

fication of the deposit of such money, and will be more convenient for candidates than is the present system. The remaining proposed amendments are mostly of a minor character which it is thought advisable to introduce in order to create the machinery for the more satisfactory conduct of elections. If necessary these will be explained more fully when in Committee. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th October, 1923.

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

QUESTION—MINING, COMET VALE.

Mr. PANTON (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has his attention been drawn to a report published in the "Kalgoorlie Miner" of the 6th October of an indignation meeting held at Comet Vale? 2, Is it a fact, as stated in the report, that

with the expenditure of another £2,000, a valuable mine could have been secured for the State? 3, If not, will he make a statement as to the facts of the position?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: I shall make a statement to the House to-morrow.

QUESTIONS (4)—POLICE.

Police Manual.

Mr. SLEEMAN: asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Did Police Inspector M. O'Halloran publish in 1914 a book entitled a "Police Manual"? 2, Was the book published in a private or a public capacity by the inspector, and was it published with the approval of the Commissioner of Police?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. 2, In his private capacity with the approval of the Minister.

Commissioner's Term of Office.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: Did the Commissioner of Police, R. Connell, in 1919 or thereabouts, make an agreement with the then existing Government by which his services were to be retained for a period of years, and, in the event of his services being dispensed with during the currency of that agreement, he was to be compensated?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: Yes. An agreement was made with the Commissioner of Police which provided that should he be retired before attaining the age of 60 he should, in addition to a pension for the actual years of service, be paid an increased amount, as if he had served an additional 10 years, as may be done under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act.

Examinations, Inspectors, Gold Stealing.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: 1, What official or person sets the examination papers for the police promotional examinations? 2, Who judges the answers and allots the marks given at these examinations? 3, How many inspectors of police are over 60 years of age? 4, What are their names and official ages? 5, Has he asked any or all of them to continue in the service after reaching the age of 60 years? 6, How many members of the force are employed on the gold stealing staff on

the goldfields? 7, What ranks in the force do the members of the gold stealing staff occupy, and who pays their salaries?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Inspector O'Halloran and Secretary, Police Department. 2, The Crown Prosecutor as Chairman. 3, Six. 4, Chief Inspector Duncan, 63; Inspector Sellenger, 62; Inspector Mitchell, 63; Inspector Houlahan, 63; Inspector Walsh, 63; Inspector Condon, 63. 5, A clause in the award given by the commission of inquiry into police pay and conditions provides that an employee reaching the age of 60 years shall have the right to retire or may be retired, provided that all employees on reaching 65 years shall be retired. 6, Two. 7, One inspector and one sergeant. Their salaries are paid by the department, and the whole of the expense is recouped by the Chamber of Mines.

Burial Permit, Alleged Delay.

Miss HOLMAN asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Is he aware that a fatal accident occurred at Plavin's Mill on Monday, the 28th September, at 2.30 p.m.? 2, Is he aware that the local police officer wired to the Fremantle police headquarters at about 5 p.m. on Monday, the 28th September, for permission to arrange the burial, and that no reply was received until late on Tuesday afternoon, thereby causing much pain and distress to the relatives who, on arrival from Perth on Tuesday, had to wait some hours before being allowed to prepare the body for burial—which service the brothers of the deceased had to render owing to the incapacity of the undertaker? 3, What was the cause of the delay in Fremantle? 4, Will he issue instructions to ensure that such a delay will not occur again?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. 2, 3, and 4, The death was reported to the District Police Office, Fremantle on 28th September, and the Coroner decided an inquest was necessary. The constable at Dwellingup was notified by telephone next day, and requested to arrange for a local justice of the peace to hold the inquiry, and the same day a telegram was sent to Dwellingup asking if a justice had been secured. The constable was called away on the Tuesday from his station on other duty, and on his return found that the undertaker would not arrange for the burial until he returned.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands and read a first time.

BILL—LABOUR EXCHANGES.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

DIVORCE AMENDMENT BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Report.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of the report of the select committee.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [4.40]: I move—

That the Committee stage of the Bill be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

Question passed.

BILL—BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.41] in moving the second reading said: This is purely a Committee Bill, embodying as it does one or two extra clauses to give greater protection in case of fire. There have been many losses on account of fires lighted in some instances by people camped in the bush, and in other instances by people clearing various areas without first notifying the holders of adjoining blocks, as required under the Act. The Act provides that the Governor-in-Council may specify times to which the Bush Fires Act shall apply. This Bill will give power to have certain areas protected, and there are provisions of the Act that would not apply to the areas protected, while the principal provisions of the Act would apply. At present, after the Governor has gazetted that fires shall not be lighted in any portion of the State, there is no power to permit of a person making a fire-break around his property, hay stacks, house or sheds, in a manner that would protect them if a fire went through the district.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Such a person would still be liable for damage.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no alteration to the law regarding liability. The Bill will make for a better administration of the Act than is possible at present.

Mr. Stubbs: Will the Bill alter the liability of a person burning between 8 and 12 o'clock?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is nothing in this Bill to relieve of liability any person who is the cause of damage to another person's property, but it will afford greater protection to other people, because anyone desirous of burning off will first have to obtain permission. If he acts without permission, a penalty is provided. Provision is made to give greater protection to Crown lands. I am told that where bush land adjoins Crown land, it has been the custom to burn off the bush land, particularly when it is used for sheep, regardless of what the consequences of the fire might be. Seeing that the State is expending a large sum of money, money coming in as revenue under the Forests Act, for the purpose of reforestation, we must guard against the great risk under present conditions to reforested areas. Crown lands must be protected equally with private lands. The Bill is purely a Committee Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, is it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Two of its clauses are not of much consequence.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The forestry clause is pretty hot.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That clause is to protect people against being burnt out by careless persons. A farmer told me only to-day that he had been burnt out twice through the carelessness of a neighbour, who had set fire to a place without notice, and without supervision even though my informant had specially asked him not to do it without supervision and had offered to send men to watch the fire. It shows the necessity for notification to protect the farmers against themselves.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The clause is not like you.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We will deal with the clause when we come to it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVE A4566.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [4.48] in moving the second reading said: This Bill refers to a small reserve situated within the area of what is now termed the Daglish townsite, opposite the Daglish station, being the new railway station erected between West Subiaco and Subiaco. Many years ago, prior to the opening up of the Karrakatta Cemetery, a small reserve was necessary there. It has never been used for the purpose for which it was intended. In fact, it has not been used at all since 1897. It is not required at present, and never will be required again. I shall lay upon the Table a plan showing the position of the reserve. I feel quite confident that the Bill is such as will receive the support of every member.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What are you going to do with the land?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am going to sell it. The inclusion of this small reserve will improve the Daglish townsite considerably. No doubt at the time the reserve was gazetted it was required, but with the opening of the Karrakatta Cemetery its usefulness went. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.50]: I shall not oppose the second reading. The Minister tells us that the reserve is no longer required as such, and cannot be put to any other purpose as a reserve. Therefore the Minister should no doubt have permission to include the area of the reserve in the blocks now being surveyed opposite the Daglish railway station. We have all too little land near our transport conveniences. A good many people have to leave their homes at an early hour to get to their work, and it is quite right to throw open for residential purposes as many blocks as possible near to transport facilities. When I see the crowds going from Fremantle to Midland Junction every morning, I feel sorry for their having to travel a long way to their work, and to walk some distance in addition.

The Minister for Lands: The healthy conditions under which they live at Fremantle enable them to do a better day's work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not prepared to agree with that statement. I hope the people at Daglish will live much nearer to the station than workers can at

Fremantle. The Minister, of course, will say that Fremantle is much better than any other spot, but the House will not endorse everything he says on that subject.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—PRIMARY PRODUCTS MARKETING.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 6th October; Mr. Lutey in the Chair, the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Causes 23 to 28, Title—agreed to.

New clause—Duration of Act:

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: In the absence of the member for Katanning, I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 29:—"This Act shall continue in operation until the 31st day of March, one thousand nine hundred and twenty-seven and no longer: Provided that the expiration of this Act shall not affect—(a) the previous operation of this Act or anything duly done or suffered under this Act; or (b) any right, privilege, obligation, or liability acquired, accrued, or incurred under this Act; or (c) any penalty, forfeiture, or punishment incurred in respect of any offence committed against this Act; or (d) any investigation, legal proceeding, or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege, obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture, or punishment as aforesaid; and any such investigation, legal proceeding, or remedy may be instituted, continued, or enforced, and any such penalty, forfeiture, or punishment may be imposed, as if this Act had not expired."

The new clause is, I believe, taken verbatim from the Queensland Act. The date, I think, is also the same. If the measure is a good thing, there should be no objection to the imposing of a time limit, when the measure can be re-enacted. This being a drastic measure, the period from now until the end of March, 1927, should allow time for testing it. If the Bill gives the good results expected by the Government, we shall be happy to renew it. In the meantime it is desirable to put a period to the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is no necessity for such a clause in this Bill, which cannot come into operation without the consent of a majority of the growers concerned in any particular industry or section of an industry.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I think the desire is to protect commercial interests.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No; that is quite wrong.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: You are a lovely representative of the primary producers!

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If any Bill comes within the category of measures in which there should be no time duration, it is this Bill.

Hon. Sir James MITCHELL: You have fixed a time limit of two years yourself.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I say that in the second year of the operation of the Act de-control cannot be brought about unless 66 per cent. of the growers vote for it. Unless they are in favour, the Act will not operate.

Hon. Sir James MITCHELL: In effect, every second year they exercise local option.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is so. It is left to the growers themselves. There is no necessity for the new clause.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: We must recognise that there are interests concerned other than those of the producers. There are the interests of the middlemen, whose operations will be interfered with. There are large interests in the city and elsewhere whose sole business it is to look after the primary producers to the extent of taking a fair percentage of the profits for their own particular benefit.

Mr. Mann: And finance them in bad times.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: They do not finance them at all. Generally speaking, the primary producers of Western Australia have been financed by the Government.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is not so regarding fruit marketing.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At any rate, the majority of the primary producers have been assisted and supported by the Government. While the Government do that during the struggling days of the settlers' development, as soon as they become a real asset to the State as producers, the middlemen step in and attempt to secure from them a maximum return for the limited

assistance rendered them in transferring the producers' products to the consumers. The opposition to the Bill by such interests is natural. They do not want the Bill and therefore seek to limit its operations.

Mr. Sampson: There is a suspicion that one or two do not want the Bill at all.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I made no bones about it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The member for Williams-Narrogin desires to secure some protection for those interests by limiting the Bill to a certain period. I regret we have that kind of opposition to the Bill from men who claim to be representatives of the primary producers. It is impossible to take up our daily newspapers without reading about marketing difficulties. We find that Sir Tom Bridges has outlined the difficulty regarding marketing at the other end of the Empire. In America extraordinary powers have been given to the Minister to dictate to the wheat pit, that huge combine of exploiters who, for generations, have fattened on the producers there. Thus, America has recognised the need for protection. The need for legislation of this kind is world wide and without a Bill of this description we shall be left badly in our attempt to compete in the markets of the world. Our products compare more than favourably with those of other countries and, although our Western Australian apples, for instance, are the best in the world, they do not bring the prices that their quality justifies.

Mr. J. H. Smith: But the Bill will not assist growers to get a better price.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Yes, it will. The fact that they cannot get a proper price is due to the marketing facilities not being on a satisfactory basis. The fruit-growers recognise this and the Mt. Barker people are sending a representative to London to study the marketing difficulties and to endeavour to put the business on a better basis.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And those people are opposing the Bill.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Their view is that of Western Australia alone. I admit that, from that point of view, the growers at Mt. Barker are in a better position to compete than are others in Western Australia; their troubles about the other poor unfortunates who cannot secure markets for their products! We must take a

broader view of the question than that and organise our marketing problem, not from a Western Australian point of view but from that of the markets of the world. To limit the operations of the Bill would merely defeat the object of the measure. I recognise that the member for Williams-Narrogin is anxious to do that. It is in bad taste for so-called primary producers' representative to introduce such an amendment at this late stage. It would prevent the Bill from being tested, in view of the limited period he suggests. This goes to show that the primary producers ought to review their political patronage and see that people are returned to Parliament to—

Mr. Mann: What has that to do with the Bill?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The producers require a Bill of a permanent description to enable them to successfully compete in the markets of the world, and not one that is merely temporary.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I resent exceedingly the remarks made by the member for Guildford.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are nothing to what I will say.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I resent his assertion that we are standing for the middlemen.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is unquestionable.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Our opposition to the Bill is purely in the interests of the primary producers.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Nonsense! It is for vested interests.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I know no producers who desire the Bill apart from those connected with the dried fruits industry. If the Bill had been confined to that industry we would have supported it.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, because it would be popular.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The wheat growers do not want the Bill, because they have a voluntary pool. I have a telegram from Mt. Barker reading as follows:—

All growers, Mt. Barker and Cranbrook districts, canvassed. Signatures obtained from 111 growers, representing 2,500 acres standing orchards, opposing Marketing Bill. (Signed Martin.)

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is already in "Hansard."

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have another from Bridgetown as follows:—

At a public meeting held last night at Bridgetown fruitgrowers of the Manjimup and Bridgetown districts unanimously agreed to support the resolution forwarded to the Minister for Agriculture by the Fruitgrowers' Association of Mount Barker, namely, "That we, the Mount Barker fruitgrowers, having considered the Fruit Marketing Bill, as submitted by the Hon. Minister for Agriculture, do hereby publicly protest that such a Bill should have been introduced, we failing to see one single clause, or part of it, that would be anything but a danger to the industry."

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: That is in "Hansard," too. Read a letter from the middlemen.

Mr. Mann: Are these people middlemen?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The only communications I have here are from primary producers and they are unanimously opposed to the Bill. Then there is the following letter from Narrikup:—

At a largely attended meeting of the Narrikup potato growers held in the Narrikup hall on 30th September, the position of the growers relative to the Bill was discussed. After a long debate on the subject we came to the conclusion that the Bill will in no way be beneficial to our interests. The following resolutions were then moved and carried unanimously:—(1) That this meeting of the Narrikup and district potato growers is strongly opposed to the passing of the Primary Products Marketing Bill, 1925. Motion moved by F. Pugh, seconded by K. Williamson. (2) That the resolution be forwarded to the members for the district in the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Read the letters that appeared in the "West Australian" this morning.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The member for Guildford suggested that we should view this question from the point of view of the world's markets. Unfortunately, we have not got power to legislate outside Western Australia. On the other hand, I am concerned with the point of view of the Western Australian producers.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Surely you would not argue that apple marketing should be limited to Western Australia?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I argue that in dealing with our apple growers, for instance, we ought to deal with them from the Western Australian point of view.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: And you would not worry about the London market?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would sooner have the opinion of the people who are

actively engaged in the marketing of apples to London than the opinion of the member for Guildford. The intention of the opponents to the Bill has been to voice the opinion of the producers who say that they do not want it. It is an unfortunate position, because the Minister is trying to force on to the producers something they do not desire. It is an extraordinary position and it will not be helpful for the member for Guildford to declare that we must look at these questions from the world point of view, whereas we desire to conserve the interests of Western Australian growers, and of Western Australia itself.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I intend to support the proposed new clause. Could not the Minister accept 1927? It would then be simple for the growers, if they want the Bill to remain in force, to pass a resolution to that effect. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. JOHNSON) has endeavoured to hoodwink and mislead members on his side of the House. In effect, he told us the Government always came to the assistance of the primary producers. That, of course, is quite wrong. The Government have never come to the assistance of the growers of fresh fruit, nor is there any provision in the Bill that will be of assistance to them. The assistance they wanted was a simple form of legislation that could be put into operation if required. The member for Guildford made an erroneous statement in declaring that the Bill would assist growers. He knows that the Bill will not assist them to find overseas markets. Further, he said the Agricultural Bank would come to the growers' assistance by making advances. But the bank has never granted a penny to the fruit growers in respect of fresh fruit. The member for Guildford said that in the past the Government had assisted the primary producers. We all know of the unholy alliance between the State Sawmills and Millers' combine when they charged fruit growers 10s. and 12s. per dozen for their cases. The Government concern assisted to keep up the price until the little spot millers succeeded in reducing it.

Mr. Sampson: The ex-Minister for Works was responsible for the reduction.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The ex-Minister for Works, in answer to a deputation at Bridgetown, told the growers to go to Hell. The member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) has advised everybody far and wide to accept the

Queensland Act as being faultless. The Bill follows the Queensland Act, and now when the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) moves an amendment to improve it, the member for Swan is going to oppose it. I trust that the Minister will agree to the proposed new clause.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am amazed at the reference by the hon. member to the ex-Minister for Works.

Mr. J. H. Smith: It is true.

Mr. SAMPSON: The reason why the price of case wood went up is well known. The ex-Minister for Works was responsible for bringing about a reduction. I gathered from the remarks of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) that if it were possible for the control of the products to be extended over the whole of Australia, he would support the Bill. The Bill will assist materially in respect of overseas shipping. Of course one must admit the difficulties the fruit growers have encountered in the securing of financial help. The reason for it is that fruit growing is not regarded as a profitable industry. The member for Williams-Narrogin erroneously said that the proposed amendment is taken from the Queensland Act. But the Queensland Act provides that the legislation is to be continued for three years, and continued thereafter by Order in Council for a further three years unless 500 growers demand a ballot respecting continuance, when a simple majority shall determine upon continuance.

The Minister for Agriculture: It shall continue by Order in Council indefinitely unless opposed by a majority of the growers.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is so. All over the world there is recognition of the need for control of products. On the second reading I submitted figures from the Commonwealth Year Book proving that fruit growing is a non-profitable industry. The area under trees is gradually reducing. That is an unreasonable argument in favour of pooling. I am sorry that after so short a period it will be necessary to submit the Bill again to the growers. In this respect the Queensland Act is preferable. However, I am delighted that the Bill is now within measurable distance of becoming an Act. The limitation suggested by the member for Williams-Narrogin is undesirable, and I hope it will not be accepted.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister has made a perfectly reasonable

provision in saying that the growers shall be asked as to the continuance of the measure. If it were not that I am opposed to the Bill altogether, I would support the Minister. This proposed new clause is akin to moving that the Bill be read this day six months. With that, of course, I agree, for to be perfectly frank, I am opposed to the whole Bill. If the proposed new clause were agreed to, the Bill would never see the light of day, because before its provisions could be put into operation the Bill would be lost. Therefore I will support the proposed new clause. The Bill, like the New Protection policy of the Commonwealth, is to benefit everybody. Of course that is utterly ridiculous. Under the Bill the fruit grower is to get better prices, while the consumer is to get cheaper fruit. Actually, if anybody suffers, it will be the consumer. We cannot influence the overseas market.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We do in wheat you know.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is useless to tell me that the middle man is the only man who can take money for the handling of the fruit. The boards will require to be paid, there will be untold waste, and many losses that the grower will have to pay for. The Minister says, "Here you are if you want a pool you simply vote for it and handle it in your own way—subject of course to the Minister." I do not know why the Government have bothered about the Bill in the face of the opposition to do it, for of course it will not be of any advantage to the Government. I have nothing to say against the people who handle the fruit for a charge as at present. It is not for us to accuse them of overcharging, but for the men who employ them to do so, if they have grounds. If the Bill were defeated the growers could still have their voluntary organisation for the marketing of their fruit. We shall see what we shall see if the growers do combine for the sale of highly perishable commodities.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: This amendment is taken from the Victorian Dried Fruits Act and not from the Queensland Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: After hearing the views of the Westralian Farmers, the producers, the orchardists, and after hearing the letters and telegrams that have been read condemning the Bill, I shall be justified in voting against it. Unless I am convinced to the contrary I shall also make a point of

voting against the third reading. I have never heard the Committee so confused on any subject as it is now. Members seem to be at sixes and sevens. The Minister for Agriculture brings down this Bill, and for the most part every other representative of the growers denounces it.

Mr. Pantou: Be fair. The United Party is a little divided, that is all.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope the Minister will be able to clear up some of the misunderstandings and misrepresentations that have occurred.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The confusion is all on the side of members opposite. The Leader of the Opposition now says it is a good Bill for the producer, but on the occasion of the second reading he said it was a rotten Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I said it was a rotten Bill for everybody.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He says the consumers will have to pay. It must, therefore, be a good Bill for the producers. The member for Swan approves of it, but the member for Nelson does not like it as his constituents do not like it. The member for Williams-Narrogin and the member for Katanning are opposed to it because it is not popular amongst a section of the growers. The opposition has come only from the Mt. Barker and Bridgetown districts. I understand that growers from those centres put their culls on the local market, and that if this Bill becomes law, their culls will be shut out from the local market. It is remarkable that at least two of the largest fruitgrowers from Bridgetown and Mt. Barker, who were until recently members of the State Fruit Advisory Board, recommended this Bill. These two gentlemen were elected by the apple growers of Bridgetown and Mt. Barker to represent them on that committee. Wherever this Bill has been explained to the producers, it has been supported. When I explained its provisions at Fremantle, the Spearwood growers unanimously endorsed it. If it was explained in other centres I believe that 90 per cent. of the growers would do the same. There is no compulsion about it. If the producers do not want it, they need not have it.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I wish to refute the suggestion of the Minister that the growers are putting their culled fruit upon the local market. The shops of Perth are full of

beautiful fruit that is being shown in the windows for sale.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What do they do with their culls?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They give them to the pigs. Hundreds and thousands of cases of fruit are ploughed into the ground for fertilising purposes, which shows the honesty of the growers in my district.

The Premier: It shows their stupidity in opposing this Bill.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If there is any culled fruit on the local market, it must come from the Swan district. The Bill makes no distinction between top standard fruit and that which is of a grade that enables it just to get in. I know of producers who send their culls to charitable institutions in Perth.

New clause put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	..	22

Majority against .. 11

AYES.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Brown	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Davy	Mr. Taylor
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Mann	Mr. Richardson
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coffler	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hughes	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willson

(Teller.)

New clause thus negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—AUCTIONEERS' ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

BILLS (3)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

- 1, Narrogin Soldiers' Memorial Institute.
- 2, Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.

Without amendment.

- 3, Forests Act Amendment.

With an amendment.

BILL—DAY BAKING.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Mr. MANN: I move an amendment—

That the words "and rolls" be struck out.

Rolls should not come under the term of small goods. Under the present Act rolls are considered to be anything under 8 ozs. The class of goods produced by pastrycooks number four. First there is pastry made from a preparation of butter and flour which goes through a skilled form of treatment; next there is the sponge mixture made from eggs, sugar, and flour; thirdly there is the queen mixture made from the creaming of butter and sugar and then mixed with flour and currants, and the fourth class is yeast-fermented goods from which the pastrycooks make yeast buns, tea cakes, coffee cakes, jubilee buns, jubilee cakes, and rolls. I contend that the making of rolls is part of the pastrycook's work rather than that of the baker. In any event, the Minister could make the position secure by declaring that a roll should be anything under 2 ozs., because that is the size of the ordinary roll.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This request comes of compromising. I compromised on the decision of the Geneva Conference by eliminating pastry from the provisions of the Bill.

Mr. Mann: You have extended the hours beyond the conference decision.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The conference merely laid down that we should not go beyond the limits fixed, but that the hours could be adjusted in accordance with climatic conditions. While the decision was that all pastry, rolls, and confectionery

should not be baked at night, I have merely asked for a prohibition applying to bread and rolls. The pastrycooks apparently are not satisfied at having been let off as regards 99 per cent. of their business; because 1 per cent. is affected, they want the also. I decided to include rolls as a safeguard to the bakers. No master baker would support the amendment, because roll would be a substitute for bread and would be sold in competition with bread, and thus pastrycooks would cut into the business of master bakers. That would create unfair competition.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You could limit the weight of the rolls.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That would not be satisfactory.

Mr. Mann: Can you imagine a man trying to feed his family on rolls?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, I have known it to be done. Rolls are certainly a substitute for bread, and to permit such competition with the master baker would be decidedly unfair.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister surely does not imagine that families could be fed on rolls.

The Minister for Works: The roll is only a small loaf.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Rolls have to be fresh to be any good at all. I suppose the Minister excluded pastry because the public insist upon having fresh pastry or none at all. The Minister might well permit rolls to be made by pastrycooks limiting the weight if necessary. If the public are to have fresh pastry, they should be able to get fresh rolls.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The member for Perth has clouded the issue by including such things as coffee cake and jubilee cake with rolls. While coffee cake and jubilee cake are made from the same dough as are rolls, a different application is necessary. The roll can take the place of bread, but jubilee cake cannot because the latter is a sweetened cake.

Mr. Mann: A roll is 2 ozs. but a loaf is 2 lbs.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The hon. member weakens his case when he suggests a qualification; it is an admission of the danger of excluding rolls without some qualification. Regardless of weight, the roll would still be a competitor with bread. It is not the function of pastrycooks to produce rolls. That is an essential part of the

baking business. Practically every bake-house produces rolls, but not so every pastrycook. If we exclude rolls, it will be an invitation to the pastrycooks to produce rolls, and the master bakers will be little better off than they are at present. One of the objects of the Bill is to get rid of the unfair competition of the small baker, but the amendment would leave the master baker with the pastry cook on his back instead.

Amendment put and negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Clause 3—Prohibition of night baking:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This clause fixes the hours during which bread may be baked.

The Minister for Works: It is the essence of the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It provides that bread shall not be baked between 6 in the evening and 8 in the morning.

The Minister for Works: I have said that I shall be interested to hear the opinions of members as to the hours.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is it intended that men shall work eight hours a day, the actual hours to be fixed by the Arbitration Court?

The Minister for Works: Yes. There is a spread of 10 hours.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not see why we should cramp the court in this matter more than is necessary, and I hope the Minister will widen the spread as much as possible. In towns of considerable size, bread is baked in the daytime now. A baker at Northam, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, or Albany having a special order, or having more than the average quantity of bread to make for the requirements of a holiday, can get assistance; but if the measure is to apply to the whole State the spread of hours should be made as wide as possible. The Bill provides that in case of emergency, say, a breakdown of machinery, the Chief Inspector of Factories may extend the spread of hours. Such a provision may work in Perth, but not in the country. From country centres bread is sent out by train, perhaps a couple of times a week; and therefore the bread does not need to leave when fresh. I understand that in any case bread cannot be despatched straight out of the oven, but must be allowed to cool a little first.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The baker in the country is subject to the competition of the baker in, say, Merredin, because of the train delivery.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister's object can be achieved without injuring the country baker, who serves a highly useful purpose, though by reason of his limited trade he does not make much. A wide spread of hours is also desirable in view of our climatic conditions.

Mr. STUBBS: I endorse the remarks of the Opposition Leader. Emphatically, if this Bill becomes law it will inflict great hardship on people in the country. Let the Minister place himself in the position of several of the bakers in my constituency, who employ no labour, but bake bread with the assistance of members of their families. They take the night work in turns, and in the daytime they deliver the bread to their customers. If the Bill becomes law, such bakers will be practically compelled to employ labour, which they can ill-afford to do. Surely the Minister will agree to the alteration suggested by the Opposition Leader. The baker who employs no labour should be allowed to start work at any hour in the morning.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: You did not preach that as a storekeeper.

Mr. STUBBS: That is a totally different thing. When I was a storekeeper, I employed labour and paid the ruling rate of wages. I never proposed interference with a man keeping a store with the aid of his own family only.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: But legislation was passed to protect you against him.

Mr. STUBBS: This Bill is reducing legislation to an absolute farce. I shall vote against the clause unless it is amended.

Mr. PANTON: I am unable to follow the previous speaker's argument. If it is a wrong principle to prevent one man from baking at night, it is a wrong principle to prevent any man from doing so. Conversely, it is a good principle to prevent unfair competition.

Mr. Davy: What is unfair competition?

Mr. PANTON: If I am baking on my own employing no one, and am allowed to bake at any time of the night, while the member for West Perth, employing labour to bake, is not allowed to start his men before 8 a.m., I can get my bread out hot to my customers and bring about a position that is causing much trouble to-day.

Mr. Angelo: Indigestion!

Mr. PANTON: The member for West Leith would have to do his round over again with hot bread after having done it once with cold bread. Thus my competition with him would be unfair. The member for Wagin said that certain bakers in his district were baking only with the help of their families.

Mr. Mann: And they are not in opposition to any other baker.

Mr. PANTON: If those people are baking at night, they are delivering in the daytime; and consequently they are either working the round of the clock or having a great deal of broken time.

Mr. Mann: They make an early start in the morning.

Mr. Stubbs: They set their dough at night, and bake it in the morning early.

Mr. PANTON: Anything after 12 o'clock midnight is early in the morning. However, under this clause such people would not be at a great disadvantage. They could set their dough early in the evening and have it finished by 10 o'clock, after which they could rest during the remainder of the night.

Mr. Stubbs: What about the train that leaves at 7 a.m. and has to take bread along the line to feed the navvies?

Mr. PANTON: The navvies would get on as we would down here. Bread baked before 8 a.m. would not be delivered until the next day. I suppose the navvy would not mind waiting for a day any more than I would.

Mr. Mann: You can get your bread the next day, but what about the country areas which have a service of only one train a week?

Mr. PANTON: That would not affect the position because the bakers would bake to fit in with the trains. Reference has been made to the spread of hours. I participated in the conference that fixed the agreement regarding hours.

Mr. Mann: The spread was from 5.30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Mr. PANTON: Yes. That compromise was arrived at because the Master Bakers' Association gave us to understand that it would enable the small men to bake in the day time. In order to allow the small bakers to continue, the operative bakers agreed to the spread of hours. Had that agreement been carried out and had the small men stood to their guns, we would not have the

difficulties that confront us to-day. The small men, however, broke away and baked at night. The result is that the employer labour has to deliver cold bread at 6 a.m. whereas the small man is able to deliver hot bread at that hour and this necessitates the baker employing labour going over the same ground later on in the day with his bread.

Mr. Stubbs: Then confine the Bill to the metropolitan area.

Mr. PANTON: This difficulty increases the cost to the consumer all the time.

Mr. Angelo: Will this reduce the cost to the consumer?

Mr. PANTON: It will go some way towards doing it.

Mr. Davy: Why this solicitude for the exploiter of labour?

Mr. PANTON: Because with the conditions that operate now, the business of the employers of labour may be curtailed and they will have to dispense with the services of some of their employees.

Mr. Davy: The man who ceases to employ will cease to exploit.

Mr. PANTON: I am concerned about the men who have their jobs now. The hon. member would be the first, if the men were put out of employment, to ask why the Government did not do something for the unemployed.

Mr. Mann: How will this proposal reduce the cost of distribution?

Mr. PANTON: By obviating the necessity for duplicating the work on rounds.

Mr. Mann: I do not think that is being done.

Mr. PANTON: I can produce a lot of evidence to show that it is being done. The hon. member had read the "West Australian" recently, he would know that that is so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Have you finished your inquiry on the Royal Commission yet?

Hon. G. Taylor: No fear!

Mr. PANTON: The Leader of the Opposition will be sorry what we have. For my part I will not agree to unfair competition if it can be avoided.

Mr. MANN: The Minister has confined the spread of hours to 10 and has provided very limited opportunities for variation to meet the requirements of the metropolitan area, the various suburbs and the country districts. On the other hand the General

Convention provided for a spread of 17 hours and even the agreement between the operatives and the master bakers here provided for a longer spread than he suggests. All will agree that it is wise to do away with night baking as far as possible, but if a start were made at 5 a.m. and the finish were at 8 o'clock, the latter part of the spread would not be regarded as night work.

Mr. Panton: Make it the 24 hours.

Mr. MANN: The spread of hours to suit the requirements of particular districts could be done by regulation or by the Arbitration Court. So long as the member for Guildford occupies his present official position there will be no difficulty.

Mr. Panton: What official position is that?

Mr. MANN: He controls the baking trade at present.

The Minister for Works: He is the head "doughy."

Mr. Davy: He controls a lot of bakeries.

Mr. MANN: He controls the lot! The Minister might postpone the further consideration of the clause and consult the different interests, not merely the member for Guildford.

The Minister for Works: We adjourned the consideration of the Bill the other night in order to enable the Opposition members to put forward their views.

Mr. MANN: I am giving mine now. The Minister has pointed to the Geneva Convention and asked us to adopt the decisions arrived at by that body. For some reason, however, he has taken seven hours off the period suggested by the Convention.

Mr. Davy: He draws the line at that.

Mr. MANN: Or else he has received instructions from the "master of the trade." Hours that are suitable in winter may not be suitable in summer, but the Minister provides no opportunity for work being done to suit the varied climatic conditions. The member for Guildford, who knows something about bread making, admitted that difficulties attached to the industry at different seasons, more particularly in the summer time. If the hours were so regulated, we would have a better chance of getting good bread rather than sour bread.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Not at all.

Mr. MANN: The hon member admitted that in winter there was a high possibility of the bread being sour.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I did not. I merely admitted there was some difficulty in respect of the dough.

Mr. MANN: That difficulty would be minimised if the Minister agreed to extend the hours either to an earlier start or to a later finish.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Under special circumstances the bakers and the disputes committee, represented by the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton), agreed to a spread of hours from 5.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Those were unreasonable hours, but we were endeavouring to avoid a total cessation of baking. We had not then the protection the Bill will afford, and we agreed to the compromise only in anticipation of this legislation. It would be distinctly unfair to use that compromise now as evidence against the operatives and say that it ought to be embodied in the Bill, for it was agreed to only to maintain industrial peace. A great deal has been said about the conditions in the country.

Mr. Stubbs: At Wagin they are all satisfied.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No, the employees are not. There the master bakers make the dough during the day and go to bed, leaving the employees to bake it by night. It is possible to so organise the business there that the employees could take turns at making the dough by night and baking it during the day. Thus, instead of being at work every night, as at present, they could take it turn about. Even when the baking starts at 5.20 a.m. the dough-maker has to work by night, and so lose the best of his rest. The later the start at baking the longer night rest can the dough-maker have. At Katanning the workers begin at 8 a.m. and finish at 4 p.m. or 5 p.m. So, actually they have day work there already. As for the man at Wagin who does not employ labour outside his own family, the members of his family have called upon the union to protect them.

Hon. G. Taylor: And of course you took prompt action.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: No, we have no power to take action. He can work his family any hours he likes. To enable him to unfairly compete against the other man employing union labour, he has been imposing upon his family to such an extent that members of that family have protested to the union. So it will be seen there is need for

legislation of this kind. At Lake Grace bread is baked during the day, and there is no occasion to give the Wagin man baking by night an advantage over the man at Lake Grace.

Mr. Stubbs: The Wagin man protests against the proposed change.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course he does, for under the existing system he can do better with his hot bread. If the inspector weighs the bread when warm it will be up to weight, but when cooled down, probably, it will be found to be below weight, the water having gone out of it. What the public buy in hot bread is not bread, but water. I have been told by a master baker that his business is 25 per cent. better to him under hot bread conditions than under cold bread conditions.

Mr. Stubbs: Gee whiz!

Mr. Davy: You do not believe that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do. Let the hon. member test it to-morrow morning; let him take a warm loaf and weigh it against a cold one.

Mr. Mann: There would be about an ounce difference.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Why does the master baker desire to market hot bread? Of what advantage is it to him?

Mr. Davy: The public want it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: All that the master baker cares about is that the customer buys bread hot, while it scales well.

Mr. Panton: Mere profiteering.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is purely a question of profit. It is not a matter that will injure anyone. The master bakers will show a little less profit, but the general community will benefit. It is true that temperature has an effect upon bread-making, but a baker can work the same hours in the summer as in the winter. The temperature of the doughs can be altered to meet the different climatic conditions. There is no difficulty about that.

Mr. Stubbs: I am told it cannot be done. Bakers ought to know better than the hon. member.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is being done, and has been done in Perth since 1919.

Mr. Stubbs: By cooling their bakehouses, such as cannot be done in the country.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is easier to cool a bakehouse in the country than in Perth.

Mr. Stubbs: Then I must have been given wrong information.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Of course. The hon. member is putting forward the case of a man who is looking after his own profit to the disregard of the interests of other bakers. The wives of master-bakers, who assist their husbands in the bakehouse, have appealed to me for legislation to protect them against their husbands.

Mr. Mann: In how many cases?

Mr. Davy: They are a lot of dirty wives.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I suppose the husband is an angel to call upon his wife to do her housework all day, and assist him in the bakehouse at night.

Mr. Davy: I do not believe it.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Such a man is not worthy of being called a husband. My sympathy goes out to the wife who is called upon to slave all day and help her husband at night.

Mr. Davy: And she goes to the baker's union to protect her.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: So that he gets an unfair advantage over his competitors.

Mr. Mann: How many cases of that sort are there?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I am glad there are limited in number. There are women praying for the passage of this Bill for the own protection, and that of their children.

Mr. Mann: Do you know of one case?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I have seen a little boy standing on a petrol case trying to scale off between 10.30 and 11 o'clock at night. The father should be ashamed of himself.

Mr. Mann: The call boys in the locomotive workshops are out all night.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: This lad was in a disagreeable bakehouse.

Mr. Mann: And the other boys are out in the rain.

The CHAIRMAN: This crossfiring must cease.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is quite practicable for day baking to go on without injury to anybody.

Mr. Mann: It is impossible.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: It is our duty to legislate in order to give the greatest good to the greatest number. In Midland Junction and Guildford the bakers have never worked on a hot delivery basis. The bread is kept by the master bakers under good conditions and is delivered to the customer.

tomers the next day. In Perth, however, the customers buy the bread hot and hold it until it is fit to use. They are carrying the burden that ought to be carried by the master bakers.

Mr. LINDSAY: The member for Guildford is here to represent one section only. He was secretary of the bakers' union. In the course of his remarks he referred to dispute committees and stop-work meetings.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I said the stop-work meetings had been avoided.

Mr. LINDSAY: The hon. member did refer to stop-work meetings. There are two sides to every question. So far the master bakers have not had their side represented. I do not see why the starting hour of 8 a.m. should be mentioned, because in many industries the starting time is before that hour. In the country districts many bakers have to bake at night, and when a man has his own business he will not work at night if it can be avoided. I have been given information by a master baker and it was different from that supplied by other members. The member for Menzies told the Committee that the reason for the high cost of bread was the double delivery. He said that a cart went round in the early morning with cold bread and another went round later with hot bread. It is quite possible that under the Bill we shall still have hot and cold bread, and the hot bread delivered at noon. Say the carters work eight hours and they finish at three o'clock, they will still deliver hot bread that has been baked in the morning. If it is not right for bakers to bake in the daytime, it is not right to make dough in the daytime. The spread of hours should be from one to nine, and then the bread from the bakehouse can be delivered in the daytime. I am thinking of the general public; I have no desire that they should get indigestion. If night baking is to be cut out what I have suggested is feasible. I cannot understand that the master bakers are out to rob the people, as has been suggested, by delivering hot bread.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: There are two separate doughs; the dough that makes the hot bread is not the dough that makes the cold bread.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have heard no arguments advanced to lead me to believe that here is any alteration desired in the agreement between the master bakers and the employees.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why does the baker like to bake at night?

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not know. If he prefers to bake at night there must be some reason for it, but I do not think it is because he wishes to sell fresh bread. In my district the train comes in at half-past four and people come to the town twice a week to meet it and they buy dry bread. There must be a reason for night baking. No man would stop up all night to bake bread if it was not necessary to do so. I suggest that the best way to get over the difficulty is to limit the hours from one to nine.

Mr. MANN: I would not have spoken again but for the forcible remarks of the member for Guildford, who stated that the master bakers were out to rob the people.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is not right.

Mr. MANN: The hon. member did not mince his words. He said the master bakers sold hot bread to defraud the people.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: I did not. I never used the word defraud.

Mr. MANN: No, but I am using it. In effect that was what the hon. member said.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, I gave you the facts. I said the bread was light when it was sold hot.

Mr. MANN: I will endeavour to show that by day baking the master bakers will sell more hot bread than by night baking. Suppose they start at 10 o'clock they will have their first batch of bread out between two and three o'clock, and on being taken out in the morning that bread will be cold. The second batch will also be delivered cold. If they start baking at 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning the first cart will go out shortly after noon with hot bread, and the next lot will also go out with hot bread.

Mr. Pantou: They cannot put a heavy load of hot bread on the cart.

Mr. MANN: If the Bill becomes law, the bakers will have to get new carts, because they cannot stack hot bread as they stack cold bread. The custom of night baking has been handed down for generations and the trade has been organised on those lines. It takes a good while to change the organisation.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: We have had it for six years.

Mr. MANN: I do not think the masters desire to revert to night baking. They are quite agreeable to day baking under a reasonable spread of hours. If the Minister

will agree to an extension of the spread of hours, I do not think the masters will oppose it, but the short spread provided for under this Bill is unworkable. The master bakers are not a lot of pirates, as the member for Guildford would have us believe, but are business men desirous of conducting their business on honest lines. They give the public as fair a deal as do any other traders.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so.

Mr. MANN: If the hon. member admits that they are honest men, I am satisfied.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: They are up to the standard of the average business man who looks after the profits first of all.

Mr. MANN: If the Minister will agree to an extension of the spread of hours, there will not be much opposition to the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In replying to the second reading discussion the other night, I said I was not wedded to the spread of hours fixed in the Bill, but would be glad to have the ideas of representatives of outback districts, and would if possible meet them if there were any difficulties arising out of the spread of hours fixed in the Bill. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) says the master bakers' views have not been considered. I met representatives of the master bakers this afternoon. There were present representatives of country employers, master bakers, and bakers who do not employ labour. They have made a suggestion as to hours that I want time to consider, and to discuss with the representatives of the union, so I propose to defer further consideration to give time to investigate their proposition.

Progress reported.

BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX ASSESSMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Bill with an amendment.

Standing Orders Suspension.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister): I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the message from the Legislative Council, dealing with the Entertainments Tax Assessment Bill, to be taken into consideration forthwith.

I desire to get the Bill finalised as early as possible. There is only one amendment suggested by the Legislative Council and, in my opinion, it is not really an amendment. It involves the striking out of Clause 11 of the word "each" which had no right to appear in the clause.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is really to correct an error?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You want to collect the tax.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes, on the 16th October.

Mr. SPEAKER: It will be necessary for the motion to be carried by an absolute majority of the House.

Question passed.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Hon. S. W. Munsie (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The amendment to strike out of line 3, Clause 11, the word "each." There is no sense or meaning in including the word. I do not know how the clause was passed without its being noticed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why did you put it there?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I do not think I am responsible for it. The Federal Act provides for the prosecution of a person who attends as well as the proprietor of an entertainment in respect of which tax is not paid, and the word "each" appears in the Federal Act. I saw no force in making the patron liable if he gained admission to an entertainment in respect of which the entertainment tax was not paid. How would a patron know whether the proprietor was paying the tax or not? In many instances a charge of 1s is made for admission and the proprietor pays the tax. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr. STUBBS: Since the Bill passed the Assembly I have received a communication from the Wagin band committee who run a picture show and devote the whole of the proceeds to charity. They wish to have inserted in the Bill an amendment to exempt them from paying the entertainments tax.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If what you say is correct, they are exempt under the Act at present.

* Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—ENTERTAINMENTS TAX.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LAND DRAINAGE.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; Hon. J Cunningham (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Interpretation:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: With reference to the definition of adjoining land, the Minister knows that in all recent surveys a strip of land is reserved to the Crown on either side of a river or watercourse of any size. Would that be a highway within the meaning of the Bill? If not, we should add "waterways" to the definition of "Adjoining."

Hon. J. Cunningham: Do you refer to a navigable river?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

Hon. J. Cunningham: If a watercourse is not navigable, it cannot be considered a highway.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Harvey River, for example, has a strip of land on either side reserved for the Crown. If it is not a highway, the amendment I have suggested is necessary. Adjacent land should still be considered adjoining land even if separated by a river like the Harvey.

Mr. George: Land is reserved to the Crown on each side of the Harvey River all the way through, and large parts of it are cultivated.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I mean in connection with drainage works.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "Adjoining" the word "or," between "road" and "highway," be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

That the definition of "Adjoining" there be added "or waterway."

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I have no objection to the amendment but I would like to know what the Opposition Leader means by "waterway." Does he mean a small rivulet, just a trickle of water, or a navigable river? There are other streams in Western Australia besides the Harvey. Where will this definition land us?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection to the Minister getting a better definition if he can. The amendment would apply in such a case as that of the Harvey River, where the Crown has, and rightly so, possession of the watercourse.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What about other districts? It is not a question of the Harvey alone. Why not insert "or waterway owned by the Crown"?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The words could not apply if the waterway were not owned by the Crown.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I am not yet prepared to accept the amendment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then the Minister should not have accepted the deletion of the word "or." What does the Minister want to put in?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I have suggested to the Opposition Leader the insertion of "or waterway owned by the Crown."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The watercourse could not be owned by anybody else. I ask leave to add to my amendment the words "owned by the Crown."

Leave given; the words added.

Mr. GEORGE: In the case of numerous Western Australian rivers the title to the land goes to the middle of the river. The Lunenburg and the Murray are cases in point. The Minister will have to be careful about his definition, or we shall be tied in a knot.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The words "owned by the Crown" are superfluous. This Bill will only apply where the Crown is in possession.

Hon. J. Cunningham: No. If it becomes an Act, it will have general application.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Will the Minister under this Bill be able to deal with a stream running through private property? There are running through private property in this part of Western Australia numerous streams which are called rivers

here, although in the Eastern States they would not be called rivers. Surely this Bill will not affect them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I ask leave to alter my amendment by substituting "watercourse" for "waterway."

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Opposition Leader does not seem to know what he wants, though he has had ample time to consider the Bill, which was introduced some weeks ago.

Leave given; the amendment altered accordingly.

Amendment, as added to and altered, put and passed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I wish to point out that there is no interpretation of "State drains," which are referred to in Clause 9. There is a definition of "main drains," but not of "State drains."

Hon. J. Cunningham: There is no mention of State drains in the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes; in Subclause (3) of Clause 9.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 7 and 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—The Minister may exercise the powers of a board:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why does the Minister ask for so much authority under this clause?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Opposition Leader, on the second reading, drew attention to the necessity for the construction of drains which could be regarded as national works. The Minister needs all the powers of a board in order to carry out national works of that kind. Moreover, in this State there are drainage boards which have ceased to function. There have also been drainage boards that have not complied with the provisions of the present Act, many having neglected to carry out the duties for which they were appointed. It has been necessary to dissolve some boards, and the Minister has stepped in and carried out their functions. Difficulties have arisen between boards and the Minister in connection with certain works, and the Minister has found it necessary, in the interests of the settlers themselves, to take certain action. Seeing that the Government propose to launch out on extensive drainage works, these powers are necessary, more especially in connection with works of a national character. The Leader

of the Opposition mentioned that there was no indication in the Bill that the Government proposed to do anything in the nature of national drainage construction. On the other hand, there is such provision in Clause 60, and other clauses deal with the raising of money for those national works.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause provides the Minister with wide powers, which he may exercise when a board fails to do its duty, and he can also exercise all the powers of a board until such board is formed.

Hon. J. Cunningham: And those powers are necessary, more especially when you consider the large sums of money involved in construction works.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the Minister should not have power to expend large sums of money in the way he suggests without consulting the board or the local authority.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The Minister would have to consult Parliament first regarding the money to be spent.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under the clause the Minister can carry out work for a considerable time, and before the works are of use to the people in a district, he can impose taxation upon them. Included in the clause relating to the powers and authorities to be exercised by the Minister are the saving words "except the power to borrow money." I do not know how the Minister will be able to carry out work if he cannot borrow the necessary money.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Parliament will vote the money and the Treasurer will make it available.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Perhaps, in another sphere, the member for West Perth, if he were consulted by those concerned, could successfully resist the effort of the Minister to impose upon a board the responsibility for expenditure before that board was consulted. The clause leaves room for litigation. The Minister claims that until a board is constituted he can constitute himself as a board. Where work is to be undertaken in a district, the people concerned should express a wish for the work to be done at their expense.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That is already provided for in the Bill. The people will be consulted, and if a majority are in opposition the work will not be gone on with.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the Minister does not propose to consult the people.

Hon. J. Cunningham: But the Bill contains that provision and the Minister must observe that condition.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause provides that the Minister can decide upon drainage works without consulting the people. I wish the Minister would read his Bill.

Hon. J. Cunningham: If the Leader of the Opposition had read the Bill he would not be wasting time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must deal with the clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause sets out clearly that the Minister may declare a drainage area and that he may impose taxation.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You are wrong. Clause 60 deals with the position.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Clause 60 is not under discussion.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The position is not as the Minister suggests, for he will have power to constitute himself a board for any length of time he pleases. That is not right. The Minister can take over the control of the affairs of a board after dissolution, if the board fails to carry out its duties to the satisfaction of the Minister. There seems to be no appeal provided and I do not know that the Minister can be prevented from taking control.

Hon. J. Cunningham: No Minister would take on that work if it were avoidable. I do not know that the former Minister for Works was anxious to assume extra duties and interfere with a board that was carrying on its work properly.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In view of the extraordinary powers that we are asked to vest in the Minister, we should be careful in agreeing to a Bill of this description. The Honorary Minister said that there was no mention of a State drain in the Bill. In Subclause 3 there is provision for a State drain but there is no definition to show what a State drain is.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That comes under the heading of main drain.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we say that the Honorary Minister shall be the law and nothing else is necessary, it will be all right. While I have every confidence in him, I do not know who may fol-

low him. I hope the Honorary Minister will tell us why he desires to have all the powers of a board before it is constituted, and, merely upon his determination, to declare a drainage area. Will he impose taxation before a drainage work is completed? Of course it may be necessary to do so where a work is clearly a national work. If the Minister wishes to take power to levy taxation, that is quite another matter.

Mr. GEORGE: A Drainage Bill has been wanted for many years. At present we have quite a lot of little separate drainage schemes requiring to be co-ordinated. I cannot see how we can reasonably expect the Minister to take the immense responsibility the Bill will place upon him, unless he has the necessary power to command the respect of all those who will be raising objections. It will never be possible to get all the low-lying lands of the South-West into a comprehensive drainage scheme without the Bill. We should be doing wrong with the Bill if we were not in it to give the Minister reasonable power to deal with all the troubles he will have in carrying out such a scheme. If the board cannot do its work, the Minister must step in and supersede the board. Either we should throw out the Bill or in it give the Minister reasonable powers to carry out the great work ahead of him.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is essential that the Minister should have these powers. Large works will be under construction, and the Minister must be fully clothed with power before he can undertake those works. As to taxation, no Minister would be anxious to hang on any longer than was necessary. As soon as it is possible to have drainage boards appointed, the whole responsibility will be passed to them. The Minister will have power to carry out the duties of a board before the board is constituted, and after the board is dissolved. Certain national works are under construction at present, and the Minister will need the widest possible powers in respect of them, otherwise we cannot make much progress.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is conceivable that the drainage schemes are already in hand, and the Minister may wish to exercise control until the boards are appointed. But the clause does not say he shall have the power of a board before the board is constituted.

Hon. J. Cunningham: He must have that power.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, except for some special reasons.

The Minister for Lands: There are plenty of special reasons.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What is the objection to the Minister having the necessary power?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No objection whatever, but why should the Minister want all the power asked for in the clause? The Minister is to declare a district without consultation with the people. As a rule people are consulted before drainage schemes are decided upon. It is unthinkable that the House should agree to the Minister deciding that certain land shall be formed into a drainage district and spending what he likes without consultation with the landowners, although imposing on them very great responsibility for payment for the scheme. Apparently the Minister proposes to start work before the appointment of a board. That does not seem to be right. When we reach Clause 11, providing for the setting aside of districts, we shall endeavour to secure an amendment. I thought the Minister for Lands would have realised—

The Minister for Lands: I realise that your ideas on the subject are entirely wrong.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What would happen if some Minister decided to run a tramway through to East Fremantle without consulting either the people there or Parliament? The Minister for Lands would be the first to object.

The Minister for Lands: I cannot get them to run a tramway there. For over 20 years I have wanted a railway there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not fair that on the judgment of the Minister the people should have to foot the expenditure the Minister may determine upon in respect of drainage. I will vote against the clause.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Take the Busselton area, where we have hundreds of farms under group settlement. Who should say whether or not a drainage scheme should be started there? For by starting such a scheme to improve those farms we should be improving a good deal of private property as well. Only the Government, through the Minister, should have a controlling voice in the matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The charges will depend upon what the Minister proposes as a national work.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Abba River is going to be straightened up, and the Sabina River also, and a drain taken right through the Wonnerup district. If we had to wait until the people there requested that the work should be done, it would not be done at all, and yet they would benefit from it once it was done. It is necessary that the Bill should contain these powers. The greatest difficulty in this State has been that when works have been carried out, after a demand from the people, there has been a complaint about paying for them. It is better that the people should know beforehand what it is likely they will have to pay for, for they will not come begging to the Government quite so often. As it is we shall lose a year in parts of the South-West because land has not been drained before. The area for a drainage scheme will not be proclaimed without the recommendation of the board.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Constitution and abolition of drainage districts:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister by this clause does not propose to consult the people concerned.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Not in connection with the declaration of a drainage district.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This power is too wide.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Similar power is contained in the Water Boards Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is a deadly weapon to place in the hands of the Minister.

Hon. J. Cunningham: If this clause were deleted no one would have power to declare any drainage district.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister must take the responsibility, but the powers given here are too wide.

The Minister for Lands: Not wider than they are in other Acts of the kind.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Government take power to spend money and charge the people concerned, and also to declare any drainage district. I hope the clause will not be passed.

Mr. DAVY: These powers should not be given to the Minister without some qualification. Under Section 8 of the Road Districts Act there are powers very similar to this, but a succeeding section provides that

the Minister shall publish his intention to exercise these powers, thus giving the people concerned an opportunity of objecting. There appears to be no such provision in this Bill.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That is contained in Clause 60.

Mr. DAVY: That deals only with the construction and maintenance of the work. I am talking about the powers conferred on the Minister to constitute drainage districts, specify the boundaries, or to abolish districts. The Minister should give the same type of notice as is provided for in the Act to which I have referred.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The member for West Perth stressed the point that the Minister has power to abolish a district. The answer to that has already been given by the Minister for Lands. There are areas in the South-West, in the developmental stage, that are increasing the drainage work to be carried out. Drainage districts are already established, and for the purpose of bringing in larger districts it is essential to abolish districts that are already formed and to declare new ones. There are various reasons why the Minister should have power to declare districts. If the Minister had not the power, what would be the use of passing legislation such as this. We know the condition that drainage districts and boards have drifted into. It is owing to the experience gained over a number of years in connection with the administration of the present Drainage Act that it has been found necessary to introduce the Bill. In the past the Minister has not had the necessary power; there has been too much restriction. The underlying object of the proposed legislation is to cope with the developmental policy in the South-West.

Mr. DAVY: The Minister has not yet told us why he should be able to exercise these powers without giving notice of his intention to do so, and giving the people the opportunity to come along and show cause why he should not do so. I can see no reason why the Minister should not give notice of his intention and to listen to objections that may be brought forward from various sources.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The power given by the clause is very wide.

The Minister for Lands: In one case the Government have to find the money and in the other the road districts have to find it.

Hon. J. Cunningham: This is not a party measure; you can pass it if you like or you can reject it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister can impose any charge he pleases, on any area he pleases, if the clause is passed.

The Minister for Lands: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I protest against the clause. The Minister will be able to do what he pleases and no one will be able to say him nay.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You said a similar clause did not already exist. Refresh your memory by reading Section 4 of the Water Boards Act, 1904.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12—Governor-in-Council may, by order, alter boundaries of districts, etc.:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under this clause the Minister can do anything he pleases. The clause will confer very wide powers upon the Minister. I do not know that Lenin in all his glory ever exercised such authority over any party in Russia. If he did, his power was pretty absolute. This clause will make absolute the power of the Minister. I shall vote against the clause, because it may work considerable injustice. It contains far greater power than any Minister should ask.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Why did you insert it in the Water Boards Act?

The Minister for Lands: Why did you insert it in this Bill?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not. I resent the statement that I drafted this Bill. I did nothing of the kind.

The Minister for Lands: You have to take the responsibility.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, it was drafted when the present Minister was in office previously. I think we should report progress. We have already done too much harm by passing the other clauses of the Bill.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You were Premier when the Bill was prepared, and I have an idea you sent it to the departmental officers for an opinion. You appear to have gone very thoroughly into the drafting of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I had nothing to do with the drafting of it.

The Minister for Lands: It is one of the best Bills you ever drafted.

Mr. Lindsay: According to the Leader of the Opposition, it does not appear to be a very good Bill.

The Minister for Lands: Because he was over here when he drafted it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did not draft it.

Hon. J. Cunningham: It was such a good Bill that we could not improve upon it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister should originate his own legislation.

Hon. J. Cunningham: You left home and I had to take the baby.

The CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition must confine his remarks to the clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is the exercise of the powers under the clause that will work the mischief.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	25
Noes	..	..	..	14
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	11
				—

stituting a board. This is an entirely new provision.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: This is necessary in order to give those people who would come within the drainage district of a new area an opportunity to obtain representation on the board. Wherever an alteration is made, the local people should be consulted.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 15—Drainage boards:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister can act without the appointment of a board in this case.

The Minister for Lands: As he will have to do in a large number of cases, because the people will have no money with which to do the work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Government would have mighty little money if the people did not give it to them.

The Minister for Lands: They would have to borrow it. This work will have to be carried out with borrowed money.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I had hoped that our requests would receive some consideration at the hands of the Minister.

The Minister for Lands: Bring forward something of some importance.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is to be a board or not. He is all-powerful.

Hon. J. Cunningham: What improvements can you suggest?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is paid to do that work. He should provide for the appointment of a board at the request of the landholders of the district. He could then define the duties of such boards. Here he proposes to say whether there should be a board or not. He is all-powerful.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Constitution of boards:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister explain the meaning of Subclause (2), which provides that the board shall consist of elective members, the number to be three or a multiple of three.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The board may be constituted of three, six, nine or 15 members if the Governor approves.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why do you not fix the number?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It can be fixed.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18 to 20—agreed to.

AYES.	
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Millington
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Mr. Angelo	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Barnard	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Davy	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Denton	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)
Sir James Mitchell	

Clause thus passed.

Clause 13—agreed to.

[Mr. Lutey took the Chair.]

Clause 14—Effect on boards:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: All boards should be constituted in the same way. There is no need for the Minister to ask for extraordinary powers when recon-

Clause 21—Disqualifications:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister explain why this disqualification has been provided with regard to a man being connected with a company? As the clause is drafted, one man may not be eligible to become a member of the board, and another who holds one share less may be eligible.

Mr. MANN: The disqualification applies to undischarged bankrupts. Surely a person convicted of fraud or a criminal offence should be disqualified just as much.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Your reference to him is after he has paid the penalty of his offence.

Mr. MANN: But an undischarged bankrupt, a man who possibly through no fault of his own has been compelled to appeal to the Insolvency Court, is to be disqualified.

Hon. J. Cunningham: He is also disqualified to sit in this House.

Mr. MANN: The distinction is not equitable. A convicted offender is not to be disqualified.

The Minister for Lands: I am glad you said "convicted." Many guilty persons have not been convicted.

Mr. MANN: Will the Minister explain why an undischarged bankrupt is not to be permitted to sit, while a person guilty of fraud is to be permitted?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Some remarkable arguments have been advanced upon this Bill. Observe the straits to which the member for Perth is pushed in finding something to say on the Bill! The hon. member knows full well that an undischarged bankrupt is not permitted to sit on any board handling Government money. A person who has been convicted of an offence and has paid the penalty comes out clear; and if the people desire to elect him, which they do on exceedingly rare occasions, there should be nothing to debar him from taking his seat.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 22 to 30—agreed to.

Clause 31—Each elector to have one vote:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I should like to know from the Minister for Lands whether a provision of this kind operates in the municipality of Fremantle? No matter what a man's obligations to pay may be under this Bill, every man shall have one vote.

The Minister for Lands: That is so in every part of the world except Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This provision is not to be found in the Road Districts Act, which the Minister for Lands has quoted freely.

The Minister for Lands: It is quite all right in this Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why has it been put into this Bill?

Hon. J. Cunningham: For the purpose of enabling the board to be elected.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why not give a vote to everybody in the district, irrespective of whether he owns land or pays rates or incurs any responsibility? Members opposite pass measures while we here simply have the pleasure of protesting. Perhaps the Government will tell us what is done in China, Japan, or Paraguay. Why is the innovation made in this measure?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The principle is that of one man one vote, with which I quite agree. That is the reason for the clause.

Mr. LINDSAY: This is a new provision. Under the Road Districts Act one may have up to four votes, according to the unimproved capital value of one's land. The election of members of a board is quite a different matter from the election of members of Parliament, because in the former case the cost of works proposed is a serious matter for the people concerned. As regards this Bill I do not agree with the principle of one man one vote.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is a provision in the Road Districts Act which will, in all probability, not be found in any other Act and it sets out that a non-resident cannot vote respecting a loan proposal, even if he is a ratepayer.

Mr. Sampson: The man who lives in the district knows best.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: In this instance, whether he is a resident or not, he has the power to vote, but most of this work will be carried out by loan. I asked the Parliamentary Draftsman to examine the different Acts in existence to ascertain if plural voting existed anywhere, and he could not find any such instances outside Australia. Even in Australia it is being eliminated gradually. It is not acres or sheep that should count, but rather brains. The member for Toodyay has referred to the Roads Districts Act and desires to see fair play under the Bill because fair play has been experienced under the Act he mentioned. Under that legislation, however, if

a man has property in a district he is not entitled to a vote regarding a loan proposal, if he is an absentee. Here it is a case of loan moneys being expended and the rates to be struck will be those necessary to cover interest and sinking fund only. A man who owns a small property may have a greater interest in a district than a person holding a large area, because the small man may be entirely dependent upon the success of his property. The one man one vote system is the best, and there is no justification for plural voting, apart from the argument that the big man pays a little extra. The last time a proposal of this description was before Parliament it was lost on the casting vote of the Chairman.

Mr. SAMPSON: This proposal would be reasonable if a uniform charge were made respecting the different holdings, but the rates must vary in accordance with the unimproved values of properties.

The Minister for Lands: That is so, but they are uniform to that extent.

Mr. SAMPSON: Surely the man who pays a large amount in rates should have greater voting power than a man who has a small holding and pays a small amount in rates. Under our Road Districts Act it is possible for a ratepayer to have his name on the roll if he pays about 2s. 6d. If we carried that provision a little further, we would say that everyone who lives in a district, irrespective of whether he contributed to the revenue of a board or not, should be given a vote. When it comes to deciding the question regarding a loan the position is different, because those who live in a district are able to say whether the proposed loan is justified. Those who do not live in the district are not qualified to express an opinion to the same extent. Thus it was that the Road Districts Act limited the power of voting to residents in a district. That applies only in respect of the question of raising a loan. If the vote were not confined to resident owners, a district might be held up indefinitely, because the voters living at a distance would be out of touch with its requirements.

Mr. DAVY: There is no kind of an election for which a stronger case can be made out for voting according to property than an election under the Bill. One might possibly say something in favour of one man one vote for a municipal election; because the powers of a municipality embrace all sorts of activities and affect the happiness

and prosperity of an individual even if he have no property. But I cannot see how one can say very much in favour of such a system under a Drainage Bill, the whole purpose of which is to elect a board with power to carry out drainage that will assist the properties in the district. Surely a man with 2,000 acres, should have more voice as to the way in which a main drain is to be put down than the man with, say, five acres! Under the Bill a man with half an acre would have the same voice on a question of drainage as a man cultivating a really big farm with an extensive irrigation plant. Peculiarly, under the Bill there is an almost unanswerable case why a man's voting power should depend upon his interest in the concern controlled by the board.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 14th October, 1925.

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

QUESTION — RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION, SALMON GUMS-NORSEMAN.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN asked the Chief Secretary: When is construction work on the Salmon Gums-Norseman railway to be commenced?