very few men in Western Australia who hold the same views as he does. Arbitration has been the means of avoiding scores of industrial disputes in Western Australia. It has kept our industries going much better than if no such legislation had been in existence. I hope the time is far distant when any section, particularly the leaders of political parties in Western Australia, will attempt, by word or action to remove the Arbitration Act from the statute-book. It is one of the safeguards that we have. There is no Act of Parliament that has not been broken at times, but that does not argue that the Acts should be set aside altogether.

Mr. Thomson: I did not say so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I shall pity Western Australia on the day when the Arbitration Court is abolished. However, I rose only to refer to the clause relating to domestic servants. They are entitled to justice first as are any other workers. No matter what claims are made, whether on behalf of domestic servants, or of the farmers or any other section of the community, the Arbitration Court will conscientiously carry out its duty and give justice to those appearing before it.

On motion by Mr. Wilson debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 1st September, 1925.

	PAGE
Question: Group Settlers' Cottages	599
Bills: Roman Catholic Geraldton Church Property, 1R.	600
Ministers' Titles, 2R., Com. Report	600
Public Education Endowment Amendment, 2R., Com. Report	601
Group Settlement Advances, 2R.	605
W.A. Trustee, Executor, and Agency Co., Ltd., Act Amendment (Private), 2R. ...	607
Plant Diseases Act Amendment, 2R.	608
Main Roads, 2R.	609
Land Tax and Income Tax Act Amendment, 2R.	613
Real Property (Commonwealth Titles), 2R., Com. Report	619

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

QUESTION—GROUP SETTLERS' COTTAGES.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE asked the Colonial Secretary: With reference to group settlers' cottages, 1, How many were contracted for in last year's contract? 2, Who was the successful tenderer, and at what price per cottage? 3, Was there a penalty clause? 4, What were the conditions of delivery? 5, Has the contractor fulfilled the conditions in regard to delivery? 6, If not, how many are short delivered? 7, If so, has the penalty clause been enforced? 8, Has an extension been granted, and for what period? 9, Has any increase in price, per cottage, been granted to the contractor? 10, What was the price per cottage of the next lowest tender? 11, What was the name of the firm or person tendering? 12, How many group shacks have remained unfloored through the winter?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Labour only, 362; labour and material, 362; total, 724. 2, Labour only: numerous contractors at prices varying according to locality, contracts let without tenders. Labour and material: John Carrigg, £241 6s. 3, Labour only: no. Labour and material: yes. 4, Labour only: period varied according to locality. Labour and material: four per week, commencing three months after notification, on 13th August, 1924, of acceptance of tender. 5 and 6, Labour and material: 28 cottages completed, 29 under construction, 8 materials on site, scantling and weatherboards cut at mill for a number.

7, Not yet. 8, Labour only: period varied according to locality; short extensions were granted when material was delayed. Labour and material: no period was fixed. 9, Labour and material: no. 10, Labour and material, £298 15s. 11, Labour and material, G. E. Grigg. 12, Shacks on three groups remained unfloored throughout the winter with sawn timber, but slabs were split and available for settlers, who did not use them but waited for sawn timber.

BILL — ROMAN CATHOLIC GERALDTON CHURCH PROPERTY.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary and read a first time.

BILL—MINISTERS' TITLES.

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to change the titles of the offices of the Colonial Treasurer and the Colonial Secretary. The measure covers alterations that have been mooted for many years. When the James Government were in office the question was seriously considered for a time, and was then allowed to drop. The Premier of the day was loth to interfere with titles that had old historical associations. However, in view of the British Government's alteration in the title of its Dominion portfolio, the present is regarded as an appropriate time to make the change. The alteration in England from "Colonial Secretary" to "Secretary of State for Dominions" was announced by the Prime Minister, Mr. Baldwin, on the 11th June last, and during July His Excellency the Governor, Sir William Campion, received a despatch from Mr. Amery which is as follows:—

Downing-street, 22nd June, 1925.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of your Ministers, a copy of a question and answer in the House of Commons regarding certain changes proposed to be made in the organisation and designation of the Colonial Office. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obedient, humble servant, (sgd.) L. S. Amery.

The enclosure read as follows:—

Captain Benn (by private notice) asked the Prime Minister if he could now state what changes it was proposed to make in the organisation and designation of the Colonial Office?

The Prime Minister: The Government have come to the conclusion that the existing organisation of the Colonial Office is no longer in correspondence with the actual constitutional position in the Empire, and is inadequate to the extent and variety of the work thrown upon it. It fails, more particularly, to give sufficiently clear recognition to the profound difference between the work of communication and consultation with the self-governing partner-nations of the British Commonwealth and the administrative work of controlling and developing the colonies and protectorates for whose welfare this House is directly responsible. The following changes are, therefore, proposed:—(1) The conduct of affairs with the Dominions will be under a separate new Secretaryship of State for Dominion Affairs, with its own Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, who will also act as Chairman of the Overseas Settlement Committee and Permanent Under-Secretary of State. (2) For reasons of practical convenience, the new Secretaryship of State will continue to be vested in the same person as the holder of the Secretaryship of State for the Colonies, and the Department of Dominion Affairs will continue to be housed in the Colonial Office.

On 12th June, the Prime Minister of Australia (Mr. Bruce), after reading the cablegram from Mr. Baldwin conveying this information, commented upon it in these words—

This action by the British Government will be appreciated by the people of Australia. When in England during the last Imperial Conference I stressed very strongly to the British Government the fact that, by the alteration of their condition, the self-governing parts of the Empire had reached the stage of being independent units within the Commonwealth of British nations, and that it was not in consonance with our position that our communications with the British Government should be made through a Minister whose title was that of Colonial Secretary, for the word "colony" did not in any way apply to the great self-governing Dominions. I am very glad that the use of this word as applied to the Dominions will now be discontinued, and that the word "dominion" will be substituted for the word "colony" in all our future communications with the British Government. I am glad that the administration of Dominion affairs will now be entirely separated from the administration of the affairs of the colonies of Great Britain.

The reasons given by Mr. Bruce in support of the change are the reasons that justify the introduction of the Bill. We are no longer a colony; we have been a State since the introduction of responsible government. Hence the titles of Colonial Treasurer and Colonial Secretary are apt to create a wrong impression abroad. It may be

thought by some that we are still a Crown Colony, and that we have not risen to such a degree of political importance as to warrant the Mother Land entrusting us with the management of our own affairs. This erroneous impression might easily be formed even by many in England who do not give close attention to Australian politics. It seems advisable, therefore, that we should follow the lead of the Old Country and do as it has done in this matter. It will not be without a pang of regret, the outcome of sentiment, that I shall see my connection severed with an illustrious line of predecessors, who date back to the foundation of Western Australia, and many of whom played distinguished parts in the work of government in the colony's pioneering days. Some of my leisure hours have been not unprofitably spent in an examination of old records, which reveal the responsibilities cast upon my predecessors, and I have envied the ability and judgment with which they mastered the various problems they were confronted with, and the high-minded principles that governed their official actions. But in a matter of this description one has to cast sentiment aside and adopt the course justified by the altered conditions of political affairs. While the Imperial authorities retained the old titles, there were some grounds for inaction; there are none now. Therefore, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [4.45]: I feel sure no one will oppose the Bill that the Colonial Secretary has so fittingly introduced. It is a proposal that marks an interesting stage in the development of Western Australia. It was in 1829 that the "Parmelia" landed the first settlers that came to this part of Western Australia. Prior to that an attempt had been made from New South Wales to form a settlement at Albany, the centenary of which will fall upon Christmas Day of this year, but that settlement proved a failure. The colony formed by the "Parmelia" settlers has, in the intervening period, grown from the stage of infancy to be an important part of the great dominion of Australia. I am sure that the people of this State and of Australia, in taking the step that indicates they have assumed all the responsibility of being part of a great dominion, do not forget that while the settlement has been growing from infancy to its present maturity, it has sheltered under the protection of the British flag. Although the Australian States are assuming the dignity of a dominion and enjoying more independence than they hitherto aspired to, changes of this kind are made with regret and with feelings of respect and affection for the Motherland that has sheltered them under her wing for so long. Just as children reach a stage when they object to being further spoken of as children and wish to be treated as men and women, so a stage has been reached in Australia when we wish to be addressed by a somewhat different term from that of colony. I support the second reading.

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—PUBLIC EDUCATION ENDOWMENT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.50] in moving the second reading said: The trustees appointed under the Education Endowment Act of 1909 can, with the approval of the Governor, grant a lease of their land for building purposes for any term not exceeding 99 years. If the lease is not for building purposes, the trustees are restricted to a term of 21 years. Instances may arise in which an applicant for a lease may desire to carry out costly improvements, and it would be unreasonable to expect him to do so under a lease for merely 21 years. Such an instance has arisen. The Cottesloe Golf Club wish to lease about 250 acres of land near Swanbourne for the purposes of a golf course, tennis courts, bowling green and croquet lawn. They were anxious to get a lease for 99 years and were prepared to carry out improvements to the value of £5,500 within the first ten years. The consent of Cabinet could be obtained to a lease for only 50 years, but the trustees then made an offer to the Golf Club under new conditions. The

Director of Education wrote in behalf of the trustees as follows:—

1st May, 1925. Mr. W. Robertson, Perpetual Trustees Buildings, 91 St. George's-terrace, Perth. Dear Sir, I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th April. The question of the proposed lease to the Cottesloe Golf Club of portion of the endowment reserve at Swanbourne was considered at a meeting of the Public Education Endowment Trustees on the 28th of April. The trustees are prepared to issue a lease to the club on the following terms:—Period of lease: Fifty years. Rent: For the first five years no rent to be charged, provided the improvements set out below are effected. For the remainder of the lease a rent of five per cent. on the unimproved capital value of the land will be charged, such value to be fixed at £20 per acre until the expiration of the 25th year from the date of commencement of the lease, when a re-appraisement will be made and a value fixed for the remaining term of 25 years. Improvements: During the first three years the club will spend on improvements a sum of £1,000, and in each of the subsequent seven years a sum of £500. The lease will contain a proviso to the effect that if the stipulated improvements are not carried out the lease may be cancelled, and any improvements which may have been effected will become the property of the endowment trustees. The lease will be for recreation purposes only, and will not confer on the lessees the right to sublet the land or any portion of it. This offer is made subject to a necessary amendment of the Public Education Endowment Act being passed by Parliament and to the consent of His Excellency the Governor.

The trustees cannot grant a lease until the Act is amended as provided in this Bill. The amendment sought is similar to one effected to the University Act in 1917. Until that amendment was made the University trustees experienced difficulty in leasing some of their land. The Act under which the public education trustees operate was passed in 1909, but trustees were not appointed until August 1910. The trustees control 69 reserves in various parts of the State, and of these 19 are leased in part or in whole. The number of leases in existence in 1924 was 26, and the amount received in rent, apart from the improvements, was £176. A large area of land near Swanbourne was granted to the trustees, and in 1912 the Federal authorities resumed 150 acres of it for which they paid compensation to the extent of £1,600. This money was invested in Western Australian inscribed stock. In addition to this investment a sum of £441 15s. was applied in 1924 to the purchase of Commonwealth war bonds having a face value of £450. The total amount invested is £2,090, which returns interest amounting to £90 annually. A sum of £1,102 10s. has also been paid out in scholarships. At present five scholarships are running, and two others will be taken up at the beginning of 1926, bringing the total number to seven, the value of which will be £210. Apart from the question of the proposed lease of the Swanbourne reserve and the 21 years' term, the Bill would probably assist the trustees to put to use the land they hold in the hills. They have reserves at Mundaring, Smith's Mill, Parkerville, Kalamunda, and Swan View, some of which land is regarded as very good orchard country, but it has been impossible to do anything with it through the trustees being unable to give a lease for more than 21 years. Except for the land in the hills, the trustees have very little land of value under their control. Many of their reserves are in townsites where the Government have blocks available, the freehold of which may be obtained, and other reserves consist of poor quality land in agricultural districts. Some of the land at Swanbourne is sand-drift. The whole of it was recently fenced to keep out great and small stock, and portion of the land is planted with marram grass with the object of stopping the drift. If the trustees succeed in leasing the land on the terms they have submitted to the Cottesloe Golf Club, it will prove a source of great revenue to the fund besides resulting in substantial improvement of the land. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. EWING (South-West) [4.58]: Some time ago I inspected the land mentioned by the Minister, and it struck me that the rent was very low, and that the trustees were not getting much revenue from the possession of such lands. Especially does that apply to a large block of land in a fine position just past the Karrakatta Cemetery. If the fee simple of that land were offered it would bring a large sum of money. I understand there are no applications for the leasing of that land and it appears to be rather useless to the trustees to hold land from which they can get no revenue. There is a large area of land at Swanbourne where the marram grass has been planted, and good work has been done to improve it. Still, I do not think that land could be leased. The Government should consider the advisableness of offering a considerable portion of such lands for sale, in order that a greater

sum of money might be available for educational purposes.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Are you not referring to the University endowment lands on the top of the hill, near the show grounds?

Hon. J. EWING: Even though it belonged to the University, if it could be disposed of, the proceeds would be available for the advancement of education. Of course, Parliament would first have to grant the power to sell, but I mention the matter in order that the Government might give it consideration.

HON. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.0]: I am very glad to be able to support the Bill. I have the honour to be one of the Education Endowment Trustees and I have also had experience of the large area of land held by the University which, at the present time, is of no particular value to that institution. There is undoubtedly a great difficulty in dealing with that land and letting it on the leasehold system. Mr. Ewing is a little in error with reference to the land that he cited opposite the show ground. That is University endowment land, and some time ago it was subdivided. The University which, by reason of an amendment of the Act, was able to offer long leases, had succeeded in disposing of portion of other areas in the neighbourhood of Nedlands and West Subiaco. These blocks have been let chiefly for the purposes of workers' homes. The particular land overlooking the showground, to which Mr. Ewing referred, was subdivided, and it was admitted to be a beautiful site on the crown of the hill. In spite of that, however, the University trustees have not succeeded in leasing a single block, although the land has been advertised widely. With reference to the particular land at Swanbourne, the Education Endowment Trust were unfortunately unable to do anything with it except to let a portion to a dairyman for grazing stock. At the present time it is not bringing in anything. If such a proposal as that of the Cottesloe Golf Club could be entertained, some revenue might be derived from it. I draw the attention of the House to the fact that it is not the intention of the Trustees to lease the whole of the land which they hold; it is intended to lease only a portion of it to the golf club, and if such be done, the value of the remainder for residential purposes will be considerably increased.

Hon. J. Ewing: What area will the golf club require.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Owing to the configuration of the ground—it is hilly and there are many sand dunes—the club will require something like 200 acres to make satisfactory links. The trustees have gone into the matter and it has been decided that 200 acres should be offered to the club. If it is possible to do that, the lease of the land will bring in a fair amount of revenue to the Education Endowment Trust. At the present time, owing to the scarcity of funds, the Education Endowment Trust is not able to do anything like that which they would wish to do to assist the boys and girls with bursaries or scholarships. It is one of the greatest blots on the education system in Western Australia that there are so few scholarships available. In all other parts of the world there are numerous bursaries and scholarships and thereby youths are able to continue their education. Many of the most brilliant men in the United Kingdom and in Australia owe their advance to the system of scholarships. I might quote one instance, that of one of the brightest intellects in the whole of Australia, in the person of the late Dr. John Hunter, of Sydney, a man who at the early age of about 25, was appointed Professor of Anatomy at the Sydney University, and was selected to go to England and America to deliver lectures on anatomy before the highest scientific bodies in those countries. Unfortunately, during his stay in America, he contracted typhoid fever and died shortly after. That was one of the greatest losses Australia ever sustained. As a young man, John Hunter was enabled to pursue his career through a system of bursaries and scholarships then pertaining in New South Wales. Although he was a fairly clever boy at school, he was not very brilliant, and for a time it was not at all sure that he would get a bursary from the school to the university. Fortunately, he did so, and as soon as he entered the university his higher powers were called out, and it was generally recognised in New South Wales that he was one of the greatest intellects that State ever produced. Had it not been for the system of bursaries and scholarships, that boy would have become a messenger in an office. I have no doubt that he would have risen to eminence eventually, but it was through the system of bursaries and scholarships that he was able to make

a start, and at an early age to secure high honours. The Education Endowment Trust are anxious to have more funds at their disposal in order to promote the system of scholarships. The members of the Trust are keenly alive to the undesirability of parting with the land, but they do hope that it may be put to some useful purpose. Owing to the great deal of land that can be acquired on fee simple in the suburbs at the present time, there is practically no demand for the Swanbourne land that is available. I am hopeful later on that there will be a demand for such land and perhaps then the endowment areas that are not now of any great value to the educational institutions, may be put to some useful purpose. If the trustees can do something in the way of leasing the land they hold to the Cottesloe Golf Club, the result will be to increase the value of the other endowment land held around there. It will be wise for the House to give the trustees this power of increasing the period for which they may lease the land, from 21 years to 99 years. I have no doubt that the Government in power will exercise a jealous scrutiny in respect of the uses to which the land will be put.

HON. H. STEWART (South-East) [5.8]: I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, the object of which is an estimable one. I cordially endorse the remarks made by Dr. Saw. In a young country like this the money spent on education is bound to be considerable, in order to provide primary and secondary education. Much of the good that might be done is unfortunately lost because there is not a sufficient number of scholarships and bursaries to enable the youth of the country to develop their intellectual powers. I commend the Leader of the House for introducing the Bill, and I believe he fully realises the position we are faced with as much as I do, that is, making the best possible use of the intellects in the State and thus giving opportunities to boys and girls to develop their mental powers for their own benefit as well as that of the State. We in Western Australia are unfortunate to the extent that education has had very little assistance from private individuals or corporations; there have been no endowments that might have assisted in the establishment of scholarships and bursaries, and it has fallen on the Government to do everything in the absence of benefactions. I should like to suggest to the Government who are so seized with the desirability of offering every facility in connection with education, that as new country is opened up and endowment lands are set aside, that new endowment lands might be carefully chosen so that in later years on becoming of value they might be turned to useful purpose. Whenever a townsite is declared or a mining or agricultural area is being opened up, a little revenue might be sacrificed by the setting aside of land from which educational institutions might benefit subsequently. I see no reason why such a policy should not be followed. Mr. Ewing asked the Minister to consider the advisableness of making some of the endowment lands available for sale. I consider that would be a mistake, and if such a proposal ever came forward it would meet with my strenuous opposition. If endowment areas are retained, as is being done now, and the Government continue to facilitate the uses to which they can be put, in time to come they will prove a valuable adjunct to educational development.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 7:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I am afraid that taking out the word "building" before "leases," as proposed in the clause, will leave a duplication. The trustees are empowered to grant a lease for any term not exceeding 21 years, and to grant building leases for any term not exceeding 99 years. If we take out the word "building" we then find the trustees twice invested with power to grant leases.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Only with the consent of the Governor can the trustees grant a lease for 99 years.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The point is that the trustees, of their own authority, can grant a lease not exceeding 21 years, but must have the approval of the Governor to grant a lease for 99 years. If the word "building" be struck out, it means that leases can be granted for any purpose

for 99 years, but only with the consent of the Governor.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—GROUP SETTLERS' ADVANCES.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [5.20] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill having for its object the safeguarding of the State's interests in respect of advances to group settlers for the purchase of stock and chattels. At a later stage, when the farms are more fully developed, they will be taken over by the Agricultural Bank. The Minister for Lands has stressed the need for the Bill. For the past fortnight there has been practically a deadlock in respect of the stocking of group settlements. Whatever may be the difference of opinion as to the prospects of ultimate success in the group settlements, all will agree that the interests of the State must be safeguarded in the making of advances to the settlers themselves. In the opinion of the Minister for Lands, who controls the group settlements, it is imperative that the Bill should be passed. At present we have 2,248 settlers on 129 groups. Of those groups 24 are engaged on piecework. The groups are being supplied with tools, plant, dairy cows, horses and other stock, and where required, bulls. In addition many settlers have been provided with cows for domestic purposes. Up to the 30th June last the Government had supplied 2,400 cows, 270 horses, and 62 bulls. Now, in the circumstances that have arisen, the Minister for Lands has cried a halt in the supplying of anything further to the groups. In the past, stock and equipment have been supplied under the Bills of Sale Act, but some settlers have refused to sign the necessary bills of sale, and some doubt has been voiced as to the operation of the Act in relation to the Crown. The view has been expressed that there is a possibility of court proceedings, and to avoid that it has been decided to introduce the Bill, which is practically on all fours with the Industries Assistance Act. It will obviate all complications and will mean less cost both to the settler and to the Government. The necessity for the change has arisen in this way: One trader trading with group settlers lodged a caveat against a bill of sale registered by the Government. Of course such a position is intolerable. It is altogether unfair that a trader should be able to come along and influence settlers to give him a lien over Government property. That is what has happened and will probably happen again, unless the Bill becomes law. Some little misconception has been abroad as to the meaning of Clause 2. It was thought that it might operate harshly against those of the group settlers who, more energetic and ambitious than others, have been putting in a lot of spare time work. However, on investigation it is found that the clause applies only to money advanced by the Government, and cannot apply to the result accruing from spare time effort put in by any group settler. Here is the opinion of the Crown Solicitor on the point—

> This Bill extends to the advances by the Lands Department similar provisions as regards the registration of the Government security to those which have worked satisfactorily under the Industries Assistance Act for the last 10 years, and which are also contained in the Discharged Soldier Settlement Act. The statutory security extends only to the chattels that have been actually supplied by the Government, and to the crops that have been raised by the expenditure of Government money.

So it will be seen that the Bill applies only to money advanced to the settlers, and therefore can work no hardship. Another objection raised was in respect of the grazing on other blocks. However, any money derived from such a service is credited to the block, not to the group. The Bill is essential to the Lands Department, and I think hon. members will be satisfied that no hardship can result from its operations. The present Act is unsatisfactory. It is perhaps a good thing these difficulties have occurred, because out of the ill good may come. This will provide a more simple and effective method than that provided under the Bills of Sale Act, which was rather costly. Advances can be made to the settlers until such time as their properties can be taken over by the Agricultural Bank, which will then have the full responsibility. I commend the Bill to members and ask

them to have regard to its importance and urgency. Until it is passed nothing can be done to supply stock to these people. It is hoped that 3,000 head of cattle will be available for them very soon, and that is one reason why it is required that this Bill should be passed early. We should make every effort to enable the groups to proceed along the lines indicated and advocated by the Minister for Lands. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.32]: I support the Bill. Nothing must be done to impede the work of the groups, or prevent these people becoming self-supporting as early as possible. The State, however, must be protected. The same position arose some years ago over the Industries Assistance Board. This Bill not only protects the State but also the groupies. It cuts both ways. A storekeeper cannot pounce on one of these men. It is not likely the Government would harass any of them.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Storekeepers will not give them credit.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Is it a good thing for a man who knows he has, say, 10s. a day coming in, to be tempted by a storekeeper to spend 12s. a day? Too much credit has been the curse of Australia. These people should not be tempted to spend what they have not got, or they will never reach the stage of prosperity we hope they will reach. I have lived amongst the groups, and seen various storekeepers chasing each other to get the custom of the settlers. The result is that some of the storekeepers have lost thousands of pounds. Somebody has to suffer in a case like that. If a storekeeper goes insolvent, the merchant loses. The main point is that we must not stop the progress of the groups. I commend the Minister for Lands for introducing this Bill, and hope it will become law as soon as possible, so that stock, seed, super, etc., may be supplied to these settlers as quickly as possible to enable them to get on their feet.

HON. H. STEWART (South-East) [5.35]: I support the intention of the Bill. Nothing must be done to interfere with the group settlers in getting on with their work of production. In view of the trouble that recently arose with regard to stock that had been supplied to them, the Government seek to be protected for a definite expenditure in this direction. While the men have been engaged in clearing and building houses, etc., there was not much on the groups that could be lifted. Now that they are beginning to get livestock and produce marketable products, things that are removable, the Government are justified in securing their position. The intention of the Bill is to protect the security of the Government. I understand there is no desire to prejudice the settler who, in his own time, improves his holding and grows extra marketable produce. A man of this type would not object to the Bill for he would feel that the Government had done so much for him that he and others similarly situated should not be placed in the position to do away with any thing that belonged to the Government.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You do believe there is such a thing as a spirit of gratitude amongst them?

Hon. H. STEWART: Yes. I am sure that farmers who are beholden to the Industries Assistance Board and the Agricultural Bank are most grateful for the help they have had from those institutions. The settler who intends to make a success of his holding, and acknowledges the extent to which he is beholden to the State, would not object to this Bill. The Honorary Minister read the opinion of the Crown Solicitor that this Bill safeguarded the livestock and chattels, and produce from cultivation and cropping, and indicated that this was all the Bill provided for. I think that is all the Government intend to provide for, but I am doubtful about Clause 2 if restricted to the scope indicated by the Minister in reading the Crown Solicitor's opinions. The clause says, inter alia—

Whenever advances are made, or have been made to a group settler to enable him to acquire livestock or other chattels, or to cultivate, crop, or improve a holding, such livestock and chattels, including the progeny, shall be mortgaged to the Minister for Lands.

This means that for all time everything grown on the holding is mortgaged to the Government until the advances for improving the holding have been repaid. This includes not only all livestock and chattels, and any expenditure incurred in putting in and taking off the crop, but also advances to improve the holding. The Honorary Min-

ister states that is not the intention of the Bill.

Hon. H. Seddon: That is what the clause means.

Hon. H. STEWART: Yes. He said it was not the intention of the Government to take security except over those things that are removable. The Bill, however, takes security over all these things, so long as there remains any obligation to the Government for the improvement of the holding. We should be clear about this. If it is desired that this full power should be obtained, the Honorary Minister should tell us the position. It may be too drastic to leave in the words "improvement of a holding." That which seems to me required to be mortgaged to the Government now is everything movable, but this would represent only a small part of the capital expenditure incurred in improving a holding.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

BILL—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR AND AGENCY CO., LTD., ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).

Second Reading.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.45] in moving the second reading said: This is a short amending Bill intended to effect various amendments in the West Australian Trustee, Executor, and Agency Co., Ltd., Act passed in 1893. A previous Amendment Act was passed in 1923. The present Bill deals with Section 21 of the principal Act. The company was originally established in 1892 with a nominal capital of £50,000 divided into 20,000 shares of £2 10s. each. Clause 2 of the Bill provides—

> Subsection (a) of Section 21 of the principal Act is repealed and the following subsection substituted therefor:—(a) No member shall in his own right hold shares in the company of the aggregate face value of more than £3,750: Provided that if the capital of the company shall at any time hereafter be increased by the issue of new shares the number of shares which may be held by each member and the aggregate face value thereof shall be proportionately increased.

Subsection (b) of Section 21 of the principal Act provides that not more than £1 per share shall be called up except in the event of the winding up or dissolution of the company, and that every member shall in such event be liable to contribute the unpaid balance of the shares held by him. The object of the restriction is, as the words I have read indicate, to provide a measure of protection to the beneficiaries of estates entrusted to the company, so that in the event of liquidation there would be a reserve fund to meet any possible deficiency. The shares in the company are paid up to 18s., and it is intended to call up the remaining 2s. of the amount in respect of which the company are authorised to make a call. In 1921 the capital of the company was increased to £75,000 by the issue of a further 10,000 shares of £2 10s. each. The shares in the company thus number 30,000, called up to 18s. each. For some time past it has been recognised by the company that shares of a denomination of £2 10s. are not what one might term so popular as shares of, say, £1 or 10s. In dealing with company shares we are all accustomed to think of them as bearing a denomination of either £1 or 10s. The desire of this company is to extend to the public at large the fullest facilities for coming in and joining their ranks. The company are anxious to enrol as many shareholders as they can possibly get, and they will invoke the powers of the Companies Act for the purpose of subdividing their shares. In that connection it has been found desirable to make some amendments in Section 21 of the principal Act. Subsection (a) of Section 21 of the principal Act reads—

> No member shall hold more than 1,000 shares in his own right——

One thousand shares would be equal to £2,500 on the denomination of £2 10s. per share—

> provided that if the capital of the company shall be increased by the issue of new shares, the number of shares which may be held by each member shall be proportionately increased.

The further issue of 10,000 shares in 1921 therefore gave members a right to hold up to 1,500 shares in all, equal to a face value of £3,750. All that the company seek to do by the present Bill is merely to transform the number of shares into the capital value; that is to say, the limit which will be placed upon the holding of any shareholder will be the number of shares that he is actually entitled to, a total value equivalent to £3,750, which is the same exactly as 1,500 shares at £2 10s. each. The Bill really does not seek to alter in any way the effect of the original

Act in that respect. Clause 3 of the Bill reads—

Subsection (b) of Section 21 of the principal Act is amended by deleting the words "one pound per share" occurring in the first line of such subsection, and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "two-fifths of the face value of each share."

The same principle is being applied here. All that is sought to be done is merely to transform the number of shares into practically a cash value. Subject to the amendment, that part of the section will read—

No more than two-fifths of the face value of each share shall be called up except in the event——

and so forth. That is exactly the same thing in another form, and the position is not altered one iota, as the same liability will remain. Two-fifths of a share having a denomination of £2 10s. would be £1, and two-fifths of a share having a denomination of £1 would be 8s. Clause 4 of the Bill is as follows—

Subsection (d) of Section 29 of the principal Act is repealed and the following subsections substituted therefor:—(d) The number of shares in the company shall not be at any time reduced to such number as shall have an aggregate face value of less than £50,000. (e) No share in the company shall be held by or transferred to a minor.

The principal Act provides that no share shall be held by or transferred to a married woman or a minor. By the Amendment Act of 1923 the words "a married woman" were struck out. A further subsection is now added to provide that no share in the company shall be held by or transferred to a minor. That provision is properly the subject of a new subsection. The Bill has been considered by a select committee, but unfortunately the report has not yet come to hand from the Government Printer. Therefore, if the second reading is passed now, I shall ask that the Committee stage be made an order of the day for a later sitting of the House. When I presented the report of the select committee I mentioned that it recommended an amendment in Clause 4 of the Bill, namely to strike out £50,000 and substitute £75,000, thus raising the amount to the present capital of the company. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [6.0] in moving the second reading said: The amendment to the Plant Diseases Act proposed in the Bill is suggested with the idea of controlling fruit fly in this State. Power to control other diseases is also provided, but it is not intended, at present at any rate, to take any serious steps except in regard to fruit fly. Under the present provisions of the Plant Diseases Act, before it is obligatory on the part of anyone to take action to combat fruit pests, it is necessary for an inspector to first visit the orchard and serve a notice on the occupier or owner instructing what action must be taken and naming a time within which his instructions shall be carried out. If the pest were one that might escape notice or be beyond the knowledge of orchardists, this would be perfectly reasonable, but with such a common and easily found insect as fruit fly, particularly in its larval stage in fruit, there should be no need for an inspector to visit and issue instructions before the occupier of an infected orchard takes action. The main object of this amendment is to find some efficient method of forcing the occupiers of small non-commercial orchards, particularly in the metropolitan area where fruit fly is most evident, to take action as soon as the pest appears. If such action be taken, it is confidently expected by the officers of the Agricultural Department that a brief period only will elapse before the pest is extirpated. Without the appointment of a very large staff of inspectors and consequent heavy expenditure, it would be impracticable to visit regularly all the small orchards which exist between Fremantle and Midland Junction. But with the amendment proposed, this large staff would not be required. It would only be necessary to advertise the fact that to have fruit fly infested fruit on a place without taking steps to get rid of it, constituted an offence under the Act, rendering the person concerned liable to prosecution. It might even then be necessary to prosecute in a few instances, but if the action were taken in that direction there would be very few breaches of the law after that. There is no doubt, in the opinion of the experts of the Agricultural Department,

that this compulsory clause is justified. It has been proved by experience in the Spearwood and neighbouring districts where, during the last two years, the growers at the small cost of 2d. per tree for a whole season have kept fruit fly under effective control. These growers rightly complain, however, that it is unfair for their orchards to run the risk of reinfestation at any time in summer from flies bred on non-commercial places. The main object is to enforce action on the part of occupiers of non-commercial orchards in the metropolitan area. But in addition to that it will also have a good effect on some of the careless commercial growers in obliging them to take immediate action when the pest appears, and so avoid delays through which both themselves and their neighbours suffer. At the present time no offence is committed until the inspector has visited an orchard, examined it and sent a notice to the owner giving him a certain number of days within which to clean up the orchard. All the time the owner is aware that the fruit fly is present and yet he takes no action.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How do you know that he is aware that it is fruit fly?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If he is an orchardist he should know the fruit fly when it is present.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But some of them may not know it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In such an event the orchardist would not be likely to be prosecuted if he could satisfy the inspector of his ignorance. If the inspector should insist and prosecute him, I do not think that in such circumstances the court would convict the person. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing debate adjourned.

BILL—MAIN ROADS.

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central)) [6.5] in moving the second reading said: The need for legislation dealing with the main roads problem has been recognised during recent years. It has frequently been stressed by road board conferences, and the ex-Minister for Works had contemplated action, and would no doubt have moved in the direction had he remained in office up to the present time. In this important matter we have lagged behind the Eastern States. All of them have given it their attention per medium of legislative enactment, and the results are said to have been most satisfactory. Victoria was the first to move; Queensland followed, then South Australia, and later New South Wales. While the road board conferences, to which I have referred, urged that legislation should be introduced, they offered no useful suggestions as to the manner in which it should be framed. They recommended that the legislation should be on similar lines to that of Victoria. But they added that there should be modifications to suit Western Australian conditions. What these modifications should be, they gave not the slightest indication. Still, the attitude adopted by them was not without some value. It was an endorsement of the principle of main roads legislation, by men who were qualified by experience to pass an opinion on the subject. The Victorian Act has been carefully considered by the Government, and it is felt that it would be unsuitable to Western Australian conditions. In Victoria, under its legislation, all money for road construction is borrowed, and the local authorities have to find the interest and sinking fund on half of the amount. While this might be all right for wealthy Victoria, it would impose on our struggling settlers financial burdens which they would find it difficult to bear.

Hon. J. Ewing: The Government pay half the interest.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. In some of the Eastern States, but not in all. In the other States the example of Victoria has been more or less followed. But under this Bill it is proposed that all main roads shall be declared main roads, and the Government shall be solely responsible for their construction and maintenance without assistance from the local authorities, except in special cases and by mutual arrangement. I shall explain at a later stage how this will be done. Let me now deal with the method of administering the Act. In the first place I wish it to be understood that the measure will apply to only such portions of the State as are covered by proclamation. Then a board, to be called the Main Roads Board, will be constituted. It is to consist of five members to be appointed by the Governor. The Chief Engineer is ex officio to be a member of the board. Two shall be officers of the Public Service, and two shall be appointed

on the nomination of the local authorities. Except the Chief Engineer, they will be appointed for three years, but of course they can be removed at any time by the Governor. Under the Bill, the Minister becomes a body corporate for the purpose of carrying out the Act, but, in connection with the administration, it will be noted that he can act only in matters relating to road construction, on the recommendation of the board. If the board does not recommend, he cannot of his own act do anything in that direction. There are two classes of roads dealt with under the Bill—main roads and developmental roads. The Governor may, on the recommendation of the board declare that any road shall be a main road. But before making the recommendation the board must take into account the moneys available for main roads, and also the importance of the thoroughfare from the standpoint of increased production.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In what way will that money come to us for the roads?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will explain that later. The board must likewise ascertain whether it will be the main trunk route between the capital and any large producing area, or any other large centre of population. The question whether the area is likely at a later date to be served by a railway must be taken into consideration, because it will be realised that it will be almost a waste of money to construct a main road through territory that will in no time be served by a railway. The difference between main roads and developmental roads is that while the main roads will be Government roads to be constructed and maintained by the Main Roads Board, the developmental roads must be handed over to the local authority after their construction. And after they are handed over, it will be the sole responsibility of the local authorities to keep them in repair.

Hon. A. Burvill: How will you distinguish between main developmental roads and main roads?

The COLONAL SECRETARY: The board will distinguish between them and the main roads will be proclaimed.

Hon. J. Ewing: Will you spend Federal money on the main roads?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will come to that. While license fees and other sources of income can be used for the building of main roads, only the Commonwealth-State grant and appropriations by our local Parliament can be drawn upon for the purpose of making developmental roads.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I was explaining the difference between main roads and developmental roads. In considering whether to make a recommendation in regard to main roads, the board shall take into account (a) the moneys available or likely to be available for main roads; (b) whether the road is or will be the main trunk route connecting any large producing area, or any area capable of becoming in the near future a large producing area, with its market or nearest port or railway station; (c) whether or not the road is or will be the main trunk route of inter-communication between two or more large producing areas, or areas capable of becoming in the near future large producing areas, or between two or more large centres of population; (d) whether the road is or will be the main trunk route between the capital and any large producing areas or any large centre of population. As regards developmental roads the board, before making any recommendation shall in consultation with the local authority make such investigations as may be prescribed, which shall include an investigation as to whether the road or proposed road will serve to develop or further develop any district or part of a district, or will serve to develop any area of Crown or private land by providing access to a railway station or a shipping wharf, or to a road leading to a railway station or a shipping wharf. The difference between main roads and developmental roads is that while the main roads will be Government roads to be maintained by the main roads board, the developmental roads must be handed over to the local authority after being constructed. Once handed over, it will be the sole responsibility of the local authority to keep them in repair. While license fees and other revenue can be used for the building of main roads only, the Commonwealth grant and appropriations by the State Parliament can be drawn upon to make developmental roads. The great development in traffic renders such a Bill as this absolutely necessary. Twenty years ago there were few vehicles that carried heavy loads. Two or three tons was a fair load for a horse-drawn cart or wagon, and

i. generally travelled at three or four miles an hour. Now there are horse-drawn wagons that carry eight tons, which, with the weight of the wagon itself, often represent 10 tons. Besides this, we have motor tractors which not only haul heavy weights but travel at fast speeds. Instead of the old dray or horse wagon with its three or four miles an hour, we have motor lorries and motor cars travelling at 20 to 40 miles an hour. The destruction of roads is therefore more rapid now than it was under the old conditions. Then there is another phase to be considered. Motor cars and motor lorries often travel long distances, perhaps through several road districts in one week. They are damaging the roads all the time, roads perhaps hundreds of miles from the municipality or road district to which the license fees were paid. Hence the Government consider it unfair that the burden of maintaining main roads should be thrown on the shoulders of the different local authorities. This Bill is a recognition of that fact and an effort to provide means to overcome the difficulty. It is not intended that the board shall have power as a constructing authority. That would mean a duplication of machinery. The roads and bridges branch of the Public Works Department is to be the constructing authority. We shall thus make use of machinery which is already in existence, and which must continue in existence to meet the necessities of portions of the State in which the Act will not operate. The Bill will enable the Minister to arrange with a local authority to construct or maintain any main road or to construct a developmental road, the funds to be provided out of the moneys available to the main road board. Provision is made for experiments to be conducted regarding material for roads, and the results will be available to anyone interested. It is probable that a laboratory for the purpose will be installed at the University. Professor Whitfield made investigations when in the Eastern States last year and he recommends that this be done. Under the Bill a main roads trust account will be created. Into this will be paid such proportion of the tax imposed on the unimproved capital value of land as has been appropriated by Parliament for the purposes of the Act.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is the land tax only.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was intended last year to make provision in this direction in the taxation measures then introduced, but it was not done.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Properties fronting main roads are also subject to municipal and road board rates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That has always been so.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: This is portion of an existing tax that will be applied.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The provision will remain in the Bill so that when it is considered desirable the proceeds from a halfpenny in the pound tax can be devoted to this purpose. The Treasurer will thus be able to draw from that source of taxation to fortify this fund. We are not obliterating it from the measure simply because no provision was made last year.

Hon. H. Stewart: Will that be a halfpenny out of the twopenny land tax?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. J. Ewing: And there will be no increased taxation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no suggestion at present to increase taxation but it is considered desirable to leave this provision in the Bill. Into this fund will also be paid all fees for licenses granted to vendors of petrol under the Act, all traffic fees, all moneys received from the Federal Government, and all appropriations by Parliament for the purpose. For main roads moneys can be drawn from all sources of the fund. But not so with developmental roads; they can be constructed only out of the Federal-State grant.

Hon. A. Burvill: Will the present subsidies to road boards be continued?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. The estimated receipts from traffic fees are £90,000, proceeds from sale of petrol £75,000, and contributions from loan fund £25,000. The latter amount at present is being granted by way of subsidies to the local authorities. If this Bill becomes law, those subsidies will no longer continue.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That amount will be paid into the trust fund.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The total sum provided for main roads will be £190,000.

Hon. H. Stewart: What do you estimate the halfpenny from land tax will produce?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not estimated it.

Hon. H. Stewart: Will it be something like the £45,000 of rebates on railway freights?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It can easily be calculated. I have mentioned petrol licenses as one of the sources of revenue. These licenses will apply only to wholesalers. There are four or five wholesalers in Western Australia at present. The fee for a license is based on 3d. a gallon, and payment must be made quarterly to the main trust account. The tax will, of course, hit some people using machinery that plays no part in damaging roads. A conference was held with merchants before the Bill was framed, and another after it was drafted. As a result of the deliberations, it was agreed that if the Government started to make exemptions difficulties would arise in collecting the tax. No one could suggest any system of exemption that would bear examination. The tax is only 1s. a tin, and it must be remembered that the general community will benefit from the fillip given to production by the existence of improved thoroughfares.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It will be a heavy impost on the farmers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: By an amendment that I propose to move, discretionary power will be given to the Minister. Members will agree that the time is ripe for the introduction of a Bill of this character. As I have already indicated, legislation of a somewhat similar nature has been considered necessary in all the Australian States, and with the wide expansion of land settlement here and the rapid increase in agricultural and pastoral production, an insistent demand has been created for the provision of vehicular transport facilities in the different centres of industrial activity in the State. We build railways, but these simply tap a country. They have done much to assist development; but in that respect they have their limitations. Good roads are also indispensable adjuncts to the usefulness of the iron horse. But the condition of these roads in many, if not all, of the country districts, is a severe handicap to the progress of industry and a perpetual drag on production. It is beyond the means of the local authorities to cope with the position, and if the State is to progress, action must be taken to meet the necessities of the situation. The Bill may not be perfect, but it is a sincere attempt to remedy the position. It is a non-party measure, and if the House can improve it so as to increase its usefulness, the Government will be only too pleased. I feel sure that the wide experience possessed by members in this Chamber will be placed at the disposal of the Government, and that, if amendments are moved, they will be submitted with a view to making the Bil more acceptable. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. STEWART (South-East) [7.48]: I to not know whether or not to congratulate the Government on bringing forward this Bill. There has been a great desire on the part of the community for legislation of this character. All representations to the Government have been to the effect that they should follow on the lines of the law that exists in Victoria relating to the construction and administration of roads. There the work is in the hands of a board possessing statutory powers. Those powers enable the board to make financial arrangements to construct highways for the purpose of facilitating transport throughout the State. The Bill before us does not in any way appreciably follow the Victorian legislation, so much so that there is a cry from the country districts, not that the Bill should be drastically amended, but that it should be rejected altogether. I have had representations made to me from various parts of my province to that effect, and other members, I understand, have also been written to in a similar strain. The Minister's concluding remarks, however, impressed me, and I was glad to learn that this was not to be treated as a party measure, and that he would be glad if the House, by suggesting amendments, could effect improvements. I am sure the House heard that with a feeling of hopefulness. I have been asked to help to reject the measure, but I feel that if we pass the second reading, we may be able to assist to make the Bill workable by suggesting amendments in Committee. When a Bill is so materially different from one's conception of what a measure should be, it is doubtful whether it is wise to seek to amend it, because in such circumstances amendments need to be of a very drastic nature. I have in mind some such occurrences. Bills have passed the second reading and desirable amendments have not been accepted in Committee. I can instance an

amendment to the Mining Act, which was put through in the closing hours of the session in 1921. The Bill proved unworkable and it had to be presented again for amendment in the following session. That policy, however, of passing the second reading of so defective a Bill is dangerous unless the House is prepared to give a Bill close consideration. When a notification was published in the Press that it was the intention of the Government to reintroduce the Main Roads Bill, I received the following letter from the Albany Municipal Council:—

> I have the honour by direction of my Council to ask that when the Main Roads Bill comes before your House you will, with the other members for the district, use your influence to defeat the passing of the Bill through your House. My Council at the present time receives about £500 or £600 under the Traffic Act for motor, etc., fees, and it is felt that if this Bill becomes law a hardship will be created in this town by the Government pooling the money and paying it into one fund. We have no assurance as to what roads in this town will be considered main roads and we do not know where the money received in this town will be spent.

I received a somewhat similar letter from the municipality of Narrogin and from several road boards requesting me to assist to bring about the rejection of the Bill. My reply to those people was that I had been considering the legislation in force in the other States and that I intended to support the second reading, but that I would seek to amend the Bill in Committee.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you not think it would be wise to refer it to a select committee?

Hon. H. STEWART: I think much good would come from such a course. That would probably save a considerable amount of the time of this House. I shall support any such proposal that may be submitted. The Minister is right when he says that Western Australia is behind the other States in regard to legislation of this nature, and he added that the road board conference had offered no useful suggestions as to the kind of legislation that should be submitted. I have before me copies of the resolutions passed at that conference in August of last year, and the effect of them is that legislation should be on the lines of the Victorian Country Roads Act. The resolutions embodied the salient features of that Act, and in them the conference gave an indication of their desires. In addition, the conference resolved that all motor fees of the State should be set aside for distribution amongst road boards and municipalities. That was a very different suggestion from the one that the main road board should take all that source of revenue in proclaimed areas and use the revenue without the other local authorities participating in any way. Apart from motor fees, the road board conference resolved that vehicle drivers and all other licenses and fees be retained by the local authorities. I think they were justified in doing that. When one considers that the local authorities use that revenue for making their developmental roads, for the purpose of keeping them in order, it must be admitted that there is justification for their claim.

Hon. A. Burvill: Do not you think it would be better if those fees were pooled in the districts?

Hon. H. STEWART: That opens up a new avenue that I am not prepared to discuss at this stage. The Minister said the Victorian Act was not suitable for Western Australia. In considering the Victorian Act I have been in communication with Mr. Calder, chairman of the Victorian Country Roads Board from its inception in 1912. Mr. Calder is an engineer and in the position he occupies has been very successful. He has won the confidence of interested parties and is looked upon as Australia's leading engineering authority on the construction and maintenance of roads. Altogether that board have authorised an expenditure in Victoria amounting to about nine millions sterling, and they have utilised the fees obtained with the best possible results. The local authorities in many instances have carried out the work of construction for the board. Ninety per cent. of the work executed has been carried out by contract. The only work done by day labour has been that of a preliminary character such as clearing the track and generally preparing for the main job of construction. Then again, whenever an unemployed difficulty has presented itself, the Country Roads Board of Victoria in the winter months has been able to place men in work, taking them from the city, or wherever they might be. Where 10 men have been sent out any distance to a main camp, they have been provided with a cook as well as with equipment, and the cost has been deducted from their pay by instalments. If the men remained on the job for three or four months, the payments they made towards their

own equipment was subsequently refunded. The idea behind that was that the men, on the inducement of the refund, would stay long enough to get used to the country life. It seems the majority of the men have remained permanently. The Minister for Works has taken up the attitude that loan money cannot be found for this work of road construction and maintenance under the Bill. When we consider the money now available at a low rate of interest from the Commonwealth and Imperial Governments for developmental work, and the reiterated statements both of the late Premier and the present Premier that money is easily available, I fail to see what can be the objection to utilising loan moneys for such sound development work as road making. Taking only the revenue of £190,000 that the Minister said is likely to be forthcoming under the Main Roads Trust, we should have no difficulty in paying interest and sinking fund even if the Government were responsible for the whole of the £19,000. Why therefore, should this developmental work of road making be restricted to revenue.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Is it not wise to restrict loan expenditure to reproductive works?

Hon. H. STEWART: What would the hon. member consider reproductive works? Is a worker's home any more a reproductive work than is a road? If, from the day you utilise loan moneys, your income is provided for in the hands of the country road board under the Main Roads Trust, surely it is sufficiently reproductive if it is paying interest and sinking fund and enabling the developmental and productive work of the State to go ahead! Road making is fully as developmental as the construction of railways.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is not directly productive, as a railway is.

Hon. H. STEWART: Not very long ago the productiveness of the railways was represented by a deficit of nearly a quarter of a million in one year. If the amount of revenue provided under the Bill is expended, we can at any rate guarantee it against a deficit on account of interest and sinking fund. There is a wide difference between a work that is supposed to be reproductive, and one that is actually reproductive.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: How would you provide for maintenance?

Hon. H. STEWART: I will illustrate how maintenance expenditure can be provided for. If, at the end of 30 years, we are going to redeem the capital expended, and in the meantime keep up our maintenance, we shall have in hand an asset at the end of the term, and we shall have also the loan money. The salient difference between the Victorian Act and this Bill is that the Victorian Board of three have statutory powers. Two of the board are engineers, and the third is chosen for his administrative ability. They have very wide powers, sufficient to deal with almost any position that can arise in respect, not only of road construction, but of the laying out of deviations, the acquiring of materials, the making of surveys, the resuming of land where necessary, and the disposition of lands previously acquired. That Board report once a year to the Minister. And before entering upon the construction of a main road or of a developmental road, they give notice to the local authorities that they have decided that a certain road is a main road. The road is then gazetted by the Governor-in-Council. This proposed State Board of five will be an advisory board. And, as indicated by the Minister, it is said that the machinery and equipment is already in existence in the roads and bridges branch of the Public Works Department. But because it is there, is not to say that is the best place for it. The general feeling is that if that equipment, personnel and plant were outside that office and under a statutory board, the result would be much more satisfactory. I do not question the ability of the departmental officers. Very often technical officers are in a difficult position in carrying out works in so wide a State as Western Australia; but I think the time has arrived when, if we had a statutory board free from the department to deal with certain work, there would still be plenty of work for the departmental branch, partly reduced, to go on with—work such as it has been doing in the past, much of which may be characterised as temporary but necessary patch-work in order to meet transport disabilities. We have a notable instance of the branch department having done a bit of patch work when they repaired the road between Perth and Armadale in the middle of last year. Although it was supposed to be a first-class job, yet within 12 months that road was not fit to drive over. As I say, the Minister for Works has an objection to loan moneys being allocated for main road construction. I contend

that with the revenue, instanced by the Minister as available, they would be fully justified in expending loan moneys in this connection. All the work they could do with their small revenue would be very little indeed. Lack of money is one of the factors that has led the Minister to treat this Main Road Board merely as a sort of co-related body to the Roads and Bridges Branch of the Public Works Department, so that each is within the other. The unsatisfactory nature of the Bill is really due to the desire to avoid having two bodies dealing with roads and because sufficient unborrowed money to expend on roads was not available to keep a board and staff fully employed. The time has arrived when the new body or board, independent of the Roads and Bridges Branch of the Public Works Department, could be established with advantage. The Minister mentioned that the Chief Engineer was to be an ex officio member of the board. The Minister will appoint one of the members as chairman. Two will be nominated from amongst officers of the Public Service, and two others will be nominated by local authorities. Reading Clause 16 dealing with the conduct of the experiments, Clause 17 dealing with other duties of the Chief Engineer, and Clause 18 dealing with requesting the local authority to give him information, it would seem that the Chief Engineer is going to do most of the work which in my opinion should be done by the Board. Under the Victorian system, which has been so successful, the board does all the work, and the chairman is an engineer.

Hon. H. Seddon: The chief engineer for roads.

Hon. H. STEWART: Yes. If the board is going to be the success the Victorian board is, the Chief Engineer should be chairman of the board. The board itself should do all these things, otherwise it would not be necessary. The provisions of the Bill lead me to conclude that the board will be composed of laymen, and I fail to see what good laymen could do. Two of the members of the Victorian board are engineers, who have not been connected with the Public Service. The chairman, an engineer, is recognised as the man who has made his mark in the profession, as the author of papers to the Institute of Engineers and by virtue of his varied and valuable experience. He is looked upon as an authority. He was chosen by the Governor-in-Council, and put into the position with another engineer and a third member who was chosen because of his administrative ability and knowledge. A secretary was then appointed and in due course a staff was built up. The worst roads in the State at the time were in Gippsland, and this board of competent men rode through the district on horseback and investigated the country. The board first sought to win the confidence of the local authorities. We want our board to be composed of men who will know what should be a main road. We do not want to have four men acting in conjunction with the Engineer in Chief, in the way proposed here. Some people may say we would not be justified in placing professional men in these responsible positions. Professional men are available, and it is a matter of the choice being a good one. They could tell better than laymen could what should be main and developmental roads, what is the best way of constructing them, and could overlook the making of experiments.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You suggest that the Engineer in Chief should be the chairman instead of the Minister.

Hon. H. STEWART: I do not understand that the Minister is to be chairman. The Minister is all-powerful and apparently he is to have a board of laymen advised by the Engineer in Chief. This must mean a large amount of circumlocution and the creation of a method more cumbersome than the present one of the Minister acting in conjunction with the Roads and Bridges Department.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: We shall have a change of policy with every change of Government.

The PRESIDENT: Hon. members must allow Mr. Stewart to proceed.

Hon. H. STEWART: The interjections are helpful. The Minister should not be doing the work outlined in the Bill. In the Victorian Act the Minister is mentioned only in Section 73, which says that the board shall make an annual report to him for presentation to Parliament. In the Bill before us the Minister is mentioned in almost every clause.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Under Clause 17 the Chief Engineer and the Minister would override the board.

Hon. H. STEWART: I do not know that. The Bill is not comparable with the statutory board that is in operation in Victoria. If we are not to have a board in which we

can impose confidence where shall we end? The first Country Road Board Act was passed in 1912. In 1915 a consolidating Act, repealing part of the 1912 Act and all of the 1914 Act was passed. Nine of the Acts do not appreciably amend the principal Act, and deal mostly with the allocation of funds. No. 2944 of 1918, the Developmental Roads Board Act, and No. 3334 of 1923, the Country Roads Act, 1923, are the most important. The later Acts since 1915, which deal with developmental roads in undeveloped areas, were passed at the express wish of the board, which prior to that date had been dealing only with main roads. I congratulate the Government upon inserting a provision in this Bill to cover not only main roads, but developmental roads. This has arisen largely from the fact that we are receiving Commonwealth grants. It is desirable that we should have a Bill of this description in order that we may put upon the best possible basis the spending of the Commonwealth grant, and obtain the necessary appropriation from this Parliament, which has to be made in order to get the Commonwealth grant. We want the money spent so as to produce the best engineering and most economical results without waste of effort. The Victorian Government originally provided two million pounds to be expended in five years in the construction of such roads as the board considered to be of sufficient importance to be classed as main roads. A fund was also provided to enable these roads to be maintained to a standard suitable for the traffic carried over them. Under Section 18 (i) of the Victorian Act the board shall proclaim by resolution from time to time to be a main road any highway of the State which in the opinion of the board is of such importance, and may rescind such resolution as regards any main road or portion of any main road. Under Section 18, Subsection (2) the Governor in Council may by order published in the "Government Gazette" confirm such resolution and thereupon any road mentioned in such resolution shall be a main road, or cease to be a main road within the meaning of the Act. The board provided under this Act may declare a road to be a main road, but it does not become a main road until it is gazetted. Under this Bill there is to be a board of five. We are justified in assuming that with the exception of the Engineer-in-Chief the board will be comprised of laymen. They will advise the Minister as to what they think is a desirable main road. After the expenditure of the original two million pounds in Victoria a further £500,000 was made available for constructional works on main roads to be expended between 1920 and 1924. In December, 1923, another million pounds was authorised, bringing the total up to four million pounds. In Victoria the country roads board make the road unless they arrange with the local authority to do so. The local authority repays to the Board half the cost of construction of main roads carried out by loan funds by payments extending over 31½ years at the rate per annum of 4½ per cent. interest and 1½ per cent. sinking fund. The Government bear the other half. But if in this State the Government cannot meet the position by paying half the cost of the roads, then I contend that in view of the revenue which will be available under the main roads trust account, it is all the more necessary to arrange for the provision of loan moneys. Instead of waiting to spend a million sterling out of revenue over a period of five years, let us spend the money at a larger rate and pay the interest out of the revenue coming in. To give an idea of the cost of constructing main roads let me mention that in Victoria for the five years ended on the 30th June, 1922, the average amount spent was £281,506, and the average mileage of road constructed was 208, and the average cost per mile £1,353. That is a fair basis of comparison for this State. The chairman of the Victorian board has recently been on a world tour examining the road question, principally in America and Great Britain. Concrete roads are greatly favoured in America, but they are not nearly so highly thought of in England. I gather from the chairman's remarks made upon his return that the concrete road is not likely to be adopted as suitable for Victoria. For one thing, the transport cost of the material required for concrete roads is heavy, and constitutes an appreciable disability. As regards maintenance of main roads, the expenditure by the Victorian board during the 11 years of its operation totals £1,734,282. That cost of maintenance is borne by the Country Roads Board in the first instance, and at the end of each financial year half the expenditure for the year is debited to the various municipalities and councils interested, and these amounts become payable on the 1st January in the following year. The largest amount spent in any year to date, that is to the end of 1922, was £267,969.

Hon. A. Burvill: What does that average per mile?

Hon. H. STEWART: I have not the figures available at the moment, but shall be glad to go into the matter further with the hon. member to-morrow.

Hon. T. Moore: Do you suggest that the maintenance should be a charge on the road boards in the country?

Hon. H. STEWART: Where there are main roads, I suggest that part of the maintenance should be a charge, but only if the road boards are relieved of part of the capital cost. As a result of the experience gained by the Victorian roads administration, the Victorian Act No. 2944, of 1918, provided a sum of £500,000 for subsidiary or developmental roads. The board had come to realise that the scheme of dealing with main roads only was inadequate for a young country like Victoria. At the end of the year the authorisation was increased to two millions. After that had been exhausted, an additional two million sterling was authorised to be spent in the ensuing four years; and a further million sterling was provided for the same purpose in December, 1922. The total amount authorised for developmental road construction was five millions, making a total of nine millions for permanent works in main roads and developmental roads. The total expenditure on developmental road construction was £2,200,964 at the end of 1923. The mileage of developmental roads constructed was 425, the cost being nearly £1,500 per mile. A certain class of traffic requires a certain class of road to carry it, and we are justified in assuming that the cost in one State will be approximately the cost in another State. If we are restricted to revenue, it means that very little in the way of main road construction can be done. Apart from that aspect, there is a great outcry on the part of the boards now because if a local authority's area is proclaimed as a prescribed area through which a main road passes, then all the traffic fees go to the Government, less cost of collection, and are to be utilised by the advisory board. In many instances the only main road going through a district would represent about 3 per cent. of the total mileage of road in the district. Thus the main roads board would take perhaps half the revenue of the local authority to make or maintain three per cent. of the road mileage, the local authority then being left with a large mileage of roads to maintain on an utterly inadequate revenue. When the Federal Government make an allocation of, say, £500,000 for road construction in Australia, they stipulate that the various State Governments shall put up pound for pound. The present Bill expressly says that for developmental roads, only that money shall be used. I have heard Mr. Willmott say concerning Bridgetown that there are 220 miles of road for the local board to maintain. If Bridgetown becomes a prescribed area, the main road through it will be only 14 miles long, and in consideration of being relieved of that mileage the board are to lose their traffic fees. I understand that for the Katanning district the traffic fees amount to £2,000. Albany's traffic fees, according to a letter I read a little while ago, amount to between £500 and £600.

Hon. A. Burvill: The official figure is £450.

Hon. H. STEWART: Is that for the municipality or for the road board?

Hon. A. Burvill: The municipality.

Hon. H. STEWART: The Minister for Works has all along told the people who waited on him with regard to roads, "I will give you the roads, but you will have to pay for them." The people chiefly advocating the Main Roads Bill were the Good Roads Association and the great majority of the people concerned in automobile traffic. On the whole the automobile people are not dissatisfied with the Bill. Some of them, using heavy vehicles, have to pay heavy license fees. I refer to the proprietors of motor buses and heavy lorries. Certainly, those who do the damage to the roads should pay for it. As regards country roads and country traffic, however, I fail to see that any appreciable benefit whatever will result from this measure. I should be sorry indeed if the Bill passed this House and finished up in its present form, with purely an advisory board of laymen, and with the Minister having power to interfere at any time. The board would be practically just as now, authorising the expenditure of certain moneys by a subbranch of the Public Works Department. If the position were likely to finish up in anything like what it is at present, I would not vote for the second reading of the Bill. My attitude will be largely determined by the trend of the debate. My desire is to support the second reading of the measure

but to follow the example that has proved so effective in the Eastern States. It is not a question of this State being a larger State or Victoria being a richer State; rather is it a question of principle embodied in having a small efficient board carrying on without red tape and with the provision of due safeguards regarding appeals if disputes should arise between the local governing authorities and a road board. Under the Victorian Developmental Roads Act power was given to the board regarding the monetary arrangements concerning developmental roads running through several road board areas. The board was given special discretionary powers to allocate the amount to be contributed by each road board concerned in accordance with that body's ability to contribute and the benefits derived from the road traversing such areas. The Act, however, provides that the contribution of such road boards shall be not less than 1 per cent., nor more than 3 per cent., and as far as possible it is provided that the contributions shall represent 2 per cent. on the cost of the construction of the road. The main road board is given very wide discretionary powers because of the ability displayed during the previous six years when the board dealt with main roads only. After the first year the board had operated regarding developmental roads, the Act was further amended to give the board wider powers still. The 1923 amending Bill extended the powers still further and provided that in any area which was considered undeveloped and where a developmental road went through it, the board had powers to recommend that for five years the people in that area should be relieved from making any contribution towards the cost of making the road, thus giving the people there an opportunity to get on their feet. That was the result of experience, and Mr. Calder said to me, "Western Australia should reverse the position we adopted in Victoria. Whereas we started with the Main Roads Bill and then with the Developmental Roads Bill and passed on to one dealing with developmental roads in undeveloped areas with liberal terms allowed to settlers regarding advances, in the interests of the development of the country and speaking as chairman of the board with 12 years of experience, I advise you to start in the opposite direction." The Bill does not proceed along the lines suggested by Mr. Calder but proceeds in the opposite direction. I am afraid it will have a hampering effect in the country and militate against the progress of settlement.

On motion by Hon. A. Burvill, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.50] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is rendered necessary owing to an oversight in connection with the measure passed last year. Since 1922 we have been collecting the tax in one amount. Previously the taxpayer could pay in two moieties. In order that our legislation might be brought into line with the Commonwealth Act, the Mitchell Government, three years ago, secured the passing of a Bill to enable the amount due by the taxpayer to be collected in one payment. Owing to the amalgamation of the Federal and State Taxation Departments, it is advisable that, as far as possible, we shall fall into line with Federal methods. Hence it is proposed to amend Section 7 of the Act of last year to enable the Government to collect the tax in the same manner as has been done for the last three years. Section 7 of the Land Tax and Income Tax Act of 1924 reads—

> Section 56 of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, shall not apply to the land tax or income tax to be levied and collected for the financial year ending the 30th day of June, 1925.

The Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, No. 15 of 1907, reads—

> Where the amount payable by any taxpayer either in respect of land tax or income tax, or in respect of both, exceeds the sum of 20s., the same shall be payable in two equal half-yearly instalments, at such times as the Governor may direct by notice published in the "Government Gazette."

If this Bill were not introduced and passed, we would be deprived of half the taxation revenue which we should enjoy this year, and our financial position would be adversely affected. There is another reason. When there was an amalgamation between the Federal and State Taxation Departments an agreement was entered into by the two parties. Clause 22 of the agreement provides that if a taxpayer pays less than the full amount due by him to the State and Com-

monwealth, the amount paid shall be credited to the State and Commonwealth pro rata to the full amount owing. It follows that if the State taxation were payable in two moieties, there would have to be thousands of adjustments between the State and the Commonwealth, and a big increase of staff would be necessary for bookkeeping purposes. This trouble would not arise were it not for the fact that payment to the Commonwealth must be made in one sum. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On the motion by Hon. H. Stewart, debate adjourned.

BILL—REAL PROPERTY (COMMONWEALTH TITLES).

Second Reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.55] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is a validating measure to enable the Commonwealth to obtain titles of lands they may acquire within the State. Similar legislation was passed last year by South Australia, and all other States have intimated their willingness to do likewise. The measure is not contentious. The Commonwealth Land Acquisition Act, 1906, enables the Commonwealth to compulsorily acquire land and obtain an indefeasible title. Section 30 of that Act provides that the registration of the Gazette notification of acquisition is to have the effect of a conveyance or transfer to the Commonwealth and in this connection directs the Registrar of Titles to perform certain duties. Obviously the Federal authorities have no power to instruct State officials as to what they shall or shall not do. The High Court said that this direction was ultra vires and, therefore, State legislation is necessary to enable the Commonwealth title to be registered. This Bill will empower the Registrar of Titles to bring land acquired by the Commonwealth under the Transfer of Land Act. The Bill will facilitate the land transactions of the Commonwealth. At present they can do nothing except by the cumbersome old method of conveyancing. If the land is brought under the Transfer of Land Act the dealings will be simple. If they wish to dispose of land to the War Service Homes, the title would not under the present law come under the Transfer of Land Act. To achieve their object the title would have to be transferred to someone else by means of the obstructing process of conveyancing.

Hon. H. Stewart: Do the Commonwealth Government desire to acquire the land on which the war service homes are built?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If they desired it, they could not get the title under the Transfer of Land Act. The only way it could be done would be by conveyancing. If the Bill be passed the Commonwealth Government will be able to get their title under the Transfer of Land Act.

Hon. H. Stewart: Might that not make it easy for the Commonwealth to acquire State land?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We should give the Commonwealth the same rights as an individual subject. The Federal Government are entitled to equal consideration with the individual in this respect. It will relieve them of considerable trouble. The measure has been carefully examined by the law officers of the Crown, and they agree that it is advisable to pass it. It is not in any way controversial. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [9.1]: I re-echo the Minister's statement regarding the necessity for the Bill. In a great many instances the Commonwealth Government have been confronted with considerable difficulty regarding the titles of land acquired by them in this State. Difficulties have arisen through the Commonwealth not being able to grant titles to individuals to whom they had sold land acquired by them under their powers. The only way in which those difficulties can be overcome is by passing a measure such as this.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.