Queensland

Parliamentary Debates
[Hansard]

Legislative Assembly

THURSDAY, 30 JULY 1885

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, 30 *July*, 1885.

Questions.—The Urangan Railway.—Formal Motions.—Charitable Institutions Management Bill—third reading.—Local Government Act of 1878 Amendment Bill—third reading.—Marsupials Destruction Act Continuation Bill—committee.—Message from the Legislative Council.—Message from the Governor.—Crown Lands Act of 1884 Amendment Bill—committee.—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the chair at half-past 3 o'clock.

QUESTIONS.

Mr. SHERIDAN asked the Minister for Works—

1 What progress, if any, has been made towards constructing the Urangan Railway?

2. If the promoters of the Urangan Railway have lodged any deposit in the hands of the Government as security for the construction of the railway in question?

3. Have the promoters of the Urangan Railway asked for, or been granted, any extension of the time allowed them by the Act to commence said railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. Miles) replied—

1. The Government are not in possession of any special information upon this subject.

2. Yes.

3. No.

Mr. BAILEY asked the Minister for Mines—

Are Chinese prohibited from mining with miners' rights on Crown lands which have been abandoned for three years?

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. W. Miles) replied—

Chinese are not prohibited from mining (for gold) with miners' rights upon Crown lands, except upon new goldfields discovered by Europeans. Chinese (not naturalised) are not permitted to mine upon Crown lands for minerals other than gold.

Mr. BAILEY: Do I understand the Minister for Mines to say that Chinese are prohibited from mining for——

The SPEAKER: I may remind the hon. member that no discussion can take place upon an answer to a question.

Mr. BAILEY: I am asking a question without notice.

The SPEAKER: It lies with the Minister to answer the question.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH: It is the practice, sir, in the House of Commons for any member to ask a question without notice. A member may find the answer he receives to be insufficient, and by further prosecuting his inquiries the information required may be obtained.

The SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for Wide Bay put his question to the Minister?

Mr. BAILEY: Are Chinese allowed to mine for tin upon fields which have been abandoned for three years. My inquiry does not apply particularly to gold-mining.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am unable to answer the hon. member's question. I simply gave him all the information in my possession. If he will repeat his question I will answer it on Tuesday. Of course I can only be guided by the law in this matter.

Mr. BAILEY asked the Attorney-General—

If a Chinaman cross the border, and is apprehended at some inland town for not having paid the poll-tax, and being without means is imprisoned—on his release from gaol can he be again punished for the same offence?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. A. Rutledge) replied—

It is a rule of law, to which the case of a Chinaman, under the circumstances suggested, forms no exception, that a man cannot be punished twice for the same offence. The punishment for non-payment of the poll-tax does not, however, extinguish the liability of such Chinaman to pay the poll-tax.

Mr. BAILEY: The answer given by the hon. gentleman is not quite satisfactory. I did not ask whether a Chinaman who did not pay the poll-tax could be sentenced to perpetual imprisonment.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL: The proceedings with regard to his liability for the payment of the poll-tax are of an entirely different nature from the proceedings for the recovery of a penalty inflicted under the Act.

THE URANGAN RAILWAY.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said: With regard to the answer given to the second question asked by Mr. Sheridan, the hon. member for Maryborough, I will ask the Minister for Works if he can inform the House how much has been deposited as security by the promoters of the Urangan Railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think, so far as my recollection will serve me, £2,000.

FORMAL MOTIONS.

The following formal motions were agreed to:—

By Mr. GRIMES—

That there be laid on the table of the House, a Return showing the numbers and area of homestead and conditional selections forfeited in each district of the colony during each of the eight years ended 31st December, 1884.

By the HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH—

That there be laid upon the table of the House, a Return showing—

1. The selections taken up in the Allora Exchange Lands.

2. The annual rents of each selection.

3. The extent to which the conditions have been performed in each selection.

4. The selections, with their acreage, which have come under the operation of the Act of 1884.

5. The rent per acre first fixed under the Act of 1884.

6. The rent as finally fixed by the board.

7. The allotments in the Allora Exchange Lands which at the commencement of the Land Act of 1884 were open to selection, and the prices at which they could be selected.

CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS MANAGEMENT BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT OF 1878 AMENDMENT BILL—THIRD READING.

On the motion of the PREMIER, this Bill was read a third time, passed, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council for their concurrence, by message in the usual form.

MARSUPIALS DESTRUCTION ACT CONTINUATION BILL — COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee to further consider this Bill in detail.

The PREMIER said he thought the question before the Committee was the new clause proposed by the hon. member for Warrego. Attention was called on the previous evening to the fact that a clause of that character required a recommendation from the Governor. It was also pointed out that the same objection was applicable to the clause already passed with reference to the inclusion of kangaroo-rats in the Bill. Under those circumstances it seemed to him that the proper course now would be to proceed with the Bill and report it to the House. Then, seeing that a clause had been improperly inserted without recommendation from the Governor, the Bill could be recommitted and the clause struck out, after which a fresh message would be received from the Governor and the Bill again committed and proceeded with in the regular way. He would therefore suggest to the hon. member to withdraw his clause. It was purely a formality.

Mr. DONALDSON said that with the permission of the Committee he would withdraw the clause he had proposed.

Mr. STEVENS asked whether the Bill would go through committee again?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair and reported the Bill to the House with amendments.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee to further consider the Bill.

Clause 1 passed as printed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and negatived.

Clauses 4 and 5 passed as printed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the CHAIRMAN left the chair and reported the Bill to the House with amendments.

The PREMIER moved that the Bill be re committed for the consideration of new clauses.

Question put.

The PREMIER said: Mr. Speaker,—Before you leave the chair I have to acquaint the House that I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to communicate to the House that His Excellency, having been informed that it is proposed to amend the Bill by providing that the money standing to the credit of marsupial boards may be applied in payment for the destruction of kangaroo-rats and dingoes, recommends such proposed amendments for the consideration of the House.

Question put and passed.

The Speaker left the chair, and the House went into Committee.

The PREMIER moved the following new clause to follow clause 1:—

The term "marsupial" in the said Act shall include "kangaroo-rat."

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said the Premier had appeared in a new capacity as messenger between the Governor and the House. Certainly the hon. gentleman performed the duty just as well as any of His Excellency's better authenticated messengers. Perhaps the Treasurer would inform them whether they were going to derive any benefit from the new system —whether there was to be any saving in his Excellency's staff through the work being done by themselves.

Mr. NORTON said he thought there was a rule that questions which had been decided once during the session could not be brought forward again. He could not put his hand on the rule, but he would like to ask the Chairman's ruling on the question.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. gentleman wish to have my ruling?

Mr. NORTON: I ask for your ruling because I think it is important that some ruling should be given. I do not want to delay the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: I will call the hon. gentleman's attention to the 237th Standing Order, which says:—

"No notice may be taken of any proceedings in Committee of the Whole House, or a select committee on a Bill, until such proceedings or Bill shall have been reported."

The PREMIER said that surely nobody doubted that on a recommittal anything could be done with a Bill! The same committee could go back and retrace its steps when a mistake was made.

Mr. NORTON: Standing Order 56 says in the same session.

The PREMIER said they could not recommit in any other session. If they could not alter upon recommittal, recommittal would be useless. Any amendment was an alteration, and if anything were struck out by mistake and put in afterwards, it was an alteration; it did not matter what kind of an alteration it was. That was a perfectly well-known fact.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH said it was not a perfectly well-known fact, and they were not going to take the dictum of the Premier in the face of the Standing Order. Standing Order 56 was as plain as possible; they could not get over it:—

"No question or amendment shall be proposed, which is the same in substance as any question which during the same session has been resolved in the affirmative or negative."

Here they had actually negatived clauses of a Bill, and reported the Bill to the Speaker. Then it was recommitted, and they proposed to carry it in exactly the same words. It was distinctly against the 56th Standing Order. The clause the Chairman referred to did not apply at all. They could recommit a Bill every day; they had done it twice to-day; and he knew quite well that they had recommitted Bills and made very important amendments. It was a truism to say that the object of recommitting a Bill was to make amendments; they knew that perfectly well. But what was guarded against by the Standing Order was that a question that had been decided should not be brought again before the Committee. Clause 2 had been put before the Committee, and it had been decided in the negative, and now they were asked to give a decision, ten minutes afterwards, upon the same point.

The PREMIER said that they knew that the House had not adopted anything yet in reference to the Bill. The Committee inserted a clause; but that report was not accepted by the House. The Bill was referred back to the Committee for further consideration, and the House knew nothing whatever of the proceedings of that Committee further than that they were reported and disagreed to. The House did not agree to those proceedings, and the Bill was sent back to the Committee. He was really ashamed to have to make that speech. The House had disagreed to the report and the Bill was now before the Committee for the consideration of new clauses. If they could not reinsert a clause that had been struck out, neither could they strike out a clause that had been inserted. It was the same thing. The matter was referred to in "May," as follows:—

"It often becomes necessary to recommit a Bill to a committee of the whole House, and occasionally to a select committee, before it is read a third time, and a recommitment of the Bill is always advisable when numerous amendments are to be proposed.

"At this stage the proceedings of the committee are otherwise open to review.

"Thus, a clause inserted in committee, by mistake has been struck out; and clauses having been introduced not relevant to the subject-matter of the Bill, the Bill has been recommitted in respect of those clauses.

"A Bill may be recommitted—1. Without limitation, in which case the entire Bill is again considered in committee and reported with "other" or "further" amendments. 2. The Bill may be recommitted with respect to particular clauses or amendments only, or to the clauses in which amendments are proposed to be made, and the preamble. 3. On clauses or schedules being offered, or intended to be proposed, the Bill may be recommitted with respect to those clauses or schedules. In these two latter cases no other parts of the Bill are open to consideration. 4. The Bill may be recommitted and an instruction given to the committee that they have power to make some particular or additional provision. If the member who has charge of the Bill, and other members also, desire the recommitment of a Bill, the former has priority in making the motion for that purpose.

"A Bill may be recommitted as often as a House thinks fit. It is not uncommon for Bills to be again recommitted once or twice, and there are cases in which a Bill has been six, and even seven, times through a committee of the whole House, in consequence of repeated recommitments. The proceedings on the report of a recommitted Bill are similar to those already explained: the report is received at once, and the Bill, as amended, is ordered to be taken into consideration on a future day."

The House had never agreed to the proceedings of the Committee, and the same rule that applied to the House—that it could not adopt two contrary conclusions—applied also to the Committee. Therefore, if they once passed a clause, they could not get rid of it without recommitting the Bill. That was the function of recommittal.

Mr. SCOTT said that the practice, ever since he had been a member of Parliament, was that a Bill might be recommitted to rectify a mistake. It very often happened, in going through a Bill, that alterations were made in clauses that affected clauses already passed by the Committee. Then the Bill was recommitted, and the clause, which had already been agreed to, was corrected. That was an alteration, and it had been done over and over again in committee. The 234th Standing Order said:—

"No notice may be taken of any proceedings in Committee of the Whole House, or a select committee on a Bill, until such proceedings or Bill shall have been reported."

When a matter had not been reported to the House the House knew nothing about it, and no notice could be taken of it.

The HON. SIR T. McILWRAITH said the 234th Standing Order, which had been quoted by the hon. gentleman, did not apply to all. It said that no notice could be taken in the House of a resolution come to by the Committee, which had not been reported. That had nothing to do with the question. The 56th Standing Order was plain and distinct. The Premier based his argument entirely upon the assumption that Standing Order No. 56 applied to the proceedings in the House alone. There was nothing in the clause whatever to show that it applied only to the House. They, as a Committee, could come to a resolution, as well as the House. There was nothing whatever in the clause, nor in the context nor in any clause near it, that would show that it did not apply to the Committee as well as to the House. Of the whole of the precedents that the Premier read, not one applied to the present case—namely, where a Bill was recommitted for the purpose of inserting a clause that had just been negatived.

The PREMIER said the 56th Standing Order related entirely to proceedings in the House. The heading of the chapter was "Orders of the Day, Notices, Motions, and Questions," and the Speaker was mentioned by name in a large number of the orders. Proceedings in committee were dealt with in a separate chapter—chapter XI.

Mr. NORTON said he had no wish to delay the Bill, and he would be quite content to take the Chairman's ruling.

The CHAIRMAN said the 56th Standing Order referred to proceedings in the House, and no question raised in committee could be considered as finally decided until it had been agreed to by the House. On that ground he ruled that it was quite competent to put the question.

Question—That the proposed new clause stand clause 2 of the Bill—put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the following new clause was ordered to be inserted after clause 2 of the Bill:—

The rates of bonus payable in respect of scalps of marsupials killed within any district shall be fixed by the board at their first meeting after the time appointed for the annual election of members, and in case no rates are fixed by the board, shall be the rates specified in Schedule B of the said Act, and for the scalp of every kangaroo-rat, twopence.

The rates so fixed shall continue to be the rates for the district for the twelve months next ensuing.

Provided that the rates so fixed shall not exceed two shillings for the scalp of a kangaroo or wallaroo, or one shilling for the scalp of a wallaby or paddamelon, or sixpence for the scalp of a kangaroo-rat, nor shall such rates be reduced below the rates specified in the said schedule, or twopence for the scalp of a kangaroo-rat without the consent of the Minister.

Mr. DONALDSON moved that the following new clause be inserted, to follow clause 3 of the Bill:—

The Minister, at the request of the board of any district, may authorise the application of the funds standing to the credit of the account of the district in payment of a bonus for the destruction of dingoes, at a rate not exceeding five shillings for each scalp.

When any such authority is given, it shall remain in force until withdrawn by the Minister on the like request.

While any such authority is in force, the provisions of the said Act relating to the scalps of marsupials, and to anything done or to be done with or in respect to scalps of marsupials, shall extend and apply to scalps of dingoes and to anything done or to be done with or in respect to scalps of dingoes as fully and effectually as if the terms "dingoes" and "scalps of dingoes" were used in the said Act wherever the terms "marsupials" and "scalps of marsupials" are used therein respectively, and the term "scalps" shall so far as necessary be deemed to include scalps of dingoes.

Having taken the opportunity last night to say what he had to say in favour of the motion, he did not think it necessary to take up the time of the Committee by going over it again. Of course, if discussion was invited, he should be ready to take part in it, but at present he would leave the matter in the hands of the Committee.

Mr. SCOTT said he was not quite clear as to how the clause would work in certain districts of the colony. The district he represented was a very extensive one, and it contained both sheep and cattle. Taking the case of a board there consisting of five members, three of whom were sheep-owners and two cattle-owners, the members representing sheep would vote for the destruction of native dogs, whereas those connected with cattle would vote for the preservation of native dogs.

Mr. STEVENSON: How do you know?

Mr. SCOTT said they might vote that way. In that case by a majority of one there might be very great hardship done to the district. He should like to see some provision made by which more than a simple majority of the board was necessary to carry the clause into effect. If it was to be a question for the whole board to decide he had nothing more to say. He should therefore like to know what was the meaning of the term "board" as used in the clause—whether it implied a majority of the board or the whole board?

Mr. DONALDSON said rather than jeopardise the passing of the clause he had not the slightest objection to amend it so as to make it mean the whole board.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS said if the clause now proposed were adopted it would change the character of the Bill altogether. The object with which the Marsupials Act was passed was to protect the natural grasses of the public estate. It was true that the graziers raised a certain amount by assessment on their stock, but that was subsidised from the general revenue: and he maintained that if the clause were introduced into the Bill there would be nothing to prevent the marsupial boards from appropriating the whole of the money to the destruction of native dogs. He thought it would be very unfair that the whole country should be taxed for the purpose of destroying dingoes. It was well known that they did not damage the natural grasses; and the exact purpose for which the clause was introduced was to throw upon the general revenue the cost of destroying those animals. He hoped the clause would be negatived.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he was very glad that they had had that opportunity of hearing an address from the Minister for Works upon natural history. The hon. gentleman had explained to them—and he (Mr. Morehead) was very glad to discover that he had such intelligence—he had explained that the native dog did not eat grass. Of course that was a new revelation the hon. gentleman had opened up; and, perhaps, there might be some reason for postponing the Bill to consider whether or not the native dog did eat grass. He dared say he did when he was sick. Other dogs did, and possibly he did. He quite agreed with the hon. gentleman that the native dog was not usually very destructive to native grasses. However, it was very interesting to know that the Minister for Works had so far advanced in knowledge as to know that as a rule the native dog did not eat grass. It was a discovery that he thought should be marked with red letters in the annals of that Parliament, that the hon. the Minister for Works had discovered—no doubt after great research—that the native dog did not eat grass. With regard to the other remarks of the hon. gentleman, which were perhaps more worthy of consideration, if such a thing were possible, than that wonderful discovery—he had actually stated that the whole colony was to be taxed for the destruction of dingoes. Did the hon. gentleman know what he was saying? Had he read the clause, or, if he had read it, did he comprehend it? It said:—

"The Minister, at the request of the board of any district, may authorise the application of the funds standing to the credit of the account of the district in payment of a bonus for the destruction of dingoes."

Now, this was a matter which, although not directly, had considerable indirect effects upon the whole colony. It directly affected those divisions of the colony to which the clause was intended to apply; and he thought that the Committee might fairly allow those men who knew best about these matters to manage their own business in their own fashion. That was what the clause proposed to do. He differed altogether from many of those who said that the cattle-holder did not suffer from the existence of native dogs. He maintained that he did suffer, and that very much more acutely in many cases than he imagined. The clause was an elastic one in that respect, because if the marsupial board thought that he, or the hon. member for Warrego, or those who agreed with them were wrong, they had the remedy in their own hands. It was, after all, a mere permissive clause, but at the same time he held it to be a very important clause, from his knowledge of the ravages of the dingo amongst cattle. The House had over and over again, in the Local Government Act, and other Acts which were sequences to that Act, gone in the direction of giving people the control of their own affairs, and if they believed in the system then surely they believed in it now. The hon. member for Warrego asked no more than that—to allow the control of the funds that were levied by rating in the marsupial districts to be placed in the hands of the board—that they might be distributed in the way directed by the majority of the board. It could be no sentimental desire to destroy the native dog that actuated the hon. member for Warrego, and those who agreed with him, in introducing the clause, but it must be the idea that the native dog was a pest to the country, which there could be no doubt it was; and he said again, the great point of the clause was that even those who held a different opinion to that had a right, in returning members to the board, to express their opinion as to whether the dingo should be included in the operation of the Marsupials Act or not.

Mr. NORTON said he was one of those who, when the original Act for the destruction of marsupials was before the House, strongly opposed the inclusion of the native dog amongst the animals to be destroyed; and he still maintained exactly the same view that he did then. He was, however, quite willing to regard the matter, as far as he could, from the views adopted by sheep-owners, as well as those held by cattle-holders. He agreed with the hon. member for Balonne that the dingo was regarded as a nuisance by the owners of sheep; but it was not so regarded by owners of cattle. For his own part, however, he did not think it was fair that either one side or the other should be alone in a matter of that kind, and on that ground he was prepared to support the new clause proposed by the hon. member for Warrego. As the owner of a cattle station he felt that the dingoes were really of good service, because there was not the slightest doubt that they kept down the marsupials. Still, they were a nuisance to the sheep-breeders, who represented a very much larger amount of capital than the cattle-breeders did. The question that presented itself to his mind was whether they who represented a cattle district should insist that the dingoes should be allowed to roam all over the country, unless men took it upon themselves to destroy them; and whether those in the cattle districts should keep breeding-grounds for what was a nuisance in the sheep districts. They ought, he thought, to make some compromise. In his mind there was no doubt that, by the adoption of the clause for the destruction of the dingo, they would be to a certain extent going against the intention of the Act, which was the destruction of marsupials. He knew that in the district he represented they were only required to levy a rate once or twice for the destruction of the marsupials, because of the work done by the dingo. When he went there first—he had been for some time connected with sheep-breeding in New South Wales, and they were accustomed to lay baits there for the dingo—when he first went up to his district he did the same thing, and found the marsupials on the run began to increase; and when he found the marsupials destroyed by the dingo he gave up the destruction of the dingo, and the result was a decrease in the number of the marsupials. That had been his experience. Still, he thought the proposed new clause was the best compromise that could be come to by the two parties.

Both sides should be represented, and as the hon. member's clause afforded the only fair means by which both sides could be represented he intended to support it. With regard to the fixing of the rates, he had always held that a low rate should be put in the Act, and if the lessees or holders of runs found it to be to their interest to raise the price to be paid for the destruction of marsupials they should make it up themselves. He had given way in that when he found the boards were allowed to fix the price. The proposal of the hon. member for Warrego was the only fair way to deal with the matter for the representation of both sheep and cattle breeders.

Mr. SCOTT said he would like to see the matter set at rest, and he would move, by way of amendment upon the clause, that the words "two-thirds of the members of" be inserted before the words "the board."

Mr. MOREHEAD said he hoped the hon. gentleman's amendment would not be accepted. They might as well ask for a two-thirds vote of the House in any legislation they were engaged in. Why should there be a two-thirds majority in that case?

Mr. BEATTIE: How can you have a two-thirds majority out of five?

Mr. MOREHEAD: As the hon. member for Fortitude Valley asked—how were they to get a two-thirds majority out of five?

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: Or out of seven?

Mr. MOREHEAD: Or out of seven, or fourteen, or any multiple of seven, if the hon. member liked. The majority should rule in that matter in the same way as they would rule in any other case that might come before the marsupial board. He trusted the hon. member for Warrego would stick to his clause as it stood, for it was a very good and liberal clause in every way. He heard the Minister for Works make some interjection. The hon. gentleman was becoming excited again. He seemed to work himself up at intervals. He did not know whether the hon. member was wound up like an alarm-clock and fixed to strike at certain times. He was not talking to the hon. gentleman just now, and he never attacked him, though he did sometimes speak kindly to him, and he was certainly not so rough on the hon. member as the Premier probably was in the Cabinet. He was perfectly certain the Premier toned the hon. gentleman down before he brought him into the House, or possibly he chastised him when the House rose. As he had said, the clause was a good one as it stood, and he hoped the amendment of the hon. member for Leichhardt would not be accepted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. C. B. Dutton) said the clause might be of some use if cattle men were elected on the boards; but many of the boards were appointed by the Government, and the men appointed were those who interested themselves most in the destruction of marsupials. They very rarely found cattle men on those boards, which were almost exclusively confined to sheep men. That necessarily would be the case, because they were brought forward, by those most interested in the destruction of the marsupials, as suitable men to deal with the working of the Act. The effect was that cattle men were left out altogether. If the clause formed part of a Bill to deal with the whole question it would be an admirable one, but he had a great objection to its being attached to a Bill to continue the operation of the old one, for the reason he gave last night—that it would press most unfairly upon a great number of cattle men whose runs formed part of marsupial districts. He would give an instance. Take the case of the marsupial district of Belyando. In that district was situated the Clermont and Peak Downs country and the country at the heads of the Belyando. It was poor and somewhat scrubby country, and was almost exclusively occupied by cattle. The marsupial board was almost entirely taken from the sheep-breeders, and they rated all men for the destruction of marsupials, even men who had fenced in freehold land. He knew one man there who had 6,000 or 7,000 head of cattle, and he had to pay nearly as much in rates for the destruction of marsupials as he paid in rent to the Government for his run. It was a gross imposition, he maintained, upon the position occupied by that man in that district, that he should be required to pay so much as that. The amendment proposed did not relieve that man of a liability of that kind. Until there was some alteration and readjustment of the marsupial districts it would be very unjust to pass the proposed new clause.

Question—That the words "two-thirds of the members of" be inserted before the words "the board"—put.

Mr. STEVENSON said he hoped the amendment would not be accepted, as it would spoil the whole clause. The Minister for Lands told them that the members of the marsupial boards were appointed by the Government. The ratepayers had the option of appointing the members of the boards if they chose. The hon. member told them that the cattle men did not take any interest in the appointment of the boards, because they did not take the same interest in the Marsupial Act as the sheep men did. He thought it would be a very good thing to have dingoes included in the Bill, so that those people might take an interest in the matter and appoint the members of the board themselves. The hon. member for Port Curtis had, in his opinion, taken a very liberal view of the matter. The clause left it entirely to the ratepayers in each district to elect their own representatives on the board, and the board would decide whether dingoes should be included in their district or not. The clause would be destroyed by any such amendment as that proposed by the hon. member for Leichhardt, and he hoped it would not be accepted by the hon. member for Warrego.

Mr. JESSOP said that perhaps some hon. members did not know how the Act was worked. The Minister for Lands said that the members of marsupial boards were appointed by the Government, which showed that he did not know much about the matter.

The PREMIER: So they are.

Mr. JESSOP: If the ratepayers did not elect them. If there was a question at issue and something for the parties interested to decide, they would choose men whom they thought would represent them best. Some persons who had the right to vote would not vote for members who would destroy native dogs. He thought the cattle men were great believers in dingoes, and it was probable that they would not support a man who would vote for their destruction. He heard the question asked across the table a few minutes ago as to how many members there were on a board. Well, there were five. Every year a notice was given that an election of members would take place on a certain day, and every person in the district represented by the board having 100 head of cattle or 500 sheep was entitled to vote. Those interested in the inclusion of dingoes under the provisions of the Bill would, no doubt, be sure to find some man who believed in their views to offer himself as a candidate for election. As to the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Leichhardt, it was

opposed to the general principle of government—namely, the principle of government by majorities. Certainly, it would not improve the clause.

Mr. DONALDSON said he had announced his intention of adhering to his proposal that the matter should be decided by an absolute majority of the board. It would be very inconvenient if the amendment of the hon. member for Leichhardt were allowed to pass. How would they get two-thirds of five, which was the number of members on a board? He had listened with very great attention indeed to the discussion on the matter, hoping to hear some argument from hon. gentlemen who were opposed to the clause, but he had not been at all enlightened by the reasons advanced. The Minister for Lands and the Minister for Works had both spoken against the clause, and of all the selfish speeches he had listened to, the most selfish was the one he had just heard from the Minister for Lands. He could not characterise it as anything else, because although cattle-owners had now sufficient protection under the Marsupials Destruction Act, the hon. gentleman objected to give the same protection to the owners of sheep. If the dingoes destroyed the marsupials, as it was contended they did, there was no necessity to pay any tax at all. They should let the dingoes loose over the marsupial country and do without the tax altogether. The Minister for Lands had stated some facts with reference to the amount of rates that had to be paid by a cattle-owner in his district; but the hon. gentleman forgot to mention that sheep-owners in that part of the country were compelled to fence in their runs with dingo-proof fence, and at the same time to pay rates for the destruction of marsupials. He (Mr. Donaldson) thought if anyone was unjustly treated it was those sheep-owners who had not only to pay rates for the destruction of marsupials but also to spend large sums of money in fencing their holdings. The clause he had moved, as he had tried to explain on the previous evening, was entirely of a permissive nature. There might be something in the arguments urged against it if the whole of the country to which the Bill would apply was occupied by cattle as well as sheep, but they knew that large portions were thoroughly unfitted for sheep, particularly in the coastal districts. In districts where it was necessary to keep sheep, no one, he was certain, would object to the destruction of the dingo. In New South Wales, a few years ago, an Act was passed, called the Protection of Stock and Pastures Act. Under that Act the board had the right to pay certain sums of money for the destruction of marsupials and dingoes, and a few years' experience had proved that that plan was a perfect success. He believed that marsupials had been almost exterminated on the best pasture lands in that colony, and the pastoralists had not had to go to the expense of making fences to keep them out. With reference to the clause before the Committee, he thought that the only places about which there could be any conflict of opinion as to the application of its provisions were those where the sheep and cattle districts joined. But in such a case it was quite competent for the Governor in Council to so alter the boundaries of any district that one should include cattle and the other sheep; and it would then be for a marsupial board to say whether their district should come under the operation of that clause or not. He could not conceive that there could be any reasonable objection to the clause as it stood. He characterised the opposite opinion as a very selfish one indeed, because although the owners of cattle, more particularly those in coastal districts, had given to them by the Marsupial Act very great facilities for the total destruction of marsupials in a few years, they would not allow the same assistance to the owners of sheep in the interior. He trusted the clause would pass.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the hon. member had accused him of selfishness, but the hon. member himself seemed to be taking the view generally assumed by the sheep-owner—that the sheep-owner was a higher order of being, and must be first considered. The cattle man at any rate deserved to be treated justly, and no doubt the readjustment of districts which had been suggested would enable the Government to make the clause act fairly towards them; but it would take time, and the clause coming into operation at once, the rates would be immediately raised. The cattle men would not only receive no benefit from it, but would be directly injured. He doubted whether men could be prevented from going into the cattle districts to poison dogs; and he knew districts where a man could earn £8 or £10 a week by poisoning them—by, in fact, destroying the only thing that enabled the cattle men to hold the country. And the cattle-owners would be compelled to pay for it; that was anomalous and outrageous. The sheep men were certainly entitled to do all they liked to destroy the dingoes in their districts; but they had no right to demand that they should be assisted by men whom such destruction positively injured.

Mr. STEVENSON said he hoped the Committee would not be led away by what the Minister for Lands said about the cattle men. He knew that when he was assisting to get up a deputation on the subject he had no difficulty in getting two men from the North to join, who were cattle-holders and did not own a single sheep in the colony. They told him they thought it would be a great benefit to the cattle men if some such clause as the present were included in the Bill. He believed that even in the districts represented by the hon. member for Leichhardt and the Minister for Lands there were as many sheep men as cattle men who would be willing to see the clause introduced. Two-thirds of the cattle men in the colony would be satisfied to see the clause inserted, believing that the dogs, when they could get calves, would not go after marsupials.

Mr. KELLETT said he could verify the remarks made by the last speaker. In the district of West Moreton he knew that the cattle-owners were perfectly satisfied that they lost a great number of calves every year through the dingoes; and he believed the majority of cattle-owners in the colony had abandoned the old idea that the dingoes did them no harm. He would guarantee that, if they were polled, two-thirds of them would vote to have the dingo included in the Bill. His experience was not the same as that of the hon. member for Port Curtis—that when the poisoning of dingoes was stopped the marsupials decreased. No doubt they kept down marsupials to a certain extent, but if the marsupials decreased wherever the dingo was allowed to run, surely there ought not to be a marsupial in the colony now. He believed the principle of the clause was fair. The stockowners of a district had it in their own power to say whether the clause should be put in force or not. Every stockowner in a district could vote for the members of the board, and if they believed the principle was a bad one they could roll up and put in men who thought as they did.

Mr. NORTON said he knew many cattle-owners held the opinion that native dogs should be included in the Bill; possibly a majority of them thought so. Of course, no one who knew anything about the subject would say that dingoes did not kill calves; but what many

people held was that, as soon as the dingoes reached such numbers as to be really destructive, it was easy to reduce them by poisoning, and that it was better to lose a small percentage of calves than to be overrun with marsupials. As to what he had said previously about the marsupials decreasing when the dingoes ceased to be poisoned, he spoke from his own personal knowledge, and he knew many others who had had the same experience. He thought the fairest thing to all parties would be to allow the proposal to pass.

Mr. DONALDSON said he had brought forward his proposal simply in the interests of the colony, and not because he thought special consideration should be shown to the sheep-owners. He believed that in a few years sheep would be largely kept where there were none now; the sheep country would extend with the extension of the railways. He felt sure the adoption of the clause he had proposed would be an advantage to the colony.

Mr. GOVETT said he had been in a district where dingoes were so plentiful and so daring that they had to be guarded against, or a man's saddle-straps or hobble-straps would be taken almost from under his head at the camp fire. He had lived in the same district until he had seen the time when sheep could be turned out in the paddocks and there graze upon the natural grasses of the country in a proper and legitimate manner without being at all worried by dogs. He would, for one, be very glad to see a fund raised to exterminate the dingo from Queensland altogether. He thought that if the marsupials were to increase to the enormous extent that they had in the Leichhardt and Peak Downs districts it would be better to allow them to eat themselves out than to preserve the dingoes to keep them down. They could fence them in and destroy them, and those that were left out in the scrubs could eat themselves out and starve. That would be better than allowing the dingo to be the destroyer of marsupials. The Minister for Works told them that the dingoes did not eat grass; but they did not altogether live upon marsupials, even when they could not get calves or sheep. They fed very largely upon lizards and eggs, and smaller animals and the millions of rats, not so large as the house rat, that sometimes appeared in the country. He had seen those rats in millions, and had seen the dogs killing them. They preferred those dainty little animals to running down an old-man kangaroo. He thought that the new clause proposed by the hon. member for Warrego should be allowed to pass, because he was convinced that the dingo was a great curse to the country.

Mr. GRIMES said he could hardly tell, from the conflicting opinions expressed upon the Bill, whether they should look upon the dingo as a pest or otherwise. He was rather inclined to look upon the dingo as not a pest, but rather a very useful animal in the country. They had had a little light thrown upon the subject by the hon. member who had just sat down, who said that dingoes did not confine themselves to marsupials, but also destroyed rats and various other things which would otherwise overrun the country. They had heard that parts of Australia had been, at times, overrun by armies of rats; and he thought they ought to be careful in legislating upon the dingoes, that they did not drive them from the face of the land altogether. He knew for a fact that they were exceedingly useful in killing the marsupials, and he was inclined to befriend them upon that ground. He rose more particularly to call attention to the fact that there might be a little difference in the wording of the clause. It was, perhaps, not generally known that there was now a cross between the domestic dog upon the stations and the dingo slut, and if only the scalp were shown there would be great difficulty in distinguishing the native dog from the cross-breds. He presumed that if it were the produce of a dingo slut they would be able to claim 5s. for the scalp; and he would suggest to the hon. member who introduced the new clause that they should insist upon some other part of the dog being produced that would identify him with the dingo. Would it not be possible to have a portion of the other end of the animal, and between the two they might be able to decide as to what was the produce of the dingo and of the domestic dog? He was sure that in a good many cases domestic dogs would be palmed off on the board as dingoes.

Mr. DONALDSON said that the board would take ample precautions with regard to that. There was not the slightest doubt that it would be much easier to distinguish which it was by the ears, which formed part of the scalp. Those dogs killed the sheep as well as dingoes.

Mr. JESSOP said he had been in the colony for twenty-six years, and he freely confessed that he never heard so many people stand up for the dingo before. If they had been a benefit to the cattle-owners, why were not domestic dogs turned out in the country if they would kill vermin as fast as the dingo could?

Mr. GRIMES said that there would be a difficulty in distinguishing those dogs by the ears. He knew that for a fact, because not more than three months ago he saw a pup which was the produce of a dingo slut, and by looking at the ears or the head of that pup one could not tell but that it was a pretty well-bred kangaroo dog. The ears of the kangaroo dog were very different from the ears of the native dog, but there would be many mistakes made if only the scalp were produced.

Mr. NORTON said he did not see what difference it made whether it was a dingo or a half-bred dingo, so long as it killed sheep; they wanted to destroy the dogs that destroyed the sheep. The difficulty was that a great many tame dogs would disappear and their ears would be paid for by the board.

Mr. FOOTE said he had intended to let the hon. gentlemen have the matter out by themselves, as he was not particularly interested in it; but hearing such a variety of opinions upon the question — and the further they got the more it became open — he thought that there was another suggestion, and that was that men engaged in killing these dogs and producing scalps would inaugurate a breeding establishment. He thought it was quite possible to go too far in the matter. According to his idea, the Minister for Lands had made out a very good case. There might be cattle stations within a district that took advantage of the clause, and the cattle men might not wish to be taxed. When the first Native Dog Act was passed nothing had been heard about marsupials, but since that time they had sprung up in millions. It was now, however, proposed to destroy both dingoes and marsupials. In any case, the clause should be confined to the real dingo, otherwise the scalp-hunters might set to work to produce dogs in order to get the head-money for them. Five shillings for a puppy was not a bad price, and it was quite a sufficient inducement to men in want of money to undertake a business of that sort. Indeed, it might be made into quite a lucrative occupation.

Mr. STEVENS said that was a matter that might well be left to the districts to settle among

hemselves. If the cattle-owners suffered, they had brought it on themselves in a great measure. Although some owners of cattle had used poison moderately and kept the dogs in check, others had not taken the slightest trouble in that direction. What he rose to say was, that he hoped the time was not far distant when the Act would be done away with altogether. That might not meet with the approval of the squatters altogether, but it would that of the taxpayers. In Victoria they had got rid of both dogs and marsupials.

An HONOURABLE MEMBER: No.

Mr. STEVENS said that was the case to a great extent, and the real dingo was nearly extinct. Those interested in the destruction of those animals should pay for it, and it should not be made a charge on the taxpayers of the colony.

Mr. MELLOR said the dingo was certainly a very destructive animal, and the cattle-owner as well as the sheep-owner suffered from its ravages. He did not altogether believe in what had been said about dingoes killing marsupials. He had seen a great many dingoes, but had never seen them chasing marsupials, although he had often seen them chasing calves and sheep. Like the hon. member for Logan, he hoped the time was not far distant when the Act would be done away with. It had become in some instances rather oppressive. In his own district there were a great many farmers owning 20 head of cattle, and although they did not suffer from marsupials they were taxed, and at the same time they had not a voice in the election of the board, which was restricted to men owning 100 head. That was an injustice, because every man who paid the rate ought to have a voice in the election of the board. If the Act was not done away with entirely, it ought at least to be confined to those districts which reaped benefit from it.

Mr. JORDAN said he did not profess to know much about sheep and cattle, though he once had part of a cattle station. He was then under the impression that native dogs were very destructive to calves, and he had spent several five-shillings in buying poison for them, and he was under the belief that he derived benefit from killing the dingoes. That was twenty-five years ago. The remarks of the hon. member for Logan raised a very important question. The hon. member said that both dingoes and marsupials had been destroyed in Victoria; but he must admit that rabbits had overrun the country and were becoming a terrible pest. He had at first felt disposed to support the proposed new clause, believing that the hon. member for Warrego had made out an excellent case; but when they imported the idea of rabbits into the question it became an exceedingly grave one, as to whether, if they destroyed dingoes wholesale throughout the colony, rabbits might not occupy their place. Whether dingoes destroyed marsupials or not seemed to be an open question; even old squatters differed in opinion upon it. If native dogs would destroy rabbits, or keep them down, they certainly ought not to be swept out of existence; and, after hearing the remarks of the hon. member for Logan, he should feel inclined to vote against the clause.

The PREMIER said he did not pretend to be an expert on the question, but he thought it a remarkable fact that, after killing off all the native dogs in Victoria, the number of rabbits in that colony had increased enormously. The district in Queensland which was most particularly anxious to use the marsupial fund for the destruction of dingoes was the district represented by the hon. member for Warrego—the very part of the country that was most in danger from rabbits. He had received information yesterday, or the day before, that the place where the rabbits were nearest the border was about where the Barcoo flowed into Cooper's Creek; and he was disposed to think that for the present it was just as well not to set to work to destroy dingoes in that part of the colony. It was well known that where rabbits were few in number they did not increase very rapidly, but if by any chance they were allowed to increase in number, they multiplied to an almost incredible extent. It was said that there had been rabbits on a run—he forgot its name—on the Paroo River, within 100 miles of the Queensland border, for the last five years.

Mr. DONALDSON: No; certainly not.

The PREMIER: It was said so; and that not more than half-a-dozen, or about one a year, had been seen; and they did not increase. For that reason he feared the present was an inopportune time to introduce any resolution for the destruction of native dogs.

Mr. STEVENS said he wished to point out, with regard to rabbits being plentiful in Victoria, that it had arisen subsequent to the removal of the dingo, so that it was quite an open question whether the dingo could keep rabbits down or not. However, he could say that foxes were let loose in parts of the country where rabbits were very plentiful, and those who knew anything about foxes would be aware that they would kill as many rabbits as dingoes would, and yet they had not been able to keep them down.

Mr. STEVENSON said he hoped the Government would be able to introduce some measure by which rabbits would be kept out of the colony without the necessity of preserving the dingo to keep them out.

Mr. DONALDSON said that with regard to the remarks of the hon. the Premier, who was generally very clear in dealing with any subject before the Committee, although he was not so on the present occasion, he would point out that in Victoria rabbits were not introduced until the dingoes were almost exterminated, except in some districts that were not occupied by stock—that was in the mallee, or down towards Cape Otway. At the present time the only place in which there were dingoes was the mallee, and that was completely overrun with rabbits. To such an extent was it overrun, that recently a Land Act was passed in that colony giving facilities to selectors to take up the country at a low rental, in order to exterminate the pest; and, in addition to that, the Government now proposed to erect rabbit-proof fences for the lessees, charging a low rate of interest upon the outlay. There was nothing whatever in the argument that the dingo would keep down the rabbits. It was a matter of impossibility, because rabbits bred in millions.

The PREMIER: If they get beyond the dogs.

Mr. DONALDSON said it was impossible to keep sheep upon country that was infested with dingoes, and he contended that sheep were necessary for the advancement of this colony. He thought the time had passed when they could profitably grow cattle. The time had come, too, when squatters would have to pay much higher rentals for the pastoral lands of the colony, and therefore it was necessary that they should have some protection from the State. He still contended that if the dingo was to be allowed to exist, or was to be protected, rather, by the Government in order to keep out the rabbit, it was a very ineffectual means of keeping them out. In fact, they were merely shielding themselves from a great responsibility which had fallen upon their shoulders. The time had arrived when some strenuous

efforts should be made by the Government to effectually fence out the rabbit. He was sorry that they had digressed from the subject before the Committee. He was not the first to introduce the rabbit question, but as it had been introduced he thought it only right to express his views upon it, especially in connection with their destruction by dingoes. He was satisfied that there was no possibility of remedying the evil in that way. If they depended upon dingoes to keep the rabbits out, it would not be long before the whole country was overrun with them.

Question—That the words "two-thirds of the members of" be inserted before "the board"—put and negatived.

Question—That the proposed new clause stand part of the Bill—put.

The Committee divided:—

AYES, 26.

Sir T. McIlwraith, Messrs. Donaldson, Bailey, Lalor, Stevens, Kates, Morehead, Archer, Kellett, J. Campbell, Stevenson, Isambert, Mellor, Smyth, Hamilton, Norton, Moreton, Wallace, Jessop, Black, Govett, Macfarlane, Ferguson, Higson, Foxton, and Horwitz.

NOES, 12.

Messrs. Griffith, Dutton, Rutledge, Dickson, Miles, Sheridan, Grimes, Wakefield, Foote, Jordan, Midgley, and Salkeld.

Resolved in the affirmative.

The PREMIER said he proposed to amend the title of the Bill by inserting the words "amend and" after the word "to," so as to read "to amend and continue," etc.

Amendment agreed to; and title, as amended, put and passed.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the House resumed, and the CHAIRMAN reported the Bill with further amendments and an amended title.

The third reading of the Bill was made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

The SPEAKER announced the receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, stating that the Council had agreed to the Appropriation Bill No. 1, without amendment.

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The PREMIER said: Before the next Order of the Day is called I have to acquaint the House that I have it in command from His Excellency the Governor to intimate to the House that His Excellency, having been informed that it is proposed to amend the Bill to amend the Crown Lands Act of 1884 by declaring and enacting that certain lessees of agricultural farms, the area of which does not exceed 160 acres, who are not the holders of contiguous farms and who become entitled to a deed of grant under the provisions of the 74th section of the principal Act, shall be entitled to have returned to them any rent which they have paid in excess of 2s. 6d. per acre, recommends the proposed amendment to the consideration of the House.

CROWN LANDS ACT OF 1884 AMENDMENT BILL—COMMITTEE.

On the Order of the Day being read, the House went into Committee to further consider this Bill.

Mr. MOREHEAD said before they commenced the discussion of the Bill he had something to say with regard to the distribution, not only of the Bill they were about to discuss, but of other Bills that had been dealt with, or partly dealt with, in committee. The practice had been—and it was a very bad practice—that after copies of Bills had got into the hands of hon. members and were left on the seats when the House rose, they were next day picked up—so the messenger had informed him—from the seats, and handed round to hon. members again. He thought that fresh copies should be sent round, because hon. members were in the habit of putting marginal notes, or making alterations, in the Bills served out to them by the messenger. He had one handed to him just now—he did not know who had it last night, but it was scored all over and marked, as hon. members would see. He did not know what was on it, nor did he want to see it; he wanted a clean copy of the Bill. Nobody wanted to see the amendments made in a Bill which an hon. member might have left upon his seat. If a member did make marginal notes upon a Bill, he probably had a right to put it in his drawer. No Bill which had any marks upon it whatever should be distributed to a member, unless it was to the member who had made the marks upon it.

Mr. SHERIDAN said he held in his hand a Bill upon which there was a marginal note, an alteration, and a somewhat ornamental diagram.

Mr. MOREHEAD said he trusted the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, or the officer whose duty it was, would take steps to have clean copies sent out, and not have copies sent round with marks upon them, which might probably lead to trouble amongst members. Assuming that they could write, he did not want to read the notes made by the Minister for Works or the Minister for Lands.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: More tomfoolery!

Mr. MOREHEAD said the hon. member need not think he was going to annoy him. He repeated they should not have put into their hands the information, or want of information, that might be exhibited by hon. members on either side of the House; clean copies of the Bill should be served out every night. The Bill he held in his hand was marked and had writing upon it, and he did not want it. He wanted a clean one.

The PREMIER said he did not think that any further discussion was necessary on that point.

Mr. MOREHEAD: It is a matter of importance.

The PREMIER: Quite so; but, attention having been called to it, it will be attended to in future.

Mr. MOREHEAD: I was told by the messenger that he had no more copies to serve out.

The PREMIER said the messenger could get more. It must be understood, however, that in the case of a very long Bill fresh copies could not be served out every night. In a case of that sort hon. members would no doubt take care of the copy served out to them and keep it in their drawers.

Mr. BLACK asked leave to withdraw the new clause proposed by him when the Bill was last under discussion, for the purpose of presenting a new clause which had just been handed round to hon. members.

Clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. BLACK said it was pointed out on the last occasion when they had that Bill under discussion that the way he had worded the clause proposed by him would allow the homestead selector to be also the possessor of a number of adjoining selections, and he would therefore be put in a better position than the ordinary conditional selector. That was not his wish in submitting the clause to the Committee, his object being to allow the

homestead selector, who was willing to confine his selection to an area not exceeding 160 acres in all, to get that land at a price which it was assumed he would get it for—namely, 2s. 6d. an acre. In order to arrive at that object he had very much pleasure in proposing the new clause which hon. members had now in their hands. It was to the following effect :—

"And whereas doubts have arisen as to the total amount which may become payable as rent by a lessee of an agricultural farm, the area whereof does not exceed 160 acres, who becomes entitled to a deed of grant of the land in fee-simple under the provisions of the seventy-fourth section of the principal Act: Be it declared and enacted as follows—

"In the case of any such lessee who has not, during the term of his lease, been the holder of any contiguous farm, if the amount paid by him as rent in respect of the farm for the five years preceding the time when he so became entitled to a deed of grant exceeds a sum equal to 2s. 6d. per acre of the land comprised in the farm, the lessee shall be entitled to have returned to him a sum equal to the difference between the sum so paid and a sum equal to 2s. 6d. per acre.

"But if he has during the term of the lease been the holder of a contiguous farm then he shall not be entitled to any such return."

He wished to have it quite clear in that, that the homestead selector should be entitled to the full amount of 160 acres. He was not quite certain whether—in the way the clause was worded—assuming a selector took up only 40 acres, and afterwards took up an additional 40 acres, the latter might not be considered a contiguous farm.

The PREMIER : He cannot, under the Act, take up more than one farm.

The HON. SIR T. MCILWRAITH : Yes, he can, under clause 74, which makes special provision with respect to agricultural farms the area whereof does not exceed 160 acres.

The PREMIER : The next clause says he cannot take up more than one farm.

Mr. BLACK said he wished the Committee plainly to understand the object he had in moving the new clause. It was, as he had intimated, to define accurately the position of the homestead selector ; and to let it be clearly understood that he was entitled to 160 acres, but no more, at 2s. 6d. per acre, on his complying with the conditions set forth in the Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS said the clause made clear a point in reference to homestead selection about which there was a doubt in the minds of hon. members before ; and he would have no objection to the clause. With reference to the question asked by the hon. gentleman, he would point out that if a man took up 40 acres under clause 74 of the Act he certainly could not take up another selection under the same conditions. With the understanding that there was no further alteration made, he was willing to allow the clause to go.

Mr. MOREHEAD said they were not going to have any understanding that there was to be no further alteration. They would not have any argument of that sort. The hon. gentleman must take the clause or leave it. They would discuss what came when it did come.

Clause put and passed.

Schedule passed as printed.

The PREMIER moved that the following be the preamble of the Bill :—

Whereas it is desirable to amend the Crown Lands Act of 1884 in certain particulars.

Question put and passed.

On the motion of the MINISTER FOR LANDS, the CHAIRMAN left the chair, and reported the Bill to the House with amendments.

The report was adopted, and the third reading of the Bill made an Order of the Day for Tuesday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

The PREMIER, in moving the adjournment of the House, said that on Tuesday next it was proposed to take first the second reading of the Rabbit Bill, and then to proceed with the Elections Bill in committee.

The House adjourned at three minutes past 6 o'clock.