

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT called for a division, with the following result:

Ayes	...	10
Noes	...	4

AYES.
The Hon. J. G. H. Amherst
The Hon. T. Burges
The Hon. R. E. Bush
The Hon. M. Grant
The Hon. R. W. Hardy
The Hon. G. W. Leake
The Hon. J. H. Monger
The Hon. W. D. Moore
The Hon. J. Morrison
The Hon. J. A. Wright
(Teller).

NOES.
The Hon. E. R. Brockman
The Hon. E. Hamersley
The Hon. G. Shenton
The Hon. J. W. Hackett
(Teller).

Majority of 6 for the Ayes.

THE PRESIDENT resumed the Chair, and reported that the Committee had made progress with the Bill, and recommended that it be returned to the Legislative Assembly with a Message conveying the Suggestion agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved that the report be adopted, and that the Committee have leave to sit again on receipt of a Message from the Legislative Assembly.

Question—put and passed.

GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): I beg now to move the second reading of the General Loan and Inscribed Stock Bill.

Question—put and passed.

The Bill was then considered in Committee and agreed to without amendment, and reported, the third reading being made an Order of the Day for the following day.

AUDIT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): I have to move the second reading of this Bill.

Question—put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—Short title:

THE HON. J. A. WRIGHT moved that progress be reported.

Question—put and passed.

Progress was reported, and leave given to sit again at the next sitting of the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House, at ten minutes to 10 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 19th February, at 8 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 18th February, 1891.

Bonuses for Production of Vegetable and Dairy Products—Public Health Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Apportionment Bill: third reading—Scab Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Excess Bill, 1890: second reading; in committee—Excess Bill, 1889: second reading; in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

BONUSES FOR PRODUCTION OF VEGETABLE AND DAIRY PRODUCE.

MR. RICHARDSON: I wish to ask the Premier the question standing in my name, Whether the Government has any intention of putting forth a comprehensive scheme of bonuses to encourage the production of all kinds of vegetable products; also for the manufacture of all kinds of dried and canned fruits; also the establishment of butter, cheese, and bacon factories on similar lines to that projected by Victoria?

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): In reply to the hon. member, I can only say that the present Government has not yet considered the matter.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. DE HAMEL obtained leave to introduce a bill to amend the Public Health Act, 1886 (50 Vic., No. 19), and moved its first reading.

Agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

APPORTIONMENT BILL.

Read a third time.

SCAB ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): As wool is an article very much produced in this country, and as a very large amount of capital indeed is invested in Western Australia in the growth and production of wool, I am sure that the subject of scab in sheep is one that must interest, I may say, almost every mem-

ber of this House. It is a subject that the Government regrets having to bring under notice at this time, because a year or two ago it was thought that scab had been pretty well got rid of throughout the length and breadth of the colony. In fact, to such an extent was that opinion formed that I find the Legislature, as late ago as the year 1888, passed an Act which recited that, "owing to the beneficial operation of the Scab Act of 1885, scab in sheep had been apparently eradicated." It now appears that in one district of the colony at least, the Victoria District, this disease has again made its appearance, and, unfortunately, the Government are bound to admit that at the present moment they have a report of a very large number of flocks in that district being infected. I may say, at the same time, that the Chief Inspector is dealing with that outbreak with all the powers at his command at the present moment, and that he has every belief that in a short time it will be got under. But it seems possible that, while all these years scab has been nursed in that district in the past, so it may be in the future unless extreme measures are taken. We must all admit the great inconvenience and the great loss of sheep and money which an outbreak of scab causes, and the great danger which results from it, not only as regards the particular district where the disease has broken out, but also the colony at large; and that the most stringent measures should be taken to stamp it out. It is all very well to consider the sheepowners in the Victoria district; but, if one district is infected, none of us is safe, either North or South of it. If scab broke out generally in the Northern District there would be many men ruined, not only there but also possibly in many districts in the South; so that it is a most important matter to this colony, this question of scab. We find that already the Governments of the other colonies have had their attention called to this matter, and they are making restrictions against the introduction of stock from this colony. It has become notorious that scab exists here; and that is a fact that must tend to depreciate largely the value of station property both in the South and in the far North. People in the other colo-

nies, when they hear of the existence of scab in Western Australia, do not trouble themselves to ascertain in what particular district it is. When it goes forth that we have scab here, station property is very materially depreciated; and it would be almost impossible at the present moment, in the other colonies, to find a man with a head on his shoulders who would invest in station property here. The Government recognise the necessity of taking every step within their power in regard to this outbreak of scab in the Victoria District, but they also realise the fact that the existing law is not stringent enough to enable them to deal with this matter effectually, and that is the reason they now propose this bill. We propose to make certain amendments in the 1885 Act, and to make it more stringent, with the view of stamping out the disease at once. The danger has been, during the last few years, not in dealing with a body of sheep under the eye of the owner or station master; but, in dealing with stray sheep that have become scattered about the country, and infect thickets, where the disease has existed for years past, and where it is communicated to clean sheep passing by. That has been the great danger in the past; and there are provisions in this Act to deal with that particular danger, and to stamp it out by the destruction of these stray sheep. Possibly the House is aware that a committee of gentlemen sat, unconnected with this House, a few weeks back, to consider this question; and they made certain suggestions to the Government, for which the Government were thankful, and which suggestions they have considered; and the major part, if not all, of these suggestions—all with one exception—the Government have embodied in this bill. They have also embodied in the bill certain suggestions from the Chief Inspector of Stock. The one exception I allude to was that which suggested that there should be a Board appointed, apparently to advise the Government on the subject. The Government are of opinion that they can deal with this matter better without a Board than with a Board. For my part, I am inclined to think that the appointment of a Board of Advice on scab would only tend to hamper the action of the Government; and I am sure no member of that

Board could be found more determined to put an end to this disease than the present Ministry. I think that before this Board went to work—the scab inspector moving the Board, and the Board moving the Government; before all this machinery was put in motion, time would be wasted. The Government would be ready to deal with the question at once, upon receipt of the inspector's report. Further, on this Board you might get gentlemen who possibly would have more sympathy with defaulting owners of sheep than the Government could possibly have; for, with this matter, the present Government intend to deal very severely indeed, as will be found on perusal of the bill. Therefore we have decided not to adopt that suggestion of the committee of gentlemen referred to, as regards the appointment of this Board of Advice. Formerly, as we know, there was a Board of Advice, under the late Administration; and we can all recognise that perhaps there was a necessity for a Board of Advice on scab in those days, when we look at the *personnel* of the Government at that time, including some gentlemen perhaps who had never seen a sheep. But you have now a Government in office who know something about sheep, and about scab in sheep; and we ask the House not to interpose between the Government and their Chief Inspector this Board of Advice. We propose, in this bill, to deal with the matter at first hand. I need not refer, and I do not intend to refer, to the various sections of the bill in moving its second reading. The matter has been threshed out by this committee of gentlemen, and the matter has been already considered, to a large extent, by members; and possibly it will not be thought necessary now to refer the bill to a select committee. If it is desired, I have no idea that the Government will offer any opposition; at the same time, I think it will be hardly necessary to do so, after the attention that has already been attracted to the subject. I may say with regard to the definition of "infected sheep," that an alteration will be found in this bill. It may be in the recollection of some members that this question was lately decided in an appeal to the Supreme Court. In this bill it is proposed that a flock

amongst which an infected sheep gets by any means, whether it belongs to that flock or does not, shall make the flock "infected sheep." That was the point upon which the case heard in the Supreme Court was decided; it was then held that an infected sheep not being of the flock where it was found did not make that flock an "infected" flock. That was a most serious matter, and it has been remedied in this bill. Under the present bill the words "infected sheep" include any sheep forming a flock, or part of a flock, amongst which may be found an infected sheep, whether such sheep belong to that flock or not. The interpretation has been further extended on the same line as is to be found in the Scab Act of New Zealand, which they are working there at present. Then again the question of stray sheep is dealt with. By the 28th section we make it lawful for any person whatever—whether the owner or not, or whether an inspector or not—to seize and destroy any stray and infected sheep, unless such sheep should happen to be in the immediate keeping of some person, or found within a paddock. The Government consider this a very important clause indeed, giving power to any person to destroy these stray infected sheep, wherever they are met, except under the circumstances I have mentioned. We also give power to any person to destroy infected sheep found upon his run, if the owner of the sheep does not himself destroy them at once; and the owner, in default, may be fined £5 for each and every sheep so found and destroyed, in addition to which he shall be liable to a penalty of £100 for the offence. These provisions may appear somewhat stringent, but unless we seek to make it incumbent to rouse out these infected thickets, and get rid of these stray sheep, for my part I say the Act is utterly useless. This is where the danger has been, and that is how scab has been communicated, according to the report of the Inspector, from these thickets, the sheep in which the owners do not care (or at any rate neglect) to destroy. In the same way as any other person, through the inspector, may destroy a stray infected sheep found on a man's run, so also is the owner himself called upon to destroy; and if he leaves it to the inspector to do we propose to put

him under a heavy penalty. We also empower inspectors to call witnesses or obtain evidence from the persons in charge of sheep on a homestead wherever they can be picked up, and all parties are called upon to give this information under a penalty. It will be found, too, that the compulsory license which obtained for years in the Scab Act of this colony has been done away with. It seems to me there is no necessity for granting compulsory licenses. At present, when sheep become infected, the owner has to send notice to the Resident Magistrate, and the Inspector grants a compulsory license (as it is called), which can be renewed on payment of so much per head. We propose to do away with these licenses. The committee of gentlemen who sat to consider this scab question also recommended that the time for cleaning sheep after inspection, instead of being the number of weeks in the existing Act, should be only four weeks; and that is provided for in this bill. Therefore, the House will see that the provisions of the Act are altered in this way: on sheep becoming infected and notice being given to the inspector, he gives the owner notice to clean, and if at the end of four weeks they are not clean, or if they have not been dipped, or the owner has not taken such means as in the opinion of the inspector he ought to have taken to clean the sheep, he (the inspector) can take them out of the owner's hands, and clean them at his expense. Another portion of the Act that is entirely new will be found also a very important portion,—that is, with regard to the removal of sheep from one district to another. It is proposed that no sheep shall come from an infected district into a clean district, unless within fourteen days previous to their introduction they have been examined by an Inspector and a clean certificate obtained, and unless also the person introducing them from an infected district into a clean one shall give seven days notice of his intention to travel them, and mention the particular crossing place from one district to the other, so that the inspector may know. Consequently sheep travelling from an infected district at the North to the South will be bound to pass one or other of these crossing places, where there will be an inspector to

inspect them, and they shall not enter the clean district without being dipped. We say that all sheep from an infected district to a clean one shall be dipped, and, if in the opinion of the inspector it is necessary, they shall also be shorn. I do not know that there are any other general features of the bill of sufficient interest to notice on the second reading; therefore I will simply ask the House now to read the bill a second time. I propose to go into committee upon it to-morrow.

MR. RICHARDSON: I venture to congratulate the Government upon bringing in what, to this colony, is a very important measure indeed. When we consider the very important place in our exports that wool occupies, and the important factor it is in the welfare and prosperity of the colony, it may be well said that nothing can be more necessary than that every possible attention should be paid to the health of the flocks upon which this wool is grown. When we consider that about half of the value of our exports is represented by this one article alone, I think I need say no more on that point. No doubt, as has been said by the Attorney General, we occupy at the present moment in the eyes of Australia, with reference to this scab in sheep question, a position tantamount to something very like dishonor. They point to us as perhaps the only colony—I believe Tasmania is supposed to be clean now—upon which the stigma of the stain of this fell disease of scab rests; and it behoves us as a community, and this House as the representative of the community in matters of legislation, to take the most stringent and even the most drastic measures to remove that stigma. In this bill, which has been so ably introduced by the Attorney General, and which, I believe, has been as ably drafted, sufficient machinery will be found to effect that very desirable purpose—at least I hope so. No doubt this colony labors under peculiar disabilities with reference to the eradication of scab, and the prevention of scab,—more so than perhaps any of the other colonies, when we consider the vast area of territory to be dealt with, and the peculiar nature of the country, and the paucity of the inhabitants. When all these circumstances are taken into consideration, it may be

well admitted that this scab question is a most difficult one to deal with successfully. I think the Government have taken a wise step when they made it a particular feature of this bill that it should deal with the question of mustering and hunting up all stray sheep, with the view of their destruction if found to be infected. I believe that is a most important, a most vital point. The most stringent measures should be taken to compel the owners to discover these stray sheep, and clean them or destroy them. Many people may think that they are in no way interested in measures of this kind, that the question of the existence of scab or its non-existence does not concern them. But I think that is an erroneous view to take of the matter. I think the fact of this colony being the only colony of the group where this disease is allowed to exist amongst its flocks is a reflection upon the whole colony. Not only is it a reflection upon the good name of the colony; it is also a question that affects the material interests of the people of the colony, and perhaps none more so than the consumers of meat in the more populous towns of Perth and Fremantle. If scab once established itself in the districts intervening between that part of the colony whence our supplies of fat stock come, it would prove an effectual bar to the introduction of that fat stock into this market, and to an immediate rise in the price of meat, which would affect every consumer in these populous centres. If it were not for our meat supplies from the Northern Districts, the price of meat would again run up to the old-fashioned prices of a few years ago. That would be a public calamity, in the prevention of which every member of the community is more or less interested. I would also point out that the colony suffers great losses in other ways from the presence of scab in our midst. The indirect losses are very great, for nobody who is now striving to improve his breed of sheep would care to introduce valuable stud animals, if they are to be subject to a penalty in the way of extraordinary precautions in the shape of compulsory dipping, which, as we know, results in their disfigurement and deterioration; for no sheep that has been put through an admixture of lime and sulphur is fit

to be looked on as a first-class animal. There is also the loss which the colony sustains in the depreciation in the value of station property, owing to this stigma of scab. As has been pointed out by the Attorney General, no man of brains would think of investing his money in station property in a colony where it was notorious this disease existed; so that the colony loses also in that way. We have not had much time to consider this bill, as it was only placed on the table yesterday; and I believe several members who are interested in this question would like to have a sort of informal meeting or conference, to go through the bill, which, I think, would save a great deal of discussion at any rate; and, if the Government have no objection, I would ask that the consideration of the bill in committee be postponed until to-morrow. I know the Government are anxious to have the bill passed as soon as possible, but I think the course I suggest would save time, for the bill might then pass through its other stages without very much more discussion.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I, also representing a pastoral district, congratulate the Government upon having brought in a measure which, it is hoped, will effectually stamp out this disease known as scab. We know that this is about the only colony now that is troubled with this disease; and, outside the danger of the disease spreading to the important Northern Districts now carrying their hundreds of thousands of sheep, which may not only mean the ruin of the pastoralists of the North, but also cause serious loss to people down here, there is the danger of the disease spreading to the clean districts South, and there is the loss which the colony generally would suffer in the eyes of the outside world. We know we cannot expect capitalists from the other colonies to invest money here in taking up pastoral country with the view of settlement, when they know that a portion of the colony is infected with scab; and I think the Government deserve the thanks of the community for taking this matter in hand. A few careless individuals may cause enormous losses to their neighbors, and a great deal of injury to the colony, simply through their neglect; and I believe a great deal of this scab in the Champion Bay District is

caused through carelessness, and probably through the present Act not being sufficiently stringent. I know the Government are anxious to get through the work of the session; but this is a very important bill, and we have had very little opportunity of perusing it, and I think it would be well, if the business of the session admits of it, that a little more time might be given us to consider it. So far as I am concerned, I think the bill cannot be made too stringent; I think it is better in the interests not only of the colony, but also in the interests of the owners of sheep themselves. No doubt individuals will rather shirk being placed to such great expense, whose sheep may become accidentally infected, and will object to so stringent a measure, and to have their sheep destroyed. Still I think these sheep owners will find in the long run that the first loss will be the best, and that in the end they will recognise that the Act is a wise Act. I have not looked over the bill myself, but I believe that the Government, with the assistance of the committee of gentlemen interested in pastoral pursuits who sat to consider the question, have prepared a bill that will have the effect of carrying out what the Government desire, and that is to stamp out this disease. I think if the Government will attain that end they will not only deserve the thanks of this House but of the whole community, and I congratulate them upon bringing forward a measure having that end in view.

Mr. CLARKSON: It is not my intention to go at any length into this very important bill this evening, as I have no doubt that the suggestion thrown out by the hon. member for De Grey will be adopted, and that the various clauses of the bill will be considered by those mainly interested in the subject by to-morrow. That it is a very important bill we must all agree, and I think the Government are to be congratulated upon the prompt action they have taken in this matter. There are several clauses which at first sight may appear very stringent—almost unnecessarily so; but when the unenviable position of the colony is considered in regard to this very serious disease, I think we should be prepared to deal most stringently with it. In committee I shall be pre-

pared to suggest some slight alteration in the wording of one or two of the clauses, but at this stage I will not detain the House any longer.

Motion for second reading put and passed.

THE SPEAKER: I see by our new Standing Orders that after the second reading of a bill, unless it be moved that the bill be referred to a select committee, the Speaker shall there and then put the question—"That the Speaker do now leave the chair, and the House resolve itself into a committee of the whole for the consideration of this bill." It is not necessary, however, that the House should go into committee on a bill immediately the second reading is passed, but another day may be fixed for going into committee. At the same time, according to our new Standing Orders, the Speaker has to put that question.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I move, sir, as an amendment that we go into committee on this bill to-morrow. The Government have no desire to hurry it through, but I understand that this will meet the wishes of members.

Agreed to.

EXCESS BILL, 1890.

This bill was read a second time, *sub silentio*, and committed.

IN COMMITTEE:

Schedule:

Items IV. to XXIV. were passed without comment.

Item XXV.—"Volunteers, £1,262 5s.":

Mr. R. F. SHOLL asked for some information as to this vote. This was in addition to the usual vote for the year, and seemed a very large amount in excess of that vote.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion)—in the temporary absence of the Premier—thought he might say that the hon. member himself, as a member of the Finance Committee, had helped to vote this money. The hon. member would probably bear in mind that the House agreed to a certain amount of expenditure by a resolution, and that the Home Government expended the money in the

purchase of guns for the defence of Albany.

Item passed.

Item XXVIII.—“Works and Buildings, £2,433 0s. 8d.”:

MR. A. FORREST raised his voice against the expenditure of £1,163 in converting the old Post Office building into a Legislative Council Chamber, when the Government had a piece of land adjoining the present House of Assembly upon which they could have put up a room that would have answered for a Council Chamber for the present. Whether it was the present Government or the old Government that was to blame in the matter it was very much the same; it appeared to him an unnecessary piece of expenditure. No one would hardly believe it that £1,163 had been spent in renovating that old Post Office.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said, unfortunately, the late Government were not there to hear the hon. member's criticism, and certainly (in the absence of the Premier) he might say that the present Government did not feel it at all, as this expenditure had not been incurred by them.

MR. LOTON thought the money had been judiciously spent in converting the old Post Office into a temporary Council Chamber rather than erecting a new building. Such a sum as £1,163 would hardly have laid the foundation of a new building.

THE SPEAKER said he thought this amount included all the alterations made in the Assembly Chamber as well as the Council Chamber. He believed that a sum of £1,000 was voted for the two Houses, and that amount not having been found sufficient this additional sum was expended.

Item passed.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Title and preamble agreed to.

Bill reported.

EXCESS BILL, 1889.

This bill passed through committee, *sub silentio*, and was reported to the House.

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

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 19th February, 1891.

Joint Committee to report on public works: adjourned debate—General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act, 1884, Amendment Bill: passed—Audit Bill: committee; progress—Loan Bill: message from the Legislative Assembly—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 8 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

JOINT COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Adjourned debate on the motion of the HON. J. MORRISON, “That joint Committees of both Houses, to investigate and report upon Public Works of magnitude, having apparently, in some of the Eastern Colonies, proved of much use and benefit, both to their Governments and to the general body of taxpayers, this House is of opinion that the working of such Committees, and their efficiency, should be inquired into, and trusts that the Ministers proceeding to the Federal Convention will inform themselves, as far as possible, upon the subject with a view of determining the desirability, or otherwise, of introducing a similar system in Western Australia.”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): Since the last sitting of the House I have been able to consider the reasons given by the hon. member for the motion, and I may now say that I have no objection to it.

Question—put and passed, and the resolution ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly by message.

GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK BILL.

This Bill was read a third time and passed, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly.

AUDIT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 15 agreed to.

Clause 16—Annual estimates of revenue and expenditure:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved, That the word “Parliament,” in the first and fifth lines, be