

who could decide what the proper compensation should be in the case of land resumed by the Crown, there were plenty of other people capable of doing so.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was then agreed to.

BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

CARD CHEATING BILL.

The House then went into Committee for the consideration of the Card Cheating Bill.

Clause 1.—Cheating at play to be punished as for obtaining money under false pretences:

MR. MARMION was afraid the Bill was so stringent that it would defeat its own object, moreover it left immense power in the hands of committing Magistrates. This clause enacted that every person who, by any ill-practice in playing at cards or dice, shall win any money shall be deemed guilty of obtaining money under false pretences, and, as such, would be liable to a long term of imprisonment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said a man could not be summarily convicted under the Act: he would have to be tried before a jury. The "ill-practice" must be proved to have been fraudulent to ensure a conviction.

The clause was then agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported.

SCAB ACT AMENDMENT AND CONSOLIDATION BILL.

This Bill was further considered in Committee.

The two new clauses, moved by Mr. Steere and the Attorney General, respectively, on August 16th (*Vide* p.p. 154-5 *ante*) were agreed to without discussion.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported.

The House adjourned at half-past eight o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 21st August, 1882.

Petition: Railway Platform, Dyer street—Railway Department: Report of Commission—Bridge over St. John's Brook—International Fisheries Exhibition—Survey of Route of Railway between Geraldton and Dongarra—Brands Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Dog Bill: second reading—Imported Labor Registry Bill: recommitted—Eastern Railway Extension Bill: referred to Select Committee—Card Cheating Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITION (No. 2): RAILWAY PLATFORM, DYER STREET.

MR. S. H. PARKER presented a petition from the inhabitants of West Perth, pointing out the advantages of a railway platform in Dyer street.

The petition was received and read.

RAILWAY DEPARTMENT: REPORT OF COMMISSION.

MR. S. H. PARKER, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, "Whether the Government intend presenting the House with the report of the Commission that has recently been sitting at Fremantle, investigating certain charges against some of the railway officials at that place?"

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said the report of the Commission had only just been received, and no decision on it had yet been arrived at, with regard to the charges referred to. Under these circumstances, the noble lord thought the hon. member would recognise the fact that it was impossible for him to give the hon. member any definite answer at present.

ST. JOHN'S BROOK BRIDGE.

In reply to MR. CAREY, THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said the Central Road Board proposed to carry out the necessary repairs of St. John's Brook Bridge, on the Blackwood and Warren Road, as soon as the season permitted of such repairs being undertaken.

INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES EXHIBITION.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) moved for

the appointment of a Select Committee to report whether in their opinion any steps—and, if so, what steps—can be advantageously taken to have this Colony represented at the great International Fisheries Exhibition, to be held in London next year; such Committee to consist of Mr. Grant, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Carey, and the mover. The Exhibition in question was one in which this Colony might be expected to take much interest, and, if we had the means and the opportunity, no doubt we could make a very creditable display. The question was, whether there was sufficient time to collect exhibits, that would do justice to the Colony and its resources. This, however, was a question which the Select Committee would be able to deal with.

The motion was agreed to.

RAILWAY FROM GERALDTON TO DONGARRA.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. CROWTHER, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to place a sum on the Estimates for next year, sufficient to defray the cost of a preliminary survey of a line of railway from Geraldton to Dongarra." The hon. member said that, in bringing this matter before the House, he would at present simply ask hon. members to take into their careful and serious consideration the importance of the object which he had in view. He would not dilate upon the advantages, local or national, which would accrue were a line of railway constructed between the port of Geraldton and the Irwin, but would at present content himself by asking the House to support this resolution as the preliminary step towards the ulterior object in view, in order to enable them to obtain an estimate of the cost of such a railway. He did not know whether it would be high treason or even unparliamentary on his part were he to divulge a State secret in connection with the proposed survey; at any rate, he thought he might venture to say that, from a conversation which he had had with the Commissioner of Railways on the subject, he did not suppose the cost of this preliminary survey would exceed more than £200 or £300. The proposed

railway, when completed—which he thought would be the case within two or three years hence—would be the means of opening up for settlement and cultivation an area of country which sooner or later must become the granary of the Colony, and the home of hundreds of thriving settlers, the fruits of whose labors would supply the whole requirements of the Colony in the way of cereals, and divert into local channels that golden stream which now flowed out of the Colony to enrich other corn-growing countries. Exception might be taken to the proposal on the ground that there was already a shipping port at Dongarra, but that exception was met by the fact that to render that port available for shipping in all weathers would involve an immense outlay of money. The very first cargo of grain ever sent from that port to Fremantle was wrecked, and the second followed suit; in short, if he had time to do so and he thought the House would care to listen to it, he could record such a chapter of casualties in connection with the shipment of breadstuffs from Dongarra as would convince the House that the losses so sustained would have gone very far indeed towards constructing this proposed line of railway. As regards the work of construction, the line would be a very simple one, a very easy one indeed. As a duly qualified amateur engineer, with a reputation at stake, he might safely say, without in any way risking that reputation, that the line would present no engineering difficulties whatever. The probable length of the line would be about 50 miles, and, for thirty miles, at all events, of that distance the railway would pass through a dead level country, thus reducing the cost of construction to a minimum. Again, as to compensation for land, the amount required would be very small indeed, as the railway would run nearly all the way either alongside or inside declared lines of road. As to the financial prospects of the railway, and the probability of its proving a reproductive undertaking, statistics could be furnished by the local agricultural societies showing beyond doubt that, even in the face of the unfavorable seasons with which the district had been afflicted of late years, it was capable of producing cereals in such quantity as

would not only supply the wants of the Colony, but also provide a considerable export trade, and, under the most adverse circumstances, would suffice to cover the cost of working the line. He did not think he need say any more, at this stage, beyond commending the resolution to the favorable consideration and acceptance of the House.

MR. BROWN seconded the resolution.

MR. STEERE was sorry he had not observed before coming into the House that this resolution was on the Notice Paper for that evening, otherwise he should have been prepared with statistics to show that there was not the slightest probability of the proposed railway ever paying its way. Therefore, for himself—although the amount asked for this preliminary survey was a very modest sum indeed—he thought it was altogether premature to move in the matter, and to ask for even this trifling amount, in view of the fact that for some years past the district which this railway would serve had produced such a very small quantity of corn,—he believed that last year it did not actually yield enough for its own requirements. He would therefore ask the House to consider what would have been the use of this railway under those circumstances. For several years previous to that,—not owing to the fault of the settlers themselves, but to unfavorable climatic influences, and the resultant causes—the quantity of cereals grown in the district had been so small that he felt sure it would never have paid the working expenses of a line of railway to have brought in all the corn of the district from Greenough to Geraldton. They had already one “unhappy railway” up there, which did not pay its working expenses, and he ventured to predict that the line the preliminary survey of which was now proposed would, in this respect, be a still more “unhappy railway” than that from Geraldton to Northampton. He believed there was already an excellent macadamised road from Geraldton to Greenough, a distance of twelve miles only, and if it did not now pay to grow corn and cart it over a good hard road that distance, it would not pay to have it brought down by railway. For these reasons he certainly did not think a railway was wanted from Greenough to Geraldton.

[Mr. BROWN: What about Dongarra?] He was coming to that. There was a port at Dongarra—not a very good one probably, but one that might be made available to meet all the shipping requirements of the district at a very small expense, by extending the jetty. It was true they had read, some years ago, of corn lying at Dongarra exposed to the open air and destroyed, because of there being no vessels to take it away; but whose fault was that? Simply a want of forethought on the part of the growers of the corn, or of the intending shippers; and surely that was no reason why that House should be asked to give them a railway. He believed that the expenditure of a few thousand pounds, in improving the port and providing increased facilities for shipping at Dongarra, would afford all that was required to enable the district to ship all the corn it was ever likely to produce. At any rate, it seemed to him altogether premature to think of constructing a long line of railway, seeing the very small quantity of cereals produced there of late years; and, if it was premature to think of constructing a railway, it was still more so to ask that House to vote a sum of money for a preliminary survey. When the hon. member for Greenough gave notice, last year, of his intention to bring forward this motion during the present Session, he simply looked upon the matter as one of the hon. member's favorite jokes. He never thought the hon. member could possibly be in earnest about it. At any rate, for the reasons he (Mr. Steere) had already given, he regretted to say he was unable to support the resolution.

MR. S. H. PARKER was happy to think that on this occasion he would be found in the ranks of the party of progress. He could not at all admit the force of the argument of the hon. member for the Swan, that because a district had been visited with unfavorable seasons, for a succession of years, and had not consequently yielded any surplus produce, it had therefore no claim for consideration at the hands of that House, with regard to providing it with facilities for meeting its requirements in favorable seasons. This district was not singular in the small quantity of corn it had produced of late years: other districts had

suffered in the same manner. Even the Eastern Districts had yielded nothing worth speaking of, available for exportation, for some years past; but that did not deter that House from sanctioning a large expenditure in providing those districts with the means of railway communication. It appeared to him that if there was any weight in the argument put forward by the hon. member for the Swan, it applied with equal force to the Eastern Districts as to the Champion Bay District. There could be no doubt that land at the North was capable of yielding sufficient wheat not only to supply the whole Colony, but also to leave a large margin for export; and the proposed railway could not fail to give an immense impetus to the development of the district. Under these circumstances he felt bound to support the motion, and he trusted that by the time these preliminary surveys were made, and if we shall not have exceeded the limits of our borrowing powers, the Government will be in a position to raise a loan for the construction of this railway.

MR. BROWN regretted that the hon. member for Greenough had not brought forward the statistics he had referred to, which would have gone a long way to satisfy hon. members that the proposed line was not unlikely to be a reproductive work, or, at any rate, that the Colony would be quite justified in undertaking it. He thought it was hardly fair to judge of the capabilities of a district by the result of a succession of abnormally unfavorable seasons. No one could deny that, in ordinary seasons, the grain-producing districts which the proposed line of railway would serve and open up were, beyond dispute, the finest corn-growing districts in the whole Colony. Notwithstanding adverse seasons, the better-to-do farmers of the district had been able to produce crops which in other parts of Australia would be considered a splendid yield. He said better-to-do, for it must be borne in mind that most of the men who cultivated the land were not men of capital, having the means to employ all the latest improvements in husbandry, but hard-working, industrious, plodding men, who had as much as they could do to keep their heads above water. With the prospect of good seasons, we might fairly

expect very good results indeed from these lands. With reference to the port of Dongarra, he was afraid the hon. member for the Swan had over-estimated its value as a port of shipment. No doubt it might, by a considerable amount of expenditure, be made available for vessels of small capacity; but there was no depth of water for large vessels, even if the jetty were extended, and it was a notoriously dangerous port during certain seasons of the year. He thought their policy ought to be in favor of railways rather than roads, even although a line may not pay for its construction directly. As a rule, railways were cheaper than macadamised roads, and did not cost so much for maintenance. Their experience in the way of road construction had not been very encouraging during the past ten years. Notwithstanding the large amount expended on them—notwithstanding the £50,000 loan—our roads at this day were in a worse condition than they were some years ago. He most cordially supported the motion.

MR. MARMION would have been happy if he could have felt that he could have conscientiously supported the proposal, but he regretted to say he was unable to do so. He was afraid if the House were to agree to this resolution, and the money asked for this survey were expended, it would really do more harm than good, by exciting false hopes in the minds of the people of the district, as regards the proposed railway—hopes which there was no immediate prospect of being realised. The length of the suggested line was said to be 50 miles, which at £4000 a mile—

MR. BROWN: £2000 would be ample; there would not be a bridge or a culvert required the whole distance.

MR. MARMION, continuing, said it was all very well talking about constructing railways for £2000 a mile—they had heard a great deal about such lines, but he defied the hon. member to point to a single railway, constructed by any State, out of public funds, at that price. He thought £4000 would be much nearer the mark, and this would bring the cost of this railway up to £200,000. The interest alone upon such a sum would be something like £10,000 and working expenses would probably represent another £10,000—if the cost of working

the lines already in existence afforded any criterion. Was there the remotest prospect of this line, under the most favorable circumstances, yielding a revenue anything approaching £20,000 a year? Certainly not. Moreover, he would point out that this railway was intended to connect two ports, and not, as was usually the case with railways in new countries, penetrate into the interior. If they had the railway built and opened to-morrow from Dongarra to Geraldton it would not enable grain to be delivered at Fremantle at a lower rate than is now charged for freight by vessel direct from Dongarra—about £1 per ton. Under these circumstances, he thought that to bolster up false hopes in the minds of the people of the district, by having this preliminary survey made, would be a great mistake, a fatal mistake, and therefore he was not prepared to support the motion. They were told that Dongarra was a very bad port, and that vessels did not care to visit it, but it was only in winter there was any danger. The corn would then be growing, and by the time it was harvested and ready for delivery they would have fine weather, and there would be no danger or difficulty whatever as regards shipping it, any more than there would be at Fremantle, or very little more. The extension of the jetty, so as to admit of the steamers and vessels getting alongside, would answer all the present requirements of the port, and afford the necessary facilities. If he could see any prospect of the proposed railway even paying its working expenses, he would be one of the first to advocate it by every means within his power, but as he could not see there was any chance of its doing so, he was very sorry to be obliged to oppose the motion for a preliminary survey.

MR. CAREY said the hon. member for the Swan had referred to the "unhappy railway" at Geraldton, and stated that he thought one such white elephant was quite enough. He (Mr. Carey) thought so, too, seeing that within the past three years that railway had cost the Colony £3,263 over and above the income derived from it,—in other words the working expenses of the line exceeded the receipts by over £3,000. In addition to that, there was the interest on the

money expended in the construction of the line (£152,000), together with the provision which had to be made to provide a sinking fund; so that altogether this unfortunate Northern line cost us about £10,000 per annum, for a railway on which he believed trains ran about three times a week. They knew very well that the amount of traffic on the line proposed by the hon. member for Greenough would be even less than this, and, although the sum asked for was small, in connection with the preliminary survey, still it must be borne in mind that if the railway itself came to be constructed it would be about 50 miles in length, which at the lowest computation—£3,000 per mile—would involve an outlay of £150,000, or very near as much as the Northern Railway itself. He was informed by a gentleman who had a large stake in the district that by running out the present jetty at Dongarra a short distance, all the shipping requirements of the port would be satisfied.

MR. CROWTHER had heard of such a thing as visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, but this was the first time he had ever heard of visiting a people with the visitations of Providence. The hon. member for Swan had no other excuse to offer for not supporting this resolution than this—because Providence had visited the Greenough and the Irwin with bad seasons of late years, these districts had no claim to a railway. The hon. member, on reflection, would hardly consider that a valid reason. As a proof of what the district could produce, in favorable seasons, he might mention that upon his return from England, in 1868, one of the first duties he had to discharge was to look after Mr. Shenton's estate on the Greenough, and see what arrangements could be made with the tenants for the payment of rent, which was to be adjusted according to the yield of wheat on the estate. When he looked over the farms, his own impression was that the yield might be reckoned at 40 bushels to the acre, but, there being some difference of opinion on this point, he and the tenants proceeded to adjust their differences and to celebrate the event—as Englishmen generally do celebrate events—by a dinner. The tenants deputed one of themselves to act as their spokesman, and

the result was, it was finally agreed that the whole estate was to pay at the rate of 35 bushels an acre. They would never have given that as an estimate, if it was not well within the mark. Unfortunately, however, owing to a visitation of Providence, they did not get 35 pints, and this visitation had been continued, with more or less severity, almost ever since. That, however, was no reason why it should continue for ever. From the appearance of the present season, there was every sign of there being a silver lining to the black cloud which had overhung the district for so many years. He had been twitted with not having put forward more elaborate statistics in support of his proposal, but he did not think this was the time for bringing forward statistics showing what the probable traffic would be on the railway, for it was not yet proposed to make a railway. They must first of all have a preliminary survey, to ascertain something like the amount which a railway would cost; and, he thought, taking the whole sense of the House, they should have that survey, and he was quite certain, if they had a survey, they would afterwards have the railway. He would even go further than that,—the day would come when they would not only have a railway from Dongarra to Geraldton, but also a railway from Geraldton to York, and from York to Guildford, and from Guildford to Perth. The hon. member for Fremantle spoke of the working expenses of a line from Dongarra to Geraldton as £10,000 a year. Well—he was going to say “when charming woman stoops to folly”—when hon. members stooped to talk nonsense like that, it was hardly worth while refuting it. So far from costing £10,000, he did not think it would cost 10,000 shillings, over and above the cost of working the present line at the North, to work this railway from Geraldton to Dongarra. He was told by the traffic manager at Geraldton that the only increase required would be an increased number of trucks, and that the working expenses would be merely nominal. As to skilled labor or engineers he did not think it would require any addition to the present staff. With regard to the Northern line costing so much, surely that could not be accepted as a criterion of the cost of maintaining other lines;

and although that Northern Railway had not yet paid the Colony directly, it had indirectly done so. Had it not been for that railway, and the cheap means of transport which it afforded, he doubted very much whether they would now have a hundred men employed in their mines, in view of the low rates which had been ruling for ore of late years. There was no doubt that our minerals and our timber were the most important natural resources of the Colony, and, being so, every effort should be made to foster those resources and to stimulate their development. He said again, if the Northern line had not paid directly, it had paid indirectly over and over again, and if it had not paid better than it had done directly, it was not the fault of the railway but of the people who managed it.

MR. RANDELL thought the hon. member for Greenough was to be complimented for bringing this matter forward. There was nothing like moving early in an important project like this, as it usually took a considerable time before any definite action could be taken to carry it out. He had always been of opinion that the district in question was one of the best in the Colony as a corn-producing district, and it had struck him from what he had heard and read of it that it was just the place for a railway. It fulfilled all the conditions which were laid down as desirable for the construction of a line. A railway would have the effect of developing its resources and opening it up for settlement. It was a district which, notwithstanding bad seasons, would pay for opening up, and in which a large number of people could settle with advantage to themselves, to the district, and to the Colony at large. The natural formation of the country, too, was favorable to railway construction, being for the most part level ground, offering little or no engineering difficulties. Its situation also was such that the working expenses of the proposed line would be reduced to a minimum, as it could be worked in conjunction with the present railway,—at least he presumed that arrangements could be made for utilising the rolling stock and the working staff of the Northern line. There could be no doubt that Dongarra was at present

placed at a great disadvantage, and, owing to the absence of facilities for transport, a very valuable district was, comparatively speaking, allowed to lie idle, whereas it might be the home of a thriving and prosperous agricultural community. The hon. member for Fremantle referred to the probable great expense of constructing the proposed line; but he (Mr. Randell) could not help thinking, from information which they received the other day, in Select Committee on the question of granting certain concessions to the Jarrahdale Timber Co. in consideration of the company extending its railway—they were then led to believe that there could be very little doubt that a railway suitable to the requirements of the Greenough District, and the adjacent country, could be constructed for £2,000 a mile. They were told that a railway in this Colony which had answered its purpose in every respect had not cost more than about £1,000 a mile.

MR. MARMION: Name.

MR. RANDELL said they were told by a gentleman connected with the Jarrahdale railway that the line was constructed for about £1,000 a mile, and he (Mr. Randell) failed to see why this Greenough line should cost £3,000 or £4,000 a mile. Of course he was aware that, as regards the Jarrahdale Timber Co.'s line, the material for the sleepers were on the spot, but surely that would not lessen the cost of the railway by thousands of pounds a mile, especially over country where there would be neither bridge nor culvert required. He did not think it was a bit too soon to ask the House for the small sum necessary to have a preliminary survey of this country undertaken, and he should cordially support the motion, as one calculated to promote the best interests not only of the district in question, but of other parts of the Colony.

MR. MARMION would ask the hon. member (Mr. Randell) whether he could point to an instance in which a State ever got a railway constructed for £1,000 a mile? Could he do so as regards any of the sister colonies? If the hon. member could, then his argument might have some weight; if he could not, then it was useless to tell them, as they had been told over and over again, what

private companies could do in the way of making railways. With the result of railway construction, by the State, in this and the other colonies, before us, it was useless our wandering into the realms of fancy, and talk about what might be done, under different circumstances and more favorable conditions. Our Northern line cost us at the rate of £4,364 per mile, while our Eastern Railway represented an expenditure of about £5,000 per mile. He was fully aware that the country traversed by these lines was not so easy as that which the Greenough and Irwin line would traverse; at the same time, it must be admitted that the cost of this proposed line would be altogether incommensurate with the probable traffic returns, or the beneficial results that would accrue from it. Under these circumstances he felt bound to oppose the motion. It was all very well to say that this preliminary survey would probably not cost more than £300 or £400; but, judging from past experience, the likelihood was that a similar sum would be wanted again next year for a preliminary survey of some other route, for there would sure to be a difference of opinion as to the merits of rival routes.

MR. BROWN said the hon. member for Fremantle wished the House to believe that, because the Geraldton and Northampton line had cost between £4,000 and £5,000, and was destined to have been one of the very cheapest description of railway, this line must cost as much. But the hon. member, when he said that, could not possibly know anything about the character of the country which the line would traverse. As to the cost of the Geraldton railway, it was that House which was to blame because that line had cost so much as it did, and so much more than it was originally intended. The Government were induced, by the howls of amateur engineers, to abandon their original design, which, if it had been carried out, would have resulted in a railway well suited for the traffic being built at a much less cost than the line actually cost. As to the country between Geraldton and Dongarra, it was, practically speaking, all level, and would not require a single culvert, much less a bridge, nor a single cutting over ten feet, nor one solitary rock cutting on the

whole line. He could not imagine in the whole Colony a stretch of fifty miles of country where a line of railway could be made so cheaply. The hon. member for Fremantle seemed to think that because the present Northern line costs so much to work it, this line would do the same, forgetting that almost the same staff would be able to work the two lines, and probably the same rolling stock. When the hon. member spoke of the cost of constructing the Northampton line, he should have borne in mind that the amount referred to included stations, sheds, telegraph offices, besides engines and rolling stock, and that, comparatively speaking, nothing of the sort would be required for the proposed line—at least, there would be no necessity to incur any great expense of that kind, beyond a siding at the Greenough and a small station at Dongarra and a goods shed. Under these circumstances he did not think the statement of the hon. member for Fremantle carried much weight with it. He thought the hon. member Mr. Randell was a little nearer the mark, when he mentioned that a certain Select Committee had been credibly informed that a line which answered every purpose of a railway had been constructed in the Colony for £1,000 a mile. He did not think the Greenough line could be built for that, but he thought about £2,000 a mile would do it.

MR. STEERE said the hon. member for Fremantle had drawn a comparison between the Northampton line and this proposed line, but he thought a completer comparison would be afforded by reference to the Eastern Railway, the cost of which, exclusive of bridges, was nearly £4,000 a mile. [MR. BROWN: What about cuttings?] There were no cuttings of any importance between Fremantle and Guildford. It appeared to him perfectly absurd to imagine that we could get a railway made, even over such level country as this was stated to be, for £2,000 a mile; he was quite certain, in his own mind, it could not be done for anything of the kind. But even if it could, this railway would mean an expenditure of £100,000, and he was sure the traffic upon it would not be enough to pay the working expenses of the line. For his own part, he saw no reason why the Legislature should at present give

any consideration to the construction of this line, as there were other railways which required to be extended before this one was constructed. Years ago, there was no difficulty in exporting corn from Dongarra to Fremantle; and the proposal to bring it by rail from Dongarra to Geraldton, and thence by sea to Fremantle, appeared to him a very circuitous way of getting it to market. They were asked,—if they were to be called upon to assist the Eastern Districts by giving them a railway, why should not they also assist the Northern Districts; and he had been charged with inconsistency in having supported the one and opposed the other. But he did not think there was any inconsistency about it at all. There were two different sets of circumstances altogether. In extending the railway Eastward, the object in view was to induce the settlement of land which was not at present cultivated; whereas at the Greenough he believed there was no land which had not been already brought under cultivation. On the Upper Irwin, he believed, there was a large area of land not yet settled upon, but he thought it was very doubtful whether that land would ever be utilised for wheat-growing, owing to climatic conditions. Wheat was not grown there now, and he did not think this was because of the distance of the locality in question from a port. He thought that by improving the shipping accommodation at Dongarra, they would do all that was necessary to meet the present requirements of the district. As the hon. member for Fremantle said, it would only be exciting false hopes in the breasts of the inhabitants of the district, were they to vote this sum for a preliminary survey, unless the House was prepared to follow it up by agreeing to a vote for the construction of the line itself. He was not prepared to do so himself, and consequently he could not consent to this preliminary survey.

MR. BURGESS spoke of the splendid yielding capabilities of the land at the Greenough, and the adaptability of the district for corn growing. He had had a long experience in cultivating land in the district, and during sixteen years he never had a failure, and the yield never averaged less than 30 bushels to the acre. We were now paying over £40,000

a year for foreign flour, and if we expended that amount on railways we should soon dispense with the necessity of sending good money out of the Colony to fill the pockets of foreign speculators.

MR. GLYDE said he had listened with much attention to all that had fallen in the course of the discussion on the motion before the Committee, and he very much regretted he was unable to support it. He should have been very glad indeed to have been able to do so, but he thought it was altogether premature to think of another railway loan while we had the Eastern Railway on our hands. With regard to Dongarra, he quite agreed with the hon. member for Fremantle that no more corn could be grown there than could be shipped to Fremantle during the summer months. As to the destruction of wheat there, owing to exposure to the weather—to which allusion had been made in the course of the debate—that wheat was intended for shipment to England.

The question was then put—That the Address be presented,—and the Committee divided, with the following result:

Ayes	6
Noes	9
Majority against ...			3

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Brown	Mr. Burt
Mr. Burges	Mr. Carey
Mr. Crowther	Mr. Glyde
Mr. S. S. Parker	Mr. Grant
Mr. Randell	Mr. Hamersley
Mr. S. H. Parker (Teller.)	Mr. Higham
	Mr. Marmion
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Steere (Teller.)

The motion was therefore negatived.

BRANDS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, in accordance with notice, moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend "The Brands Act, 1881."

Leave given, Bill brought in, and read a first time.

DOG BILL.

MR. STEERE, in accordance with notice, moved the second reading of a Bill to amend the law relating to the licensing of dogs. The hon. member said the Bill was principally a consolidation of the various Acts already in force

relating to the licensing of dogs; but it contained a somewhat important alteration in the existing law, in one particular. It was proposed to give to the various District Roads Boards, for the purpose of being applied to the destruction of unregistered dogs, in their respective districts, all the fees derived from the licensing of all dogs kept outside the boundaries of the municipalities. Every one acquainted with country matters was aware of the immense losses which stock owners—not only sheep owners but also cattle owners—sustained in consequence of the ravages of native dogs and of dogs owned by the natives themselves. This was a question which had occupied the attention of the Legislatures of many of the adjacent colonies, where the settlers suffered from the same evil as ourselves, and he thought it was the duty of our own Legislature to provide some means of relief for stock owners, against the ravages of these pests. On a former occasion, when he had sought to legislate in this direction, he stated that upwards of 90,000 sheep disappeared from the flocks of the Colony every year, and that the majority of these sheep were destroyed by native dogs. He believed that five per cent. of all the sheep in the Colony were annually destroyed by these pests, and the settlers were powerless to deal with the evil, in an effectual manner. Under these circumstances, it seemed to him, if the fees now derived by the Government from dog licenses outside the Municipalities were handed over to the Roads Boards, to be applied to the destruction of unlicensed dogs, the evil would in a great measure be abated. For several Sessions past he had been pressed by country settlers to introduce a Bill of this nature, but he had hesitated doing so owing to the embarrassed state of the public finances; he did not like to ask the Government to give up even this small source of revenue,—which last year, he observed, amounted to between £400 and £500. But now that the financial equilibrium had been restored, and our finances were in a comparatively flourishing condition, he thought we might fairly ask the Government to forego this source of revenue in view of the great benefit which its application to the destruction of these canine pests would confer upon the settlers of the

Colony. He believed the Bill was as stringent as it could possibly be made, without at the same time being too oppressive to excite such opposition as was aroused on a former occasion, when it was proposed that all registered dogs should wear collars. He noticed, by the bye, that a measure precisely similar in its provisions to that which he had introduced some years ago—as regards the compulsory wearing of collars by dogs—had since been passed in New Zealand, and he still thought the principle was a very good one indeed. But it was one that did not meet with the approval of the people of this Colony, and it was not his wish to bring forward any measure that appeared to be in opposition to public feeling. Consequently he had omitted the provision as regards wearing collars, from the present Bill; with that exception, it went very much on the lines of the Bill which he had introduced in that House a few years ago. He begged to move its second reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said there was one feature of the Bill which did not altogether meet with his concurrence, inasmuch as it proposed to deprive the Government of a certain source of revenue; but he was not going to oppose the Bill on that account. He would, however, like to ask the hon. member for the Swan whether he really thought the various Roads Boards were ever likely to go to the trouble of carrying out the provisions of the Bill? He had no doubt some of these Boards might do so, to the best of their ability, but he firmly believed that in the majority of cases it would be simply throwing money away, and he thought it would be very desirable to amend the Bill, giving a discretionary power to the Governor in Council to hand over these dog licensing fees to the Roads Boards, if he considered it necessary or expedient to do so. There might be occasions in which it might be most undesirable that these fees should be placed at the uncontrolled disposal of the Boards, and he thought there ought to be some saving clause whereby the Governor might exercise his discretion on the subject. There was another point to which he would wish to draw attention: he noticed that while provision was made for inflicting a penalty upon constables

neglecting their duties, or overstepping their duties, in carrying out the provisions of the Bill, no penalty was provided in the event of the Roads Boards officers being guilty of a dereliction of duty. This was a defect in the Bill which he would move to amend in Committee, and it would also be his duty to move an amendment leaving the distribution of this fund to the discretion of the Governor-in-Council. He had no further opposition to offer to the Bill.

MR. SHENTON said the principle of the Bill was one which would have his cordial support, though he thought its details were capable of being improved upon. He had received several representations from his own constituents with reference to the ravages caused by native dogs, and it was well known that our settlers expended large sums every year in the purchase of strychnine and other poisons with a view to destroy these pests, but with very indifferent results. He thought the country districts ought to be placed on the same footing as Municipalities with regard to receiving the fees paid in respect of dog licenses, and that the money so derived should be kept as a separate fund, and applied solely to the destruction of unregistered dogs. At the same time, he agreed with the noble lord that there ought to be some restriction as regards the distribution of the funds derived from this source, and that Roads Boards in the vicinity of towns such as Perth and Fremantle, where there were no native dogs to be destroyed, should not receive these fees,—at any rate in the same proportion as Roads Boards in localities which were infested by these pests. There might be objections to one or two of the clauses, but he hoped the House would affirm the principle of the Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said he had but one objection to the Bill, and it was this,—it seemed to him to be somewhat too cumbrous to effect its object, which, as he understood it, was simply the destruction of wild dogs. He could hardly think it was necessary to have a Bill of twenty-two clauses to attain that object. All that was required was a short measure, providing that the fees now payable to the Government for dog licenses should be collected by the Roads

Boards and applied to a certain purpose. Surely all that might be done without bringing all this cumbrous and elaborate machinery to bear upon the matter.

MR. BURT said he had been taunted the other day by his hon. and learned friend the Attorney General with not having read a certain Bill, to wit, the Card Cheating Bill. He thought it was his turn now to taunt the hon. and learned gentleman with not having read the present Bill. Had he done so, he would have seen that the Bill aimed at something beyond the destruction of wild dogs, for it also provided for the consolidation of all the existing laws relating to dogs. Had it not been for that, the Bill, in all probability, would have been quite as short as even the hon. and learned gentleman himself could have wished. The Government seemed to have a great weakness for short Bills this Session, and possibly they exercised a wise discretion in cutting them short, for he could hardly congratulate them upon the treatment which their bigger ones had been subjected to.

MR. MARMION said the principal reason why he objected to the Bill was the objection which he had laid some stress upon before, namely, that it aimed at the indiscriminate destruction of all unregistered dogs, whether belonging to natives or to whites. It had always appeared to him a hardship that the dogs belonging to the aboriginal population should be included in this wholesale slaughter. It might be said that these dogs committed more depredations than native dogs did, and though this may be to some extent correct—at any rate he was not in a position to contradict the statement—still, whether it be true or otherwise, it appeared to him a hardship that the faithful canine friends of these poor people—the only friend left to them—should be destroyed in this wholesale manner. He should like to see some provision made in the Bill so that the remnant of the aboriginal population left amongst us should be allowed to have a limited number of their canine pets about them, to solace their declining age. He noticed hon. members' laughter, and he had fully anticipated that the sentiment he had expressed would have tickled the risible faculties of his audience; but, at the risk of being

laughed at, he was prepared to stand up as the friend of the aboriginal race, and to defend their canine companions from the operations of this Bill, the provisions of which he hoped to see modified.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was then agreed to.

EASTERN RAILWAY: PLATFORM AT WEST PERTH.

The Order of the Day for the adjourned debate on this subject was, on the motion of Mr. S. H. PARKER, discharged.

IMPORTED LABOR REGISTRY BILL.

The Order of the Day for the third reading of this Bill being read,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) moved that the Bill be recommitted, which was agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 2.—Interpretation of the expression "Medical Practitioner," etc.:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said that, according to the wording of this clause as it now stood, a medical practitioner within the meaning of the Act might be any Bachelor of Arts, who was a licentiate of any European university. He would therefore move the omission of the words "university or," so that the clause would apply to licentiates of any recognised European school of medicine.

Agreed to, and clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 7.—Medical certificate, how obtained:

MR. BROWN said this clause, as now worded, might entail a great deal of unnecessary hardship and inconvenience upon the employers of colored labor. It required that the medical certificate shall be obtained either from a medical practitioner at the port at which the laborer had been shipped, or from the Government medical officer resident at or nearest to the port in this Colony at which such laborer is intended to be landed. Now it might happen that coolies might be destined (say) for Kimberley, and yet landed in the first place at Fremantle, but they would have to be taken to Nicol Bay, according to this clause, as being the port nearest to their destination at which a Government

medical officer resided. This would be obviously inconvenient, and he would propose, as an amendment, that the certificate required under the Act should be given by any Government medical officer in the Colony. He would therefore move that all the words after the word "from," in the 14th line, be struck out, and the words "any Government medical officer in this Colony" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 9 and 11—relating to contracts :

MR. BROWN said it was understood that certain amendments already proposed, as regards contracts to be entered into between employers and their laborers were merely adopted *pro formâ*, and that they were to be discussed, upon the re-committal of the Bill. It would be remembered that the original Bill only recognised agreements or contracts entered into in this Colony, but exception was taken to that, and the Bill was amended. He believed, however, that the amendments recognised no agreements made in the Colony, and employers would not be able to engage any laborer without having previously entered into a contract with him at the port of shipment. As had been pointed out in the course of a former discussion on this subject, these coolies at the termination of their original agreement might wish to enter into another employer's service, but the 11th clause made no provision for this subsequent engagement; it merely contemplated that all contracts shall be explained to the laborer at the port of shipment. Consequently it would be necessary to make some provision with reference to subsequent contracts entered into in this Colony.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) said the hon. member had certainly discovered a blot in the Bill, and in order to remove it he would move that the following words be added to clause 11: "Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent any person from entering into a contract with a laborer within the Colony after the importation of such laborer, and after the termination of any previous contract which such laborer may have entered into; provided also, that any

"such subsequent contract shall be in the form contained in Schedule C."

MR. BURT said there was another aspect of the question which had not yet been provided for. Provision had been made for the mutual rescission of a contract by the employer and the laborer, but cases might arise in which it might be necessary to give an employer the right to terminate an agreement without the consent of the laborer,—where, for instance, a man refused to work, or left his employer's service. They could not expect an employer to run after these men all over the Colony. What he would suggest was that a contract might be rescinded, on good cause being shown, before a Magistrate, without the consent of the laborer.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow): If the hon. member will be good enough to propose an amendment to meet the case referred to, I shall be delighted to accept it; or, if he will not do so, I shall see what I can do myself to meet his wishes. Although such a thing as he contemplates would not be likely to happen often, still it might be as well to provide for such a contingency. Under the circumstances, I beg to move that Progress be reported, and leave obtained to sit again on Tuesday, 22nd August.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

EASTERN RAILWAY EXTENSION BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in accordance with notice, moved, That the House should now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole for the consideration of this Bill in detail.

MR. SHENTON, as an amendment, moved, That the Bill be referred to a Select Committee, consisting of Lord Gifford, Mr. Hamersley, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Crowther, and the Mover, and with leave, Mr. S. H. Parker and Mr. Carey; with power to call for persons and papers. The hon. member said his object in moving the amendment was in order to elicit as much information as they could with reference to the site of the station at York, with regard to which there appeared to be a great deal of uncertainty. The Select Committee would be in a

position to examine Mr. Mason, who surveyed the line, and also the Commissioner of Railways, and then report to the House on the subject.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) failed to see what was to be gained by referring the Bill to a Select Committee at this stage. He was afraid the Committee would not be able to elicit any further information with reference to the route of the terminal station than was embodied in the schedules of the Bill. The Commissioner had not been to York to inspect the site of the proposed station, and until he had an opportunity of personally inspecting the locality, he would not be in a position to advise the Committee whether it would be desirable to have the station at the point marked B on the plan (in the neighborhood of Mr. Monger's house), or in a more central position, at the point marked C, in the vicinity of Craig's hotel. There was no doubt, however, that the line would have to go as far as the first-named point,—which was that originally decided upon as the site for the station, and it would be a question for future consideration whether it would be better to extend it to the latter point. It would, however, be at least two years before the line reached the point marked B, and ample opportunity would be afforded before that time to decide whether it should not go further, to the point marked C. If it did, the question might arise whether there would be enough funds to take it there, in view of the compensation money that would have to be paid for land which it would be necessary to resume in order to have the station at that point.

MR. CAREY, though not as a rule in favor of referring Bills to Select Committees, thought this was one of those cases in which that course might be advantageously adopted.

MR. STEERE also considered it a most desirable course to adopt. It would be in the recollection of the House that a similar question arose in connection with the Bill authorising the construction of the second section of the line, with reference to Stirling Square at Guildford, and it might be necessary that the Select Committee in this instance, as was done on that occasion, should proceed to York and inspect the

two sites proposed for the terminal station, and decide which is the more desirable of the two. He must say he never before saw a railway in the Colony which seemed destined to incur such a large and apparently unnecessary expenditure for compensation money as this line did at York.

MR. S. H. PARKER thought it would be very inadvisable to pass the Bill until the House was in possession of some further and more definite information as to the site of the proposed terminus at York. Although it was true enough the Commissioner had power to deviate, he had not the power to extend beyond the limits of the schedule. In view of the difficulties experienced in connection with the Northampton station, which entailed a heavy additional cost upon the Colony, owing to the deviation made, he thought it would be better to obtain the most precise information obtainable before they agreed to the schedules of the Bill. Such Bills as these were invariably referred to Select Committees at home before they were adopted by the House of Commons.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said he did not oppose the appointment of a Select Committee, but he failed to see what was to be gained by referring the Bill to such Committee at this stage.

MR. MARMION said they must not legislate for this railway as if it were intended it should remain for ever at York, as the terminus, but in view of a further extension.

The motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee was then agreed to.

CARD CHEATING BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

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