

# Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 21st August, 1912.

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

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: Plan of the proposed Merredin to Coolgardie railway.

## QUESTION — WORKERS' HOMES, FREMANTLE.

Mr. CARPENTER (without notice) asked the Premier: In view of the fact that complaints have been made that information with reference to workers' homes is not easily available, will the Premier arrange for the distribution of forms and information generally from some public office in the larger centres.

The PREMIER replied: The question of distributing information has already been decided by the board, and so far as Fremantle is concerned, the distribution of the pamphlets issued will be through the Government offices.

## BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1. Roman Catholic Church Property Amendment.
2. High School Amendment.
3. Fremantle Harbour Trust Act Amendment.
4. State Hotels.

Introduced by the Premier.

## DISRESPECT TO THE CHAIR.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to again draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that it is not permissible for them to discuss matters or to leave their seats when a motion is being put from the Chair.

## RETURN — RAILWAY REVENUE, FREMANTLE AND PERTH TO BUNBURY.

Mr. LAYMAN (Nelson) moved—

*That there be laid upon the Table of the House a return showing the amount of revenue earned by the Railway Department for the carriage of goods to Bunbury from Perth and Fremantle during the time since the "port to port" rate (special truck) has been abolished, and for the corresponding months of the previous year, as divulged by the books of the Bunbury goods shed; also showing the tonnage of goods carried by the railways from Perth and Fremantle to Bunbury during the same periods; and also the tonnage over the Bunbury Jetty to and from the s.s. "Kurnalpi" during the same periods, as shown by the Bunbury Harbour Trust returns.*

It was to be hoped that the Minister for Railways would treat the motion as formal and supply the House with the information at the earliest moment. He wished to ascertain whether there was any justification for the statements so freely and frequently made in the South-West, and more particularly in business circles to the effect that the Railway Department was losing a large amount of revenue by the abolition of the port to port rates. There was no desire to harass the Minister or the Government in the matter, neither was there any desire to harass the officers of the department. He recognised that in the Commissioner we had a very keen business man, who had only one fault and that was the desire to make the railways show a very big profit. That forced him to the conclusion that it was not through any recommendation of the officers of the department, but that it was rather, because of the policy of the Government, that the port to port rate

was abolished. He, however, was not yet quite convinced that the department were losing the large amount stated. His desire was to get the information presented to the House so that it might be analysed and a decision arrived at in the matter.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE (Katanning) seconded the motion.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION — RAILWAY VIADUCT THROUGH PERTH.

Mr. GILL (Leederville) moved—

*That before any further expenditure is incurred in the construction of bridges over the railway between West Perth and East Perth stations, it is advisable that a thorough inquiry be made as to the practicability of carrying the traffic through Perth by means of a viaduct.*

He said: I realise in submitting this motion that we are dealing with a very big and important subject, but it is not by any means new. The matter has been before the public of Western Australia, and politicians have been dealing with it, for the past 15 years. I might place it on a par with the Perth town hall, and the results achieved with regard to the inquiries which have been made may also be said to be on a level with what has happened in connection with the Perth town hall. Very little has happened. However, it is a very important question, and a very big one. I am not dealing with it from the point of view of Perth alone. It covers a greater ground than that, and I hope hon. members will not look at it merely from that point of view. When I say that its importance concerns more than the city of Perth, I am speaking from the point of view of the expenditure involved in the proposal, a proposal that has been before the people for the last 15 years, and which I understand the railway authorities are dealing with at the present time. Undoubtedly whichever proposal should be finally adopted, whether we decide to get over the difficulty by means of bridges over the railway, or by constructing a viaduct, either

plan will involve very heavy expenditure from which no return will be received. It will be seen, therefore, that the question concerns, not only the city of Perth, but the whole of the State, as the interest and sinking fund will have to be provided by the whole of the State. I hope hon. members will remember this. There have been many schemes discussed during the last few years in connection with this difficulty. I am not here to-day to discuss the question of whether the difficulty exists, because it will be admitted that the difficulty is a very real one; in fact it was admitted 15 years ago, when Mr. John Davies was manager of our railways, and more particularly at that time in regard to the William-street crossing. Ever since that period we have realised that there is a difficulty owing to the fact that our railway runs through the centre of the City, in consequence of which the City is divided into two portions. Some means must be devised for getting over the difficulty. If anyone doubts the urgency of doing something in this regard it is only necessary for him to go down to the Melbourne-road crossing any evening. Anyone who sees the street traffic blocked at that point, as it is daily, owing to the exigencies of running the railway traffic, will be convinced of the necessity for doing something to get over the difficulty. While the railway operations are in progress the traffic is absolutely blocked at the Melbourne-road crossing, and at many other crossings between West Perth and East Perth. The problem must be solved, and my object in moving the motion is to attempt to prevail upon the House and Ministers to abstain from any expenditure upon the erection of bridges over the railway, which I understand is the proposal at present under consideration. They should abstain from any such expenditure until we find—perhaps by way of further expert inquiry—which is likely to be the more permanent solution of the difficulty. I do not intend to deal here with the many proposals that have been mentioned in the past. To my mind the only two proposals worthy of consideration are those I have mentioned, namely, bridges

or, alternatively, a viaduct. I propose to confine my remarks to these two schemes. I am not in a position to say what are the proposals of the railway authorities in regard to bridges. I have asked questions upon this subject, but have been unable to get any information owing to the fact that the matter has not been finally considered. I was anxious to know which streets they proposed bridging, and to secure an estimate of the cost. I think my motion is well timed, seeing that they have not yet finally arrived at a decision in regard to the matter, and I am hopeful that it is not too late to prevent the authorities proceeding with the erection of bridges. I am led to believe that they are considering bridges by reason of the fact that the railway engineers have consulted with the city engineers in regard to the matter. I wish briefly to point out the position with respect to bridges across our railways. I hope to be able to show that it is not the best proposal for getting over the difficulty. In the first place, if we are going to adopt that method of crossing it will be necessary to erect bridges over all the streets intersecting the line. This is the proposal which, I understand, is under consideration, namely, that the whole of the streets from West Perth to East Perth shall be bridged. I go farther, and say that in the very near future it will be necessary to bridge the whole of our streets between West Perth and Mount Lawley. I understand that plans are now being prepared for the bridging of several streets, and seeing that the Government have already secured land at East Perth for the erection of loco. running sheds, I say it will be necessary for us to bridge the whole of the streets as far as Mount Lawley. Even Claisebrook-road will have to be bridged if the loco. sheds are to be at East Perth, because the running in and out of the light engines, and the shunting generally, will necessitate the bridging of that street. By bridging we will be absolutely blocking the whole of the streets from West Perth to Mount Lawley, which will be a serious obstacle to a number of persons in Perth, particularly those who

have heavy carting to do. A good deal will rest upon the grade of these bridges. That is a question I am not in a position to speak upon, but I think I may safely anticipate that the grades will not be much easier than that of the William-street bridge. If this is so hon. members will see the difficulty that must arise from this blocking of our streets from West Perth to Mount Lawley by bridges having a grade approaching to that of the William-street bridge. Trouble will inevitably ensue. At the present time carters who have to cross the railway make extra charges against delays, but if we erect bridges in all the streets it will be found that the carters will still further increase their charges as a set-off against the provision of extra power to haul the freight over the incline. Therefore, I say the bridges proposition means a very serious bar to the progress of Perth, and will be a heavy tax on a great number of people. Not only will we have this trouble, but while we are creating the trouble, we will be involved in a very heavy expenditure. I am given to understand that the Melbourne-road bridge will cost a minimum of £75,000. The Minister smiles, but I have my information from a fairly reliable authority. This bridge will have to be of great length, and, therefore, the estimate of £75,000 is not likely to be very far out. Pier-street will have to have a big bridge. Other bridges will be on a smaller scale, but taking them in the aggregate it is safe to anticipate an expenditure of £250,000. I think I am, if anything, under the mark in making that statement. Of course I have nothing to go on beyond what I can gather from outside sources, and consequently I am not speaking authoritatively, but, judging by the number of bridges to be erected, I say the cost will total pretty well £250,000. This estimate seems reasonable when we take into consideration the Claisebrook-road proposition, which undoubtedly will have to be put into effect once we have the loco. running sheds at East Perth. This £250,000 represents a very heavy expenditure from which no return whatever will be received. Obviously, therefore, the pro-

position requires very serious consideration. It will cause untold trouble to Ministers. The trouble at Melbourne-road to-day is nothing by comparison with what may be expected when the bridges are completed.

Mr. Lewis: The south side line will relieve that trouble.

Mr. GILL: The south side line will not relieve the congestion of traffic in Perth created by the carriage of Perth material, and that is the trouble which will face Ministers should they decide to erect bridges over the railway. The proposition I suggest is that of a viaduct. In considering this proposal we have something substantial to go upon, owing to the fact that thorough investigations have been made in the past in regard to this matter. Fifteen years ago a joint select committee representing both Houses of Parliament was appointed to investigate the question, and having taken evidence from professional gentlemen, the manager of the railways of the State, and the engineers, the committee recommended to Parliament that a viaduct should be constructed from Thomas-street to East Perth as the best means of getting over the difficulty. Some two years later the question was again taken up, and a Royal Commission was appointed to further investigate it. This Royal Commission took evidence from some of the same officials, and from a number of others, and eventually recommended the construction of a viaduct from Thomas-street to East Perth. The Commissioners went very fully into all phases of the question and made an estimate of the cost. The recommendation of that Commission I propose to read to hon. members—

The only other method of dealing with the question considered was the construction of a viaduct to carry the railway over the City. The recommendation of the joint committee favoured this course of action. It was estimated the work, including land resumption and compensation would cost £400,000, but as against this it was calculated the recoups from the sale or lease of land not required for railway

purposes, and the income from leasing arches in the viaduct would represent a capitalised value of £298,000 as a set-off against the cost of construction.

They go on to point out other aspects of the question, finally recommending a viaduct, practically the same proposition as was put forward by the joint select committee. Seeing that these two bodies, after having gone fully into the question and after having estimates from engineers, including Mr. Muir and Mr. Thompson, came to this conclusion, I think it gives sufficient ground to the Government to stay their hand at the present time and consider if the viaduct is not a more suitable proposition, not only for the city of Perth, but in the interests of the State itself. A viaduct will undoubtedly get over a great difficulty, and it will have many advantages as it will open up the whole of the streets and will not cut the city in two as the present system does. The streets may be continued from north to south and at the same time freer scope will be given to the railway people, who will not have to put up with the hindrances and delays that are incurred at the present time, nor will they have half the responsibility which they have to bear in connection with the present crossings. There will also be a big return from the leasing of the viaduct, and the large revenue thus to be derived will compensate to a considerable extent for the expenditure incurred. Of course I realise there is one stumbling-block which will be raised by the Minister and those who oppose the construction of a viaduct. In taking evidence the Royal Commission went thoroughly into the matter and examined all authorities who were available. Amongst others they examined Mr. Speight, who did not favour a viaduct, but generally speaking his opposition was on the ground that it would be necessary to remove the goods sheds and goods yards from the present site, and judging from his report he could not see at that time sufficient grounds for the expenditure, because he considered that some other proposal would get over the difficulty and be sufficient for a number of years to come. A number of years have

elapsed since that time, and now we are faced with a big difficulty, and the question arises as to whether the goods yards are sufficient for our present requirements, and even if sufficient for present requirements, will they be sufficient in ten or twelve years' time. I say unhesitatingly that they are not sufficient to-day, and although there will be increased accommodation when the loco. sheds are removed, that increase will only be sufficient to meet present requirements, and in ten or twelve years it will be necessary to remove the goods yards to some other locality where there is more accommodation. That is the point I wish to make in connection with the two propositions I have mentioned. Should the Government decide to proceed with the construction of bridges, which will involve a heavy expenditure from which there will be no return at all, can it be said that those bridges will be a permanent solution of the difficulty, or will they not be only temporary expedients that will have to be removed in a decade or so? If the bridges are not a permanent solution, it is the duty of the Government to postpone the carrying out of these works; but should they decide to construct a viaduct, that will undoubtedly be a permanent solution, and although the initial expenditure will be heavier than the construction of bridges, still having regard to the interest which the viaduct scheme will return, the actual expenditure will be considerably less than that which would be necessitated on the bridges. I say that the Ministry would be justified in staying their hand until they have gone fully into this question, with the object of arriving at a definite and permanent solution. I hope that the Government will follow the course I have indicated in the motion, so that we will not have, as we have had before, one Government expending money to-day and some other Government in a few years' time having to pull down and destroy what has cost the country a good many thousands of pounds, because of a short-sighted policy or because a matter had been treated as one of expediency. It was only two or three years ago that we lengthened and

strengthened the Beaufort-street bridge, and in the following year we had a report from the Commissioner of Railways saying that it was necessary to make a further extension of the bridge. That sort of thing means the piling up of the public debt in a manner that is not in the interests of the people generally. To prevent a recurrence of such waste, I have very much pleasure in moving the motion.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue): I second the motion.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

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

Mr. DOOLEY (Geraldton) moved—

*That this House is of opinion that in the interests of the health and convenience of the public of Geraldton, and for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the farmers, fruit growers, and pastoralists of the surrounding districts, the establishment of abattoirs and chilling works at the port of Geraldton is an immediate necessity.*

He said: In moving this motion I have a dual object in view. In the first place, I desire that the interests of the settlers of the Geraldton and Murchison districts shall be considered, and in the second place I desire as far as possible to give effect to the principle of decentralisation. Before discussing the motion generally, I would like to make a few of what may be termed discursory remarks. It is not generally known that Geraldton and district have been of very great importance in the economic development of this State, particularly in the early days of its existence. Of course, it may be said that the fact of Geraldton being to a certain extent a back number now is because the district is not so productive and has not as great possibilities at the present time as it had in those days; but I would like to point out some of the reasons that have conduced to Geraldton being in a somewhat backward position to-day. One reason is that the breaking out of the goldfields on the eastern side of the State

diverted attention from the northern settled districts, and in consequence all the expenditure and influence was first given to the goldfields areas and then drifted down towards the southern and south-western portions of the State. That, in conjunction with the fact that previous Governments have not done their duty to the northern districts, is the chief reason why the Geraldton district is languishing to-day. To give an illustration of this sort of neglect I would refer members to a publication issued by the Minister for Lands lately and called *The Settlers' Guide*. I notice that in that publication there are more than 100 illustrations, and the booklet is nicely prepared and well got up, but there is not one which makes any reference to Geraldton or illustrates any point of interest with regard to that centre. I think that a publication such as that, the ostensible object of which is to advertise the resources and interesting parts of the State, should give equal consideration to every part. I notice that opinions have been canvassed from all other portions of the agricultural districts, but not one reference is made to Geraldton. In future when such publications are being compiled I think it would be well, in order to do justice to the whole of the districts, that the opinions of local newspapers or land agents should be given some prominence, with a view to giving information as to the facts of interest connected with the various districts. Another fact to which I would draw attention is that Geraldton ranks at least third or fourth in the list of ports in this State, and it is also the oldest mining district in Western Australia, if not in Australia, the Northampton mining fields having been discovered something like 60 years ago. This was also a pastoral country of very great possibilities in those early days, and to-day the hinterland that Geraldton serves is the greatest sheep and cattle raising district in the central and south-western division of this State. We ship considerably more wool from Geraldton than is shipped from any other port, and as a lamb-raising country it is agreed on all sides to be one of the

finest in the State. Another fact that cannot be emphasised too strongly is that Geraldton and the surrounding country was the original granary of this State. Coming to the question of freezers or chilling works for Geraldton, I would like to point out that Geraldton, in spite of all these difficulties, and of the lack of proper attention in past years by different Governments, is coming along at a fairly rapid rate so far as population is concerned. The result is that the health of the community is now becoming a very serious matter for consideration. The necessity for abattoirs is becoming more pressing daily. We have three or four private slaughter-houses scattered in different parts of the district adjacent to Geraldton, and that is not conducive to a proper safeguard of the public health. In one instance we have a private slaughter-house something like five miles in one direction, and the next is something like four miles in the opposite direction, and the other is one and a-half or two miles in another direction. These places are isolated in the surrounding bush and scrub, which makes inspection rather a difficult and a costly matter. There are splendid sites for abattoirs close to Geraldton and they could be constructed there as cheaply as in any other place in the State, and the advantage, of course, would be that the public health would be made more secure by having the slaughtering and distribution of the meat supply of the town on a more favourable footing so far as inspection is concerned. That being so, and seeing that it is absolutely imperative that it should be brought about at an early date, I take this opportunity of saying that, were the question of chilling works considered in conjunction with the abattoirs, I feel certain the Government would be able to take the two together and deal with them more economically and expeditiously, and in a more practical way than if the propositions were considered apart. It is given out on all sides that the Geraldton district is without any doubt or exaggeration one of the best for lamb raising, and the reason of that is because of its splendid pastoral land, its clean and

sweet country, and because its climate is considerably milder than that of districts further south or east. And the result is that lambs mature and become ready for the market three weeks earlier than anywhere else, but the only markets at present are Fremantle and Perth. There is a distance of 300 miles, and considerably more in some cases, to get to market, and when we consider that a lamb, according to the authorities, will lose three to four pounds in weight during transit, in addition to being knocked about, and to say nothing of the cost, which amounts from 1s. 6d. to 2s. per head to send them to market, it is a very serious matter for the farmers in those districts. Those farmers are on fairly small holdings and consequently they have to utilise their land to the very best advantage, and it is generally agreed that mixed farming is the most economical and most profitable method in these days. With regard to the question of expense, previous Governments have stated that they expected a guarantee of 10,000 lambs before such an undertaking could be considered, but I do not think it is dealing fairly with those people to require such a guarantee when all the circumstances are taken into consideration. We know very well that until a concern is established and a venture is properly made known, we cannot expect customers or possible customers to give any guarantee. One other State has taken up this matter and such a suggestion or proposition as a guarantee was never mentioned. Taking South Australia, we find that that State ran a similar business for a matter of five years before it could be regarded as a success.

Mr. HEITMANN: Where did they have it established?

Mr. DOOLEY: At Port Adelaide or Dry Creek. It has been established something like 17 years, and for the first five years there were absolutely no profits at all, but it always paid working expenses. The total value of the stock dealt with in the first year, 1895-6, amounted to something like £50,408 14s. 7d., and by 1903-4 the business had increased to a value of £97,148 3s. 4d. I think that

should show that with a business of this kind, if the country which is being served is of a suitable nature, we need have no fear regarding the scheme turning out a financial success, particularly when we consider that abattoirs would have to be built and by doing so we would considerably minimise the original expense, as we could arrange the buildings in such a way as to provide for the expansion of trade. The question of supplying the necessary sheep is one in regard to which I have canvassed wide opinions, and I find that the general consensus of opinion is that before the concern would be established anything like two or three years, instead of 10,000 head of lambs being supplied, growers could supply at least 65,000 or 70,000 head.

Mr. HEITMANN: It will mean going in for export.

Mr. DOOLEY: Both for export and for the local market; the two could be taken together.

Mr. HEITMANN: You mean the West Australian market?

Mr. DOOLEY: Yes. Dealing with the stock that a farmer has, November is the best time for him to market it. If he has to keep it after that the stock deteriorates and consequently he loses on it. Lambs are at their highest maturity for market about November, and if there were freezing or chilling works the farmer could provide for slaughtering the lambs at that time and holding the carcasses in reserve to meet the requirements of the market. In view of the fact that the State is running steamships along the coast, it would be a very simple proposition to convey the stock to Fremantle, and we could arrange to work in conjunction with other depôts in regard to export to other ports. I would like to point out the number of places that would be served and that would be prepared to utilise chilling works should they be established. Taking an area north of the Rockhampton district, I have received advice from nine holders in connection with this matter and the number of lambs they could supply, if reasonable facilities are offered, would amount to 11,100 head, ranging from as low as 300 to 2,500 head

per holder. That is in the northern district within a distance of 40 miles.

Mr. HEITMANN: Are they big land owners or small?

Mr. DOOLEY: Some are big and some are not. Included in them are settlers on the Oakabella estate, which is a repurchased estate taken up in late years, to the very great advantage of that district. And there are four holders who have land in what is termed the Bowes area; that is another repurchased estate. There are two holders on one portion of that area who are prepared to supply 2,000 head. Coming to another portion of the Bowes area, there are four settlers, and I am informed that there are others who would be prepared to send along 2,000 head. Coming to the Mt. Erin estate east of that particular area, another repurchased estate and rich country, we have eight settlers who feel confident they would be able to supply at least 2,500 head. These are all small farmers who are trying to do their best in the way of mixed farming; but as I have already stated, they have had no outlet for anything of this kind, because the distance to Perth is too great and because the wastage and cost of haulage to Perth is so very excessive that it has been out of the question. Consequently, the district has languished for want of the facility that I am asking the House to provide at Geraldton.

Mr. HEITMANN: I do not think it pays on those areas around Northampton.

Mr. DOOLEY: It does not pay at present, for the reason that they cannot make it pay because they have no market. We have heard talk of the operations of a meat ring and so forth around Perth and Fremantle. I have had farmers tell me that they know for a fact it is operating detrimentally to them if they attempt to get stock to Perth or Fremantle from this distance. Then we come to another area, what is known as the East Chapman. There we have a dozen people and their quota to the proposition would amount to 3,000 head. Next we come to Moonyoonooka, where there would be something like 1,000, and from the Newmaracarra neighbourhood within twenty miles of Geraldton there would be an-

other 3,000 head from four or five holdings. Next, coming to the Greenough Flats, back and front, we would get something like 8,000 head and from about Dongarra, Mingenew, and Irwin 10,000 head; also from Yandanooka and Arrino and the new settlers down there we would get 10,000 head, while Carnamah and Coorow would supply 2,000 head. Then, taking the Northern railway as far as Mullewa and Kockatea we would get something like 2,500. Naturally, I do not wish to make public the names of these gentlemen, but they are all bona fide, and I have the names here. These gentlemen have all considered and discussed the question, and they believe that this would be a fair and reasonable estimate of what they would be able to supply to such a place. Farther north we go on to the Murchison, and Pindar, Yalgoo, Barnong, Wurarga and Twin Peaks would supply 7,000 head, making a grand total of 65,000 head of lambs that could be supplied, providing the facilities are given for these people to market their stock. I think this should be sufficient earnest of the intention or desire of the people of Geraldton and the district surrounding it, that they are anxious and willing to facilitate a proposition of this kind, but we must also take into consideration the by-products. South Australia in that respect shows a very decent return. Of course they are so well developed in South Australia after seventeen years that the industry is on a fairly big scale, and their output amounts to something like 197,000 carcasses a year. Those were the figures last year. I merely mention these figures to interest the House by way of comparison. The output last year in regard to by-products was 636 casks of first-grade tallow, 460 casks of second-grade tallow, 12 casks of medium-grade tallow, and 93 casks of mixed beef and tallow, making a total of 501 tons, 5 cwt. of tallow. Other by-products were, 226 tons of bone manure, 57 tons of blood manure, and 16 tons of poultry meat meal, making a total of 300 tons 11 cwt. These items are worth considering in approaching the question of chilling works. Not only should we encourage the primary in-



dustries in the country, but we should attempt to develop the secondary industries as far as we can, particularly when we are placed under such disadvantages as compared with the more highly developed centres of the Eastern States. I contend that Geraldton is well suited for industries such as fellmongery and tanning, and a lot of the trades and manufactures pertaining to that class of work. By making a start in this direction we are helping along the industrial development of an outlying centre that has been in the past too much neglected, and neglected in a very unfair manner as I have indicated in regard to lack of knowledge and lack of advertising such as in the *Settlers' Guide*. Those are instances and influences that have kept that part of the country back.

Mr. HEITMANN: The people themselves have not been very progressive.

Mr. DOOLEY: They have had to battle against great odds. Being one of the earliest settlements in this State the district became practically a slave to the old Conservative system which was ingrained in it. The pastoral industry was started there in the first place, and land settlement was kept back because of the inequitable land laws and administration that went on for a long time.

Mr. SPEAKER: This discussion is getting out of order.

Mr. DOOLEY: I did not intend to get away from the substance of the motion, but it was on account of the interjection. I thought that the information would account for the backwardness of the Geraldton district. A great deal depends upon this matter. If proper consideration is given by the Government to a proposal like this, it will not only benefit the people in that district, but it will benefit the whole State, because it will assist very materially in solving the question of the scarcity of meat supply. If the stock, particularly mutton and lamb, is slaughtered under Government control at Geraldton, the markets in different centres of the State can be supplied at reasonable prices. The Government will know exactly how the markets are working, and that there are no ulterior influences at

work with regard to rigging the market or inflating prices. I hope the House will consider the motion. I hope members will give it every possible consideration.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I second the motion.

On motion by the Minister for Lands, debate adjourned.

#### RETURN—TOBACCO AND LIQUORS FOR STATE HOTELS AND STEAMSHIPS.

Mr. LANDER (East Perth) moved—

*That there be laid upon the Table a return showing:—1, The prices paid for cigars, cigarettes, and tobacco, spirits, beer, stout, aerated waters purchased for sale at the State hotels and State steamships for the twelve months ended July 31, 1912. 2, Names of the persons supplying same. 3, Quantities of each supplied to each institution for the period named. 4, The prices of recent tenders for supply during the ensuing three years, and the names of the successful tenderers.*

He said: The Premier had recently asked what was the object of bringing forward this motion. The Premier was bringing forward a comprehensive Bill dealing with the liquor traffic, and the information asked for in the motion would be very beneficial to members when that Bill came forward so as to contradict many of the bogies that would be raised. Another object was to see whether the Tender Board gave full consideration and justice to the local manufacturers of cigars and cigarettes. Of tenders recently received, out of seven there were six for imported stuff. We had three local manufacturers of cigars and cigarettes; and taking the cigars as a criterion of the quality of the article they turned out, they compared very favourably with the makers of the imported article. One thing to be on guard against in connection with the imported cigars was that we should not accept prison-made stuff and cheap rubbish. If one cigar expert had pulled to pieces before him a few days previously was a sample of what

the Government were going to serve out in connection with some of the tenders it would be very unfair. Taking the records of locally made articles supplied to the railways and other institutions, there would not be much fault to find with the local products. We should build up local industries, and the only way to do it was to support local manufacturing from our primary products. He hoped the Premier would offer no objection to placing this information before the House.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) seconded the motion.

Question put and passed.

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

##### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): The member for Gascoyne in introducing this Bill told us that so far as it affected shearers it was approved by this House last session. As the Bill is before members at the present time, however, it provides accommodation not only for shearers and shed hands, but also for agricultural workers, and in that regard the innovation is of importance and must receive careful consideration. We all approve of workers being comfortably and adequately provided for. So far as shearers are concerned, I understand that the pastoralists have for the most part already provided the accommodation asked for in the Bill. The mover did not tell us that the farm hands had asked to be included; in fact, he touched very lightly upon that part of the measure. If we are to consider all workers, I would like to remind the hon. member that there are men working on the goldfields who, probably are less comfortably placed than those who are working anywhere else, and if members are to consider the housing of workers generally, those who are on the goldfields should not be forgotten. I remember when in Boulder some time ago, seeing a number of humpies or buildings that were in my opinion totally inadequate for the purposes to which they

were put. It has to be remembered also that the residents of the goldfields live under very unpleasant conditions in the way of high temperatures and dust, and other things which tend to add to their discomfort. I notice that there is a clause in the Bill which compels shearers to keep their huts clean and that a penalty limited to £5 is provided for. I think the hon. member has acted wisely there. It would be well also if a similar clause were to be made to apply to the houses which will be occupied by agricultural workers. The mover evidently knows all about the pastoral industry, but I am not so sure that he possesses quite the same amount of knowledge in regard to the requirements of the agricultural workers. The conditions are totally different. Stations are situated a great distance apart. In some cases as much as 100 miles separate them, and when a man goes to a station to undertake shearing work, it is not an easy matter for him to move to the next shed. In the agricultural districts the farms are placed close to each other, and as good men are always in demand, the result is that a worker, if he is not satisfied with the conditions on one farm, can easily move on to the next. If a man can act independently when there is a demand for his services he can insist upon the conditions under which he is working being made fairly comfortable for him. Agricultural work is entirely different from pastoral work. A farmer must have his work done when his season demands, and everyone knows that it is impossible to say how many men will be needed at harvest time. For instance, the wheat farm may require the services of a few men while the farmer who makes hay may need a large number and the work has to be done in a short time. It is impossible to say on a farm up to 1,000 acres in extent how many men might be required during a rushed season. It does seem to me that we must consider the position of our agriculturists also. The harvesting of the crop, whether it be wheat or apples or potatoes, must be done, and if it did happen that the farmer had insufficient housing accommodation in accordance with this measure, it ought

to be possible for him to provide temporary accommodation. When the Bill is in Committee, therefore, I intend to move in the direction of inserting a new clause to provide that agricultural workers who may be temporary workers be accommodated in tents. I hope that the provision will be accepted by the hon. member in charge of the Bill, because it may often happen that a farmer who is not in an old settled district will find himself compelled to put up his temporary workers in this way. I think also that we should provide for the exemption of new settlers for a period of at least three years. We know it is impossible when facing the work of conquering the forests even in the wheat belts, to say nothing of the South-West, for the settler to do very much in the way of providing house accommodation even for himself. I hope that the hon. member will agree, if the Bill is to apply to all agriculturists, to defer the coming into operation of its provisions for at least twelve months, because with the busy season coming upon the farmers, they will find it difficult to set to work to build houses, and, after all, that is what they will have to do if they are to provide accommodation for their workers under this measure. I wish it to be distinctly understood that I agree that that should be done. In most cases it has already been done; still we must provide for our newly settled districts, but, at the same time we must remember that the farmer is not like the squatter: he is not a rich man and has many troubles to contend with. We know that last year's crops were not good in every district and in those places where those on the land suffered in consequence, it would not be possible for them to provide accommodation except of a meagre kind. We must remember also that the farmer has to pay many taxes in preparing his land for cultivation and all these things operate against him. Most of our new settlers in the first year or two of the work on their farms we know live in camps, and they are the people who should for a time be exempt from further imposts. There is also a clause in the Bill which provides for the appointment of inspectors. I believe that

the police should be asked to undertake this work. If the country is to pay an army of inspectors to visit the farms and stations throughout the year, the administration of this measure will be very costly indeed. The police can make the inspections very comfortably. It is already their duty to visit farms from time to time, and in most places the police constable is a well-known character, and therefore I doubt whether anyone else would do the work as well or bring about the results that the hon. member desires. We must all agree that the hon. member by interesting himself in this question, deserves the thanks of the House. We agree that everything that can be done to make these people comfortable should be done. When we are dealing with the measure in Committee, however, I hope the hon. member will listen to the arguments which will be put forward by agricultural members, and it is fortunate that every one of them come from old settled districts where the farms are fairly well equipped. Therefore, when we ask that consideration be shown to the newer settlers, the hon. member will understand that we shall do so with a knowledge of the requirements of the people and not with the object of preventing accommodation being eventually provided on every holding. We want the Bill when it becomes law to be reasonable, and in the meantime we want the House to consider the man who for the present is unable, and for some time to come may be unable, to employ men, unless the provisions now appearing in the Bill are considerably modified. I repeat that hon. members on this side have no objection to the measure. All that we ask is that when it is put into operation, sufficient notice be given, and we ask that consideration be shown to those who so far have not been able to provide themselves with adequate accommodation.

Mr. NANSON (Greenough): So far as the portion of this Bill dealing with shearers is concerned, it only provides for what has already been undertaken in the vast majority of instances by the pastoralists. When, however, we come to Part 3 of the Bill dealing with accommodation for agricultural labourers, we ap-

proach more controversial grounds. The agricultural industry in this State cannot be regarded as standing entirely in a class by itself; it is rather an industry composed of various classes. We have the higher developed farm where no possible exception can be taken—indeed it is highly desirable that no exception be taken—to providing the persons engaged as labourers on such a farm with adequate accommodation. On the other hand, we have another very large class, referred to by the member for Northam, who have only just embarked upon a career of farming, and in many cases whose efforts are in such a stage that they can scarcely be said to have become farmers in the sense of cultivating the land, because, when a man first goes on the land in this country unless he is in the fortunate position of being able to buy an improved farm, his energies are kept fully employed for some considerable time in fencing and clearing, and otherwise making land ready for cultivation. I notice that the definition of agricultural labourer in the Bill is made to include every person employed for any period exceeding 24 hours by an employer in agricultural or pastoral work of any kind. This illustrates one of the dangers of the Bill in its present form. Unless that definition be made more definite, assuming the Bill becomes law in its present form, the law courts will probably be called upon to decide at no distant date what is agricultural work. Are we to say that a person engaged in clearing land is engaged in agricultural work, or that a person engaged in fencing or ringbarking is engaged in agricultural work? Really all these operations precede the actual work of farming proper, and if we are to have legislation providing for the accommodation of the farm labourer it is highly desirable we should have absolute clearness in regard to our definitions. When first a man goes on the land he has to rough it to a considerable extent. He puts up a tent or humpy of some sort for a beginning. Are we to suppose that from the moment he commences to clear his holding, although he may be content with rude camping accommodation for himself, he is to provide, for whatever casual

labour he may employ to assist him in the operation of clearing, accommodation of superior description? I can quite understand the need for providing for accommodation when the farmer has actually got to work on purely agricultural operations, but when he is making his land ready for farming work, when he is still in the camping stage himself, if the restrictions imposed are made too severe the reflex action of legislation of this kind will be to discourage people going on the land and also to discourage the employment of labour by persons who have already gone on the land. It is noticeable in the part of the Bill dealing with the accommodation of shearers that the accommodation to be provided is set forth with considerable particularity; but when we come to Part 3, dealing with the accommodation to be provided for agricultural labourers, everything is vague, and nothing is laid down definitely. We are told that every employer shall provide proper, adequate and sufficient accommodation for the agricultural labourers employed by him; but there is nothing, or very little indeed, within the four corners of the Bill to suggest what is proper, adequate and sufficient accommodation. It is true that as far as sleeping accommodation is concerned, the amount of cubic air space to be provided is specified, while it is also provided that if there are more than two agricultural labourers to be accommodated, they must not have their meals in the room in which they sleep. Except for these two particulars everything is vague and dependent upon the power given to make regulations under the measure. It is a favourite device of Parliamentary draughtsmen, which I venture to think is followed too freely in this State, to leave a great variety of matters to regulations which have no place in the schedule of the Bill. This Bill is a noticeable example of the enormous power given to whatever Government happen to be in office to make regulations under the Act. Surely when we consider the condition of the agricultural industry in this State, when we remember that a large number of the farmers are still pioneers in the fullest sense of the term, still in the very initiation of their

enterprise, we should be careful not to place on the statute-book merely vague provisions and then leave to the Government of the day the power for putting those provisions into more definite form by regulation. Let us know what we are to be asked to pass; let us know specifically what is the precise nature of the accommodation demanded, both in regard to the developed farm and in regard to land only just taken up in order to be made ready for cultivation. Then when we know from a perusal of the Bill, when we are put in possession of those facts, we shall be better able to judge as to whether legislation of this kind is warranted in the interests both of the worker in the agricultural industry and of the employer.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE (Katanning): We on this side of the House realise that it is reasonable and fair that proper accommodation should be provided, particularly in regard to shearers. We are also at one with the hon. member who introduced the Bill in agreeing that in some instances it is necessary that accommodation should be provided for the agricultural labourers. But, as pointed out by the member for Greenough, the provisions of the Bill dealing with the accommodation of agricultural labourers are surrounded with very great difficulties. We all know the many hardships our new settlers have to put up with, and those who are conversant with the settlement now going on in outlying districts know only too well that those settlers have little or no accommodation for themselves and their families. Therefore I think that these provisions in the Bill are inopportune, and have been drafted without a proper knowledge of the real position. The hon. member who introduced the Bill is quite in earnest in regard to this matter, but I am certain he is not possessed of the true position of affairs in the agricultural districts. It is the dream of every settler upon the land to have a decent homestead, but we must give him reasonable time in which to realise this dream, and we must first permit him to produce something from the land in order that he may be able to provide the

accommodation demanded in the Bill. Clause 2 provides exemption for pastoral employers of fewer than eight shearers. Apparently the hon. member realised that the provisions of the Bill might impose a hardship upon the small sheep grower. If the hon. member was of that opinion when he drafted the Bill, why, if only in order to be consistent, did he not provide similar exemption in Part 3 of the Bill, which deals with agricultural labourers? I hope the hon. member will either agree to the amendment of the definition of agricultural labourer, or excise Part 3 from the Bill. I am certainly of opinion that it would be better to eliminate the whole of that part than to pass it in its present form. I agree with the hon. member that it is only right that we should have provision for reasonable accommodation; but in building up this great country we cannot do everything in a day, and I think the hon. member should have been content to re-introduce the Bill as it left the Chamber last session, when its application was restricted to shearers, without tacking on to it this new provision for accommodation for agricultural labourers. We would then have had an opportunity of watching the effect of the measure in its operation in respect to the pastoral industry, and would have had time to judge what should be done in respect to the accommodation to be provided in the agricultural industry. Had this course been adopted we could have devised some provisions more in keeping with actual requirements. From my knowledge of the outlying agricultural districts, I can say that Part 3 of the Bill, if passed in its present form, will have a highly detrimental effect upon the settlement of our land.

Mr. McDonald: If the farmers cannot provide decent accommodation for their hands, let them give up wheat growing altogether.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE: We often hear that class of argument from that side of the House.

Mr. McDonald: It is not argument; it is a statement.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE: If we were to apply that line of reasoning to all our

industries we would be a very long time in getting a start with any of them. It is the desire of every member on this side of the House to see our industries developed, and I am satisfied that it is the desire of those on the land to provide adequate accommodation for their employees. But we must give them reasonable time in which to do this, and I say that before being brought down, a Bill like this should have been given the fullest consideration.

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

Mr. A. E. PIESSE: I was endeavouring to point out before tea the harassing effects that the provisions of Part 3 of the Bill would have upon our new settlers, if passed in their present form, particularly the settlers in the pioneering stage, and I hope that the member for Gascoyne will accept the amendment outlined by the member for Northam. I think we should at least give the new settlers exemption for from three to five years. That would be a reasonable exemption, and we should also provide that the Act should not come into operation until a reasonable time after it had been passed. There are special cases which, I think, have been overlooked by the member who introduced the Bill. One is the case of employment on threshing or chaff-cutting plants. Do I understand that it will be necessary for the farmer to provide accommodation? I quite appreciate that the accommodation, after all, is only a very small matter, but even that small expenditure will work very harshly on the settler as he will be obliged to provide special accommodation for a large number of hands who may be on his farm for only a few days in each year. I would suggest that tent accommodation would be sufficient in such cases. I notice that we are left in the dark to some extent as to what is proper and adequate accommodation. So far as the construction of buildings is concerned, everything has been left to regulation which may be prescribed by the Minister, but I think that fuller particulars should have been given in the Bill in regard to this matter. I

do not wish it to be understood that I am objecting to the provisions of the measure being made to apply to agricultural labourers. I am fully aware that there are a good number of settlers who can afford to supply accommodation. There are quite a number who do provide reasonable and proper accommodation, and I am aware that there are some who may have to be compelled to make such provision, but there are a greater number who will find it harassing if they are called upon to make that provision straight away. So far as I can see the holder of a homestead block of 160 acres, or even a smaller area, will be compelled to make provision for the accommodation of an agricultural worker who may be in his employ for only 24 hours. In Committee I shall move an amendment to the definition of "agricultural labourer" that the words "twenty-four hours" be struck out and "one week" inserted in lieu, and I hope that will be accepted. I notice that inspectors are to be appointed, and I would again remind the House that this will entail considerable expense. This Bill will mean the inspection of every agricultural and pastoral holding in the State, and that must entail a considerable amount of work. It has been suggested that the work should be carried out by the police department. I am well aware that there are no officers in the State who could carry out this work better than the police, but we are already loading up the force with increased work from year to year in connection with the collection of statistics, and the Government must realise that in this way the department is being very seriously taxed. When we are dealing with experimental legislation of this kind, we should take into consideration what it is going to cost the country by way of inspection. I have nothing further to say except that I hope the hon. member in charge of the Bill will be pleased to accept the amendments outlined by several members on this side of the House, and which if put into the Bill will help materially towards the successful working of the Act.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora): I desire to compliment the hon. member for Gascoyne on bringing this Bill forward. Every member who has spoken has given the introducer of the Bill every credit, but I notice in connection with all these Bills that although the congratulations offered to the members who bring them forward are great, yet when the Bills get into Committee the sympathies of those gentlemen do not run to the same extent as might be inferred from their second reading speeches. Personally I am of opinion that this Bill is in many respects even better than the Act covering the same industry in New Zealand. The member for Northam says that he is quite in favour of the measure applying to pastoralists, and embracing the shearing sheds, but when it comes to agriculture he and most of the members of the Opposition side think that an injustice is being done to the farming industry. I do not represent a farming constituency, but the hon. member having compared the accommodation necessary under this Bill with that of the workers on the goldfields, I wish to enter my protest against any measure being put upon the statute-book that is going to allow of the housing of men in even such premises as some of the men on the goldfields live in.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is pretty healthy on the goldfields.

Mr. FOLEY: It is healthy, but as one who has lived on the goldfields for many years, I know that much of the money which is passed by this and other Governments for the use of roads boards and municipal councils has been spent in doing away with or preventing the establishment of such houses as those quoted by the hon. member. I could point to places on the goldfields where the local inspector, backed up in many cases by the central board's inspector, has demanded the demolition of some of these tenements, which were a disgrace to any place, whether the goldfields or elsewhere. There is no doubt that the majority of men have fairly good houses built in conformity with the requirements of the goldfields, but there is one big distinction between their places and the accommoda-

tion referred to in this Bill, and that is that the goldfields workers provide their own houses. Now, this Bill aims mostly at temporary employment. The very existence of a shearing shed shows that employment in connection with it is only temporary, and if we look into this matter we find that in this State as well as in the other States, the shearers have not been treated with that amount of care which their work merits. Some of the men after shearing on the board all day and perspiring heavily, have to retire to very poor camps—in some places no camps at all are provided—and they contract bad backs, and the rheumatism which often follows makes the shearer old when he is in reality still a young man. I hope this Bill will have the effect of compelling every employer to provide good accommodation for his shearers, and I am pleased to see that all members are agreed that so far as shearing and pastoralists are concerned the measure is fair. I wish now to deal with the references to the effects of the Bill in connection with the pioneering stage in the farming industry. Every representative of a farming constituency who has spoken told us of the hardships that the settlers have to suffer. But as one desirous of doing something for the working people of this State, I think that if a man goes farming he is perfectly at liberty to sacrifice himself, but he is not at liberty to sacrifice the safety and health of anyone who works for him. There is no doubt in my mind that when these farmers went on the land to do that pioneering work they did so with the distinct object of benefiting themselves, and of getting away from the wage system and the competitive system under which the men employed by them are working; and they knew that if they remained under the wage system they would never secure the farm which they possess at present. The member for Greenough said he believed that in regard to ringbarking, fencing, and clearing, this measure would work harshly against the farmers. It is distinctly stated that contracts for clearing work are provided for, and surely any reason-

able minded man, and I think the member who introduced the Bill, having had experience in these matters, knows well that fencing, ringbarking, and clearing are embodied in the temporary employment spoken of.

Mr. Heitmann: But if we are providing for a man on contract, why not for a man on day labour?

Mr. FOLEY: I say the Bill provides for temporary employment such as this. Anyone who knows anything about this work is aware that if a man is fencing, and if his work covers any extent, he has to shift his camp, and that being the case it could not reasonably be expected that the employer should put a camp up for him. But the member who introduced the Bill stated in regard to this clause that he was quite willing that a tent should fulfil the conditions, and no doubt a tent would apply in such a case just as a house would apply to a man who is following agricultural labouring work from one year's end to another for any one employer. The man who is pioneering should be very well satisfied with the Bill because in the pioneering stage, when he is having his fences put up and his trees ringbarked and his land cleared, he is protected.

Mr. Heitmann: There is nothing about that in the Bill.

Mr. FOLEY: The Bill provides for it.

Mr. Heitmann: Where?

Mr. FOLEY: I have the word of the member who introduced the Bill that he would not think for a moment of treating such a case as this as anything else than temporary employment. A farmer is protected in the pioneering stage and if members read the Bill closely they will find that that is so. One clause to which reference has been made is that which provides that when two or more men are working together, rooms should be provided in which to live and sleep. That is a wise clause. The health of this State should be our first consideration, and I scarcely think it healthful to have men eating and sleeping, and practically living in the one room. It is a wise provision but it is not a new one. The New Zealand Act provides for it, and I under-

stand it has worked well there and I see no reason why it should not work well in this State. It is one of the clauses which the member who introduced the Bill should hang to closely and not allow it to be deleted from the measure. Regarding the question as it affects the shearers, there are many squatters, I am led to believe, who are at present waiting for the passing of this Bill in order to see what conditions they have to build to, and I trust members, when they are considering this measure, will regard it from the viewpoint that if it is healthful in the city, or in a mining camp, or in a timber camp, to have a fair air space allowed, it is also healthful that in shearers' huts and agricultural labourers' huts that proper air space should be allowed.

Mr. O'Loughlin: They get too much air space there.

Mr. FOLEY: As regards the inspectors, there is no doubt that the police in this State have a very heavy load to carry and, unfortunately, some of them do not carry it too well. As regards the police being given the power of inspection under each and every one of the Acts passed by Parliament, I think it unwise, because the ability required to pass the examination for a police officer or policeman in this State does not qualify these men to interpret the law to the extent that their word should be taken solely as to whether a particular law is being carried out properly. The difficulty, I think, can be overcome by the appointment not of permanent inspectors but of local men, if they are procurable, and not necessarily members of the police force. I trust that the services of many good men in the various districts—and there are good men to be found—will enable the provisions of this measure to be carried out; and I think every district would be able to find men who would see that it was administered.

Mr. Heitmann: Could you find better men than the police, generally speaking?

Mr. FOLEY: It is not a good thing to say too much about the police.



Mr. Heitmann: Do you not think by their training they are better able to interpret an Act than the average man?

Mr. FOLEY: I do not.

Mr. Heitmann: I do.

Mr. FOLEY: I hope that the Bill will not be amended too much in Committee. I trust that the two cases stated by the members who have spoken against the measure will be taken into consideration, but that without further exception the Bill will be placed on the statute-book.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY (Moore): Until last session I never heard of any great need for such a Bill as the one now before the House, and the member who introduced it assured us that it was necessary, and he laid claim to a very wide experience throughout the length and breadth of this country. He brought forward two extreme cases to support his argument in favour of this Bill, but I might say that in a general way the large majority, not only of pastoralists, but of agriculturists also, provide considerably more accommodation than this Bill stipulates. Generally speaking, there is no objection to the provisions of this measure, because I think that every right-thinking pastoralist or agriculturist is prepared to consider those whom he employs and is prepared to look after their comfort and see that they are properly housed and fed. I do not know of instances where this is not done. It seems a great pity that our statute-book should have to be overloaded with all these Acts of Parliament, and that we should have to legislate for all these matters. We pass a number of laws during each session of Parliament which are never put into operation; they simply remain dead letters for years after, and I think it is quite possible that this Bill will be among that number. I have no objection in a general way to the Bill, and members of the Opposition who represent agricultural or pastoral interests have no objection, because they and their constituents are prepared to see that their employees are properly accommodated, but I think that the rights of employers under this measure are not altogether properly con-

sidered. The member who introduced the Bill, I think, will agree with me that if the employee has certain rights, the employer also has certain rights, and those rights should be properly respected on both sides.

Mr. McDonald: Will this Bill interfere with them?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: The Bill provides, among other things, for shearers to keep their rooms clean and to make them responsible for damage, which may be done. The employer has no say whatever: he cannot go to his men and say, "Look here boys this place is not being kept properly clean; one man has been complaining to me that he has to do it all, and that nobody else will do anything." He has no remedy; he cannot say, "You must keep this place clean." He has to wait until the inspector comes round. While shearing is going on in this enormous territory, we will need an army of inspectors to see that such a measure is properly carried out. There is a tremendous amount of territory to travel over and an employer can do nothing to compel the men to keep their rooms clean unless an inspector comes along and directs them to do so. The men might say, "No, you cannot come in, you have no right; before you can come in and take any part in having this place cleansed you must get the order of an inspector." That is the effect of the measure. If the inspector does come along, which is very unlikely, and the man complains, the inspector can give him permission to have the cleaning up done at the expense of the shearers. Then again, if any damage is done—though I do not think this is likely to occur, still when it becomes an Act of Parliament under which we have to live all these points have to be considered—the inspector can give the owner the right to have it repaired. If there is any need for these provisions, there is equally a need to see that they are fairly and properly carried out. If an inspector comes along and says, "Very well you can have this place cleansed," or if certain damage has been done, and the inspector gives the owner the right to have

it repaired, the owner can deduct the money out of the wages of the men. We are all right so far; but suppose the inspector does not come along and suppose the men play fast and loose with the place and knock it all to pieces, which I do not for a moment say they will do, though the Bill provides against their doing so. If so, the Bill ought to provide a penalty, but there is no penalty if the shearer gets away and the inspector comes afterwards and gives the employer permission to have this damage repaired.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The shearer has to come back next year.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: There is no provision made in the Bill for a penalty or for the employer applying to the court for a remedy. Now look at the other side of the picture, where the inspector makes an order for the employer to do a certain thing. If the inspector comes along and says the accommodation is not sufficient according to the Act and regulations, he can give the employer notice that this work shall be done within a certain time; and if the employer does not do it, he is liable to a heavy penalty, he is liable to £1 a day for every day he neglects to carry out the orders of the inspector; and, further, if he does not do it, even though he has to pay these penalties, the inspector can take him before two justices of the peace and compel him by law to have it done. If the employer is compelled to do certain things through the court, as is provided in this Bill, the same should apply to the other side; not that I think these questions are likely to arise, but because I think it is our duty to see that, at any rate, Acts of Parliament are drawn up in equity and fairness to both sides. All the onus is put on the employer in this Bill, and none on the employee. The pastoralist, again, has to give the inspector three days' notice by post, only three days' notice, that he is going to begin shearing on a certain day. Knowing how far apart these stations are in the North, and how impossible it will be to have an army of inspectors under the measure, unless it is going to cost a little fortune to keep them going, in many instances the in-

spector will not get this notice that shearing is going to commence until the shearing is over. Probably the inspector will have a number of other places to inspect, and he may have numbers of miles to travel, so that possibly in a number of cases he will not turn up at the stations until shearing is all over. That is not a wise provision; and if so much is left to the inspectors, it ought to be seen, at any rate, that they are able to be at the stations during shearing time. There is too much left to regulations under this Bill. The terms are not thoroughly defined. It says that every employer shall provide "proper, adequate and efficient accommodation for agricultural labourers" employed by him. Regulations will have to provide the rest. This Parliament has always, from the time I first entered it, been very jealous of its rights in regard to this matter. Members have always desired that as little as possible should be left to regulations, that only the administration should be left to regulations; but in this case what shall be "proper, adequate and sufficient accommodation for agricultural labourers" is to be left entirely to regulations. If an Act of Parliament is to be efficient and satisfactory it should take the weight off the Government of the country. I do not think the Government should be made responsible entirely for how the statute should be carried out. It is the duty of Parliament to frame a Bill not in a skeleton form but as a whole, as a living body, and to let the Government administer it, but this Bill it seems to me is to form a skeleton, and the Government are to fill in the body. This is a mistake. The Bill is too wide in its interpretations and it is too crude. The hon. member who has just sat down said that the Bill provided for temporary employment. I have read the Bill through carefully and I see nothing in it in regard to temporary employment. With regard to agricultural labourers the Bill is very crude, and the different points are very shortly defined, but a great deal depends on the interpretation of what is an "agricultural labourer." I do not know whether a court would in-

interpret "agriculture" or "agricultural" strictly on the literal meaning of the word or in its general sense. I should take it that a court would interpret it in its general sense. It is used by all of us in its general sense. When we talk of a man being engaged in agricultural pursuits we do not merely talk about a man who is engaged simply in cultivating the soil which agriculture means; but it is used in its wider sense and made to embrace all employments in connection with agriculture. If one asks whether a fencer or a clearer of land is engaged in agricultural pursuits or is an agricultural labourer, I think any ordinary man would say at once that he is an agricultural labourer; he certainly is not a tradesman, or a mechanic, or a sailor, or a tailor, he is an agricultural labourer. The man who clears land makes it ready for the proper acceptance of the term "agriculture," but still he is employed in agricultural work. In the country many men are engaged in what is ordinarily termed piecework or contract work. The old acceptance of the term was piece-work, but it may properly be termed contract work. Agriculturists and pastoralists all desire to get as much as possible done by contract work, because they always find they can get better value for their money, and the men as a rule are better satisfied in employment such as that than working for ordinary wages. I take it these men who take contracts for clearing land will come under the provisions of the Bill that apply to agricultural labourers. When a man takes a contract for clearing 200 acres of land and putting up so many miles of fencing, he generally employs two or three men, but under the Bill he must have proper and sufficient accommodation for these men, which I think is out of the question, because I do not think the large body of working men who are contractors or piece-workers in the country would care to be burdened with a regulation such as this. The men who go there in most instances provide their own tents; they go about the country carrying their tents and everything they require with them, and it is out of the question to compel a man, who is merely

an agricultural worker as a contractor for clearing, fencing, or ringbarking, to come under the operations of this Bill. I do not think it is reasonable, and I really do not think it was intended, still, these men come under this Bill, I am confident, and some provision should be made for exempting them. This does not personally affect members on the Opposition side of the House, nor does it affect in the slightest degree the large body of those whom they represent, because the agriculturist is at all times anxious—the large majority of the agriculturists are—to give employees comfortable homes. The agriculturists want to keep their employees. It is the object of a farmer when he engages a man to keep him, and if he wants to keep a man he must make him comfortable, and must make him feel that the place is a home for him. Many members on the Opposition side of the House and many of those whom they represent are men of that kidney; they desire to see their workers around them with comfortable homes, the married men with their cottages and their little gardens, where perhaps they will work during dinner hours, and very often in the middle of the day and on Sundays.

Mr. Green: Then, what is your objection to the Bill?

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: It is an extraordinary thing that if ever a man stands up to speak there are members on the Government side who immediately try to make the House believe that an hon. member speaking from the Opposition benches is merely speaking on personal grounds. I am not speaking on personal grounds. I am speaking on general grounds, and for the benefit of those who will be affected by the Bill, not those who, like myself and many others, are not in the least affected by it, but those who will be detrimentally affected by it. Something has been said this evening of the man who goes out into the country to open up and subdue the wilderness and make a home for himself—the hon. member who just sat down said, "I do not think he needs special consideration; he has gone there in the hope of making a fortune (or

something to that effect) and why should we give him special consideration; he has gone there because he thinks it a good thing, and he hopes there is a good future before him." We all know very well that the men who go out into the backblocks to open up the country have to spend every penny they can gather together, beg or borrow—I will not say steal—to improve their property, and the homestead is perhaps the last thing a man thinks about because there are no profits in the homestead. These men go out and put up their log humpies and make them very comfortable. There are many men who go out into the backblocks and open up the country in this way who make their places comfortable. I am quite sure many members of the House would be pleased to have a meal in these places and to sleep in them, yet they are only made of logs, or, in some cases, of bushes, such as we very often see on the goldfields, but they are kept clean. A man takes a pride even in this little spot, because he knows it is his own, and he tries to make it as comfortable as possible, and he likes to feel that people who come along will not imagine that he is living in a pigsty. To provide that that man should have to afford accommodation such as this Bill contemplates, will be detrimental to the interests of these people and detrimental to settlement in Western Australia. The hon. member in charge of the Bill may be prepared to move amendments, and he may have many ideas in his own mind with regard to provisions he may propose to submit in Committee, but at the present time there is nothing in this Bill which will enable, we will say, a new settler to provide a tent for his employee; the Bill states that he will have to provide sufficient and adequate accommodation. Of course we do not know what the regulations will provide. Everything is left to regulations. We have a skeleton here and the Government are left to fill up the body. I do not welcome this Bill, because there is no very general demand for it, certainly not amongst agriculturists. There may be need for it amongst shearers, but at the same time I cannot see the use of overburdening our statute books with legisla-

tion and providing exactly what a man has to do, when he is to get up and when he is to sit down, and when he is to have his meals and everything else. Under the Bill the employer will have no power on his own property, and no matter what damage may be done, he will not be able to say, "You are to do so and so"; it is all to be left to the inspector when he comes along. I do not think that is proper supervision, and I am quite sure that in its present form the Bill will not have the effect the hon. member desires. When a measure of this sort is introduced, we want, as far as possible, to make it so that it will be fairly acceptable to all concerned, and at the same time that those who have to work under it will feel that the interests of both sides are well considered and conserved.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. T. H. Bath): When this measure was introduced during last session, it provided only for insistence upon certain accommodation for shearers.

Mr. Monger: On large stations.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: And to those provisions in this measure have been added others dealing with accommodation for agricultural labourers. When the measure was before us last session—and again on this occasion—I for one paid considerable attention and respect to the views enunciated by the member for Gascoyne because I recognise that he represents a district in which the pastoral industry is of great importance, and that coming into contact as he did with the pastoralist in his native habitat, and the shearer where he was directly employed, he had the opportunity of ascertaining what was required in regard to proper accommodation for shearers. But I am quite convinced that the inclusion in this Bill of the provisions dealing with agricultural labourers, on general lines as provided in the Bill, has been made with very little knowledge of the local circumstances of the industry in Western Australia.

Mr. Monger: Hear, hear.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This Bill providing for specific accommodation for agricultural labourers might be justi-

fied in an old settled agricultural community like the United Kingdom, or even in the Dominion of New Zealand, where farming has been carried on for a large number of years and where the holdings are highly developed as the result of many years' work upon them by their owners and those who previously occupied them. In the present case, however, we have to deal with comparatively recent settlement and to anyone who has had the opportunity of visiting the agricultural districts and particularly the newer ones will know at once that this Bill in the case of thousands of settlers, will insist upon the settler providing for workers better accommodation than he has been able to provide for himself and family up to date. In a very large number of instances the settlers we have in Western Australia have been accustomed to other employment and have been led to take up agricultural land in the hope that they will be able to build up a home for themselves, and to have some assurance both for themselves and families in the future, but I am fain to admit that a very large number of them, when taking up that land have in no sense realised the struggle and difficulties before them, and it is only after actual experience of the pioneering work, actual experience of what might be termed the economic side, the realisation of what is likely to accrue from those efforts they have been able to appreciate those difficulties and realise that the high hopes with which they set out are not likely to be attained except without a struggle extending over a very considerable period. I have had opportunities, both at the time when the dry season was at its most severe stage, and at the end of it, just before we entered upon the more auspicious season we are approaching this year, of coming into personal contact with those settlers and obtaining first hand an account of their struggles and of seeing also that in a large number of instances the wives and families have heroically joined the men folk in attempting to win out of the difficulties they have encountered, and in that attempt they are undergoing privation, they are putting up with conditions both in regard to habitation and food which

stamps the women as being heroines as much as those who have received more acclaim and more advertisement in history. Under such circumstances, is it fair for us, in this initial stage of the development on so large a percentage of our holdings, to insist upon conditions which 20 years hence might be imposed without hardship, but which, at the present time, would not only be impossible for the people to fulfil, but would inevitably result in determining their struggles and compelling them to seek other avenues of employment. Then again, it is difficult to understand why there should be a distinction in the measure between two sections, why, in the application of this Bill, it should be stated that it does not apply to those sheds where less than eight shearers are employed. On the other hand, no such restriction is imposed in regard to agricultural labourers. If it is fair in regard to the pastoralist, who, according to the general consensus of opinion, is regarded as following a much more lucrative occupation than that of the agriculturist, if it is considered not advisable to apply the Bill to those pastoralists who employ less than eight hands, how much more necessary is it to consider those who follow a less lucrative avocation and who undoubtedly ought to be included in a reservation of this kind. Then we find that the definition of agricultural labourer includes those employed for a greater term than 24 hours. Take the case of a new settler, or one who has been on the land for only a year or two. His house will be of the most primitive kind. He recognises that if he is to develop the farm as a successful proposition he cannot afford to have too much of his capital invested in what might be termed non-reproductive buildings, and therefore in nearly every instance the house, while it may be clean and while it may be fairly comfortable, comparatively speaking, might probably be one of the least expensive portions of the work upon his farm. He recognises that there is need to conserve all his funds for expenditure in ringbarking, clearing, fencing, and water conservation, and, in nearly every instance the settler and his wife make

up their minds that for the first few years they will endure these discomforts and as they do in many instances, they occupy a far less comfortable dwelling than they have been accustomed to when following their previous occupation, and they hope that by the utilisation of the capital in other directions they will in the future be able to provide a more comfortable home. Throughout Western Australia farmers will very often point with pride to the first dwelling they occupied, then to the second and then to the third, but that is after a struggle extending over 20 or 30 years, and I contend that the House ought to consider whether it is advisable to impose these restrictions at the outset, particularly as many of those who follow up what might be termed agricultural employment, that is, working for farmers, prefer to get a straight-out wage of so much a day and provide for themselves. They regard it as preferable to receive so much per day or per week, and under those circumstances the imposition of conditions of the kind suggested in the Bill will, in the first place, inflict hardships on what constitute the largest proportion of our agriculturists in Western Australia—new settlers, and in the second place there is no necessity for them because of the different conditions of employment. Probably after a considerable period, after the State has become more closely developed, when more farms have been cleared and got on to the basis of genuine agricultural propositions, we shall reach that stage, which was reached years ago elsewhere, at which the farmer decides that, in addition to his own dwelling and the necessary outbuildings, he will provide special accommodation for those whom he desires to employ; because at that stage he will require to employ more labour than when in the earlier stages of his occupation. Under the circumstances I think the member for Gascoyne would have been well advised to introduce the Bill on similar lines to those of measures in force in the Eastern States; that is, to provide accommodation for shearers, and in this present immature state of agriculture, when settlers are facing their

initial hardships, to leave this question of accommodation for agricultural labourers until some more opportune time, or at least to exercise the same restriction as applies to the shearing industry, and provide that the Bill shall not affect those agricultural employers who employ fewer than eight agricultural labourers.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest): I realise that up to the present not very much criticism has been directed against the measure. The last speech, however, while very thoughtful, has been rather destructive of some of the features of the Bill. The Minister for Lands has rightly pointed out that the difficulties encountered by new settlers on the land are such as to warrant the extension of some alleviation in respect to them. So far as it related to shearing, I gave a similar measure my hearty support last year, and have watched with great interest the progress, or lack of progress, since that time. I will still watch with interest the progress of this measure through another place, for if it becomes law, and there is any probability of its provisions being put into active operation, there are some 3,000 or 4,000 of my constituents who will readily welcome a similar measure. While it is truly regrettable that such a measure should be required, even the member for Gascoyne must admit that practically all Australia has been built by those who live in the open air. Mining, agriculture, shearing, all compel men for a considerable time of the year to put up with the sky for a covering. Taken all round it is a healthy practice.

Mr. McDonald: That applies to the other fellow.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have had a few years of it myself, and it has never imposed any serious inconvenience upon me. I believe that if we had a more rational system of housing our people there would not be nearly so much mortality in our midst.

Mr. McDonald: Then why oppose the Bill?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not opposing it, I am merely pointing out some of its features which, perhaps, are not really required. We all realise that shearing is

heart-breaking and back-breaking work, and consequently we believe that shearers should have proper accommodation on the various stations. The member for Moore, who, perhaps, passed the strongest criticism on the Bill, pointed out that there were no possibilities whatever of penalties being imposed on shearers who damaged property or who failed to keep the premises clean. I was struck with the inconsistency of some of his remarks, because while he pointed to the probability of the shearers' quarters being allowed to get into a dirty and filthy condition, he emphasised the contention that in agricultural districts the men's quarters were always so clean and tidy. Without any disparagement whatever of the employees in one industry as against those in another I think the shearer is just as likely to keep his quarters clean as is the agricultural labourer, or indeed anyone else. Again, as regards the imposition of penalties, the member for Moore must not forget that, although the shearer may not be get-at-able by law, for the reason that shearing is concluded and the shearer has taken his departure, yet that shearer generally looks to go back to the same shed in the following season, and, therefore, the owner has in his hands a very powerful lever; because if the offending shearer has left the shed and, consequently, the penalty of the law cannot be imposed upon him, the pastoralist will not be eager to give him employment next season. We have had instances during the last few weeks of a pastoralist refusing to employ men hitherto employed by him with unfailing regularity in previous years. Having taken a prejudice against members of a certain organisation, that pastoralist has determinedly refused to employ them. Therefore it will be seen that the pastoralists have in their hands a penalty far more potent than the infliction of a fine as will be provided by law if this Bill pass. However, there is very little opposition to that part of the Bill dealing with shearers, and, therefore, we can dismiss it. But, as regards Part 3, I agree with those who have pointed out the difficulties that would stand in the way of its application. I was under the impression that, even if the Bill be-

came law, we could, perhaps, apply it to the older settled localities. Under Clause 18 the Minister and his officers have power to give exemption to a new district, to a particular body of settlers or, perhaps, even to a whole province. The Minister may wholly or partly exempt any employer from any provisions of the Bill. I believe that under a sympathetic Minister we would have power to exempt all those new settlers struggling against adverse circumstances. However, if an amendment is moved, and I understand it will be moved, with the object of making provision for those who are in temporary employment by stipulating for the provision of tents—not a very serious disability to impose—that amendment, I am sure, will be accepted by the member for Gascoyne. I not know that the Bill will apply to many new places in agricultural districts, but I believe there are some older established places, the employers in which do not treat their employees as they should. I agree with the Minister for Lands that in a young State development is the watchword. Each and every settler who has gone on the land in recent years has taken that course in a desire to flee from the wages market. They desire to become independent, and a very laudable desire it is. I only wish I could assist a large number of my constituents to get on the soil and make homes for themselves. I hope to see the day when a great number of the workers in our different industries will be given greater encouragement to take up land and establish permanent homes for themselves. We realise that in regard to land settlement generally the bulk of our settlers have difficulty in providing decent homes for themselves in the early stage of their struggle. I have been through the greater portion of the agricultural districts, have been amongst new settlers who have gone on the land with only £20 at their back. For the time being, at least, those people have entirely neglected to provide decent houses for their wives and children, because their desire has been to get a little cropping done immediately in order to secure some small return, leaving until a more opportune time the provision of better accommoda-

tion. I do not think it would be necessary to apply the provisions of the Bill to such as these. If any amendment is moved on behalf of those engaged in chaffcutting, clearing and ringbarking I sincerely trust that these men will be deemed temporary employees, and so long as tent accommodation is provided, I think that should be sufficient to meet the case. I do not think the member for Gascoyne will press the provisions of the Bill in so far as they relate to the bulk of the new settlers; because, as he, with his vast experience of the bush must know, worse conditions exist to-day in respect to these new settlers than exist in any other industry, for the reason that they are all hampered by lack of funds. Consequently it would be unfair to impose on them unnecessary conditions while they are struggling to build up homes for themselves. But if the Bill were thrown out, or if Part 3 were eliminated, many cases would remain in which proper accommodation is not provided by those who are in a position to provide it. Even if antagonistic amendments are moved and carried I hope the time is not far distant when a successful attempt will be made to ensure provision for the proper accommodation of workers by employers who are in a position to provide it and who should be forced to provide it if they will not do so of their own volition.

Mr. GARDINER (Roebourne) : I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion is not seconded.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE (Toodyay) : I think we may say that Part 3 of the Bill is practically doomed. I have had pleasure in listening to the speech of the Minister for Lands, who clearly pointed out the difficulties under which the new settlers labour and who made out an indisputable case on their behalf. In so far as shearers' accommodation is concerned, from my knowledge of that particular class of labour I fail to realise any pressing need for this measure. There may be in the other States, but in this State we very seldom hear complaints from the shearers

as to the lack of accommodation. Having regard to our climatic conditions there is, to my mind, no occasion for harassing the pastoralist. I am sorry I cannot agree with those members who have declared there is a necessity for this measure. Even if such accommodation were provided I am sure the majority of shearers would prefer the open air to sleeping in close dwellings where, perhaps, they would be accommodated in crowded quarters in a hot climate. Reference has been made to New Zealand, but it must be remembered that the New Zealand climate is very different from that of the northern part of this State. If there were many complaints in respect to the accommodation provided I am sure they would reach us. For my part I have never heard them. I have had considerable experience in connection with shearing, and I may say that so far as shearers' back is concerned, it is something like housemaid's knee, and it is not due so much to lack of good sleeping accommodation as to draughty sheds and the heated state the men get into when working so hard. The work is certainly very strenuous, and it is made more so by the enthusiasm and the extraordinary effort of the men in their rivalry to become the ringer or as near to the ringer as possible. It is this special effort and not so much the accommodation that causes the bad backs. To my mind, if the men had good food it would be much better than any special sleeping accommodation. In any case if this accommodation is lacking, the shearers' union is sufficiently strong to look after itself. I feel sure that if the accommodation was bad the men would quickly send a note along to the boss demanding that something better should be provided.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What about the rural workers? They cannot enforce it.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: There is no complaint on their part.

Mr. Heitmann: I met some of them at the Palace hotel the other day.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: I am not acquainted with that class of worker. My experience extends only to the true



worker and he does not complain. His main ambition is to get the best wage he can for his labour, and otherwise, so far as I know, he is satisfied. The Bill might be restricted to some of the settled agricultural districts, but even in those the men are fairly well satisfied. If there were any chance of getting support from the Government side of the House I would move that this Bill be read six months hence because I am satisfied that in the present circumstances it is not justified. The hon. member for Gascoyne, in introducing the Bill, trotted out the same old story about the pigstye, but I think that if careful examination were made it would be found that the pigstye did not exist. I have not yet seen a boss who would wish to house his shearers in the same dwelling as his pigs.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: The hon. member did not say that they were both in the same place.

Mr. A. N. PIESSE: The hon. member said that the shearers was in the sty and the pig came in shortly afterwards. In regard to the farming districts, it is a well-known fact that the new settler is a large employer of labour; in fact, more than half the money he expends on his holding is expended in the employment of labour; therefore if you compel the new settler to provide special accommodation, you must restrict the employment which the settlers can offer, and thus deprive a large number of people of one of the avenues of employment. I sincerely hope that the member for Gascoyne will see fit, if not to withdraw the Bill, at any rate to accept amendments, because there is very little in the present development of the State to warrant such a measure.

Mr. TURVEY (Swan): I desire to congratulate the hon. member for Gascoyne on introducing this measure, and also to congratulate the hon. member who has just sat down on not attempting to carry out his threat to move that the Bill be read six months hence. I am quite satisfied that the member for Gascoyne has as intimate a knowledge of the shearers and rural workers of the State as any member in the House, and I would further say that he is just as sincere in

desiring that justice should be done to the farmer as any other member, either on this side or on the other side of the House. The member for Moore pointed to the fact that much is left to regulations in this Bill. I believe that is a wise precaution. Clause 20 clearly sets out that such regulations may be general in their application, or may be limited to particular districts, localities, or premises, and it is quite clear that in a State so vast as Western Australia accommodation which may suit such a locality as the eastern agricultural areas would not meet the requirements of the south-west, for instance. It is only fitting that the necessary precautions should be taken to provide by regulation that the buildings may be constructed according to the conditions of the particular districts. In Clause 18 it is provided that the Minister may by order, wholly or partly exempt any employer from the operation of this Act, and I feel sure that the hon. member for Gascoyne had this in mind when he launched the Bill before the House.

Mr. A. E. Piesse: He would need to have a special department to deal with exemptions.

Mr. TURVEY: I do not think so. This is not the only Bill in which much is left to regulation. The member for Moore pointed out that the visits of inspectors would be very infrequent. I might also point out that the visits of inspectors in other departments are very infrequent, too, but the fact of inspectors being appointed to see that accommodation is provided would be sufficient to ensure that those responsible provided the worker with the accommodation necessary for his work. Although I intend to support the second reading, I want to clearly indicate that it is my intention to move in Committee that reasonable exemption be granted to the pioneers in the agricultural areas. As one who has spent the greater part of his life in agricultural areas I realise that the general enforcement of this measure would press heavily on many of the farmers in Western Australia. I could point to many a farmer in this State who made his start practically living in the open, being unable to provide even

tent accommodation for himself, and I am sure that the member for Gascoyne will be quite agreeable to accept an amendment in Committee exempting the agriculturists of the State for five years or so from the establishment of their farms. So far as the position of shearers is concerned, I do not know much of the pastoral industry in this State, but I can speak with a good deal of experience of the manner in which shearers were treated in the Eastern States many years ago, and if the conditions obtain in Western Australia that obtained in parts of the Eastern States in those days it is full time that provision was made to ensure reasonable accommodation for the shearers and shed hands. I visited many shearing sheds in the Eastern States, and I remember how the shearers were huddled together with a Chinese cook in conditions worse than one would see in the steerage accommodation of our coastal steamers. Reference has been made by a member of the Opposition to the fact that the duties of inspection could be well carried out by the police. Already the police have multifarious duties to attend to; we are yearly overloading these men with additional work, and I do not wish to see them called upon to shoulder the additional responsibility of inspection under the provisions of this measure.

Mr. HEITMANN: But they have to visit every farm house.

Mr. TURVEY: It is true that they have to visit every farm house in connection with the statistical work, but I do not know whether the hon. member is aware of the opinion held by the police in regard to that work. If not, I would ask him to inquire of the country constables.

Mr. HEITMANN: Of course every man objects to hard work if he can get out of it.

Mr. TURVEY: That work is not the duty of the police; it is one of the extra duties cast upon them in recent years, and there seem to be certain members of the community who are ready at all times to impose any further duties of this kind on the shoulders of the police.

Mr. HEITMANN: Why not?

Mr. TURVEY: Perhaps the hon. member will be able to relieve the police of some of those duties. I wish to say in conclusion that in Committee I intend to see that every provision is made that the pioneer agriculturists, the men who are going out into the wilderness and opening up the agricultural areas in the State, suffer no injustice; but where they are once established and have rural workers in their midst, then I say that the well established farmers who are not providing decent accommodation for them should be made to do so. I have met many well established farmers who are treating their men well, but there are others. This Bill is to deal with those others. Further, I have found in every instance that the well established farmers who have provided decent accommodation for their workers are getting the best results from them. It is generally found by the farmers that where they house and treat their workers well, they get a better class of worker, the man who is more content to settle down with the farmers.

Mr. HEITMANN: That applies generally.

Mr. TURVEY: It does apply generally. I have met many farmers who supplied separate accommodation altogether and who built neat little cottages for their workers, but I must say that such men are the exception and not the general rule. I desire, in conclusion, to congratulate the member for Gascoyne on his honest attempt to do something for the agricultural labourers of this State, and I feel sure he will take the necessary precaution, even before this Bill reaches the Committee stage, to see that amendments are put upon the Notice Paper to remove any injustice whatever upon the pioneer agriculturist.

Mr. MONGER (York): I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I put the motion I want to draw the attention of the House to a principle embodied in the Bill which, before the Committee stage is reached, may influence me to disallow the measure. The member for Gascoyne, when introducing the Bill, referred to the appointment of independent inspectors, and during the whole of the

debate that point has been stressed. I want to point out that it is not within the province of a member or a Minister to introduce any matter in a measure which makes a charge on the public revenue, unless a Message is received from the Crown. Therefore, I want to inform the House that if a Message is not received before the Committee stage is reached, or if the Government do not give an assurance that this Bill will not make a charge on the public revenue, I will have to disallow the measure.

Motion put and passed; the debate adjourned.

*[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]*

# **BILL — FREMANTLE-KALGOORLIE (MERREDIN-COOLGARDIE SEC- TION) RAILWAY.**

## *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) The Minister in introducing this Bill made it clear that no measure has ever been introduced into the House, except the Kalgoorlie water scheme that meant so great an expenditure as this railway line. I welcome this measure because it marks in no uncertain way the first step towards linking up Western Australia with the railway systems of the Eastern States. I remember years ago, when Sir John Forrest proposed to build the first line to the goldfields from Southern Cross, that the people had very great doubts about the wisdom of spending so much money upon that railway. It was not very much compared with the expenditure we are now facing, but there was a doubt about the wisdom of completing the few miles of line to the goldfields. Then, when the line proved successful, people said it was Sir John Forrest's luck. Sir John Forrest would have been very pleased indeed to have been in the Minister's place to introduce this measure. No matter whether we are agreed as to every detail of the proposal, we can congratulate the Minister upon the privilege he has enjoyed of introducing so important a Bill into the House. The Min-

ister made a point regarding the urgency of this work and stated that a duplication of the line from Merredin east to Coolgardie is necessary in order that the enormous tonnage to be hauled for the Federal authorities might be carried with the least possible inconvenience to the traffic now being handled on the line. The Bill is a very important one because it commits the country to the building of the whole of the line. While I have no objection to that, I dare say there are many members who would like to have the measure fully considered, and no matter how great the urgency I think the Minister will give the necessary time to discuss the proposition fully.

The Minister for Works: The question of building the line is *past discussion*.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: You cannot build the line without money.

The Minister for Works: The question whether we will build the line or not is *past discussion*.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It has not been passed by this House. I am not objecting to the Bill but I congratulate the Minister upon having the privilege of introducing such an important measure. I want to see this country linked up with the rest of Australia. The Minister explained that the section to be built is that from Merredin to Coolgardie, and he explained very lightly that he would have preferred to introduce a Bill authorising the construction of the line from Fremantle to the terminus. That, of course, is impossible because the Government have not yet determined by which route the line is to reach Northam. We all understand that it is advisable that facilities should be provided, probably in the way the Minister suggests, to meet the enormous traffic which will have to be faced. I should have been glad if he could have told the House the direction which the line will take from Fremantle. Full inquiry, however, is necessary, and we can quite understand that such inquiry must first be made. I am pleased to know that the line will probably go by the Swan route.

The Minister for Works: I never said so.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am glad to hear that the Swan route is better than the proposed Armadale route. I believe that the route through the Swan valley and via Wooroloo will be the best that can be obtained. The Minister, of course, must have the surveys completed and careful and full inquiry made before he can decide. We all admit that, and I understand that this is being done. I hope the Minister will take the House into his confidence as soon as ever the information is to hand.

The Minister for Works: Most assuredly.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister stated that he had consulted with the Engineer-in-Chief, and the Engineer for Existing Lines, with regard to the 250,000 tons which will have to be hauled to Kalgoorlie to meet the demands of the Federal Government, but it seems to me that we should have heard from the Traffic Department or the Commissioner of Railways that he is not able to handle the traffic on the single line that now runs to Kalgoorlie.

The Minister for Works: That is impossible. I said 10 crossing places would have to be put in.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister gave us the information he had from the Engineer-in-Chief and the Engineer for Existing Lines, but I think the Commissioner of Railways was probably the right man to be consulted; I do not know whether he was consulted.

The Minister for Works: He concurred in the report.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am glad to know the Commissioner has been consulted, and I am glad to have the assurance that he finds he cannot handle the traffic over the single line, and that the step proposed by this Bill is advisable.

The Minister for Works: He states that it is impossible without putting in the crossings referred to.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is right that the Commissioner should be consulted because the widening of the gauge from 3ft. 6in. to 4ft. 8½in. will cost a considerable sum of money. It is proposed that the sleepers shall be permanent and

that we shall put down the heavier rails, 50lbs., when the time arrives to do so. This House, I take it, would hesitate to authorise so great an expenditure, except on the advice of the Traffic Department, because the only reason for this step is that it is to meet the requirements of traffic. Of course it is very much better to do this than to have a congestion of traffic, or to have a lot of useless expenditure, such as the Minister says he would have had to face if this proposal were not accepted. I should like to hear from the Minister that the alteration in the order for rails weighing 60lbs. to rails weighing 50lbs. is necessary. I believe the information is that if he insisted upon the contract he now has for 60lb. rails being carried out, there would be delay in getting the 50lb. rails. I am glad the alteration under this order will not interfere with the building of agricultural railways.

The Minister for Works: We did not use the 60lb. rails. The 60lb. rails were to be used on existing lines and the rails to be taken up would be available for agricultural lines.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Unless they are forthcoming fairly soon there must be some delay in getting the rails for other work. I hope the Minister will put in hand the work he has cancelled in order that 60lb. rails may be got as soon as possible. It is essential that existing lines should be relaid and it is essential that agricultural railways should be pushed on with. I am prepared to accept the assurance of the Minister that there will be as little delay as possible in that connection. I would like to point out that the traffic from Northam to Merredin will be very much heavier than the traffic can possibly be from Merredin to Coolgardie. Members know that from Northam to Merredin there is a very important and thickly settled agricultural district, and that the traffic increases tremendously, after leaving Merredin, coming west. If the Minister can have the information with regard to the route of the line through the Darling Ranges decided before the Merredin duplication is put in hand I understand he will in-

roduce a Bill authorising him to relay or lay the section of the line from East Northam, or Northam, to Merredin.

The Minister for Works: We admit if we can get through the Swan Valley we will want more for the section from East Northam to Merredin than from Merredin to Coolgardie.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I agree with the Minister because the traffic is heavier there. If the traffic can be got over that section of the line it can be carried from Merredin to Coolgardie without any difficulty.

The Minister for Works: The only difference is we have the Wickiepin to Merredin line, over which to take the sleepers, which will relieve things.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Wickiepin to Merredin line when built will relieve the position if the sleepers can be run from the South-West over the line to Merredin. I understand it will be a considerable time before that railway can be completed, though I believe it is the intention of the Minister to push on with the line.

The Minister for Works: We are building the Wickiepin-Merredin line in three places, namely, at Wickiepin, Merredin, and half way.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If the line is constructed between Wickiepin and Merredin, as soon as the line from Merredin to Coolgardie is completed it should afford relief. I hope the Minister will duplicate the other section of the eastern line because there will be a lot of traffic to carry over it. There is every prospect that we are in for a good season and that the Railway Department will have all they can do to cope with ordinary traffic, quite apart from this additional traffic for the Federal authorities. The 183 miles of railway proposed by this Bill is to cost £670,000, and, notwithstanding that we all realise that we are committed to the Bill, members should appreciate just what that means. To complete the line we shall need to borrow, I suppose, something approaching two millions of money. It is an enormous sum because, in addition to laying this 83 miles, and the other 200 miles, we shall have to provide sta-

tions and rolling stock and all other things necessary to a railway, and we are thus committing ourselves to an expenditure of about two million pounds. I mention this because the facts should be in the minds of members when they are dealing with a matter of such importance.

The Minister for Works: I doubt whether two millions will do it.

The Premier: Of course it will be spread over a period; it cannot be built in a day.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I quite understand that the line cannot be built in a day. The point is we are committing the country to this expenditure in passing this measure. Although it provides for a section of the line only, it means we are committed to the building of the whole of the line. The Bill provides for a ten-miles deviation. I do not know that this is necessary in this case, because the line runs parallel to the railway already in existence. I know we have provided in previous Bills for such a deviation, and I know that ordinarily deviations are provided for to improve the grades. I know we have had a deviation in connection with one line, but there were instructions from the House that altered the situation. The Minister, however, will agree with me that the authority to deviate should not be ten miles and that five miles is sufficient. I hope in future Bills he will see his way to limit the deviation power to five miles, particularly in level country such as this Bill is dealing with.

The Minister for Works: We are trying to do the surveys first, and avoid that.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That will be a very good course, and I hope the Minister will follow it. The Bill also provides for land resumption, which is a usual provision I am bound to admit, but I would point out, and I hope the Minister will agree with me, that we are laying down a second track which does not improve the value of the land at all, and resumption is not so necessary in this case as with a new line opening up new country. Though we know that if the land is resumed it will be paid for, still it causes some unrest to have a provision of this

nature standing, as it will be in this case, for a year or two. There is very little settlement between Merredin and Coolgardie, and the provision will not do any harm, but when introducing the Bills for the other sections of the line the Minister should consider that he will be running through country that is already served and which will not be improved by the construction of an additional railway. I am pleased indeed to hear that the line is to be built by the Working Railways. It is the right idea in connection with this line, and I believe it would be a good idea in connection with all lines built departmentally. I have always thought so. From time to time when the Working Railways have been called upon to take over lines from the Engineer-in-Chief, they invariably say, "It will not do, we will have to spend a lot of money on it to improve it," and, of course, they have spent considerable sums on improving lines handed over to them. Just now, I believe, there is some trouble with the Goomalling-Wongan Hills line.

The Premier: Very serious trouble, and it is worse on the Dowerin-Merredin line.

Mr. O'Loughlin: What trouble is that?

The Premier: The line is spreading out.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If these lines had been constructed by his department, the Commissioner of Railways would have seen to it that he got lines which suited his purpose.

The Minister for Works: You would then get away from the cheapness of them.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Engineer for Existing Lines is more capable of satisfying the Commissioner of Railways in putting down a substantial line than probably the Engineer-in-Chief is concerned to do.

The Premier: He can do it just as capably if he is authorised to do it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Engineer-in-Chief would not be likely to do it quite so well, because he has not the responsibility of running the lines. However, if we are to build lines departmentally it is better that the Engineer-in-Chief should supervise and see that we get value for the money, and that the Railway Department should be entrusted with the work;

and I am pleased to see that in this case, at any rate, the Commissioner of Railways is to lay down this line. I realise this is done because he already controls the line running parallel, of which this is to be a duplication. I know the Bill is merely introduced to carry out promises that have been made from time to time, first by the James Government and afterwards by succeeding Governments. We have always undertaken to do this work if the Federal people would undertake to do theirs. I would like to know if the agreement with the Federal Government as to the land they will require has been signed; and if it has been signed, I hope, before this Bill passes, the Minister for Works will make the agreement available to the House. It is important that members should know just what it is proposed to grant to the Federal authorities in connection with their line. We all know they are always reaching out for new avenues of expenditure, and we also know that where opportunities offer they are very anxious indeed to secure land. Quite recently the South Australian Government had some trouble with the Minister for Home Affairs. I believe that the trouble has been settled, but the Minister wanted more land than the South Australian Government thought they were entitled to give. Another matter the Minister for Works has not touched on is what timbers are to be used. Does the Minister intend to use powellised karri for our lines, or will he stick to our good old jarrah.

The Minister for Works: We will get the best, of course.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Then the Minister will use jarrah.

The Premier: I differ from you there.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We have had limited experience with karri.

The Premier: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is certainly not more than six years since we first put powellised karri into our railways. If powellised karri is as good as it is claimed to be, the Government will have done great work in having induced the Federal Government to use powellised sleepers on their lines, the greatest work that has been done

in connection with our timber industry for many years; but I claim some credit for the past Government for setting going the tests on which our friends opposite have based their ideas as to the value of the timber. Everyone in the State must rejoice in the fact that a method has been discovered to make the timber more valuable.

The Premier: Your boss is doing his very best to try to discredit it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have no boss, not even the Premier of the State nor the caucus that sits behind him. The Premier always refers to Sir John Forrest as "boss" of the Liberal Party, but if there is one man I would like to sit under in Australia it is Sir John Forrest.

Mr. Green: Of course; he is your boss.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I wish I could claim for the Premier as boss what I can for the great Liberal who represents this State in the Federal Parliament. There are several questions we would like to see answered. We would like to be assured that the Federal Government will start their line at once. They should at least start as soon as we do. I saw by the papers the other day that their Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Deane, is coming across to start the building of the Federal portion of the Trans-Australian railway, but we have had so many promises from Mr. King O'Malley that the line will be started that we shall be very pleased indeed to hear when the first sod is turned.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You made many promises.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: And carried them out. I hope the Minister will be able to tell us when the Federal Government propose to start their part of the contract.

The Premier: We have quite enough to do to look after our own business.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Premier does not understand his business if he says it is not his business to see that the Federal Government carry out their part of the contract. When he is asking the House to spend two million pounds to carry out our part, it is reasonable that he, as representative of the State, should make it his business to see that the Fed-

eral Government carry out their part. I do not think much of the expedition of the Federal Government, and I think the Premier should see that our money is not spent until they start to spend theirs. I am sorry it is necessary to go to this additional expense in order that the traffic may be carried. I should be very glad if we could have put off the building of this line so that our agricultural and developmental railways might be pushed on with.

The Premier: I cannot follow you there. What about the Governor's Speech of two years ago when you were going to build the line to the border.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The position of two years ago is not quite the position of to-day. The Premier told us the other night that he could not push on railways faster for want of funds. He knows the money market is very much tighter to-day than it was two years ago, and he will find it a much more difficult task to borrow to-day than it was two years ago. Money is tighter and harder to obtain, and our commitments are heavier. We are committing ourselves to two millions for this line, and we want to build agricultural railways at the cost of another two million pounds. I regret we have to build this line now when the money could be put to better account for agricultural developmental railways.

The Premier: You are not consistent. A couple of years ago you were going to build this line to the border.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I would remind the Premier that "two years ago" was a totally different matter. Money is more difficult to get, as he knows, and his borrowing power is more limited, he is committed to a great deal of expenditure; he is committed to agricultural railways and vast State enterprises that will cost a great amount of money, and he is committed to an enormous amount of money for the Agricultural Bank, because Mr. Fisher will have the Savings Bank money. It is his duty as Treasurer to see to it that the commitments of the Government with regard to our claims are met. There is no disguising the fact that the Premier will have to borrow very largely on that unfavourable market. We must borrow

for agricultural lines, and we must supply capital for our agricultural loans. The Premier realises there is difficulty in getting the money that is needed, and for economical reasons he would do well to ask the Federal Government to borrow money for the construction of our portion of the line. It could then be loaned to us and we could pay interest in the ordinary way. Time and again the Federal Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher, has said that he can borrow money more cheaply than the State, and, as this is a national work, the collective credit of the people of Australia should be used in borrowing the money. If the collective credit of the people of Australia is sufficiently good to enable Mr. Fisher to borrow this money at 3 per cent., it would be wise for the Premier to ask Mr. Fisher to undertake that work for us. This is a national work, and the Premier would be justified in asking the Federal Government to assist in its construction. The Premier will have to pay 4 per cent. for his money, and if the Federal Government can get it for 3 per cent. there will be a very big saving. Of course there is no desire on the part of anyone to stand in the way of the prompt building of this line. I am merely voicing an opinion with regard to the financial aspect and expressing the view that we should do our utmost to obtain the money as cheaply as possible. With regard to the line itself the Minister has told us that at first it will be laid on a 3ft. 6in. gauge, and that later it will be widened to 4ft. 8½in. I know also that Australians will not be satisfied until we have the line running from east to west, and I am bound to admit that we are engaged upon a work which will for the first time make federation a reality. At the present time we are isolated from the rest of Australia. This work will, amongst other things, have the effect of making the great port of Fremantle the front door of Australia. We also want eastern Australia to know more about us than they do now. Just now we are ruled almost entirely by eastern legislators. True we have representation in the Federal Cabinet, but all the same our numbers there are very small,

and it will be a good thing for Western Australia when the eastern legislators will be able to travel over this line.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They are treating us very well so far.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I think they are treating us very badly. I repeat that I am pleased, and I daresay that every member in this House is pleased to have the privilege of taking a hand in authorising the construction of this work. I hope the Minister will, at the earliest possible moment, take the House into his confidence with regard to the survey which is being made through the Darling Ranges. So far as I am concerned, I think the line should run along the route of the present railway. We have a water supply and settled country there, and the people along that route would benefit considerably by the broad gauge. While I have very much pleasure in supporting the Bill I wish I could induce the Premier to view the situation a little more seriously. The line must be laid sooner or later, and the determination of the Government to do it now must meet with approval. It is pleasing also to know that the Government are satisfied that the Federal authorities will carry out their portion of the work without further delay.

Mr. McDOWALL (Coolgardie): It seems almost unnecessary to speak on this important question, but I think the House must be unanimous in congratulating the Ministry on its promptness in bringing forward this measure. The Federal Government have passed a Bill for the construction of the Trans-Australian railway, and we have engaged with that Government to do our share of the work. At the earliest possible moment the Ministry have brought in a measure to authorise the construction of the line over a section about the route of which there can be no argument, and I certainly am very glad indeed to find that it is being done with such expedition. The fears expressed by the member for Northam are, I think, altogether unwarranted. I do not think we need fear that the Government will rush into unnecessary expenditure of two million pounds without carefully consid-



ering the ways and means of getting it, and if it is found that the Federal Government can borrow it at a lower rate, I have no doubt that arrangements will be made to secure it through the Federal Government. But after all is said and done, these questions are beside the present Bill. The Bill affirms, or gives authority to construct a line from Merredin to Coolgardie. The Minister in an exhaustive speech very clearly gave the information as to why it is necessary to build the line from Merredin to Coolgardie. The carrying of 250,000 tons of material for the Federal Government and the avoidance of crossings that would be necessary if the line was not at once constructed are strong arguments in favour of taking the line in hand without delay. The existing line between Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie being duplicated, the terminus for the present will be Coolgardie. I am only sorry that Coolgardie is not to be the terminus of the Trans-Australian railway, so far as Western Australia is concerned.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Where is Coolgardie?

Mr. McDOWALL: Coolgardie is world famed; its name is known throughout the whole of the civilised world, and I am astonished at the ignorance of the member for Forrest in asking a question that could be answered anywhere.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What is the population of Coolgardie?

Mr. McDOWALL: I would remind the Honorary Minister that within the municipal boundaries of Coolgardie there are over 2,000 people. These figures are according to the last census.

Member: Goats.

Mr. McDOWALL: No, they are here. In the last six months more gold was obtained in Coolgardie than in the corresponding six months of the previous year. Coolgardie is not by any means a place that is done, and I believe it will again come to the rescue of this State as it did in 1892. I am, however, digressing from the subject matter. I did not rise in order to boost my constituency; I rose simply to say a word or two in connection with the Bill, and to congratulate the Ministry upon so

promptly attempting to carry out their portion of the contract with the Federal Government, and, unlike the member for Northam, I do not think we need have any fear about the commencement of the work on the part of the Federal authorities. We know that at the present time it has been started at the Port Augusta end, and we know it will be started at this end in the near future. I am satisfied that we can rely upon the good faith of the Federal Government, and being able to do that it is satisfactory to find our own people already making a start. I therefore have every reason to most heartily support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HEITMANN (Cue): I suppose after the national speech made by the member for Coolgardie any member who dares to oppose this Bill will at once be branded as a "States frighter." It appears to me that we are dealing very lightly with this question, and it does not seem to have struck the member for Coolgardie that in this one line, which we are undertaking to build, we are heaping up the loan indebtedness of the population to the extent of £5 or £6 per head.

Mr. McDowall: We have to do it to keep faith.

Mr. HEITMANN: It is a good thing to always be able to say that we have to do it, but I think hon. members will recognise that the amount of loan indebtedness which the people of this State will be able to bear must necessarily be limited, and at the rate we are going—and while we are supposed to be a non-horroring party we have been accused of having that policy—it will not be many years before the greater portion of our revenue will be taken up in the payment of interest and sinking fund on our loans.

Mr. Green: We will never reach that position with the Labour party in power.

Mr. HEITMANN: We are going on at a great rate towards that position, and it is a position which already has been reached by one of the States of Australia, or I should say, almost reached. It is not so many years since Queensland was paying 47 per cent. of her total revenue in interest and sinking fund, and

I think it would be disastrous if we had to contribute to that extent. At the present time in Western Australia we have promised to construct railways and public works which will increase our indebtedness to a great extent. It is very easy to borrow, and to lead ourselves to believe that most of the works which have been constructed out of loan money will be reproductive. Even though that may be so, we must recognise that it will be many years before some of the works become reproductive, and I do not think it can be said that this work we are about to undertake will be reproductive. As a matter of fact it appeals to me that it will be anything but that, and I regret that past Governments in this State did not insist on the Federal Government undertaking the construction of the line. It appears to me almost too much to ask a population of 300,000 people to take upon themselves the responsibility of the expenditure of two million pounds to carry out this work. I am convinced that if the right attitude had been adopted in the past the Federal Government would willingly have constructed the whole of this work. But we had Ministers carried away by the sentimental cry that we could not have Federation until the various States were linked up by a railway, and they said they would be prepared to build the line from Fremantle to the border. While they may have been prepared to do so at that time, I am sorry that they gave that promise to the Federal Government. I am convinced that the Federal Government would have been prepared to do the whole of this work, and it would have been much fairer to ask the whole of the people of Australia to carry the burden instead of putting it on the shoulders of 300,000 people. I have not been led away by the sentimental cry that we cannot progress without this railway. I can see little else in the Trans-Australian railway but sentiment. I confess, however, that the building of the line must help to develop the country, more or less, but as long as we have other railways to construct, railways which are necessary in order that our own people might produce to the greatest possible

extent, we should consider the question whether the Trans-Australian railway should be built at the present time, or whether we should build those railways in our own State which the people are crying out for. And after all it seems to me that by starting the railway 12 months from now we would still be in time to carry out the work required by the Federal Government. Without any great deal of expenditure the material could be carried over the existing line.

The Premier: I would be glad if you would tell me how.

The Minister for Works: It would cost £67,000 for temporary work.

Mr. HEITMANN: If that is so I recognise there is a necessity for going on with the work. But even so it seems to me there are other lines which should be carried out, and in the building of which this money could be used with greater advantage to the State. As a matter of fact they are not likely to seriously begin the Trans-Australian railway for some months to come. Although we were promised it five or six months ago no start has been made as yet.

The Premier: We have to get the material over our section before they can start.

Mr. HEITMANN: Then they will start in about two years' time.

The Premier: No, a start will be made in five months' time.

Mr. HEITMANN: That is, a start will be made to carry the material in five months' time.

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. HEITMANN: Well, temporary work will have to be done, much as we may try to avoid it by the construction of this railway. We should be very careful, indeed, with the expenditure of loan moneys. It is unfortunate that we should be running to this expenditure, and I really think the work should be carried out by the Federal Government.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): I agree with the member for Cue that it would be very much better from the standpoint of this State if the Federal Government would undertake the construction of this railway from Kalgoorlie to Fre-

mantle; but the fact remains that they have not offered to do it, while, on the other hand, previous State Governments have given them definite assurances that we would be ready to undertake the construction of the line from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie whenever they were ready to undertake the construction of the section from Port Augusta. At the Premiers' Conference we attempted to discuss the question of how far the Federal authorities should assist the State in bringing about a uniform gauge of 4 feet 8½ inches, but unfortunately the conference decided that the question was not within the realm of practical politics at the present time, although we pointed out that it was seriously affecting us because we had decided to continue the 4 feet 8½ inch gauge from Kalgoorlie to the coast, as otherwise the big railway would be of very little use to us. They pointed out that ultimately the Commonwealth would have to recoup this State on the basis of whatever assistance was given to the other States in bringing about uniformity of gauge. I want to ask would it be fair for the present Government, owing to the large demand for the expenditure of loan moneys in many directions in different parts of the State, to refuse to keep the honourable compact entered into with the Federal Government, a compact which undoubtedly had a great deal to do with inducing the Federal Parliament to pass the Trans-Australian Railway Bill? It is an attitude my Government are not prepared to adopt. We regard it as an honourable compact, and we are going to keep faith with it. The question arises as to whether it is advisable that we should proceed immediately with this work, or delay it to a future date, which some hon. members think would do just as well. I want to point out, as the Minister for Works has already done, that this question has been thoroughly thrashed out with the Working Railways and the departmental engineers, and the Working Railways in particular intimated that unless we did something in this direction we would have to expend some £60,000 to put in crossing loops on the line in order that we might carry the railway material required by the Commonwealth Govern-

ment for the new railway, and that that expenditure would in the end be absolutely lost. We concluded that it would be better to expend the money on a permanent railway than that it should be ultimately lost to us, in which event we would still have the permanent work to do. We hope very shortly to ask Parliament for authority for the construction of a further portion of the line westward. The greatest pressure of all will be between Northam and Merredin, but the question as to whether the line should be constructed between Northam and Merredin cannot be decided until the whole route from Merredin to the sea-board has been resolved upon. We must first of all decide the question as to where and how we are going to get through the ranges before we can afford to come any farther westward from Merredin. In the meantime we can arrange for crossing loops, and thus avoid a considerable expenditure. But, as I say, the greatest pressure will be between Northam and Merredin, owing to the huge harvests expected this season and the next. While giving approval in general terms to the Bill the hon. member for Northam tried to make capital out of the fact that the money could be better expended in developing the country. That cry comes very well from the member for Northam, who was a member on the Cabinet which, on the 28th July, 1910, presented a Governor's Speech wherein they told Parliament, per medium of the Governor, that they were not prepared to wait any longer for the Federal Government to construct the railway, but were themselves determined to construct the whole length from Fremantle to the border. Surely if the hon. member was sincere in the remarks he made on the present debate he should, two years ago, have foreseen the necessity of going cautiously. I stated at the time that it was mere claptrap put in the Governor's Speech with a view to belittling the Federal Government, which happened to be a Labour Government. Since bearing the member for Northam on this Bill I am more than ever convinced that the Government of which he was a member had no intention of putting that threat into effect, and that if the Federal authorities had

said "Very well, we do not propose to construct the railway" they would have dropped the proposal at once. In fact when the Loan Estimates came down that year they contained no provision for the expenditure of a single shilling on the construction of such a railway, nor did the Government subsequently ask for any such authority. We do not know what action the Federal Government are going to take regarding the construction of their portion of this railway, but we are concerned, however, with our ability to comply with the agreement to keep them supplied with material in order to expedite the construction of that railway. It is for this we are asking Parliamentary authority. We are determined, so far as is humanly possible, to carry that material over our railway with a view to expediting the construction of the line. The hon. member asked whether we proposed to put down powellised karri sleepers or jarrah sleepers. We will put down powellised karri sleepers if we can get them at less cost than the jarrah, because we are convinced that they are equally as good as, if not better than, jarrah.

Mr. Dooley: If they will withstand the white ants.

The PREMIER: There is no doubt about their withstanding the white ants, and I can assure the member for Geraldton that as a Government we are concerned about our timber industry and the very real asset it is to the State. We are not taking up the attitude that because particular firms are operating on jarrah we are going to exclude our karri. We have magnificent karri forests, and we have no objection to using powellised karri as freely as jarrah, and therefore we propose to put in that class of timber if it is available. I have no desire to decri jarrah, for it has amply proved its worth, but I regret that some so-called friends of Western Australia have done their utmost to prevent this State from supplying sleepers to the trans-Australian railway. Apparently their desire is to assist the firms operating on jarrah, and in their attempt to prevent the karri from coming into competition with the jarrah supplied by those firms, they have sought

to prevent the large amount of money to be paid for these sleepers from coming into Western Australia and to divert it to some other part of the Commonwealth, if not to some other part of the world. But I am pleased to say they have not been successful, although they were prepared to move heaven and earth in their desire. I will say, further, that had it not been that a Labour Government was in power in the Federal Parliament, a Labour Government that knew no parochial interests, this State would never have secured that contract. The Federal Government were not concerned about any big combines, and I am pleased to say that that contract alone will bring a quarter of a million of money into the State which might easily have gone elsewhere. Nor does the contract mean the supply of sleepers only, for the carriage of that material over our railways will bring an enormous sum into the coffers of the State to assist in developing our industries. That is what we had in view when we put in our tender for the supply of sleepers. The question of the tightness of the money market is receiving the attention of Treasurers in all the States of the Commonwealth; but surely the member for Northam would not ask us as a Government to refuse to go on with necessary public works because of this disability. Would he urge that I should keep off the market because, in common with other Treasurers, I have to pay a little more for the money just now? This country needs the money to such an extent that it would be wrong to evade the responsibility of securing it, that is, so long as we are not, by virtue of the fact that we need it, compelled to pay more for it than we would otherwise have to do. The State requires developing and, as I said at Albany, if we were to comply merely with the earnest requests made by members of Parliament alone, we would require six millions of loan money. Then we are told we ought to prevent the expenditure of loan moneys. We are going to prevent it, as far as possible, except on reproductive works. This work will be reproductive, because instead of spend-

ing that £60,000 odd which would eventually be lost to us, we will save it by constructing a line long promised by this State to the Federal Government conditionally on their undertaking the construction of the Trans-Australian railway. And that is the reason why we have asked that it should receive urgent attention. I am satisfied that eventually Parliament, and the State as a whole, will appreciate the action of the Government in undertaking this work as early as possible, in order to prevent the expenditure of a large sum of money which, undoubtedly, will be saved in the long run.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE (Katanning): It is not my intention to speak at any length, but there is one little matter upon which I would like the Minister for Works to give us some little information when replying, and that is in connection with the conversion of an order for 60lb. rails to 80lb. rails. I take it the Minister will assure us that the conversion of this order is not going to in any way delay the works that are already in hand, and on which it is intended to use 60lb. rails. I am referring to the Wickiepin-Merredin railway.

The Minister for Works: Those rails are landed now.

Mr. A. E. PIESSE: I am also referring to the proposed relaying of the second section of the Great Southern line from Katanning to Albany. For many years we have waited for this very necessary work, and we are looking forward to a more expeditious train service, and I hope the Minister will assure us that this work is not going to be delayed by the conversion of the order. We must all congratulate the Government upon the expedition with which they are dealing with this Fremantle-Kalgoorlie section. It is to be regretted that our loan expenditure will be greatly increased within the near future, and I can only express the hope that the development of the country in other directions is not going to be seriously retarded by the raising of such a large sum of money to carry out this necessary work. I congratulate the Government upon their

efforts to get on with the laying of this section of the Transcontinental line at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. MONGER: I move—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

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

Ayes	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	25
				—
Majority against	..			17
				—

#### AYES.

Mr. Allen	Mr. A. E. Piesse
Mr. Lefroy	Mr. A. N. Piesse
Mr. Male	Mr. Layman
Mr. Mitchell	(Teller).
Mr. Monger	

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDonald
Mr. Bath	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Collier	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Dooley	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Foley	Mr. B. J. Stubbs
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Green	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Heilmann
Mr. Lewis	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. MONGER (York): My only reason for moving the adjournment of the debate was in order to allow the leader of the Opposition to be present, to give an expression of his opinion upon this very important measure. I understand from a member on this side of the House that the leader of the Opposition is absolutely in accord with the Bill, practically as introduced by the Minister for Works, but in his absence through indisposition I think it would have been only courteous in the circumstances for the Premier to have agreed to my suggestion.

The Premier: But your deputy leader spoke.

Mr. MONGER: I do object to the innuendoes that are made on every occasion when I rise to speak or to move the adjournment of the House—remarks of the kind that were allowed to emanate from the Premier this evening.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member should have taken exception to the remarks at the time.

The Premier: There was nothing he could have taken exception to.

Mr. MONGER: Even now, at this thirteenth hour, I will ask the Minister for Works, before winding up the second reading debate upon this important measure, to allow the leader of the Opposition to be in his place to make any comment he may think desirable on this Bill.

Mr. LEWIS (Canning): I welcome the introduction of this measure as another evidence that the advent of a national progressive party in Australia has brought about the consummation of the true Federal spirit in the linking of East and West together. The member for Cue was somewhat pessimistic in referring to the obligations which the Bill would entail by necessitating the borrowing of a large sum of money to carry out this work. But experience throughout Australia has proved that it is absolutely essential, in order to develop not only this State but also other States, to carry out the construction of railways which in a short period of time, prove reproductive and ultimately bring about vast development. I sincerely hope that the Government will not continue to construct the broad gauge line parallel with the existing railway to the Eastern Goldfields, but will strike out, and continue its construction through new country which will be thereby opened up. The Minister has put up a good argument in favour of this Bill in the fact that it will obviate the heavy expenditure that would be incurred in the provision of temporary crossings and sidings in connection with the conveying of material required for the Transcontinental line. In the event of the broad gauge line being taken along the route of the present railway, there can be no further necessity for the present line to remain, because even the most enthusiastic supporter of that route cannot contend that the present traffic, or that which will be created, will be sufficient to occupy both lines. Two, or even a dozen lines will not create more traffic, because it is not

the fact of railways competing with one another that creates traffic, but rather the opening up and development of our resources, and the production of more from the soil by the giving of proper transport facilities, in order to encourage settlement and development. I repeat that should the broad gauge line be constructed parallel with the existing line, the narrow one must be done away with, and we will then have a break of gauge on all branch lines, which will necessitate these being worked as a separate system. All junctions with diverging lines must then become changing stations for both goods and passenger traffic, thereby causing more confusion and greater delay and expense to the travelling public. Each and every line must then have workshops to suit its individual necessities, as well as separate engines and rolling stock to work the traffic. If, on the other hand, this line is separated from the present system no injury will be done to any of the others. The need for the construction of this line provides a splendid opportunity for the remaining portion to open up a new track, thus giving railway conveniences to parts of the State that are now languishing for want of them. There is an immense belt of country between York and Narrogin on the Great Southern line, and also between Armadale and Pinjarra on the South-Western line, in which there are wonderful possibilities that can be developed by railway communication. We can also secure a better grade than we would have over the Darling Range on our existing lines, and if necessary we could have the 20 chain radius curves, whereas on the existing line we have in many instances eight to ten chain radius curves. I am also pleased in connection with the introduction of the measure that the Working Railways can carry out this work, in fact, I believe the Working Railways could construct many of our lines much more effectively and turn out the work better than the Public Works Department can. They have the practical knowledge, and we have found from experience in connection with the construction of a certain line, the

Pinjarra to Marrinup line, that after the Working Railways had taken it over the expenditure of a large sum of money was necessary to properly ballast and equip the line so that it could carry out the work required of it. I am pleased that this Bill has been introduced, for it proves that our party at present are alive to the interests of this great continent, and have brought this work, which has been dangling before the eyes of the people of this State for many years, to a practical issue.

Mr. ALLEN (West Perth): I would like to add a word of congratulation to the Government on bringing down this Bill at an early date. I think that, considering the Government would like to have conserved the money for other important work, they deserve the congratulations of the House in coming down so early with the Bill to carry out the promises given by previous Governments and thus doing what is necessary to consummate this Federal spirit. The people of Western Australia have long been crying out for a railway to connect the east with the west, to consummate the tie which has so far been broken. Something has been said with regard to doing this from a sentimental reason only. I think there is something greater than that. Without this railway we are practically cut off from the Eastern States. With the railway we shall be connected, and, if for no other purpose, we require it for defence. I hope we shall not urgently require it for defence purposes, but the day may come quicker than we expect. Although the railway will cost a considerable sum, we might bear in mind that the circulation of the money will bring with it very great prosperity and advantages to this State. I hope that even now the Federal Government may see some way of coming to the assistance of this State which has done so much in the past for the sister States in the direction of providing such an immense market for their products. The State of Western Australia to my mind has, since the discovery of gold, provided one of the finest markets possible for the Eastern States, and there is no doubt that, had

we kept out of Federation, the terms we could have made would have been very much better. However, we are in it, and everyone is looking forward to the consummation by connecting the railways. I do sincerely congratulate the Government on having taken the matter in hand so early to give effect to the wishes of the people and fulfil the promises made by the previous Governments.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I must say I am pleased to be in Parliament when a section of this great Trans-Australian railway is being approved by this House and I am also pleased to be a member of the Labour party and to know that the Labour party are in power in the Federal arena and also in the State arena and responsible for the construction of this great national work, so long promised, so long desired, but never attained until the people's party got into full control of Australian politics. At the same time, I must say I share the feelings of regret which have been expressed by other members that the Federal Government is not building this railway right through from Port Augusta to Fremantle. We all know that it was held out to the people of Western Australia as an inducement to enter the Federation. We would have entered into the Federation in any case, I think, but it was held out as an inducement that this Trans-Australian railway connecting the east with the west should be built by the Federal Government, and it is disappointing now to find that we have to spend a couple of million pounds to build the section from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle. The work is a national one, required for the purpose of defence and I say the Federal Government should bear the cost of the construction and should retain the control of the railway right through from Fremantle to Port Augusta and also from Port Augusta to the Pacific Ocean. If my memory serves me right, I believe a previous Federal Government offered to build the railway right through, but that the offer was refused at that time because there was some jealousy about the Federal Government owning a rail-

way between the rich Eastern Goldfields and the coast of Western Australia. If this is so, I would like to ask the Minister for Works, even at this late hour and without delaying the work of construction if arrangements could not be made for the Federal Government to bear the expense and to own the railway proposed on the broad gauge between Kalgoorlie and Fremantle. When Parliament in 1903 passed a Bill which became Act No. 4 of that year, promising to build this railway, the estimated cost was put down at two million pounds, and I must say when I look at the huge undeveloped spaces in this State, and when I know the number of people on the land in Western Australia in want of light agricultural railways and having to wait for them, I regret the expenditure of this two million pounds which, if spent on State development would build over a thousand miles of light agricultural railways. I hope even now that one day, if not at once, the Federal Government will take over this railway from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle, and will repay to this State the amount we are now forced to expend which we do willingly in most respects, if at the same time somewhat reluctantly from the financial aspect. I hope that in regard to the section between Merredin and Fremantle the Government will, if possible, see that when the Bill for that section is introduced, it will follow a route which will open up new country. We are forced into this great expenditure, and I take it that at least three-quarters of a million of money will have to be spent on the building of the 4ft. 8½in. gauge railway from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie. I say to the Government that this country cannot afford to spend that money if the new line is to be laid down alongside the existing railway, when for the same expenditure we could run it along a different route and open up new agricultural areas right through from Merredin to Fremantle.

Mr. Turvey: You would like the Narrogin-Armadale route?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would like to see the Narrogin-Armadale route adopted, but I am not parochial on that

point. I think the Armadale-Narrogin route is the proper route for this line to take, and I want to see done whatever is the best for Western Australia, and I want above all, to see that that money opens up fresh agricultural areas and is not spent to lay another railway alongside the existing rails. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this important and historic measure.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (in reply): I expected that this Bill would meet with a good reception, because we are simply carrying out and giving effect to promises made by succeeding Governments. We have passed the stage when we can question the wisdom of doing so. Personally I have my own views on the matter, and I held them at the time the James Government introduced the Bill giving the guarantee, but at the same time, we, as the Government, must recognise that the people of Western Australia gave an assurance, and on that assurance the Federal authorities have undertaken the construction of this line. There are one or two points in reference to the Bill with which I wish to deal. The question of the deviation is one. It is true that we are asking for a deviation of ten miles. I do not think that that deviation will be necessary, but the engineers point out that to get a one in eighty grade, even on the existing line will present some difficulties, and it may be necessary to go around these obstacles which might entail a deviation of ten miles, and, as a consequence, they say that to be on the safe side, it is better to put that provision for deviation in the Bill. The member for Northam stated that we should not include provisions for deviations in all Bills for railway construction. I am prepared to admit that. Previous to taking a portfolio I expressed the opinion that it was wrong to present a Bill to Parliament without indicating exactly where the line was to be constructed, and the Government have endeavoured to overcome that difficulty by sending out surveyors in anticipation of Bills being passed. We



are proposing to extend the Bolgart line and that line is being surveyed so that we can definitely state where the route will be. The same applies to the Cow-cowing-Mount Marshall line, and in regard to the Wagin west line the same steps will be taken. In connection with the line under consideration, we have not had time to survey it and we cannot say what deviations will be necessary. Consequently, we are asking Parliament to give us that right though I do not anticipate, and I am basing my opinion on the statements of the Engineer-in-Chief, that a ten or even five miles deviation will be necessary. Having admitted that a deviation is necessary, and we say it is necessary to deviate from the existing line to get a one in eighty grade, it may be necessary to resume land. I do not think that a deviation will be necessary in any of these settled parts, but, in the majority of places, deviation will occur in the goldfields area where we will be dealing with Crown lands. However, there may be deviations in other places which will necessitate resumptions, and we are simply asking for this provision in the Bill. The hon. member raised an important question as to whether we intend to use powellised karri sleepers, and I have no hesitation in saying definitely that we will if we can get them in time, because we believe they are the better class of sleeper. There is no question about that. The powellised karri is supposed to have the life of a jarrah sleeper, and this conclusion is arrived at after thorough experiments have been made. Karri is the better timber for sleepers, because the main difficulty with jarrah is that the dog spikes do not hold, and consequently jarrah gives trouble at various periods, whereas with karri once the dog spike is put in it is there for all time. That is one of the advantages of karri over jarrah, and then, having the powellising process, the life of karri is said by experts, whose statements I am prepared to accept, to be equal to that of jarrah. Consequently we believe karri to be a better timber for sleepers, and we will use it, but we want to get on with this line in order to make it possible for

us to start carrying powellised sleepers and rails for the Federal people. Consequently we may not be able to get the karri sleepers ready, and we will have to use a considerable amount of jarrah sleepers for this portion of the line. I agree with the member for Northam when he says that the people should know exactly the responsibility they are taking in building this section of the line. I would be pleased if I could accept the hon. member's figures as to the cost of the line being two million pounds. I believe it will be more. No doubt it is a huge expenditure, but this will not be done in a day or a year. In building this portion of the line we are taking on a responsibility of building the whole of it, but the responsibility was taken long before this Bill was introduced. We are pledging the country to an expenditure of over two million pounds, but it has to be faced, and I believe the State is capable of carrying it, though there will be difficulties in raising the money. There are difficulties throughout the world to-day in raising money; it is not so cheap as it was some years ago. But we have to overcome these difficulties, and we will overcome them, and we will have sufficient capital to build the line. I believe that when it is built Western Australia will prosper to a greater extent than it has done so far. As was pointed out last night, we want to expedite the measure because it is necessary to get going if we are to carry the material for the Federal line. The member for York mentioned the absence of the leader of the Opposition. I regret that he is not present, but I think the hon. member is correct when he says that the Bill has met with the endorsement of the leader of the Opposition.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Holman in the Chair, the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, and 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Power to Governor to compulsorily purchase land within 15 miles of railways :

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This was the usual clause provided in railway Bills for lines built into new country which added to the value of land, but in this case we were practically duplicating an existing line and not increasing the value of the adjoining land. There was not much land held under conditional purchase or freehold along this railway. The clause was hardly necessary.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause was not so necessary as it was in other Bills, but it was a precautionary measure, though advantage might not be taken of it. As a matter of fact, there was probably not an instance on record where advantage had been taken of a similar clause in other Bills.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The power to resume would be held over people for three years. If the clause was not necessary it should not appear in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As power was given to deviate ten miles it was an indication this would not be an absolutely parallel line; and though the deviation would probably not be more than five miles, if land had to be acquired for the purpose there was necessity for the clause. At any rate it was a precaution it was advisable to take where there was likely to be a deviation.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Where people had land that was not being used it might well be resumed, but where a line was being duplicated it would be wrong for the Minister to retain paragraph (a) which formed part of the clause. There was no desire for a feeling of uncertainty to get abroad and that would certainly follow if the clause was retained. This was not on all-fours with other railway propositions which had been before the House.

The Minister for Mines: There may be cause for deviation and we want power to resume, in the event of a new township springing up. / / / / /

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That power was given in Clause 5.

The Minister for Mines: No, in Clause 4.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The clause might well appear somewhere else, or it might be limited by striking out paragraph (a). The Government were setting up a precedent that would be wrong. It really set up an authority that the Government had no right to ask.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The clause was a most valuable one, and ought to appear in all railway Bills. The member for Northam was more concerned about the Bill that would be introduced presently for the construction of the railway from Merredin to Fremantle, rather than the Bill under consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should not impute motives.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The desire of the member for Northam as a matter of public policy was that this clause should be struck out of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was still imputing motives.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There was no desire on his part to do that. What he wished to imply was that the member for Northam was zealous for the interests of the land holders in his constituency, and might be affected by the clause if it was included in the measure that would be introduced later on for the construction of a railway through his constituency from Merredin to Fremantle. The member for Northam claimed credit for having introduced this particular clause in other railway Bills. He would inform the hon. member however, that the clause was contained in the Collie-Narrogin railway Bill, which was approved by Parliament long before the hon. member was elected. He (Mr. Johnston) had recommended Governments with which the member for Northam had been associated to resume large, empty estates at the Williams, and which could have been resumed under that clause, but the hon. member's Government never adopted that recommendation, and although he said now it was a good clause he never availed himself of the power to exercise it while he was in office.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: So far as his electorate was concerned, all the land adjacent to the railway was improved, and had been put to its full use, and it

was not likely to be affected by the clause. The Surveyor General had instructions to report or cause a report to be made in regard to all land adjacent to any new railway that might be laid down.

Hon. H. B. LEFROY: If a man was not improving his land the Government should have power to resume, but this clause gave the Government too much power. He understood that the clause was contained in all railway Bills, but it seemed to him that it placed too much power in the hands of the Government, because it enabled the Government to compulsorily purchase land, which a man may have lived on for a lifetime, and on which he might desire his children to live. That was a wrong principle and he objected to it. It was not usual when in the past railways were built to agricultural districts to make a provision such as the one proposed. It was a wrong policy for a man to be compelled to give up his holding. It would, perhaps, be justifiable if the land were required for some public purpose, but the clause provided for taking land from one man and giving it to another to be used for precisely the same purpose as the original owner had used it.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5, 6—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment; and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 10.54 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 22nd August, 1912.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: By-law of the Broad Arrow roads board.

By the Premier: Annual report of the Chief Inspector of Liquors to 30th June, 1912.

By Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Inspector's report on dairies (ordered on motion by Mr. Lander).

### QUESTION — TIMBER REGULATIONS, SAWMILL PERMIT.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is he aware that sawmill permit No. 35/11, containing 6,800 acres, was granted to the Timber Corporation on 14th July, 1909? 2, Is he aware that regulation No. 27, gazetted on the 27th March, 1910, provides that operations must be commenced within six months after approval? 3, Has the sawmill permit mentioned been liable to forfeiture? 4, What reason has been given by the company concerned for their failure to observe the regulations?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, No. 4, The Regulations are being complied with. The area was approved on the understanding that the mill erected near Greenbushes was of sufficient capacity to hold the land granted as Sawmilling Permit No. 35/11, it being considered necessary to make the Corporation erect another mill. The Corporation also relinquished for selection a considerable area of the land held under timber lease in exchange for the area granted under sawmill permit.