

We might as well face the question on proper lines. There was no good in fencing it. It would now be a question as to whether we were going to have coloured labour or not. We should face the question fairly. The Premier must support the amendment, because he favoured the idea nearly nine years ago, when he was most enthusiastic upon it. He (Mr. Connor) was equally enthusiastic then, and had not departed from the position he took up. If we desired to be consistent with the idea of the Young Australia party, that we did not want any coloured labour in Australia, but wanted a pure white race and not a piebald race, we should adopt the amendment. The Premier's sympathies would be with the amendment, although his policy might not allow him to support it.

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

Ayes ...	...	...	11
Noes ...	...	...	12

Majority against 1

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Atkins
Mr. Connor	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Duglish	Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Hastie	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Holman	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Pigott	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Reid	Mr. James
Mr. Wallace	Mr. Bason
Mr. Burges (Teller).	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the clause passed.

Clauses 52 to 63—agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 28th October, 1903.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: By-law for Collie Municipality.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTION—CATTLE DIPPING, FREMANTLE.

MR. HASSELL asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Whether it is a fact that a number of East Kimberley cattle are to be dipped at Fremantle. 2, Whether the said cattle have been dipped before being shipped. 3, Whether they will be allowed to go at large or to be distributed in the State after dipping.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, It is not anticipated, at this late period in the shipping season, that many cattle will be available for dipping. Those available will be dipped if owners desire it. It is the wish of the Government to make all the experiments possible. This course is being pursued. 2, No. 3, This will depend on the results gained. It is not intended to formally dip cattle and release because of that formality. An application for the release of dipped stock will be treated on its merits.

QUESTION—SHEEP DIPPING, WHY COMPULSORY.

MR. HASSELL asked the Minister for Lands: Under what Act of Parliament the compulsory dipping of sheep in the South-West district, as gazetted, is authorised.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The Stock Diseases Act, 1895.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by MR. HIGHAM, leave of absence granted to the member for North Perth (Dr. McWilliams), and on motion by MR. ATKINS leave granted to the member for the Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher), for one fortnight, on the ground of urgent private business.

MOTION—MRS. TRACEY'S PETITION, ALLEGED WRONGS.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the recommendation of the select committee of last session on the petition of Mrs. Tracey should receive the favourable consideration of the Government.

Last session a select committee, consisting of himself and members for the Murchison (Mr. Nanson), the Swan (Mr. Jacoby), the Greenough (Mr. Stone), and Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor), was appointed to inquire into the question of the alleged wrongs of Mrs. Tracey. The result of the inquiry was laid on the table of the House, and the committee reported they were of opinion that the lady had suffered some wrong in the past and was the victim of very unfortunate circumstances, and therefore was deserving of some consideration. The committee came to the conclusion that the best thing to do was to ask the Government to consider her case, and see whether it would not be the best way out of the difficulty to provide her with counsel so that her case might be re-opened if she thought fit. This was a case involving considerable property and all the lady possessed; and it was not an unknown circumstance for the State to provide means by which the path of justice might be re-opened to a litigant. There was no need for him to do more than move that the report of the committee receive favourable consideration at the hands of the Government. They would probably inquire into the matter through the Crown Law Department, and probably the lady would be provided with counsel so that her case might be re-opened. No doubt the lady had suffered a loss, and it would be very wrong to prevent her case being re-opened.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James) opposed the motion. There was no ground at all to justify it, any more than a request that the State should pay the lady compensation for whatever wrong she suffered. If she had suffered wrong, it was at the hands of private people. She had the opportunity of going before the Court, and had been assisted in that direction by private contributions. In addition, her matter had been inquired into by a select committee of the House some years ago. Very few litigants losing cases had received so much consideration or so much inquiry into their case as had Mrs. Tracey. The present condition of her cause was greatly due to her pertinacity, and not so much to its justice. On two occasions select committees had inquired into it at the request of members of the House, and they found no chance for the matter being re-opened. When members bore in mind that the case had been before the Court, fully argued on all sides, discussed, and determined, they could not expect the case to be once more re-opened. Members should bear in mind their responsibilities as members, and not vote for the motion because the lady concerned was so pertinacious.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): No doubt the Premier opposed the motion on account of the very small information supplied by the member for West Perth, who evidently had studied the question at great length, and devoted a great deal of time to it. If the member for West Perth had done his best for the lady, there were no grounds in favour of the motion. No amount of compensation had been mentioned.

MR. MORAN: Compensation was not recommended. Justice alone was asked for.

MR. FOULKES: All were anxious to do justice to all parts of the community, but a little more information should be supplied on this matter. The Government opposed the motion owing to the lack of information. On reading the report of the select committee, one could not find any evidence set out.

MR. MORAN: It was hard to get evidence from the dead.

MR. FOULKES: There were a number of persons living in Perth to-day who knew something about the case. There

should be an adjournment of the debate, so that the members who sat on the select committee could supply the House with fuller information. That would be the best way of dealing with the question. When the whole facts were brought forward, the House might give a larger sum by way of compensation than members were prepared to do now. He moved the adjournment of the debate.

MR. MORAN consented to an adjournment. He would read the history of the whole case, and later on would comment on it at length.

Motion passed, and the debate adjourned.

FREEZING WORKS FOR WYNDHAM— MOTION IRREGULAR.

MR. S. C. PIGOTT (West Kimberley), in accordance with notice, rose to move "That, in the interests of the State, immediate steps should be taken by the Government to ascertain the best means of establishing meat freezing and chilling works at Wyndham, whereby the immense losses in stock, and the extreme cruelty to animals incurred under the present system of bringing cattle from that port to Fremantle, may be obviated."

DR. J. S. HICKS (Roebourne), on a point of order, said that when the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) moved in the House on the tick question, the member for West Kimberley (Mr. Pigott) moved an amendment which was identical in substance with the motion which the hon. member now desired to move. Was it competent for the hon. member to now move his motion? Standing Order 176 provided that no question should be proposed which was the same in substance as any question that, during the session, had been resolved in the affirmative or negative. The hon. member's amendment was negatived on the 23rd September.

THE SPEAKER: No doubt the motion was a portion of the same question that had been submitted to the House before, and that being the case it could not now be put.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS assured the member for West Kimberley that the inquiries desired were now being made.

MOTION—LAND TAXATION, UN- IMPROVED VALUE.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanoona) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should, at an early date, introduce a measure for the imposition of a tax upon the unimproved value of land.

He said: I much regret that I have to make this motion to-day, when some of our good agricultural friends are absent. Those gentlemen have such a high opinion of agricultural land, that if here I am sure they would be only too glad to agree to this motion, in their belief that the land of this State will be able to stand the imposition of taxation as well as all the burdens which it bears at the present moment. It will be recollected that last year and the year before, I asked the House to agree to a motion that some of the inter-State duties should be abolished; but on both occasions the majority of members were decidedly against that, so decidedly that it seemed to me useless to persevere in that direction in this Parliament. Members will recollect that on the occasions referred to my object was to introduce a fairer system of taxation in Western Australia than has obtained. I remember pointing out, as has often been pointed out in this House, that in Western Australia we have what is practically a poll-tax. Men, women, and children are taxed as nearly as possible on an equal basis as persons, and not according to their power to bear taxation. Although some members seemed to sympathise with my views of the case, I found that the majority were opposed to me. Though the majority consisted of gentlemen always ready to declare that what this State wants above everything else is people with big families, yet the majority were ready to do their best to secure a continuance of special taxation, penalising the people who fulfil the biblical injunction to increase and multiply. Last year I was unable to state my views of the case; and I am glad on this occasion to be given an opportunity of doing something which will tend to assist and encourage those who follow that particular injunction. During last session and in the preceding year, only two objections were taken to my motion; first, that our steadily progressing agricultural industry needed the protection of high prices; and second, that the State needed revenue

to develop the country. Since that time, owing to the rapidly descending sliding-scale, the protective influence of the sliding-scale duties has been quickly diminishing; and curiously enough, while it is disappearing, none of the prognostications which we have heard throughout the State have yet been fulfilled—the prognostications of evil to result to our agricultural and other producing industries through the operation of the sliding-scale. In spite of the fact that the sliding-scale duties have to a large extent been taken off, our land is in greater demand than ever; our farmers and other producers have as high prices for their products as they ever had before; and the desire to clear and cultivate the land was never so vigorous. Besides, the value of land has very greatly appreciated. But settlement of people on the land has not lessened the necessity for a large revenue to expend on increasing the conveniences of civilisation, conveniences which only the Government can undertake to provide. The necessity for that revenue is even greater than before; yet the source of revenue upon which much of our national improvement and development depends—the inter-State duties—has already declined, and within the next three years will completely disappear. Recently the Treasurer gave us his estimate that the loss of revenue during the year would be, from this source, £120,000.

THE TREASURER: No; £41,000.

MR. HASTIE: However, it has been understood all along that we received, roundly, from inter-State duties a little less than a quarter of a million. Already two-fifths of that revenue have been deducted, and we may be certain—and this, I suppose, the Treasurer will accept as a fair statement—that within three years from now the Treasury will have lost nearly a quarter of a million of money. I think that is stating the case very fairly. We have always assumed that the total loss would be between £200,000 and £250,000. That sum will be lost annually; and whatever system of taxation we may intend to impose in the future, we must always keep in mind the fact that we shall no longer have any control over our customs revenue. I need not here discuss the question whether direct or indirect taxation is the

better. We have no choice in the matter. We must either stop all farther improvement and farther provision for the convenience of our people, and not impose new taxation, or we must follow the example of every other State in Australasia and of every other country in the world, by collecting a large portion of our revenue through direct taxation. Western Australia, I believe, will soon cease to be one of the very few civilised countries where people live and flourish without any appreciable burden of direct taxation. It is unnecessary to say that we are the only people who have so far escaped direct taxation. In every other Australian State with the exception of Queensland, and in New Zealand, there are a land tax and an income tax; and only last year Queensland started to collect an income tax, and it is well understood that one of the first measures of the new Queensland Government will be the imposition next year of taxation on land values. It is interesting to notice the proportion of direct and indirect taxation levied in the different States; and if we consult *Coghlan*, whose figures are usually considered the most accurate, we shall find that Western Australia stands, generally speaking, at the foot of the ladder. The proportion of our revenue derived from direct taxation is not only one of the lowest in Australasia, but, so far as I can find out, one of the lowest in the world. In this State we collect by what is classed as direct taxation 4·29 per cent. of the total taxation of the country. In Queensland the percentage is 6·22; but the figures refer to the years 1901 and 1902 only. I have not the figures for the present year; but if I had, I could prove the Queensland percentage to be much higher than 6·22. In New South Wales the proportion is 8·94 per cent.; Victoria and South Australia each collects 10 per cent. of the entire revenue by direct taxation; while Tasmania collects 11·44 per cent., and New Zealand 13·36 per cent. It is interesting to notice what is usually classed as direct and indirect taxation by statisticians. Mr. Coghlan (New South Wales) includes as direct taxation income taxes, land taxes, absentee taxes, probate and other stamp duties. The figures I have given seem small for Western Australia, and give no idea as to the amount

of direct taxation levied on the residents of this State, as nearly two-thirds of the amount I have referred to are contributed by absentees, and most if not all the balance is probate duty collected from the estates of people who have no farther use for money. In what is meant by direct taxation the people of Western Australia contribute practically nothing. I have been urging the House to consider what source of taxation we should wish to have next. I believe there is no doubt in the minds of members that we as a State cannot stand still. We have an immense amount of work to do, and work that must be done by the State. We must move along, and it is necessary for us to pay our way. We have often heard that Australian credit, if not stopped, to a large extent is discounted; and the only way in which the State can progress is by depending on money collected from the people themselves, and not mortgage all the heritage of posterity as security for money borrowed, even if there is an opportunity of getting that money loaned to us. In considering the question as to what new means of taxation can be levied, I do not think there is much difference of opinion in regard to the principle that we should follow. Those who should be called upon to pay should be those who have most benefited by the people of the State, and farther that we should not follow the system that has been followed hitherto, that of imposing, as far as possible, equal taxation on every individual in the State irrespective of the power to bear taxation. I have asked that we should follow the example of other parts of the world by imposing taxation on land, and the conditions of the land in this State are pretty well known. The bulk of the land here has been alienated to the people of the State on practically nominal conditions. [MR. MORAN: The bulk of the land has not been alienated.] The bulk of the land has been alienated. I do not say for one moment anything like the bulk of the land of the State has been alienated, or that it will be for a long time, but the land known nominally as Crown land is in the possession of other people. Some people who have taken up land in the State have improved their properties a great deal, both in the towns and in the country, and not only have the improvements

benefited themselves, but also the properties belonging to a large number of other people who have not gone to the trouble of assisting in the improvement of the State. I need not debate the question at this time whether if we impose a land tax we should levy the tax on all land according to its capital value. No one at the present time will insist that the improvements on land should be taxed. What we are trying to aim at in the first place is that those persons who have benefited by the prosperity of the State should be taxed on that value and not on any value that has been added to the land by improvements effected by themselves. Besides, a great deal of value has been added to land irrespective of the efforts of the people who at present occupy the land; it has been caused by the settlement of population in the neighbourhood. A great deal more value has been added to land by the expenditure of public money on roads, on railways, and on improved water supplies; in the starting of industries in districts, and by numerous conveniences which only population or a paternal Government can give. All this has been done at the expense of the people of the State, and it is a great deal more, at any rate, than the individual owners of the land concerned have done. Very much of the accrued value of land in towns and in the country which is in the possession of private individuals the State has chiefly been responsible for. When a number of years ago we started on our present prosperous way, there arose a habit, caused by the enhanced value given to property, of a very large portion of the ground being taken up. A very large portion of that ground, I am quite within the mark in saying that the bulk of that ground which has been taken up since people believed in the prosperity of Western Australia, has been taken up by people not to make use of it, but to be able to prevent other persons from using it unless a very large price was paid for the permission. In some cases people have made very big profits. In the future, whatever legislation is enacted, people must get handsome profits in order to allow lands which they hold at the present time being made use of. Here, as elsewhere, the most profitable local industry has been

that of acquiring ground and of being able to prevent its being worked unless someone will pay the holder handsomely for the privilege of working it. It is needless to instance the Midland Company and other people in the category I have mentioned. In travelling on nearly every railway in the State, in the vicinity of which the value of land has been greatly improved at the expense of the State, everyone of us has seen, over and over again, large patches of ground unused; and when we ask the reason why that is so we are constantly told that it belongs to so and so, who refuses to sell unless he gets a big profit, which means that one person has the power to prevent large areas from being used. On one day lately, I think this day fortnight, we discussed the ways and means by which we could compel big areas of ground to be worked in this State. On that occasion all the speakers were unanimous that effective steps should be taken, all were willing that something should be done, but the wisacres of the House pointed out that it would be a very difficult matter to attain the object effectually by a change of law. It was declared that a section in the Constitution Act prevented the State, or should prevent the State, from imposing conditions on land that did not obtain before Responsible Government. On the other hand the objectors pointed out that the Constitution provided that the State retained in its hands all the powers of taxation, and advised the House to approach by taxation the object in view. I hope, in fact I believe, that every member who spoke in that way on the occasion I have mentioned will support the motion. It will be observed the motion is general in its terms. I do not ask the House to decide exactly in what way taxation should be arranged, but I presume, under the cover of the motion, we are able to discuss the question of a graduated tax, a tax on absentees or any other mode of imposition. All that I ask the House to do is to agree to the principle that land taxation ought to be imposed in Western Australia. Probably in the Midland Company's case a land tax is absolutely necessary; it certainly appears to my mind as being the most effective way to compel that company to open up the ground to people who wish to use it. When that is proposed there

is not much doubt we shall hear many objections to it; but the main objection when we threaten to impose a tax on the poor Midland Company is that we shall incur the displeasure of the English capitalists—the English people will no longer think of investing in our loans or in any securities in Western Australia. These people, I take it, will be very careful to hide from us the other side of the question. They will not tell us of the different treatment the Midland Company would have received had their money been invested in England instead of out here; they will not tell us that if the Midland Company had acquired land and a railway in England, they would not only be taxed on the land, but on every possible improvement: they would be taxed on their railway, on their sheds, their station houses and in fact on everything they have, and they would have been paying that tax for very many years. In other words if the Midland Company were taxed on what seems fair taxation to people in England, or on what may be called a fair English basis, they would be certain to have paid far more money than they are likely to be asked to pay by people in this State. Besides, if the Midland Company's land had been in England no paternal Government would have been ready to guarantee their loans, to push solely as the Government here have done at our expense railway communication at both ends of the system, and enormously increase the traffic by doing our best to settle people on the land round about the company's concession. That obtains not only in regard to the Midland Railway, but it is generally true on a smaller scale in various other parts of the State. The main object I take it the House will have in mind in dealing with the motion, in addition to the obtaining of revenue, is to see as far as possible that all land in the State shall be made available for use. Universal experience tells us that that can only be done by having many owners and occupiers of land. In no case where land is in the possession of a few people is it good for a country or any portion of a country. It will be farther interesting to notice what has been done in other parts of Australia, as the problem we have to consider is not peculiar to Western Australia. As I have said,

all the States in Australia have tried to overcome the difficulty except Queensland and Western Australia, and Queensland will join with the others it is understood early next year. I will briefly refer to the taxes imposed in Australia generally. South Australia imposes $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on all land valued at less than £5,000 and 1d. in the £ on all land over that amount. She farther imposes an extra 20 per cent. on absentees. New South Wales has not so many provisions. There 1d. in the £ is imposed on all land over £240 in value, and evidently all owners of land of less value than £240 escape taxation altogether. New Zealand seems to have looked at the matter in a more scientific way, and has arranged that 1d. in the £ shall be paid on all land, but that if any owner has land of less value than £1,500 he shall have exemption in relation to £500. In addition, a graduated land tax is there imposed; for instance, land of the value of £5,000 and under £10,000, belonging to one owner, is taxed one-eighth of a penny per £, and land over £15,000 in value is charged $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per £; also an ascending scale goes on until land worth £70,000 is charged 1d. in the £, and land worth £210,000 is charged 2d. in the £. Absentees are charged 20 per cent more, and that is in addition to the ordinary taxation I have quoted of 1d. in the £. Land taxation in New Zealand has proved fairly effective, and certainly has not prevented people from holding land for speculative purposes; nor has it had the effect we have been often threatened with, of preventing people from going on the land and making full use of it. It has been effective there in causing nearly all the workable land to become available to those who have desired to make use of it.

MR. MORAN: The repurchase of estates has done that.

MR. HASTIE: That is one thing, but the repurchase of estates without a land tax has been considered in New Zealand absolutely impossible, and no one has pointed out how in this country or anywhere else, unless there is a land tax, we can make a fair deal in the purchase of estates.

MR. MORAN: It is a good means to an end.

MR. HASTIE: One is a complement of the other. We cannot expect to buy

estates at a fair value unless we have a check by levying land taxation; and I have no doubt we shall find when once we have land taxation in this State that the purchase of estates will be carried out much more to the satisfaction of the people of Western Australia. Hitherto we have lived in this State without this impost mainly on account of our available area, but we have now about reached the end of our tether. Good land fit for agriculture, and within what may be called a fairly convenient distance, is now more scarce, and people will not have the opportunity of taking up new lands unless we can adopt means which will compel persons whose strict occupation is not in connection with land to throw open their areas for selection. I believe that if we impose land taxation it can be so arranged that one tax only will meet the case. Most people seem to favour the New Zealand method, which has been in operation several years and has been very effective, and I believe that is the quickest way of attaining the object we all desire. I hope no member will think of suggesting we should follow the example of Victoria. There all city lands and all town and rated suburban land is exempted from land taxation; and all areas under 640 acres go free. Moreover, there are so many exemptions, for various reasons, of areas above this quantity that the land tax collected in Victoria is very small, and the taxation there has by no means been effective in breaking up large estates. Those who have travelled in Victoria, even in the last year or two, are unanimous in declaring that the greatest curse to that country is the fact that for 100 or 200 miles round about Melbourne very much of the best and fairest land in the State is in the hands of those people who make little or no use of it. The cry for the breaking up of large estates is as strong in Victoria now as ever it was. I wish the House would agree to this principle of levying taxation on land values. I do not for a moment think that anything can be done this session; so we can only hope that the next Parliament will take up the question, and if members will adopt the principle I advocate the people of the State will have an opportunity of expressing their opinion at the next election. Surely members should not object that land bears a great many

burdens already, but doubtless we shall hear it said that in municipalities and roads board districts the taxation levied is found vexatious. Land taxation, like everything else, is only comparative, and people will compare their present burdens with the burdens they bore a number of years ago, but that surely is not a very fair way in which to look at the question. If we are to consider the incidence of taxation it will be as well to compare it with that of other countries, and if that be done we shall find that even under local taxation the people in Western Australia pay a great deal less than is paid by people in any other country in the world. Besides, in this connection surely local taxation does not count. The bulk of the local taxation raised in towns and roads board districts is used to render the local life better, for improving the property and increasing its value, and surely that is sufficient to recompense them for the tax. The people of this State as a whole have spent thousands of pounds on improving the conditions of life and increasing the value of property, both in towns and in roads board districts, and in simple justice the State should have a share of the increased value. We have done enough in this State for the special individual who goes upon the land, and it is now about time to treat justly the people of the State as a whole, which object can be achieved by carrying into effect the motion I have proposed. I hope members will discuss the question in all its phases.

MR. MORAN: Do you propose to give any idea of what available land there is, and how much money we may expect to get out of a tax?

MR. HASTIE: I do not propose to give the hon. member that information, for I assume he has the same figures available as others have. Hundreds of people in this State are willing to declare in general terms that they are agreeable to this or any other good thing; but the moment we begin to put the idea into practice, a dozen different reasons are brought against it. The hon. member asks me to make an estimate as to the exact figures, and then he asks me the basis. If I give that, he may point out where the figures are not exactly accurate; so instead of discussing the principle whether we should impose taxation

or not, we might spend most of our time in discussing whether the hon. member's figures or mine are the more correct. I did not think the hon. member would be particularly anxious in that direction, otherwise I could have supplied him; and I promise that before he has finished with his speech on the subject I will be able to give him as many figures as he likes to mention. I hope members will discuss this question, and make suggestions with the object of placing the incidence of taxation in Western Australia on a much fairer basis than now obtains.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie): I second the motion.

MR. W. M. PURKISS (Perth): I am a firm believer in the principle of raising money by means of a tax on the unimproved value of land and a tax on income; and if I could be sure that we should have a corresponding remission of our present taxation *pro tanto*, I would vote for the motion; but seeing that already the handful of people in this State are paying something approaching four million pounds per annum in taxation, it seems an absolute absurdity to talk of farther increasing the taxation. The taxation per head is something like £19; and 65,000 to 70,000 people, the breadwinners and heads of households, have to find this four million pounds, and therefore pay something in excess of £60 each per annum. I have over and over again preached the doctrine in this House that we are the most highly-taxed people in the world. That has never been contradicted. I have appealed to every source; I have asked members inside the House and persons outside, also the newspapers, to point to any country in the world where taxation is higher than in Western Australia. [MR. MORAN: Do you mean relatively or actually?] Actually; and I have never received an answer. The position is unparalleled. It is obvious that we do not want more revenue, for we came down last year with a surplus, and we cannot spend our money fast enough. What is the use of asking for taxation upon land in view of a fact like that? If the Government or the mover of the motion could point out a course that would enable us to get a corresponding remission of other taxation, I would go heart and soul for this proposal, because I believe absolutely in an unim-

proved land tax and an income tax. In New Zealand, where they have a graduated land tax and a tax upon incomes, there is a corresponding remission in the customs taxation. In New Zealand they only raise something like a million and a half through the customs-house, while here we raise through our customs-house one and a quarter millions, irrespective of our inter-State duties. If in New Zealand they raised customs duties to the extent we do, the revenue would be enormous.

MR. MORAN: You must remember they have a higher tariff, all the same.

MR. PURKISS: Yes; but the people do not pay it. It is only something on paper.

MR. DAGLISH: It means they pay a higher price.

MR. PURKISS: They may do so, but it simply means that they have a scale of custom-house taxation on paper. If a certain sum is raised, the people only contribute a certain amount. Nearly a million of people in New Zealand raise £1,600,000, while here we raise nearly one and a-quarter million *plus* the inter-State duties.

MR. BATH: We pay our way, and they do not.

MR. PURKISS: I am quite with the mover of the motion. I believe in a graduated tax on unimproved land value, and I believe in an income tax. However, in view of the fact that we raise nearly four millions from our bread-winners, and that this amount is more than sufficient for the State, because the Treasurer comes down with a surplus every year showing that we cannot spend the money, why should we need to go in for more taxation? If we go in for a land tax, we should follow it by an income tax, and thus exhaust all our sources of taxation. The customs revenue, outside the inter-State duties, will gradually decrease, because we shall be importing largely from the Eastern States instead of from Europe; and the bookkeeping system will end in a very few years, in respect of which a very large slice of our revenue may be taken away from us. Let us therefore preserve every source of taxation for the time of pinch, and not go in now for additional taxation on the top of our present high taxation and get into a system of extravagance. When the time

of pinch comes the strain will be great indeed. We do not want more taxation now, for we have plenty of it with a revenue unequalled in the world. Let us wait for the time of pinch, and if it is necessary to resort to additional taxation then let us resort to it and tide over the rainy day. We cannot get any remission from our customs duties, because that is in the hands of the Federal Government; and I do not know where we could put our finger on any internal taxation which would give us a corresponding remission. However, if we could remit some taxation from other sources, I for one would say "Let us have a tax on unimproved land or on income."

On motion by MR. BURGESS, debate adjourned.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from 14th September.

MR. HARPER in the Chair; MR. PURKISS in charge of the Bill.

New clause:

THE PREMIER: Progress had been reported when Clauses 1 and 2 were passed, as it was then desired to add one or two new clauses, and some members desired on recommendation to discuss the question raised by Subclause 3 of Clause 2. He now moved that the following be added as Clause 3:—

No action shall be brought or continued against any municipal council in respect of any act, matter, or thing done before the passing of this Act which might have been lawfully done if this Act had been in force at the time of the doing of such act, matter, or thing; but the plaintiff in any such action pending at the commencement of this Act shall be entitled to recover against the defendant such costs, as between party and party, as may have been incurred by the plaintiff prior to the passing of this Act.

This provided that in case of any pending action a council must pay the cost of the action to the plaintiff.

MR. MORAN said he would not oppose the new clause, on the understanding that the Bill would be recommitted.

MR. ATKINS: Would the clause override the Court in actions that might be brought against councils?

THE PREMIER: Any proceeding that was pending would be against a council

to restrain them from carrying on work. If the Bill passed without this additional clause, no injunction would lie against the council. The clause provided that in such a case the council should pay the costs of the other side. Without the clause, the council need not pay costs.

MR. ATKINS : Why should we interfere with the course of the law ?

THE PREMIER : Clause 2 rendered legal what would be illegal before the Act was amended. It was desired that plaintiffs in actions should not be prejudiced in the matter of their costs. The clause was for the protection of plaintiffs.

MR. MORAN : The clause removed the objection of retrospection ?

THE PREMIER : Yes.

Question passed, and the clause added to the Bill.

New Clause :

THE PREMIER moved that the following be added as Clause 4 :—

Notwithstanding any provisions of the principal Act, the proclamation published in the *Government Gazette* on the twenty-third day of October, one thousand nine hundred and three, whereby the municipalities of Broad Arrow and Paddington were united to form one municipality under the name of "The Mayor and Councillors of Broad Arrow-Paddington," is hereby declared to be valid, and the said municipalities shall be deemed to have been lawfully united so as to form one municipality as from the date of the publication of such proclamation.

Recently an amalgamation of the Broad Arrow and Paddington municipalities had been effected ; and to enable this amalgamation to be carried out, the area of one of the municipalities had first to be enlarged so that the two municipalities would be adjoining. Under the existing Act the procedure was very cumbersome. Petitions were necessary, counter petitions might be received, and it was necessary to advertise. In this case both municipalities were anxious to amalgamate, and the Government had moved as quickly as possible by issuing a proclamation on the 23rd October, uniting the two municipalities under the name of Broad Arrow and Paddington. There might be some question as to whether the proper notices were given, or as to whether the petitions lodged were lodged with the proper authorities, though all the parties were

willing to have the two municipalities amalgamated.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : Was it necessary to have a special Bill for the purpose ?

THE PREMIER : The present Act was far too cumbersome and defective. There might be objections raised months afterwards. These municipalities wanted to be joined quickly, to enable them to prepare their rate book at once.

Question passed, and the clause added to the Bill.

New Clause—Amendment of Section 52 :

MR. BATH moved that the following be added as a clause :—

Section 52 of the principal Act is amended by striking out Subsection 2 up to the word "year."

By the section, every ratepayer who had paid his rates on or before the 1st September was entitled to have his name inserted in the municipal electoral list ; and any occupier liable to be rated in respect of land valued for municipal purposes at not less than £10 was eligible as a mayor or a councillor. The new clause sought to place the ratepayer's qualification on the same basis as the qualification of a candidate for municipal office. The section provided that unless the rates were fully paid the ratepayer could not vote. In goldfields municipalities many ratepayers paid large sums in rates, but overlooked some small possession such as a garden area, and were therefore disqualified as voters because portion of the rates remained unpaid. By the Act municipalities were given every facility for recovering rates by levy and distress ; and the two provisions of the Act might well be unified, so as to place a man who wished to have his name on the ratepayers' roll on the same footing as a candidate for the council.

THE PREMIER : Evidently the hon. member's object was to strike out Subsection 2. The matter should be fully discussed, for there was something to be said on both sides. *Primâ facie*, there was no reason why a man who did not pay his rates should receive consideration. Local bodies ought to be assisted to collect their rates. Some, himself included, considered that it should not be obligatory on local bodies to send out rate collectors. People should pay rates voluntarily, in discharge of a civic duty.

True, defaulting ratepayers could now be penalised; but the amplest time was given for payment. As a rule, the rate was struck in December, notices got out before March, and the ratepayer had till the 1st September to pay up. Difficulties arose because some ratepayers postponed payment as long as possible; and if by their default they lost the right to vote, did they deserve much sympathy? If people did not pay their rates when due, should the Act be amended so that local bodies to get payment must make constant applications or must sue and distrain?

MR. MORAN: The municipal franchise was a reward for holding property.

THE PREMIER: No. Surely the franchise was given to the ratepayer—not to the man who did not pay or contribute to the common fund. Why should he have a voice in its distribution? The majority paid their rates; and why create a system which would increase the number of bad payers and lessen the number of good?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: A man might be disqualified in respect of property not his own, for which he was wrongly rated.

THE PREMIER: None could be disqualified except for non-payment of rates due by him.

MR. BATH: But if a man had paid rates on one property he should be qualified though he owed rates due on another.

THE PREMIER: If a man owed £20 it was no excuse to say he had paid £10.

MR. BATH: Why make any difference between him and the candidate?

THE PREMIER: Deal with the candidate if desired. In spite of some cases of hardship, municipalities ought to be assisted to collect rates due; and that municipal disfranchisement was the most effective means appeared from this agitation for its abolition. He had no sympathy with the man who could not pay his rate between March and September, who put off payment till the last moment, and who would refrain from paying till after the 1st September were it not for the provisions of this section.

MR. STONE: Throughout the country there was a general feeling that municipal bodies had too much protection in the matter of rates. They were allowed 10 per cent. for rates overdue; and an appellant against a valuation had to

deposit £2, together with the whole year's rates, before he could come into court. Moreover, the municipality had a preemptive claim over ratable property, and was thus in a better position than other creditors.

THE PREMIER: The property was not always a valuable security.

MR. STONE: A good enough security for the rates due.

THE PREMIER: Not if the property was mortgaged.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: According to the mover, a disqualification resulted if all rates were not paid. He (Mr. Illingworth) had frequently been rated for properties which he did not own, some that he never did own, and others that he had parted with. If he were standing as a candidate for the city council, someone might object that he had not paid his rates on such a property, and disqualification would follow.

THE PREMIER: Not unless the rate were due and payable.

MR. MORAN: The candidate's name might, for non-payment, be omitted from the roll.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: An owner sometimes arranged that a tenant should pay the rates, and was disqualified if the tenant did not pay. Again, an owner entitled to four votes for a certain ward might pay £50 a year in rates; and because he omitted to pay on one property he was wholly disqualified. In Subiaco he had been rated for properties which he did not possess and never had possessed; yet he could be disqualified for not paying unless he proved, perhaps at law, that he was not the owner.

THE PREMIER: If the majority of ratepayers owed small sums, the municipality could not be expected to sue. Section 52 was a splendid means of collecting such rates.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No; people who owed only a few shillings did not trouble about voting as ratepayers.

THE PREMIER: Yes; many did.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Was a man to be disqualified as a municipal council candidate because his name appeared on the rate book as the owner of property which he did not possess and had not paid rates for, though he had paid on property really belonging to him rates sufficient to qualify him as a candidate?

THE PREMIER: That could be done.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was an injustice.

MR. PURKISS: All taxation was payable in cash, and the object of the Act was to make taxation of this kind self-collective, because in poor municipalities the cost of collection ate up the very heart of the income, as municipalities had to pay a town clerk and someone to go round to collect the rates. The more we could make taxation of this kind self-collective the better. All knew, with reference to local politics in municipalities and roads boards, what a keen interest was taken in the election of a mayor or a councillor, and how jealous people were to secure a vote. If it was stated that a ratepayer should not have the privilege of voting for a mayor or councillor unless the rates were paid, that would bring about to a large extent the self-collection of the rates.

[Sitting suspended for ten minutes.]

MR. PURKISS (continuing): There was nothing in the cases mentioned by the member for Cue. If a man had a right in respect of property of which he was not the owner, there was a forum provided for curing that so as to get the name struck off the roll. In the case of an agreement with a tenant that the tenant should pay the rates, that was a matter between the landlord and the tenant and had nothing to do with the municipality.

MR. DAGLISH: It was to be hoped the member for Hannans would not persist in his proposed new clause. It was brought forward solely for the purpose of meeting a few special cases that existed in one municipality, and because these few special cases existed in one municipality the Committee were asked to alter the law relating to all municipalities throughout the State. The question of the municipal law was specially referred to by the Colonial Secretary a few months ago in a communication to the various municipal councils, and in that communication the Colonial Secretary asked that all municipalities should send in a list of proposed necessary amendments to the Municipalities Act, as the Government intended to introduce an amending Bill. That request, he believed, was pretty generally complied

with; at all events, a municipal conference was held this year, at which a number of proposals representing the views of ratepayers throughout the State were brought forward and discussed. He did not remember any proposal on the lines of the clause suggested by the member for Hannans having been brought forward, and the representatives of the ratepayers were as fully qualified as the member for Hannans to express an intelligent opinion on a matter like this, as they were brought closely in touch with the ratepayers. It was possible to make an alteration with advantage in Section 52 of the Municipalities Act with a view of making the rating more equal. At present it appeared in almost every municipality throughout the State that the particular section was administered in this way. If a ratepayer held half a dozen assessments they were all treated as separate assessments, and if a ratepayer had paid rates on five assessments his name appeared on the roll for the five for which he had paid rates. That, he believed, was almost the invariable rule. In the same way, if only one assessment was paid, the ratepayer's name appeared on the roll in respect to that one. It seemed that exception to this mode of rating was adopted in one of the municipalities, and that was the cause of this amendment. If the member for Hannans proposed an amendment making it the clear duty of municipalities to treat each assessment on its individual merits, that would meet the case, and remove the hardships of which the member complained; at the same time, it would make no startling revolution in the present municipal institutions. Section 52 was very helpful in the collection of rates. The member for Hannans had stated that the municipalities already were amply protected; they were more fully secured than any other creditor. In his (Mr. Daglish's) experience, this section of the Act was the only security that a municipality had for the payment of rates without incurring very heavy legal liabilities which it was impossible to undertake. There were, in many municipalities, assessments of a small annual value which returned a yearly rate of possibly three shillings or four shillings. It was utterly absurd to imagine that any protection the law gave to municipalities in the way

of legal procedure would warrant municipalities in moving the court in regard to a small sum like that. In these particular cases the law was powerless to recover rates unless there existed a provision giving to the ratepayers some additional inducement to pay their rates by a certain day. The section was found to be most helpful in that way. As the time for the annual elections approached ratepayers hastened to pay their rates so as to be able to exercise their votes. In a new country, where all municipalities were new and most of them struggling, any inducement to pay the rates was very helpful and necessary. The man who neglected to pay his rates deserved no consideration whatever, because the money of other persons, more sensible of their obligations and more anxious to fulfil them, was being expended, with the natural result that the neglectful person's property was being improved. If a man would not recognise his obligations in regard to payment, he had no right to consideration at all in regard to the privilege of voting. Municipal representation was purely representation of property. If a man who held property failed to recognise the liabilities property entailed on him he must not get the privileges of representation which were earned by the fulfilment of the responsibilities. The member for Hannans had put forward what might appear a justification for the clause in the argument that he simply proposed to put the individual elector on the same footing as the individual candidate for a seat in a municipal council. The object of the provision was to enable a person who would be liable to be rated for the next year to be eligible to become a candidate. As a general principle, it was absurd to argue that ratepayers who had been forced to pay up their dues by a certain date would be willing to send to the council as their representative a man who had ignored the same responsibility. Many amendments were required, and a Bill would have to be brought forward next session dealing with the whole matter. It would be far better to make all the necessary amendments at one time, than begin by a piecemeal amendment of this description.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

MR. BATH: People had been excluded from exercising their votes just because they had left unpaid a small amount of rates. So long as municipalities had a right of recovering their rates in the law courts, issuing a warrant, and levying distress, they could collect the amounts due. As to the statement that they could not do so in small cases, he knew of instances on the goldfields where it had been done. It was only fair that we should remove this disability which certain people were labouring under. Under the present law it was possible for a person who had not paid his rates to be a candidate, and that being so why should not the right to vote be allowed to a man who wished to do so, even if he had not paid his rates?

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

Ayes	...	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	...	15

Majority against ... 9

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Atkins
Mr. Holman	Mr. Burgess
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Stone	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Harper
Mr. Reid (Teller).	Mr. Hassell
	Mr. Hayward
	Mr. Hicks
	Mr. Hopkins
	Mr. Jacoby
	Mr. James
	Mr. Purkiss
	Mr. Wallace
	Mr. Yelverton
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Clause thus negatived.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

MOTION—COMPULSORY IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS.

Debate resumed from 14th October, on the motion by Hon. G. Throssell, affirming that legislation should be introduced for the compulsory improvement of all first-class agricultural land held by absentee owners, same as applies to resident selectors under the existing land laws; also on Mr. Diamond's amendment to omit the words "absentee owners."

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hopkins): No doubt the object sought by the mover was to bring about a condition of affairs which would render imperative the improvement of large areas of land alienated from the Crown, for which Crown grants have issued,

and which, at the present time, are lying unfenced, unimproved, and unoccupied. The hon. member did not desire to provide additional revenue for the Government. The proposal outlined by the hon. member is, I think, wholly impracticable; and I believe that members who have given any consideration to the proposal will accept this view, because it is supported by the fact that no other country has adopted such a proposal. The member for Northam for a long period filled the office of Commissioner of Crown Lands; and although there appear to be no records in the department—I do not know whether Mr. Throssell made any announcement on the point, but judging from the report in *Hansard* I do not think he did—it is reported that a Bill on the lines laid down in his proposal was at one time prepared and passed this House. If that is so, I have not been able to find any trace or record of it. The Bill was certainly not prepared in the Lands Department.

MR. BURGESS: It passed this House.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: As to what happened to the Bill if it was introduced, I have been unable to trace it in any way. The mover is doubtless imbued with a fascinating idea, if it can be brought in operation. I believe that such a Bill was at one time drafted, and I think it passed the legislature of Natal and was sent home; but the Queen's assent was withheld for the simple reason that the Bill was deemed to be repugnant to the Constitution. It was held that when a Crown grant was issued for certain properties, the obligations had been performed. It amounted to this, that the imposition of additional burdens, as was contemplated by the Natal Bill, would probably lead to the owners of the land again surrendering it to the Crown. At the time it was thus viewed, and was held to be a constitutional difficulty—I believe it was termed a constitutional immorality—and for that reason the Bill did not receive the assent of Her Majesty. There is another proposal which has engaged the attention of the House, the motion moved by the member for Kanowna (land tax); and I have had some information prepared in order that members may have it at their disposal in dealing with that question. In New

Zealand the local governing body has the power to impose a rate on the unimproved value of lands. In addition to that there is a land and income assessment tax by which all lands are taxed. This is a graduated tax with schedules prepared. There is a special exemption up to 500 acres, and there are other exemptions up to £2,000 allowed in cases of old age and illness. In Victoria there is also a land tax. Under their Act all conditional purchases are included within the scope of land taxation; and I do not for one moment assume such a step would be contemplated in Western Australia.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is that so?

THE MINISTER: That is so. In Victoria all conditional purchases come within the scope of the land tax.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There is an exemption to 640 acres.

THE MINISTER: That is the case; but there is an exemption in every system of land taxation that exists throughout the Australian States and New Zealand. In South Australia there is taxation on all lands with exemptions. That taxation is $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per £, and in case of absentees it is increased by 20 per cent.

MR. JACOBY: Does that extend to conditional purchases?

THE MINISTER: Apparently it does. I would not like to say, with authority, that it does or does not. The Act is not sufficiently clear for me to declare that it does, but after going through the Act carefully I have come to the belief that conditional purchases are taxed in South Australia. In that State the land tax was increased by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per £ last year, and I believe a Bill was recently introduced to have that increase continued. In New South Wales there is also a land and income tax. The landowner furnishes a valuation of his land; there is a £240 minimum; and this taxation imposes 1d. per £ on unimproved values. Members are thus given an idea of the systems of land taxation in vogue in the Eastern States. For my part, without pledging the Government one way or the other, it appears to me at times when I am going round the State and see large areas of valuable land for which in many instances a Crown grant was issued, I dare say for a trifling consideration, this land being held without improvements carried

out and without its productiveness made use of in any way by the owner, who may be an absentee allowing it to lie idle so as to reap the advantages given to him by the development of the State, the increase of population, and the expenditure of loan moneys and revenue in the building of railways and other public works through the country, that I can agree with the member for Northam in this respect, that it is not right this state of affairs should continue. In New Zealand, when the Act was introduced which enabled the Government to repurchase under compulsory conditions, I believe the assessment was fixed by the owner of the land against the assessment which was eventually determined and reviewed by the resident magistrate, from whose decision the owner could appeal to the Supreme Court; but I believe that once it was fixed the Government had the right to resume the property at an addition of ten per cent. It has struck me that in some cases in Western Australia where there are large and valuable tracts of country unutilised and unoccupied, and where even the boundary lines are not fenced, it would be no revolutionary proposal to force the owners either to fence their properties on the boundary lines or turn the land to account, or to give the State an opportunity of purchasing at a reasonable price and so turning it to some advantage in the interests of the country. I think it is generally conceded by those members who have given consideration to the question that the proposal as outlined by the member for Northam is not practicable.

MR. TAYLOR: It only applies to first-class land.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: After all, who is going to discriminate between what is first-class and what is third-class land? That is a very difficult thing to deal with. The Under Secretary for Lands agrees with me in the contention I have raised; and to-day he consulted the Commissioner of Titles, who stated that he had no knowledge of a Bill which was supposed to have been prepared in Mr. Throssell's time, and at that time I think the Commissioner was Parliamentary Draftsman.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There was no such Bill: it was a taxation Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think it was.

MR. STONE: Do you say that boundary fences should be put up?

THE PREMIER: That cannot be done under this method.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: When it comes to a tax on unimproved values of land, that is a different proposal, and we have plenty of precedents for it in the Eastern States. I think the question is more likely to reach finality on the lines of the motion proposed by the member for Kanowna.

MR. JACOBY: He proposed a general tax.

MR. W. ATKINS (Murray): I would like to know whether the motion of the member for Kanowna (land tax) means that all land is to be taxed on unimproved values, or that only unimproved land is to be taxed on unimproved values. If he means to tax unimproved land on unimproved values, I am with him; but if all land is to be taxed, I am against him.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is out of order to discuss any other motion.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (in explanation): In referring to the motion of the member for Kanowna, I do not desire to convey the impression that I am prepared to support it; but the fact of its being introduced will open up a discussion enabling us to hear the views of other members, and I think that is the only way we can reach finality on the matter.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): The land of the company referred to by the Minister for Lands is exempted.

THE MINISTER: I did not refer to any company. I was speaking on the broad principle.

MR. STONE: Speaking of the concession of the Midland Railway Company, a notice has been served on them by a roads board for a rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per acre or 1d. in the £, and the company have sent back a reply to say they were specially exempted. How then can we get at the company by a land tax?

THE PREMIER: I think you may get at them by an action at law. It is what may be called b-l-u-f-f.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): One must admit that the arguments of the Minister for Lands, in regard to the

difficulty in dealing with the proposal of the member for Northam, are all very well; but we might at least carry the motion with the amendment of the member for South Fremantle, as an expression of the view of this House that some method of enforced improvement is desirable if practicable. I think, as the Minister for Lands has indicated, that taxation is the only way by which we can enforce compulsory improvements. There can be no question as to the powers of the Legislature in regard to taxation, and I think there can be as little question concerning the powers of Parliament to discriminate between the different classes of land as well as between the different areas. It would be in our power to pass a motion proposing a differentiated tax in proportion to the amount of improvement, making unimproved land most highly taxable. In that way I think we could, with a certain amount of success, carry out the views of the member for Northam. There is no distinct proposal to deal with taxation in the motion; but I think the motion is couched in such general terms that we can fairly claim there is no exemption of the question of taxation.

THE PREMIER: The motion says "compulsory improvements to be of a similar nature."

MR. DAGLISH: Improvements would be compulsory, if we passed a form of taxation on unimproved lands which would make it profitless to possess such lands. That would be a form of compulsory improvement. There are no conditions that can override the power of Parliament to impose taxation on any land held throughout the State by Crown grant or fee simple. [**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** This motion does not refer to taxation.] My argument is that the motion proposes legislation of any description that may appeal to the House to enforce improvements. I am willing to admit that the motion advances the extent of improvement, but it does not advance the nature of the legislation by which that extent of improvement is to be achieved. I agree entirely with the view of the Minister for Lands, that we can most effectively deal with the matter on some such proposal as that of the member for Kanowna, or in a Bill based on that proposal. I do not know of any other measure that could

deal with it; and I was somewhat surprised at the haste of the Minister for Lands, after his speech in which he seemed to favour such a course, in disclaiming his support to such a proposition. I hope the Government will carefully consider whether it is possible, by grading taxation, to enforce some method of improving the large areas of land referred to in this motion.

MR. A. Y. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I take it that the object of this motion is simply to advertise the member for Northam; and as I object to such advertisement, I intend to support the contention of the Minister for Lands. This is simply a cunningly-worded motion to advertise the member for Northam.

Amendment (Mr. Diamond's, to omit "absentee owners") put, and a division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	7
Noes	...	...	14

Majority against ... 7

AYES.		NOES.	
Mr. Bath		Mr. Atkins	
Mr. Daglish		Mr. Burges	
Mr. Ewing		Mr. Hassell	
Mr. Holman		Mr. Hayward	
Mr. Stone		Mr. Hicks	
Mr. Taylor		Mr. Hopkins	
Mr. Pigott (Teller).		Mr. Illingworth	
		Mr. Jacoby	
		Mr. James	
		Mr. Purkiss	
		Mr. Reid	
		Mr. Wallace	
		Mr. Yelverton	
		Mr. Higham (Teller).	

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion (Hon. G. Throssell's) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	8
Noes	...	...	12

Majority against ... 4

AYES.		NOES.	
Mr. Bath		Mr. Atkins	
Mr. Ewing		Mr. Burges	
Mr. Holman		Mr. Hassell	
Mr. Reid		Mr. Hayward	
Mr. Stone		Mr. Hicks	
Mr. Taylor		Mr. Hopkins	
Mr. Wallace		Mr. Illingworth	
Mr. Daglish (Teller).		Mr. Jacoby	
		Mr. James	
		Mr. Pigott	
		Mr. Yelverton	
		Mr. Higham (Teller).	

Question thus negatived.

MOTION—MIDLAND RAILWAY AND LANDS, TO PURCHASE.

Debate resumed from 14th October, on the motion by Mr. Quinlan, "That the

time has arrived when, in the best interests of the State, the Government should purchase the Midland Railway and the lands of the company; and to this end the authority of the House be given to the Government to enter into negotiations with the company or its representatives in this State for the purchase upon terms to be agreed upon."

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (Cue): The question covered by this motion is to my mind, one of the most important which this or any other Parliament for some time to come can consider. I have long held the conviction that the most desirable method of dealing with this question would be to obtain possession of the Midland Railway and lands—primarily to obtain the lands. I am not so particularly anxious to secure the railway, except on the general principle which I hold that all railways should belong to the State. But in the present condition of Western Australia, the Midland lands ought to be controlled entirely by the State, and ought to be under conditions similar to those of lands under the State law. Now the State law is of two kinds—the law as to Crown lands, which permits their sale under definite conditions, and the law as to purchased lands, which under a separate Act allows the Government to vary the prices according to the circumstances and the values of the lands referred to. I hold that if the State could become possessed of the 2,000,000 acres of land now belonging to the Midland Railway Company, the State could under the Lands Purchase Act dispose of that land at prices which would return a great profit, and give immense relief to thousands of people who now desire to settle in that part of the country. I hold that a purchase at a reasonable price could be effected without any loss to the Crown—indeed at a profit to the Crown if the land were properly handled. It is within my own knowledge that a considerable portion of that land has been parted with, and is now being parted with, by the company, at prices varying from £1 to £2 an acre; and if the present holders, who offer no particular inducement to intending buyers, can get those prices—and they can get and are getting them—then the State would have no difficulty in obtaining similar prices. The land of good quality and in prox-

imity to the railway could be sold at varying prices which would justify the State in becoming possessed of the property. The land farther distant, and of inferior quality, could be sold under our Lands Purchase Act at still lower prices—at prices below the present 10s. per acre; and there is no reason why it should not be. The main desideratum is that the State should get possession of the land. In addition, we should seek to carry another point of great importance by obtaining a long section of line which lies between two Government railways, and making it part and parcel of the great railway system of the country. When, however, we have to deal with a property owned by a company domiciled outside the State, we have to deal with it as we deal with other properties not our own, and which we desire to purchase. It is futile to tell people: "You should say this and should not say that." We are not dealing with people who are not as fully acquainted as we are with the conditions of this railway and this land. Men who are considered good enough to be directors of the Bank of England and the London and Westminster Bank are not men to be misled by any remarks which I or any other member may make in this House; and it is futile—it is like the ostrich hiding its head in the sand and thinking no one can see the rest of it—to say, "You should not disclose this or that." There is no reason why we should not fully disclose and consider the value of the property which it is proposed to buy. Some years ago I was taken to task because I urged the purchase of this railway; and because I at that time had a certain small section of this land—about 20,000 acres—for sale in my office, it was hurriedly concluded by the Press and in other quarters that I had some personal interest in the sale of the railway.

MR. JACOBY: You were also Treasurer at the time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The hon. member should have waited. When I took the position of Treasurer of the State I deemed that position inconsistent with holding control of any portion of the Midland Company's lands, because I had strong opinions about the purchase of the land, and I gave up the control when I took the portfolio of Treasurer. I never

received one shilling commission from the Midland Company after I accepted the position of Treasurer of the State.

MR. JACOBY: At the time you made the statement you were Treasurer.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What statement?

MR. JACOBY: Regarding the value of the line.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I make the statement again. What does it reveal, or what did it reveal? I made the statement that the railway proceeds were approaching the interest on a million and a half of money, and the country should have noticed it. It was a statement which the country will regret having failed to notice, and if the Government had noticed the statement then and had taken the advice I gave, they would at once have taken the necessary steps to secure the railway, and they would have got that railway at a lower price than they will get it at now. I gave good advice to the House, and I gave good advice to the Ministry of which I was a member. I gave good advice to the State, and with conscientiousness I gave that good advice, and it is good advice still, and no amount of personal criticism will make that advice more than what it was. What were the facts? An effort was made by a previous Government to secure the railway. The price was given at a million and a half; that was the amount that was asked. What did it mean? It meant 3 per cent. interest on a million and a half of money. That was just about the proceeds of the railway, something like £41,000, the actual proceeds of the railway at the time. If this railway could have been purchased for that sum of money, and if the railway itself covered 3 per cent. on the purchase, what advice could any sensible man give but to say that the railway was a good bargain? And we could have got in addition to the railway two million acres of land, which land could be made to return one million of money. At that time there was a report circulated that the railway could be bought for £1,000,000. As a matter of fact a suggestion was made through the Agent-General in London that possibly the railway could be secured for something like that sum; but when the offer was made it was found that the circumstances had changed. I was not possessed of that knowledge.

The sum of £1,200,000 was mentioned as a tempting amount for the railway, and the price submitted to the Agent-General was £1,350,000. That was the lowest sum that the railway was ever offered for. At that time our 3 per cents. were worth £90 in the market, and the proposition was that the railway could be purchased for £1,350,000 with 3 per cent. bonds taken at par and held for 10 years. That was the proposal, and that offer could or could not have been accepted by the State. That was the proposal, and even by proper negotiations perhaps a lower price could have been obtained. Supposing the railway had been secured for that sum of money, we have to take into consideration the difference between the floating, which would be £130,000. This means that the railway could have been secured for a matter of £1,215,000. That is what the railway could have been secured for. I believe by proper negotiations it could be secured at some such figure yet. I do not know; I am not in the know. Since I left the Treasury no item or telegram in regard to this matter has come to me, but from the information I then had I gave the best advice in my judgment, which was that the State should take steps to obtain the railway. That is the motion before the House, that the Government should take steps to obtain the railway. That was a good proposition then; it is a good proposition now. The proposition then was the question of price; the proposition now is still a question of price. It is all a question of price. It is a question whether the Government can secure the railway at a price to recommend to the House and which the House will approve of. I contend that it is a matter of public urgency that the State should be possessed of that land, and if possible the State should be possessed of the railway. The first thing is the land, that is the primary consideration; but I think the question should be considered as applying both to the railway and the land. I am not in a position to say what the railway is worth, but it is worth more to the State than to anybody else. If anything can be got out of the land, the State can get it. The State can get more out of the land than a private individual can, for a private individual cannot treat with two million acres of land but the State

can. A private individual cannot give long terms, but the State can. So long as we can make a deal at a price that is satisfactory and become possessed of the property, and that on a proper proportion of time, it will pay not only the cost but the interest and the sinking fund. It ought to be a good proposition for the Government to consider. I contend that it is a good proposition to consider. I will not suggest what price the Government should give: that is a matter for their consideration. No doubt the owners of the property will get what they can for it. We have to consider the question that although the Midland Railway can show a return of £41 in the hundred for the cost of working, the Government price is £80, and consequently we cannot consider the question on their proposition. We cannot treat the railway on the proposition that we could obtain a profit of 58 per cent., because we could not make such a profit out of it. The State is in the unique position of dealing with the land easily and on terms which no one else can. The State can secure the purchase and secure itself for the money; that will be satisfactory. If the Government can see their way clear to get possession of the land, they can put it under the Land Purchase Act and it can be made to pay any price the Government are prepared to give, any reasonable and proper price; it can be made to return the capital cost of the land and the railway, and the railway will be a permanent profit to the State. Holding that conviction, I must strongly support the motion before the House. This is all the Government should consider. There are no financial difficulties in the way, because the company are prepared, I understand—it was the case then, and I do not know of any change which has come since then—to take the State's 3 per cent. bonds at par for any price that may be agreed upon. It was a matter of £1,350,000; that was the price named then; a nominal quotation, no fixtures. There would be no financial difficulties in the transfer of the bonds. It would not affect our securities, because terms could be made for the bonds to be held so that they would not affect the market. I have perhaps strong feelings on the question, because I look on it as a great question to the State. Perhaps at

times I have said more about it than I ought to have said, but I have said nothing to my own personal interest.

THE PREMIER: Hear hear.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If I have erred in my conviction, I am here to express my conviction, and it is for the ultimate benefit of the State in which I live. I believe the proposition is a good one. I believe the time will come in the State when, no matter at what price, the State will buy the railway. The State will have to buy it, it seems to me, because public opinion is in favour of it, and unless we can secure a change in connection with the Midland Railway Company's land by a species of taxation which we have been talking about to-night, or some other process—it will be a long process anyhow—unless we take steps to moderate the terms, it must be ever a growing rather than a decreasing price, consequently there are no points in delay. If I thought we could change the circumstances and change the price, it would be a different thing. Whatever the price is within reason, I think that the Government should take the matter into consideration and be prepared, fortified by a vote of the House, to make a proposal in regard to the railway. The Government will not care to make a proposal which is unsatisfactory to the House, I am sure, but if they do the House will have to sanction the proposal; still to make a proposal will do no harm at all. It is possible in their desire to get free from a distant property the owners will come to decent terms, and I believe they will. My impression is that if properly managed the property can be secured at a satisfactory price to the State, but I am not sure that it will be satisfactory to the original owners. In fact I know it will not be so if everybody was paid twenty shillings in the pound, because then the company would want a big price. But the people who will suffer the greatest losses are no longer connected with the company: we have to deal with the present holders. If we go the right way about it the property can be secured. I do not favour the present do-nothing policy; something ought to be done. Some basis ought to be arrived at for acceptance or negation. We ought to negotiate in some way; there should be some fixture so that the country would

be able to say, "We cannot get it for so much, therefore we cannot buy it"; or "We can get it for so much and the country should buy it." I think good business can be done for the State, and I do not think any good will be gained by delay. I do not think anything we can do will make things better. I want to say that when I came into Parliament in 1894 there was no one in the House who said so much against or exposed the malpractices of the Midland Railway Company as I did. My speeches are on record. I have always been opposed to the company since its inception, and I have done all I could to oppose it. I was opposed to the £500,000; I was opposed to the £60,000; I was opposed to assistance being given to the railway all the time; and if the powers who were then responsible had done their duty to the State they would never have made that £500,000 advance, but they would have forfeited from the company any rights which the company possessed. Instead of that the Government abrogated the old conditions and made fresh ones, when the action of the company would have helped us to become the possessors of the railway. We have to meet affairs as they are. Certain things have been abrogated and certain other conditions made. At the present time the State is responsible for half a million of money at four per cent., and that is payable in 20 years. That half million should have been paid off, and our extra responsibility would not have been a great sum of money. This motion commits us to nothing more than asking the Government to endeavour—I presume during the recess, because we cannot do much before this Parliament lapses—either to make an offer or get a quotation from the Midland Company such as they can recommend this House to accept or reject, as the case may be. I would ask for nothing more than that. I ask that the present do-nothing policy shall cease, and that something shall be done to secure for the State this valuable tract of country, and if possible the railway as well. I hope the House will see its way clear to support the motion.

Mr. A. Y. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I intend to support the motion, and I simply rise to correct an impression which seems to exist in the North, as expressed by the member for Greenough

(Mr. Stone) some time ago, that those along the Great Southern Railway oppose the purchase of the Midland Railway. I had a great deal to do in relation to the purchase of the Great Southern Railway, of which I am not ashamed; and during the time I have been in the House I would have supported, if it had come to a division, a motion to purchase the Midland Railway at any satisfactory price.

Mr. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): I am afraid that motions of this description, like the indiscreet speech of the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) when he was Colonial Treasurer some time ago, only make it increasingly difficult for this country to bring about what we desire. I consider it far better to leave matters of this kind entirely to the discretion of the Government, because every time there is an agitation in this House or in the country to purchase the line, it puts up the backs of that company and makes it less easy to negotiate with them.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: It does not affect the matter a bit.

Mr. JACOBY: Anyhow, I have very good reason for believing that if there had been in the past less agitation in this House for the purchase of that line there might have been more desire on the part of the company to come to terms with the Government. I have no doubt that if an offer were made by the company, any Government would consider it a duty to make a tentative agreement for the purchase of that line on the best possible terms, and bring the matter before Parliament, and that would be the time for the subject to be discussed. If we pass a motion in favour of the purchase of this line, what are we committing ourselves to? Are we going to fill the pockets of the owners of the line with a tremendous amount of money for that concession? I should like to know, before I give my vote for the purchase of that line, what we are going to pay for it. We have the line, and the country is getting benefit from it; and I should be somewhat sorry to see taken away from this State a line which acts as a check upon the working of our own railways. Here we have a report from the Commissioner of Railways, which shows that we are practically paying for the working of our lines about 100 per cent. more than

the Midland Company are paying for the working of theirs, and even if we pick out Government lines almost identical as far as the service is concerned, we find that the comparison is greatly to the disadvantage of our own lines. If we could secure what we want most, that being the opening up of the lands of that concession, I for one should be perfectly content to allow the railway to continue in the possession of the company. From the reports of people who use the line, taken as a whole the service is a very satisfactory one. The whole dissatisfaction is in connection with the land policy of the company. I should like to see some method adopted, if it can honestly be done, to force that company to realise its lands, to make them available; and I cannot understand what reason actuates the company in taking up the policy it does, because surely it must be to the benefit of its own line to have settlement.

MR. MORAN: To force our hands.

MR. JACOBY: If we were to say, "We will not buy your line; we will make you bankrupt," we should get some good out of it; but whilst we keep up the present agitation and talk about buying the line, and not having the money to do it with, the company stiffens its back.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Say you will not buy the line.

MR. JACOBY: It would be better to do that than to go on as we are doing at present. I do not know whether something could be done by treaty for the purchase of the land, but at any rate as far as the country is concerned I cannot say whether the State lands are suffering any great disadvantage.

MR. BURGESS: What about the people living on the land?

MR. JACOBY: I will deal with that. The difficulty is that people who are selecting small areas of land are unable to obtain their titles. I have brought this matter forward before.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Are these small settlers complying with the usual conditions?

MR. JACOBY: I know of one instance where a settler has taken up 300 acres or something like that, and has cleared a large portion of the land and built a house, but at the present time he has not his title because the Minister for Lands

will not let him have it. One may ask Mr. Henry Brockman about that.

THE PREMIER: We are following out the recommendation of the select committee.

MR. MORAN: Those people are tenants at will.

MR. JACOBY: We are having a fairly satisfactory train service from the company.

MR. HASSELL: There was great complaint last year.

MR. JACOBY: We are, I say, having a fairly satisfactory service, and nearly all agree on that point. If it be not satisfactory, we shall be able to give power to the Government to make it so, provided there is no attempt to have confiscation or repudiation. I appeal to the House whether, now we have that line, it would not be far better to spend a million and a half in opening up other districts by railways. Our main object is to open up the country, and if the Midland Company provides a satisfactory service, why bother about the line? My vote would go, in preference, to voting a million and a half to open up some other portions of the country.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You would have to borrow money.

MR. JACOBY: If we buy this line we shall be a million and a half farther in debt, and shall have no additional railway, but if we build a new line we shall have new country opened up. I intend to vote against this motion, but not because I have no sympathy with the desire to have the line purchased on account of the lands. If the lands cannot be got without the line I should like to see the whole thing purchased, but if the land concession can be obtained without the railway, I prefer that to be done. I would like to see this motion withdrawn. I am sorry, indeed, to find that the mover of this motion, like the movers of half-a-dozen other motions which we have been discussing to-night, is not in his place. I think it inadvisable to bring such a motion as this forward, seeing that it only hampers the Government and makes it more difficult to bring about what we desire.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): No one can find much fault with the train service on the Midland line, which has accomplished a very useful purpose, and

has served people inland. The trouble is the land policy, and we want the company to realise the land. I support the motion to purchase this railway with its lands at any reasonable and fair price, under proper conditions. The Government have the purchase of the Great Southern Railway and its lands to guide them as to whether the deal would be a good one or not, and I think they are pleased to compare notes to see whether in the case of the Great Southern Railway a good deal was made. The roads boards throughout the district which this line traverses have started a system of local taxation of something like a penny in the pound or a halfpenny on the acre; and this will make the company consider their position. If a land tax be introduced, that will cause the company to either sell the line or run it at a great loss; so in my opinion if the Government open up negotiations with the company and point out the position, we can effect a satisfactory deal. In any case, if the line be purchased I would like to see it kept under separate management, seeing that the cost of managing the line now works out at half the cost of working the Government lines, and by having a section like the Midland line worked by separate management we could play one line off against the other, and get better results for the public.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mt. Magnet): It is refreshing to hear members like the member for the Swan (Mr. Jacoby) advocating the possession of the land by the Government, whilst desiring that the line should be left in the hands of the company. A number of people in this House and throughout the State have expressed an opinion on the remark by the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) some time ago, as to the value of that concern as a whole, and that opinion raised a suspicion that the persons conducting the business of the company were certainly a lot of born fools, who had in their hands a concern whose value they did not know. I hope members will disabuse their minds of that opinion of the company, and will realise that the company know what they have in their hands and are sound business men, having a sound business man at the head of their affairs in this State. The whole concern is for sale, like everything else

at a price, and had it not been for the policy of procrastination of the late Mr. Leake some time ago when the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone), Mr. Drew, and myself met him, the whole concern could have been bought at what I consider a fair price, and I base my opinion as to a fair price on the disposal of the land. I notice that when the Government are acquiring land they base the value of land they desire to obtain on the direct return they will get from that land. I want to say that my idea of the State purchasing this land with a view to close settlement is that even if the Government were directly losers by the transaction, the indirect benefit to the State would justify the Government in giving what was considered at the time more than the value of the land. In this property is a lot of valuable land, and through this procrastination policy of a former Government—I am inclined to think the present Government are following the example—the company are disposing of this very valuable land to pastoralists. The time will yet come when the State will have to buy these particular blocks back at a very high price indeed. If the Government wish to settle the northern part of the State above Gingin, it is their duty to approach the company and make a reasonable offer, and to go into the whole concern, making a valuation and endeavouring to strike a medium with the company to get possession of the concession. I know very well that the Government realise they have no chance of getting the land unless they take the railway; and that the railway cannot be run by the State at other than a loss is clear to everybody. I am not going into the conditions of running the line, for that is only a side issue so far as I am concerned to-day. However, if the Government bought out the whole of the concession, by settling people on the land they would increase in a few years the traffic to such an extent that, undoubtedly, within seven or ten years the line would be a paying concern. If the Government are going to compute the traffic on what it is to-day, naturally they would say they will have nothing to do with the concern; but I want the Government to look farther ahead and compute the actual number of persons they can settle on the land along the line, for by that

means they can arrive at the approximate traffic and will then see that the concern is worth buying. Certain members are interested in lands along this line, and they are not anxious that the Government should in any way force the hands of the company for fear that their taxation in the way of rent may be increased. This House has however very quietly submitted to one means of squeezing the company by subsidising the steamer service to Geraldton.

MR. JACOBY: We have not had that subject before us yet.

MR. WALLACE: It was discussed by the House, because a motion was passed on which the Government acted. Of course we will have an opportunity of again discussing it when we come to the Estimates. That was one of the means, however, by which the Government sought to squeeze the company, and I am sorry to think that any gentlemen forming a Ministry would be so blind to business tactics as to think that the company would be squeezed by that means. The directors of the company are not such fools as to have their noses cut off to spite their faces. If the Government are sincere in their desire to settle people on the land, the Treasurer can be intrusted with the duty of approaching the company and making a fair offer. I hope that the motion will be carried, notwithstanding the Government do not desire it since it would force their hands; but my experience is that unless the hands of the Government are forced, the railway and lands will be in the same state for the next ten years. Members should realise that we want people settled on this portion of the State, and that the only means of doing so is to become possessed of the railway as well as the land. The question then as to how the railway will be run is a matter which I will be satisfied to leave in the hands of the Treasurer, because he can devise a scheme as to how the line can be run in the interests of the persons settled in the north and along its route. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and I hope it will be passed.

MR. W. ATKINS (Murray): Although I do not hold any brief for the Midland Railway Company, I think it will be a good policy on the part of the Government to get the lands held by the com-

pany, if possible at a reasonable price. Certainly I do not think the price at which the Midland Company have sold some of the best of their lands is a reasonable price, and I think this House to a great extent forgets that the company are picking the eyes out of their land and selling it at such high prices, that the balance of the land which will be left for the Government to buy will be of very inferior value. I think it would be well, however, that the Government should get that land, but I think the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) was rather out when he said that the interest on the emoluments derived from the railway by the Midland Railway Company would, if the Government held the line, pay the interest on the money required for the purchase of the land at three per cent. The Midland Railway Company are making a profit because the cost of their working expenses is 41 per cent. of their earnings; but the Government working expenses are 84 per cent. Where therefore does the three per cent. come in? If there is anything to be done at all, why not let the Midland people keep the railway which they are running at a good percentage, and out of which they are doing well, and try to get the land. There is no doubt that as a State-owned railway it will never pay the percentage on the capital cost that it earns under the present management.

MR. MORAN: Why not hand over all our railways to private companies?

MR. ATKINS: I think so too.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): I have been waiting patiently for a member of the Government to enlighten us as to the position of affairs with regard to the Midland Railway Company. I understand that every member of this House, in fact every member of the community, is anxious to see that this concession of land and railway is taken over by the State. The desire is that such a thing should take place, but we all have the fear, so well expressed by the member for the Swan (Mr. Jacoby), that if this motion is passed for the purchase of the concession, the company will simply put up their price. The member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) says that it will not have much effect. In this respect it will not, that the liquidators will keep the land so long as it pays them to keep

it. They will only sell if they get an offer of such a price that it will pay them better to sell out and invest elsewhere. The liquidators are treated much better in regard to the amount they are charged by this State than they would be treated elsewhere. They have received every possible consideration. Up to the time the "Julia Percy" was started they could not have been treated better elsewhere. The liquidators are not particularly charitable persons, and they are only likely to sell their concession if the Treasurer would say, "Give us your land. Here is a million and a-half or a couple of millions." They would not sell for a million and a-half if they thought, by waiting on, the Treasurer would advance the sum by half a million more. Although I am very anxious that the Government should take over this concession, I have a hesitancy in voting for the motion on the ground that it may encourage these people to ask for more money than they would be willing to take if no such motion was passed. Several subsidiary questions in connection with this matter have been brought forward. For instance, it is said that the people along the line and at the end of the line are content with the management of the railway. I was along the line the other day and, so far as I could gather, there was nothing particularly wrong with the way in which the line is run. I also met a fair number of people in Geraldton and on the Murchison, including Mount Magnet, and from what I recollect of what they told me the people there said that the Midland Company were forwarding their goods at a very cheap rate, and that they had been doing so ever since the opposition of the steamship was seriously started. If the Government followed the policy that obtained up to a few months ago and allowed the company a monopoly, such as the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Wallace) desires, the company would cease to give the concessions in freight they give at the present time. I may not be stating the case quite clearly, but that is how it appears to me. With reference to the question of leaving the railway to be continued under private management, I have often expressed the opinion in this House that the most serious question in connection with a

company owning a private line was that the company had a monopoly of a district. However, a company cannot have a monopoly if it is subject to opposition, and the Midland Railway Company is no more subject to opposition here than it would be in England or any where else. If a company ran a line from Liverpool to Glasgow or to any other part of Great Britain along the coast, that company would be subject to the very greatest possible steamship competition—exactly the same competition that obtains here at the present time; and even if the people wished for cheap freights and could not get them, they would subsidise a service exactly as the Government have done in this case. In other words the Treasurer has only followed a good English precedent, and I am surprised at such an enlightened member as the member for Mount Magnet not falling in with it. One fault certainly has been found with the Midland Company, in regard to the manner in which they deal with their land. In fact I had something to say on the matter to-day, when I was very careful to point out—and I am very glad the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone) agrees with me—as I wish to point out again, that the same thing obtains not only on the Midland line, but in many other places up in that direction. In fact, in going through the famous agricultural district of Greenough I saw several large sections of unused land. When I asked why it was idle, the answer was, "Because the people of Greenough have quite enough land under cultivation already, and are not anxious to cultivate that idle land, or give anyone else power to cultivate it." So that the Midland Company alone should not be blamed for refusing to allow their land to be used. However, if any scheme is brought before the House by which the Midland Company and other people who hold lands and refuse to allow them to be used can be touched, I feel quite certain that the majority of this House will agree to it. The member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) stated that another satisfactory solution of this difficulty would be to impose some conditions on the Midland Company. I hope the Government and the House will take up that idea; for I feel certain that if the Government can only convince the

Midland Railway Company that in a short time the company will be called on to pay a very substantial tax, they will consider before allowing their revenue to be thus diminished. So long as we continue to keep the company in their present position they will always be inclined to ask a much higher price than they are entitled to. If any negotiations are commenced, I hope the Treasurer will bear in mind that what the country has to pay is the cost of the actual work done, and not the fanciful prices which will no doubt be named by the company. Probably they will ask from three to five times as much as they actually spent in this State.

THE TREASURER: Five times as much would be fairly strong.

MR. HASTIE: I do not think it an unlikely demand. I need not ask the Treasurer not to have any bowels of compassion for the debenture-holders, because the present debenture-holders have not spent very much money, and have not entered on a risky enterprise. All they did was to make sure that they had a very good security for the money advanced, and that there was no risk whatever of their losing by the investment. On another question, there must be some difference of opinion—what is the attitude of the people who live alongside the railway, and of the people at the end of the railway, in the Geraldton and Magnet districts? When I was there, I found that opinion was divided, and this has been the experience of other members. Some of the local residents wish the Government to take over the whole of the line; others are of a contrary opinion. My own idea is that, if at all possible, arrangements should be made for the line being taken over quickly.

MR. MORAN: Where shall we raise a million and a-half?

MR. HASTIE: It was pointed out by the ex-Treasurer (Mr. Illingworth) and others, that we should not need to find any money at all. We can give the company bonds, and those bonds will not increase our general indebtedness. The hon. member assured the House that there was no difficulty about the money, because the company were willing to take our bonds and to agree not to put them on the market in competition with our other bonds. I presume the hon. mem-

ber is satisfied that such an arrangement would not increase the indebtedness of the State, nor injure its credit. If so, the scheme would do no harm. But my experience of people in England, as of people elsewhere, is that they will not enter into any arrangement unless it pays them well; and I hope that the Treasurer will, in considering this, bear in mind that he ought not to make any arrangement which will give the company too much for their railway and their land.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): No one in this Chamber or in this country has a keener desire than I, nor has anybody for years past had a keener desire than I have had, that the country should again become possessed of this its natural property, the land held by the Midland Railway Company. This question is an old source of contention in the House, and has given rise to most animated discussions in years gone by. I moved on two occasions with a view to legislation which any ordinary British possession should be entitled to make in reference to its lands, denying not for one moment that my idea was, as it is and always will be, that the company had violated in spirit every one of the covenants entered into with this State when the company first got that concession. And it was on this question that I had in this Chamber, for the first time in many years, a heated discussion with Sir John Forrest, in which a certain animus was displayed. He, being then Premier, was on all occasions averse to what I considered justice to the country in dealing with the Midland concession. He always protected the company, and argued that it would be unfair to take their lands. I opposed him on two separate occasions at great length; for days in this House we carried on the fight; and the Premier won. I have made this question a special feature of my career in this House, and have no desire to be looked on as one unmindful of the obligations of this State in any bargain which it concludes. But what are the facts? This was not in its essence a railway scheme; it was what is known as a colonisation scheme pure and simple; and the railway was one of the desiderata in carrying out that colonisation scheme. Now are we bound to believe that this country is under any special obligation, in

dealing with lands of the company, apart from the obligations the country is under in dealing with the lands of our numerous State tenants? I have always held that there has never been any possible justification for the action of past Governments in shielding the company from the operation of proposed land taxation. So far back as 1900 I made a motion in this House, because at that time there were rumours in the air that the Midland Company wished their concession to be bought; and the truth of this was admitted by the Premier, though in the course of the debate he said, "They are only verbal offers." I moved that we should have a careful examination and a detailed valuation of the Midland Railway and the rest of the company's property; that a complete valuation should be made of the rolling-stock; that these valuations should be on a cash basis of actual value; and that a thorough audit of the railway accounts of the company should be made by the Government. The motion was strenuously opposed by the then Premier (Sir John Forrest), and so far as results went was defeated ignominiously. But none the less I contend that had my course of action been followed in years gone by, we should now be in possession of the Midland Railway, after having paid a fair price for it. My motion was strenuously opposed by the then Premier, and by a leading member of the Opposition, Mr. F. Wilson. The Premier said it was impertinent on my part to propose to inquire into the affairs of the company. But I pointed out that at the same time he was proposing to pass legislation which would make every man send in a return of his private business. And yet, forsooth, the great Midland concession, which was half a national affair, must not be touched at all! I shall not read the quotation, being sure that members will credit my statement of its substance. Mr. Wilson also opposed me very strenuously at that time, and said: "I think it would be most detrimental to have such a valuation made as now proposed. It would certainly depreciate the assets of the company, because naturally the valuation would not be the figure which they put upon their property." He opposed my making an impartial valuation, though such a valuation

would have given us a good basis to work on. But a more important debate ensued later on, in which I again spoke in reference to this very company. What was known as the Rural Lands Improvement Bill was brought before this House by the Forrest Government. The Bill was initiated and inspired by the grand old man of land legislation in Western Australia, the Hon. George Throssell; and had he been given his way—but he was not—the Midland lands would have been included. But a clause was inserted on which a debate of great length and importance, adjourned from day to day, took place in the House. The clause exempted the very lands which ought to have been included—the Midland concession. I moved that the clause be struck out. Here was a Bill for the improvement of rural lands in this State, following the policy of Mr. Throssell, which has always been to insist upon improvement—witness the present motion. The Government stonewalled me on that occasion, and ultimately moved an adjournment, which was secured by, I think, one vote. I do not want to read the report of that debate. The Premier and I had a heated discussion, and Sir John Forrest stated that there was some sort of tacit understanding with the company that they should get ten years' notice before any land tax was imposed; and on being pressed, the Premier admitted that such an understanding found no place in the agreement, but said there was a sort of understanding to that effect. Sir John Forrest was actuated by one motive. He considered that fair play should be given to the company, because he thought they had done good work in the past, and therefore should be given every chance. Why should the company, who had by some means or other violated every covenant in their contract, evaded them in some way, receive exemption while our own people, holding the lands of the State, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, are compelled to improve their lands, while these absenters are not compelled to improve theirs? I moved the deletion of the clause in the following words:—

Having arrived at the kernel of the Bill, this colony had a duty to perform to itself and to its people; for we had treated the Midland Railway Company with every liber-

ality, having met them fairly and squarely on every clause of the concession, and the colony had done more than that, for it came to the assistance of the other party to the contract.

I went on to point out that the time had come to include this company in the scheme for the general improvement of the State. I suggested that we should take no notice of the Midland Railway, but that we should insist, in the best interests of Western Australia, that the vacant lands should be improved. That discussion went on for days, and an amendment was moved by Mr. Quinlan to give the company some years' notice—not only the Midland Company but all absentees. The Rural Lands Act was not to come into force for some years, and Mr. Quinlan was encouraged to give the absentees a few years longer than the ordinary landowner. He proposed that the land taxation under the Bill should come into play in the year 1902; that was last year. The result was that we were defeated in the heel of the hunt by a majority of one. The Ayes numbered 12 and the Noes 13. There had been an ineffectual struggle in this Chamber doing what the House did last session and what the House is doing now. I am opposed to the motion; I ask the House not to pass it. I have full confidence in the Government of the country. I know they are fully alive to the whole question, and that they will deal with the company, the railway, and the lands in the best way they can. The Government are not asleep; they have the full confidence and the powers of the House. They can make the best possible proposals, and they can come to the House for ratification. Why should it be proposed to play into the hands of a company who have been acting a dog-in-the-manger policy for years, who have treated their tenants worse than the tenants of the Irish landlords were treated? This young progressive State wants land, and should have it. The company are blocking the settlement of the best land of the State. People come to us for land, and we should be able to give it. There are two notices of motion on the Notice Paper, one by Mr. Throssell, saying that the time has come to tax unimproved lands, and the other by the member for Kanowna, stating that the time has come for a general unimproved land tax; and before we give a chance for

the passing of these motions we advertise to the world that the Government are instructed by the House to purchase this railway. That can have only one effect, to defeat our aspirations; and what are our aspirations? To give a full and complete price and reward to the company for their concession. If I had power to-morrow I would not deduct one penny from the fair value of the concession. Neither am I going to enhance the value of the company's security by telling them that we are going to buy their property. It is most unstatesmanlike for the House to authorise the Government to purchase the railway. Why should we not ignore the existence of the Midland Railway?

MR. WALLACE: They know we want it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You cannot tell them anything they do not know.

MR. MORAN: What is the use of the motion? If I had any office in the Government of the country, I would insist that this motion should not be carried. I think any Government, with the interests of the country at heart, should come down to the House boldly and carry out one of the conditions asked for in the two motions which are now before the House. Let the Midland Company know that Western Australia will have their land utilised. If a man gets land given to him on conditional purchase, he has to improve it. If a pastoral lessee has any land given him, it is on condition that he shall use it. Every lessee in the State who gets land has to improve his land. The man who gets land by virtue of his miner's right has to improve the land within his pegs, and the mining lessee receives land on consideration that he carries out the labour covenants. Why should consideration be given to the Midland Company after what has been done for them? Let us pursue the policy of saying that the lands of this country must be used. I ask the House not to pass the motion. Even if the Midland Railway Company can work their railway at 40 per cent., we could not have a ridiculous proposal to buy their land at such a price. We must reduce the working expenses of our system. We cannot buy the land and let the company have the railway. The proposition must be a whole and entire proposition. We want the land, but we do not want it so badly

that we are going to buy it at an exorbitant price. We want the lands to be improved. I am informed that the railway is giving a good service. All the more reason why we should not be in a hurry. If the railway is giving a good service, let us go on with our land policy. We have several reasons before us in the Chamber why the motion should not be passed. I entreat for its delay until we have dealt with the motion proposed by Mr. Throssell and the motion proposed by the member for Kanowna. Do not let us pass the motion now ; it is unwise. We are giving the Government no more power than they have, but we are advertising to the company, by passing the motion, that the Government are instructed to buy their railway and their land. It is the same all the world over : if a man knows that you want a thing and are keen after it, up goes the price. Let us deal with the lands of the country and let us insist on the conditions being carried out all over the State the same as we insist with our State tenants. I have not heard one word from the Government on this subject, but I have implicit confidence in them in regard to this matter. This question came before the Government of which I was a member. It came up on a letter from the Agent General, but I cannot give the exact terms : I am not going to commit a breach of faith. That railway was to be purchased—I am now speaking only as a private member—and I believe that line would have been purchased at less than the price which has been stated now had we pursued the policy which would have been part of the policy I believe of the Throssell Government. The Rural Lands Bill would have had an influence in this matter. The Government have no credit at the present time to buy that railway. There is no system of juggling with figures to get out of the position, for the Government will have to pay the interest on the whole of the money which they pay for the railway, and the earnings do not warrant that. We have other urgent works in hand which we require our credit for. As one who has taken the keenest interest in this matter for years, and one who feels a full sense of his responsibility, I beg that the motion be delayed, and not passed by this Parliament.

MR. DAGLISH (Subiaco) : In the absence of the member for Toodyay (the mover), I move the adjournment of the debate.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James) : If the hon. member will permit me, I suggest that the motion be withdrawn. It has been suggested by the member who moved the motion, and by those who have supported it, that there is a desire to purchase the railway and the land concession. May I say that it is the worst possible step to take, if we desire to purchase the line, to advertise the fact of our desire to do so. I think members are taking rather a short-sighted view of the question. There is a great deal of work to be done in the State. No doubt we should like to own the railway, and we should like to own and settle the lands ; but, on the other hand, there are works in various parts of the State which need to be done, and there are portions of the State which need to be opened up where there is no railway communication, and where people require railway communication to enable the full development of that land to be carried out. We have a great deal of settlement going on in the south-west and the southern areas, and that is due to the fact that there is a large extent of good agricultural land in that particular centre. If the land covered by the Midland Railway Company's concession was open for settlement, probably we should not obtain such good results as we are obtaining now from the Crown lands which are open for settlement. The State is affected just as an individual is. The more land that is open to selection, the more rush there is in giving it away. We have at present any amount of land available for those who want land to settle on ; and looking at the interests of the State, not measuring the interests with to-day, because the life of a country is not measured by a day or by a few months—looking a few years ahead, can anyone say that the best interests of the State should be sacrificed because to-day we are unable to carry on settlement over the concession held by the Midland Railway Company, when we have in the south-western portion of the State a great area that can be and is being settled ? It has been pointed out by the member for West Perth that it is idle to

say because the Midland Company have a concession to sell and will take from us bonds for it, that means nothing. It adds to our indebtedness. It is on the debit side of the balance-sheet, and the English people who are called on to lend us money appreciate that fact. There is this privately-owned railway, and it is not suggested that the railway is worth anything like the price asked for it; but it is suggested that we should give the price, because we should receive back into our hands a large area of agricultural land. I have already stated we have at present a large area of agricultural land for settlement. The tying up of the Midland Company's lands will no doubt militate against the local centres; but we want members to look at the matter from the standpoint of the State as a whole; and I say farther, why should not this Midland Company, owning such a large area of land, be called on to submit to the same kind of obligation which we find existing in other States when development is being throttled by the company's action. This company have received from the State the most generous treatment. I know of no company which has received so much kindness and consideration, but time will show that they must not expect too generous treatment at our hands, and we must emphasise that. The company must do the best they can to develop their lands and show more reason in the price which they ask for it. I should like to see the various parts of the State developed, but we are losing nothing, and the ultimate development of the State is not being sacrificed by not having this land available for settlement to-day. I hope that the motion will not be pressed, but that it will be withdrawn.

At 6-30, the DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, the SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): I wish to say a few words on this motion, and to join with other members in expressing my objection to it. On the face of it the motion may have something to recommend itself, assuming that by purchasing the railway and the land the State is getting back a great deal of what it has parted with; but the fact is that, instead of getting back the whole of the land, we should get

only half of it. We may assume that the remainder is the best portion of the land originally obtained; therefore, if we want to do anything satisfactory in the way of settling these lands, it must be very much more than the purchase of the Midland Railway and the land the company now hold. I certainly think with many others that it is very wise to let the company run that railway. They can run it much more cheaply than the Government, and I believe as satisfactorily, and from the expressions of opinion I have heard from a good many travellers on that line, it is as well if not better managed than the Government line is between Mullewa Junction and the goldfields; so that, as far as I can see, there is a great deal to lose, for the purchase of the line would result in a loss if the Government ran it at the same cost as that of the present Government railways. The matter of the land is altogether a broader subject than that touched upon in this motion, because if we are going to insist on a policy of improving the land, this will not achieve that object, apart from the wisdom of attempting to force people to sell. What occurred to me might be done—I do not know whether it is quite feasible or not—to surmount the difficulties of dealing with land already alienated would be something in this way: to impose a system of taxation with great exemptions, that is to put a tax on all lands, but anyone who had done a certain amount of improvement would be exempt. That appears to be one way of getting at a person without violating the principles which operate against any direct aim at people owning land and not improving it. The principle of exemption is one accepted in law and in practice, and if what is desired could be achieved in that way we could then deal not only with the lands at present held by the Midland Railway Company, but with those lands, amounting to something over 2,000,000 acres of the best of that original concession, which have now been disposed of. I trust the House will definitely say it will not adopt this motion, but hope that during the recess the Government will be able to prove to the bondholders that their interest lies in parting with the land and holding the railway, which I believe would be of advantage to the State.

Question put, and negatived on the voices.

FACTORIES BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the previous day.

Mr. HARPER in the Chair; the PREMIER in charge of the Bill.

New Clause:

THE PREMIER moved that the following be added as Clause 58:

Every inspector shall, in relation to factories, have all the powers of an inspector appointed under the Health Act, 1898, and the powers and duties of inspectors appointed under that Act shall, in relation to factories, be exercised by inspectors appointed under this Act, under the direction and control of the Central Board of Health.

This would prevent a factory owner from being harassed by three or four different inspectors, for it would give to an inspector appointed under the Factories Act all the powers now enjoyed by a local board inspector and the Central Board inspector.

Clause passed, and added to the Bill.

New Clause:

MR. DAGLISH moved that the following be added as a new clause:—

It shall be unlawful for any person to deliver bread or cause bread to be delivered from a cart or in the street, or at any house or premises on the third Wednesday in every month, unless the day before or the day following such Wednesday be a public holiday. The object was to give to this class of employee and factory owner a monthly holiday. In the metropolitan district the Arbitration Court had given an award providing for a monthly holiday in regard to bread-carters. The weak point of the award was that the baker himself could deliver bread on the holiday, and that by the establishment of an unfair competition with the man who did not himself undertake the work of delivering bread the principle of the holiday would break down. He (Mr. Daglish) had been asked by some of the masters and by the workmen to move that the clause be added to the Bill. There was no work so arduous as that of bread-carting, and both masters and men did not desire the principle of the holiday to break down.

MR. PIGOTT hoped the Committee would not adopt the clause, as the reasons given by the member for Subiaco were not good enough. It was claimed that

because a man wished to use his own time and his own labour at his own expense to enhance his livelihood, he should be prevented from doing so. It would be quite a horrible state of affairs for any Parliament to reach, to say that it had power to limit any man using his own powers to earn money for himself. Every man had the right to use his own powers, and to make every effort to make his livelihood as good as possible.

MR. BATH: That applied to a high-way robber.

MR. DIAMOND: And to burglary.

MR. PIGOTT: If it could be shown that the baker was doing any harm by delivering bread on the holiday, the clause should be supported.

MR. JOHNSON: Then the hon. member would have to support the clause?

MR. PIGOTT: A man should be able to use his own ability, so long as he was not doing it to the detriment of others. By the clause it was desired to make a criminal of the man who delivered bread on a holiday.

MR. HIGHAM: The clause was worthy of farther consideration. There was no real necessity for making it part of the Bill. The Fremantle bakers had agreed amongst themselves to have one holiday during the month, and we did not hear of any dissension among them. It would be unwise to make it absolutely compulsory to refrain from delivering bread on a certain Wednesday afternoon, and at Fremantle in connection with the shipping trade it would be impossible. Ships might arrive on the holiday, and must be supplied with bread. It would be better to have a mutual understanding among the bakers. Such a condition worked well in Fremantle, and should work well in other places.

MR. DAGLISH: The question as to whether it was desirable to make the Wednesday holiday compulsory on bakers did not arise, because it had already been made compulsory on a large majority of bakers. A small handful, however, had been omitted from the award of the Arbitration Court. The member for West Kimberley could not see why all men should be put on the same footing; but his argument would apply to no interference by the State in any shape or form with the hours men worked, and would apply against the whole principle of the

Arbitration Act. The principle of State interference had been adopted long since, and no argument was necessary to show that it should be extended to the baking trade. The clause only put a few men on the same basis as the majority.

MR. PIGOTT: It was sought to make the award apply to both masters and servants.

MR. DAGLISH: The award of the Court applied to both masters and servants up to a certain point, but stopped short with regard to a small handful in the trade within the area covered by the award. There was, however, a large portion of the State, which would probably be in factory districts, uncovered by the award, and the amendment would bring these people within the conditions imposed by the award.

MR. PIGOTT: They could go to the Court if they had any complaints.

MR. DAGLISH did not want the support of the member for West Kimberley, who had never supported anything in the interests of the great majority, for all his interests were with the handful, and he was always in favour of anything adverse to the interests of the majority, such as on the question of Chinese exclusion.

THE PREMIER: The member for West Kimberley voted for their exclusion, on the previous night.

MR. DAGLISH: That was only because the hon. member had the chance of a slap at the Government. The House should adopt the clause.

MR. HAYWARD: In the case of a steamer, could bread be delivered on board on the holiday?

MR. DAGLISH: There was nothing in the clause to prevent the delivering of bread to ships. Ships were not "premises." An amendment to except ships would be accepted.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member could not ask the House to accept the clause, for two reasons. The first was that the Arbitration Court had cognisance of such matters and had power to regulate them. An award had been made dealing with the matter, and if it was not effective because some persons could not be got at, there was reason for amending the Arbitration Act. The second reason was that if in connection with the Factories Bill we took up department by department, occupation by

occupation, and clause by clause, and provided when a carter, a butcher, a baker, or any other employee should work and should not work, it would not be a Factories Bill at all.

MR. DAGLISH: The masters had agreed to the clause.

THE PREMIER: That did not matter. The Factories Bill was before the House.

MR. DAGLISH: A bakehouse was a factory.

THE PREMIER: Undoubtedly; but a street was not, nor were the premises to which the bread was delivered factories.

MR. DAGLISH: The carter came under the Act.

THE PREMIER: So also might the butcher come under the Act. There were several occupations under the provisions of the Act, but we had abstained from mentioning the hours of labour in regard to factories. The matter had been discussed last session, and a large majority then decided to leave it to the Arbitration Court. For that reason the clause dealing with carters had been struck out of the Bill; but the clause now proposed by the hon. member adduced the same thing in regard to the delivery of bread. He (the Premier) did not approve of the clause nor its substance. If a man was carrying on as a small trader and had no employees working with him, he should have the right to deliver bread on the holiday. The same question arose in the Early Closing Act. Some preference should be given to the small man, and under these circumstances the clause should be rejected.

MR. DIAMOND: There was no objection to the clause except on the ground mentioned by the member for Fremantle. Shipping ports should be exempted. If the hon. member would alter his clause so that the delivery of bread to ships should not be prevented, he (Mr. Diamond) would support it. In a port like Fremantle the clause would prevent the delivery of bread to ships, which had to leave at all hours.

THE PREMIER: Why should not the bakers in Fremantle have one Wednesday half-holiday per month?

MR. DIAMOND: The shipping trade of any port must be governed by special laws.

THE PREMIER: Why should not the men on the ships eat stale bread?

MR. DIAMOND: They would not be able to get any bread.

THE PREMIER: Yes; on Wednesday morning.

MR. DAGLISH: For the convenience of shipping he would consent to the clause being altered, if a member desiring the alteration moved an amendment.

MR. BATH: Opponents of this class of legislation always discovered that it was restrictive; but all laws were restrictive. The Premier said that bakers who did not employ carters should not be subject to the clause.

THE PREMIER: Members wishing to impose restrictions should show that these were in the interest of the State.

MR. BATH: The Arbitration Court had decided that certain men in the baking trade should have a half-holiday once a month. This did not apply to the small number of master bakers who did not employ men; hence the decision of the Court was nullified, for these few bakers would have an undue advantage over their business rivals.

THE PREMIER: Why should the small men be handicapped?

MR. BATH: They would not be handicapped, but would have an undue advantage over those compelled to refrain from work on holidays. To ask that all should observe the same conditions was not to restrict liberty.

MR. ATKINS: The Labour members tried at all times to gain advantages for trade unionists; but why try to prevent a small master baker from working if he liked? If a large employer liked to work on the half-holiday let him do so.

MR. JOHNSON: The award of the Arbitration Court applied to unionist and non-unionist alike. In this matter the Labour party were making no special effort on behalf of unionists. The Premier said the new clause would handicap the industrious baker who did not employ labour. Not so. The court had determined that bakers should have a monthly half-holiday. The grocer could on the Tuesday take in a stock of bread and deliver it through his carters. The clause would not hamper the small baker who did his own baking and consequently had to employ a carter. The only man assisted by the award would be he who was not a baker and who could sell bread on Wednesday, though bakers

were debarred from employing their carters to sell it.

MR. HIGHAM: This motion would prevent the grocer also from delivering bread on the half-holiday.

MR. DAGLISH: The clause was not an experiment, having been in operation for some time in certain districts of Victoria without any of the dreadful consequences anticipated by members here. The member for the Murray (Mr. Atkins) in his anxiety to conserve the interests of the struggling baker, should have been present when the Bread Bill was considered, for he could then have moved to provide that the struggling baker should have a right to bake and to deliver bread on a Sunday. That Bill prevented the making of bread on four days per month, and this clause would give a fifth holiday.

MR. PIGOTT: Labour members' arguments were confusing. One said the new clause was to benefit the employee and the baker; another that the clause was to put all bakers on one level. Could we put a baker with only one horse and cart on the same level as the baker with a dozen? A third member said the clause was not for the benefit of the baker but of the grocer, though it appeared that the grocer had to confine himself to delivering groceries. These conflicting arguments were not convincing. A unanimous argument would have carried some weight.

MR. DAGLISH: The arguments were not conflicting, but supplementary.

MR. PIGOTT: Probably another Labour member would say the clause was to benefit the butcher. We had passed enough clauses dealing with the hours of labour; we had constituted an Arbitration Court; and as he pointed out when the Arbitration Bill was considered, as long as the awards of the Arbitration Court were given in favour of the workers the awards were accepted honourably, but when they were given in favour of the employer there might be some doubt as to whether they would be loyally kept. Questions as to the number of hours to be worked by men should be kept out of the Factories Bill.

MR. MORAN: Last session he promised to support this amendment at the request of a large number of employees and some of the master bakers in his electorate. No injury would be done to

the small man who was competing all the time with the big man, and no advantage was given by one person over the other. There were exceptions in every case. When a Factories Bill was passed it was only meant to apply to Perth; and when an Early Closing Act was passed, certain shopkeepers were not compelled to close. He was at a loss to understand what need there was to make any reference to the Arbitration Court. Laws were made for the guidance of the Arbitration Court, and this clause would provide that one holiday a month should be given to the bakers. He recognised the difficulty of delivering bread to ships, but it was easy to say that the clause should have no reference to any person delivering bread to any ship in port at any time. A man who employed no labour in his business always had the pull over the man who employed labour. He (Mr. Moran) would vote for the clause because the employees outnumbered the employers ten to one, and he wished to give a certain holiday to the larger number. He was against enlarging the legislative powers of a creature of Parliament like the Arbitration Court. It was not part of the business of that court to deal with matters similar to that dealt with in the clause. Why strain now at this little gnat when all Australia had swallowed the camel of early closing?

MR. DIAMOND: The only objection to the clause was the delivery of bread to ships; therefore he moved—

That the following words be added to the proposed new clause: "Provided that the delivery of bread to ships arriving or departing on the day in question be not interfered with."

MR. HAYWARD: The words "arriving or departing" were objectionable, as steamers in port having a lot of passengers on board could not do without bread for a day.

MR. DIAMOND agreed to the words "arriving or departing" being struck out of the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	14

Majority Against ... 3

AYES.
Mr. Bath
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Holman
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Moran
Mr. Reid
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Daglish (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Atkins
Mr. Burges
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Jacoby
Mr. James
Mr. Pigott
Sir J. G. Leo Steere
Mr. Stone
Mr. Yelverton
Mr. Higham (Teller)

Clause thus negatived.

New Clause:

MR. WALLACE moved that the following be added as a clause:

Every cabinet-maker and dealer in furniture, who sells or offers for sale goods manufactured wholly or partly by Asiatic labour, and whether imported or manufactured in Western Australia, shall—(1.) Stamp such goods in the prescribed manner, with the words "Asiatic labour"; and (2.) Keep securely fixed outside of his shop, and facing the main thoroughfare, a notice on which shall be legibly painted the words "The goods sold in this shop are made [or partly made, as the case may be] by Asiatic labour."

This clause could not be called new, because he moved it last session when the Factories Bill was before the House, and it was carried by a good majority, those who supported it including the members for the South-West Mining District, Bunbury, Geraldton, Fremantle, Dundas, and West Perth. He had had a chat with several furniture dealers, and they approved of the clause. Numerous people were prejudiced against furniture manufactured by Asiatics, more particularly he believed because people knew they did not get the same quality of workmanship as in furniture manufactured by English workers. A report by a Royal Commission in Victoria in 1902-3 showed that the value of the furniture exported from Victoria to Western Australia in 1896 was £25,551, as against £7,004 in 1902. The falling off was principally due to the fact that the Victorian Factories Act largely restricted the operations of Asiatic furniture makers, the result being that Asiatics were flocking into Western Australia. He wished to emphasise the danger of a large, unlimited influx of Chinese into this State during the last year or so. The material used by Asiatics was certainly not the best, and he would be almost accurate in saying it was the worst; but the Chinese were able to so polish it that it deceived

ordinary buyers, there being nothing to show whether the furniture was made by European or Asiatic. The Chinese were past-masters in dovetailing, and a prominent furniture dealer admitted that it was extremely difficult to detect an article manufactured by them.

MR. DIAMOND, in supporting the new clause, said he confidently expected a majority of the Committee would do likewise. If people wanted to buy goods manufactured by sweated Chinese, they should know what they were getting. The clause meant no injustice to the Chinese. It simply meant justice to the purchaser.

MR. ILLINGWORTH felt justified in claiming the vote of the Premier, for the Premier was the first to endeavour to bring in legislation to limit the operations of Asiatics and the conditions under which they should enter the State. The Premier's best argument was to treat the Asiatic by making the country not too profitable for him to live in, so that he would be the hewer of wood and drawer of water rather than a competitor in the higher arts; and cabinet-making was one of the high arts so far as labour was concerned. Every consistent opponent of Asiatics would refuse to buy cabinet-work or work of that character manufactured by Asiatics. Consequently if we wished to reduce the profits of that business, so far as Asiatics were concerned, and to restrict them to other lines, such as cabbage growing, we should make it plain that the goods they manufactured were manufactured by Asiatics; and the best way to do so was to stamp the goods. Then of course every Labour member and every Labour member's wife would evade the shop marked as selling Chinese stamped goods. There could be no difference on the question. We should brand articles made by Asiatics and the shops selling those goods made by Asiatics, and people should be consistent in avoiding such shops. Thus we could restrict the Asiatics to such channels of labour as would leave them hewers of wood and drawers of water.

THE PREMIER: Some members would be disappointed to learn that he could not support the clause, for he looked upon it as entirely ineffective, and looked on its discussion as a waste of good time. One could not quarrel with

the hon. member for not being consistent. While making the clause apply to all goods made by Asiatics the hon. member wished it to apply only to the cabinet-making trade, as that was the evil in his mind. If the clause went farther we should have to limit the term "goods," since it meant far more than the hon. member intended. The object of the clause was to limit goods made by Chinamen in the State, and the member for Cue was quite right in saying that he (the Premier) was the first to seek to limit the occupations of Chinese. It was, however, extremely difficult to deal with the trades of these people except by passing laws relating to health matters. However strong we might feel with regard to Asiatic labour we should not be unjust to these Asiatics. The world would exist a very long time, and it would not be long before Australia would be rid of all Chinamen.

MR. DAGLISH: They were increasing.

THE PREMIER: They were only increasing in this State because they came here from the Eastern States. The main object of the clause was to limit persons to whom the Chinese could sell goods.

MR. DIAMOND: It was to enable people to buy with their eyes open.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That might be the effect, but it was not the object of the clause.

THE PREMIER: No person wanted to know that goods were made by Chinese in order that he might buy more of them.

MR. DAGLISH: A person could do so if he desired.

THE PREMIER: The contention was that if persons knew by whom the furniture was made they would not buy Chinese-made goods.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: People registered brands in order that they might popularise their goods.

THE PREMIER: Then all the Europeans could register brands and the Chinamen could not copy them, so that there would be no need for the clause. He objected to placing a limit on these men now that we had them in the State. He also objected to the subclause which provided that their goods should be stamped with the words "Asiatic labour."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The stamp "Made in Germany" was law in Great Britain.

THE PREMIER: The injunction of the clause was either a gross injustice or useless. It was a gross injustice if we insisted that the brand should be placed in such a position that anybody could see it, for it would mean a defacement of the furniture. Otherwise the brand would be useless, for a brand on the back of a chest of drawers would not be seen.

MR. JOHNSON: The brand was put in the drawer, and the person pulling the drawer out could see it.

THE PREMIER: If we wished to discourage the public from buying goods made by Asiatics by placing a brand where it could be seen, we could only do so by placing the brand in a prominent position. We would thus deface the furniture. The matter had been abundantly proved by the experience of Victoria, where there was a provision for branding furniture. The provision was of no use in that State, for as much Chinese furniture was sold as ever, and year after year there was the complaint that the Chinamen controlled the furniture-making trade of Victoria. The injunction must be useless if the brand was put where it could not be seen. The only effect of the other proposed subclause would be that Chinese furniture would be sold in Chinese shops.

MR. WALLACE: That would be all right. The public would know what they were buying.

THE PREMIER: If members travelled along Barrack street they would see that the shops kept by Chinamen were always crowded.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not by working men.

THE PREMIER: If the subclause were effective at all, and if it was insisted that every person selling furniture made by Asiatics should have a label outside his door, the effect would be to considerably reduce the cost to the seller, for there would be less cost to the middleman, and not one whit less furniture made by Chinese would be sold. On the contrary more would be sold. The theory was that if people were told that in a certain shop they were buying Chinese-made articles they would not go there, but the theory did not stand the test of practice. We knew that in Perth and in other parts of Australia things obviously sold as of Chinese manu-

facture were sold in Chinese shops, but these shops seemed to multiply and thrive. There was nothing in the clause that kept the customers away, which proved that the provisions of the clause would not be effective and that it would not be wise to put them in the Bill. It would tend to create defeat by putting in the clause, for while there were no great substantial benefits to be gained, opposition would be created by it to the Bill itself. The very fact that the leader of the Opposition would support the clause if it were enlarged, proved that there was something unwise in it. Unless the clause showed some substantial benefit it would be unwise to put it in the Bill; and he hoped the Committee would not agree to it.

MR. HASTIE: If the new clause would be ineffective, why the Premier's eloquent attack upon it?

THE PREMIER: The more points given to the opponents of the Bill, the less our chance of passing it.

MR. HASTIE: There were no points here which they could lay hold of. Manufacturers who wished to sell Chinese furniture should be compelled to say so plainly. Many people would buy Chinese vegetables who would not be known to possess Chinese furniture.

THE PREMIER: Could not Singapore furniture be sold?

MR. HASTIE: Yes; and it was sold as of white manufacture. What harm in giving the people a choice? If the leader of the Opposition could be assured that he was getting Chinese furniture, and the member for Mount Magnet thought he was getting furniture of white manufacture, why should the Premier rob them of that surety? The marking of Chinese furniture had been effective wherever tried—in Melbourne, for instance. It had not abolished the manufacture, but had limited it, and had let people know what they were buying.

THE PREMIER: Surely no one could tell that by the price.

MR. HASTIE: Let the Premier visit any furniture shop in Perth; and not in one case out of ten would he be informed that any article was of Chinese manufacture.

THE PREMIER: And was Chinese furniture sold at the same price as European?

MR. HASTIE: In most cases, yes.

THE PREMIER: Then if the sale by European merchants were restricted, sales by Chinese merchants would be increased fourfold.

MR. HASTIE: No; less would be bought. The Premier, for instance, would not knowingly buy Chinese furniture. The clause was needed if for nothing else than to prevent furniture-dealers from falsely pretending that Chinese furniture was of European manufacture. Some years ago many white cabinet-makers were employed in Perth; now there were few. The same had happened in Melbourne; but in Melbourne and Sydney the number of Chinese factories was restricted, while there was now no restriction here on the importation of Chinese from Victoria and New South Wales; consequently we were troubled with an influx of Chinese, and must protect our own people. Chinese could not be kept out; and this clause was the only means suggested by which we would get a fair proportion of cabinet-making work done by white people. The Premier did not agree with limiting the work of Chinamen who were here. That was astonishing. Surely all factory legislation dealing with Chinese had for its object limiting their work? That was so in Victoria and New South Wales. Would the Premier put the Chinese on the same plane with Europeans? Following the precedent set last session, let us put this clause in the Bill.

MR. MORAN supported the new clause, though it looked somewhat paltry and strove after the impossible. In and around Perth we found a Chinese gardener hawking vegetables one day, and dying of bubonic plague on the next. He would vote for the clause because he had constantly striven to thwart the growth of all kinds of Chinese industry, though the fact remained that Chinese here could neither be murdered nor deported. But though the city contained many Chinese and Japanese laundries which competed with white laundries in Perth, nobody suggested that every man patronising the former must carry a photo. of a Chinaman on his shirt-front. The really dangerous Asiatic occupations which spread contagion were preserved, while an attack was made on Chinese

furniture-making which was harmless. A great step could be taken if it were fair and possible to prevent Chinamen living in Perth, and to prohibit their market gardens in the city and suburbs. In King Street they herded in hordes like ants, 600 on an acre of ground, playing fan tan and ping pong. Here were gigantic evils existing unchecked; and we were wasting time on the marking of furniture. It was idle to suppose we could persuade people, for shame's sake, to refrain from dealing with Chinese. That was a fallacy. The lady in her carriage and the hod-carrier's wife would continue to buy from the Chinaman. Did not workmen's wives buy furniture from the Chinese? It was hardly necessary to insist on placarding outside the shop that Asiatic goods were sold within. Stamping of the goods was sufficient; though, as the Premier just said, if we insisted on stamping furniture in a prominent part we spoilt the article, while if the stamp were put on the back, the purchaser had but to replace the stamped board with a new one, and he had "English" furniture. It was said similar legislation had had no effect in Victoria.

MR. DAGLISH: A commission reported in its favour.

THE PREMIER: The Chinamen controlled the furniture trade there.

MR. DAGLISH: No; there had been a considerable reduction in the Chinese employed.

MR. MORAN: Chinamen were coming here in large numbers because federalists had insisted on our uniting with the Eastern States. Prior to federating we had an Undesirable Immigrants Act far superior to any in the East, and Asiatics were successfully excluded; but once the barrier between this and the other States was thrown down, Chinese and other coloured races were coming here from the East, and we could not stop them. He asked free-trade Labour men, where was the consistency of the man who wished to brand Chinese furniture but would not save the working man of Australia from competition with the sweated borders of India, China, and Japan? Such men would drink Chinese tea at every meal, and talk themselves hoarse against erecting a customs barrier to prevent importations from China and

Japan; yet they called themselves anti-coloured-labour men. Pursue a policy which would protect the workers of the Commonwealth against Asiatic importations, and do not mind the few Chinese here. For aught we knew, we were wearing shirts ironed by Japanese. Some of the so-called European laundries employed Chinese.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The bulk of them employed Japanese.

MR. MORAN: The clause would have his support, because he was consistent in trying to checkmate any unfair competition of Chinese with white labour. While tiddlewinking with this clause, there was a greater evil staring us in the face in Perth of Chinamen herding together in houses, spreading disease in all quarters. It was to be hoped that Parliament and local boards of health would insist on cleanliness in the Chinese dwellings.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: One would think from the tone of the debate that this was some new-fangled idea. The Premier was aware of the British common law as to manufactures, that goods made outside Great Britain must be branded with the name of the country from which they came.

THE PREMIER: What had been the result? It had increased the sale one hundredfold of branded goods.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Premier was inaccurate in his statement. Large quantities of German cutlery were imported into Great Britain, and exported from Great Britain to other parts of the world as British-made goods; and to prevent this being done a law was passed for the branding of goods made in Germany and in other places. Not only were the goods branded, but the packages containing the goods had to be branded with the name of the country where the goods were made. The Premier put forward the idea that the clause would be ineffective as the goods could not be branded in a prominent position, for if they were the brand would destroy the value of the goods. All men who manufactured good articles put on their brands.

THE PREMIER: Where was the precedent for Subclause 2?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The question before us was that goods manufactured

in Chinese workshops should be branded as Chinese-made. Was there any reason why that should not be done? If it was deemed desirable in the interests of manufacturers that goods made in Germany should be branded "Made in Germany," then why the objection to stamping Chinese-made furniture?

MR. MORAN: The stamping of German goods was to keep a record of British manufactures.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: One could buy a saw branded "Robert Sawley, British steel" and one could also buy a saw branded "Robert Sawley, German steel." Why was that? Because one article was inferior to the other. In Great Britain goods were compelled to be marked with the name of the place from whence they came, and goods could not be imported into Great Britain or exported from Great Britain or sold in Great Britain without being branded. Why should not the same be done with furniture made in Chinese workshops? If people in this State wanted Chinese-made goods because the goods were better or cheaper, there was no reason why people should not buy them; but there was a reason why goods should not be palmed off or represented as being European goods when they were not. Goods were sold as European-made when they were made in Chinese workshops.

THE PREMIER: What necessity was there for Subclause 2?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Premier had in a previous debate in the House pointed out that if a man sold medicine, he should be a pharmaceutical chemist and he should put up his name. If a man was a cabinet-maker, why should he not put up his name? If a man sold Dickson's plate, why should he not ticket it up, and if he sold German plate why should he not say so?

THE PREMIER: But the subclause was vindictive.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The hon. member was reading in the clause what was not in the wording. Why should a firm be entitled to sell Chinese-made furniture under the representation that it was made by European workmen? If furniture was made by Chinese it should be so branded, and the man who sold the furniture should have it ticketed up that he sold such furniture. If a man

sold any special line of goods he was only too glad to ticket it up, therefore why not ticket up that certain goods were made by Chinese?

MR. DAGLISH: As the statement that there had been no reduction in the Chinese labour in the furniture trade in Victoria had been challenged, he wished to quote an extract from the recent report of the Victorian Commission, in which it was pointed out that in 1901 there were 574 Chinese employed in Victorian furniture factories, and in 1903 that number had fallen to 300. It was said that nearly all these Chinese had gone to the country districts, where they were eking out a living fossicking or sluicing on the goldfields or being employed by their countrymen in gardening. The Victorian Commission argued in favour of the stamping of furniture, and in order to deal with any want of effectiveness on the part of the law as it stood it was proposed to extend the law a step farther. Previously the original maker of Chinese furniture, or the man who made and sold it unstamped, was liable to a penalty. The goods were usually sold to dealers who passed them on to the public through auction rooms or shops. The Victorian Commission recommended that the first purchaser should also be liable to a penalty if he sold the furniture unstamped. That was a caution against the first person, the dealer, obliterating the stamp. He (Mr. Daglish) was willing to support the amendment. It was not necessary to go into the question of what harm was done by the introduction of Chinese goods from outside. He would like to see the importation of Chinese goods stopped, and protection afforded to our own workmen against any outside competition, but unfortunately there was no power to do that now. It was regrettable that the Central Board of Health had not devoted a little more attention to Chinese residences, not only in the outlying districts but in Perth. When the Local Board of Health was relieved of its duties in relation to factories, it might concentrate a little more effort on Chinese establishments other than factories in the metropolitan area. With regard to furniture, it was well known that Chinese-made goods were foisted on the buying public as European-made, and at present there was

no protection whatever. It was, however, proposed to give protection under this new clause by stipulating that Chinese goods should be stamped, and causing notice to be placed outside shops where such goods were sold. At present we had no opportunity of knowing in what shops Chinese goods were sold. This clause should be followed by others imposing substantial penalties. In many cases a big profit was made on the sale of goods foisted off as European-made, and unless the penalty imposed were a substantial one this clause would not be operative.

MR. JACOBY: The danger which faced this country through the large influx of Asiatics from the other States should call for some action on the part of this House to see whether we could find special means of restricting their employment. But as to this particular clause, he was afraid that, so far as the first portion was concerned, it would have the opposite effect from that intended. At present Chinamen employed at cabinet-making were working on a comparatively small scale, and they sold their products to the larger middlemen, presumably, who were able to take a restricted quantity; but if a provision like this were passed we should restrict the sale under the present method and force the Chinamen to organise large shops or adopt other means, the ultimate result of which would, he believed, be a larger sale of Chinese furniture than at present. Of the comparatively small shopkeepers in Perth those doing the largest amount of trade were Chinamen. If the working people made up their minds to absolutely discourage Chinese shopkeepers and mechanics, they had the thing in their own hands and could refuse to buy from them; but human nature was the same everywhere and in all classes, and we found that the people who sold the cheapest goods got the most custom.

MR. HAYWARD: There was no objection to Subclause 1, but he believed the second subclause, with regard to fixing a notice in front of every shop in which Chinese-made furniture was sold, would have a very bad effect in relation to people who kept general furniture shops. The mere fact of goods being stamped would be sufficient for the public, and that

would not inflict a hardship on the general furniture dealer. He moved as an amendment,

That Subclause 2 be struck out.

MR. WALLACE: The president of the Chamber of Manufactures had pointed out, in his evidence before the select committee, that the competition in the furniture trade by Asiatics was very strong. Indeed, the witness believed there was more furniture manufactured by Asiatics than by the other classes. The member for Kalgoorlie asked the witness whether he did not think it necessary to protect the public against this inferior stuff, and Mr. Dunlop replied that he would much rather see it branded. The Premier found it prudent to include Clause 23, regarding the hours of Chinese in laundries, but as to the furniture trade the hon. gentleman did not wish to at all restrict Chinese engaged in it, but desired to allow them open competition in the markets. He (Mr. Wallace) wished to assist people to locate dealers who sold Chinese furniture. The honest dealer need have no objection to Subclause 2.

MR. TAYLOR supported the clause as it stood. We had had Chinese tenders for provisions in different parts of the State accepted by the Government in preference to tenders by white people. One could therefore understand the Premier protecting the Chinese in every walk of life, and it was refreshing to know that the leader of the Opposition was anxious to see Chinese furniture branded so that he would know what he was purchasing. He (Mr. Taylor) had always been opposed to Asiatics from so far back as 20 years ago in Queensland, and one of the first things he had done in Western Australia was to speak on the goldfields against the employment of Asiatics. On that occasion, ten years ago, a league was formed, of which he was the president. The member for West Perth had spoken generally, and not referred particularly to the Labour members of Western Australia being freetraders, but he had said that the major portion of labour representatives in Australia were freetraders. No Labour man who had received his political training in an industrial union was a freetrader. The overwhelming majority of workers in Australia, and

especially in Western Australia, were protectionists, and at the Federal elections they would make their voices heard as protectionists. If Australia was to become a nation it would only be by a protective tariff. While he (Mr. Taylor) supported the clause with the object of reducing the opportunities of Chinese in cabinet-making, he would go farther, and if it would be possible to carry a resolution in this Chamber to prevent Chinese working in the furniture trade or in anything else in Western Australia, he would support it. He could bear out the statement that all classes dealt with Chinese, and he was sorry to see it. He had spoken against the people on the goldfields dealing with Afghans in the townships. The Committee should carry the proposal, for it would go a long way towards restricting Chinese furniture manufacturers in this State.

Amendment negatived.

Clause passed, and added to the Bill.

First Schedule :

MR. DAGLISH moved as an amendment,

That the following be added to the schedule :
Where Chinese or other Asiatics work, or are employed, or are occupiers, for each such person so working, or employed, or occupying, twenty-five pounds per annum.

The proposal was to increase the registration fee for Chinese factories and employees in Chinese factories. It was a direct method of dealing with Chinese work in factories, and there could be no doubt as to the effectiveness of the proposal. It would at any rate make up some of the difference in the rate of wages paid to the white men and Chinamen in the furniture trade. An inspector of factories in Victoria in 1901 recommended that this was the only effective way of dealing with the question.

MR. YELVERTON supported the amendment. It was his intention, if a division had taken place on the clause moved by the member for Mt. Magnet, to have voted in support of the clause. He was entirely opposed to the employment of Asiatics in this State, and wherever he could see an opportunity of restricting the avenues of Chinese he would do so.

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

Ayes	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	8

Majority for ... 6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Atkins
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Hastie	Mr. James
Mr. Holman	Mr. Pigott
Mr. Illingworth	Sir J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Stone
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Higham (Teller).
Mr. Moran	
Mr. Reid	
Mr. Taylor	
Mr. Wallace	
Mr. Yelverton	
Mr. Burges (Teller).	

Amendment thus passed.

THE PREMIER: While anxious to see the passage of the Bill, he must candidly admit that no matter how strongly he felt on the Chinese question, he could not for one moment connect his name with a provision such as that just agreed to by a majority; and he would have to drop the Bill unless the addition to the schedule was eliminated on recom-mital. Members should bear in mind that the Chinese came to the State under certain conditions, and that it would be a gross and crying injustice if we adopted legislation so as to prevent their carrying on the trades and occupations they had been allowed to follow in the past. We had in the Bill imposed on them certain conditions not imposed on other workers, notably in the definition of "factory" and in respect of the hours of labour in laundries. He hoped the Committee would not go farther. He had conceded much; but to-morrow morning members would doubtless perceive that if the vote just passed were indorsed, we should be doing a grave injustice to men who, whatever their faults, were entitled to live.

Schedule as amended agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at two minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 29th October, 1903.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: By-laws of Yalgoo and North-East Coolgardie Roads Boards.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: Department of Agriculture, Annual Report.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

STOCK DEPARTMENT AND SWINE FEVER.

NOTICE OF A QUESTION.

MR. MORAN gave notice that on the next Tuesday he would ask the Minister for Lands the following question: 1. When he made his corrected statement re diseases in pigs in this State, and quoted his Acting Chief Inspector of Stock as follows, "I have visited the piggery of Mr. Leslie, of Bayswater, yesterday, and found that among his pigs two were suffering from swine fever," did he know that up to that time already 90 pigs had died at Mr. Leslie's place. 2. If he knew, why did he deliberately keep back the information from the House. 3. If he did not know it, did his inspector know it.

THE SPEAKER: It was not quite a proper question to put to a Minister,