words "within agricultural areas" be struck out.

Carried.

Sub-section (*c.*)—"No person under "the age of eighteen years shall "be eligible to obtain a license "to occupy land within an "agricultural area:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved that the words "within an agricultural area" be struck out.

Carried, *nem. con.*

MR. GRANT said he noticed that no person under the age of eighteen years shall be eligible to obtain a license to occupy land within an agricultural area. Would females be eligible?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said, yes; it was not proposed to debar women from becoming occupiers so long as they were not under the prescribed age.

Sub-section (*d.*)—"The maximum "area held by one person with- "in an agricultural area shall "not exceed one thousand acres "and the minimum shall not "be less than one hundred "acres:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved to insert after the word "minimum," in the fifth line, the words "except in special cases, approved by the Commissioner." There might be cases where this would clash with other portions of the regulations, where a smaller minimum area was allowed.

The amendment was accepted.

Sub-section (*e.*)—"Every applicant "for land within an agricultural "area shall make his applica- "tion in one block on the pre- "scribed form, and pay on ap- "plication the first year's rent, "as prescribed by clause 79 of "these regulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved that

the words "within an agricultural area" be struck out.

Carried.

Sub-section (*f.*)—"Upon the approval of the application by "the Commissioner, a license "shall be issued for five years, "to be exchanged for a lease "for fifteen years if the improvements and conditions are "performed, as required by "these regulations:"

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Sub-section (*g.*) — "Within six "months of the approval by "the Commissioner the licensee "shall commence to reside on "some portion of the land held "by him, residing upon it and "making it his home for nine "months in each year of the "term of his license, with the "exception of the first year; "and during the term of his "license shall fence in the "whole of the land on the surveyed boundaries, or, in special "cases, as near thereto as shall "be approved of by the Commissioner; the fence to be of "the description prescribed by "the interpretation clause of "these regulations. Provided "that the Commissioner, on the "application of the licensee, "may grant an exemption from "fencing any part of the land "which has frontage to a permanent river, creek, or other "natural boundary held by the "Commissioner to be sufficient. "Provided further, that not less "than one-tenth of the area "held by the licensee be fenced "in within the first two years. "A statutory declaration, in the "form prescribed by these regulations, shall be made on the "1st of March in each year as "to residence and improvement, "and also at the termination of "the license:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he wished to alter the residential part of the clause on the lines of the New South Wales Act, which required the occupier to make the land his usual place of abode during the term of his license, without any other habitual residence. He therefore had to move the following amendments: "To strike out all the words "after 'his,' in the seventh line, down to "and including the word 'year,' in the "10th line, and insert the following, "'usual home without any other habitu-"'al residence during the term of his "'license.'"

MR. BURGES objected to the condition as to personal residence, which he thought was a very hard condition. For some reason or other a man might have occasion to leave the district temporarily, and it would be a great hardship if he were not allowed to put his son, or his servant, or his agent in charge of his property. A man's intentions might be good, but circumstances might arise compelling him to reside elsewhere during a portion of his time; but now he would have to reside upon his farm all the year round.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): Not if he takes up his land outside an area.

MR. PARKER thought the whole gist of these conditional purchase regulations was that the holder should reside on his land. As to a man's intentions being good, he would remind the hon. member of what the late lamented Dr. Johnson said about a certain place being paved with good intentions.

MR. CROWTHER asked if there was any chance of getting the time for fencing extended. Five years was altogether too short a time within which to compel the class of men that would come under this conditional purchase system to fence the whole of their land.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): It is only two years in New South Wales.

MR. CROWTHER: They have money in New South Wales, which is more than those who will take up land under this clause in this colony are likely to have.

MR. LOTON: The Land Regulations in New South Wales were not framed with the intention of settling people on the land, but rather to prevent them doing so; and, I care not what may be said to the contrary, that is the object of these regulations also.

MR. VENN: Hear, hear. No doubt of it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said it was absolutely necessary to insist upon fencing and improvements within a certain time, otherwise there would be no gurarantee of a man's *bona fides*.

MR. WITTENOOM said the object in view was to get men to take up land who had some amount of capital to work it and make some good use of it. It was absurd to talk about immigrants coming out here without any money in their pockets, and expecting to be able to take up land of their own as soon as they came into the colony, in the expectation of making a living out of it, without any knowledge or experience of the climate and the characteristics of the country. Any man who contemplated taking up land without some means to carry out the prescribed conditions would find it a dead failure, under these regulations.

MR. VENN did not think that immigrants were likely to come here unless they thought they would be improving their position. If a man thought he was coming out here simply to work upon another man's land, he might as well stop at home. We must give these men some facilities for taking up land for themselves, and the only chance we had was to make our terms as easy as possible, while at the same time keeping out the mere land-grabber. It was said by some people that the present S.O.L. Regulations were too hard, but it was now proposed to make them harder still, by compelling a man to reside all the year round on his own land, and thus preclude him from earning a penny by working elsewhere. What difference would it make who resided on the land, so long as the conditions were complied with?

MR. HARPER thought if we were going to legislate for immigrants coming out here without a sixpence, we had better give up land legislation altogether. Coming here totally ignorant of the country and of the work necessary to succeed, ninety-nine out of every hundred of these men must turn out a failure, if put on a piece of land of their own. He thought that the people we should encourage to settle on the land were not paupers; the men we wanted were young men trained and educated to farming life in the colony; or a still more desirable class would be the agriculturists of South Australia, scores of whom were ready to come here as soon as an opportunity was afforded them of settling on the land. He believed himself it would be from South Australia that we should get the larger number of our agriculturists, and not from England.

MR. GRANT said it would be sheer nonsense for the poor man, who depended upon his bone and muscle alone, to take up land in this or any other colony, in the expectation of making a living out of it. He must have some modest amount of capital as well as bone and muscle, or he would rue the day he ever became his own landlord. At home a man required about £10 an acre to start with, and it was no use a man starting here with less than £4 or £5 an acre.

MR. VENN really could not understand some hon. members. One minute they wanted to exclude the man of capital, and the next minute they said the man without capital must prove a dead failure.

The amendments submitted by the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS were put and passed.

MR. BURGES moved that all the words after the word "residence," in the amended regulation, be struck out, and the following words inserted in lieu thereof: "the licensee shall pay an extra rent of threepence per acre per annum, until the conditions of the license are carried out." The hon. member said he thought it would only be fair and just that in the event of a man having been unable to carry out the terms of his original agreement he should have a little longer time given him to do so, provided he paid an increased rent.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) pointed out that they had already decided that principle in a previous clause.

MR. BURGES said he had no wish to press his amendment, in opposition to the wish of the House; although he thought it was a very fair proposal.

The amendment therefore was not put.

Sub-section (*h.*)—"In the event of "the required improvements "and conditions not being com- "pleted at the end of two years, "or on the expiration of the "license, as the case may be, or "on breach of the conditions of

"residence, the land shall be "forfeited to the Crown, to- "gether with any improvements "existing upon it, and there- "upon shall become Crown land "for the purpose of these Reg- "ulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest), without comment, moved that the following words be struck out, at the end of the sub-section, "and thereupon shall become Crown land for the purposes of these Regulations."

Carried.

Sub-section (*i.*)—"At the expiration "of the license, and upon the "licensee satisfying the Com- "missioner that the terms of the "license have been fulfilled, a "lease shall thereupon be issued "for fifteen years; at the expira- "tion of the lease, or at any "time after the issue of the lease, "provided that the required "fencing is in good order, and "that an amount equal to the "full purchase money has been "expended on the land in addi- "tion to the cost of such fenc- "ing, and further provided the "full purchase money has been "paid, a Crown grant shall "issue:"

This was agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Sub-section (*j.*)—"If the required "improvements and conditions "have not been fulfilled at the "end of the lease, or if at any "time the annual instalment is "not paid as required by these "Regulations, the lease shall be "forfeited, and shall thereupon "revert to the Crown and be- "come Crown land under these "Regulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved that the words "and become Crown land under these Regulations" be struck out, as they were a surplusage.

The amendment was agreed to, and the sub-section put and passed.

Sub-section (*k*).—"Any person hav- "ing obtained land within an "agricultural area of less extent "than one thousand acres may "make a second application, "and no more, for one block "for any area not exceeding, "together with his first se- "lection, the maximum area of "one thousand acres:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved the following amendments: After the word "second," in the 5th line, to insert the words "and third;" to strike out the words "for one block;" and also to strike out the words "first selection," in the 8th line, and insert the words "former selection or selections." This would give a person an opportunity of making a third application for a block of land, instead of two applications, provided the maximum area of his three blocks did not exceed the quantity which a person was allowed to hold under the regulations.

The amendment was agreed to without comment.

Sub-section (*l*).—"At any time after "the issue of a lease (but not "during the license) the lessee "may transfer all his right, "title, and interest in his lease, "provided the Commissioner's "approval is obtained; and fur- "ther provided that the person "to whom the land is trans- "ferred does not hold, together "with the portion to be trans- "ferred, more than one thou- "sand acres within any declared "agricultural area, under these "Regulations:"

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said as he intended moving some fresh clauses dealing with transfers he would move that this sub-section be struck out.

Agreed to, and clause struck out.

Sub-section (*m*).—"If any licensee "or lessee shall die or be declar- "ed lunatic before the fulfil- "ment of the prescribed con- "ditions of residence and "fencing, his land may, with the "approval of the Commissioner, "be held by his representatives "or their assigns subject to the "fulfilment by them of all un- "fulfilled conditions, except the "condition of residence; but in "trust for, and for the benefit "of the persons rightfully en- "titled:"

Mr. WITTENOOM thought this was a very wise provision, for it struck him that there would be a great many people who would be declared lunatics, if they endeavored to carry out all the provisions of these Land Regulations.

The sub-section was then agreed to, and Clause 50, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 51—"Any person possessed of "land in fee or special occupation license "under previous regulations within a de- "clared agricultural area, and residing "upon a portion of such land, shall be "allowed to become a conditional pur- "chaser within such area, subject to all "the conditions, with the exception of "residence (which, however, shall be on "the land already held by him in fee or "special occupation license within such "area), prescribed by the regulations:"

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said that the amendments already passed necessitated several amendments in this clause, and he would therefore move that it be struck out, and the following clause inserted in lieu thereof:—"Any person possessed of "rural land in fee or special occupation "license under previous regulations, with- "in the South-West Division, and resid- "ing upon a portion of such land, shall "be allowed to become a conditional "purchaser, subject to all the conditions, "with the exception of residence (which, "however, shall be on the land already "held by him in fee or special occupation "license), prescribed by Clause 50 of "these Regulations. Provided that the "land applied for shall not be more than "10 miles from such residence." He might say that the proviso at the end of the clause was necessary for this reason: a man might live in Perth and select his land in the Champion Bay district or any other part of the colony. It was not intended he should be allowed to do that.

The new clause was adopted without comment.

Clause 52—Conditional purchase, by deferred payment, with residence:

Agreed to, without discussion, with a verbal amendment.

Clause 53—Conditional purchase, by deferred payment, without residence:

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved that this clause be struck out, with the view of introducing a shorter one, embodying the same provisions as to doubling the rent and other penalties not imposed upon the residential holder. The new clause which he wished to move was as follows:—"Any Crown land in the South- "West Division not being land reserved "or required to be reserved for any "public purpose may be applied for, and "on approval by the Commissioner may "be sold without conditions of residence, "subject however to all the other condi- "tions prescribed by Clause 50 of these "regulations, except that the first pay- "ment of rent and all subsequent pay- "ments shall be double those respectively "prescribed on Conditional Purchases "with residence under Clause 50 of these "regulations. Provided that if the land "is situated outside an agricultural area "and not surveyed, the time from which "the conditions date shall be the date of "survey instead of the date of approval."

Mr. MARMION thought the conditions were rather harsh, and that it was worthy of consideration whether they ought to double the rent, and also to compel a man to do double the amount of improvements compared with the man who resided on the land. He thought they ought to do away with one or the other of these conditions, which seemed unnecessarily harsh. He would rather make the payment 1s. per acre per annum for ten years (instead of 6d., extending over twenty years), and compel the non-residential holder to do his improvements within ten years, rather than double the value of the improvements for the longer term.

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said the object which the select committee had in view, and which the Government had in view in adopting the committee's recommendation, was to encourage people by every possible means to reside on the land; and it would never do to give those who were not prepared to reside the same advantages as were offered to the residential holder. The conditions as to improvements might be rather hard, but they were in accordance with the recommendations of the select committee.

Mr. VENN pointed out that the danger of making the conditions too hard was that the railway syndicates would offer their land on much easier terms than the

Government; and they certainly would have no difficulty in doing that.

MR. MARMION thought that was a point deserving of their serious consideration.

Progress was then reported, leave being obtained to sit again next day.

The House adjourned at a quarter to twelve o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 10th August, 1886.

Council Chamber: Additional conveniences for Members—Mail service between Northampton and Nookawarra—Gold Duty Bill: first reading—Smelting works at Champion Bay—Repeal of 14 Vic., No. 20—Goldfields Bill: third reading—Land Regulations: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

ADDITIONAL CONVENIENCES FOR MEMBERS.

MR. PARKER: I wish, with leave, without notice, to call the attention of the hon. gentleman representing the Department of Public Works to a promise which the hon. gentleman, I think, made last year, not only that he would have this Chamber lit with gas (which would be a great convenience to hon. members like myself whose eyesight is somewhat deficient) but also provide receptacles, with a drawer and key, in which members might keep the sessional papers, bills, and other current literature provided for them by the Government, while the House is sitting. Such a receptacle would certainly be a great convenience. I believe that, in the House of Commons, members are not provided with all these conveniences, but, on the other hand, I question whether the members of the House of Commons take anything like the interest which we here take in parliamentary literature. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will tell us whether there is any probability of his being able to supply us with these receptacles or drawers, with a separate key to them.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): I am not aware, sir, that last year I made any such promise as the hon. member alludes to; at the same time, I believe there was an idea that each member should have a separate desk, with lock and key. As, however, I presume the Chamber will shortly have to be enlarged and otherwise improved, these little conveniences have not yet been provided.

MR. PARKER: I was not aware that it was intended to enlarge the present Chamber.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): When the proposed additional members will have to be accommodated.

MR. PARKER: Meanwhile, perhaps the hon. gentleman will see what can be done to improve the present accommodation, in the direction I have just indicated.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): I will try and think of it.

MR. PARKER: Thank you.

MAIL SERVICE FROM NORTHAMPTON TO NOOKAWARRA.

MR. WITTENOOM, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency "the Governor, praying that he will be "pleased to place on the Estimates for "1887 a sufficient sum of money to "provide a mail to run once monthly "from Northampton up the Murchison "to Nookawarra, *via* Geraldine Mine, "and back." The hon. member said he had moved the address in consequence of a petition he had received from several of the settlers living on the Murchison River, who at the present moment were entirely destitute of any means of postal communication, and who had asked him to bring this matter before the House. In order to enable hon. members to better grasp the situation he would ask them to imagine a circle, at the southern end of which was Geraldton, and at the north