

## ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 20 minutes past 5 o'clock p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 23rd August, 1893.

Defective Fish-plates used in the Construction of South-Western Railway—Contractor for Midland Railway Working from Southern End only—Homesteads Bill: in committee—Municipal Institutions Bill: second reading—Chinese Immigration Amendment Bill: second reading: adjourned debate—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the chair at 4:30 p.m.

## PRAYERS.

## DEFECTIVE FISH-PLATES USED IN CONSTRUCTION OF SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY.

MR. RICHARDSON, on behalf of Mr. HARPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways,—1. Who was to blame for the large number of defective fish-plates used in the construction of the South-Western Railway, and for the inferior character of some of the engines and other rolling stock imported from England since the appointment of our Agent General? 2. Had the said defective works been purchased at low, medium, or high rates? 3. By whom had the said goods been inspected and passed? 4. Was such inspection paid for by commission or salary? 5. Was the same inspector still employed by the Government?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied: 1. As regards the fish-plates, they were manufactured by the Ebbu Vale Company, and this Company has admitted its liability for the defective plates by refunding the cost of those supplied in lieu thereof. The purchase took place previous to the appointment of the Agent General. Copies of the correspondence on the sub-

ject are now laid on the table. 2. The fish-plates were purchased at the market rate current at the time. 3. They were passed by an officer (Mr. W. H. Stanger), acting under Sir Charles Hutton Gregory, consulting engineer. 4. The inspection was paid for by a commission of 2s. 6d. per ton. 5. The same inspector is still employed by the Consulting Engineers in England. As regards the locomotives, a correspondence is now taking place in reference thereto, and the matter is being inquired into in England. Three Kitson's locomotives, received in December, 1891, were somewhat defective in workmanship and materials, but no other defective rolling-stock has been received.

## CONTRACTOR FOR MIDLAND RAILWAY WORKING FROM SOUTHERN END ONLY.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether the Government had given permission to the contractor for the Midland Railway to work from the Southern end only, instead of at both ends, as provided in the original contract.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: The Government have not given any permission in regard to this matter, nor has any permission been applied for.

## HOMESTEADS BILL.

## IN COMMITTEE.

This Bill was further considered in committee.

Clause 22:

Put and passed.

Clause 23.—“Lessee to pay cost of survey by instalments:”

MR. A. FORREST moved, as an amendment, that the words “one half” be inserted after the word “pay,” in the first line. He said the Bill introduced a new principle by requiring the selector to pay the cost of survey, and the Government ought to be satisfied with the second and third-class lands being improved, without exacting also the cost of survey. However, he proposed that the cost be divided.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was surprised at the hon. member having raised no objection to the poor selector of a freehold homestead being required to pay the cost of survey, yet now proposing to exempt from this charge the

men of means, when taking up leasehold areas. This was contrary to the hon. member's usual profession of being a friend to the poor and struggling man. The proposal in the clause would be a good innovation upon the former practice, as the cost of surveying many blocks would be a great tax on the general community. The clause provided an easy mode of payment for the lessee; and this charge would also test the *bona fides* of any person applying for a leasehold area, as he would have to pay one-fifth of the survey fee when making the application.

MR. MONGER supported the amendment, and hoped it would be pressed, though he would prefer that the Government should pay the whole cost of the survey.

MR. LEFROY said the amendment was reasonable, as the Government were receiving from the present lessees only about one farthing an acre per annum as rental, whereas the new lessees, under this Bill, would have to pay 2d. or 3d. an acre yearly, according to quality.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) reminded the hon. member that the new lessees would be purchasing the freehold by paying the higher rental.

MR. LEFROY said the fact of the land being improved, to a greater extent, by the new lessees would be a benefit to the State, and the conditions should be made as liberal as possible.

MR. RICHARDSON said the amendment would be a reasonable compromise between paying the whole cost of survey and paying none. A large proportion of the land to be leased, under this Bill, had not returned any revenue to the Government hitherto. A nominal rental was no benefit to the State, but the improvement of large areas of country would be a benefit.

MR. HASSELL supported the amendment.

MR. CLARKSON said the amendment would offer a further inducement to persons desirous of leasing lands, under the Bill.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the adoption of the amendment would have to be followed by a large increase in the annual Estimates for survey expenses. If there were a large number of applicants for these homestead leases in the first

year or two, the costs of survey would be a serious drain on the public purse, and hon. members would do well to be careful in that direction.

MR. LOTON said the Government should regard this question in the most liberal light. The first year's rental received from the new lessees would provide a sufficient fund out of which the survey expenses could be paid, and no large extra sum in the annual Estimates would be required for surveys. The Government need not be afraid to accept this amendment, and the practice hitherto had been for the Government to pay the whole cost of survey.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said hon. members should bear in mind that this Bill was getting into big areas now—larger than he had intended. The class of men who could take up these large areas must have means. Take the 10,000-acre man, for instance: the hon. member for the DeGrey had told the House, on a previous evening, how much this class of lessee would have to expend; and the Government were asking merely that such a man should pay, in survey fees, £10 a year for the first five years, a mere bagatelle in comparison with the amount which the lessee must have to work upon for carrying out the required improvements. In the case of the small man, the survey fee would not be more than £2 10s. a year for five years. The survey fee was said to be a small matter to the Government, but he noticed that hon. members tried to get hold of the revenue in every way they could. It would not be objected to by the Government if one-half the survey fee were to be paid during the first five years, and the remainder at the end of the term.

MR. MOLLOY said the Premier had hit the nail on the head in saying the Bill had assumed a different aspect from what he had intended. This part of the Bill, as now altered, was not for the bold yeoman, but for the man who wanted 10,000 acres. Some hon. members had got the maximum areas increased, and now they wanted to shift the cost of survey on to the poorer class of the community—to lock up the lands in grazing areas within forty miles of a railway, on which the State had expended large sums in opening the country with railways, and the poorer class of the community to pay the

cost of surveys for relieving wealthy individuals from that necessary expense. This amendment was not to relieve the poor or deserving settler who improved a small area, but to enable richer men to take up large areas without paying the cost of survey. He objected to tax the country for the exclusive benefit of these men of means, to the detriment of the poorer classes of the community.

MR. A. FORREST said the hon. member who had just spoken could not have read the Bill, as he had been speaking of the first-class lands, and not the inferior lands then under discussion. Reading from an estimate in his hand, he showed that to put 1,000 acres into a fair state of cultivation, under this Bill, would cost £1,300. It was impossible for men engaged solely in town life to understand this question as affecting the settlement of country lands. This amendment was going to be carried, and he believed that if he had included in it the whole cost, a majority would have supported him. It was humbug to say a larger staff and more funds would be required to carry out his proposal. The Government should spend less in the public offices and more outside.

MR. THROSSELL said he would support the amendment.

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

Clause 24.—“Time allowed for taking possession:”

MR. A. FORREST moved, as an amendment, that the words “after survey” be inserted after the word “months,” in the first line. He said the leaseholder could not begin to improve his selection by fencing it until the boundaries were fixed by survey. He believed that many hon. members in that House would take up homestead leases under this Bill, and that a great quantity of second and third-class land, which no one would touch at present, would be improved, as a consequence of the lessee being able to convert his leasehold into a freehold. He found, however, that this amendment was not worded in such a manner as would carry out his intention, and he would withdraw it and submit the proposal in another form.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that, according to the amendment, an intending lessee would

first select his area from the map, and ask to have the area surveyed; when surveyed, he would inspect the land, and might then say, “Thank you; I won’t have it, it is not good enough.”

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, while there was something in the mover’s argument, yet the Attorney General’s way of putting the case showed clearly that the country would be put to a lot of expense by persons who had no serious intention of taking up the particular blocks applied for. If the amendment were adopted, the Government would be put to £50 or £100 of expense in surveying a block applied for, and no more might be heard about it. A person might put down a pound or two for the purpose of securing a particular block, and might consider afterwards whether to take it up or leave it.

MR. A. FORREST said he knew one instance in which a man had held 640 acres for a long time, and been waiting to put up the fencing, but could not do so until the survey was made, and it had not been made until quite lately. However, he asked leave to withdraw the amendment, for the present.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, as an amendment, that the words “if the land is then surveyed, or, if the land is not then surveyed, then within six months from the date of survey,” be inserted after the word “Minister,” in the second line.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. RICHARDSON moved, as a further amendment, that the word “three,” in the third line, be struck out, and the word “two” be inserted in lieu thereof. He said this amendment would require the lessee to show his *bona fides*, by fencing in the whole of his area within two years instead of three.

MR. CLARKSON said that if a lessee did not intend to fence the leasehold he should leave it alone entirely. Fencing, grubbing the poison plant, and ring-barking were necessary for making the land of any use.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he accepted the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. RICHARDSON moved, as a further amendment, that the word “half” be inserted after the word “prescribed,”

in line 7; that the word "whole," in line 7, be struck out, and the words "and shall within the next ensuing two years fence in the remaining half of the area of his lease" be inserted after the word "lease," in line 7.

Amendment put and passed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) proposed, as a further amendment, that the following proviso be added to the clause: "Provided that if any delay arises consequent on the survey not being completed, the period for the completion of the improvements shall be reckoned from the date of survey."

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 25.—"Improvements required to be made on homestead leases:"

MR. RICHARDSON moved, as an amendment, that the words "during the next ensuing ten years" be inserted after the word "shall," in line 4. He said that, as the amount of rental to be paid had been reduced for the first fifteen years, it became desirable to expedite the completion of the improvements, so that instead of allowing the lessee to drag on his improvements through the whole thirty years, they should be completed within the first fifteen years. His amendment was in the interest of speedy settlement.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said he had intended to suggest an alteration of this kind. Every lessee who intended to live by the products of the soil should expend the necessary money for improvements in the shortest possible time, and the amount required by the Bill to be expended was not large. The amendment was an improvement.

MR. HARPER pointed out that there was no specific condition in the Bill as to eradicating the poison plant.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this requirement was covered by the general terms of the 25th clause.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. RICHARDSON moved, as a further amendment, that the words "the amount of the annual rental paid to the Government for the land," in lines 8 and 9, be struck out, and that the words "in second-class lands eightpence per acre per annum of the whole area of his lease, and in the third-class fivepence per acre per

annum" be inserted in lieu thereof. He said this amendment would carry out what had been agreed to already.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 26.—"Pastoral lessee in occupation to have prior right to homestead leases:"

MR. A. FORREST moved, as an amendment, that the word "two," in line 6, be struck out, and the word "three" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. RICHARDSON moved, as a further amendment, that the following words be added to the end of the clause: "Provided further, that such lessee shall be entitled to select double the area allowed under the previous provisions of this Act, and shall also be allowed a rebate or discount of one-third of the prescribed annual rent, but shall in all other respects comply with the terms and conditions of this Act." He said this extra allowance to any present lessee would be only bare justice, in consideration of his having spent years and much capital in stocking and building up a homestead. They should not legislate over his head, but give him the opportunity of operating under this measure to the extent named; though the present lessee should, in like manner, be required to comply with all the terms and conditions, except as regarded the area of selection and the amount of rental.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he could not agree with the proposition, as it would not be in the interest of the country to encourage the formation of large estates of this kind. Under the present Land Regulations, the lessee had ample opportunity to obtain as much other land as was necessary. He did not see why the rebate in the rental should be allowed, and he did not believe this larger power to present lessees would be availed of by many. If many of the landholders, now in the country, had only half their present area, the land would be better improved, and the country better settled. He asked the mover whether it was worth while to press the amendment, as it was not likely to be carried in that House.

MR. LEFROY said the clause as it stood was cruel to the present lessees, by not allowing them to select sufficient areas

on their present holdings. This would apply particularly to a number of large leaseholders in the Champion Bay District, and would wipe them out of existence, after they had spent the best part of their lives and all their capital in forming homes that were a credit to the colony. If the farmers were the backbone of the colony, the pastoralists might be called the lifeblood of the colony, and it was these men who, having done so much to advance the colony, would be treated most harshly by this clause, unless they were protected. He strongly urged the Government to accept the amendment.

The Chairman left the chair at 6:30 p.m.

The Chairman resumed the chair at 7:30 p.m.

MR. CLARKSON supported the amendment, saying the present lessees should have some advantage, and he protested against a clause which showed so little consideration for the present lessees.

MR. A. FORREST said the amendment had his entire sympathy, but he could not vote for it, because it went too far by proposing to give such large areas to the present lessees. The right which the clause gave to them, as having the first selection before others could come in and select their present areas, was a sufficient compensation for loss of quantity.

MR. THROSSELL opposed the amendment, as smacking of the selfish demand of "West Australia for the West Australians." It was wrong in principle to favour the formation of large estates, as would be done by giving as much as 20,000 acres to the present lessees, with a reduction also of one-third in the rental.

MR. TRAYLEN said he would support the amendment, if modified by leaving out the rebate of rent.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) reminded the committee that in the land-grant railway districts the major portion of the lessees had, by Act of Parliament, been dispossessed of their lands, and received no more compensation than had been paid for their improvements. Why should hon. members now begin to treat another class of lessees in a different way? It seemed to him that the present lessees were liberally treated under the Bill.

MR. RICHARDSON said he was not wedded to the wording of his amendment, but in bringing it forward he had

been actuated by a feeling of justice. Several opponents to the amendment were influenced by fear of the opinion of others—the fear of forming large estates, which struck him as being a peculiar objection. That cry was nothing but a ghost, and a ghost that many hon. members were afraid of.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member had interfered with the Bill, by his amendments, to a larger extent than the Government had contemplated. In disturbing the present lessees, the Government did not want to substitute one kind of squatter in place of those already occupying the land as pastoralists, but to introduce a class who would cultivate the land in smaller areas, and not use their leaseholds for pastoral purposes exclusively. He admitted that the Bill, as altered in committee, would unduly interfere with the present lessees, but the responsibility must rest on the mover of this and other amendments, and on those who supported him. To grant large areas preferentially to the present lessees was not the right way to compensate them for disturbance in their holdings.

MR. RICHARDSON said that if three persons took up 5,000 acres each, the result would be the same as if five persons took up 3,000 acres each.

MR. LEFROY said it was extraordinary to hear they should not legislate in favour of West Australians. Lessees along private railways could purchase from the companies, and a lessee in those districts would be in a better position for protecting his present holding than a lessee along a Government railway. He objected to the suggestion that the amendment was in the direction of class legislation. His motto would be: *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*. If the present lessees took up large areas, under this Bill, they would have to employ labour on the land for fulfilling the conditions of improvement, and would be doing just as much good for the country as if the land were taken by others in smaller areas. Under the present Land Regulations, not more than 1,000 acres could be taken by one man, under conditional purchase, but the Government proposed to allow the present lessees to take up 3,000 acres. Why, then, should a cry of "favouritism" be raised against the amendment?

MR. THROSSELL said the amendment would defeat itself, by stimulating the present lessees to sell their preferential right to speculative buyers, or to adjoining owners, and thus create large estates.

MR. CLARKSON took it for granted that no member of the House would dream of proposing class legislation.

MR. RICHARDSON said he would withdraw the proposal for a rebate of rent.

MR. TRAYLEN moved, as an amendment upon Mr. Richardson's amendment, that all the words after the word "Act," in line 2, be struck out.

Amendment upon amendment put and passed.

Amendment, as amended, put and negatived.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 27.—"When and on what conditions a Crown grant may be obtained:"

MR. LEFROY moved, as an amendment, that all the words after the word "payment," in line 13, and up to and inclusive of the word "lands," in line 16, be struck out, and that the following words be inserted in lieu thereof: "the cash value of rental due on the said lands for the remaining term of the lease, reckoned at compound interest at 5 per cent." He argued that if the cash value were paid down at once, and reckoned in the manner he proposed, the Government would be receiving as much in cash at the lower rate as they would receive if the purchase money were paid as a rental spread over the remaining period. That was to say, a lessee paying up at once should be allowed a reduction proportionate to the value of the money, reckoned at compound interest, for 25 years' use of that money while in the hands of the Government.

MR. LOTON supported the amendment, and said that if a lessee wanted to redeem the land ten or twenty years before the end of his term of lease, it would not be reasonable to expect him to pay the full amount in cash which he would otherwise have to pay in rental.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that what the Government wanted was an annual income from the land. The amendment was to the effect that, instead of an annual rental, the amount should be paid in a lump and invested, so that the interest might accumulate at

compound rate, and at the end of the term the Government would realise from the investment a total amount equal to what they would have been receiving if taken as a yearly rental. That was not what the Government wanted. They wanted an annual revenue which they could spend. Calculating 3d. an acre per annum, at compound interest, it would realise more than 7s. 6d. at the end of thirty years. He did not agree with the amendment. The object of enabling leaseholders to acquire the freehold at an earlier period than the full term was to provide for exceptional cases. He did not quite understand the amendment, and did not think the mover understood it himself. Twopence or threepence an acre for thirty years would not amount to the sum of 7s. 6d. at all. He did not much like this new-fangled notion of compound interest and actuarial proportion, as applied to the clause. A plain and simple way of fixing the value would be better understood by those taking up the land.

MR. RICHARDSON said the Treasury bench did not understand this calculation, and therefore the Ministers were opposing it. He had taken the trouble to work it out, by rule of thumb, and he reckoned it thus: if a man purchased at the end of ten years, instead of having to pay the difference between his rent and 6s. 3d. an acre, he would have to pay the difference between his rent and 4s. 6d. The 4s. 6d. and 6s. 3d. would be equal to 2d. and 3d. an acre, according to the class of land, carried on for thirty years. That was the only just way of assessing the value according to the number of years to run.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said this mode of valuation and payment might be good for the lessee, but not for the Government. The principal had never to be paid, but only the interest, reckoned on an assumed value, which was less than 3 per cent. per annum upon a principal which was never to be paid; and yet, when a lessee wanted to buy out the land, some hon. members wanted to allow interest upon interest, as a discount for cash; that was to allow compound interest. This would be a bad system to introduce, for the impression would be created that one kind of

measure was to be dealt out to persons who leased large areas, and another kind to persons who took up homestead farms. It did not strike hon. members to make this allowance until the lessee came under consideration. If this method of calculation were adopted, the Government, instead of receiving a sum of money at the end of ten years, might have something to refund to the lessee.

MR. CLARKSON said the question was whether the land was to be parted with for cash or on "tick." It would be to the advantage of the Government if cash were paid, and the money could be used reproductively.

MR. MONGER congratulated the Commissioner of Crown Lands on his knowledge in dealing with a simple problem in arithmetic. The amendment was worded clearly and distinctly. It funded the value of 2d. or 3d. an acre per annum for so many years, with compound interest accumulating at 5 per cent. This calculation might be referred to the boys in a higher class at school. A certain sum of money paid down to-day should be worth a consideration for its use during a period, and he was surprised to find the Government opposing the amendment.

MR. TRAYLEN worked out the problem in this way: assume the lease had fifteen years to run, at 3d. an acre per annum; the lessee would pay during that period 3s. 9d.; in finding the value of 3s. 9d. fifteen years hence, he made it to be nearly 2s.; therefore, if the lessee paid to the Government 2s. now, he would have paid as much as if he went on paying an annual rental of 3d. an acre for 15 years. The Government would get the advantage of the 2s. cash down, and they could spend it advantageously. He would prefer 4 per cent. instead of 5, as the basis of a fair calculation. The words "present cash value" might make the amendment clearer.

MR. A. FORREST said that time should be allowed to consider this important amendment. He moved that progress be reported, and leave be asked to sit again.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the amendment was opposed to the Land Regulations which had been in operation many years. The poison lease conditions would need to be altered, on

the same principle, if introduced into this Bill, so that the lessee who cleared the poison in less than the full period might be entitled to his fee simple if he paid the balance of the rent for 21 years. Why not capitalise that too? This amendment was only another way of trying to get the land cheaper than the price at which the Government wished to dispose of it. If a lessee was in a hurry to obtain the fee simple, why should not the State get the benefit of his earlier payment? Some hon. members wanted to make provisions for enabling a person to settle on leased land for a year or two, make some improvements, and then purchase the fee simple at a discount for cash. But he contended that those lessees who wanted to purchase in a short time should pay the price fixed for the land, and if there was any advantage in the cash payment, let the State get the advantage in these exceptional cases. The only object of the amendment was to enable lessees to obtain the fee simple quicker; but the Government did not wish to encourage that, and any lessee who did want the fee simple quickly should pay for it, and not be induced to do so by the offer of a discount. He regarded the amendment as a device for enabling men of means to obtain the land at a cheaper rate, and he was not going to support that. It would be better to give the land away entirely, than make a provision which would enable a man to get a large area for about 2s. an acre.

Motion for reporting progress put, and division taken, with the following result:—

|          |     |     |    |
|----------|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Noes ... | ... | ... | 8  |

Majority for ... 10

| AYES.                  | NOES.                 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mr. Burt               | Mr. Darlôt            |
| Mr. Clarkson           | Mr. Lefroy            |
| Sir John Forrest       | Mr. Loton             |
| Mr. A. Forrest         | Mr. Molloy            |
| Mr. Harper             | Mr. Monger            |
| Mr. Hassell            | Mr. Piesse            |
| Mr. Marmion            | Mr. H. W. Sholl       |
| Mr. Pearse             | Mr. Traylen (Teller). |
| Mr. Phillips           |                       |
| Mr. Quinlan            |                       |
| Mr. Richardson         |                       |
| Mr. R. F. Sholl        |                       |
| Mr. Simpson            |                       |
| Mr. Solomon            |                       |
| Sir J. G. Lee Steere   |                       |
| Mr. Throssell          |                       |
| Mr. Venn               |                       |
| Mr. Paterson (Teller). |                       |

Question put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

## MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

### SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said: It will not be necessary for me to say more than a few words, because the House will be well acquainted with the object, and with the principles that are involved. During the last session, the hon. member for West Perth moved a resolution, which was carried, affirming that the Government should be asked to prepare a Bill for consolidating the municipal laws of the colony, and bringing the subject generally up to date. It is well known that, prior to the last session, the Municipal Council of Perth had been for some time preparing a Bill applicable to the city of Perth; but that Bill was not introduced, and, in now dealing with the subject, the Government have thought it to be their duty to deal with municipal law in a manner applicable to all the municipalities in the colony, present or future. Still, none of the provisions of this Bill go outside what may be needed in Perth or any other municipality, the principles and powers of this Bill being applicable to any or every municipality in the colony, although some of the provisions here included may not be found necessary in the smaller municipalities for some time to come. We have preserved in the Bill the municipalities as they at present exist, and have provided for the creation of new municipalities as they may become necessary hereafter, by the authority of the Governor in Council. The Bill is divided into ten parts, and each part deals with distinct matters. The first part is preliminary. The second part relates to the constitution of municipalities, the only particular feature being a new one providing for the appointment of committees and sub-committees of a municipal council, this step having been already taken in Perth, and perhaps in Fremantle also; and such committees are usual in municipalities of large size, in other colonies. The Bill provides that a council may delegate powers to committees, whose proceedings are subject to the approval or disapproval

of the council. The third part deals with the qualification of electors, and the making up of electoral lists; and we have endeavoured throughout the Bill to keep to the existing arrangements, so far as they relate simply to matters of administration; for instance, to keep to the dates fixed by the present law, for the making up of electoral lists, and other such matters, so that the formal duties may continue to be done at the same times and in the same manner as before. These provisions are a re-enactment of the present law, but are in many cases improved. We provide that persons whose names have been left out of the list may send in their claims for insertion; also that objections shall be heard before a revision court, and after the lists have been through the revision court, they are to be certified, and then become the electoral lists of the council. The fourth part deals with the qualification of councillors, also with the qualifications of mayor and auditors. There is a different qualification provided in the case of mayors for Perth and Fremantle. The fifth part relates to the election of the council, and in this the Bill proposes a change. Hitherto the elections have been conducted in a rather absurd way, there being no provisions against acts of bribery and corruption. For a long time it has appeared desirable to put the proceedings at elections on a better footing, in that respect, and to provide that universal bribery and corruption should not be rampant, as they have been in the past. This part of the Bill aims at putting down anything like bribery and corruption at elections for municipal councillors. The system of voting was open; the elector wrote his name, and it was apparent to any observer how he voted, but we have here introduced, for the first time, the system of voting by ballot, and I think it is an improvement. Voting by ballot has been in operation at parliamentary elections, and though the mode of balloting was rather involved at first, yet the provisions of this Bill have been framed for doing away with any difficulty. We did find some difficulty in arranging for the election of a mayor, and perhaps also two or three auditors, on the same day and at the same time; but I think these details will be found to be as simple as possible in the Bill. In the election of a mayor, some electors



have one vote, and others have several votes, up to four, according to the value of their properties; so that each elector must receive, and fill up, as many voting papers as he has votes to exercise. The same applies to the election of councillors and auditors. Therefore each elector will be voting in a sort of threefold election, the voting papers for each being separate and distinct. We maintain the system of voting by proxy, in certain cases, and there is a somewhat similar principle in the parliamentary electoral system, though the distances are not quite the same. In the parliamentary system of voting by proxy, the proxy papers can be obtained only from the Resident Magistrate in each district, and they have to countersign and forward each paper to the Returning Officer, and to do a number of other acts, which we propose here to dispense with, by placing the proxy voting on a simpler footing. If an elector be more than twenty miles away from the polling place, on the day of election, he cannot possibly vote by ballot, but may sign a voting paper, one or more, according to the number of his votes, and send the same to the polling place in proper time. As to secrecy in this case, I do not think that an elector who happens to be many miles away will object to vote by signing his name. The sixth part deals with the powers and duties of a council, and these have been much enlarged, in the Bill. Firstly, we give ample power to make by-laws, whereas the present law falls far short of giving the necessary powers to municipalities; but, in this Bill, I do not think that any necessary powers have been overlooked, nor will it be easy to devise any municipal subject in regard to which the powers have not been included. We provide 28 items in regard to which by-laws may be made, including hawkers, chimney-sweepers, scavengers, slaughter-houses, contamination of water, and many other things not hitherto within the control of municipal councils. In this part of the Bill also are provisions as to the width of streets, including those to be made by the council, and those which may be made by private owners. These provisions we have taken from the Municipal Bill prepared previously by the Perth Council, and I hope that when the hon. members for Perth read this Bill, they will see that we have been

indebted largely to the labours of the Perth Council in drafting their Bill, and I am glad to acknowledge that we are so indebted for many of these sections. Perhaps the most important part of the Bill is the seventh part, relating to finance, and the preparing of annual estimates, the system of rating, and so on. With reference to the exemption of rating of land belonging to the Crown, to public bodies created by statute, and so on, we have simply incorporated the old law, in Section 144 of this Bill. We pick up, as it were, the most recent opinion of Parliament on the subject, and having fully debated these clauses, and Parliament having passed them, I do not know that we should gain much by reopening that subject. It is provided that the council shall make a valuation of all rateable property, on or before the same date as they make the valuation now; and, as to the mode of valuing, the capital value need be made only, as the section expresses it, when necessary, because if you find the annual value according to the rules laid down, you do not need to find the capital value. The rates are to be assessed always on the annual value, but in finding the annual value you must be guided by the rules laid down in Section 147; and the Bill also fixes the minimum value. The first sub-section of the clause provides thus:—"The annual value of any rateable land shall be deemed to be a sum equal to the full, fair, average estimated net amount of rent at which such land might reasonably be expected to let from year to year, on the assumption (if necessary to be made in any case) that such letting is allowed by law, less a deduction of ten pounds per centum for repairs insurance, rates, taxes, and other outgoings." That is, I think, the same provision as in the draft Bill of the Perth Council. Then, if you want to find the capital value in any case, sub-section 2 says:—"The capital value of any rateable land shall be estimated at the fair average value of land, exclusive of improvements, in fee simple, in the same neighbourhood." There is the question of the annual value of occupied land and of unoccupied land. Sub-section 3 provides that, if the land is occupied, you must go to the land and find the annual value; so that the rate will really be on the rental, or on what the rental may be fairly esti-

mated to yield. But it is provided that the annual value of occupied land shall in no case be less than 5 per cent. of the fair capital value; therefore, although the land may be let at a certain rental, still the rental value shall be estimated at not less than 5 per cent. of the fair capital value, without reckoning the improvements. If, for instance, a property is worth £3,000, including the buildings, then to find the capital value you must find what is the fair value of bare ground of a similar character in the same neighbourhood. If the capital value be found to be £1,000, then the annual value of that land shall be not less than 5 per cent. of £1,000, namely, £50; and if the actual rent for that land be less than £50, the rate will be levied on the £50 as the fair annual value. That provision is aimed at those cases where a very valuable block of land in a town has no building on it, and, in order to escape the rates, the owner puts a shanty on it, and claims to have it rated only on the nominal rent which the shanty brings in. The Bill says, in effect, "No; that is not the fair annual value, which must be not less than 5 per cent. of the capital value." That principle was debated at length by the Perth Council, when drafting their Bill. There has been a subject of great dispute as to the rating of small pieces of land that are adjoining lots, because they are rated separately. This Bill provides, as in the Perth draft Bill, that any land conterminous shall be considered as being part and parcel of such land, and shall not be rated separately; so that if a man has a piece of land which he uses, say, as a separate piece at the bottom end of his allotment, it shall not be rated separately. This is an important provision, and there may be room for difference of opinion; but this is an attempt to place the matter on a reasonable footing, and I think it will commend itself to the support of a majority of the House, though the Government will be willing to alter the Bill, in these respects, if a better system of rating can be shown. It may be thought that the 5 per cent., in sub-section 3, is a little too high, or that it should be 3 or  $3\frac{1}{2}$ , or 4 per cent.; but this detail can be discussed in committee. The same portion of the Bill, after dealing with the manner of making up the rate book, which is to be very much the same as at

present, contains provisions for appeals against the rates. It provides that appeals may be made to the Local Court of the district, under Section 156. This part of the Bill will put the method of appeals on a much better footing, the present method of appeals being rather involved. There are two or three systems, for a ratepayer may appeal against a rate when it is struck, of which formality the outside ratepayers generally have no personal notice, and we are all in the habit of allowing the time to go by without thinking of appealing, or of the necessity for it. There is no provision for requiring any grounds of appeal to be stated, at present, if an appeal were entered. Then, if a distress were levied for rates unpaid, the aggrieved person might go before a magistrate, and appeal in a sort of way, and no ground of appeal is required to be stated. I think, however, that in practice there has been no appeal, because the existing sections have been difficult to work. The Bill now provides that when a rate is struck, the fact shall be brought to the notice of every ratepayer, and a separate notice must be served on each one. The rate is to be paid at the office of the council, and it will not be necessary, in future, for a collector to go round making a demand for payment, but it will be the duty of ratepayers to pay the money at the office of the council, after receiving the notice, and, if they do not, the Mayor may issue a warrant of distress to recover the amount due. The distraining bailiff may get in more rates than the collector does at present. With the notice are to be sent the particulars of the rate, so that each ratepayer may know exactly what the annual value and the capital value have been fixed at, and he may appeal at once on either of these points. The power of distraining exists now, but the procedure is much simplified in the Bill, as the council may distrain against a hundred people by one warrant. Another feature of Part VII. is that notice of the subdivision or transfer of any land has to be given to the council. I believe it has been a great difficulty, in the past, for the council to ascertain the changes of ownership in subdivisions and transfers. When a supposed owner is rated, he may reply that he sold the land long ago; then it may be found that the

buyer has also sold it to somebody else, and the same piece of land may be found to be in the hands of a syndicate, so that there is extreme difficulty in tracing the changes of ownership and collecting the rates. The Bill provides that notice of any subdivision or transfer of land must be given to the council, and I think that is a necessary thing, for it will not be much trouble, when a man sells a piece of land in a municipality, to give notice at the council chamber that he is no longer liable for rates, but that someone else is. To get rid of the liability will be an incentive to the vendor to give the required notice, and the council will thus have ready at hand the names of those who are ratepayers and owners of land. If the rates are not duly paid, there is the same provision in the Bill as in the present law for enabling the council, after a lapse of eighteen months, and by order of the Court, to sell the property, and the balance of the proceeds to be paid to the owner, on petition, if at any future time he makes the demand. The eighth part of the Bill relates to loans, and these provisions are pretty well the same as at present. The provisions for taking a vote of the ratepayers upon any proposed loan, for the issue of debentures, for the making of a sinking fund, and so on, are the same as at present. The ninth part refers to the auditing of the accounts, those provisions being the same as before, except that Clause 209 provides for a special audit in certain cases, this being a provision which exists in some other colonies, and one which may well be adopted here. The auditors of the corporation accounts would, as a rule, be ratepayers; but there may be cases in which a special audit should be held, and, if such cases do arise, these provisions will meet them. It is provided that the Governor may, from time to time, appoint for every municipality two auditors, who, on being required so to do by the council, or by the Colonial Secretary, or by any fifty ratepayers, or by any creditor of the same, may hold a special audit of the accounts, and shall forthwith notify, in the *Government Gazette* and in some newspaper circulating in the municipality, that such audit will be held at a certain time and place. The expenses of a special audit are to be borne, as provided in Clause 211, as follows:—"If any such

special audit has been required by the electors, as aforesaid, the council shall defray the expenses thereof. If such audit has been required by any creditor or creditors of the municipality, the creditor or creditors shall defray the said expenses. If such audit has been required by the Colonial Secretary, the said expenses shall be defrayed from the Consolidated Revenue Fund." Sometimes a municipality gets rather loose in its transactions, or may be suspected of going a little wild, or there may be friction, and in any such case the Governor may appoint two special auditors, to ascertain exactly how the accounts stand. Any corporation conducting its affairs properly could not have any reasonable objection to a special audit, if demanded. The remaining portion contains miscellaneous provisions relating to legal proceedings and the recovery of penalties. I have not pretended to go through the clauses, which can be considered in committee, and I can only hope this House will afford some degree of support to this measure, which has necessitated considerable labour in its preparation. We have endeavoured in the Bill to eliminate from the present law all its objectionable features, and to make everything as simple as possible, to adopt better methods of election, to suppress bribery and corruption, to define the annual and capital value, and so on; also, to make this Bill workable not only in Perth and Fremantle and other large centres of population, but also workable in all other parts of the colony. I do not think there is anything in the Bill that cannot be worked equally in a municipality at Southern Cross or at Perth, and I hope the House will find that the measure may prove of some service to the country.

On the motion of MR. A. FORREST, the debate was adjourned until Monday, the 28th August.

#### CHINESE IMMIGRATION BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

##### ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The Order of the Day for the second reading of this Bill having been read, the adjourned debate was resumed.

MR. RICHARDSON: Nearly every member who has spoken on this Bill is fully in accord with the spirit of the re-

marks made by the Premier in moving the second reading. None of us desires any large influx of Chinese into this colony, and we all agree that it is necessary to take precautions to prevent it. To thresh out that question at any length would be like flogging a dead lion. I hope every member has made up his mind that there is some necessity to impose further restrictions for preventing such an influx of Chinese or any alien population of Asiatics as may endanger the supremacy of our own race, or as may enter into serious competition in the labour market. But, while giving credit to the Premier for the honesty of his intentions, I do say there are callings in this vast colony, and there are districts away from the populous centres, which are not in a condition to do without a small sprinkling of these races, as menial servants, as hewers of wood and drawers of water. It is rather hard on the residents of those districts to be denied the comfort or luxury of having servants to perform these menial offices, and to which our own race have a decided aversion. There are callings which we hardly expect our own race to relish and take to kindly, such as watering a patch of vegetables; and I cannot see any danger in allowing settlers to have a few servants to perform such tasks. Cooking in the country districts, in a hot climate, is not an enviable occupation; every individual on the place expects his meals to be ready at the right time. As a rule, white men do not relish the labour of cooking in a hot climate; it is a cruelty to inflict this labour on the women; yet, if we cannot get these menial races to do it, the labour falls on the poor women. This hardship reacts on the settlement of people away from the towns, when the wives and daughters of settlers have to be slaves and drudges. Allowing for these requirements, we are willing to accept any restrictions for preventing an unnecessary influx of Chinese and other Asiatic aliens. To allow one such immigrant to every 500 tons of a ship's burden is not enough to give the necessary supply; and as the present boats are too large for the trade along the Northern coast, smaller ones may be put on. The argument used by the Premier, with reference to the legislation of other colonies on this subject, is not quite on

parallel lines, for those are large and populous colonies, having steamers of thousands of tons register trading to their ports, whereas the steamers trading to some of our ports are very small. All we ask, in order to accommodate the requirements of settlers in our Northern districts, is that the number of these immigrants to be admitted shall be in the proportion of one Chinaman to 200 tons of ship's register. These immigrants might be admitted on the condition that they must be sent back, at the end of their period of engagement, if not re-engaged with the same employer; and, if any great aversion to returning were manifested, then let these individual labourers pay £25 a head, as a condition of being allowed to remain in the country. Such restrictions would effectually prevent any possible influx; and the requirements of certain sections of the community, who are entitled to consideration, would thus be served. All the settlers in this colony do not live in temperate latitudes nor in populous centres, where the comforts of life are readily obtainable. I ask the Government either to consent to a reference of this Bill to a select committee for amending the provisions in a sensible manner, with proper safeguards, or to consent to so amend the Bill as to allow a few house servants to be imported by white settlers, not allowing any other race to indent them, and compelling these servants to serve only European masters, so as not to compete with the white race.

MR. MONGER: I do not think that the present Ministry have introduced any Bill which will meet with so much favour and support, in the country, as this Bill. There is only one portion of the colony that raises the slightest objection, which comes from the few members who represent Northern constituencies. Taking into consideration the rate at which the Chinese in this colony have increased during the last few years, it must be evident that legislation is necessary to prevent a greater influx of this objectionable race. In 1888, when Sir Malcolm Fraser represented this colony at the Federal Council, the Chinese population then in this colony were estimated to be about 400; but since then the number has increased to more than 1,300—that is to say, during the last five years the Chinese in this colony have increased three-fold,

this being a far greater increase, proportionately, than that of the white population. If we go on allowing the Chinese population to treble itself every five years, this colony will, in a short time, be in the possession of Chinamen. The argument of the Northern advocates of Chinese immigration is that they want these men as cooks and water drawers. But if we take the *North-West Times* as a criterion as to the number of Chinese in that part of the colony, we must admit there are more than sufficient for the Northern requirements. In a recent issue of that paper, I saw it stated that there were hundreds of Chinese, Malays, and other aliens knocking about Cossack and Roebourne, and unable to find any employment. Therefore, if the squatters in the North require cooks and water drawers, why don't they engage those aliens who are knocking about those towns, instead of sending away to Singapore for new men? We hear some argue that the Chinese labour is cheap, but I think it will be admitted, by those who have had experience in employing Chinese labour, that it is about the dearest labour one can get. I stand here as one who has had as much experience of that objectionable race as any member of this House, and I must admit my experience is that Chinese labour is the dearest that it is possible to get, in the Southern portions of the colony. There is not only the cost of getting them here, but, after importing them, they, in many cases, bring the most objectionable diseases and habits. There is also nothing to prevent them from leaving their employer, who has imported them, and I will defy the whole police force of the colony to arrest any Chinaman who does not want to return to his employment. The hon. member for the De Grey has asked the Government to make certain concessions, but I hope the Government will not give way on those points, but will adhere to the Bill as it stands in respect of those provisions. I do not think we can get a better committee than that of the whole House, and why the hon. member should want a select committee I do not know. I am sorry the Bill does not go further, by also restricting the immigration of Malays and Afghans, and all other alien races, and I hope the Government will introduce an amendment to that effect. But while we,

on the one hand, are legislating to prevent the influx of these objectionable races, yet on the other hand the Government, or rather the people of the colony with the assistance of the Government, are ruining one of our most valuable exports by playing into the hands of those Chinese whom we are legislating to keep out. I refer to the sandalwood industry, and though this reference may be somewhat out of place at present, yet when we have an opportunity of making them pay more for one of our most valuable exports, we do not think fit to do so, though I hope the Government will support any motion in that direction. I am pleased that this Bill has been brought forward, and I hope all hon. members will give it their support.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The Government are, no doubt, actuated by a desire to prevent the very large influx of Chinese that has lately taken place, and every member of this House will acknowledge the wisdom of checking that influx to a great extent. But, in doing so, we should deal with the matter fairly. The hon. member for York has said the number of Chinese in this colony has increased threefold in five years; that he has had great experience of Chinese labour, and that it is not cheap. We do not say their labour is cheap. We say that in some localities their labour is a necessity. It is well known that the hon. member is himself responsible for a considerable amount of the influx of Chinese, for it is not many months since they were brought over in shiploads by the hon. member and those connected with him. He alluded also to their objectionable diseases and habits, but I think that statement is a libel on the Chinese. No one has ever seen a drunken Chinaman; and we know they never appear in the police courts, unless as complainants who have been assaulted by that section which the hon. member would pat on the back. We should look at this question simply as one of policy. We do not want to see the European race elbowed out by the Chinese, but in the Northern districts, and in some of the Southern districts also, the Chinese is a necessity. I believe there is hardly a hotel in Perth in which there is not a Chinese cook employed, because white servants cannot be got to do the work. I do not think

white cooks are numerous or easily obtained in the colony, and the people of our own race prefer to turn their attention to something else. Would the artisans in our towns be able to get cheap vegetables, without the Chinese gardeners? The other day I read about someone protesting, in a newspaper, against the people in Perth patronising the Chinese gardeners, rather than supporting the industry of the white gardeners; and he instanced the case of a white gardener driving round with his cart, and a Chinese gardener appearing on the scene with his baskets of vegetables, and when the white women came out of their houses to buy, they preferred to patronise the Chinaman instead of the white gardener, a preference which the writer said he could not understand. But it struck me that that incident spoke for itself. Those women were probably the wives of labouring men, who had to make so much money last through the week, and having to buy the vegetables in the cheapest market, they preferred to buy from the Chinaman because they got better value for their money. That shows the necessity and benefit which these Chinese gardeners are even to the working men themselves. With regard to limiting the number of Chinese immigrants to one for every 500 tons of a ship's register, I think if the Government would alter that limit to 200 tons it would meet all requirements. There are only two steamers running between Singapore and our Northern ports, and there is no certainty that these may not be taken off at any time, and thus practically stop the importation of Chinese. I also agree with the suggestion of the member for the DeGrey, that those employers who import these labourers should be required to return them at the end of the period of service, or give them the option of re-engaging with the same employers. This would prevent their distribution all over the country, and probably stop the importation. The plan would work its own cure. Reference has been made to the *North-West Times* as representing public opinion in that district; but I think it simply represents the opinion of the editor. I do not think newspapers represent public opinion, but they may influence public opinion, and induce persons to adopt the views of the editor. If the price of sandalwood had not gone down, I believe

the Chinese would have had the support even of the hon. member for York. It is unfortunate that some buyers of sandalwood on the other side formed a Chinese ring, and kept down the price for sandalwood. I have never employed Chinamen, but I feel that they are a necessity in the North, as gardeners, water drawers, and cooks, for you cannot induce white labourers to reside in tropical districts, where they would be isolated from their fellow men. If white labour cannot be obtained there, it would be unfair to prevent the settlers in the interior of the North-West from obtaining the necessary labour, and this applies especially to cooks. I hope the Government will support the suggestions of those members who represent the North-Western districts. We are all actuated with one desire, to prevent a large influx of Chinese, and I think that object will be attained by accepting the amendment suggested by the hon. member for the DeGrey.

MR. SIMPSON: I am sure there is perfect honesty in the opinions expressed upon this question in this House by members who believe they are doing their duty to the colony. But, in dropping down to cooks and vegetables, they are losing sight of the great principle that we are a part of Australia, and that the other colonies have found it necessary to legislate against the influx of Chinese. The United States of America also have determined, by treaty, that any influx of Chinese is inimical to the advance and progress of the citizens of the United States. I will admit there may be difficulties in the way of supplying the requirements of Northern settlers, with regard to cooks and water drawers; but, as was pointed out by the Premier, who did not take a mean view of this question, these men have their vices. I remember that the Chinese Envoys who came to Australia, some years ago, told us that we in Australia were distinctly responsible for allowing the Chinese to herd together in our cities, and to live in a very degraded and debased way, and that such a state of things would not be allowed in China. I believe that is true; but there are other parts of Australia where the settlers have had to live in the back blocks, and they have managed to get on without Chinese labour. The number of Chinese imported into Western Australia

is out of proportion to the number sent to the Northern districts. They come chiefly to the South, and you can't walk round Perth, or Fremantle, or Geraldton without meeting a Chinaman every fifty yards nearly. They are assuming an undue proportion in this colony, and we are told they have trebled in number since the year 1888. The hon. member for York, who has had practical experience of Chinese labour, tells us it is not cheap, and I hope this will never be a cheap labour country for any race, or either sex. So far as I can read the history of Australian colonisation, and the development and advance of civilisation in the world, the highest advances have been parallel with the best paid labour. I consider the best workman is the man who gives most value for your money. I would like to draw attention to the fact that there is an intercolonial obligation on us to carry this matter out. In 1888 we had the misfortune to occupy an unpleasant position at the Chinese Conference, and that was that we sent a gentleman occupying a high and distinguished position in this colony, but he could not speak and could not vote as our representative. I have before me the report of the proceedings at that Conference, and it is invariably recorded there that the representative of Western Australia did not speak and did not vote. To-day, we have the opportunity to shake off that unpleasant remembrance, and to assist the Government to wheel our country into line with the other colonies, by determining that we will act with them in the interests of our race. Who gave us Australia? We must remember that Great Britain gave us Australia as a sort of sacred trust placed in our care, and, unless we take this action, we are handing over Western Australia practically to the hordes of China. It was pointed out, at the Conference, that there was a great menace to Australia, should China become the nation that it is expected to do. It is only within the last six years that Lord Salisbury has compelled the Chinese authorities to address Her Majesty the Queen as other than a barbarian. It was found there was only one expression in the Chinese language by which she could be addressed, and that was as a barbarian; but Lord Salisbury considered it his duty to compel them to address the head of

the Great British nation in some other way. We know we are looked upon as barbarians by the Chinese people, and that they are the centre of civilisation. In California, after a commission of inquiry, it was declared that however long the Chinese are resident in a country, though offering a tacit obedience to the laws of that country, they never assimilate the spirit of those laws. In the China Town of San Francisco it was found that the Chinese had their own courts of justice, by which they determined how Chinese residents should act towards each other. In addition to that, we have the weighty remarks of men like Sir Samuel Griffith, who, in speaking on this matter before the Queensland Assembly, said:—"It has been proved by experience that Chinese become formidable competitors with European labour in almost every branch of industry"—not merely as cooks or gardeners—"such branches as cabinet-making having been almost monopolised by them in several of the Australian cities; and, as to their habits of living, the cost of subsistence to them is very much less than to Europeans living in accordance with European habits. The effect of their unrestricted competition would be to lower wages and reduce the standard of comfort to the European artisan and labourer. But in the opinion of this Government"—the Government of Queensland—"the strongest objection to allowing the immigration of Chinese is the fact that they cannot be admitted to an equal share in the political and social institutions of the colony." So says Sir Samuel Griffith, a man who knows the value of words, and attaches the proper meaning and use to the words he uses, as a skilled lawyer. Then we came to another colony, that of Victoria, and here is a danger that may possibly menace this colony in the future in regard to the Chinese question, and that is the use which may be made of naturalisation papers. There is a provision in our laws for the Chinese to become naturalised, and I will quote from a State document which was drawn up in Victoria and submitted to a select committee of the House of Commons in London, showing how the naturalisation papers taken out by the Chinese were used and trafficked in, for the purpose of admitting into that colony many hundreds of fresh Chinese, who

practised deception on the authorities by entering the colony with naturalisation papers which had been fraudulently conveyed to them for the purpose of evading the laws of Victoria. [Extracts read.] I might trespass on the patience of the House with other extracts of the sort; but I should like to point out that we are in the early days of the development of our colonisation, and in view of the gold discoveries which have been, and are being, made in many parts of our territory, we should anticipate and provide for a great influx of population, remembering what happened in Victoria when the gold discoveries at Bendigo and Ballarat were astonishing the world in 1854. I hope we shall assist the Ministry in carrying this Bill in its integrity, clause by clause, as it is drafted. We shall then fulfil the obligation of civilisation, and do credit to the country in which we have the honour to live.

MR. QUINLAN: I, like the hon. member for York, have pleasure in congratulating the Government upon having introduced this measure. I have been pledged in this direction, formerly; and I was somewhat astonished at the figures quoted by the Premier, when he said there are 1,378 Chinese in the colony at present. I had no idea the number had become so large; and though I was, at one time, favourable to some provision for the introduction of Chinese in the Northern portion of the colony, yet the difficulty of surrounding such a provision with safeguards is manifest, in view of the fact that so many as 209 Chinese have been introduced during the last year, and 157 of them have settled in the Southern portion of the colony. Such facts upset the argument, so often repeated, as to the necessity for permitting Chinese to be imported for meeting the labour requirements of settlers in the North. As stated by the hon. member for Geraldton, in reference to legislating for the future of this great territory, I think it becomes the duty of this Assembly to follow in the footsteps of the other colonies, and at once assimilate our laws for preventing the further influx of Chinese into Australia. In fact, I would prefer that the Chinese be excluded entirely. If a poll-tax were enforced, in addition to the restriction as to tonnage, the desire of the Australian community would be

better satisfied, and there would then be no fear of the Chinese becoming a menace. I am pleased to notice, in Clause 3, that those Chinese who may be brought in upon engagements of service are to be returned to their own country at the end of their term of engagement; but, knowing this provision has been so much evaded in the past, I wonder whether any have been returned. It will be remembered that, in reference to certain dire diseases in this country, they have been imported by aliens. I need not refer to recent cases of leprosy, and particularly one in Perth, which cost the country a considerable sum of money. While admitting that the Chinese are much abused for their vices, and that they still have some virtues, I say their further influx would be a menace to the country.

MR. MOLLOY: I join with the other members in congratulating the Government upon having introduced this measure. A numerous signed petition was presented to this House, a short time ago, asking for the repeal of the Imported Labour Registry Act, and that such repeal has been found necessary is evident from the introduction of this Bill. It was pointed out, in that petition, that the competition of Chinese against European labour was oppressive, and inimical to the colony's progress. Several hon. members have contended, this evening, that Chinese labour is a necessity in parts of the colony and for particular occupations; but other hon. members have refuted that argument, and shown that by carrying the principle to its extreme limit would operate against the interests of all classes of the community. The Chinese have hitherto evaded the law which required that they should be returned to their own country at the expiration of their term of service as imported labourers, and they do this by accumulating some means while in service, and then removing to some other district, where they enter into competition against European workers. In Perth we have competition of this nature; we have them competing in trade, without being under the same conditions as European traders, and it is notorious that these people are able to live at a cheaper rate than Europeans. Numbers of them collect in one common dwelling, in a co-operative manner, while each European worker has to maintain his



family decently, and pay rent for a dwelling. For that reason alone, it is undesirable to encourage them to come into our colony. We find that even the poor women who have to depend on washing, and eke out a livelihood for their families by this labour, are now exposed to the competition of Chinese men working in laundries. It is a crying shame that these Chinese washermen are encouraged by European families, and that many poor women are deprived of this means of subsistence. Not one hon. member will maintain that this is the class of colonist we want, or that will tend to improve the condition of the colony, or add to its prosperity. We do not want to have men following the occupations of women. Then, if we regard them as contributors to the revenue, as compared with Europeans, we find the Chinamen come here without wives or families; they congregate in groups and make common property of a dwelling, and their personal expenses are insignificant in comparison with those of the Europeans against whom they compete. It has been shown that they are increasing alarmingly in numbers, and the check intended by this Bill is wise and necessary. As to the alleged necessity for importing more, I maintain there is no necessity whatever for this class of labour, and that cheap labour will not tend to the improvement of any person's condition. The Chinese will continue at the labour for which they are imported only so long as it suits them, and until they can enter into competition with European labour, thereby turning the weapon against those who imported or employed them; so that, if the principle is followed to its ultimate consequences, the result must be that the whole of the Europeans must be thrust out of their employments, and these aliens become supreme in our midst. This Bill will be welcomed with delight, in the length and breadth of the colony, and will redound to the credit of the Ministry which introduced it. The growth of this evil to an alarming extent has induced those who would sit idly by to a sense of their duty, and they have seen that it is necessary to apply a check. I am sure the thanks of the community will be due to the Ministry for introducing this Bill.

MR. SOLOMON: I am entirely in accord with the Bill, and congratulate the

Government on bringing it forward. The reference to the larger tonnage of steamers trading to other colonies is not a fair argument, without referring also to the larger population of those colonies as compared with the numbers in Western Australia. We have found, from experience, how undesirable these Chinese are as immigrants, both as regards their habits and the loathsome diseases which they disseminate. I entirely concur in supporting the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

---

### Legislative Council,

*Thursday, 24th August, 1893.*

Victoria Public Library: Sunday opening of—Roads crossed by Railways: maintenance of full width of—Post and Telegraph Bill: third reading—Real Estates Administration Bill: second reading: committee—Criminal Law Appeal Bill: second reading: committee—Public Depositors Relief Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at half-past 4 o'clock.

#### PRAYERS.

#### VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY—SUNDAY OPENING OF.

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST: I beg to move, by leave, without notice, "That this House, having considered the report of the committee of the Victoria Public Library, considers it expedient that the Library should be open to the public on Sundays from 2 to 6 p.m." I have already consulted my hon. friend the Colonial Secretary on the subject, and he has intimated to me that he has no objection to the motion. A similar motion has already been agreed to in another