

tained. I want the clause to be definite and to say that the price shall be fixed. The reason why I seek the insertion of the words "subject as hereinafter provided" is that I propose to move a further amendment, namely to strike out in the next line the words "but with due regard to the prices to be charged by millers for the products of wheat," with a view to the insertion of words establishing a maximum price of 7s. and a minimum price of 5s. per bushel.

The PREMIER: I suggest that the better course would be to let the clause go as it is, for the present, and deal with it on re-committal.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I suggest that we now report progress, so that the Leader of the Opposition may have an opportunity of placing his amendment on the Notice Paper.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I regret that the amendment is not intelligible to members. It was drafted by the gentleman who drafted the Bill, namely the Solicitor General. It is not my fault that the amendment does not appear on the Notice Paper, since I asked the Solicitor General to have it placed there, and he said he would do so. I understand, however, that the Premier told the Solicitor General it was unnecessary.

The Premier: Well, the amendment is so easily understood.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is how it appears to me.

The PREMIER: When the Solicitor General asked me whether it was worth while printing an addendum to the Notice Paper for the purpose of this amendment, I said it was not worth while, as the amendment was so simple—a question of a maximum of 7s. and a minimum of 5s. per bushel for local consumption.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 10.36 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 21st September, 1921.

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

### QUEENSLAND COLLIERY DISASTER.

Message in reply.

The PRESIDENT: I have to announce to hon. members that I have received the following telegram from the Premier of Queensland in answer to the telegram despatched by myself yesterday—

The President, Legislative Council.  
Thanks for your wire respecting the appalling disaster at Mount Mulligan. (Signed)  
Theodore, Premier.

### QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT CASES.

Hon. J. DUFFELL asked the Minister for Education: Will the Minister lay on the Table of the House a return showing—1, The number of cases brought before the Arbitration Court since the 1st of January, 1913. 2, The number of cases which resulted in an increase of wages, and the number in which increases were refused. 3, The number of cases in which the decisions of the Court were deemed unsatisfactory by the workers, and led to strikes or other action on their part. 4, The number of cases which were deemed unsatisfactory by the employers, and what action was taken by them in consequence. 5, The number and amount of fines inflicted by the Court on registered unions, and the amount received in respect of such fines.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied—While it is not usual to furnish such returns, if the hon. member will move for a return, and the House concurs, it will be furnished, excepting the information asked for in 3 and 4 in respect of which there are no official records from which the information can be compiled.

### QUESTION—STATE RECEIVING HOME.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many children are there at

the State Receiving Home? 2, What are the ages of the children? 3, How long has each child been an inmate of the Home?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied—1, 41 (25 girls and 16 boys). 2, Ages range from 6 months to 17 years. 3, Average period of residence—girls 62 days, boys 47 days

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. A. H. Panton (for Hon. J. Cornell), leave of absence for three consecutive sittings of the House granted to Hon. T. Moore (Central) on the ground of urgent private business.

#### BILL—RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS.

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

#### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Fisheries Act Amendment.

Passed.

2, Official Trustee.

Transmitted to the Assembly.

#### BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £542,000.

##### Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.36]: At the commencement of this session a Supply Bill was passed covering the requirements of the Government for the period of two months, namely, July and August. The Bill now presented, covers the requirements for the current month of September. It had been thought that the Budget, together with the Estimates of receipts and expenditure for the year would have been submitted before it was necessary to bring this Supply Bill forward, although it has been very unusual for a Budget to be delivered at such an early stage of the session. As members will doubtless fully realise, the task of the Treasurer in preparing the Budget this year has been an unusually heavy one. To my personal knowledge the Treasurer has devoted a great deal of time and attention to the Budget during the last few weeks in particular, and the work is now completed. The Budget Speech will be delivered on Tuesday next and it is necessary, pending the passing of the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill, that Supply shall be granted covering the month of September. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.39]: Owing to an unfortunate set of circumstances, I was unable to be present when the Address-in-reply was before this Chamber. As I did not have an opportunity of giving

expression to some of my views on that occasion, I hope the House will pardon me if I have somewhat more to say at the present time than is usually the case. I am reminded of a statement that appeared in the Press when the last Supply Bill was before the House two months ago. According to that statement, Mr. Lynn said: "I presume this will be the only opportunity we will have of offering any remarks upon the finances of the State. The Supply Bill will be passed to-day and I understand the Estimates will be ready for presentation on the last day of the session." Now this is the point I wish to make. The Leader of the House said: "Later on, there will be another Supply Bill, if that is the case." Are we to assume that, as we have a Supply Bill now, as indicated by the Minister in his interjection, on the last day of the session we will have the Estimates in the usual way?

The Minister for Education: I hope not.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I hope not too. On many occasions the House has threatened to take a determined stand in connection with the finances, but for some unaccountable reason it has always been put off till a more convenient season. I am ready to take the stand to-day, as I have always been, during the last five years. I am ready to say that the present expenditure must cease and some attempt must be made to bring the daily expenditure within the limits of the daily revenue. It may be necessary to say some hard things during the course of this debate. So far as the individual members of the Ministry are concerned, I have a very great regard for them in their private capacity. I would do almost anything for them if they were in difficulties; I would do almost anything for them for health's sake, for instance, and for their personal welfare. In view of their record extending over the last year or two, however, one has to contemplate their past actions and say that, while one likes them personally, in the interests of the State they should be extinguished politically. I do not want to confuse the personal with the political element. Politically, I say that a large percentage of the Ministers to-day have no justification for remaining in office, for the simple reason that they have made no attempt to carry out their promises. The Supply Bill which we are asked to pass to cover the month's requirements represents a sum of £542,000. No one knows better than the Leader of the House that the actual requirements of the State are at least £100,000 more than the sum asked for. On the basis of last year's expenditure, and I understand that this year's expenditure is more than that of last year, the monthly requirements amount to £650,000 and not £542,000. It will thus be seen that the Government are asking the House for £100,000 less than they know is necessary to enable them to carry on.

Hon. E. Rose: What about economies?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We will see about the economies later on. What is the position of the State to-day? Apart from Treasury

bills, which run into some millions, the indebtedness of the State on the 30th June was about 42 million pounds.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Where do you get those figures?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: From the quarterly "Statistical Abstract." The hon. member will understand that I am using round figures. On page 6 of the "Abstract," however, the actual figures are given as £41,227,938, without overdrafts at the London Westminster and Parr's Bank, Treasury bills, and so on.

Hon. A. Sanderson: That is as at the 31st December last.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There has been no alteration since then that I can find. I remarked previously that apart from Treasury bills, which represent a considerable sum of money and huge overdrafts due to banks in London and elsewhere, that is the position as I find it. Apart from that there is a Federal loan indebtedness somewhere in the vicinity of 350 million pounds, and I presume this State is responsible for its quota. On a per capita calculation, our proportion of that 350 millions would be about 20 millions sterling. Now the question arises as to how this forty odd millions has been expended by the State. Has it been expended in profitable concerns—revenue earning concerns, interest earning concerns? Let me first of all deal with the railways. Last year the railways spent £237,375 more than they estimated to spend in order to earn £36,389 less than they estimated to earn. They were £275,000 out in their calculation for the year, and yet to-day we find the Railway Department sending out pill-boxed invitations to members of Parliament to visit the Midland Junction workshops and lunch in the Midland Junction town hall.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Did not you go?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No. It is the only invitation I have never replied to. I was afraid to reply to it in case I might say something which would not be complimentary. However, that is the position: £275,000 out in their calculations, and on the strength of it a free lunch at Midland Junction. If the Government allow the affairs of the country to be burlesqued in this manner, I shall not be one to assist to provide the funds with which to do it. I pass now to point out how the 42 millions of money has been spent and what is being done with the works on which it has been expended. We have three-quarters of a million to a million of money locked up in the Wyndham Meat Works and this season the Government were afraid to open the doors. If they had opened the works and carried on and slaughtered the 15,000 head of cattle they estimated to slaughter, the loss would have been £165,000, and I can assure members that I am not talking without the book. The Government, however, kept the doors of the meat works closed, and they are facing a loss of £75,000 for interest and sinking fund.

Hon. J. Ewing: It looks as if that will be the position for all time.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is the position at present. I took a deputation to the Premier at the time when the Government intimated their intention not to open the works this season, and the Premier gave me the figures, and I was astounded. He rang his bell and asked Mr. Shapecott to tell the General Manager, Mr. McGhie, to give me all the information, and when I saw the facts I said to the Premier, "I cannot ask you to open those works." By keeping the works closed we were faced with a loss of £75,000 by way of interest and sinking fund. If the works had been operated, the loss for the year would have been £165,000.

Hon. H. Stewart: What do you advise should be done?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The works could handle only 15,000 head of cattle.

The Minister for Education: No; more than that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is all the works could have handled this year.

The Minister for Education: They have handled far more in one season.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: More cattle can be handled at those works, only on one condition, and that is that the overseas steamers are available to clear out the insulated chambers. All that the Government proposed to handle this year on the insulated space available was 15,000 head. I ask members to consider whether 15,000 head of cattle could stand an interest and sinking fund charge of £75,000? It would mean that every bullock that walked into the works would carry a penalty of £5 by way of interest and sinking fund, a sum which would paralyse any industry.

Hon. H. Stewart: What should be done?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is only one thing to be done; that is to sell the works at any price and let someone else try to do something with them. What the squatters were concerned about was that a private company should get hold of the works instead of having them operating under State enterprise. I speak on behalf of the pastoralists of Kimberley when I say that they have had experience of State enterprise, and they have had experience of private enterprise, and they can get more equitable treatment from private enterprise than they can from State enterprise when it comes to a business deal.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Why do not the pastoralists lease the works?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: What, on a capital of £800,000, with £75,000 interest and sinking fund, a penalty of £5 per head for every bullock that passes into the works! Why did the Government buy the 15,000 bullocks this year and then not take delivery of them? They purchased the bullocks for approximately £7 10s. on the average. If they had handled them, the only way the works could have been made to pay, without making any profit, would have been for the squatters to have given them the bullocks worth £7 10s., and an addi-

tional sum of £3 10s. to take them over. These are their own figures, viz., an estimated loss of £165,000 on 15,000 bullocks; an average loss of £11 per head. This is the sort of concern the money of the country is tangled up with, and the sooner we get rid of the works the better.

Hon. J. Duffell: What could the Government get for them, £400,000?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I would rather not answer that question. I understand that there is a possibility of someone making an offer for the works, and I do not want to fix any price upon them. All I wish to say is that the Government can never operate them to the advantage of the State or of the parties concerned. There are a number of people in the district dependent entirely on the sale of their cattle for bread and butter. The Government have had to come to their assistance, and provide sufficient money for them to carry on until means can be found to treat their products either inside or outside the Wyndham Meat Works. We have no balance sheet for the Wyndham Meat Works—at least I have not been able to discover that a balance sheet was available—but we have the Treasury figures, the debits and the credits, and I presume these are on revenue account and not on capital account. The figures show that the Treasury has debited the works for the year ended the 30th June last with £676,417, and has credited them for the same year with £375,244. It will be seen that the Treasury has financed the Wyndham Meat Works to the extent of £301,173 during the last financial year. I do not know whether it was the quantity of meat on hand—

The Minister for Education: A lot of that is capital account.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: These are the figures given to us. The trouble is that we are given a Treasury statement and later the Minister comes along with an explanation that the statement is not correct, but that certain deductions and additions should be made. I urge the Minister that if the Government publish anything at all, they should publish what is correct, and if they cannot publish a correct statement, then they should publish nothing at all. I maintain that the Treasury figures as published show that the Treasury financed the Wyndham Meat Works last year to the extent of £301,173. If we have to borrow money at 6½ per cent., we cannot afford to lock it up in a concern of this kind. Now I pass to the State Steamship Service. When the State steamships were introduced on the North-West coast in the days of the Labour Government, I was the only man on the floor of this House, outside of Labour members, who stood up and justified the Government's action. I contended that a monopoly existed and that if it was good to provide railways for one part of the State, it was equally right where railways could not be built, to provide ships. However, after our experience of the State steamships, I repeat that private companies operating on the North-West coast are more equitable in their treat-

ment of clients than the State steamship service. The latter do not care how they run whether they adhere to the time table or not whether they carry goods or do not. They do exactly as they like. It appears to me that there is no public morality at all in connection with any of the State trading concerns. They do just as they like. The Treasury figures in connection with the State steamships show that the debits for the year were £302,658, and the credits £275,943. According to those figures the Treasury financed the State steamships to the tune of £110,725 for the year ended 30th June last. Now what have we got to-day in the way of steam ships? We have the "Bambra." I do not quite know who owns her; originally she was a German ship loaned by the Federal Government to the Western Australian Government, I believe. She is named the "Bambra," but someone recently remarked, and not without justification, that she should have been named the "Beacon" because she was always to be found on a bank where beacons generally are. We have the "Eucla" running on the south coast and not earning grease for the engines. We have the "Kangaroo." When this vessel was purchased we were told she was to open up the trade between Fremantle, the North-West ports and Singapore. We have had this vessel for five years, and during that period she has been operating in foreign waters, profiteering. I think the "Kangaroo" made something like a quarter of a million of money up to the termination of the war, but I would like the Minister to tell us what she made during the last 12 months. She was tied up in one of the English ports for at least six months costing money all the time, waiting for a charter which she never got. She went on to the berth to load for Australia. Full rates were asked and she got no cargo. Half-rates were asked and she got no cargo, and for weeks past she has been plugging out to Australia in ballast at the rate of nine knots an hour to run on our North-West coast. This coast is the most difficult in the world owing to the 30ft. rise and fall of tide. The Minister himself had an experience of it last year. Any steamer, to be successful on the North-West coast, must be able to do 15 knots to get from one port to another; otherwise she must miss the tide and lose the day between each tidal port. We were told five years ago when the "Kangaroo" began profiteering that she would be of no use on the North-West coast. To-day, when the Government can do nothing else with her—they missed their opportunity to sell her at the termination of the war—they intend to put her into this impossible trade. We have visions of a semi-Parliamentary trip to the Islands. I do not know who is going to pay the expenses of the ship while the Minister or the trade representatives deliver public addresses as to the possibilities of Western Australia, probably with a Bunbury potato in one hand and a Gingin orange in the other, offering them to the Javanese, the

highest bidder to be the purchaser. The possibilities of opening up trade with the East have been reported upon by you, Mr. President. If the ship had been available five years ago and during the war period, we might have established direct trade with the Islands. The business people of Australia, however, are keen enough to go out and get any trade which is available, without having a Government-owned ship and a Government party to show them how to transact their business. This is the kind of thing that is going on. This is the kind of thing for which this House is responsible. It is time that the House realised its responsibility, and said, "This nonsense shall cease." Now I proceed to an examination of the balance-sheet of the State steamship service. No balance-sheet is available since the year ended on the 30th June, 1920. The "Kangaroo" made things look very healthy up to that date, but since that date no balance-sheet is available. From the 1920 balance-sheet I find that, taking the steamers at cost, less depreciation to the 30th June, 1916, the value set upon those steamers is £189,933. Why did the Government cease depreciating at the end of 1916? I should say that the older the ships get, the greater the depreciation; but here we have in these balance-sheets no depreciation since 1916. I would like Mr. Lynn to tell the House what he thinks the steamships are worth now. I am informed that there is one charter for the "Kangaroo" when she reaches Fremantle. I understand that the State Government have started out as a buyer of sheep for the Straits Settlements Government, and that those sheep are to be shipped in the "Kangaroo." I hope it is not correct that the State Government are buying sheep in those circumstances for shipment in the "Kangaroo." If the officer who I am told is making the purchase on behalf of the Government is allowed to purchase the sheep, I fear very much that there will be trouble between the Western Australian Government and the Straits Settlements Government. One would expect a man going out to buy sheep to know at all events the head of the animal from its tail. I question if the officer concerned knows more than that, and I ask the Leader of the House to look into the matter, which is of serious importance. Now I come to the State Sawmills, in which we have a vast amount locked up. Again no balance sheet is available. If some of the balance sheets can be produced without audit, why cannot the rest be produced without audit? The State Sawmills were financed by the State Treasury last year to the extent of £763,945, and the Treasury credit of the sawmills for the same period stands at £712,249. The net result is that the Treasury last year financed the State Sawmills to the extent of £41,666. We cannot get to the bottom of the matter until we have the balance sheet. Probably we shall not get the balance sheet until the close of the session.

The Minister for Education: The balance sheets will be supplied within a few days.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We cannot borrow money at 6½ per cent. to be put into flooring boards, which are to be seasoned and then are to wait some years for a purchaser. We cannot afford to be cutting timber for stock. I understand that the only way to cut timber profitably is to get an order first, and to cut it in large quantities and deliver it straight off the saw into the trucks for immediate shipment. Next I come to the money invested in the State Implement Works, on which we are paying interest and sinking fund every day of the week. In this instance the balance sheet is available. To begin with, the Treasury last year financed that undertaking to the extent of £248,773, and the Treasury got back from the works £173,869. There again we appear to have an additional amount of £75,609 locked up in machinery, machinery which may or may not be sold. From the unaudited balance sheet which is available, I find that the present capital value of the State Implement Works is £111,412. But the actual capital invested in the works is £231,644. The Government have already had to write off more than half the invested capital—write off £120,232. That amount has been written off the works, but the Treasurer still pays interest on it. The works themselves pay interest on the lesser amount, £111,000; but the Treasurer pays interest on the full amount of £231,000. To use the expression of the Minister in charge of the works, "after all the flap doodle," and all the writing down of £120,000, we get a loss of £1,526 12s. 3d. for the year. But what would be the loss if interest on the £120,000, written off were charged? What would be the loss if we realised the scrap iron and the stock at North Fremantle, and put the true value on those things? These are questions which we ought to consider. According to the Treasury figures, the Treasury financed these enterprises last year to the extent of approximately half-a-million. I repeat, can we finance four concerns of that description, borrowing money at 6½ per cent. to the extent of half-a-million in a year? When we come to analyse Ministers' public utterances, what do we find? Within the last six months the Treasurer has said that the State trading concerns were a nightmare to him. At a later stage he said there was nothing to worry about in the State trading concerns, but that the trouble lay somewhere else. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) subsequently made the Treasurer admit on the floor of the House that the State trading concerns since their inception had paid £250,000 into revenue. But the Treasurer should have said that the £250,000 referred to came from the steamer "Kangaroo," and that the "Kangaroo" had made all that money, and that the "Kangaroo" had carried the whole of the State trading concerns up to that date. But there is no "Kangaroo" to-day carrying the State trading concerns. On the con-

trary, the taxpayer of this country has to carry the "Kangaroo" while she plugs out from England at the rate of nine knots an hour, not even freighted. In reply to the member for North-East Fremantle the Treasurer further said that last year the State trading concerns had paid £7,700 into revenue. But then we are told by the Leader of this House that that is not revenue. The Leader of this House says that the amount of £7,700 represents surplus capital, and not revenue at all.

The Minister for Education: I said it was not profit.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: These are the facts; these are the published figures. The gentlemen who make these statements are the gentlemen who come to us to-day and ask for a sum of £540,000 in order to carry on for a month—well knowing, as I know, as you, Mr. President, know—that they really want £650,000. That is on the basis of last year's figures. If I can get any support in this House, until there is some definite undertaking from the Government that they will face the position, Ministers will not get £540,000, or £50,000, or £5,000. I have shown how the borrowed money has been invested in non-paying concerns. I come now to the fact that during recent years this State has borrowed five millions of money to pay expenses. In sound business borrowed money must produce interest. When one comes to borrow five millions in order to pay expenses, there is only one end, and that is bankruptcy. If any hon. member as an individual borrows money to live upon, he must know that if he keeps on borrowing for that purpose, it means eventually the bankruptcy court. If a combination of persons do it, or if a State does it, or if an empire does it, there is only one alternative, and that is bankruptcy. Nevertheless, in recent years we have borrowed a sum of five millions sterling to pay our expenses. Can 300,000 people carry all this interest? Can the 300,000 people be expected to remain silent much longer? Personally I do not think they can. If we calculate interest on the five millions borrowed to pay expenses with, then the interest on the deficit alone amounts to £1,000 per day. The daily expenditure for the last four years was approximately £2,000 more than the revenue. As a matter of fact, to use round figures, the daily revenue for last year was approximately £23,000 for six days a week, and the daily expenditure approximately £25,000. I said four years ago that this State was slipping back at the rate of £2,000 per day. The Leader of the House replied that either what I stated, or I myself—I care not which, the hon. gentleman has said so many hard things to me—was a monument of error. But now, after the lapse of four years, I am here proving to the hon. gentleman that what I said has come true. It is all very well to talk about what should be done by the Government. This Government will not do anything except just let affairs meander on. It is up to this House to say what shall be

done. Mr. Stewart has on the Notice Paper a motion which represents a step in the right direction, viz., reduction in Parliamentary salaries, but which does not go far enough. Some hon. members have complained that there is nothing specific about the motion. However, when we come to the motion I shall move an amendment which will make it specific enough. At a point when this country was "right up against it"—and every member knew of that fact—we increased our salaries by 33 per cent. We thereupon found ourselves faced by a railway strike and a Public Service strike and sundry other strikes. Those troubles can be traced back absolutely to the action of Parliament in raising the salaries of members by 33 per cent.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Parliament should take the lead.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is just where I come in. Parliament should lead the public by reducing Parliamentary salaries. However, we can deal with that question later. There is coming before us a certain important Bill which found no mention, as well it might have found, in the Governor's Speech. It appears that we are to have a Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works. Such a committee is to be brought into existence, and I presume its members are to be paid.

Hon. A. Sanderson: They will want payment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Personally I am not going to be a party to the appointment of a committee to do those things for which Ministers are paid to accept the responsibility.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the hon. member is in order in anticipating the debate on the measure.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am merely indicating that when the Bill comes along, it will get a warm reception from at all events myself. I leave it at that for the present. I would draw attention to the fact that we have the Arbitration Court reducing hours and increasing pay. Then we have the appeal court for public servants. It is not reducing hours, but it is increasing pay. We have special paid tribunals all tending to bring about less work for more money. Everybody knows that the primary industries cannot be carried on under existing conditions. Whilst all these courts are engaged reducing hours and increasing pay, we find in the Governor's Speech that the market for wool—to say nothing about wheat which is to be kept up by a fictitious pool; there is to be free wheat in South Australia and pooled wheat in Western Australia.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must not discuss these matters, unless he connects his remarks with the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Surely the Arbitration Court and the special court for public servants are to be paid out of the funds provided in the Supply Bill now under discussion.

The PRESIDENT: If the hon. member says so, well and good, but he was discussing the merits of the courts.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Who is to supply the money for these courts? The men producing wheat, wool, meat, base metals, pearl shell, sandalwood. All these products were referred to in the Governor's Speech; and the Ministers advised the Governor, and we heard it read in the Speech, that all these industries are in a state of collapse. We have the courts putting up wages and reducing hours, although Ministers know that the industries which have to exist under those courts are in a state of collapse.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: The pastoralists are not shoving up the price of meat, are they?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is the duty of the Government to govern, to interest themselves in the welfare and health and education of the people to maintain law and order and let it stop at that, allowing private enterprise to develop the industries. Whilst we have men asking the Government to provide work, and deputations to the Premier for employment, everybody knows that men out of work can get huge wages, £5 and £10 per week, at shearing. Only last Thursday men went out of the city prepared to work for £5 per week as shed hands and £10 as shearers, but when they reached the job there were unionists ready to chase them away and send them back to Perth, pay their train fares and expenses to increase the unemployed of Perth. I have every sympathy for the women and children, but if the Government provide sustenance for the men who will not work—and if they want to work the unions will not allow them to work—there will be trouble so far as I am concerned. I have more confidence in this country than I ever had previously. The more I see of the country the more I am convinced that the American theory is correct, which is that, provided we have the rainfall, all land is good land. It is then only a question of applying science to agriculture. We have hundreds of thousands of acres of land south of Geraldton which could be made productive, and which in turn would make our national debt mere moonshine. But nobody wants to work. No matter how good the country may be, no matter how good a business may be, yet if these things be badly managed there is only one end—bankruptcy. I do not suppose there are anywhere else in the world 300,000 people with the opportunities that we have. Yet the country has been ruined by extravagance and bad management and bad government, and the members of this House are in a sense responsible for it.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Are you prepared to chuck the Government out?

Hon. J. Cornell: They wouldn't go out.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The day will come when the people, if they do not fire out the Government, will fire out the members of this House, and be perfectly justified in doing it. I am prepared to do anything that will com-

pel the Government to bring their daily expenditure within their daily revenue. I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5.21]: I have little to say on the Bill. During the Address-in-reply I expressed my attitude towards the Government: We would not be justified in stopping Supply when the electors are content with the Government of the day. There is one aspect of the Bill I wish to touch upon. I understand it is intended that the Government shall utilise the State steamer "Kangaroo" to open up trade with the Near East, Java and the Straits Settlements. Much can be said for and against the action of the Government in granting for this purpose free passes to people interested in trade. I will leave that aspect of the question to other critics. It is only wise that we should endeavour to open up trade and intercourse with our kindred beyond the seas. But there is a phase of the position which I would stress. These measures should have necessary safeguards. The Government, in offering facilities to traders to open up connections with the Near East, are in duty bound to go further and see to it that if there be any buccaneers amongst those traders there will be such supervision as will prevent the buccaneers going to the length they have gone in respect of Australian trade in South Africa.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member had better confine himself to the Supply Bill. I do not see the natural application of his remarks.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I understand that part of the funds to be provided under the Supply Bill will be utilised in the direction of despatching the "Kangaroo" to the Near East.

The PRESIDENT: I did not gather that from the hon. member's remarks.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is so, and I want to point out to the Minister the damage which a few unscrupulous traders can do. In South Africa, where there is no direct representation of Australia, the Australian trade has been so abused that Australian traders and goods are anathema to the local people. That should not be so. I arrived at that opinion in consequence of what I saw and heard in South Africa, and the opinion has since been confirmed. In the middle of last month a business man of South Africa informed me that there is a movement throughout South Africa to cut out all Australian goods. I hope that in this proposed venture to the Near East the necessary safeguards will be taken, and that the Government will see to it that the people with whom we desire to trade shall not be exploited.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	7

Majority for .. 8

## AYRS.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. A. Greig
Hon. F. A. Baglin	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. A. H. Pantou
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Duffell
Hon. J. Ewing	(Teller.)

## NORS.

Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

## In Committee.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT  
AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—ADOPTION OF CHILDREN ACT  
AMENDMENT.

## In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day, Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported yesterday on the motion of the Minister for Education for the insertion of a new clause to stand as Clause 3 as follows: "The record of any proceedings in the Supreme Court under the principal Act shall not be open to public inspection without the sanction of a judge."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I reported progress yesterday in order that any valid objections which might have been raised by hon. members could be investigated. There were two points at issue. One was as to the course of action we propose to take to protect the child so that its chances in the way of receiving any property or money that might be left to it might not be prejudiced at some future date. The second point was as to whether it was right that parents who had a legitimate reason for desiring to see the register should be put to the trouble and expense of getting an order from the judge. I have gone exhaustively into these points with the Solicitor General and I think the matter can be treated in such a way as to meet the objections that have been raised, and make the Adoption of Children Act better in one particular than it was before. With regard to the first point, it will be obvious that if the adopting parent knew that property had been left to a child, it

would be easy enough for the parent to trace the matter back and establish the identity of the child. I take it what was desired was that the legal representative of the person who might have left money or property should be able to trace the matter forward, and find out what had become of the child which had lost its name and identity because of its adoption. Section 8 of the Registration of Birth, Deaths, and Marriages Act Amendment Act, 1914, provides—

When an order of adoption has been made under the Adoption of Children Act, 1896, the district registrar having the custody of the registry of the birth of such child shall, on an application being made in the prescribed form, and on payment of the prescribed fee, make an entry on the register in the prescribed manner of the surname of the adopting parent conferred on the child.

If the registrar is applied to, the particulars can be put on the original certificate of birth. If any person wishes in future to find out what has become of a child, who was originally known as so and so, he can go to the registrar of births, deaths, and marriages, and from the child's registration find out what has become of it. I propose to submit a new clause making it mandatory on the clerk of courts, where the adoption is done, to forward a notification to the registrar, and the registrar will then be required to enter it up. This will make the chain complete, and there will be no difficulty in tracing the child. The Solicitor General points out that he was very careful, in putting in this new clause, to say nothing about an order of the judge. If an order of the judge is required some procedure will be necessary to obtain it, though not necessarily such an expensive one as suggested by Mr. Holmes. What is contemplated is that any person who desires to search the records can go to the office of the Supreme Court and pay his fee, and in the ordinary course of events that will be all. If the new clause is agreed to the person will be merely informed that the judge will see him after the court has risen and he will get the sanction to go on. It is not contemplated that this will involve any expense or unnecessary delay.

Hon. J. Nicholson: These things all involve that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: By using the term "sanction of a judge" it is the opinion of the Solicitor General that the sanction can be obtained without any expense.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: What the Leader of the House has said will accomplish the desired result so far as a child born in this State is concerned, but it would not assist the child born outside the State. The name of the child would not be entered in the registers in the other States or in the Old Country, wherever the child might have been born.

The Minister for Education: I do not see how we can help that.



Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I agree that the officers of the Supreme Court should send a copy of the order that is granted to the Registrar General, but the record would only have any effect in the case of a child born within the State. Why should all this difficulty surround the searching of a record in regard to an adopted child? Registers of companies are open to the public for inspection. Why should not the records of an adopted child be open to the public without the sanction of a judge?

Hon. J. Cornell: Are the police court records open to the public?

Hon. A. Lovekin: There are so many wicked people about.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We should not erect a hedge around records in this way. We might impose a fee for searching the records.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Whilst appreciating the legal aspect placed before us by Mr. Nicholson, I am not going to pit my knowledge on a point such as he has raised against the arguments he advanced. I am, however, sufficiently intelligent to realise that there are circumstances which should be strictly kept secret so far as an adopted child is concerned, and the Leader of the House made the position very clear yesterday afternoon when he cited an instance which might easily happen. An adopted child might in the course of time attend a high school where a mischievous schoolmate on making a discovery might declare that the child in question was not the child she was actually supposed to be. In such a way the child might learn for the first time that the people whom she regarded as her parents were not so in actual fact. The effect of this can be imagined. We therefore cannot be too careful in hedging in anything pertaining to such children in circumstances like those described. The subject of matrimony was raised by Dr. Saw yesterday. That opens up the question of environment. If a child has been brought up in good surroundings, there is no reason why secrecy should not be observed for all time regarding the child's antecedents. My fear is that busybodies may do considerable mischief by acquiring and disclosing information which should remain secret. Therefore I intend to support the new clause.

Hon. H. STEWART: We do not want people, simply out of curiosity, to do an injury or to hurt the feelings of any child that may have been adopted. On the other hand, under this Bill cases may arise where, in the event of such a provision as that suggested being inserted, the position will be made unduly hard. It is necessary to consider the original Act and to have regard to what it does in connection with the adopted child, and how the amendment will affect matters. In my opinion there is no reason for adding the proposed new clause, because Section 11 of the Act gives power to make rules. Under that section ample power is given to provide that registers will be kept, so that, as it is, we can insti-

tute a system of registration and provide for safeguards so that no harm may be done in any instance. Section 7 of that Act provides that an adopted child shall have the legal status of a legitimate child of the people who are adopting it, but on reading the proviso it will be found that there are three subsections which limit the benefits that can be obtained by the adopted child. Section 11 of the principal Act can be utilised to safeguard all classes of adopted children, and it is unnecessary to adopt this special clause in the Bill. Section 7 provides that an adopted child is to have the legal status of a legitimate child, but the proviso sets out the exceptions. I mention this fact to show that, whereas the clause in the first instance conveys the impression that the adopted child has all the legal status of the legitimate child, there are these provisos which restrict that status. I do not, of course, say that it is not right that it should be so, and that these exceptions are not correct, but it is as well for members to understand that there are these exceptions.

Hon. J. Cornell: After adoption a man can will property to the child so adopted.

Hon. H. STEWART: Under Section 9 it is provided that it shall be lawful for any Judge of the Supreme Court in his discretion to vary, reverse and discharge an order of adoption whether made by himself or any other Judge, subject to such terms and conditions as he thinks fit. Although the Bill eliminates the necessity for adding the adopted name, it does not specifically remove the original name. It would be very wrong if it did. There would be instances where it would be necessary to trace back the birth of the child. The necessity for a register is shown by Section 9 of the parent Act. This demonstrates the fact that we must be careful and not take drastic action regarding records. Section 11 of the principal Act, which gives authority to make rules and regulations, provides all the power necessary and desirable.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The Minister has a departmental file on which these and other amendments are put up. I saw that file and I suggested that this particular amendment was unnecessary, for the reasons advanced by Mr. Stewart, namely, that what is sought to be achieved could be done under Section 11 of the principal Act. On further inquiry I found, however, that Section 11 does not cover the position contemplated by this amendment. Mr. Stewart says that Section 9 will also cover it. That section provides that the Judge may vary, reverse or discharge an order of adoption. It has nothing whatever to do with registration, so that Mr. Stewart's contention does not hold good. The amendment the Minister has proposed says that the records of any proceedings in the Supreme Court shall not be open to public inspection without the sanction of a Judge. As to the necessity for some such provision, it is much to be regretted that there are maliciously and

evilily disposed people. I cannot account for their attitude, but some of them seem to take a delight in making things unpleasant for others. I will quote cases which have come before the officers of the department. In one case a step-mother has been endeavouring to really persecute two girls who are the adopted children of very respectable people. Those people adopted the girls at the request of a dying mother. The woman I complain of is the stepmother and is most vindictive towards these children.

Hon. A. Sanderson: How will the amendment help them?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: One of the girls is engaged to be married and this woman said to her—"If you marry I will show these people that you are not the child of so and so. I will prove that you are so and so." The girl in question—if I mentioned the name, many hon. members would know the case—was very much distressed. Why should we leave it open to such a person as this stepmother to secure a certificate to use for some vindictive reason or other. There is another case, and here again I do not know why some people desire to be so wicked. In this instance the person sent to the Eastern States for the birth certificate of a child to show that it was illegitimate and sent it to me. I do not want to encourage this sort of thing, and if an amendment will prevent such proceedings, I will support it. The State wants by every means possible to encourage the adoption of children. It is for the benefit of the children themselves as well as for the State. Last year there were 87 adoptions and, apart from the benefit to the children, that meant a saving to the State of £22,000. Parents who adopt these children have a strong objection to carrying on the name of their forebears, and when persons adopt such a child they want to keep it quite clear as their own child. We should guard them if we can. Members would be well advised if they agreed to this proposal.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I do not intend to go into the question of heredity and environment, for the Chairman would stop me if I did. Nor do I want the veil of secrecy rudely torn aside for the benefit of inquisitive eyes. I maintain that a parent whose son or daughter who is engaged to marry one of these people is entitled to know something of that person and whose son or daughter that person happens to be. Yesterday we were under the impression that this involved a costly procedure before the court, with a certain amount of publicity. If it means that a judge will give his sanction personally, either by word of mouth or by letter, it will overcome the objection I have, and I will support it.

Hon. H. STEWART: Section 9 of the principal Act provides for variations being made. It has a general application and that seems to me to show that we are not justified in covering up the position irretrievably. I am in agreement with Dr. Saw.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I would rather give the Minister discretionary power to deal with this than anyone else.

Hon. H. STEWART: I do not want to see costs heaping up.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move an amendment—

That the new clause be amended by striking out the words "a judge" with a view to inserting "the Master of the Supreme Court."

The Master of the Supreme Court is accessible at all reasonable times, and although we have the advice of the Crown Law Department that a judge is also accessible, we know that a judge is supposed to lead a life of seclusion. I think it would be preferable to provide for this work being done by the Master of the Supreme Court.

Amendment put and passed

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move—

That the words "the Master of the Supreme Court" be inserted.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I suggest that you add "without the necessity of a formal order."

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I agree to the hon. member's suggestion.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: What is the meaning of "a formal order"?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I take it that the Master of the Supreme Court would satisfy himself that the application was a bona fide one and, being satisfied, would give his sanction.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Without the words I have suggested, the Master might think it necessary to go through all the procedure of an application to a judge and make a formal order. All we want to do is to put a block in the way of inquisitive people who might desire to injure a child. Perhaps it would be better to stipulate that the sanction should be in writing.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I would like to know the opinion of the Master of the Supreme Court. I suggest that it would be well worth inquiring.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Have we asked the judges?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That is an entirely different matter. I am opposed to the amendment and, if it is defeated, I shall oppose the insertion of the new clause. The provision will not have the slightest effect in preventing chatting women from talking scandal. The Master of the Supreme Court would have to be guided not by his own private opinion but by certain rules. Surely it would be quite permissible for not only a prospective mother-in-law but a possibly prospective mother-in-law to make inquiries before things went too far. Is this to be permitted or to be brushed aside?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Two years ago a select committee inquired into this very question and this was the recommendation. If we make it clear that the authority from the Master of the Supreme Court shall be in writing it will meet the case.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not the amendment before the Committee.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment in order to allow the hon. member to move in the direction he has indicated.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I move an amendment—

That the new clause be amended by inserting after the word "sanction" the words "in writing."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I move an amendment—

That the words "the Master of the Supreme Court without the necessity of a formal order" be inserted.

Hon. J. CORNELL: We have to look at these amendments from the standpoint of the people who will have to interpret the provision. It is proposed to stipulate that there shall be no necessity for a formal order, but from whom?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The intention is that the Master would give his sanction in writing, but without it being necessary to make a formal order.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move—

That progress be reported.  
My object is—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot discuss the motion.

Motion put and passed; Progress reported.

## BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

### Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, Bill recommitted for the purpose of considering two new clauses.

### In Committee.

Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; Hon. A. Lovekin in charge of the Bill.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Last night the Minister for Education said he would assent to the recommittal of the Bill and agree to a clause which he then refused to agree to, if I could substantiate the statements I had made regarding the attitude of two religious bodies. I now hold in my hand a letter addressed to me to-day by the Right Reverend Dr. Clune, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth, which reads—

Dear Mr. Lovekin,—I have no objection whatever to the magistrates of the Children's Court visiting our institutions when-

ever they so desire. The fact is that we court inspection. We feel it will remove prejudice.

I have also a letter from the Right Reverend Dr. Riley, the Anglican Archbishop of Perth, which bears to-day's date and reads—

Dear Mr. Lovekin,—This is the land of inspectors, and we cannot be surprised that committees object to have any more. We welcome the visits of some inspectors, because they are sympathetic and give us sometimes valuable hints. This is not always so. At the orphanages we are always glad to see visitors who are interested in the children, and for years there has been a notice up saying that they can come on week-days from 10 to 5 o'clock. We have no objection at all to the magistrates who send in children coming at any reasonable time to see how the children are getting on, if they do not come as inspectors armed with authority to give orders. We endeavour to do what the Charities Department wish, and you can quite understand that we cannot have another body giving orders. I think this makes the position clear.

Those letters are in effect what I told the Committee last night. I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 3: "Section 17a of the State Children Act, 1907-1919, is amended by omitting the words 'authorised in that behalf by the Governor.'"

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not propose to offer any objection whatever to the new clause, because, as I told the Committee last night, I am quite prepared to be bound by the wishes of these two parties, who are the only private parties interested. It was stated last night by Mr. Lovekin that the people who really objected to the clause which he proposed were the State Children Department, with regard to their own institutions. I denied that statement last night, and I now repeat the denial. Whilst not opposing the new clause, I would say that I take up that attitude because the two churches have not to-day, either by their Archbishops or by other means, approached me in opposition to the new clause. I therefore take it that they are satisfied. I regret that the letters read by Mr. Lovekin are not so clear as he thinks they are. The effect of his amendment will be to allow not only the magistrate of the Children's Court, but any member of that court, to visit any of these institutions.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Both the Archbishops understand that.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The effect will be to authorise any of the 60 members of the Children's Court throughout Australia to enter, visit, and inspect any of these institutions, at any time, reasonable or unreasonable. However, the Anglican and the Catholic authorities are apparently satisfied with the position put forward by Mr.

Lovekin, and therefore I have nothing further to say.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Archbishop Clune does use the word "magistrates" in his letter, but the Children's Court consists of nothing but magistrates.

The Minister for Education: The Act says, "Magistrates and members."

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Yes; but at the time the Act was passed there were members of the Children's Court who were not justices of the peace. Now all the members of the Children's Courts are justices of the peace. Both the Catholic Archbishop and the Anglican Archbishop fully understand the position.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not add to the new clause the words "at any reasonable time"?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am inclined to agree with the Leader of the House, who has put the position very plainly. A certain power is to be taken from the Governor, and the members of the Children's Courts are to be authorised to visit these institutions at any time. The function of the Children's Courts is to adjudicate in regard to children. Those courts can commit children, but there is no obligation to commit them to these particular institutions. The proposal now is to establish two kinds of inspection: one being that already authorised by the law, and the other being inspection by members of Children's Courts. From such an arrangement conflict is likely to result. It would safeguard the House if the section of the Act were amended to provide that a special magistrate might with the consent of the authorities concerned enter, visit or inspect any institution. I am not much enamoured of the new clause moved by Mr. Lovekin. It would be just as logical for me as a justice of the peace to have the exclusive right to inspect the Fremantle gaol.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I hope the Committee will support the amendment. The Leader of the House has made it clear that the objections he raised last night have been overcome. Nobody gives more time and attention to matters pertaining to the children's court than does Mr. Lovekin. We shall be quite justified in assisting the hon. member to get the Bill into proper shape.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I cannot see any need for the new clause. In the letters received from both archbishops it has been pointed out that they have no objection to inspection. Therefore why should we have a clause like this? The clause seems to be quite unnecessary. If there was any objection to inspection, it would be time to provide machinery under which inspections could be made. I have not heard of any difficulty in respect of official visits to the institutions.

Hon. H. STEWART: The hon. member has not told us why the new clause is required. There is no necessity for it. Both

archbishops say they have no objection to inspection.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I should like to know from Mr. Lovekin whether the Government, who have power to give this order, have placed any difficulty in the way of members of the court visiting the institutions, or whether the parties responsible for the control of the institutions have raised any objection to legitimate visits of inspection.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The Government have been asked by members of the children's court if they would give authority under Section 17 for the members of the court to visit the institutions. The reply was that the Government would be willing to give authority for two lady members and two male members of the court to pay such visits. We say that is scarcely sufficient, because it means putting all the work on to those four members. Unless I, as a member of the court, am of the four referred to, I cannot go to any of the institutions in pursuance of some particular case in which I am interested, and so I have to ask one of the four to act as my deputy. We ask that all members of the court be armed with the same power. There cannot be any objection to that. Those in control of the institutions raise no objection to it. As one who, like the other members of the court, is doing his best for the children of the State, I hope hon. members will agree to the new clause.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I expected Mr. Lovekin to tell us whether he had been refused permission to inspect. That is the point. According to the communications read here to-night, both archbishops definitely state that they have no objection to inspection by a magistrate; but neither of the archbishops says he is desirous that this clause should be inserted in the Bill. That should be taken into consideration.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They know that it is the amendment we are dealing with.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: But they do not touch upon it. They simply say they have no objection to inspection. Mr. Lovekin has not made out a case. He has not told us that he has had trouble when desirous of inspecting any of these places.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Assuming that the Government still persist in limiting authority of inspection to four members of the court, and that other members of the court make overtures to an institution, and the institution says, "Walk right in and inspect"—could the Government prevent it?

Hon. A. Lovekin: No, but you would not get the members of the court to do that.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Government have more to do than grant permission for inspection. The Government have also to protect the institutions from those authorised to inspect them. It is now proposed to take away that authority and vest it in the children's court.

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

Ayes .. ..	11
Noes .. ..	3

Majority for ..	8
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#### AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. A. Lovekin
Hon. C. McKenzie	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. Cunningham	(Teller.)

New clause thus passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move—

That a further new clause be added to stand as Clause 3, as follows:—Section 10 of the State Children Act 1907-1919 is amended by adding at the end of the section the following, "Provided that when any recommendation has been made by the court such recommendation shall not be departed from without the consent of the Minister."

When I spoke on this question last night I proposed to add a new clause which members thought would make it of a mandatory nature, and would take the administration of the department out of the hands of the officials. Although there was no such intention, I have looked further into the matter and ascertained from the Minister that the amendment would be agreed to by him if it appeared in a modified form. Under this proposed new clause, if the court makes a recommendation the secretary of the department may not interfere with it without the approval of the Minister.

New clause put and passed; Bill again reported with further amendments.

#### BILL—FREMANTLE LANDS.

##### Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [8.20] in moving the second reading said: In 1912 the Fremantle Municipal Council under an Act passed that year surrendered two reserves which were to be set apart for the purpose of erecting workers' homes. These two reserves were, number 1353, bounded by Moore street, High street, Amherst street and Edmund street, of an area of about 3½ acres, and number 1532, which was a recreation ground in Broome street, having an area of about 10½ acres. The land was subdivided into allotments and certain rights of way were set out on the plans. It is now discovered that the land is not required for the purpose for which it was set apart.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Nor is it suitable.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is so. None of the land has been sub-divided nor have the rights-of-way been made as was provided on the plans. It is proposed to re-vest this land in the Fremantle Municipal Council. In exchange the council will surrender to the Crown for education purposes the block of land referred to in the schedule, namely lot 1697.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Is that a mutual arrangement?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Entirely. It is desired by all parties. The two reserves that we have at present are of no use for workers home purposes, and the Government have no use for them. The Fremantle Council desires to get them back, and to give us in place of them reserve number 1697, containing 6 acres 1 rood 57 perches, and situate between Park street and Ellen street and Swanbourne street, east of the public park. It is at the end of the park. The council desires to give us that area for school purposes, and to take back the two reserves which they previously surrendered for workers' home purposes. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

##### In Committee.

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

#### BILL—CORONERS ACT AMENDMENT.

##### Second reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [8.25] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to make two small amendments to the Act that was passed last session. The Act generally has worked admirably, and has been a great improvement on previous legislation. One difficulty has arisen which I confess I did not see at the time exactly how to overcome. Section 5 of the Act provides:

The jurisdiction and powers in this Act expressed to be given to coroners may be exercised to the same extent and subject to the same conditions by a deputy coroner, or a resident magistrate, or by a justice acting as a coroner with the authority of the Attorney General.

One of the objects of the Act passed last session was to do away with the practice which had grown up of any Justice of the Peace being called upon to act as coroner, and instead to have suitable persons appointed as coroners. That has worked satisfactorily in most cases, but it has occurred over and over again with sudden deaths that inquests have had to take place in remote portions of the State, and it has been found necessary for the Attorney General to au-

thorise some person on the spot to act as coroner. The Attorney General in Perth can have very little knowledge of the persons recommended. In some cases the inquest is already over before it has been possible to give the authority. In order to get over the difficulty it is proposed to amend that section by adding the words "Or at the request or with the authority of the resident magistrate." The resident magistrate is the most suitable person to say which of the three or four justices in a given locality is the best qualified to conduct an inquest. Another amendment to the Act relates to Section 41 dealing with remuneration. It is as follows:

The fees to be paid to any medical practitioner for attending at any inquest, and for the making of any post mortem examination, shall be fixed by scale to be prescribed by the Attorney General from time to time. Provided that—(1) no remuneration shall be paid for the performance of any post mortem examination made without the previous direction of the coroner, and

This is the sub-section which has not been found at all workable, and which it is proposed to eliminate—

(2) When the death has happened in a public hospital or prison, no medical officer appointed with salary to attend such public hospital or prison shall be entitled to such remuneration.

I understand that in the drafting of the Coroners Act these words were copied from the English Act, the circumstances in England being altogether different from what they are here. The practice here prior to the passing of the Act was that a scale of fees was prescribed on the holding of post mortem examinations, and when the examinations were held by the doctor of the hospital in which the death had occurred he only got half fees. The passing of this legislation has cut him out of those altogether, with the result that he has refused to do the work. Someone else has, therefore, been called upon to do the work for full fees. It is proposed to delete that sub-clause altogether. It is entirely an oversight on my part that it ever got into the Bill. I do not blame myself in the matter, because I referred the Bill to the public health authorities to see if there was anything in it to which they objected; but this matter missed detection. It is intended to make another amendment to meet circumstances that have recently arisen. The interpretation clause reads—

"Coroner" includes a deputy coroner, a resident magistrate, and a justice authorised by the Attorney General to act as a coroner.

It is proposed to make provision so that in the case of a vacancy in the office of the Attorney General, this Act shall have effect as if the words "Minister for Justice" were inserted in the place of the words "Attorney General" wherever those words appear.

Without that it is open to doubt whether the Minister for Justice is able to do those things under the Coroners Act which are vested in the Attorney General. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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.

## BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [8.35] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to make the Act passed last session compulsory. As the law at present stands, societies formed under the Act of 1863 are not compelled to become registered under the new Act, but may continue to carry on just as if the new Act were not in existence. Under the Bill, the societies whose rules and regulations do not permit them to come under the new Act will be compelled to alter their rules and regulations so that they shall come under the new law. Provision is also made for the societies under the old Act on becoming incorporated under the new Act to transfer the properties that are vested in trustees, without fees being charged. The only other provision of the Bill enacts that when the auditor of a society is a public auditor appointed under the provisions of the Friendly Societies Act, 1894, and the Co-operative and Provident Societies Act, 1903, a second auditor shall not be required. The Bill was the subject of a good deal of discussion when it was last before the House, and it affects a point raised and discussed by Mr. Nicholson at some length on that occasion. For that reason I do not propose to proceed to the Committee stage this evening. I have not had the opportunity of asking Mr. Nicholson whether he has any objection to the present Bill. No exception was taken to it when it was before another place, but that is no reason why there should not be ample opportunity to consider it here. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

## BILL—INSPECTION OF BOILERS AND MACHINERY.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [8.38] in moving the second reading said: I shall be pleased if the course adopted in connection with the previous Bill is followed in regard to this one. The Bill has come from another place

and it has been exhaustively dealt with there, but I have been informed that certain persons, interested in the Bill, consider that in one or two respects it might be amended. If that be the case then by all means let us give them ample opportunity of being heard. If hon. members will look at the Bill they will notice that against many of the clauses are the words "new" or "altered." The Bill re-enacts the Act of 1904, and except where the words "new" or "altered" are printed in the margin, the existing law is reproduced. It is a consolidating measure, and hon. members will agree that where possible it is better to consolidate a measure in this way rather than to put up a long series of amendments. The main features of the Bill provide for an inspection of boilers. The term "boiler" has been enlarged to include any vessel used at a pressure above the atmospheric pressure so as to include boilers which have hitherto not come within the law and have been used without safety appliances and have been the cause of accidents. The term is also enlarged to include air receivers, which are similar to boilers, inasmuch as they carry a high pressure, and also any vessel used under steam pressure as a digester, which often carries a pressure of from 50 to 60 lbs. to the square inch. The provisions relating to the inspection of machinery are substantially the existing law, but as regards certain agricultural machinery and small plants in outlying districts, where the cost of inspection is too great to undertake with the usual frequency, provision is made that such plants having been once inspected may have their certificates extended so as to avoid such frequent inspections as have hitherto been necessary. An alteration is made in the provision with regard to the inspection of lifts. At the present time lifts have to be inspected once in every 12 months. A number of accidents have happened, though fortunately not many have proved fatal.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Will the additional inspection mean the appointment of more inspectors?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think so, but if it is necessary for the protection of life that lifts should be inspected every six months, I for one will not discuss whether that will involve the appointment of an additional inspector or not. Either it is desirable that lifts should be inspected and be given certificates every six months, or it is not desirable.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I think it is desirable.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It must be done, and it is no use raising the question whether the work will involve the appointment of another inspector.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is it a fact that you propose to prohibit the use of a pump with which to inflate a tyre unless the person using it has a certificate?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think so. In the case of accidents

to persons, inspectors of machinery have hitherto been at a disadvantage, inasmuch as they have had no legal recognition in the case of coronial inquiries. It is now proposed that an inspector shall be notified of such inquiries, shall have the power to give evidence himself, and call any witness whom he may think desirable. This is merely carrying out what we have done in regard to many other pieces of legislation such as mining inspection, factories and shops and one or two others. Probably the most important alteration is in connection with the certification of engine-drivers and boiler attendants. At a recent conference held in Sydney of chief inspectors and heads of departments, it was decided that something in the nature of uniformity throughout the States was desirable, and with a view to obtaining this, the whole position of uniformity of examination and certification of drivers was carefully considered. The Bill embraces the suggestions unanimously arrived at by the conference, and it is hoped that in a short time the other States will come into line. The grading of certificates has been slightly altered, and in every case ample provision has been made for the guarding of the rights of existing certificate holders. With regard to the question of the certification of boiler attendants, this has been deemed necessary both in this State and the others for years past and is thought to be a step in the right direction. Since the introduction of internal combustion engines, the utility of which, except for comparatively small plants, was not contemplated when the existing Act was introduced, these plants are now being brought into use for much larger powers, and especially in the case of suction gas plants there are many complications which an inexperienced man may find difficult to cope with. In connection with engine-drivers' certificates, provision is made for drivers of internal combustion engines and boiler attendants who have had experience prior to the commencement of the Act to obtain service certificates, so that there will be no hardship imposed upon such men who are already in positions of this nature. As I have said, I hope the consideration of the Bill will be deferred so that those interested may have an opportunity of making such representations as they may desire, and also because there are members in this House who are competent to discuss this question and who may desire to have ample opportunity to look into the Bill. It is essentially a Bill for Committee consideration and it is not necessary for me to labour the matter any further. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. R. J. Lynn, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9 p.m.*