

inquiry that it is desirable to embody this sub-clause in the Bill, it can be re-inserted at a later date.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—Repeal of paragraph (d) of Section 66:

Mr. McCALLUM: I move an amendment—

*That the words "Paragraph (d)," line 1, be struck out, and "Paragraphs (d) and (e)" inserted in lieu.*

I shall, later, move the insertion of another paragraph, which appears on the Notice Paper.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The effect of the amendment will be to extend the provision generally, instead of its being limited to lead works. The amendment means that in every factory where the number of employees exceeds six, the employer must provide a separate room in which the employees shall take their meals. That would impose on many employers a very heavy burden, involving structural alterations. The principal Act already provides that separate dining rooms must be supplied for women and boys. Where a dining-room is provided, there is great difficulty in inducing the workers to use it, compulsion being necessary as a rule. Working in lead is admittedly most dangerous, and in lead works the provision of a separate dining-room is undoubtedly necessary. But in factories where poison is not floating in the air, a special dining-room is not necessary. I hope the amendment will not be carried, as it would have a bad effect on nascent industries.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, put and negatived.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 143:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no positive objection to this clause, but it is unnecessary, as the Interpretation Act of 1918 provides that an Act shall include regulations, rules, and by-laws made under it. Consequently, the desire of the hon. member is given effect to already.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Crown Solicitor advised me that the clause was most necessary.

Hon. P. Collier: He advised the Minister too, I suppose.

Mr. McCALLUM: It is necessary to make provision for enforcing the regulations as well as the measure itself. In any case, the position cannot be damaged by agreeing to the clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause would be necessary but for the fact that the Interpretation Act deals with the matter. My information was not gained from the Solicitor General, and it is only fair that I should mention the fact.

Clause put and negatived.

Bill reported with amendments.

*House adjourned at 11.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Thursday, 1st November, 1923.*

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

### CONDOLENCE—THE LATE LADY WITTENOOM.

#### *President's Acknowledgment.*

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The following letter has been received from the Hon. the President:—

I and my family appreciate very highly the resolution carried at the meeting of the Legislative Council on Tuesday. Will you please convey to the members our sincere appreciation not only of the sympathy expressed in the resolution, but also in their action of adjourning the House. It is indeed comforting under such a sudden and wholly unexpected bereavement. I am, Yours, sincerely, E. H. Wittenoom, President.

### QUESTION—WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES asked the Minister for Education: 1, Has any agreement been finalised for the disposal of the products of the Wyndham Meat Works? 2, If so, with whom? 3, Will the Minister lay the agreement or agreements on the Table?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, An arrangement has been made with Sheed, Thomson & Co., and an agreement is now being finalised. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Yes, when finalised.

### QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT, CONGESTION.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many of the 105 industrial cases, i.e., 34 references of industrial disputes, 10 applications for interpretation of awards, and 61 citations for breaches of awards, that were awaiting hearing by the Arbitration Court on the 25th September last, are still unheard? 2, Will the Arbitration Court go into recess for the Christmas vacation? 3, If so, on what date and for what

period? 4, What action do the Government propose to follow to enable the Court to overcome the congestion?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, There were not 105 industrial cases awaiting hearing on the 25th September last, but 94, namely, 23 references of industrial disputes, 10 applications for interpretation of awards, and 61 citations for breaches of awards. The number of these awaiting hearing at date is 66, namely, 21 references of industrial disputes, 6 applications for interpretation of awards, and 39 citations for breaches of awards. 2 and 3, It is impossible to answer these questions in the absence of the President of the court, who will return to Perth on the 11th November. 4, The matter is receiving consideration.

#### QUESTION—JANDAKOT ROAD BOARD, PAPERS.

Hon. G. POTTER asked the Minister for Education: Will he lay on the Table all papers dealing with the late Jandakot Road Board?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: Yes.

#### BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. A. Lovekin and read a first time.

#### BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING.

##### *In Committee.*

Resumed from 16th October; Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title and commencement of Act:

Hon. A. Lovekin had moved the following amendment:—

*That the words "twenty-four" be struck out, with a view to the insertion of other words.*

Hon. J. E. DODD: I regret that the amendment has been moved at this stage, because it is evidently intended to kill the Bill. It will have that effect if agreed to. I was astounded when I read in the "Daily News" the account of the proceedings when the Bill was before members on the previous occasion. It seemed to me that members spoke entirely under a misconception as to what the Bill meant and as to what it was likely to accomplish. They appeared to be in a state of panic lest a new department would be created, a long list of inspectors appointed, the cost of cottages increased, and, generally, to think the Bill was unnecessary because there had been no accidents. I would like to reply to a few of these arguments. There seemed to be a general impression amongst those who spoke that no

scaffolding legislation was in operation in other parts of Australia, except Queensland. I have been at some pains to ascertain the position in other States, and I propose to give hon. members some information as to how this legislation has operated in other States and the number of inspectors who have been appointed to supervise the work there. I find that a Scaffolding Inspection Act was agreed to in South Australia in 1908. In New Zealand a Scaffolding and Excavations Act was passed in 1906. It was amended in 1908 and again in 1922. It came into operation this year. In New South Wales a Scaffolding and Lifts Act was passed in 1902, and in Queensland there is the Inspection of Machinery and Scaffolding Act of 1908-12. In Victoria, the scaffolding laws are included in the Municipal Corporations Act. From this members will see that in every State of the Commonwealth, except Tasmania and Western Australia, scaffolding legislation is in operation. Grave fears were expressed in this Chamber when the Factories and Shops Act of 1920 was before the House. It was suggested that there would be an army of inspectors appointed under that measure if it became law. I find that since that measure became law there has been an increase of only one inspector to look after those matters and he is merely on loan. Prior to the passing of that Act in 1920 there were a chief inspector, three male inspectors, and one female inspector; to-day there are four male inspectors and one female inspector as well as the chief inspector. This shows that the grave fears expressed that an army of inspectors would be appointed and a new department created were groundless. At the end of three years we find that only one extra inspector has been appointed. I have received the following telegram from the Chief Inspector of Factories in South Australia to show how the legislation has operated there—

Inspectors of scaffolding in this State are officers of the Factories and Steam Boilers Department, and are under the control of the Chief Inspector of Factories and Steam Boilers.

There are only two inspectors in South Australia, where the legislation has operated since 1907-1908. In Queensland the inspection of scaffolding is controlled by the Scaffolding Department, which is a sub-department of the Public Works Department there. They have one chief inspector and two inspectors employed on this work in the metropolitan area, and the inspectors of machinery carry out scaffolding inspections in the outside districts. As I have already indicated, the Scaffolding Act in Victoria is embodied in the Municipal Corporations Act. In New Zealand the Scaffolding and Excavations Act of 1922 repealed the Scaffolding Inspection Act of 1908, in which were incorporated the Scaffolding Inspection Act, 1906, and the amending Act of 1907. The present Act came into force in April, 1923. They do not say how many inspectors are employed, but I have received information regarding the provisions of the Act.

The regulations under the New South Wales Scaffolding and Lifts Act of 1912 are administered by the Scaffolding and Lifts Branch of the Department of Labour and Industry. Two inspectors do the actual work of inspecting scaffolding and their activities are confined to Sydney. At Newcastle the work is carried out by machinery inspectors as the occasion arises. Thus, in every State of Australia except in Tasmania and Western Australia, scaffolding legislation is in operation and there has been an Act in force in New Zealand for quite a long time. That disposes of the argument that another new department will be created and that an army of inspectors will be required. It would be a good thing if a Department of Labour and Industry were created here, and the whole of the activities under industrial Acts were brought within its scope. I think money could be saved and better administration could be secured. It was asked why the Labour Government did not introduce a Scaffolding Bill during their term of office. The Labour Party came into power late in 1911. The first session was very short, the principal Bill brought forward being the Industrial Arbitration Bill, which was defeated. In 1912 we had a very long session and the Arbitration Bill and the Workers Compensation Bill were introduced. The Arbitration Bill was before this House on 53 days, so that there was not much time to consider other industrial legislation. In 1913 we introduced the Mines Regulation Bill and the Factories and Shops Bill, both of which were defeated. A Scaffolding Bill was prepared by the Labour Government and the skeleton of it is before us to-day. In 1914 the war broke out and all contentious legislation, by agreement, was dropped for two or three sessions. That explains why the Labour Government did not proceed with a Scaffolding Bill. It has been argued that the measure will add to the cost of cottages. I have no objection to builders and contractors voicing their opinions through members of this Chamber, but any objections they raise ought to be well founded. They should not advance such an objection as that this measure will add to the cost of cottages. Their only real objection is that the measure may cause them a little extra trouble and make some little difference to their costs. The Bill, however, will not affect cottages. It deals only with scaffolding 8 feet high.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What about the chimneys?

Hon. J. E. DODD: Trace industrial legislation back as far as we may, the argument has always been used that it will do harm to the people it is designed to benefit. When the Factories Bill was first introduced into England, John Bright, one of the finest statesmen that Britain ever knew, opposed it tooth and nail, although little children were living in the factories and working two shifts, the ones going off shift and tumbling into the beds of those going on shift. Yet such a philanthropic gentleman as John Bright op-

posed that legislation and threatened to turn the locks of his factories if it was passed. The same applied to the mines, where little children five years of age were working. It was argued that if legislation were passed harm would be done to the children working in the mines. Now it is argued that this Bill will increase the cost of cottages. There is no weight whatever behind the argument. Some cottages with very high foundations may require slightly higher scaffolding than usual, but very few will come within the scope of this measure. In the country the measure will apply only where the Government proclaim it. Quite a number of Acts in force to-day operate only in certain portions of the State. The Factories Act might be quoted as an example. No one would desire to extend this measure to the North-West, where a pastoralist may be erecting a shed. The desire is that building be made safe for the men engaged in the industry. It has been urged that the Bill is unnecessary because there have been no accidents. I am not satisfied that there have been no accidents. No statistics are available and an immense amount of research would be necessary to discover whether there have been any accidents.

Hon. T. Moore: It would be rather remarkable if there had been none.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I do not know what view the insurance companies take of building trade risks, but if I were a betting man I would feel inclined to wager that the insurance companies regard building as a hazardous occupation and charge accordingly. I have tried to obtain information but my opportunities are limited. The Minister might be able to ascertain from those controlling the Government insurance what the rates are for mining, building construction and general labouring work. Surely we are not going to wait until some scaffolding collapses and five or six men are killed before doing anything to protect building trade employees. We do not do that in other trades; why should we do it in this? A large number of men will be affected by the Bill—masons, painters, carpenters, plasterers, bricklayers, plumbers and builders' labourers, and they represent a considerable section of the community, especially in the metropolitan area. I doubt whether any accidents have been caused through drink. These men have as much right to protection as any other workers. Since I have been a member of this Chamber, the people working in quite a number of professions and industries have sought and gained protection, and why should this body of men be singled out and denied the protection they are entitled to? In recent years measures have been passed in the interests of dentists, architects, medical practitioners, land agents, opticians, factory and shop workers, miners, seamen, civil servants, railway men, engine-drivers and engineers, and all connected with machinery, and they now enjoy a large measure of protection. A little while ago there was a great

outcry by builders and contractors about the lack of skilled artisans. Quite a number of skilled men have left Western Australia for the Eastern States. The other day a contractor told me that his best man was leaving for Victoria, where he could get better wages and more constant employment. When we consider that, in addition, he will be protected there, this may be an explanation why so many skilled artisans are leaving this State and going elsewhere. Surely it cannot be argued, in view of the experience of other States, that this measure is going to be a burden on the community, resulting in increased taxation, or adding to the cost of building. One or two clauses may require some amendment. A while ago we passed a Coroners Bill and thought we were consolidating all the laws relating to coroners' inquests. Yet Bill after Bill comes before us containing some diverse procedure for coroners' inquests. This Bill suggests another diversity. I realise it is necessary that men connected with a particular trade should sit on the jury when an inquiry is being held regarding an accident in that trade. This applies to the mining industry, and I would have it apply in any industry where a certain amount of skill is required. An amendment should be made in this direction. It has been urged that the Miners' Phthisis Act should receive attention before any other legislation of this kind. I entirely agree with that contention. Miners' phthisis should come first out of a hundred industrial matters. I was struck by an article that appeared in the "Daily News" regarding a stone which fell down from a building in St. George's terrace while a pedestrian was passing, the pedestrian narrowly escaping death. The paragraph urged that some law should be passed to prevent the possibility of such occurrences. The paper in which Mr. Lovekin is interested is keen on watching things and realises that we must not wait until men are killed before we pass legislation. There might be some defect in scaffolding and half-a-dozen people might be killed—men working on the building, or passers-by. Let us not wait until such a calamity occurs. The Bill will inflict no hardship on anybody, and will give much-needed protection to the men engaged in the building trade.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Dodd, and I think also Mr. Gray, spoke of the employers' and contractors' associations voicing their views in this House. I moved the amendment, and I have never spoken to a builder or a contractor, nor have I had any communication whatever with the builders' and contractors' associations on the subject. The amendments I have in view on this Bill are such as occurred to me as being necessary when I read the Bill. Mr. Dodd, like most of his former colleagues in the Labour Government, has taken a good deal of pains to obtain information to submit to the Chamber on this subject. Without offence I should like to say

that all that information is beside the question at the present moment. The conditions prevailing in most of the Eastern States are different from the conditions here. In this State the Legislature in 1884 passed a Building Act, and as time went on the Legislature thought it was the duty of the local authorities to look after buildings. Accordingly, in 1906, when the Municipal Corporations Act was passed, Parliament thought fit to merge the Building Act in the Municipal Corporations Act, where it is to-day. Under the Municipal Corporations Act building by-laws were passed. I have them here. Apart from buildings not over one storey, to which we are told this Bill will not apply, almost everything that is required is provided for by the by-laws except the actual tying of knots on scaffolding. The by-laws provide for the strength of timbers and the strength of the walls, and for the protection of the public and the workers. Where buildings are over one storey, scaffolding must be put out overhead and the pathway must be railed and protected. It seems to me that the proper condition of affairs prevails here now. It is the business of the local authorities to look after the buildings in their districts. Under this Bill a new department will be created, a department merely for the purpose of supervising the tying of knots. The building regulations, which occupy many pages, cover pretty well everything connected with building except, as I have said, the tying of knots. I have obtained leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act. I am just as much concerned for the preservation of life and limb as any member of the Chamber is. I do not wish to see any accident or any death. It seems to me that the way I propose is a better way than that of providing a new department, limited to a few inspectors for the whole State. Under the scheme I propose there will be a man in each district to look after the building as well as the scaffolding. My proposal is to confer on municipal corporations the power, and impose on them the duty, to see that the scaffolding is safe as well as that the building is safe; and they can do this without the creation of another department and without more expense to the public. It is suggested that under the Bill there will not be a new department. What does the Bill mean except a new department? Clause 3 provides that the fees under the measure shall provide the necessary money. Clause 4 provides that inspectors and a chief inspector shall be appointed, that the State shall be cut up into districts, and that districts shall be assigned to different inspectors. This country comprises a million square miles of territory, and unless we are going to have enormous districts, which it would be impossible for any inspector to get over within a reasonable time, there must be half an army of inspectors. I suggest to the Government that in these parlous times we ought not to establish another department, even if it means only a few hundred pounds. I suggest that especially we ought not to create another

department when we can get the work done better by giving the job to the people who are already charged with supervising building operations in each district. It is said that this measure is not to apply to the country districts. I do not know what will be done immediately we get the department established. If we get one man started, he gets a typist, and then an assistant, and gradually the thing develops into an enormous department. If we leave the job with the municipalities, and give them the increased powers which can be comprised within a Bill of five lines, they will look after the scaffolding as well as the building, and there will be an authority looking after the protection of life and limb, and this without further charge on the revenue. The Bill is essentially one in regard to which this Chamber should step in. In this State we have any amount of duplication—four or five sets of accounts everywhere, four or five paymasters here and there, offices created all over the place. Do we want to duplicate this work of inspection, or shall we put it under the charge of the municipalities and road boards? If in any particular country district inspection is not considered necessary, by-laws and regulations need not be passed. The City of Perth would no doubt pass by-laws and regulations if that course is thought necessary to provide for the safety of scaffolding. The best interests of the country will be served by throwing out the Bill. If that is done, I shall ask the House to proceed with the measure which has been read a first time to-day.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: My first objection to this Bill is that the measure is to apply to the whole State. Mr. Dodd has quoted telegrams he has received from the Eastern States on this subject, but I gather that there scaffolding legislation applies only to the cities. A perusal of the Bill has satisfied me that it proposes to create another department. Clause 4 provides for the appointment of inspectors and a chief inspector. Clause 7 provides that any inspector may inspect at any time by night or by day. We can get over the difficulty as Mr. Lovekin has suggested, by amending the Municipal Corporations Act and letting the executive officers of the local authorities carry out the duty of inspecting scaffolding. We have had it stated here that insurance records traced back for 25 years fail to disclose a single scaffolding accident in this State. That assertion was made some days ago, and it has not been disputed. The cause of our freedom from accidents is that the responsibility has been and is with the contractor. The contractor and the supervisor have to be continually on the building, and they are not going to wander about on faulty scaffolding. Dual control always means trouble. The Bill proposes to bring in a Government inspector to take the responsibility off the contractor, a responsibility that should rest with him.

Mr. Dodd referred to the number of men employed. That is an argument in favour of the amendment. The Bill is only the thin edge of the wedge. The next thing will be provision for the inspection of scaffolding on every windmill or down every well.

Hon. J. Nicholson: A well is not a building.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No, I say that wells and windmills will next be included. One day last week a number of painters were employed repainting a huge building in Perth. They had no scaffolding, but they were amply protected. If the Bill had been in force, instead of that building being painted without scaffolding, a scaffolding would have been erected in accordance with the directions of the Government inspector. Under the Bill the cost of all buildings and repairs will be increased. All this can be avoided by giving the local authorities power to inspect scaffolding where necessary. Then all the little places can go on as they are going.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I will oppose the measure, not because I object to extending protection to men engaged on scaffolding, but because the Bill does not provide the proper course for that protection. I agree with Mr. Lovekin that the proper authority is the local authority. The Bill will mean the creation of a new department. Objections are frequently raised to the great cost of Government departments. Departmental authorities are always trying to extend their departments, and the result is increased cost to the State. On the ground of economy, therefore, I object to creating a new department for carrying out work that can be carried out just as efficiently by the local authorities. Mr. Dodd cited the case of Victoria. Victoria showed great wisdom in the means adopted for meeting this difficulty. The Victorian law is embodied in the Municipal Corporations Act. It was there recognised that the authority supervising building operations is the proper authority to carry out the inspection of scaffolding. I will vote against the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am surprised at the earnestness displayed by Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Lovekin. They desire to protect life and limb, but they say it should be done by an amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act. If the Municipal Corporations Act be amended, it will have practically the same effect as the Bill. Then why not accept the Bill?

Hon. J. Nicholson: Because it will create a new department.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It is definitely provided in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Mr. Dodd was at pains to point out that this has not been the result in other States where similar legislation is in existence. In each of the large cities of the Eastern States and of

New Zealand there are not more than two or three inspectors. Probably there will be but one in this State. The Bill will not mean the creation of another department.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But the Bill says it will.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Under Clause 25 fees are to be charged, and probably they will be sufficient to cover the cost of administering the Act. The increase in cost of building as the result of the Bill will be infinitesimal and should not be taken into account when considering the protection of human life. As far as I can see, the ideas of the Government are not to be agreed to, but the ideas of Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Holmes and Mr. Nicholson are to be adopted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are we not entitled to have ideas?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Of course you are, but the Bill provides everything that can be required.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But if we can simplify it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member intends, not to simplify it, but to defeat it if he can. He and Mr. Holmes know quite well what they are doing. They are asking hon. members to defeat the Bill. I do not think it is right to give notice of legislation designed to take the place of legislation already before the Committee. Mr. Lovekin might well have waited until tomorrow before giving notice of his proposed new Bill. It would have been a much more decent thing for him to have awaited the decision of the Committee on the Bill before us, a Bill designed to provide protection for human life. The hon. member thinks it can be done another way, but I say, let the Committee first decide upon the Bill before us. Should the Committee reject the Bill, there will be ample time in which to bring in another Bill. However, the proposed new Bill has been put on the Notice Paper to-day so as to show members what is intended when the Bill before us shall have been defeated.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: The hon. member always has "a better 'ole."

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We should first decide whether or not the Bill before us is good enough before we give any attention to another Bill to take its place. However, the hon. member says, "No, we are going to introduce other legislation that will hand over this inspection to the local authorities." That is not my way of doing things, nor do I think it will appeal to hon. members generally. In Western Australia we have been very fortunate in having so few scaffolding accidents, but there have been serious scaffolding accidents in other States of Australia. I have here a pamphlet showing the wonderful scaffolding deemed necessary in London. Although the buildings in Perth are relatively small, still we require protection here, just as it is required in London.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That scaffolding is to protect the passing public.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: A man was nearly killed the other day outside Forrest Chambers because something fell from the scaffolding. I will look into the various points that have been raised. If the clause is negatived the responsibility must rest with members who support the amendment. The session is drawing to a close, and it will be many months before any measure can be brought down in substitution of this one. I hope members will not vote in such a way as to kill the Bill.

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

Ayes	..	..	4
Noes	..	..	9

Majority against .. 5

#### AYES.

Hon. A. Burvill	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller.)
Hon. A. Lovekin	

#### NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. W. Carroll	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. E. H. Gray
Hon. E. H. Harris	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—Interpretation :

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

*That in the definition of scaffolding the word "eight" be struck out with a view to inserting another word.*

Scaffolding of eight feet in height will not enable workmen to erect the chimney of any ordinary cottage. Furthermore, when the painter is required to repaint a wall he almost invariably uses a plank and two ladders upon which to stand. Under this Bill he will be unable to use such scaffolding until it has been passed by an inspector, and every time he requires to raise the plank another tier, the inspector will again have to be called. The height of the scaffolding should be not less than 16ft.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I oppose the amendment, for if the height is increased it will jeopardise the Bill.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following results:—

Ayes	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	7

Majority against .. 1

#### AYES.

Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. A. Lovekin
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. W. Carroll
	(Teller.)

NOMs.

Hon. A. Burvill  
Hon. J. E. Dodd  
Hon. J. Ewing  
Hon. E. H. Gray

Hon. J. W. Hickey  
Hon. A. J. H. Saw  
Hon. R. G. Ardagh  
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

*That at the end of the definition of "scaffolding" the following words be added:—"Provided that in the case of a building already completed the floor line of any storey shall be deemed to be the horizontal base."*

The object of the amendment is that in the case of repairs, the ground line shall be taken as the horizontal base. If a man wants to paint the outside of a third or fourth storey, scaffolding has to be built up from the ground base. Obviously it is not necessary to do that. When there are windows and such places where scaffolding can be fixed, it should be possible to erect it from those places and so avoid enormous expense. On reading the definition I am not so sure that in the event of our requiring to paint, say, the ceiling of this Chamber, we should not have to put up scaffolding as from the ground base. I desire to provide that any internal work in a building already completed shall be used for scaffolding purposes.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What would be the position with a completed building on which it was desired to erect another storey, a building such as the G.P.O. for instance?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The same thing would apply. No one would put up scaffolding from the ground for such a purpose.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Perhaps the amendment can be accepted with an addition. I move an amendment on the amendment—

*That the following words be added to the amendment:—"For renovation or repairing purposes only."*

Hon. A. Lovekin: I have no objection to the addition of those words.

Amendment on the amendment put and passed; the amendment as amended agreed to.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Will the Minister consider, on the recommital of the Bill, the advisableness of exempting houses of one storey in conformity with the Municipalities Act now in existence.

The Minister for Education: I will give the matter consideration.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: What interpretation is to be put on the word "structure" in the second last line of the definition of "scaffolding"?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It refers to scaffolding existing 8ft. from the horizontal base. In my opinion it would be on the top of the scaffolding.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The hon. member, I think, wishes to know the nature of the "structure" for which the scaffolding would be erected. The structure might be a house,

a chimney, a windmill, or even a haystack. A windmill is clearly a structure.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Bill is not clear on that point.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I had in mind a structure such as a waterwheel. This does not come under the definition of machinery. The Bill will not apply to anything to which the Inspection of Machinery Act will apply. What would be the structure that would need to be repaired or altered?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: On reading the definition again, I think it does apply to everything over 8ft.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Can we take it that, before the recommital stage is reached, the Minister will consider the meaning of the word "structure"?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Certainly.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Appointment of inspectors:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Subclause 2 provides that every inspector shall be furnished with a certificate of appointment. Other measures provide that inspectors' certificate shall be in the handwriting of the Minister. We should have a similar provision here. I move an amendment—

*That in line 2, after "appointment," the following words be inserted:—"in writing under the hand of the Minister."*

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—Public inspectors:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

*That in line 2 "approval" be struck out, and "appointment" inserted in lieu.*

Anybody exercising authority under the provisions of the Bill should be appointed, and not merely approved by the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Mr. Harris has not referred to one aspect. From time to time it may be found necessary to ask an officer to carry out certain inspection work, and it should not be necessary to actually appoint those men. It may be known, for instance, that an officer of another department, who is in a particular district, is capable of doing certain work, and approval may be given by the Minister to enable him to do so.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It would really be a temporary appointment.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: All inspectors will be appointed by the Minister, but it may not be possible for an inspector to be in a place when his services are urgently required. If a suitable officer were on the spot, he could carry out the work with the approval of the Minister. Hence the necessity for the clause as it stands. The hon. member would be well advised to allow the clause to pass as printed. I will go into

the matter, and see whether it is necessary to make such provision as he suggests.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the Committee agreed to the insertion of the word "appointment" it might bring the officer concerned under the provisions of the Public Service Act. If that were so, it might be possible to get rid of him only in pursuance of the four means provided by the Public Service Act. Further than that, the amendment might result in the building up of a large department.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I agree with Mr. Holmes. If the amendment were carried, there would be no reason for retaining Clause 5 at all. It is intended to prescribe the powers, duties and obligations of those holding the certificates of approval. As to the position of such an officer under the Public Service Act, any man who has been a Minister of the Crown realises the danger, for many men who have received such appointments have subsequently applied for privileges under the Public Service Act. Mr. Harris would be well advised to leave the clause alone, or else to cut it out altogether.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The clause as it stands will facilitate the operation of the measure, and also make for economy. The amendment is not necessary.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The point raised by the Minister is an interesting one. I am impressed with the suggestion as to what might happen if we used the word "appointment," and, in the circumstances, I will not press the amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There seems to be some inconsistency between Sub-clause 2 of Clause 4, which provides for inspectors receiving certificates of appointment, and Clause 5, which deals with the issue of certificates of approval to public inspectors. Before an inspector can enter upon any premises and go about his duties, he must have a certificate of appointment. Clause 5 refers to certificates of approval.

Hon. W. Carroll: That refers to other than inspectors.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There should be only one certificate, and that should be a certificate of appointment. One way of getting over the difficulty would be to make provision for temporary appointments. The clause should receive the serious consideration of the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think the clause wants any consideration. It makes provision for the issue of certificates of approval to persons to act as inspectors. They are given full powers, as prescribed, and for the period of his appointment a man so appointed will have the same power as an inspector.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Minister would be wise to report progress on this clause, which, if agreed to, will be ineffective because Clause 4 provides that inspectors shall be provided with certificates of appointment. If a man acts temporarily under Clause 5,

he must receive a certificate of appointment before he can do anything. Thus, if we pass Clause 5 as it stands, with reference to certificates of approval, it will become a dead letter.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In deference to the wishes of the hon. member, I will adopt the course he suggests.

Progress reported.

## BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

### Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 16th October.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [6.13]: When this legislation was originally introduced, it was at a time of severe distress in the agricultural districts. It was brought forward as a temporary expedient to get over the difficulties of that period. If one refers back to the speeches of hon. members when the measure came before the House for consideration, it will be seen that it was never intended to make this legislation permanent. What do we find now? Apparently the Government are seeking year by year to retain their powers under this particular Act. Apparently they feel reluctant to merge the powers of the Industries Assistance Board in those possessed by the Agricultural Bank. Having regard to promises which were made last session by the then Leader of the House that the Act would be terminated, I am strongly of the opinion that the time has now been reached when we should decide on the termination of this Act, notwithstanding the fact, which I acknowledge, that it has been a wonderfully beneficial piece of legislation.

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

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No one can deny that important advantages and benefits have been derived from the operation of the Act, but it was never intended that this legislation should be continued after the period of abnormal conditions had ceased. The time is past when this Act should cease to have effect. We must not forget the recommendations of the Assembly select committee last year. The main and unqualified recommendation was that the time had come when the board's operations should cease. The statement made by the Leader of the House when moving the second reading confirmed the decision of the select committee. He told us there had been losses of approximately £220,000, that there are on the books 381 accounts carrying advances amounting to £198,850, and that these clients have reached their full limit.

The Minister for Education: That money will not be lost.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No, but the £220,000 has been lost. In that loss is included £92,000 for abandoned farms. According to the statement of the Minister the number of abandoned farms is 196 as against 200 odd when the select committee reported.



The total amount advanced since the Act has been in operation—about seven years—is over £7,800,000, or more than £1,000,000 per annum. During last year the amount advanced was £1,103,000. One would have naturally thought that in the course of seven years a very material reduction would have been witnessed each year in the amounts advanced, but there has been no reduction. Section 15 of the Act, which the Bill proposes to amend, provides that no commodity shall be supplied or money advanced under the principal Act or its amendments after the 31st day of March—the year has already been extended to 1924—except under the provisions of Section 14 of the Act. It is proposed to alter that so that the date shall be extended another year. There are many things in the report of the select committee deserving of reference, but one outstanding feature is their statement regarding the position of outside creditors. There is no doubt the preferential position in which clients of the board are placed and the protection afforded them under the Act is unfair to the ordinary traders of the community. Traders are being deprived of the rights they otherwise would have. I do not gainsay that in many instances the Act has proved a decided advantage. By reason of the Act many men have been helped to prosperity, and good luck to them. It is admitted, however, that there are 200 men who have reached their full limit, and it is time a halt was cried. The board should make a close examination of all their securities, ascertain the exact position and draw the double line. Under the Act any advances made by the board have the effect of a mortgage or a bill of sale over the lands, crops and chattels to secure the repayment of advances with interest. This is a very serious thing when we consider the position of outside creditors. We must have regard not only for the farmer, who has been helped in a time of stress, but also for the trading community, and in their interests it is time the Act was brought to an end. Even at this stage I feel inclined to vote against the second reading and so emphasise my opposition to the continuance of a measure that obviously should be terminated. On reflection, however, it would be fairer to give the Government a final opportunity. They should understand emphatically that no continuation will be sanctioned after the expiration of the extension now sought. This legislation must be brought to a close and all advances in future should be dealt with under the Agricultural Bank. I hope the Government will seriously consider the matter and will not attempt next year to secure a further continuance of the Act.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West—in reply) [7.40]: I am indebted to members for the close consideration they have given the Bill. I have carefully noted what they have said and their arguments will be brought before the Government. The Government regard a continuance of the measure as necessary for

another year. I hope the time is not far distant when we shall be able to do without this legislation, and when clients of the board will be able to do without its assistance. It was pleasing to hear members say that, though they consider the Act should be discontinued, they were satisfied it had been of great value. The Government believe it will be of great value during the coming year. Whether it will be necessary to ask for a further continuance will depend upon what happens during the next 12 months. Since I spoke on the Bill, I have had evidence regarding the value of this legislation. Out from Wagin I saw a beautiful crop of 200 acres of wheat. To my astonishment and pleasure I learned that it was owned by a client of the board and that this crop would enable him to practically clear himself. After the bountiful season now being experienced, many of the clients should be able to free themselves, and the necessity for continuance may not be so marked next year. I am inclined to think the Bill may be required for even another year. The Government desire that every man on the land should have an opportunity to make good.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Have you considered writing down the indebtedness and leaving some of them on the land?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: No doubt that will be done. It is desirable to keep these men on the land and assist them to make good as others have done. The farmers assisted under this Act have produced wealth amounting to practically £7,000,000 during the seven years, so that the measure has been of great value.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee, etc.*

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

**BILL—THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED, ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).**

*Select Committee's Report.*

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

*That the report of the select committee be adopted.*

Question put and passed.

*As to Second Reading.*

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I further move—

*That as the preamble of the Bill has been reported by the select committee to be proved, the second reading of the Bill be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House, and that the amendments to the Bill suggested by the select committee be placed on the Notice Paper for consideration in Committee.*

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Is this exactly in order The House has now adopted the select committee's report. I take it, therefore, that no further consideration can be given at any later stage to any amendments contained in that report.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: All that has been adopted by the House is the select committee's report. That fact does not prevent any hon. member from moving, when the Bill is in Committee, any amendment he may think proper on the measure as it comes before the House then. Under the Standing Orders a private Bill must be referred to a select committee, and that has been done. The report has been presented, and it must of necessity be adopted.

Hon. J. Duffell: But the report contains certain amendments.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Merely the suggested amendments of the select committee.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The select committee merely recommend the amendments.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes.

Hon. J. Duffell: I accept that explanation.

Question put and passed.

#### BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Amendment of Section 15:

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I move an amendment—

*That the following be added to paragraph (b) of Subclause 5: "and by a like form of receipt the trustees may discharge or partially discharge any further charge or collateral security which they hold, provided they are satisfied with the security which remains."*

This amendment is practically identical with that of which the Minister for Education has given notice. In favour of my amendment I would urge that it comprehends the intention of the Minister's amendment with this exception, that what I propose does not touch vacant land. On the other hand, the Minister's amendment does touch vacant land. Now, friendly societies do not advance at all on vacant land. Therefore the latter portion of the amendment which the Minister has placed on the Notice Paper is not required at all. At the time when this question was under consideration with the Registrar of Friendly Societies, it was practically agreed that what my amendment proposes should be included in paragraph (b) of Subclause 5; and the friendly societies were surprised to find that paragraph (b) did not contain this

provision. If my amendment is carried, the Minister's amendment will not be required.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Although I suggested to Mr. Duffell that he should move this amendment prior to that of the Minister, yet on comparing his amendment with the Minister's I think the latter is the better of the two, and also the safer of the two, because the Minister's amendment provides that a friendly society shall not lend money to a greater extent than two-thirds of the value of the property.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is already provided for.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Duffell's amendment rather nullifies that provision. It gives discretion to the trustees to take less than two-thirds. That does not make for the safety of the societies.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Duffell's amendment does not give the same protection as does the amendment proposed by the Minister. Mr. Duffell's amendment refers to a discharge, or partial discharge, of a further charge or of the collateral security. But it might be a case of the principal charge, not a further charge at all. Under the Minister's amendment the discharge would apply to any security whatever; and it makes it clear that any three trustees can effect the discharge, whereas under Mr Duffell's amendment the trustees as a whole are required to do it. It is important that the friendly societies should have paragraph (d) of the Minister's amendment. Without that paragraph it would be necessary for a proper reconveyance under the old system to be prepared, which would mean added expense. Mr. Duffell would be wise in withdrawing his amendment in favour of that of the Minister.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Speaking on the second reading last night, I pointed out that the societies did not lend on vacant land, and that the repayments are made in such a way that the principal is reduced every quarter. Whilst in the past it has been necessary to give some collateral security, yet practically no losses have been incurred as the result of the operations of the Act. Knowing that, the Registrar General agreed to this amendment. The societies have lent something like £100,000 to their members, of which less than £250 stands as bad debts. The simpler the provision can be made, the better for the borrowing members. The main object is to keep down expense. On the second reading I explained that for a loan of £500 through the society the cost was only £4 5s. 6d., whereas if the loan had been raised from an outside source it would have cost £14. The council of the friendly societies having gone thoroughly into all the facts, have drafted the amendment moved by me. I am not very particular whether this or the Minister's amendment be accepted. Both have the same object in view, but the amendment before us is the simpler.

Amendment put and negatived.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move an amendment—

*That the following paragraphs be added to Subclause 5:—*

(d.) *The trustees of any society or branch, or a majority (not less than three) of them, may, by memorandum signed by them, discharge any portion of the property comprised in any mortgage or security from the whole of the principal, interest, and other moneys thereby secured, notwithstanding that such moneys have not been paid, if the trustees signing the discharge are satisfied that the undischarged property is sufficient security for payment of the moneys intended to be secured by such mortgage or security, and that the amount owing on the mortgage or security does not exceed two-thirds of the value of such undischarged property, and such discharge shall, as regards any land thereby affected which is not under the Transfer of Land Act, 1893, operate as a reconveyance, and as regards any land which is under that Act, may be registered as a discharge of the property therein mentioned.*

(e.) *In lieu of any such receipt as is herein-before mentioned, a separate memorandum of discharge or partial discharge, as the case may require, in the prescribed form, may be signed by the trustees or so many of them as would have authority to sign such receipt, and such memorandum of discharge shall have the same effect as such a receipt as aforesaid, and may be registered in the same manner.*

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move an amendment—

*That Subclause 6 be struck out and the following subclause inserted in lieu:—*

(6.) *By adding a subsection as follows:—*  
(13.) *It shall not be permissible for the trustees of a society or branch to lend money on the security of any property in any case in which the amount of the loan would exceed two-thirds of the value of the property.*

It was intended to incorporate Section 10 of the Trustees Act of 1900, but a deputation waited on the Colonial Secretary with the result that he agreed to the amendment I have moved which, perhaps, is all that is necessary.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The societies are subject to the Trustees Act. The Bill does not incorporate Section 10 of the Trustees Act, which provides for the security of the trustee who, in making a loan, is acting bona fide. Subsections (2) and (3) of Section 10 of the Trustees Act ought to go into the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: As I have explained, it was intended to insert the whole of Section 10 of the Trustees Act, but the friendly societies did not agree to that, and so the amendment has been substituted. I think it provides sufficient security.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I take it that trustees of friendly societies do not want to in-

volve themselves in litigation. The question is, what is the value of the property? The Trustees Act provides that the amount of the loan must not exceed two-thirds of the value of the property. It also says a loan must be made under the advice of the valuer expressed in his report. Those provisions of the Act should be embodied in this Bill. Otherwise, if there is any over-lending the trustees may land themselves in trouble.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: That will mean more expense.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It is not an expense. If the trustees are lending money on the advice of the valuer they are protected.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: These trustees are all men of vast and long experience. They have shown themselves to be capable, and to know something of the values upon which they are lending money. There are many instances showing that they have made advance payments on buildings that are being erected. If valuers are to make periodical visits to properties, they will require to be paid, and this will mean expense for the societies. There is no need for the provisions of the Trustees Act to be embodied in this Bill.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Under the clause as printed trustees are prohibited from lending money to a greater extent than two-thirds of the value of the property. The trustees must take the responsibility, but if they do this subject to a proper valuation being made, they will be protected, if the provisions of the Trustees Act are embodied in the Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The object of this particular provision of the Trustees Act is to provide a measure of protection for the trustees, in the first place.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: For which they have to pay. The societies do not want it.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is also a protection to those interested in trust funds. A trustee under the Trustees Act could not lend money without a proper examination by a competent man of the value of the property. The trustee would get the valuation of the property on which he proposed to lend trust money. If that value shows there is ample security on the requisite margin, in the event of any loss by reason of depreciation of security the trustee, on the valuation, would be safeguarded from being sued. A friendly society trustee would not necessarily be regarded in law as a competent valuer. I have no desire to do anything against the wishes of friendly societies, but wish to point out the risk of the situation. The matter is of sufficient importance to warrant the Minister in reporting progress, and referring the matter back to the friendly societies. I am in favour of restoring the original clause, instead of adopting the amendment.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Duffell said that the trustees are experienced men who have carried out the valuations for years without loss. I am looking at it purely from the

point of view of the stability of the societies. I can carry my mind back some years to the transactions of certain building societies in Melbourne.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: A different thing altogether.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Those societies lent money on properties over and above their value and as a consequence all the members were practically ruined, as well as the building societies. This was due to the fact that the trustees of those building societies were making their own valuations and lending money to the depositors on those valuations. It is quite possible that we may have a new set of men—the present generation will not live for ever—who will not know as much about valuations as the trustees of the present time, who will not lend more than should be lent. In this way the funds of a society may be materially jeopardised. Before the money of a friendly society is lent there should be a proper valuation, and some protection afforded to the trustees who are advancing the money. I do not intend seriously to oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. Duffell: You are doing your level best to oppose it.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It is our duty to draw attention to a matter of this kind.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I would like to hear from Mr. Duffell the reason why the friendly societies object to such a safeguard. If the reason is good and sufficient I shall be prepared to accept it. If on the other hand the only explanation which can be given is that it may be possible to save a small expenditure of money, I shall not regard that as a sufficient reason why an excellent safeguard such as is proposed should be excluded.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I cannot understand the attitude of Mr. Lovekin who desires to place unnecessary expense upon the shoulders of those who cannot afford to pay. It is not only one society that is affected. All that are doing business in Western Australia are concerned in this, and most of these societies have been in existence almost ever since the State was known as the Swan River Settlement. I have already shown that the total loss as the result of mistakes made by the trustees, has amounted to less than £250. The point raised by Mr. Willmott is reasonable. Money is advanced to members of societies who are depending on the organisation in the hour of need and at a time of trouble, the need when sickness falls upon them, the benefit when death intervenes, benefit either for the member himself, the widow or the children. To go to a working man and say, "It will cost you £10 for a valuation" or even £14 as I have pointed out, will prove a serious matter. Hundreds of men in such circumstances would pay the rates until the day of their death and never have the opportunity of possessing a home they could call their own if they were obliged to pay £10 for a valuation. I take excep-

tion to the obstacles Mr. Lovekin is endeavouring to place in the way.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I am not placing any obstacles in the way. I am just drawing attention to what may happen.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: It is a matter of pounds, shillings and pence, and I hope members will see eye to eye with me.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Representations were made to the Colonial Secretary that if the Bill passed as it was framed the friendly societies would suffer. I agree with Mr. Duffell that if this additional cost is imposed it will be a serious thing. Seeing that the record of the friendly societies has been so good, and that the Colonial Secretary has full confidence in the trustees, the Committee might well agree to the amendment.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I realise that Mr. Duffell is familiar with the operations of the friendly societies, and that he knows better than I do what is necessary. I am bound, however, to explain the position as it appears to me. Mr. Duffell stressed the point that considerable expense will fall upon the borrower. I do not know that it will cost what he says, but is it not better that the borrower should pay the £10 than that the funds of the societies should be placed in jeopardy by loans being granted in excess of the value of properties? If the Minister is satisfied, and if Mr. Duffell is satisfied, I shall not press the matter any further.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 10 to 17—agreed to.

Clause 18—Compulsory registration of friendly or benefit societies:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move an amendment—

*That all the words after "36 (a)" be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—(1.) Once in every year before the first day of September every unregistered benefit association shall send to the Registrar a return containing a statement of the number of members of the association, together with a statement of the ages, the periods of sickness, deaths, and other contingencies in respect of which benefits are given by the association, and also a statement showing the receipts and expenditure of the association for the year ending on the last preceding thirtieth day of June, and also a copy of the association's last balance-sheet, and such other information as the Governor by regulation prescribes. With every such return a copy of the rules for the time being in force shall also be delivered to the Registrar: Provided that it shall not be necessary to forward to the Registrar any rules which have previously been delivered to him. (2.) "Unregistered benefit association" means any voluntary association or society which consists of more than ten persons, and the object whereof, either solely or among other objects, is*

to raise by the subscriptions of the members, funds out of which advances may be made for the mutual relief or the maintenance of members, their wives or children, in sickness or infirmity, or any other kindred purpose, or out of which payment of death benefits may be made, and which is not registered as a friendly society under this Act. (3.) If any default is made in the observance of the provisions of this section, then the secretary or other permanent officer of the association, and also each of the members of the board of directors, council, or other governing body of the association, shall be guilty of an offence, and liable on summary conviction to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds.

The clause is a compulsory one, under the terms of which societies such as the Railway Death Benefit Fund, the Railway Sick and Provident Fund and the Government Printing Office and Education Department Death Benefit Funds, would have been compelled to be registered under the Act. Deputations waited upon the Colonial Secretary regarding the clause in the Bill; and after the Minister had given the matter considerable attention he considered that for the time being, and until we see how this legislation will work out, the clause could be waived in favour of the amendment I am now suggesting. Personally I think it would be a good thing if all these funds were registered under the Friendly Societies Act.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Why?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Because they would be under the jurisdiction of the Registrar, who would know what was being done.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The amendment and the clause are practically the same thing.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: They are not. The amendment is very different.

Hon. A. Duffell: The compulsory nature of the provision is eliminated.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: And the Registrar is able to get the information that is necessary.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Does he want it for statistical purposes?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: We want to know what the societies are doing.

Hon. J. Duffell: Exactly.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If they are doing wrong, the Government can step in. The amendment satisfies all parties concerned.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Will the amendment require returns to be submitted where it is made a condition of employment that employees shall subscribe to a fund not registered in this State? I understand in some instances the money is held here, but the administration of the fund is carried out from the Eastern States.

The Minister for Education: Are those funds registered here?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: No, but the employees are compelled to subscribe to the fund which is administered from the Eastern States.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is an important point and I would like to look into it before proceeding with the amendment.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 1st November, 1923.

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

### QUESTION—LAKESIDE WOODLINE.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Minister for Railways: What is the present position regarding the negotiations by the Government for the purchase of the Lakeside woodline?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The matter is being investigated.

### QUESTION—HARNESS AND SADDLERY, PURCHASES.

Mr. HUGHES asked the Premier: 1, What is the value respectively of harness and saddlery purchased by the Stores Branch from the 1st of July, 1922, to the 30th of June, 1923, inclusive—(a) by tender; (b) by written quote; (c) by verbal quote? 2, In the matter of written quotes, to what firms were quote forms supplied during the aforesaid period? 3, As to verbal quotes, what firms were solicited for quotes during that period?

The PREMIER replied: It will take some time to get out the information. I will supply it as soon as I get it.