HON. S. J. HAYNES: The clause should be altered to read "other effects," in lieu of "chattels." Implements and furniture might require to be given as security under a bill of sale for a cash advance, and it should be possible for this to be obtained without the necessity for giving notice. To permit this, the wording of the clause should be "shall not apply to bills of sale given over wool, stock, or other effects."

HON. J. M. DREW: We should give these matters careful consideration, and not hasten the passage of amendments unless we really knew what they meant. He moved that progress be reported.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9·17 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 11th September, 1906.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4·30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police. 2, Government Analyst's Report on certain Whiskies, amendment of a slight error in original report. 3, Return showing Occupations of Assisted Immigrants and the number registered at the Labour Bureau, ordered on motion by Mr. Heitmann.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES: Return of Exemptions granted on Mines during 1906.

By the TREASURER: 1, Return showing the attendance of certain scholars at the James Street school, ordered on motion by Mr. H. Brown. 2, Return of duties collected under the Dividend Duty Act, ordered, on motion by Mr. Taylor. 3, Papers in connection with water reticulation, Subiaco, ordered on motion by Mr. Daglish.

STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT, URGENCY MOTIONS.

MR. SPEAKER presented a report of the Standing Orders Committee, chiefly recommending that Standing Order 47, dealing with Motions of Urgency, should be extended so as to provide that any member wishing to move "that the House do now adjourn" shall first submit to the Speaker a written statement of the subject proposed to be discussed, and if the Speaker thinks it in order he shall read it to the House, whereupon if seven members rise in their places to support the motion, it shall be proceeded with.

BILL—SECOND-HAND DEALERS.

COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Legislative Council now considered in Committee; MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair, the ATTORNEY GENERAL in charge of the Bill.

No. 1—Clause 6, strike out:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: This clause provided that the name of the licensee should be displayed on the premises of the licensee in legible characters at least two inches long. The Council had struck out the clause because by Clause 3 a second-hand dealer was obliged to obtain a license, and because no great benefit would obtain by making it necessay to have a sign up which might, in some senses, lead to a certain amount of humiliation when the business was carried on upon legitimate lines. The Bill was

intended to enable the police to deal with a certain class of crime; and to subject tradesmen to any indignity was needless. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

MR. JOHNSON: By Clause 4 the dealer must be licensed; but the general public and the police could not, in the absence of the notice, discriminate between licensed and unlicensed dealers.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The police would have access to the register. No penalty was imposed on the public for dealing with an unlicensed dealer.

MR. HUDSON: Would the Bill give a title to the goods purchased from a licensed dealer?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No. By Clause 9 every licensee must on demand show his license to a constable, and permit him to inspect the shop, goods, and book of record. The Criminal Investigation Branch, he understood, considered Clause 6 unnecessary.

MR. TAYLOR: The measure was not for the protection of the second-hand dealer only, but the public. Strike out the clause, and the public would not know whether the dealer was licensed. To prevent illicit traffic in gold we licensed gold-buyers; yet people in Perth not 400 yards from the Mines Department bought gold without a license. Did this Bill give any title to the goods purchased by the licensed dealer?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: No. The purchaser must take the risk.

MR. TAYLOR: Then what was the good of the Bill?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was a preventive.

MR. TAYLOR: Why should any second-hand dealer be ashamed of his occupation? When Clause 6 was passed here the Attorney General thought it very good. Members spent hours in debating such clauses, which were passed after Ministers had obtained the best departmental advice; and after going to another place the Bill came back with amendments which Ministers were always too eager to accept. Could the Attorney General advance any argument used in another place in favour of the amendment? If there was any virtue in the Bill, a clause providing that the public should know who were licensed second-hand dealers could do no harm.

MR. BATH: The whole Bill, rather than the present provision, was objectionable. Without this clause the police would have ample knowledge of second-hand dealers' shops, for these must be licensed and registered. It seemed unnecessary to compel the dealer to put up the required sign. None but the police seemed to call for the Bill; and they perhaps wished to harry second-hand dealers. But there was no evidence that even the police desired it.

MR. JOHNSON: The amendment would doubtless be passed, for it was a Government amendment; but it was not altogether fair that the Government, after passing the Bill here, should immediately strike out a clause in another place.

Question passed, the clause struck out.

No. 2—Clause 12, line 3, strike out the words "any justice," and insert the words "two justices":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the amendment be agreed to. In many of our Acts we had deemed it wise to provide that the bench should consist of two justices.

Question passed.

No. 3—Clause 14, insert at the end the words "except purchasers of second-hand jewellery":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The clause would exempt certain persons who purchased second-hand articles, not to sell again intact, but for the purpose of manufacturing other articles therefrom. The Council, however, desired to except purchasers of second-hand jewellery. Jewellery was easily stolen, and its identity readily destroyed. Other articles were more or less subject to identification, but the identity of jewellery could be destroyed, while the value of the gold remained the same. This amendment was worthy of consideration, being soundly based. He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed, the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 4—Clause 16 (exemptions), in line 2 strike out "books," and insert "or" before "mining":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: After considerable discussion, this House amended the clause by inserting second-hand book shops among the exemptions. The Council desired to strike out "books" apparently because certain books were removed from the Public Library. This was not sufficient justification. Certainly some books were taken from the Public Library, but the number was few. He moved—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

MR. H. BROWN: A petition signed by 30 second-hand book dealers in Perth and Subiaco opposing the Council's amendment had been placed in his hands. These people considered they were sufficiently harassed by regulations restricting their calling, and that if they were not granted an exemption they would need to close their shops, because the dealing in second-hand books took place after the hours prescribed in the Bill for second-hand shops.

Question passed, the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 5—Clause 17, line 2, insert between "any" and "person" the word "intoxicated," and strike out "at the time under the influence of intoxicating liquor":

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: This was a question whether it was more correct to say "an intoxicated person" or "a person who is at the time under the influence of intoxicating liquor." He moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed, the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted.

Reasons for not agreeing to amendment No. 4 were drawn up and adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—LAND TAX.

SECOND READING.

Resumed from the 6th September.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): Having dealt fully with the question of land values taxation on the Land Tax Assessment Bill, I have no intention of making lengthy remarks on the Bill before us at the present moment, except to say that the Treasurer exhibited in regard to this measure some of the lack of knowledge which was also apparent when he was dealing with the Land Tax Assessment Bill. When the member for Subiaco inquired whether the Treasurer, in submitting an estimate of the revenue which would be derived from this measure, had taken into account the proposals for the rebate and other exemptions on conditional purchases, the Treasurer had to confess he did not know. When a Minister introduces a measure of the importance of a taxation Bill, it should be expected by this House that the Minister should display some knowledge, and should be able to place reliable statistics before members. Then the Treasurer doubted the correctness of my estimate of the amount which would be realised from the tax at 1½d. in the pound, supposing no exemptions and no rebates had been carried, but I have since taken the trouble to make the simple calculation once more, and I find that the amount stated by me was correct.

THE TREASURER: Have you looked up your report in *Hansard* to see whether you mentioned rebates?

MR. BATH: To the statement I made, that a tax of 1½d. in the pound on the unimproved value as submitted by the Premier would realise the sum I mentioned, supposing no exemptions or rebates had been introduced in the Bill, I still adhere. Since making that statement I have ascertained, by a simple calculation, that the amount I gave was correct. The unimproved value was stated by the Premier in his speech on the second reading of the Land Tax Assessment Bill to be £14,445,582, which at 1½d. in the pound would realise £90,284 17s. 9d. The sum mentioned by the Treasurer as estimated to be realised by this tax is somewhere about £60,000. This is owing to the fact that the rebates and exemptions will operate to considerably reduce the amount which would be otherwise realised; but we have also to bear in mind that, not only will the amount to be obtained from this tax be less by the operation of these provisions, but the cost of collection must be considerably higher than it would other-

wise be if the tax were levied on unimproved values and no account whatever taken of exemptions and rebates. When the Treasurer was introducing the Land Tax Assessment Bill he gave us some interesting figures as to the decline in revenue because of the reduction in the special sliding scale that applies to this State, and from other causes. He said it made a net shortage of £364,000 as compared with our financial position in 1901-2; and in comparing an estimate for the current financial year with that for 1905-6, he estimated a shortage of £249,899. He recognises that even if the expenditure is only on the same scale as last year — we have to realise that it was considerably less in many directions, notably in the public works and railways, than in 1905 — some means will have to be devised in order to retain our revenue at something like the amount it has reached during the past few years. Yet the only proposition the Treasurer has submitted to the House is one for imposing a land tax, one that will realise a sum estimated at £60,000; and on his own showing we have a deficit of £249,899 to make up. Bearing in mind these figures, would it not be better to have an all-round tax which would bear equitably and justly on all parties who would come under the tax of the same amount provided in the Land Tax Bill which would realise a sum of £90,000, rather than one that will only realise £60,000 and will involve considerably higher cost of collection. If members consider this they will recognise the unwisdom of separating these two measures, of considering the Land Tax Assessment Bill apart from the Land Tax Bill which we have before us, and thus being unable to take into consideration the amount of revenue that would be derived from the tax. The Treasurer has not told us, either in his speech on the Address-in-Reply, in his second reading speech on the Assessment Bill, or in his speech in introducing this measure, as to how he is going to make up the deficiency from £60,000 to the total shortage of £249,000.

THE TREASURER: Wait until the Budget Speech.

MR. BATH: The hon. member asks the House to wait until the Budget comes along; but we have had this tax urged upon members who have opposed it, and we have had them requested by the Treasurer to vote for it as a means of making up the revenue. We have had it pointed out that it is absolutely necessary, whether members like it or not, that there should be fresh taxation found for the State, and the best means of raising that is by a land tax. The Treasurer has absolutely led members to believe that by this tax he proposes to make up the shortage in the revenue.

THE TREASURER: No.

MR. BATH: When it is pointed out to the hon. member that he will only realise £60,000 out of the £249,000, he calmly and coolly tells us to wait until the Budget is brought down. If the Treasurer recognised the responsibility he owes to the House, there should have been some indication not by way of an estimate of figures, or rather attempted estimate, but an indication of the general lines which the Treasurer intended to take to make up the shortage. Although the Treasurer has demurred to my statement that this is the only method devised, it is the only one put forward by the Treasurer as a means of raising revenue. In view of that fact I think members have either to face the necessity of raising this tax to a higher amount, or attempting in some way, either on recommittal or the third reading, to so readjust the land tax as to raise a larger amount than that proposed by the Treasurer. I have no farther remarks to make in regard to the measure, except to say that the Treasurer has seemed to rely on the passing moment for any knowledge he has on this as on the Land Tax Assessment Bill. His task would have been made easier and have facilitated the passage of the measure through the House if had taken the trouble to make himself acquainted with the measure before introducing it to the House.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (West Perth): I expressed the substance of my attitude in regard to this Bill on the Address-in-Reply. I did not speak on the Assessment Bill, but before this measure passes I would like to make a few remarks. The question of new taxation is necessarily one which will be opposed principally by those whom it affects,

and is always an objectionable thing at any time. No matter what taxes are put on, objections must and will arise. The first question that presents itself is, why do we require this tax at all? Because unless we can show that we require this tax there is no justification for adopting it. I have felt that a tax of this kind must have a vast amount of opposition. It reaches the people directly, and one of the things in taxation which is most objected to is direct taxation. It has this disadvantage, that when we impose direct taxation, people recognise it and feel it, and it should tend to greater economy in administration. If we could have put this increased taxation on the Customs, probably there would have been very little cry about the matter; but when we come to deal specifically with certain persons and reach them with direct taxation, opposition arises. I myself say a land tax is one which necessarily people object to; but after all if fresh taxation is required it seems to me the most equitable tax we can begin with is this tax. For this reason I have so far supported the measure, but I would like to refer to what the Leader of the Opposition has stated. This tax proposed will not make up the requirements. On the other hand if we are to impose direct taxation without greater economy the cry of injustice is emphasised. I have looked through the revenue just for my own satisfaction to see what we are doing with the money. Our revenue last year up to the 20th of June amounted to £3,558,939. The question is, what have we done with this money? We are raising a lot of money from a small population: how is that money being expended? I find in the first instance we have to deal with interest and sinking fund, £822,636, an amount we cannot reduce. We cannot economise in that. We cannot disturb it; it must be paid and provided. Then we come to our great commercial undertaking, the railways on which we expended last year £1,236,198. I would like again to point out to members that this great spending institution of ours, and earning institution also, has come down to lines which are causing me some anxiety. We have got down to about the margin of interest and sinking fund. I have been watching this for many years, and when I was for a little while in the Treasury I emphasised the position then that we must make this spending and earning concern of ours pay interest and sinking fund.

MR. JOHNSON: Have the railways ever paid sinking fund?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Some years they have done so, but this year they will scarcely pay interest and sinking fund. The railways have for several years come a little below, sometimes in excess. But a little up or down perhaps we cannot arrange for. I want to call attention again to the fact that this House has this session decided by resolution to make certain reductions, and these reductions will seriously affect our railways. It means this, that if the profit goes below covering interest and sinking fund, it means that the money must come out of the general revenue. If we are to make reductions say on our railways and raise fresh taxation on land and in other ways, we are not getting much forwarder. What we want to do is to make up the deficiency in our revenue caused by the action of past years. In 1900 we collected through the Customs, from goods imported from other States, close on £300,000. This amount would necessarily be reduced from year to year as our production increased and the tax on importations from other States lessened. The tax would annually be less. We have remitted a large amount in taxation on the products of other States since Federation. This went very largely into the pockets of the people; but it has to be made good if we are to keep up our standard of expenditure. In dealing with a great concern like our railways, persons who use the railways should not gain at the expense of those who do not use the railways. I am not pleading that the revenue made out of our railways is so great as to press for a profit. The people who use the railways ought not to look to those who do not use the railways to a great extent to make up interest and sinking fund. On that concern we spent last year £1,268,136. The next important item is education, on which last year we spent £162,010. There is no greater enthusiast in regard to education than myself. No one desires more earnestly to see education in the secondary schools, particularly technical schools, and a university, than myself.

But with a population of 266,000 people we cannot expect to have all the privileges and all the standards of the other States with a million of people. That is a mistake we have a tendency to run into.

MR. TAYLOR: South Australia established a university with 50,000 less persons than we have to-day.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am not speaking against a university. But South Australia established the university there by large donations from wealthy men. We have taken steps in the right direction, and have practically endowed the coming university by setting aside lands which in the future will become very valuable and important. We are spending £163,000 on education. I do not think any member of the House is disposed to reduce that sum very much, if at all, whether there is a difference of opinion as to expenditure in lines of higher education. But as far as our present system of education is concerned I think there is no desire to reduce the standard in the least degree. In mines we spent last year £235,859. A good portion of this was exchanged in the purchase of copper and so on, in expenses connected with the public batteries, but after all we spent a large sum of money in mining. When we realise that mining is to a large extent the backbone of this State, I think members will not be disposed to materially reduce that vote. Possibly some may be, but I think, taking it on the whole, there will be no disposition to largely reduce the expenditure there. When we come to the public works we find that £238,150 has been expended. We have been accustomed to spend much larger sums than that, but last year we were not able to do so, and in the coming year we shall probably not be able to do so. Public works if carried out should be carried out as far as possible on reproductive work, but there is a vast amount of smaller matters which cannot be constructed on those lines. Is the House prepared to greatly reduce that vote? I am inclined to think not. Then dealing with the other matters, take our own special Government expenses, police for instance £124,025, medical and lunacy £97,558, charity £34,763; a matter of £256,346 in all. It seems to me that we are doing a very large amount of work for the general public, and I am not disposed to alter the conditions of it. Charity had better be given out of the general revenue than fall heavily, crushingly so, upon a few persons of generous disposition—the same with our medical and lunacy. These things must be provided for, and provided for if possible out of the general revenue of the State. They leave a very great deal to public liberality, and to the benevolence of our people, but, after all, if proper provision has to be made for our sick and disabled we must make such provision from our revenue, and so make good what is necessary for our people. But it ought to be recognised that we are doing this. People should recognise that we are doing in this State a very large amount for the public, and doing it out of the public expenditure. Lands £112,000: I think there is room for some economies here, and that a matter of 72·80 per cent. of the revenue received from that source is too much to spend on that institution. Taking all matters of a miscellaneous nature, we have an amount of £567,938. Last year we received £3,558,939, and spent £3,632,313, leaving us a deficit to start with this year.' And considering what we are going to do, are we going to reduce any of this expenditure? Probably there will be some severe economies exercised in the various departments, and I hope the Government will not continue any unnecessary expenditure while they are taxing people with a fresh system of taxation. At the same time if we are to carry on the work of attending to our sick, and vote money to charity, to educate our children, run our mines, and attend to our lands business, it is quite clear that the State must have money, and as we have remitted a certain amount of taxation it seems to me there is no help for it but to have some form of taxation, and to start with I can see nothing more equitable than this land tax. I object to it; I do not like it; my friends do not like it; my constituents will not like it; but at the same time I feel certain that as more money must be raised, this is the most equitable start we can make. I presume that in a little while we may have to go farther, and may have to come to an income tax, or some other means of raising money. But it seems to me we

are face to face with the stern reality that we have remitted a large amount of taxation through the Customs, and we have no farther control over the Customs. We cannot put the money back through the Customs, and we cannot get it by indirect taxation. We must make some provision by direct taxation, and that direct taxation seems to me to be provided in the best possible form in this land tax. For this reason, although I very much regret that it is necessary, and and that the form of the taxation should be so direct, and to some extent inequitable because it reaches only a certain number of our population, I think the House will recognise that under our circumstances it is inevitable that we should support the Bill; therefore I propose to do so.

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): Few words will suffice me in regard to this measure. When the Land Tax Assessment Bill was under discussion, an amendment was moved for the purpose of having it delayed until the present Bill was brought in. I submitted the position that a Land Tax Bill, or a Bill for any other new form of taxation, should come up with the Financial Statement of the Treasurer, and I am still of that opinion. I think that before this House is asked to pass the Land Tax Bill or any other Bill imposing new taxation, the House should be fairly in possession of all the information the Treasurer can give us. It should be in possession of the annual Financial Statement, and should know precisely what the Treasurer expects to receive in the present financial year and what he requires to expend, and should be satisfied that the amount to be raised by the tax will be sufficient to meet the purposes of the Treasurer for the financial year. The member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth) has by his speech shown the impossibility of fairly discussing the proposition without a knowledge of what the Government propose to do in regard to the saving of money in some departments, or the raising of money in some other direction. It is impossible to discuss financial proposals piecemeal, it is impossible to deal with them as they should be dealt with unless we are taken into the full confidence of the Treasurer. When it was proposed to deal with the machinery Bill, I urged that the machinery Bill should not be delayed, but that we should allow the Government to get its machinery with a view afterwards of finding out the amount of money it was necessary to raise by means of this new taxation. We are entirely in the dark as to the amount of money it will be necessary for us to raise. The Treasurer tells us what this Bill is estimated to produce, but he has not told us what his requirements will be, and he cannot tell us until his Estimates of revenue and expenditure have been framed. I therefore suggest that the Treasurer might well agree to adjourn this debate until he has made his Budget Statement. A little while ago we were led to believe that this statement would be made early in August, but I understand there are unavoidable causes which have so acted as to prevent its production. We are entitled to have that before going on with a measure which, as the Treasurer knows, may be entirely inadequate to meet the needs which exist. We have a right to assume that this measure will produce far more revenue than the Treasurer requires, or, on the other hand, to assume that it will be altogether insufficient; and if it be insufficient, then some new form of taxation will again have to be devised. There is very little debatable matter in the Bill itself, and it is unfair to expect members to do as the member for West Perth has already done—discuss the general financial problem without any information from the Treasurer that will enable us to do so properly. I would therefore very strongly urge that the debate should be adjourned, and that members should have it brought up again after they have heard the Budget Statement of the Treasurer. Speaking to the tax itself, as I shall have no opportunity of doing so again even if the adjournment be agreed to, I cannot help regretting that it has not been made a progressive one. It seems to me that if we are required only to raise say £60,000, by making the tax a progressive one we should have allowed the small farmers, whom the Ministers, the Premier, the member for Northam, and the member for Sussex are so anxious to help, to get off a little more lightly, and we could have taxed

more heavily those large companies, or large landowners who are doing nothing whatever with their land. We should have achieved the double purpose of letting off the small man a little more lightly, and of assisting in the land settlement policy of the Government by causing to be brought into earlier use large estates held by individuals who are doing nothing whatever with them. However, I suppose it is too late, seeing that the machinery Bill is already passed, to do anything in the direction of suggesting graduation. At the same time I believe that a graduated tax would be far more satisfactory to the farmers, and to the general body of the community than the measure at present before us will be. It would have let off the man we are anxious to help so much lighter, and could readily have been made to produce exactly the same amount of revenue. As I said earlier, I do not intend to take up the time of the House at any length, but I do urge the Minister to adopt the practice which has invariably been adopted.

THE TREASURER: Where?

MR. DAGLISH: In Great Britain and in the various States of Australia. When any alteration is made in the taxation it is done at the time the Budget is brought down. When has a tariff been varied in any State except at the time the Budget Statement has been made, when the Treasurer invariably has been able to say whether he could afford to reduce or dispense with certain duties, or whether he required to impose certain new duties or to increase certain old ones? Invariably that has been done at the time the Budget Statement has been made. When either a reduction or an increase in the income tax is made in Great Britain it is done at the time the Budget Statement is made, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer then points out that he will require certain increased revenue, and the need to obtain that increased revenue is shown by the figures and the statements he submits to the House of Commons. In order to obtain the increased revenue it is proposed that there shall be an increase in the income tax, or if there be instead a large surplus, then it is proposed that a certain proportion of the income tax shall be struck off. The proper time to submit to this House any proposition to impose a new tax or reduce or abolish an old tax is I say when the Treasurer submits to the House his facts and figures, to enable members clearly to see whether his proposals are in accordance with the facts and figures he presents to the House, and to judge the matter. Such a proposition should be made at no other time than when these figures are available to members for their perusal, when they can be intelligently used in the discussion of the question submitted to the House. This is a very vital matter. The imposition of any new tax is a vital matter, and members are entitled to know before committing themselves to it that the measure under discussion will serve the purpose for which it is required.

THE PREMIER (Hon. N. J. Moore): The arguments used by the member for Subiaco are very much on the lines of those used by the Treasurer when the amendment was proposed by the member for Claremont, that the two Bills should be brought in as one.

MR. DAGLISH: I used them myself then.

THE PREMIER: That is the usual form, but it is too late to remedy that now. Whoever may be Treasurer will have an opportunity when bringing down his Budget to say whether the tax is absolutely necessary or not each year. I should like to say one word in connection with a statement made, that the present Land Tax Bill is likely to retard settlement. From a return for the last month it is apparent that it will not have that effect. We find that during July of this year the selections taken up under conditional purchase amounted to 63,827 acres.

MR. GULL: That is because you told the country people that the other man has to pay the tax.

THE PREMIER: The argument used is that this tax will retard settlement; we hear that on all sides; but as a matter of fact, settlement has gone up from 63,827 acres to 117,109 acres, or practically 100 per cent. since the Land Tax Assessment Bill was introduced.

MR. H. BROWN (Perth): When this Bill gets into Committee it is my intention to move to reduce the 1½d. tax to 1d., and the ¾d. tax to ½d., only by way of protest. We read yesterday a speech

delivered by the Honorary Minister (Hon. J. Mitchell); and as the member for Swan has said, it was a case of taxing the other fellow. It must be very disheartening to metropolitan members to find responsible Ministers of the State touring the country and telling their constituents not to worry because "they are not going to pay the tax; they are going to get the benefits from it, but the towns and cities are going to pay it." We are told by the Premier that he requires money for the interest on particular spur railways; but we were told last session, I think, that these spur lines would cost in all about £100,000, and if those are the figures, then £5,000 would be ample to find interest and sinking fund for these particular lines.

THE PREMIER: I said to provide interest on loans.

MR. H. BROWN: Those were the particular lines before the House, and I take it that if we get the three lines passed last session constructed within the financial year the State will do well indeed.

THE PREMIER: We have them now.

MR. H. BROWN: It would have been better to save money rather than plunge the State into practically a sort of chaos to raise this £60,000. We had last year a roads and bridges vote of about a quarter of a million. Surely it is easy to save £60,000 out of that vote. I think the land tax is a most pernicious one. It is simply taxing people directly to obtain revenue from them, and then to give it back to them by indirect means; and as has been mentioned by Ministers, the public works policy for this State for the time being is not to be for the towns but solely for the country. I am certain that the effect of this particular tax on the towns and country will be entirely different. The Ministry hope that it will open up the country. If it will have that effect, country lands will be improved; but if it is thought that every vacant block of land in the towns should be improved, if we consider the matter for a moment we must see that if all the blocks were improved it would not only have the effect of reducing the value of the blocks persons are compelled to build on, but it would also tend to reduce the values and rentals of the whole of the towns and cities in this State. If it had been a tax solely on unimproved land values I would have been in favour of it, because I am quite certain that, had the good land along the main trunk railways been made available for settlement, the necessity to build spur railways would not have come about for the next ten years. It was the intention of every member of the House to burst up those large estates that have remained idle for so many years past. We heard the member for West Perth referring to the increased expenditure on the railways, and there was a resolution carried in the House that certain concessions should be given to the various timber companies of this State; yet we find that in this very Bill these companies we are so anxious to help by reducing freights are the very companies that are to be exempted under this Bill from this form of taxation. It is most inconsistent. During this debate I have possibly been spoken of as "the member for the city." It is all very well for the Treasurer to give the various amounts that will be paid by different holders; but I say without fear of contradiction that on several blocks in Perth a tax of £30 to £50 per annum will have to be paid by tenants in Hay Street and in other streets. More especially will they feel it heavily when by the arbitrary provisions of the Assessment Bill the tax must be paid within 30 days after notice is served. I take it that no one will be more oppressed than the occupiers of property in this State. We know that considerable land is leased and that the first clause in leases is that the rates and taxes shall be paid by the tenant; so we will not get at the owner of the property at all. I was surprised the other evening that the Treasurer did not point out that it did not matter how much the owner of land in the country improved his land, should he by any possible chance hold a block of land in the city, it might swamp all the improvements it would be possible for him to effect in the country, and he must pay a higher taxation; also, *vice versâ*. I intend at all events for my constituency to move for a reduction in the tax.

MR. A. C. GULL (Swan): I am very much inclined to follow the member

for Perth in supporting a reduction. I have realised from the beginning that the necessities of the Treasurer are driving him to a land tax. It is not that the Treasurer thinks this is a good tax, and not that any of us thinks it a good tax in the interests of the country, but it is an expedient purely for raising revenue in place of what we have lost through unfortunate circumstances. Holding that opinion, I have said all through that if this tax were an equitable and just tax it should have been levied on as large a section of the populace as it could have been; that is to say, there should have been no exemptions. I was prepared to fight exemptions all through; but having been beaten on the first clause of the Assessment Bill I abandoned that idea. It has been the policy to tell every section of the community, "It is not you who will be affected; it is the other who will pay." It has been "the other man is going to pay" all through the arguments of hon. members. [Interjection by the HONORARY MINISTER.] It is a wrong argument from one who calls himself a statesman. Apart from the exigencies of the Treasurer, this tax is undoubtedly a bad advertisement for our immigration settlement. I ask, now that this tax has come about, are we going to make a feature of it in our advertisements in London? Are are we going to let everybody know, as we should, that having got them here we are going to put a land tax on them? All through, my support of this tax has been purely that there was no getting out of it, and it is only the unfortunate circumstances of the State that prompt me to vote for it at all. I have tried to point out at various times that the dual system of taxation was where the shoe was going to pinch. The Treasurer has said that for the first year, at all events, we will take as nearly as possible the roads boards valuations. There is possibly no more inequitable method of dealing with the land tax proposal than taking these roads boards valuations. Up to the present time many boards that should have been in a position to raise a fair measure of taxation have shelved their responsibilities from year to year. The Northam roads board have kept down the valuations religiously, and also the amount of their tax. The Greenough roads board have kept down their valuations to nothing practically.

MR. STONE: Nonsense! Stick to facts.

MR. GULL: We can also go to the South-West roads districts; but certainly they are in a poorer condition. However, I take these two roads districts, Northam and Greenough, as representing first-class agricultural communities in Western Australia, in order to compare them with other districts which, largely through the fact of small owners being on these boards instead of large owners, have taxed themselves up to the hilt. Now, what is going to happen if we accept the roads board valuations? The result is going to be that the latter districts will have to pay more in proportion to their local taxation than the Northam and Greenough districts. Therefore, I say there is no more inequitable form of dealing with the taxation than taking these roads board valuations. It is said that it will take time for the Government to provide a better system; but unquestionably the system proposed to be adopted will have to be revised. There is no reason why we should rush bull-headed into the system we are to adopt, instead of arriving at a fair and just system. As this is a new tax and a new burden on the community, and because, for the various reasons that I have pointed out, it is going to be levied unfairly in its incidence, it is the duty of those in charge of affairs to make the burden as light as possible. If it is found to work correctly, as year by year goes on no doubt the Treasurer will ask Parliament to provide more and more money from this particular tax. In fact he is going to make this particular tax the chief measure for raising revenue as against the means we have thrown away. And when I realise that land is now to be the chief subject of taxation from year to year, the proposed rates of 1½d. and ¾d. are higher than should in the first instance be fixed. For that reason I will support the member for Perth when he moves his amendment.

THE TREASURER (in reply as mover): Of course, I cannot be supposed to have a full knowledge of the opinions of every member of this House on the methods I have adopted when introducing these measures. I do regret ex-

tremely—in fact it is a matter of great concern to me—that I cannot by my methods please every member of this House. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) has taken me severely to task on account of the ignorance I have displayed. Well, I do not profess to have a deeper knowledge of this and similar subjects than other members have; and though I admit that the hon. member's knowledge is most profound, I must say that it has been conspicuous by its absence on this occasion and in the many speeches he has delivered on the subject of the proposed tax. He blames me for admitting that I was doubtful whether conditional purchase leases were included in certain estimates of valuations. I said at first that I was not sure, and subsequently that I thought they must be included, because I presumed that the roads boards would tax such leases. I wish to remind the hon. member that it is not possible for even a Minister of the Crown to carry every fact in his head; and as I based that estimate of what I am to receive under certain conditions on figures supplied to the department by the Government to which the hon. member belonged, it is clear that he ought to have as full a knowledge of the facts as he requires from me. Returns were supplied by the Daglish Government, and the actuaries of the Statistical Branch based their calculations on those returns. For a moment I was not aware whether certain conditional purchases had been included. Later on I corrected myself, and said that they must have been. That is supposed to be a proof of my ignorance as compared with the full knowledge which I admit the hon. member to possess of this and all other matters. He wishes me to point out to the House what the Government purposes doing to make up the balance of the loss which, as I indicated when introducing the Land Tax Assessment Bill, Western Australia has sustained since entering the Federation. I regret exceedingly that it is impossible for me to-night to give the House that information. The hon. member must be aware that until I have my Budget prepared, my Estimates completed—and they are not yet completed—it is impossible for me to give any of the detailed information as to what items of revenue may be supposed to show an increase this year, what items may be supposed to show a decrease, what items of expenditure may be cut down, and what other economies effected.

MR. TAYLOR: Did you not promise us the Estimates in August?

THE TREASURER: And if I had all that information prepared I should be happy indeed to deliver my Budget Speech this evening, and to put the Estimates before the House. I may say I hoped to be in a position to bring down the Estimates during the month of August. I said "early in August." But I found that I had been too sanguine. I was new at the game. I did not know the obstacles I had to overcome, was not aware of the difficulties which a Treasurer has to contend with, nor of the many departments and sub-departments on which he has to depend for getting ready the figures necessary for the Budget. And so I have gone somewhat beyond the date. Then I must remind members that I shall have to know the fate of this Land Tax Bill before I can complete my Budget, and this is a reply to the exception which the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) took to passing this measure at the present time. Strange to say, the Leader of the Opposition took me to task for not bringing in the taxation Bill with the machinery Bill. He said the two should have been introduced as one. On the other hand, the member for Subiaco says that I was perfectly justified in bringing in the machinery Bill by itself, but was not justified in bringing in this taxation Bill; that I should have waited till my Estimates were brought in. That argument might hold good if land taxation were already a principle adopted and in vogue in this State. The argument will no doubt hold good next year, when the Treasurer in his Budget Speech will indicate what tax it is necessary to impose on the land to serve the financial purposes of the State. But I submit that when we are introducing a fresh method of taxation we are justified in laying our proposals before the House, and in securing its decision as to the amount of the tax which Parliament will impose, before we frame our Estimates at all. That is the course I shall try to take, and I hope it

will meet with the approval of the House generally. The member for Perth (Mr. H. Brown) has given us another second-reading speech on the Land Tax Assessment Bill. I do not propose to follow in his footsteps, but I do propose to ask the House to accept my assurance that every effort is being made by way of economy, both in administration and in respect of what one may call needless expenditure; every effort is being made in order that a favourable Budget may be put before the House. I may say in conclusion that the Budget will include the amount already stated, £60,000, presumably available as a result of the land tax.

MR. JOHNSON: You do not reckon on your education fees?

THE TREASURER: Yes.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

THE TREASURER moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair, for the purpose of going into Committee on the Bill.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS: To-morrow.

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

Ayes	...	...	23
Noes	...	...	14
Majority for	...	...	9

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Bath
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Coucher	Mr. Brown
Mr. Davies	Mr. Collier
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Holman
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gull	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Walker
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Layman	Mr. Troy (*Teller*).
Mr. McLarty	
Mr. Mitchell	
Mr. Monger	
Mr. N. J. Moore	
Mr. S. F. Moore	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Stone	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Hardwick (*Teller*).	

Question thus passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair; the TREASURER in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Grant of land tax:

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "for the year ending the thirtieth day of June one thousand nine hundred and seven" be struck out, and the words "until such time as Parliament otherwise determines" be inserted in lieu.

The clause as it stood would impose a land tax for one year only, whereas the tax should be enacted year after year until Parliament otherwise decided. To give a yearly opportunity for altering the rate of the tax, while the assessed values of the land remained unaltered would make the measure operate in a manner altogether different from what was desired. City lands were yearly increasing in value, while the increase in the value of country lands was not nearly so great. This would be unfair to country taxpayers. This amendment would mean that the tax would continue until Parliament otherwise decided, and would not be for the year ending 1907. For the sake of the permanency of our industries, it was necessary that those who carried them on should know where they stood; but if they were to have this tax one year, and, at the will of the Treasurer, no tax at all another year, they would not know where they stood.

THE TREASURER: It was difficult to follow the hon. member's argument. The argument was, protection to the people paying the tax; but the effect of having to bring taxation proposals before Parliament annually was a much greater protection than any fixture we could make by striking out these words. Where could the protection come in by fixing the tax until Parliament otherwise authorised? The assessment could be altered from time to time at the will of the Treasurer administering the Act.

MR. BATH: But not with the supervision of Parliament. This amendment would give the opportunity of bringing this measure on without submitting the Assessment Bill.

THE TREASURER: Exactly; but it would not have the effect of preventing the taxation being brought before Parliament without touching the Assessment Bill. The machinery Bill was there for all time. All we had to consider each year was how much we should impose on the landholders. This year we asked that it should be 1½d. in the pound; next

year another Bill would be necessary to say how much we were going to impose.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. FOULKES: Would the officials appointed to levy and collect this tax be under the Public Service Commissioner, or would they be directly appointed by the Treasurer?

THE TREASURER: The officials would be under the control of the Treasurer. They would be in a sub-department of the Treasury, and therefore would come under the Public Service Commissioner.

MR. FOULKES: The officers should be directly under the control of the Public Service Commissioner. They should not hold office subject to the pleasure of the Minister. It would be their duty to levy and collect this tax, and a Minister might give instructions to them to be exceedingly strict. If they were under the control of the Commissioner, they would be likely to act more impartially between the landowner and the State than if they were placed under the direct control of the Minister. Assurance should be given that these officers would not be removed from office without the consent and advice of the Public Service Commissioner.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: This discussion was altogether irrevelant. It was in Clause 3 of the Assessment Bill that the authority was given to appoint assessors, and the hon. member should have moved to attach conditions to their appointment when the Land Tax Assessment Bill was under discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: No discussion could be allowed on this point, but information could be sought.

THE TREASURER: The Public Service Commissioner would not control these officers appointed under the Land Tax Assessment Bill in their routine, but the appointments would be made under the Public Service Act. There were certain offences upon which any Minister could dismiss an official, but the powers of the Public Service Act would apply to these officers.

MR. H. BROWN moved an amendment—

That word "halfpenny" after "penny" be struck out.

This would reduce the tax from 1½d. to 1d. in the pound. It was a most inopportune time in the annals of the State to impose such a high land tax, as things were in the towns. Of course we learned from country members that things in the country were prosperous, and that the country people were quite able to pay the tax.

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

Ayes	...	...	6
Noes	...	...	29
Majority against	...		23

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Bath
Mr. Gull	Mr. Bolton
Mr. S. F. Moore	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Smith	Mr. Carson
Mr. Brown (*Teller*).	Mr. Collier
	Mr. Daglish
	Mr. Davies
	Mr. Eddy
	Mr. Ewing
	Mr. Gordon
	Mr. Gregory
	Mr. Hardwick
	Mr. Hayward
	Mr. Holman
	Mr. Hudson
	Mr. Keenan
	Mr. Layman
	Mr. McLarty
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Stone
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Underwood
	Mr. Walker
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Monger (*Teller*).

Amendment thus negatived.

At 6·30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.
At 7·30, Chair resumed.

Clause put and passed.
Preamble, Title—agreed to.
Bill reported without amendment; the report adopted.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the 23rd August.

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): When introducing this measure the Premier referred at some length to the history of land settlement in this State, and it is noteworthy that almost every amendment of the Land Act which has been passed has been in the direction of restricting the area which can be obtained

by one person. This is only natural, because in the early history of this State when there were large areas of land available, and only a small number of people within the borders of the State, there did not appear to those charged with the administration at the time the necessity for placing any restriction whatever on the acquisition of land. But as time has progressed and population has grown, and a larger proportion of the population has taken to agricultural pursuits, the necessity has arisen for the restriction of the area of land which can be acquired by one person, and also for the better working of the Lands Department. Occasion has arisen from time to time for amendments to be made in the Land Act which have resulted in a large amount of land legislation placed on the statute-book of the State. In connection with this matter, while of course we recognise the necessity for amendments of the Land Act, it must be borne in mind that almost every amendment has also necessitated an increase in the land expenditure, not only because the passage of each measure has necessitated a considerable increase in cost, even in the printing bill and the gazettal of amendments, and in various other directions; but the greatest indication of the necessity for amendment in our legislation is in the fact, which was mentioned by the Premier in the course of his speech, that although the process of acquiring land has gone on with remarkable rapidity in recent years, the percentage of alienated land under cultivation is still very small: as stated by the Premier, very little more than four per cent. of the total area alienated. I think this is sufficient justification for some of the amendments which the Premier has embodied in the Bill in the direction of making more specific improvement conditions in regard to our conditional and grazing leases. The fact that although facilities have been provided for acquiring land, and although the terms of our Agricultural Bank Act have been fairly liberal, still only a small proportion of the land taken up under our various Land Acts has been utilised. This leads one to the conclusion that there must have been a good deal of land acquired in the past merely for speculative purposes. Under the Land Act of 1898, although a very laudable intention appeared in the framing of that measure providing that before conditional purchases could be alienated in fee simple certain improvements had to be effected, yet in actual practice and in administering the Act it is shown that those who desired to acquire land for speculative purposes could hold it for a number of years, and the only improvement necessary was that of fencing. We all recognised that a fence must be put up in a workmanlike manner, and under the system of inspection the fence had to be passed before it was allowed as an improvement; but the fence erected by the speculator on the land did not involve loss to him, because in selling the land not only did he secure the increased price caused by increased settlement, but he could also secure the value of the fence. Therefore I cordially agree with the Premier in respect to the progressive improvements: I regard this as a distinct advance in land legislation. Then again the proposal for decentralisation is one that has been talked of for a considerable length of time, and a great many people have committed themselves to the opinion that the decentralisation of land administration would be a distinct advantage. We have to recognise that in the introduction of a new policy which will entail almost a complete change in the working of the department, there is a possibility of grave dangers creeping in. In regard to the proposal for decentralisation, during the brief time I was in the Lands Department I recognised that it would be undoubtedly an advantage to Western Australia in the acquirement of our land and in placing would-be settlers on the land with the greatest amount of expedition that decentralisation should be introduced. I considered the best possible method of securing this was by instituting the reform in instalments. With this end in view I introduced the amendment that provided that settlers could apply for their land in the district offices, and that the priority of their claim should date from the time the claim was lodged in the district office inssead of in the head office in Perth. We are continually having New Zealand pointed out as an example of the advantage of decentralisation; but we must bear in mind that so far as New Zealand is concerned

in the administration not only of the Land Department but also of other departments of State, New Zealand has always had decentralisation. Before the present form of administration and the present Parliament was introduced they had four provincial Governments in New Zealand, and each of those provincial Governments had a considerable amount of autonomy not only in the administration of land but in many other departments of State; and the effect was when the central Government was established in New Zealand they still retained the policy of decentralisation in regard to land and other matters, with the result that that policy has grown up with the State, and as the work of the department in regard to land has grown, so they have been able to adjust the policy of decentralisation in comformity with the growth of the departments. But we have to recognise that in Western Australia we are superimposing what is practically a new system altogether; and there is a possibility in the transition from the policy of centralisation to that of decentralisation an added cost will be involved as far as the department is concerned. If we can utilise the officers at present in the head office and place them in charge of the various district land offices without the necessity of employing new officers, then the reform is one that will be commendable. I am afraid, unless greater care is exercised, this transition period will only be negotiated by an increase in the cost of administration in the Lands Department. All must recognise that at the present time when new taxation is proposed, and when the question of adjusting our finances is under consideration, any increase in the cost of any department, especially the Lands Department, must be carefully watched. In connection with the pastoral leases of the State, some of the clauses embodied in the measure provide for the raising of the rents. But it seems to me this proposal comes somewhat late on the scene, and it will mean these rents will only be raised for pastoral lessees that are on the outskirts of settlement. So far as Kimberley and the North-West districts are concerned, almost all the land suitable for pastoral purposes, and which possess natural advantages owing to the proximity to markets and a better rainfall, have already been absorbed in pastoral leases, and such leases cannot be brought under the Bill; so the raising of rents can only apply to new pastoral leases, which in the circumstances will be on the outskirts of settlement; and this will thus inflict a certain injustice as far as they are concerned compared with more favourable pastoral leases. The difficulties seemed to be first occasioned when it was decided that the rent for these pastoral leases should be apportioned over one district independent of the superiority of one pastoral lease over another; and it should be a question for consideration when these leases fall due as to whether legislation should not be introduced by which, instead of making a universal rent apply over a very large district, some method of assessment should be devised by which the amount would be proportionate according to the value of the pastoral lease itself. In New South Wales they have a system somewhat similar to this by which the rent on leases in the Western district is decided according to the stock-carrying capacity of the land. This capacity is decided by officers of the department, and the rent is proportioned accordingly. Then again I am glad to see that provision is made for the selection of land in many of those districts not hitherto available for agricultural purposes. I know that under the 1898 Act land could not be selected for agricultural purposes. I have no personal knowledge of the capabilities of the Kimberley district for instance, but we have seen repeatedly in the papers letters from those who have been there stating that there are many portions of the Kimberley district and the North of Western Australia suitable for tropical culture, but owing to the fact that the area has been absorbed in pastoral leases it has been impossible for those desiring land for agricultural use to secure it. I know of instances where individuals on the goldfields were desirous of taking up an area of land in the North of this State for the purpose of tobacco culture. For many months they plied the Lands Department with requests to make land available, and it was not until some time after they put in their applications they were able to secure an area of land. The Premier has decided to reinstate grazing leases. He recognises that

there is a considerable area of land in this State which is not suitable for agricultural purposes, what is generally known as the sandplain of this State; and I agree with him that when Western Australia gets beyond a stage that her farmers are catering for the local market, and they have to compete by exporting their produce, the sandplain will not be utilisable for agricultural purposes; but I believe that a better policy than that proposed by the Premier would be that adopted in New Zealand in the disposal of their land for agricultural purposes by a portion of the Land Act which provides for small grazing leases. We have it here stated in regard to New Zealand:—

> Small grazing runs are divided into two classes: first-class, in which they cannot exceed 5,000 acres; and second-class, in which they cannot exceed 20,000 acres in area. These runs are leased for the term of twenty-one years, with right of renewal for a like term, at a rental of 2½ per cent. on the capital value of the land, but such capital value cannot be less than 5s. per acre.

It goes on to deal with provision for residence and improvements which have to be carried out on those leases. Whilst it is recognised that there are areas not suited for agricultural purposes, the past experience of land in this State, according to those competent to speak with authority, has been that much of the land characterised as third-class land in the old days has been found to be of better quality than at first supposed, with the result that under our system of grazing leases, and even under the system of poison leases, much good land has been parted with and the fee simple granted. I believe it would be preferable in connection with these areas if we were to adopt the New Zealand system, namely to lease the land for 21 years with a right of renewal. If at any time the land were to prove valuable, if the progress of agriculture and the development of science were to make it evident that this land could be used for agricultural purposes, and that it was desirable it should not be parted with in any such large areas, then by the adoption of the system which they have in New Zealand, by which the people are recompensed to the full value of their improvements, the State could step in and make it available for settlement; but if the fee simple is parted with it makes it practically impossible, except under the repurchase system for closer settlement, to make this land available. The Premier in the course of his speech said it was our duty at this stage of our history to benefit by the mistakes of the past, and to see that no one individual could become possessed of a very large area, otherwise in the near future we would have to repurchase some of those estates; and he went on to refer to the position of those estates which have been repurchased by the Government for closer settlement, and stated that there were 529 settlers on those areas which previously only 14 occupied. I remember a debate on land matters in this House, although I have not been able to look up the exact quotation, where Mr. Throssell, whilst a member of this House, referred to the fact that on some estates which have been repurchased the policy of building up larger areas has gone on in connection with that, and it is only to be expected that as these people secure the fee simple of the areas of these repurchased estates the policy of building up large estates will go on perhaps steadily, but it must eventually take place, and the time will come when the Government will have to repurchase these a second time in order to cut them up for closer settlement. In regard to this matter I have always held one opinion, and I have seen no reason in the course of events to change that opinion. I believe that in Western Australia as in other parts of the world the time will come when we will be faced with the necessity of providing for the nationalisation of our land. Times have occurred in this House when I have been twitted with change of opinions on this subject; but I wish only to state that during the short time I occupied the Lands Department I recognised that it was not sufficient to initiate the principle of land nationalisation only so far as our residential leases on the goldfields were concerned, and to allow people to monopolise the land in other districts practically unchecked. I thought that if the system was good for the residential leases on the goldfields it should be good for other portions of this State, and with that end in view I prepared a draft of an amendment of the Land Act by which town lots throughout the agricultural districts and grazing leases and poison

leases should not be parted with by conditional purchase, but should be leased somewhat on terms like those existing in New Zealand. And now, as a confirmation of the wisdom of those views, we have the present New Zealand Government laying down as part of their programme that in the future no portion of the remaining Crown land shall be alienated, but the leasing system shall be instituted in connection with it. They are also providing what will prove a solution of the educational problem in the State, and that is that the rents accruing from the leased Crown lands shall be devoted to endowment for educational purposes, not only for primary education, but also for secondary education and for university purposes. I know the argument which will be advanced by members who oppose this view, and that is that they believe in the good old British system of every man having a little bit of land to call his own; but if they will only take the trouble to look up the records of the land alienation in Great Britain they will find that only one man out of every 111 in Great Britain does have a little bit of ground to call his own; and yet practically the whole of our land system is derived from the precedents established in the old country. Of course the results have had longer to work out in the old country than in these newer colonies, where we have been in a much happier position. We have had small populations with an unlimited area of land; but that time has passed. Even in the Eastern States and New Zealand the easy acquiring of land and gradually building it into large estates has gone on, and every book which has been issued by Mr. Coghlan and his successor Mr. Hall, dealing with land alienation, has gone to show that this policy of concentrating the ownership of the land in the hands of a few persons is going steadily on. I have only to quote the fact and the statistics as laid down by W. H. Hall, the Government Statistician of New South Wales, in the official Year Book for 1905-6.

MR. STONE: If he did not sell the land, where would he get the land tax?

MEMBER: He would not want a land tax.

MR. BATH: The Year Book says:—

> The least satisfactory feature in the table is the fact that the number of holdings of moderate size does not greatly increase. In 1880 the holdings having an area of from 16 to 400 acres numbered 27,501, while in 1905 they numbered 39,843, showing an advance of only 45 per cent. On the other hand, the larger holdings have increased at more than twice that rate. For the year ended 31st March, 1905, there were 15,245 holdings of 401 acres and upwards in extent, compared with 7,443 in 1880, or an increase of 105 per cent. during this short period.

In the course of his analysis of the figures the writer says:—

> The climax is reached, however, in the holdings of more than 10,000 acres in extent. Of these there are but 772, aggregating 22,830,261 acres, or 47·48 per cent. of the whole area alienated from the Crown, each averaging an area of 31,621 acres.

That is that nearly half the land in New South Wales alienated from the Crown is in the hands of 722 persons. This concentration of the bulk of the land in New South Wales in the hands of a few persons has been going on, because if you compare the position in 1905 as shown by this book with the position in previous years you will see that the land is much more widely distributed. Then dealing with the whole of Australia and New Zealand Mr. Coghlan says:—

> The most remarkable feature of the table is that in New South Wales about one-half the alienated land is owned by 730 persons or institutions, in South Australia by 1,283, and in New Zealand by less than 500.

There can be no doubt that in Western Australia the necessity for land settlement has compelled the Government to purchase large estates in order to cut them up for closer settlement. Even with large areas of land still available and still untouched as far as our settlers are concerned the position will be a suicidal one if the Government have to continue doing this not once or twice, but in the course of years a number of times, in order that the policy of aggregating large areas of land in the hands of a few persons may be destroyed and in order that closer settlement may be encouraged. The Government cannot buy land without paying the full value for it, and it means that the indebtedness of the State will increase with a view to securing the policy of closer settlement; yet this policy of closer settlement by the opera-

tion of our land laws is practically nullified, because it only tends in the long run to build up large estates. Even in New Zealand, with the liberal land legislation which they have enjoyed in past years, this result has accrued. I have no doubt that the operation of their land laws in New Zealand, and the experience they have had, have shown that some alteration is necessary, and has resulted in the Government of New Zealand adopting the policy which they outlined the other day in their policy speech, namely that of refusing to alienate any farther areas of Crown land, but making them available rather by the leasehold system. We also have in the statistics given by Mulhall as to the holdings of land in Great Britain, that from the decade 1885 to 1895 there was a decrease in the number of farms throughout Great Britain of no less than 13,000. That is a serious position for Great Britain. It is land monopoly operating through the building up of large estates, practically acquiring the agricultural interests in the old country and driving the agricultural workers more and more into the towns and factory life. When one recognises what the factory life has done for the many thousands of workers in England they will admit that this policy of killing the agricultural industry is one that is sapping the very life blood of the people of Great Britain. In regard to our pastoral leases I moved for a return here some time back for the purpose of finding out how much rent had been paid by pastoral lessees to the State for lands held in various districts. I did this because it appears to me that a number of pastoral lessees, if they have availed themselves of the provisions of the 1898 Act, have been securing an advantage at the expense of the State. Under the Land Regulations which were amended by the 1898 Act, in the South-West Division pastoral lessees were granted land at a rental of £1 per 1,000 acres, and as the rent under the 1898 Act was also fixed at £1 per 1,000 acres the pastoral lessees were given the right to bring their leases under the Act. So far as the South-West Division was concerned the lessees did not secure any advantage. In the Gascoyne Division, under the Land Regulations the rent for the first seven years was 10s. per 1,000 acres, in the second seven years 12s. 6d., and in the third seven years 15s. per 1,000 acres, while under the 1898 Act the rent was fixed at 10s. per 1,000 acres. This means that the pastoral lessees who under the 1887 regulations during the third seven years should have been paying 15s., by bringing leases under the 1898 Act were allowed to bring them under the 10s. per thousand acres clause, thus securing a reduction of 5s. In the Eucla Division for the first seven years the rent was 10s., in the second seven years 12s. 6d., and in the third seven years 15s. per 1,000 acres. Under the 1898 Act lessees were enabled to secure the leases for 5s. per 1,000 acres, thus enabling those who held them under the 1887 regulations at the rate of 15s. per acre, by using the transfer clause of the 1898 Act, to secure a reduction in rent of 10s. per 1,000 acres. In the North-West in the first seven years the rental was 10s. per 1,000 acres, and in the second seven years 15s., and in the third seven years 20s. Under the 1898 Act the lessee could transfer his holding and secure it at the rate of 10s. per 1,000 acres, so that these people were enabled to obtain a reduction of 10s. per 1,000 acres. In the Eastern Division the rent in the first seven years was 2s. 6d. per 1,000 acres, in the second seven years 5s., and in the third seven years 7s 6d.; and under the 1898 Act lessees were enabled to get their holdings for the first portion of their term at 2s. 6d. and for the second portion 5s. per 1,000 acres; so that these people were enabled to secure a reduction by transferring their leases under the 1898 Act of from 7s. 6d. per 1,000 acres to 2s. 6d. In the Kimberley Division the rent for the first seven years was 10s. per 1,000 acres, in the second seven years 15s. per 1,000 acres, and in the third seven years 20s. per 1,000 acres. But as the rent for these leases under the 1898 Act was fixed at £1 per 1,000 acres these persons could not secure any advantage. I see the Premier in the measure which he has introduced has inserted a provision which will deal with this; but if the pastoral lessees were awake to their opportunities under the 1898 Act probably there is not one who has not utilised his right before the 21st August 1906, as set down in the Act, and thus escaped the operation of this pro-

posal. It seems to me the Premier should make some inquiry into this and find to what extent the pastoral lessees——

THE PREMIER: That was the idea of making it the 21st August, and not waiting until the passing of the Bill.

MR. BATH: But the Premier must recognise that some of the lessees must have secured a material advantage already by effecting a surrender of their holdings. During the time I was Minister for Lands I refused the transfer of these pastoral leases from under the Regulations of 1887 to the Land Act of 1898. We have a proposal embodied in this amending Land Bill that is for the granting of the fee simple after a term of years for all residential leases on the goldfields, notwithstanding the fact that under the amending Act which provided for the residential leases being granted it was stated that the fee simple should not be granted. That is a question I do not propose to deal with on the second reading of this Bill, but I shall reserve any remarks I may have to offer till the clause is considered in Committee. It has been urged in extenuation of this proposal that in New Zealand the system of leasing has been found to work badly, has become unpopular, and that the people of New Zealand, or rather the Crown lessees, have made a demand for the fee simple to be granted. In New Zealand the Government appointed a commission to inquire into the conditions of the Crown lessees to make recommendations and to report, in order to place the Crown lessees on a satisfactory basis. These recommendations when they were presented to Parliament were expressly against the fee simple being granted for any leases issued in New Zealand. In the session of 1895 a number of the members in Opposition thought this was an excellent apportunity of defeating the Government, labouring under the delusion that the Crown lessees were dissatisfied with their position. And they thought they could bring sufficient pressure to bear on a number of Government supporters to vote against the Government. This matter was embodied in a resolution which was brought before the House by the Premier, and an amendment was moved by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Massie) that the fee simple should be granted to lessees. That amendment was defeated by a big majority, and the Leader of the Opposition then carried the campaign into the elections which took place at the end of that year. At the time it was predicted in New Zealand and all over Australia that as a result of the refusal to grant the fee simple, Mr. Seddon's downfall would take place and that the Liberal Reform Administration would come to an end. Yet we found that although the elections were fought out almost entirely on that issue, although the Opposition availed themselves of every opportunity of utilising the Crown lessees or trying to influence them in favour of the fee simple, we found that Mr. Seddon came back as Premier of New Zealand with an increased majority over that which he had previously enjoyed. We found in the report of the commission containing the evidence given by Crown lessees that a majority stated emphatically that if certain provisions were made by which they could utilise the Advances to Settlers Act the same as those in possession of freeholds, they were perfectly satisfied with their position as lessees of the Crown. By an amendment in the Advances to Settlers Act the grievances were removed, and we found these people at the elections voting for the maintenance of the Seddon policy and for the maintenance of the policy of leasing. As far as this principle is concerned I do not suppose the time has arrived in Western Australia when land monopoly will bring the seriousness of it before the notice of the people; but the time will inevitably come when by the aggregation of estates in Western Australia and the monopoly of land in the hands of a few, we shall be faced with the position as they have it in Great Britain, which is claimed to be the home of the principle, that every man should have a little bit of land which he can call hisown. But those people are without that little bit of land to call their own, while the great bulk of the land is in the hands of a few individuals. In regard to the farther proposals of the measure as submitted by the Premier

they will have my hearty concurrence. They are designed to make the Land Act more workable and to assist settlers desirous of utilising the land for legitimate purposes, and any proposal having that object in view will have the hearty concurrence of all those who have the welfare of Western Australia at heart.

Question put and passed.
Bill read a second time.

BILL—MINES REGULATION.

IN COMMITTEE:

Resumed from the 6th September; Mr. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair, the MINISTER FOR MINES in charge of the Bill.

Clause 28—Examination and inquiry as to the cause of accident:

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That in Subclause 1 all the words after "occurred" to "thereof," in lines 3 and 4, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: "and shall thereafter, at some convenient place, secure the statements of such witnesses as can give any evidence of the cause of the accident."

The locality of an accident was the wrong place for an inspector to make an examination of witnesses as to the occurrence. Those in the immediate vicinity of an accident underground were as a rule in an excited state, and that was not the best time to secure their evidence. Better enable the inspector to examine the witnesses at some convenient place near the mine. Witnesses often declared that when making statements immediately after an accident they were confused, and the statements had subsequently to be varied.

THE MINISTER: The amendment would not effect the desired object. The manager's office, or some place underground, might constitute the "convenient place" which the amendment provided for. When an accident occurred the inspector went as quickly as possible to the spot and collected whatever evidence he could so as to ascertain whether a prosecution ought to be initiated. It would be wrong to place difficulties in the way of the inspector, whose duty it was to get the witnesses' statements immediately, in order to present a case to the department.

MR. TAYLOR: It would be better to insert the words "apart from the mine" after "place," in the amendment. When the inspector reached the scene of the accident he would have no difficulty in ascertaining who saw the accident and who knew most about it. He could easily notify the witnesses that he would examine them at a certain place, say on the same evening. This delay might enable the injured person to make a clear statement. Immediately after a severe accident some of the witnesses were nervous, and ought to have a chance to calm down. Many injured men had made, when semi-conscious, statements in which they afterwards recognised serious inaccuracies.

MR. JOHNSON: A similar section was in the existing Act, and worked badly. The inspector immediately questioned the men, in the presence of the manager or the shift-boss. This was wholly undesirable. It was wrong that men should be called on to make statements immediately after a fatal accident. The men were not then fit to state correctly how the accident occurred. In dozens of cases the statements made immediately after the accident were at variance with statements by the same witness at the coroner's inquest. The amendment should be made to read that the inspector should take the names of the witnesses, instead of their statements. The clause as it stood was not framed in fairness to the men.

MR. WALKER could not agree to striking out the words, for it might be necessary there and then to take evidence, as the opportunity of obtaining evidence from the persons witnessing the accident might not occur later. The inquiry made on the spot immediately after an accident should not be of an elaborate character.

THE MINISTER: Inquiries of that nature were altogether different from the inquiry made by the inspector immediately after an accident for departmental purposes.

MR. WALKER: All that need be done then and there would be to secure the materials for a full inquiry to be

held later. If no inquiry were made at the time and no names were taken, that course would tell rather against the workers than for them. A systematic and calm inquiry should be held after; but material for such inquiry should be sought immediately after the accident, and the inspector should not be denied the right or opportunity of obtaining information as soon as possible from those best able to give it.

MR. BARNETT could not see why there should be objection to the mining inspector obtaining information immediately after an accident, because a truthful and straightforward statement from those who saw the accident or were present when it occurred would be more likely to be obtained then than later.

MR. GULL: Working miners who had seen an accident should not be afraid to say, even in the presence of the mine manager, how the accident happened. The clause should pass as it stood.

MR. JOHNSON: In nine cases out of ten, the miner who was asked to give evidence was taken into the mine office, and the evidence was written down in presence of the manager.

MR. GULL: Men who had witnessed an accident would be more ready to give a straightforward statement if asked about it immediately than they would if an interval occurred and they talked the matter over; because it was within common experience that in such cases a weaker mind was led by a stronger mind to adopt another version of the story.

MR. SCADDAN produced a copy of a report made by a mining inspector, relating to an accident in the South Kalgurli mine, and attached to it was a copy of statements made by several witnesses; each witness signing his statement, the same as would be done at a coroner's inquest. That report would be submitted to the Minister for Mines, who might direct action to be taken on it if he thought necessary. The objectionable part was that the mine manager or other authority would send to the department for a copy of the inspector's report together with evidence taken; and if that document was intended to be confidential for the use of the department, it should not be sent out to persons interested in the mine where an accident had occurred.

THE MINISTER would be pleased to stop any inspectors' reports being sent out to the authorities of a mine where an accident had occurred.

MR. SCADDAN: If these reports were treated in future as of a confidential nature, the authorities of a mine where an accident had occurred could be sued for damages. He supported the clause as it stood.

THE MINISTER: That would be done. The inquiry held by a mining inspector after an accident was not in the nature of a full inquiry such as would be held at a coroner's inquest, but consisted in simply taking the statements of men on the spot who could speak as to an accident. Those statements when taken were held by the inspector for the department to consider whether an action should lie against the management for a breach of the Act. In the case of a fatal accident and a coroner's inquest following, any statements taken by the mining inspector immediately after the accident would not be brought forward at the coroner's inquest, although the men who had made the statements to the inspector would doubtless attend the inquiry and give evidence, and the inspector could then question any witness if he thought necessary. It would be improper if statements made to an inspector immediately after an accident were taken in the presence of the mine manager. He (the Minister) was not aware that this had been done, but would inquire; and if he found there was such a practice he would have it stopped. The men making statements to an inspector immediately after an accident should do so untrammelled by the presence of any authority connected with the particular mine. Of course the department had no power to compel workers to make statements immediately after an accident; but it was in the interests of the workmen that inquiry should be made by the inspector and statements obtained as soon as possible after the accident. It was better in the interests of the workers to allow the inspector to get these statements as quickly as possible after an accident occurred, and he assured members that these statements should be taken for the use of the department, and for the department alone. As to the reports of mining

inspectors made in the case of an accident, these reports were always made available for publication, and an inspector knowing his report was to be published would be the more careful in preparing it. He (the Minister) was prepared to look on the statements made by men immediately after an accident as being confidential to the department; and if it was found necessary for the department to issue a summons or to prosecute the management for a breach of the Act or regulations in relation to an accident, the statements made to the inspector by workmen immediately after an accident would have to be used by the department; otherwise the statements should be kept as confidential in the department. He must oppose the amendment which had been moved, and divide the committee on it if necessary.

MR. HOLMAN saw no objection to the taking of workmen's statements by a mining inspector immediately after an accident. But what he had objected to was that the statement made by an injured person was taken at a time when that person was not in a condition to give a calm account of what had happened. Immediately an inspector visited a mine after an accident, he took the statements of those workers who knew anything about the accident; and it was almost the invariable practice for the inspector to proceed to the hospital where the injured man or men were lying, and take their statements at once, while the injured persons were not in a condition to give a clear account of what had happened. Statements so taken by an inspector had been used afterwards when a claim for compensation went before a court. The way in which such statements were taken from an injured person was that the inspector would ask "Did you do so and so?" or "Did you see so and so?" and the injured man would reply "Yes," or would reply "No." When he saw at a later period the way in which his replies had been written down by the inspector, and the way in which the inspector had written down the questions put to him, the injured man was often surprised and could not recognise that as being his statement.

THE MINISTER: That would never be allowed.

MR. HOLMAN: But it had been allowed. It was pleasing now to hear the Minister say he was entirely opposed to it. It was most unfair to take a statement from an injured person until he was in a proper condition to make a statement in a calm and clear manner.

MR. GULL: If the case were to prove fatal, what then?

MR. HOLMAN: What was the use of going to a dying man and writing down a statement? It was to be hoped the clause would be so amended that it would not be possible for a man to work in a place by himself. He objected to statements being taken from witnesses and sent to mining companies, so that the statements might be used in evidence if a case were taken into court.

THE MINISTER was willing to move an amendment to insert after "thereof" the words "such statement shall not be taken in the presence of any person interested."

MR. BATH: Cases had been brought under his notice where statements had been taken by officials of the mine. This was objected to by miners working on the belt. One failed to see the advantage of a statement being taken, unless it was to be utilised in some way. Although the Minister said the statements might be used if a miner gave a different statement at the inquiry, and then it would be a question as to which of the statements the man made was correct. In an excited state a man might give utterance to a statement, which in calmer moments he might give in a more correct and particular manner. On the suggestion of the Minister, he would withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES moved—

That in line 5, after "thereof," the words "and such statement shall not be taken in the presence of any person interested" be inserted.

Amendment passed.

MR. HOLMAN moved that the following be inserted as Subclause 4:—

A representative of the Miners' Association in the district shall be entitled to examine the place where the accident occurred, and may be present when statements are obtained from witnesses, and may appear at inquiries held

respecting mining accidents, and shall have the right to call and examine or cross-examine witnesses.

It was necessary to do all we possibly could to prevent serious accidents occurring from time to time. The blame for accidents was not always laid on the shoulders of the right person. It would be useless to send a notification to the representative of the miners' association, unless that representative were allowed to visit the place where the accident occurred and be present at the inquiry to examine witnesses. If an inspector deemed an inquiry necessary, the association should have the right to have a representative at the inquiry present, and to have an opportunity of bringing forward all requisite evidence. On one occasion a warden refused the request of a representative of an association to be present at an inquiry, but the Minister, upon application, said the Act should be amended to allow such representative to attend. The Minister should not object to this amendment, as on a previous occasion the Minister had moved an amendment to allow a representative of an association to attend an inquest.

THE MINISTER was opposed just as much to this amendment as to the one carried on the voices the other night; although in the face of the carrying of the former amendment he did not see how he could now so strongly oppose this amendment. He would like now to make some reply to remarks made on a former occasion, when it was stated that in the preparation of this Bill he (the Minister) sent the State Mining Engineer to Kalgoorlie last January to have a secret conclave with the Chamber of Mines for the purpose of framing the Bill. That statement was absolutely incorrect. There was not a vestige of truth in the statement. Last year the State Mining Engineer waited not only on the Chamber of Mines but the miners' association, to try and arrive at a determination as to the proper height of stopes. The only time there had been any conference with the Chamber of Mines was last year after the defeat of the late Government, and the Mining Bill being then on the table he (the Minister) waited on the Chamber of Mines with the State Mining Engineer, and did what the late Government had not done, held a conference with the representatives of the miners' union. The other day he (the Minister) proceeded to Kalgoorlie and visited the Chamber of Mines and also the Trades Hall, and discussed the Mining Bill with the miners' representatives. This Bill had been drafted almost entirely by himself. The only two points in dispute practically between himself and the members on the Opposition side were those in reference to the check inspector and Sunday labour. Apart from these two main points it was generally admitted that the present Bill was an improvement on the measure brought down last year. He (the Minister) thought he was justified, seeing the number of amendments on the Notice Paper, in saying that members should not press amendments which they did not deem advisable to bring forward when the last Mining Bill was before the House.

MR. SCADDAN: There was no opportunity last year.

THE MINISTER: There were the second-reading speeches. He was justified in throwing the blame on two members of the late Ministry, seeing that the Leader of the Opposition had only been a member of the Government for a short time and was not a member of the Government when the Bill was brought in. He (the Minister) was prepared, owing to the decision the House arrived at the other night, to accept the amendment, subject to certain alterations. If these alterations were not accepted, he would divide the Committee on the amendment, and do his best to have it thrown out. He wished that a representative of the miners' association of the district should be entitled to examine the place where the accident occurred, but he did not think it wise that any person should be allowed to go below for the purpose of making an examination unless having some mining experience. He would accept the amendment if the hon. member would agree to add after the word "shall," in the first line, "subject to regulations"—the regulation would be that the person should be approved of by the Minister, and that he should be a man with some mining knowledge. Also we should strike out the words "and may be present when statements are obtained from witnesses." The secretary of a union might be a man without

the least bit of mining knowledge, and such a man should not be allowed by law to go below and then enter a court of law and say, "I examined this spot, and saw things absolutely dangerous, and the Act has not been carried out." We should be doing a wrong to both sides, if we allowed that; a very grave wrong indeed to those people responsible. As to the words, "and may be present when statements are obtained from witnesses," he would not allow their insertion at any price. We should rely on the inspector himself for the purpose of taking these statements. The inspector should stand apart from either the employer or the employee. He was a Government officer, and should be compelled to do his duty. If members knew of a man taking statements from a person who was seriously injured, and doing so in the presence of a mining manager, they should call attention to it.

MR. SCADDAN: Complaint had been made in the House by him, and the Minister concurred in the statement that if men were doing what was alleged they should be dismissed.

THE MINISTER: We could not make laws because some man in the street had made a statement. Any member should call attention to such a dereliction of duty on the part of an inspector as was referred to.

MR. COLLIER: Parliament was not always sitting.

THE MINISTER: In every instance he had tried to be fair. He had often had rows, but he was sure no member on the Opposition side could say that he had not acted impartially. If any complaint was made, a proper inquiry should be made at once. We were not dealing only with Kalgoorlie, where it would be easy to obtain an efficient person as a representative, but we had to take the outside districts as well; and in every instance we wanted to try to appoint a man with some mining knowledge. The member for Mt. Magnet said the other night that a union secretary would make a good inspector, because he was travelling about from place to place. And then we had another member saying he would not make a good inspector. A person would not be debarred because he was secretary to a union; but men had been nominated who had not been underground. He suggested an amendment to the amendment—

That the words "subject to regulations" be inserted after "shall," in line one.

MR. HOLMAN: After the amendment carried in the previous portion of the clause, it would be only fair that the inspector should take evidence or statements from witnesses, and that only the inspector and the witnesses be present. The reason he moved that part of the clause was that in the past a manager or representative of the company had invariably been present when statements were taken from witnesses. If that was to be continued, the representative of the association should have the same opportunity. He had no objection at all to the words referred to being struck out of the amendment. As to the first portion of the clause, he had no objection to its being amended by the insertion of the words "who shall be a practical miner."

THE MINISTER: It would be "subject to regulations," which would mean that one must be a practical miner.

MR. HOLMAN: As long as that would cover it, he saw no objection. The Minister had denied a statement made by him (Mr. Holman) last Thursday night, that the State Mining Engineer tried to confer with the representative of the Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie in connection with the Mines Regulation Bill. He again stated it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must accept the explanation given.

MR. HOLMAN: The statement was based on the authority of a very reputable mining journal in London, which he thought the Minister would take as some authority. If statements like this were published in the old country without authority, some action should be taken. We had an example only a few days ago when a certain person interested in mining went home and said that the Government here had promised him a railway, certain conditions, and the right to own minerals on properties. Unless such statements were contradicted, we should have only the Press to rely on. The *Miners' Journal* of the 10th March stated, under the heading "Western Australia"—

The State Mining Engineer has been privately conferring with the executive of the

Chamber of Mines at Kalgoorlie this afternoon regarding the proposed Mines Regulation Bill and working of mines generally, including the height of stopes, Sunday labour, safety fuses, etc.

The statement he made on Thursday night was amply borne out by this. If the Minister would deny that statement was correct, he would have to accept the denial; but he thought members would consider that the ground on which he based his statement was very reputable, because this journal was looked upon as being the most reputable mining journal in the old country. There it was stated that the State Mining Engineer had been privately conferring with the executive of the Chamber of Mines in connection with the Mines Regulation Bill. He did not think he drew on his imagination when he made the statement.

THE MINISTER: The other man who wrote it did.

MR. HOLMAN: That might be. He could only go by what was published in the Press. If the Minister denied the statement, he must accept the denial.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Minister had denied it.

THE MINISTER: The State Mining Engineer was rung up to-day by him and questioned, and it was his answer that he gave to the Committee. The State Mining Engineer went to confer with the Chamber Mines and of the Miners' Association in regard to the height of stopes, and a promise was made by the chamber at that time that he should receive certain information in regard to the Sunday labour in Mines. The Government had always made a point of treating both sides alike. He could give no other authority than that of the State Mining Engineer.

MR. HOLMAN: The Minister's denial would be accepted by him. But it bore him out in two points at least, namely as to the height of the stopes and Sunday labour. But the quotation spoke also of interviewing with regard to the Mines Regulation Bill and the working of mines generally.

THE MINISTER: This had nothing to do with the Bill.

MR. HOLMAN: The Minister must look to the State Mining Engineer when drawing up such an important measure as the Mines Regulation Bill. Since last Thursday we had had the State Mining Engineer advising the Minister what was necessary. Any Minister would take the advice of his departmental officers. If he could not do so, the best thing was to get rid of those officers. He (Mr. Holman) had not said that union secretaries would not make good check inspectors. He had not denied that they would, nor had he said they would. A great many union secretaries in Western Australia would make good check inspectors, and a large number would not. He saw no objection to the amendment suggested by the Minister, if there was no objection on this (Opposition) side. The Minister again repeated——

THE CHAIRMAN: The question was that certain words be inserted.

MR. HOLMAN: But if a statement was made by any person in the House, a member had a right to rebut it, especially if it had reference to the member himself. The Minister had said that the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) and himself should have been in a position to know about the framing of the Mines Regulation Bill. During the time that the member for Mt. Margaret and himself were members of the Cabinet the Mines Regulation Bill never came before them at all. It was being prepared by the then Minister for Mines, and not in a state to be placed before other Ministers. In all probability the amendment he moved would have been introduced into that Bill. He would accept the present amendment.

MR. TROY: In the previous clause it was provided on the recommendation of the Minister that no interested party should be present when statements were being taken by the inspector. Would the Minister say whether the clerks employed by a company would be interested parties? The employer did not always attend the inquiries or the scenes of accidents. Very often a clerk was sent.

MR. TAYLOR: While the Minister was collecting his scattered thoughts to furnish a reply to the member for Mt. Magnet, he (Mr. Taylor) desired again to object to the Minister's making statements implicating him (Mr. Taylor) with legislation brought down by a Government with which he had nothing to do at the time. It was only fair that he should

enter his protest against the Minister stating that he (Mr. Taylor) was a member of a Cabinet that brought down certain legislation, and that he had not opposed it then, but was opposing it now. The inference was that he (Mr. Taylor) was now opposing this measure on party lines. That was not the case. The Minister also brought to book the member for Murchison and himself with reference to a certain statement made concerning the State Mining Engineer. The statement was founded on a report by the New South Wales correspondent of the *London Mining Journal*, which stated that the State Mining Engineer had been conferring with the executive authority of the Chamber of Mines with reference to intended legislation dealing with the mining industry, dealing with the height of stopes and other things. Opposition members were perfectly in order, and justified, in making the statement in reference to the State Mining Engineer. The Minister, in righteous indignation, had contended that it was untrue; but it was not a concoction; the report in the *Mining Journal* had been taken by members as their authority for making the statement. The Minister desired that no person should go to the scene of an accident unless approved by the Minister; but in nine cases out of ten Ministers for Mines in Australia were not practical miners. If the matter was left to the associations for decision, we could depend that the associations would send the best man. It did not follow that the choice of selection was confined to the secretaries of unions. There were other officials in the associations. Of course the secretary would be the most convenient man to send in most cases; but if he was not a practical miner the association would avail themselves of the services of some of their members who were practical men.

MR. COLLIER moved an amendment on Mr. Holman's amendment—

That the words "The Miners' Association" be struck out, and "an industrial union of workers" inserted in lieu.

Very often accidents happened to engine-drivers. In the case of the Great Boulder accident, in which five men were killed, it would have been useless to send a practical miner to the accident. The amendment would cover all classes of labour on mines, and would allow a representative of the engine-drivers' union to be appointed.

MR. TROY: Would the Minister answer the question put previously?

THE MINISTER: If a man were likely to die as the result of an accident on an out-back mine, the inspector would deem it wise to have some one in the room with him, and would probably need to get the clerk to take notes; but in cases of accidents other than fatal, it would be wise if the inspector could take his own notes. That was his (the Minister's) idea as to how the Act should be administered.

MR. HOLMAN: Regulations could be made to that effect.

THE MINISTER: A certain amount of discretion must be given to the inspector in the case of an accident which would probably prove fatal. It would be necessary to have some one in attendance other than the manager or sub-manager of the mine; but ordinarily the evidence should be taken by the inspector with no one else present.

Amendment (Mr. Collier's) put and passed.

On motions by the MINISTER, Mr. Holman's amendment was also amended by inserting the words "subject to regulations" between "shall" and "be entitled to examine," and by striking out the words "and may be present when statements are obtained from witnesses."

Amendment (Mr. Holman's) as amended passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 29, 30, 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Engine-drivers to be certificated:

MR. SCADDAN moved an amendment—

That after "of" in line 2 of Subclause 4, the words "paragraph (*b*) of Subsection one of" be inserted.

This would provide that the Minister could exempt any driver from the operation of paragraph (*b*) of Subclause 1 of this clause. Paragraph (*b*) dealt with persons offending against the Act by taking charge of winding machinery by

which materials alone were raised or lowered in any shaft without holding first or second-class certificates.

THE MINISTER: The amendment could be accepted.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. SCADDAN: A certificated engine-driver should be in charge whenever men were raised or lowered.

THE MINISTER: When men's lives were at stake every precaution should be taken. But the hon. member's proposed amendment needed redrafting, and should be farther considered.

MR. SCADDAN would not press the amendment.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 33—General Rules, ventilation, etc.:

MR. HOLMAN: What regulations would be made for ventilation? Subclause 1 was not so good as the existing law, but was retrogressive. What one inspector would consider an adequate supply of pure air might be considered inadequate by another. The existing Act stipulated so many cubic feet for each man, horse, etc.

MR. BATH: The amendment tabled by him might appear strange, as there was no schedule in the Bill; but the regulations should appear as a schedule, or should be embodied in these general rules.

THE MINISTER: The old rule provided for a certain quantity of air; but the latest research showed that a good quality of air was the main desideratum, and quantity a secondary consideration. An accident to the State Mining Engineer had hindered the preparation of the regulations, but a rough draft had just been received, and would be printed, laid on the table, and distributed to members before recommittal of the Bill. Then the Committee could discuss whether the regulations should be inside or outside the measure. Till we saw how the regulations worked it would probably be wiser to keep them out of the Act, so that they might be capable of alteration from time to time. Otherwise, if they proved unworkable, they might result in the closing down of mines.. The Minister would be responsible to the House for the regulations, and would not be likely to make serious alterations while Parliament was in recess. The suggested amendments as to sanitation and ventilation should not be pressed. The first point mentioned in the draft regulations was the quality of air—that the total quantity of carbon dioxide should not exceed 0·15 per cent. by volume, except for 30 minutes after an explosion, when a higher percentage was permissible. The next paragraph dealt with the reading of the temperature by the dry bulb thermometer, and the next with the reading by the wet bulb instrument. The regulations needed mature consideration.

MR. BATH: Ventilation and sanitation of mines were of great importance. The result of investigation had been to show that if we had the quality of air, there must necessarily be the volume. As the Minister had promised to submit the regulations containing the recommendations of the State Mining Engineer, we should be able to know exactly what was recommended in regard to effective ventilation and presumably sanitation in our mines.

THE MINISTER: And dealing with ropes as well.

MR. BATH: There was no objection on his part to withdraw the amendment he had on the Notice Paper, with a view of farther consideration being given to the question on recommittal.

MR. SCADDAN: It was necessary to make the regulations as rigid as possible. Whilst the Minister might have in his mind the necessity of improving the ventilation of mines as they at present existed, the hon. gentleman had also to consider the ventilation of them when they reached greater depth. He hoped the Minister would give us an apportunity of considering the regulations.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

THE MINISTER: It was intended to have the regulations laid on the table for discussion, and he would have them printed as speedily as possible. They would need to be carefully looked into, The fullest discussion would be allowed on them, so that when they were gazetted they would have received the approval of the House.

MR. WALKER: This clause was exceedingly indefinite. We should be able to have something fixed. Would the Committee be able to discuss the clause again?

THE MINISTER: Yes; on recommittal.

MR. BATH: moved an amendment—

That the words "one week's," in line 5 of paragraph (*d*) of Subclause 3, be struck out with a view of inserting "two days'."

There was no necessity for any mine to keep one week's supply of explosives underground. It must be a source of great danger to those employed, and seeing that there was every facility for getting explosives down every day if required, a limit of two days would be sufficient.

THE MINISTER: We were not only dealing with mines like those at Kalgoorlie, but many of these mines were some distance from a magazine, and if the amendment were carried it would be rather hard when mine-owners were using small quantities.

MR. BATH: The amendment only related to storage underground; they could have a magazine on the surface.

THE MINISTER: Not many had magazines on the surface. In big mines at Kalgoorlie they got their supplies in two or three times a week. We were dealing with mines all over the State.

MR. TAYLOR: Provision for allowing a week's supply should meet the wishes of members. In some outlying places prospectors perhaps had no magazine on the surface. They might have a month's supply, which would not be sufficient for half a day's supply for a large mine. It was very hard to devise a system which would suit all parties concerned. A larger supply could not be kept on the big mines. If one day's supply exploded, things would not be too good for the big mines; but a day's supply on a small mine in the prospecting stage would not make much difference. It would be better to accept the clause as it stood.

MR. BATH: The member for Ivanhoe had a suggestion which would meet the case.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. SCADDAN moved an amendment—

That in line 5 of paragraph (*d*) the words "but in no case exceeding" be inserted after "to be."

This would enable the inspector to certify that two days' supply could be kept in certain magazines. On some of these mines if they were to have the liberty given under this clause to store a week's supply, if an explosion occurred it would lift the mine and two or three others with it.

Amendment passed.

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That the following words be added to paragraph (*m*): "and an adequate supply of tools approved of for this purpose by the inspector shall be provided for use."

This paragraph provided that in charging holes for blasting, no iron or steel tools should be used in tamping or ramming. We had to remember, however, that in certain mines no proper tools were provided for the men; and we should make provision, if we inserted this regulation applying to the men, that the management should keep a sufficient supply of proper tools.

Amendment passed.

MR. BATH moved that the following words be added to paragraph (*q*)—

—an adequate supply of which shall be made readily available.

The paragraph provided that no hole which had been fired should be recharged until thoroughly cooled or washed out with water. It was necessary to provide that an adequate supply of water should be made readily available.

Amendment passed.

MR. SCADDAN moved that paragraph (*r*) be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—

After the last shot has been fired in any working place, and before any relief of shift, a competent person, being a member of the party firing such shot, shall, except in the case of a miss-fire, carefully inspect the face of such place. In the event either of any danger being found to exist, or of a shot missing fire, the fact shall be reported to the relieving shift, together with the position of all charged holes, if any, before it comes to the face. The mem-

bers of a relieved party shall, on proof of failure to make the inspection or the report required as aforesaid, each be guilty of an offence against this Act, notwithstanding that such failure is the wrongful act or omission of a member or members of such party to whom the other member or members have entrusted the duty of making such report or inspection.

The paragraph in the Bill would lead to the appointment of a person in each party who would be responsible for the proper and safe handling of explosives. This was almost impracticable, because a party where each man was competent would not permit any man to take the responsibility of firing out holes It was well to maintain the existing system in vogue throughout Australia. Each member of the party should be responsible for the safe condition of the face. If we were to deal with the matter at all by legislation we should allow the present system to be maintained. When he (Mr. Scaddan) was working in a mine, one of the party would be deputed to do the firing out one day, and another man the next day; but the man firing out was usually deputed to go back to the face before the relief shift came on, to see that everything was right and to notify the relieving shift. The man also made a statement to his own party as to the condition of the face, and if any member of the shift going off met a member of the relieving shift, he could tell the relieving man as to the condition of the face. Very often a shot held fire; and the relief party not knowing how deep the hole had been bored would not know whether the face had been torn properly. The man who had fired out would readily see whether the face had been properly torn, and if he had reason to believe it had not, would use his tamping stick to find whether it was properly torn, and if it was not properly torn, he would report to the relieving shift. He (Mr. Scaddan) objected to one man being made responsible on all occasions for firing out. It was not always wise that one man should have authority and be called upon to face the danger of firing out a face. To give one man the responsibility would also be an argument to reduce the wages of all but one man in the party. It was too much responsibility to place on the shoulders of any man. If the Chamber of Mines had asked for this proposal, he was not aware of their comments on the subject. This provision was already in the Tasmanian and New South Wales Acts, and he believed worked well. He did not know whether it was in the Victorian Act, but it was inevitably the course carried out there. Every member of a party should be held responsible.

THE MINISTER: The object of the amendment was to make every member of a party equally responsible. The amendment was taken from the New South Wales Mining Act, but not much mining was done in New South Wales. If this amendment were inserted, it would be a direct incentive for the men to rush into a place immediately after a shot had been fired; and presuming a shot was fired in a long drive, it might take some hours before the gelignite fumes disappeared. It was an extraordinary proposal indeed. One man should be held responsible when a party were firing. He did not say that the same man should be held responsible each time, but the men who fired the shot should be held responsible for reporting a miss-fire, or anything that went wrong. He was prepared to amend the clause to that effect. The Chamber of Mines disagreed with this proposal, and stated that every man working in a party who were using explosives should be held responsible for the proper handling of the explosives. The Bill did not fully provide for the reporting of a miss-fire, and it ought to be made more clear. In the case of a miss-fire, a party going away should have the place barricaded and a notice posted up, so that there would be no chance of other men entering the place without knowing what had happened. Seven years ago, in the McTavish mine, a miss-fire took place. The men went away without reporting it, and the next morning two men went down into the place. The next thing was the carrying of two bodies from the mine. We should place the responsibility on men leaving the place, to report it to the next shift, or to post a notice. He could not agree with the amendment. When he was at the Trades Hall the other night with the

miners, they agreed with him that this proposition was unworkable, and the Chamber of Mines also concurred. An amendment had been drafted by the State Mining Engineer to the effect that in every case where explosives were used, the men belonging to the working party who used the explosives should be held responsible for the proper use of the same and for the reporting of miss-fires to the relieving shift or to the shift-boss. If that met the views of the member, he would move to that effect, and also insert a provision that in the case of miss-firing a notice should be posted in that portion of the mine before the men left.

MR. SCADDAN: After the explanation of the Minister, he would not press the amendment. The only danger did not lie in miss-firing. There was the case of a hole not completely exploded, and the ground hanging after the firing of a hole. It was difficult to explain to a relieving shift where the number of holes had been fired in a stope. The great majority of accidents occurred immediately after a shift going into a place, because the men had not obtained sufficient knowledge of the condition of the place in which they were going to work.

THE MINISTER: Let the hon. member call at the department on Friday, to assist in drafting a subclause.

MR. SCADDAN would not press the amendment. The majority of the accidents in such places occurred immediately after a change of shift, showing that the men going on had not a sufficient knowledge of the condition of the place where they worked.

MR. TAYLOR: Different mines had different methods. In development work the firing off was done possibly at night, so as not to interfere with breaking stone for battery purposes. The afternoon shift had no opportunity of seeing the day shift coming on in the morning; but if the afternoon shift fired out, its shift-boss could tell the day shift-boss that a certain number of holes had been charged and fired. He, when engaged in boring with a rock drill, had narrowly escaped cutting into n old hole containing 18 plugs of fracteur which had missed fire, and of the existence of which he had not been warned. Had he bored in the direction recommended by his mate, both must have perished. The preceding shift counted the shots but were not sure that all had gone off, and as usual concluded that two shots had gone together. Had the men been obliged to examine the face the danger might have been averted, for they could have reported to the shift-boss who came on in the morning that a hole had missed fire. It was common to find fracteur lying about in the bottom, and common for a man to bore a hole in soft country and find two or three plugs of fracteur not exploded. The man who fired out should be responsible. The men not using fracteur would not accept responsibility It was idle to say that fumes would hang about in a rise for three hours after the firing. If such were the case the place would not be fit for men to work in. He had been where some men could not work ten minutes without having to get fresh air. Every provision should be made for the safety of men going on after the firing out by a previous shift.

THE PREMIER: This was one of the most important provisions in the Bill. He had not had experience in a mine, but in a rock cutting he nearly lost a number of men through a case similar to that which had been referred to, that was where seven shots went in and only five were fired. The party who originally put in the shot should give the new party some indication of where the shot lay. The member for Ivanhoe and the Minister for Mines might between them frame a clause which would give what we all desired, namely safety to the men engaged in the work of firing the shot.

MR. HOLMAN: It was not always possible to remain behind to give information, because in many cases there were only two shifts in a mine. The only means of getting over that difficulty would be to leave a notice, as indicated by the Minister. The paragraph did not meet the case. The Minister having promised to deal with the matter on recommittal we could leave it now.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

MR. SCADDAN: During the year something like 234 cases of explosives had been condemned. About 53,000 pounds of imported dynamite had been condemned during the same year in Victoria, therefore he was of opinion that the inspection of explosives in this State had not been what it might have been. He did not wish to press the matter, but that was his opinion. In Victoria there was at present considerable agitation against the class of explosives used in the mines. No explosives should be used in a mine until they had been passed by the chief inspector of explosives.

THE MINISTER: They were all supposed to be passed by the chief inspector.

MR. SCADDAN: It was desirable that the chief inspector of explosives should take all responsibility of their being in good condition. We should consider the health of the men first, and revenue afterwards. The mine-owners in Victoria were asking the Minister to make provision of this nature in the amendment of the Mining Act. He would suggest that we have a provision somewhat as follows:—"All explosives used shall be certified to by the chief inspector of explosives as being in good condition, before being transferred to mining centres, the case containing the same to have some distinguishing mark thereon." The only extra cost entailed would be that of stamping the case. He was not particularly anxious that the matter should be placed in the Bill at this juncture, but he commended it to the Minister, and if the Minister would give him an opportunity when the Bill was recommitted he would move it, if the Minister was not prepared to accept that now.

THE MINISTER: The suggested amendment would hardly be of any use. No explosives were allowed in the State unless they passed the test provided by the chief inspector of explosives. That officer was supposed to be responsible to see that no inferior explosives came into the State.

MR. SCADDAN: The chief inspector admitted that they had.

THE MINISTER: No.

MR. SCADDAN: Yes; in his annual report.

THE MINISTER: That was not so. We had gone farther. Knowing that gelignite or dynamite would deteriorate, we had appointed an inspector who had special instruments, a complete outfit, and who went from magazine to magazine, from mine to mine, for the purpose of testing explosives in the various mining centres. We had not only power to inspect, but full power to condemn explosives not up to the standard, and that was the imperial standard. Not only was there inspection at Fremantle, but tests were made on the mines. Unless it was argued that the imperial standard was not worthy of going by, or that the department were not doing their duty, though he believed they were very carefu in seeing to this, the amendment suggested would be useless.

MR. SCADDAN: During 1905, according to the report of the Mines Department, 2,384,000lbs. of gelignite were imported and only 1,064 samples tested, showing that a considerable amount of gelignite, the principal explosive used, was not tested.

THE MINISTER: Every case was tested. A report would be produced to show the procedure adopted.

Subclause 8:

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That in Subclause 8 the words "ladder-way" be inserted between "working" and "pumping shaft."

This made it essential that a ladder-way passing through strata not safe should be timbered, as well as working shafts or pumping shafts.

THE MINISTER: Surely a working shaft would cover a ladder-way. The amendment was not necessary.

MR. HOLMAN: The amendment was necessary. The word "ladder" should be inserted before "working or pumping shaft." Ladder working or pumping shafts passing through unsafe strata should be timbered. In many mines there were shafts used solely for ladderways.

THE MINISTER: A ladder-way was a working shaft.

MR. HOLMAN: Not in the true sense. The shaft might be abandoned for any

other purpose, and in such case the shaft was always referred to as the ladder shaft. There was no valid objection to inserting the word to make the meaning clear beyond a doubt.

MR. BATH: Among practical miners the interpretation of a working shaft was a shaft used for hauling material.

THE MINISTER: There was a better authority than that of the hon member.

MR. BATH: That was the interpretation placed on the word by practical miners. It would only apply to ladder ways where the strata was unsafe.

THE MINISTER: There was no objection to the insertion of the word in the proper position.

MR. BATH: It was immaterial when the word was inserted.

Amendment (altered to read that the word "ladder" be inserted before "working") put and passed.

Subclause 10:

MR. HOLMAN: In every large mine there were certain parts abandoned and old stopes were used for travelling ways. A serious accident occurred in the travelling way of the Fingal mine a few months ago. Certain workmen were travelling to their work through a place that was not timbered, and a piece of ground fell and injured one man. In a great many cases there were travelling roads on the surface in close proximity to underground workings. These travelling ways might break through.

THE MINISTER: The clause said, "Every travelling way, whether on the surface or underground."

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 10 the words "or a man-engine" be struck out.

There was no such thing in Western Australia

Amendment passed.

Subclause 14:

MR. BATH moved an amendment —

That in lines 3 and 4 of Subclause 14 the words "unless some other safe means exist for exit of men from all parts of the mine,' be struck out.

Whether machinery was used or not, a ladder-way should be provided in case of accident. Men might be imprisoned unless a ladder-way was provided.

THE MINISTER: From all parts of a mine there must be some "other safe means of exit." If that was so, why compel the proprietors to go to the expense of putting in ladder ways?

MR. SCADDAN: It would be no hardship to have ladder-ways provided in the mines in Western Australia. In Victoria there was a provision to this effect, and in some of the Acts in the other States there was a provision that when a shaft was being sunk a chain ladder had to be provided.

THE MINISTER: That was provided for in the Bill.

MR. SCADDAN: In the main shaft a ladder-way should be provided from the bottom plat to the surface so that in case of accident to the machinery the men could get to the surface. Through an accident men might be prevented from getting away if no ladder was provided. Only recently he had asked a question as to whether an inspectior had reported that certain men had been imprisoned in the Ivanhoe mine for three hours through an accident in the mine and there being no means of exit.

THE PREMIER: What need of a ladder in a shaft having a grade of one in seven, with a tunnel out of which the men could walk?

MR. BATH: The subclause was unobjectionable if it referred to workings in which the men could escape by a drive into another shaft; but he interpreted "some other safe means of exit" to refer to a cage or skid.

MR. SCADDAN: In underlay shafts, referred to by the Premier, where a ladder was not provided there was a footway, which served the same purpose.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Daglish) put the question—

That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the clause.

MR. BATH: Was that a proper method of putting an amendment in Committee?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; according to the Standing Orders.

MR. BATH: In Committee the question was always, "That the words

proposed to be struck out be struck out."

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member was not raising a point of order, the question would be put as stated.

Amendment put, and a division taken.

MR. TAYLOR: Was the member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick) in order in crossing the floor of the House after the appointment of tellers?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was in the gangway, and could not be said to have crossed the floor.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	17
Noes	11
Majority for	6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Barnett	Mr. Bath
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Collier
Mr. Brown	Mr. Holman
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Horan
Mr. Ewing	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Gordon	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gull	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Walker
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Troy (*Teller*).
Mr. N. J. Moore	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Stone	
Mr. Verryard	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Layman (*Teller*).	

Amendment thus negatived.

Subclause 19:

MR. SCADDAN: Subclause 19 provided that persons in charge of an engine must have effective supervision, but it was not sufficiently clear. The existing regulation was evaded. At a mine on the Kalgoorlie Belt one engine-driver used to have charge of a tailings hoist on the surface, also of a winding engine and two boilers about 50 yards away, used for the raising and lowering of men. The driver used to leave his boilers and two engines to assist men tipping dry cyanide, about 200 yards up the lease. The then Minister, in reply to representations, stated that the man could not be forced to remain continually in charge of his engines. When men were working in the shaft the engine-driver should always be within call of the knocker.

THE MINISTER: Such was the intention; but it was not sought to provide that the driver must be continuously in charge of a small hoist on the surface. But where they were engaged in hauling in the mines, and they had special responsibility thrown upon them, this rule should be insisted upon.

MR. SCADDAN: Where a man was working below, and was in charge of a winding engine, he should not go so far out of reach that he could not clearly hear the distinct knocks.

Subclause 28—Shafts with ladders:

THE MINISTER moved an amendment—

That the words "sunk after the passing of this Act" be inserted after "shaft."

Many shafts had been already timbered, and the intervals were not more than 45 feet under the old Act. There was no necessity to compel people to pull out old timber and put in fresh timber. In the case of farther timbering the new conditions would have to be complied with.

Amendment put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

BILL—MONEY-LENDERS.

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11·16 o'clock, until the next day.