that has become established to get his Bill passed as drafted.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member to deal with the amendment.

Mr. THOMSON: I am appealing to the Minister to accept the amendment.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Are you agreeable to the City Council having no representation?

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, I am agreeable to their representative being cut out.

Mr. BROWN: I support the amendment and urge the Minister to accept it. The success of the market will depend upon the patronage of the producers, and if they feel that they have fair representation on the trust, they will realise that it is to their interests to patronise the market. Sometimes a producer gets returns from the markets that he considers are unjust, but if he has fair representation on the trust, he will feel confident of getting a square deal from the market.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 15th September, 1926.

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

BILLS (6)—THIRD READING.

1, Government Savings Bank Act Amendment.

Returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

2, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.

3, Federal Aid Roads Agreement.

4, Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs Act Amendment.

5, Herdsman's Lake Drainage Act Repeal.

6, Vermin Act Amendment.

Passed.

BILL—SOLDIER LAND SETTLEMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

MOTION—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT.

To Disallow Regulation.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the following motion by Hon. E. H. Harris:

That Regulation No. 128 under the Industrial Arbitration Acts, 1912-25, relating to Industrial Boards and Boards of Reference, laid upon the Table on the 19th August, 1926, be and is hereby disallowed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.40]: Mr. Harris is seeking to bring about a disallowance of Regulation 128 under the Industrial Arbitration Acts 1912-25, not because he has any objection to the regulation so far as it goes, but because he considers it does not go far enough. Parliament has no power to amend regulations; it can only disallow them. In giving reasons for the disallowance, Parliament can suggest the amendment which it desires should be made. That is Mr. Harris's position. He is under the impression that there is no effective check on the expenditure involved by industrial boards and boards of reference, that there is a temptation to these bodies to extend their sittings, and hours of sittings, for the sake of the fees, and that therefore a proviso should be added to the regulation as follows:—

Provided that the President of the Court of Arbitration shall first certify that the time occupied and charged for by the chairman and members of the said respective boards in the performance of their duties is fair and reasonable, and that the proceedings be-

fore them have not been unduly prolonged, and further that the fees and payments payable hereunder are correct.

The possible dangers referred to by Mr. Harris have not been overlooked by the Court of Arbitration. They were not overlooked when the regulations were framed. It was arranged that all vouchers in connection with such expenditure should be subjected to the careful scrutiny of the Industrial Registrar, and that no accounts should be paid except upon his certification. The scope of his duties does not involve merely checking the accounts to see whether the accounts add up correctly, but involves also ascertaining whether there is a fair return for the money expended. The Industrial Registrar was selected to examine the accounts, because it was realised that he would be the only official of the court conversant with the movements and sittings of boards, and that he would be able to form a correct judgment as to whether these bodies were fleecing the Treasury or not. He is an officer who has had some experience of industrial boards of various kinds, and has actually served on different occasions as chairman of boards appointed to settle industrial disputes. Hence he should, I think members will agree, be one of the best possible men for exercising the necessary check. That is not all. The registrar has been appointed as certifying official under Section 33 of the Audit Act. Section 33 of that Act, Subsection 1, reads—

> No public accountant shall pay any account unless he shall have been authorised so to do by some person appointed by the Governor for the purpose, and unless such account shall have been duly certified to as correct by some person appointed by the Governor for that purpose.

Subsection 5 reads—

> The correctness of every account in regard to computations, castings, rates of charge, and the faithful performance of the services charged shall be certified by the person incuring the expense.

There is a further check upon extravagant expenditure. All the vouchers have to go to the Treasury. The Under Treasurer would certainly notify the Treasurer if the vouchers revealed anything in the way of funny business. Again, provision has to be made by means of an item on the Estimates for payments to these industrial boards, and Parliament will have knowledge as to what they are costing the country, and will be able to judge as to whether the State is getting fair value for the money spent. It is quite true, as Mr. Harris stated, that in New South Wales the accounts were paid on the certification of the chairmen of the various boards. Under that provision the system was open to abuse. That is generally admitted. In Victoria there was a similar experience until it was ruled that accounts would be paid only on the certification of the industrial registrar. That arrangement has been in operation for many years and has proved entirely satisfactory. It has eliminated the undesirable features feared by Mr. Harris. It is not considered desirable or necessary to encumber the president of the Arbitration Court with the certification of these vouchers. He would not be in a proper position to do so, unless he neglected some of his important duties. In any case, I think most hon. members will agree that the checking of accounts is a matter for an administrative officer, especially when we have one who is considered sufficiently qualified to be appointed as a certifying officer under the Audit Act. Occasions may arise when the boards may protest against actions taken by the industrial registrar, and in such instances provision has already been made for reference of the matters in dispute to the Court of Arbitration. Should the registrar come to the conclusion that any board has imposed on the State, his duty is to report accordingly to the court, and the court can, if it thinks fit, recommend to the Minister that the board shall be dissolved under Section 112 of the Arbitration Act. In view of the safeguards provided, which I have detailed, I hope Mr. Harris will withdraw his motion. There is another matter to which Mr. Harris referred, namely, the lack of uniformity in the system of paying expenses to industrial boards under the Arbitration Act. Industrial boards are reimbursed for all necessary expenses actually incurred, whereas with regard to the Apprenticeship Board, the members are reimbursed for expenses as provided by the Public Service regulations. In that respect there is not uniformity, as Mr. Harris indicated. The system regarding the Apprenticeship Board has been in existence for some years. It was thought inadvisable to disturb a custom of such duration and for that reason it was decided not to make any change in respect to that board. All boards recently appointed, and all future boards will not be paid in accordance with Public Service regulations but will be recouped all necessary ex-

penses actually incurred. I hope Mr. Harris will withdraw his motion.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East—in reply) [4.50]: The Chief Secretary has indicated the procedure adopted for the checking of accounts. It was not within my knowledge that the industrial registrar was empowered to certify accounts submitted. When moving my motion I was under the impression that accounts might go before him and I wished to be assured that some officer would be called upon to certify as to the correctness of those accounts. Notwithstanding the remarks of the Chief Secretary, I cannot agree with his statement that Parliament could judge whether fair value had been received in the work performed for the money spent. The Arbitration Court has power to appoint boards and would delegate to the board the work to be undertaken. Therefore the court would have a better idea than members of Parliament as to whether the work performed had been such that the State had received value for the money expended. Parliament has to pass an amount in the Estimates for that purpose and the annual report presented sets out that such and such boards have been appointed with certain results. For my part I do not think any value can be placed upon the argument advanced by the Chief Secretary that Parliament would be in a better position than any other section of the community to decide this question. It is hardly fair that the industrial registrar, who is a civil servant, should be called upon to accept the odium, if any, attached to an objection raised to the time taken by a board appointed by the Arbitration Court to carry out certain work. I waited to see whether any hon. member would support my motion, but in view of the explanation by the Chief Secretary, I ask leave to withdraw it.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.52]: In view of the remarks of the Minister, I do not think the House need hesitate regarding the passing of the Bill. There are a few questions that arise in connection with our forests, to which I think it desirable to draw the attention of hon. members. We are all impressed with the necessity for extending forestry work. I have been told that if we continue to cut out our jarrah forests at the present rate, the passing of another 10 years will see the end of our marketable jarrah in sight. If that be so, there is all the more urgent need to prosecute the further conservation of this valuable timber and for a more aggressive policy regarding reaforestation. For that reason we are pleased to know that the Government are adopting a systematic policy in advancing this work. Regarding the field operations covered by the Forests Department, last year's report shows that £1,562 worth of boronia blossoms were gathered for the purpose of extracting perfume. One cannot help wondering whether any steps have been taken to conserve this valuable plant. It would be a great pity if one of the most noted of our wild flowers were ruthlessly exterminated by gathering the blooms for their perfume. I would be glad to hear that the department have taken steps to prevent the destruction and possible eradication of our boronia shrubs. I should have liked to peruse the annual report of the Forests Department for last year before discussing the Bill. The report would have been informative and would have assisted in the passage of the measure. While dealing with the forests generally, I would urge upon the Government the desirability of reorganising the forests laboratory, for the purpose of investigating forests products that have been discovered, or that will possibly be discovered in the future. The activities of such a laboratory would fall under four headings. The first would deal with essences, oils, perfumes, and gums. I was interested to note in the department's report for 1925 that the exports of essential oils amounted to £41,884. The value of the essential oils exported last year exceeded the value of tannin bark exported and was no less than 25 per cent. of the value of the sandalwood exported. The greater proportion of the essential oils exported represented sandalwood oil, which, as hon. members know, is used for medicinal purposes. In view of the value of this product, we should do our best to secure the regrowth and regeneration of our sandalwood forests. The planting of sandalwood trees should be prosecuted to a greater extent than it is at present. When the Forest Department have sufficient authoritative information to enable them to proceed along sound lines, I hope that these operations will

be extended very considerably. Sandalwood is one of the products of our arid regions and if we could discover methods for increasing its growth, the State would benefit all round. Coming to the food values of our fodder plants, a considerable strip of country in the northern parts of the Eastern Goldfields areas has been taken over for the purpose of stock raising. The value of that country depends upon the tremendous growth of top feed. Unfortunately, the experience in the Eastern States, and to a large extent in Western Australia as well, is that these fodder plants have suffered considerably because the country has been overstocked in times of drought. I think it was Professor Osborne who drew attention to this important fact during the recent Science Congress in Perth. He sounded a note of warning regarding what had taken place in the Eastern States and advised the authorities in Western Australia to take steps to safeguard their pastoral resources. Every effort should be made to preserve our fodder plants in the districts I refer to. The third field of operation for research work is in respect of some of our plants that may prove valuable for textile purposes. We have plants growing in the goldfields areas that offer a wide field for research. There are several plants that I know of that could well be submitted to a manufacturing process, because I believe they would be of use in making bags, or even rope. We must remember that considerable imports of these commodities are necessary for carrying on our industries in Western Australia. There is one plant, the name of which I do not know, that has a long pod. When the pod is opened there is found inside a very fine silky fibre. One cannot help thinking that if experiments were carried out, this plant would be found useful for textile purposes. The value of Western Australian timbers has been demonstrated already by the beautiful cabinet work that has been before the public for years past. I had the privilege and pleasure the other day of inspecting a collection of Western Australian timbers. There were 150 varieties and some of them were most attractive. Some beautifully grained timber was exhibited amongst the specimens. One outstanding feature of the timbers grown in the dry areas is that they contain a considerable quantity of oil. I understand that it is a characteristic of plants in the drier regions that the sap or natural oil is more concentrated than in timber grown in the more humid areas. There is no reason why, with the assistance of the Federal Government through the Science and Industry Bureau, work should not be carried out along these lines. We could make use of the technical ability of the officers of the Forests Department in carrying out the work along scientific lines. They have the ability to do the work and there is tremendous scope for investigation that would be exceedingly profitable. There is an immense amount of work to be done to secure the valuable essences or products to be derived from our native trees. Parliament could step in with a recommendation for the conservation of the trees and plants affected, and could impose a royalty on exports. Thus we would help to preserve the growth of the trees and plants and open up another profitable field for industry in Western Australia. It is quite evident that a research laborotory would not only demonstrate its usefulness but would be a source of profit to Western Australia. Whilst on the question of research I would stress the necessity for inaugurating work on lines somewhat similar to those adopted in the United States. In some of the western States it was found impossible to carry on the ordinary methods of agriculture. On the other hand, there were certain of the States which responded to the research work carried on and it was found that the areas in some of those States could be made capable of carrying stock. Botanists were sent to every part of the world where the climatic conditions were similar to those of the States in question, and as a result of the work carried on by those officers during a period extending over two or three years, in which time they studied plants in different parts of the world, it was found that a considerable number were capable of being acclimatised and cultivated, and in Arizona and Mexico the plants soon became part of the agricultural economy of those places.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What plants were they?

Hon. H. SEDDON: Chiefly drier country plants, used for fibres. The botanists found varieties of the sorghum family flourishing in Central Asia, and that they were being used there for the feeding of stock. Those plants have been adapted and are growing profitably in Arizona. There is in central Mexico a plant which is slow growing but which yields a latex which can be worked

into rubber. This, too, proves the possibility of valuable products being developed by means of research work. There is no doubt that similar products may be discovered in plants existing in Western Australia. There is one field that should particularly commend itself to the department, and that is the cultivation of the sorghum plants for the production of power alcohol. There is a considerable amount of sugar in many of these plants, and the sugar content could increase with the cross breeding of the plants. If, as a result of the investigation work, it were found that these plants could be successfully grown on the goldfields and in other arid parts of the State, we would thus bring into practical use land which at the present time is not capable of being developed. I commend the question to the consideration of the department; it seems to me a function peculiarly adapted to the Forestry Department. We have a number of officers there well trained and thoroughly familiar with the principles of botany, and those officers could apply their abilities in the direction of benfiting the State. I draw the attention of members to the fact that the sandalwood position has now definitely demonstrated itself, and that it has vindicated the action taken by Mr. Scaddan when Minister for Forests in the previous Government. That action has put the sandalwood position on a sound basis. The State has realised the benfit of this tremendous asset, and there is no reason why we should not get even more valuable results in the future, because there is likely to be a continued demand for this wood in China. It is possible that the State may see the desirability of increasing the royalty on sandalwood in view of that possible increased demand. At any rate, the question of the transfer of the allowance to the revenue fund this year should commend itself to members, and it would be well to continue the course now being adopted of bringing the Bill up for revision year by year so that we may be able to discuss the trend of events. I support the Bill.

HON. A. BURVILL (South-East) [5.4]: I desire to say a few words in support of the second reading of the Bill. I was glad to hear from the Chief Secretary, and also to learn from the Conservator's report, of what had been done in the way of proclaiming forests. I wish to stress the importance of establishing pine plantations of which, in my opinion, we have not enough in the State. In our south-western areas, the time is rapidly approaching when timber for fruit cases will be scarce and dear, remembering the period it will take to get new forests growing so that they may be ready to take the place of the hardwoods which are being used now.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Has not the price gone up since the Government entered the field?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not wish to enter on a discussion of that question just now. The Conservator of Forests, in his report of last year, quoted what was being done in respect of pine forests in France. He referred chiefly to their accessibility and stressed the fact that the accessibility, not only of the forest, but of any other product had a great deal to do with its value. Bearing that in mind, I consider that pine plantations should exist in fruitgrowing districts, such as around Albany and Mt. Barker, so that when they came into production their accessibility to the places that required them would be the principal feature. At the present time the fruitgrowers in that part of the State are put to such expense by reason of the inaccessibility of timbers for fruit cases, that they have been agitating for a reduction in railway freights. If the forests were accessible, a reduction in freights would not trouble the fruitgrowers at all. Therefore in the planting of new forests, now is the time to consider where the trees should be grown. More attention should also be given to the planting of wattle. As a result of my journeyings throughout different parts of the State I have made comparisons between what is happening here and in the Eastern States. The golden wattle, as we know, is particularly adapted to the south-western and southern parts of Western Australia. We have land that is exactly similar to land in certain parts of Victoria and South Australia, where the wattle grows. Victoria used to export wattle bark to the extent of £100,000 annually. At the present time wattle is coming to Australia from South Africa.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And our own wattle, too.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Originally the wattle of South Africa came from Victoria. In South Africa in 1920 there were 120,000 acres of wattle which originally came from the Commonwealth and that area produced 59,000 tons of bark of the value of £283,-

000. There is a good deal more money in wattle than in many other kinds of trees, for the reason that wattle reaches maturity in from six to eight years, and if there is a proper rotation of planting, once the trees are established the bark can be taken annually. It only requires to be planted and there is a sure income after say eight years at the most. Further than that the wattle does not require to be planted on first-class land; all that it needs is a decent rainfall and it will grow on sandy soil and close to the coast, land that in this State at the present time is mostly unutilised. Last night in dealing with the question of the dedication of State forests, the Minister gave us the views of the Conservator and of the Surveyor General and he said that those views would have to be reconciled. He told us that on the one hand precautions had to be taken lest valuable timber areas might be obliterated, whilst on the other hand the other extreme might be reached when land not likely to yield timber profitably, but which might be excellent for agricultural purposes, might be held up from cultivation. I understand there is a tendency on the part of the Conservator to dedicate as forests, land that is suitable for cultivation. I think that is what the Chief Secretary was alluding to when he referred to the fact that the Conservator and the Surveyor General were not in accord. I do not consider it wise to do what the Conservator suggests. Mr. Lane-Poole when Conservator of Forests in Western Australia held a similar opinion to that of the present Conservator. On looking up "Australian Forestry" of 1916, by D. E. Hutchins, at the time when Mr. R. T. Robinson was Minister controlling forests, we find the view expressed by Mr. Lane-Poole that to prevent the possibility of abuses, forest reserves should be vested in trustees, but he preferred to wait until such time as the forests of Australia were under the control of the Commonwealth Government. I do not think that members would agree to our forests being taken over by the Commonwealth. In another part of this book where Hutchins speaks of the control of the forests he says—

> In any case the Forests Department must have undivided autocratic control over all the operations. Half measures or a divided authority are useless.

There is no doubt that is necessary so far as forestry is concerned, but when it comes to agricultural land that may be included in the forests area, some arrangement should be made between the two departments to enable them to work amicably together. Perhaps I may offer the suggestion that the Minister controlling the Forests Department and the Minister controlling the Lands Department should be the same person, so that the permanent heads of both departments would be under one control. Thus a solution of the difficulty might be arrived at.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.16]: I assure Mr. Seddon and Mr. Burvill that their suggestions will receive every consideration from the Government. That expression, I hope, will not be regarded as a mere figure of speech. Ever since I have accepted office it has been my practice to have extracts made from the various speeches of members of the Legislative Council, whether those speeches were in criticism or by way of suggestion, and to have the extracts sent on to the various Ministers concerned. Since this session opened, on the 29th July, over 70 communications of that nature have gone from my office to different Ministers conveying suggestions and criticisms made by members of this Chamber. One of the first things I did this morning was to instruct my clerk to extract from "Hansard" Mr. Burvill's suggestion regarding disease in potatoes and to transmit it without delay to the Minister for Agriculture. I have pursued that course without exception, and I shall not depart from it. Hon. members, therefore, need not conclude that their criticisms, suggestions and opinions are not noted. They are and will continue to be noted.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—JETTIES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [5.22]: Since the House adjourned yesterday I have taken the opportunity to discuss the Jetties Bill, and also the Navigation Act Amendment Bill, with shipping people at Fremantle and also with the Chief Harbour

Master. The latter measure will be dealt with by Mr. Holmes. As regards the Jetties Bill, I find it is considered necessary that the Government should have power to make regulations as proposed under Clause 4. Mr. Nicholson has referred to Subclause 8 of Clause 4, which provides for a regulation—

Imposing on intending shippers of goods from any public jetty an obligation to furnish to an officer full and true accounts of the goods intended to be shipped.

I am told that what the subclause proposes is the practice to-day. Moreover, it is necessary; and therefore no exception can be taken to the subclause. I agree also as to the necessity for making regulations, as proposed by Subclause 9, in regard to berthing dues, wharfage dues, handling charges, storage charges and so forth. Subclause 10, however, should be deleted in Committee. That subclause refers to regulations—

Defining and limiting the liability of the Government in respect of goods landed, discharged, deposited, stored, carried, or left on or in any public jetty or any premises appurtenant thereto or used in connection therewith, or loaded or shipped by the department from any jetty or any such premises as aforesaid.

Subclause 10 thus proposes to empower the Government to frame regulations doing away with all liability whatsoever. It would mean that the producer or the consumer would have to pay. The Government ought to be liable in the circumstances set forth. Again, I must take exception to Subclause 11—

Exempting the Government from liability for or in respect of (a) damage to any such goods as aforesaid caused or contributed to by insufficient protection or packing; (b) damage to or loss of any such goods for which no receipt has been given by the department—

Those two paragraphs are in order—

(c) Damage to or loss of any such goods discharged, landed, loaded, or handled in wet weather—

Who is going to be responsible if wheat or flour, for instance, should be damaged while being shipped?

The Honorary Minister: Who is responsible now? The shipper.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The shipper or the producer every time. The Government ought to be responsible. Apparently, between the ship's sling and the wharf no one is responsible. Subclause 11 continues—

(d) Damage to or loss of any such goods in any case in which no claim in respect thereof has been made within the prescribed time—

That is quite in order, though the "prescribed time" should be stated. Claims could not be allowed to stand over for six or nine months.

(e) Damage to or loss of any such goods discharged, landed, loaded, or handled outside the hours prescribed as the working hours to be observed in connection with any jetty.

At the tidal ports ships arrive during the night, probably being unable to get in until night; yet nobody is to be responsible. Unless ullage is pointed out by the tally clerk when the case leaves the ship's sling, no responsibility is accepted by the ship; and by this paragraph the Government also decline responsibility.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Neither should they be responsible.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Is this a Bill to encourage thieving on the wharf?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The hon. member interjecting knows nothing about the North.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Apparently he does not know anything about the South either. After the working hours, whatever they may be—I do not know whether the lumpers now work six hours a day or eight—the Government will not take any responsibility. It means that the lumpers will be able to thieve and ullage without anyone being liable.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It means nothing of the kind.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I want this House to see that the producer and the consumer are protected. This is supposed to be the most democratic country in the world, and therefore our Government should set an example. Subclause 12 is unobjectionable—

Prescribing the times within which claims must be made against the Government or the department.

Subclause 13, however, is too drastic altogether—

Precluding any person from disputing as against the Government or the department that the particulars, weights, and measurement of any goods discharged, landed, or unloaded on any jetty are different from that stated in the relative manifest or other shipping document.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why is it too drastic?

Hon. G. W. MILES: Is it not possible for an error to be made in stating the measurement or weight of a package sent aboard a ship? If there is an error, this subclause prevents the shipper from making any claim.

Hon. H. Stewart: For the sake of information, does the manifest set out to be an accurate document?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It is supposed to be. However, this subclause might cause a shipper to be compelled to pay freight on a ton or two more than the actual measurement or weight. These provisions will apply practically throughout the State, though of course the Railway Department and the Fremantle and Bunbury Harbour Trusts have their own regulations, which are fairly stringent. Once regulations are framed, we do not sight them again, as pointed out by Mr. Nicholson. They are there for all time, and do not come up for review. Moreover, this Bill and the Navigation Act Amendment Bill have not gone through the usual procedure of being introduced in another place and debated there by both sides. If they go through this House, they will pass the other House as a matter of course. In these two cases we are not acting as a House of review. It is our duty to scrutinise more carefully Bills introduced here than Bills which come up from another place. As regards the present Bill and the Navigation Act Amendment Bill, once they have been passed here the Government will say, "The Council are satisfied." The Government having a majority in another place, that would be the end of discussion of the measures. In the North the shipping companies now refuse to accept responsibilty as regards goods landed after 5 p.m. That may be all right, but when the goods get into trucks and are landed into sheds the Government should be responsible for any pilfering or ullaging that may take place.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Are they similarly responsible on the railway system?

Hon. G. W. MILES: They should be.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But are they?

Hon. G W. MILES: They are common carriers, on the same footing as other carriers. I am surprised that the interjection should come from a member who supports the present Government. The small man cannot fight the Government; he cannot afford to pay the piper, and so he has to suffer. I have little more to say. A number of the regulations are necessary, and I think the other clauses of the Bill are quite in order. However, I hope that in Committee we shall be able to amend those I have indicated as needing amendment.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.31] The Bill, I think, is loaded. It will n affect Bunbury, nor Fremantle. I urge mer bers to scrutinise it very closely. It w affect Esperance, Busselton and all the ou parts; particularly will it affect the nort ern ports. At least we should see to that the railway people or the jetty autho ties take control of goods and protect the Mr. Gray, whose authority on many su jects we are not prepared to accept, as what about the railways. The railwa carry consignments at a cheap rate, b take no responsibility. When we pay higher rate, the railways have to take t responsibility. There is no "Commissione risk," nor "Owner's risk" in respect of je ties. Subclause 11 of Clause 4 deals wi the damage or loss of any goods discharg or loaded in wet weather. A ship com into port in bad weather; the goods a thrown out on the wharf and left there the rain, when it might reasonably be e pected that they would be moved into shed. All the responsibility is to be ca on the poor unfortunate shipper.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is a premium neglect.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Then we have provision dealing with goods handled outsi the prescribed working hours. But in t far North ships have to go in and out all hours of the night, according to the sta of the tide. Our duty, surely, is to see it that when those ships go in and la goods, somebody is responsible for the pr tection of those goods. Hon. members w see that the Bill requires very close scru iny. Mr. Miles has drawn attention Clause 13, which precludes any person fro taking action against the Government wh there is an error in the manifest or bill lading. However, the clause does not pr clude the Government from imposing higher penalty. If the error be an unde measurement, the Government can alter and enforce the higher rate; but if a 5-t consignment be shown in the manifest being of 7 tons, the person concerned h no right to dispute it. Surely that is a on sided position! Rates and wharfage charg are very high in the North. During t war period the wharfages were pluss by 20 per cent. Consider what that mea If the wharfage be 5s. per ton at Fremant the 20 per cent. plus represents 1s., where with wharfage £1 per ton in the North, t 20 per cent. represents 4s. So, whereas t

increase at Fremantle is from 5s. to 6s., at the outports it is from 20s. to 24s. We might reasonably ask that this plussing by so much per cent. be dispensed with, and that the plussing be put on an equal basis. The percentage plan is manifestly unfair. However, these are some of the difficulties the pioneers have to contend with, and which I hope the House will help us to rectify.

HON. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.38]: I agree with the last two speakers that the Bill will not greatly affect Fremantle and Bunbury, where there are ample sheds for the protection of the goods, but that it will inflict injustice on the northern ports and on Esperance, where no such provision is made. The railways, like the Fremantle Harbour Trust, regulate themselves out of all responsibility. On the railways the "Commissioner's risk" freight is so high that consignors cannot avail themselves of it save in exceptional circumstances, whilst under "owner's risk" there is no responsibility for anything that happens to the consignment unless negligence can be proved. It is different in respect of shipping, where the freight rate is all the same. At many of the northern ports the ships have to go in during the night, dump their stuff on the wharf and clear out again. It is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs, and clearly it is our duty to do anything we can to improve those conditions in the North. I agree that when in Committee we should endeavour to amend some of the provisions in the Bill, particularly subclauses 10 to 13 of Clause 4.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray, debate adjourned.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.42]: This is another Bill that will not affect Fremantle or Bunbury, where they have harbour trusts.

Hon. E. H. Gray: This will affect Fremantle.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It will suit Fremantle and suit Bunbury, for those two ports do not come under the provisions of the Bill. But it will not suit the outports. It is proposed to render compulsory the having of a certificated engineer in charge of the machinery of every vessel used for navigation. Let us see what effect that will have on the pearling industry. The whole of the auxiliary vessels in the pearling fleet will have to carry certificated engineers. That is only for a portion of the year, because for only a portion of the year are the vessels engaged. The imposing of this condition on those boats will set up the same state of affairs as was set up under the Workers' Compensation Act. A condition of affairs was set up by that measure that imposed upon the pearling industry of Broome a penalty of £20,000 a year, but let me say to the credit of the Minister for Works, Mr. McCallum, that when he found out the position in the following session, he introduced a Bill to amend the Act. I am trying to show that it is of no use our experimenting with legislation. Let us deal with this question now and not give it 12 months' trial, during which such difficulties may arise that we shall have to repeal the measure. Reverting to the application of the Workers' Compensation Act to the pearling industry, two of the divers lost their lives, and attached to each of those deaths was a penalty of £600. The divers were not insured and could not be insured, because the industry could not stand it. Further than that, the position was farcical. The coloured men engaged in pearling are brought to the State under an agreement between the country they come from and the pearling masters of Broome. The country they come from fixes the value of the life of one of these men at £20, and the country in which they are considered to be aliens fixed the value at £600. Out of this arose another peculiar position. Although the pearling industry has been carried on for many years, under the £20 valuation no one ever lodged a claim in respect of the death of one of those men, but as soon as we passed the Act setting a value of £600 on the men, and two of them died, some speculative lawyer or someone else came on the scene and started proceedings to recover the money. I mention that as an instance of experimental legislation passed in defiance of advice given by members of this House. If we allow this Bill to pass as it stands, complications must result. A qualified engineer would be required on each pearling boat fitted with auxiliary power.

The Honorary Minister: The Bill does not say that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have looked up "Hansard" and read the remarks of the Honorary Minister in moving the second reading. Though he said the measure should not have that effect, he did not say it would not have that effect. It is futile of the Honorary Minister to tell us that the Bill should not have that effect. We have to consider the Bill in the light, not of what may happen, but of what will happen, and take steps to safeguard the interests of the State against such contingencies. If the Bill becomes an Act, the launches and lighters engaged at other ports in the North will each require an engineer. Those launches meet a boat once a week, or once a fortnight, and sometimes only once a month, and the engineer will be permitted to do nothing but engineering. When a boat arrives he will not be permitted to handle the cargo. Mr. Gray smiles, but he knows full well what is likely to happen, and if this Bill be passed, doubtless he will wear a very broad smile. It is in the North Province that the bulk of the difficulties will occur, and we should do as we have done in other legislation—exempt the North. We have exempted the North from certain provisions of the Licensing Act, and exemptions have been granted under other statutes. Therefore, let this measure be confined to the South.

Hon. A. Burvill: Why should the South have to tolerate those difficulties?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If members representing the southern part of the State consider the matter carefully, they will probably find as great cause for objecting to the measure as I do. When the Bill is considered in Committee members representing the North will take what steps they can to protect the interests of the residents in that area.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [5.52] in moving the second reading said: Last session a Bill almost identical with this measure was passed in another place, but owing to the pressure of business during the closing days of the session, time did not permit of its being dealt with by this House, and it lapsed. During the last 25 years legislation has been passed covering most industries, but though the Coal Mines Regulation Act came into operation in 1902, this is the first attempt that has been made to amend it. We are all pleased with the rapid strides made by the industry in recent years and we congratulate the people, who have risked their capital, upon the success that has attended their enterprise. At Collie both parties—mine owners and miners—have arrived at an agreement which is perhaps better than anything of its kind in Australia.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What about the third party?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The two parties are of opinion that legislation is necessary to place matters on a more business-like basis, and for that reason the agreement has been embodied in the Bill. The Bill was drafted as the result of a conference of representatives of the Mines Department, the coal mine owners and the union. Although differences of opinion occurred at the conference, this Bill represents the unanimous opinion of all parties concerned. After the experience of a quarter of a century it is only natural that amendments of the Act have been found to be necessary. The Bill contains a good many clauses, but the most important are those providing for the raising of the age of boys from 18 to 19, and for the seven-hour shift. The Bill stipulates that no person shall be employed underground for more than seven hours in any 24 consecutive hours. That has been the custom at Collie during the last five years at any rate. Anyone with mining experience will agree that whatever justification there may be for insisting upon an 8-hour shift in surface occupations, there is no doubt that seven hours is sufficient underground. Men employed on the surface in God's fresh air never raise any strenuous objection to hard work, but speaking from personal experience I maintain that seven hours is a long enough shift to work underground. Both parties to the agreement desire that it should be embodied in this Bill, and seeing that both parties are in agreement, we should have no hesitation in passing the measure. Coal miners who work under the piecework system at high pressure have not much to look forward to except an early grave and often a lingering

death. I do not wish to become sentimental, but this clause of the Bill, at any rate, has much to commend it.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: There is no miners' phthisis in coal mining.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There are quite a lot of things that do not appeal to the hon. member. Men of experience know the risks attached to coal mining, of which I could paint a really pathetic picture. Still, I have said sufficient to satisfy members that miners working on piecework are entitled to the conditions set out in the agreement. There are certain men engaged at the pits who cannot come under the agreement. Both parties have realised the importance of that aspect of the question, and have agreed that these men should be entirely exempt. The Act provides for the payment of persons by weight, and that weighing should be done as near to the pit's mouth as is reasonably practicable. Considerable dissatisfaction has existed in Collie for some time because of the fact that the weighing machines were too far distant from the pit's mouth, and that considerable loss was suffered by the miners. One clause in the Bill provides that the maximum distance of the weighing appliance from the pit's mouth shall be 200 yards. That is generally agreed to be a reasonable distance. If it is proved to the satisfaction of the Minister that a disability is suffered by the employer, the distance can be increased at his discretion. Another difficulty has occurred with regard to weights and measures. Section 15 of the principal Act provides that the weights, balances and scales shall be inspected by an inspector under the Weights and Measures Act. The Bill provides for the appointment of an officer to carry out the functions of an inspector of weights and measures once at least in every six months, or when required by the employer or the union. Either party can make application, and both sides have agreed to this. Section 16 of the principal Act provides that no person shall be employed in a mine in which there are not two separate openings for ingress and egress. The second opening is not required to be commenced until 12 months after coal has been struck in the first shaft. The term has been reduced in the Bill to six months, it being held that the development of the field warrants the alteration. It is also provided that the two openings shall be similar in size, so as to avoid confusion in time of danger. The people of Collie feel that the industry there has advanced to such a stage that a period of six months is sufficient for an exemption of this kind. Clause 12 provides for the manager of a coal mine having control of it, and insisting upon his real authority. One manager will control one mine only. The experience of one manager having only nominal control over a number of mines has proved unsatisfactory. I understand there is a good deal of dissatisfaction over this question, owing to the distance apart of some of the mines. One man can hardly control the output from several mines. It would be more satisfactory to all parties if one manager were in control of one mine. There will be no difficulty in the managers securing the necessary qualifications, as the board will sit every six months if required.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Does this refer to a general manager?

Hon. J. Ewing: No, to an ordinary manager.

The HONORARY MINISTER: To the manager of the mine. As things are, parents are not encouraged to send their boys into coal mines with the object of becoming managers, because one man may control a large district and so make it difficult for young men to advance.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The trouble is that the mines employ factotums, not managers.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The principal Act provides that no person shall be entitled to a certificate until he has had practical experience for at least five years. The Bill, however, provides that he must have at least five years underground experience. This is a wise provision, and is very necessary in the interests of the safety of the miners, and from the business point of view.

Hon. H. Stewart: What was it before?

The HONORARY MINISTER: At present if the accountant or storeman has sufficient influence or knowledge of figures, he may be placed in control of a mine. This would create considerable dissatisfaction, and the men would have no confidence in their manager. People always have more confidence in a person who thoroughly understands his job.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Cannot the owners appoint whomsoever they like as manager?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes. It is only a question of the qualifications of the appointee. If an engine-driver is required for any particular plant, he must be qualified for the position, but the question of selection remains with the mine owners. Most people object to Sunday work. It is

the law at present, because by Section 47 of the Mines Regulation Act, the Sunday labour sections apply to coal mines. By this Bill it is proposed to repeal Section 47 of the Mines Regulation Act, 1906, wherever provision is made that these regulations shall apply to coal mines. At present it is not necessary for baths and hot and cold showers to be provided on the mines. In the interests of health and humanity it is essential that these should be provided. The Bill accordingly makes provision for change houses and shower baths, similar to the provision of the Mines Regulation Act 1906, and the Queensland Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1925. The Minister may, if necessary, grant exemptions in these cases. A new field may be discovered near Collie, and if the Minister considers it would be a disability for the mine owners to fulfil these conditions, he may waive them for the time being. There has been controversy over the age limit of boys employed in mines. The definition of "boy" in the principal Act is a male under the age of 18, but the practice at Collie has been to pay all employees as boys until they attain the age of 19. This has been accepted by the Arbitration Court. The Bill in no way affects the minimum wage at which boys may be employed, because it will still be permissible to employ boys of the age of 14. It does, however, affect the contribution to the accident fund, and benefits therefrom, for the contributions by the boys and the benefits derived by them are half those in the case of a man. The Coal Mines Regulation Act provides for payment to an accident fund, with contributions by the employers and employees. The Bill inaugurates an aged and infirm coal miners' superannuation fund. One-eighth of the moneys collected towards the accident fund will be diverted to this fund. All adult males will contribute to this fund at the rate of 3d. per fortnight, and the owners have agreed to pay an amount equivalent to that given by the miners. This is a humane act on the part of both sides, and one that will be very much appreciated by the miners in Collie. The most important of the amendments to the schedule is that which provides that 50 per cent. of the men employed in a mine shall be experienced miners. This is more necessary in the case of coal mines than in other mines. There are many problems connected with coal mining which are not appreciated by men engaged in other mining occupations. At one period rather conservative regulations were observe in Collie. These have since been waive To-day a miner is accepted as a miner. I the interests of the owner as well as th miner, however, it is agreed that it is a goo thing to have 50 per cent. of those engage on a face thoroughly experienced in th work. Many other clauses of the Bill a of a machinery nature. I see nothing in th measure, from my experience, that wi detrimentally affect any section of the com munity.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does not the Bi usurp the functions of the Arbitration Cou in the fixing of hours?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We a only doing by Act of Parliament what is no in operation in Collie. Practically every pr vision of the Bill is already being observe by both parties in Collie. The mine owner the miners' union, and the Mines Departme had a conference before last session, and, a result of the agreement arrived at, this Bi was drawn up. It was carried in anoth place last session, but arrived in this Cham ber too late to be dealt with. This Bill almost identical with that one. I commen the measure to the House, feeling sure th as it meets with the wishes of the parti concerned, it will have the unanimous su port of the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing, debate a journed.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M Drew—Central) [6.15]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn unt 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 21st September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.16 p.m.