Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 14th November, 1944.

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

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

Resumed from the 8th November. Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 3—Amendment of Section 3:

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on this clause to which the Honorary Minister had moved the following amendment—

> That in line 3 of paragraph (b) before the word "more" the word "not" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

> That at the end of paragraph (b) the following words be added:—"or in which rooms are let to persons for living accommodation under a contract in the nature of a sub-tenancy running from week to week."

The object of the amendment is to meet special conditions now existing in the cities of Perth and Fremantle. In the Health Department's opinion, the words proposed are needed to deal with those conditions. The Bill amply provides for two different kinds of premises: Firstly, places where people receive board and lodging from week to week provided that not more than six persons are so accommodated, and, secondly, places where people receive lodging only from night to night. However, quite a different type has sprung up in recent years, namely, a house where the tenant farms out rooms to individuals, and in which sometimes the rooms are furnished and sometimes not, no meals being supplied and no service rendered. The tenants do their own cleaning, or perhaps do not do it at all—which is the trouble. This new and deplorable state of affairs, to which I made reference at the second reading stage, the Health Department considers would be met by the amendment. There are instances of the lessees of such places imposing upon people, taking down the landlord, and letting rooms not affording sufficient accommodation.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: The Health Department should have the right to send an inspector into any house to see that proper health conditions prevail; but I object to people—of whom there must be hundreds—who have a friend of the family living with them, being compelled to register their homes as boarding-houses. If any amendment is required to enable the health authority to inspect a house, let us have it, because we require good health conditions in all houses, whether they take in boarders or not.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I agree that it is wrong that a tenant who lets one room or two rooms should be forced to register and have a notice posted up outside his house, as this amendment provides.

The Honorary Minister: They would not come under that provision.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I think it is wrong they should have to register, though the health authorities should have power under the Act, if they have not already got it, to inspect every home.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The Minister has said that the authorities consider this amendment necessary. Could he tell us for what reason?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am informed that this amendment would not affect anyone who happens to have friends or relatives staying in his house; but a house in which the tenant was making a business of letting rooms to less than six persons, would have to be registered. That will give the authorities a knowledge of what is going on and will enable them to inspect such premises.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: If there is no other purpose behind the amendment than

to facilitate inspection, why not make that inspection general and not compel these people to register their houses as boarding-houses?

Hon. G. W. Miles: If people are paying for a room the place will have to be registered.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is to deal with people who are trying to get as much as they can from letting rooms and will not affect people who have friends or relatives living in their houses.

Hon. G. W. MILES: This difficulty could be overcome by giving the authorities power, if they do not already possess it, to inspect any residence. If we agreed to this amendment, a person letting a room to a friend would have to register his place as a lodging-house. I object to that.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: There is a tendency on the part of some people to subdivide premises by putting up a few sheets of asbestos on a verandah, thus providing rooms for letting. In that way they infringe the building regulations and overcrowd their premises, which is not desirable.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is there not power already to prevent that?

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I think there is. I believe it is a question of machinery to check up on them. I am not too clear about it. Whether it is right to do that in order to overcome this difficulty, I am not prepared to say, but I know people who live in small dwellings have enclosed the verandahs or put a partition across a room or some other part of the buildings in order to provide rooms for letting. Without some record of such places, it is hard to cope with them under the building or health regulations. I would be inclined to do something to prevent the enclosing of verandahs to provide rooms for letting, though I do not like the idea of insisting that these places must be registered.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Suppose we agree that there is some objection to people who want to let a room to a friend having to register. Is that not a lesser evil than allowing people who are making a living out of overcrowding their premises to get away with it? If something is not done about the matter, every boarding-house that takes in one or two people will declare them to be friends or relatives. These places will never have anybody in them except friends or relatives. How is a friend or relative to be defined? Must proof of blood relationship be submitted when people are claimed to be friends or relatives? I think we are stretching it a bit too far. There might be some objection to houses being registered as boarding-houses; but, after all, there are many forms of registration today. All of us carry personal registration cards about with us in our pockets. There is no real objection to registration, and that is where it ends. In order to clean up what are admittedly deplorable conditions, which will continue after the war until the number of buildings is increased so as to provide extra accommodation, we should agree to take steps to remedy them even though the legislation may be unpopular with a few. I support the amendment.

Hon. F. E. GIBSON: No legislation of a restrictive nature can be passed without interfering with the wishes of some people. The amendment will have the advantage of directing the attention of health authorities in particular localities to the fact that certain houses are used for this particular purpose. It has been said that already there is the power for health inspectors to view premises, but it is not possible to have inspectors running round inspecting houses here, there and everywhere, because there are not sufficient inspectors available for that purpose. Should premises be registered the authorities will know what houses should be inspected. In some homes there are three or four families living under conditions that are not healthy. If some control could be exercised over the present-day situation, it would be of advantage to all concerned.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Where would you put the extra families?

Hon. F. E. GIBSON: We could at any rate make the position better for those people. Even if we could not make people leave their rooms, we could improve the health conditions under which they are at present living.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: We already have the machinery to deal with the situation referred to by Mr. Gibson, but the authorities are not doing very much in that direction on account of the present abnormal circumstances. Owing to wartime conditions many things are tolerated that would

not be permitted in a normal period. We should not compel a person to register his premises merely because he has let a couple of rooms to some friends or relatives. What I object to is converting, say, a four-roomed house into a six or eight-roomed house merely by enclosing portions of verandahs. At present three or four families are occupying one house and that means, for instance, that too many people are using one sanitary convenience and one bathroom. Even that position could be altered if the law were strictly enforced. While the war is in progress and abnormal conditions continue, it would be unwise to pass legislation that would be too restrictive.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: What is the object of the amendment? Under the Act at present "lodging-house" means any house in which any unspecified number of people are housed or lodged for hire for a single night or for less than a week at a time, whereas a "boarding-house" means a place in which not more than six persons, exclusive of the family, are boarded for hire from week to week. I fail to see the object of the amendment. I do not know that it will advance the position very far.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The amendment will deal with the position where less than six persons are affected. It is an exaggeration to say that anyone who has a relative staying with him will be required to register his premises as a lodging-house. The object of the legislation is to clean up an objectionable position that exists in Perth and Fremantle as soon as practicable after the war ends. It is not necessary to go far from Parliament House to see rooms that have been constructed on verandahs for subletting to tenants. The object is to deal with people who are making a business of sub-letting rooms under unsatisfactory conditions, people who are making big profits and not rendering any service to their tenants. The unsatisfactory nature of the position cannot be exaggerated. If these lodging-house keepers are compelled to register their premises, the authorities will be able to keep an eye on them and perhaps compel the provision of adequate conveniences. Reports from the Health Department's officers show that premises of the type under discussion must be dealt with: they want the necessary power to deal with them and also knowledge of where the premises are. The intention of the amendment is to exercise control over people who are defying the health laws.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Quite a number of people accommodate one or two guests in their homes not for profit but because they appreciate how extremely difficult it is for people to secure accommodation. I would be willing to support the Honorary Minister if he made the amending legislation apply to premises where not more than two persons were accommodated instead of making it refer to where less than six are housed. If the Bill is passed as the Minister desires some householders may refuse to continue accommodating one or two guests rather than agree to register their homes as lodging-houses. In trying to get over one trouble, the Honorary Minister may find that the legislation will create further difficulties. There is already power under the Act to permit of the inspection of these premises. If, in addition, a lodging-house is declared to be a place in which more than two persons are lodged for profit, that should meet the situation.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out that the word "not" has already been inserted in the clause.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I would accept an amendment on the lines suggested by Sir Hal Colebatch. The definition would, if so amended, apply to rooms that were let to two or more persons.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Is it suggested that the sub-letting of rooms will come under this provision?

The Honorary Minister: Yes, that is its object.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Would that not bring every block of flats under the Act? I doubt whether the proposal will cover what the Honorary Minister wants. A boarding-house at present is a place where more than six people are accommodated for profit. Could we not alter the definition by striking out the words "for less than a week," and inserting the words "for any period"?

The Honorary Minister: I am referring to lodging-houses, not to boarding-houses.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think Sir Hal Colebatch is suggesting that the Honorary Minister should withdraw his amendment, and that the word "two" should then be in-

serted before the word "persons." The word "not" should also come out.

The CHAIRMAN: The word "not" cannot come out at this stage.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Then the Committee is in a hopeless position.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Dr. Hislop has put forward the right solution of the difficulty. The Bill can be recommitted and the word "not" then taken out.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That deals with boarding-houses; I am dealing with lodging-houses! If Sir Hal Colebatch will move to amend an amendment along the lines he has suggested, it will meet the position.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I did not realise that the word "not" had been inserted. I think that will have to come out later. Could we not strike out the word "six" and insert the word "two"?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot do that today. The amendment moved by the Honorary Minister is at present before the Committee.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move—

> That the amendment be amended by inserting after the word "to" in line 2 the words "more than two."

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Does that cover everything?

The Honorary Minister: That will cover all sub-tenancies.

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

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1, Members of Parliament Fund Act Amendment.
(Hon. G. B. Wood in charge.)
2, Constitution Acts Amendment (No. 2).
3, Busselton Cemetery.
4, Stamp Act Amendment.
Received from the Assembly.

BILL—PERTH DIOCESAN TRUSTEES (SPECIAL FUND).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 8th November.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.18]: The reason I secured the adjournment of the debate was to enable me to make some investigations into the Bill should it become an Act. From the investigations I have made, It would appear that the wishes of the late Mr. Samuel Evans Burges will be met, that the rector will get what is due to him and that the Bill meets with the wishes of the Diocesan Trustees. It is therefore my intention to support the measure.

HON. H. S. W. PARKER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I would have opposed this Bill had it not been for the fact that Mr. Wood informed me he had some very drastic amendments to move. I was approached originally to bring the Bill before this Chamber; and, on looking into it, I found that it did not, as drafted, quite meet the wishes of anybody concerned. It will depend entirely upon what happens in the Committee stage whether I shall support the Bill or not. I shall not oppose the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. G. Fraser in the Chair; Hon. V. Hamersley in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Judge may hear and determine applications:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I have an amendment on the notice paper which I do not intend to move. I have, however, prepared for insertion a new clause, copies of which have been supplied to members. I ask the Committee to strike out the clause. If that is done, I shall then move to insert in lieu a new clause as follows:—

> The surplus income arising from the special fund remaining in the hands of the trustees in any year after payment to the Church of England clergyman for the time being stationed at York of the sum of Twenty pounds may at the discretion of the trustees, be capitalised or paid to the Church of England clergyman for the time being stationed at York.

Clause put and negatived.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move—

> That the following new clause be inserted in lieu of the clause struck out.—"The surplus income arising from the special fund remaining in the hands of the trustees in any year after payment to the Church of England clergyman for the time being stationed at York of the sum of

> Twenty pounds may, at the discretion of the trustees, be capitalised or paid to the Church of England clergyman for the time being stationed at York.''

At present, as Mr. Hamersley pointed out, the trustees cannot pay the clergyman at York any surplus money in their hands after the £20 per annum is paid. The Bill, as drawn, proposes to overcome the difficulty by obtaining the direction of a judge of the Supreme Court on the matter. I do not consider this course at all necessary. Unquestionably, the clergyman at York is entitled to the surplus income. I have consulted with everybody concerned in the matter and all agree to the proposal which I am submitting to the Committee. The person who actually found the £500—the son of the testator—is living today. He told me that it was a great effort to find the £500 in 1908, so that the clergyman might get his annuity of £20. While Mr. Burges does not claim any legal right to say what shall be done, in my opinion he nevertheless has a moral right to do so and Parliament should respect his wishes. I have also consulted the Diocesan Trustees on the matter and they approve of the alteration. I received a letter from Mr. Shillington, who framed the amendments for me, in which he says—

> I read the proposed amendments over the telephone to Mr. Fisher, Diocesan Secretary, and he advised that the trustees would have no objection to same.

I also submitted a rough draft of the proposed new clause to the secretary of the Diocesan Trustees myself. If what I suggest is adopted, a consequential amendment will be required in the preamble.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The money was provided in the first place by the late Mr. Burges to help the clergyman at York. Mr. Burges lived at York and his interests were centred there; consequently he was in a better position at the time to know what help the clergyman required. Clergymen at that time were receiving very low stipends. I do not consider it necessary that an application should be made to a judge in Chambers for directions to deal with the surplus income. The original sum of £500 was paid over in 1908 and it has now grown to a substantial sum. The intention would appear to be to divert the surplus income to other funds, thereby defeating the intention of the testator. I commend Mr. Wood for drawing attention to the matter.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: Would those who know all about this matter please explain why it is necessary to capitalise the income at all? I understand the capital now is only about £1,000 and that it will not bring in more than £40 or £50 at present. Possibly, in another 20 years, the capital may have increased to such an extent as to bring in an income of £100. Why not say that the money shall be paid to the clergyman at York? No clergyman is paid a magnificent salary; and if he can get £100 or £200, why not give it to him?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I am glad that Dr. Hislop brought up that question. The trustees have no desire to capitalise the income; they want the power, which they have not got at the moment, to pay all the income to the clergyman at York.

New clause put and passed.

Preamble:

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I move an amendment—

> That the words ''to apply to a judge of the Supreme Court from time to time for directions as to the use and application of the surplus income arising from the said capital sum and that such judge be empowered to make such orders in relation to the use and application of such surplus income as to such judge shall seem fit'' be struck out and the words:—''at its discretion to capitalise the surplus income arising from the said capital sum or to pay such surplus income to the Church of England clergyman for the time being stationed at York'' inserted in lieu.

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

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—NATIVES (CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS).

In Committee.

Resumed from the 7th November. Hon. G. Fraser in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title:

The CHAIRMAN: The question is: That the clause be agreed to.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Adult natives may make application to a magistrate for a certificate of citizenship:

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

> That in line 5 of Subclause (2) after the word "all" the word "habitual" be inserted.

If a native falls back into his aboriginal ways of living he should lose his citizenship rights, but I do not think it is the intention of Parliament to deprive him of the right of association with his relatives, or occasional association with his native friends. I think that the addition of the word "habitual" will clear up that doubt.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot accept this amendment. There is a difficulty in regard to the word "habitual." We desire, as far as possible, to see that the natives who are given citizenship rights shall not associate with natives other than those who are very closely related to them. I am advised that frequently there is difficulty in regard to this word "habitual." One of the natives concerned may be frequently visited by other natives who have not applied for a certificate or who are not exempted from the Native Administration Act, and are natives in law. Simply because natives, who are not relatives of the person concerned, visit him frequently it cannot be said that they habitually do so. In order to protect the native who has become a certificate holder, I would prefer that the word "habitual" were not inserted. Members will recognise the difference between "habitual" association and "frequent" association which may be undesirable. One of our big difficulties with the natives is the drink question. If a native who becomes a certificate holder is allowed to be visited frequently by other natives who are not holders of certificates the drink question arises, and it is difficult to deal with. I ask the Committee not to accept the amendment and I assure Mr. Seddon that the department will use every discretion in dealing with this particular phase of the matter.

Hon. H. SEDDON: There is a distinction between the word "habitual" and the word "frequent." The text of this subclause requires that the native shall, for the two years prior to the date of the application, have dissolved all tribal and native association. That is very restricted. My idea is to allow a certain amount of latitude by inserting the word "habitual." If, as the Chief Secretary has indicated, such a native were in the habit of associating with other natives, then obviously he would come under those provisions of the Bill which endanger his certificate. On the other hand, I think that we could allow him to have occasional association with them and, as the clause says that the association shall be at his will, the principle cannot be said to be difficult of interpretation.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I would like the Chief Secretary to give a reply to the following case: I know of a half-caste in Geraldton whose case I put forward some time ago. He is exempt from the Act. If we pass this Bill, will that half-caste, who does a white man's work and lives as a white man, be in danger of losing his certificate if he continues as he has done in the past to associate with his fellow half-castes who are under the Act? Although he is not under the Act he is still a half-caste and it is natural for him to associate with his fellow half-castes who are still under the Act. There are under the Act other half-castes who are living, like this man, in houses and, to all intents and purposes, live as white men. But they have not applied for exemption.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: One of the objects of this Bill is to overcome the difficulty mentioned by Mr. Hall. If the measure becomes an Act then the difficulty of the half-caste who refuses to apply for exemption under the present Act will, to a great extent, be overcome. Today a certificate of exemption does not give a native any right other than that he is not subject to the provisions of the Native Administration Act while the certificate lasts. It does not give him any citizenship rights such as the right to vote. This Bill will enable a native to get all the rights of a white man, including the franchise. If a native is granted a certificate under this measure he becomes, to all intents and purposes, as far as the law is concerned, a white man. He is no longer a native unless he does not comply with the provisions of the measure, in which case the certificate can be withdrawn and he will revert to the status of a native and be subject to the Native Administration Act. The Bill is

particularly clear in regard to half-castes associating with other half-castes.

If a half-caste wishes to retain his certificate of citizenship then he must dissolve all association with natives excepting those who are very close relatives. If he associates with natives, who are not so related to him, in such a way as not to comply with the provisions of the Bill, then the certificate will be withdrawn. If a native still wishes to adopt native habits and associates with natives not exempted, it is of not much use his applying for exemption under this measure. The cardinal principle of the Bill is to give to a native, who is desirous of qualifying, an opportunity to become a real citizen of this country with all the rights and privileges of a white man. If a native desires a certificate under this measure he cannot have it both ways; he must either be a white man or a native. When a native who is exempt from the Native Administration Act mixes indiscriminately with other natives, then sooner or later the questions of liquor and of intercourse with other natives arise. It is for those reasons that these conditions are included in the Bill.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Later on the Bill provides that a native, for the two years immediately prior to the application, must have adopted the manner and habits of civilised life. That is wide enough. If we accept the amendment proposed by Mr. Seddon, it will be a hard matter to determine. The greatest care will be required on the part of the administration, and if we tie down the administration by inserting the word "habitual," the position will be rendered very difficult. We would be wise to leave well alone and experiment with the measure as it stands.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: It will be very difficult to prove that an applicant has dissolved all tribal and native associations. If we struck out the word "all," it would be better. I can appreciate the difficulty that would arise from the insertion of the word "habitual."

Hon. H. SEDDON: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

> That in line 5 of Subclause (2) the word "all" be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has just occurred to me that I might have conveyed the impression that it would not be possible for a certificate-holder to associate with other natives at all. For the certificate-holder to carry on as we desire him to do will be hard enough without stipulating that he shall have no association whatever with other natives. Only where the association is frequent or detrimental to him would exception be taken. I raise no objection to the deletion of the word "all."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I move an amendment—

> That in line 7 of Subclause (2) after the word "degree" the words "or where such association occurs at a mission" be inserted.

A native having received a certificate of citizenship will be regarded as a white man, and a white man is not allowed on a native reserve. Mission stations are classified as native reserves, so a certificate-holder would not be able to associate with his relatives at a mission. Seeing that a mission is a place where natives meet under the best conditions, there can be no objection to making this provision. We had a highly educated native in this State and such a man might wish to go to a mission and speak to the natives.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot accept the amendment. When a native receives a certificate of citizenship, he is regarded as a white man and must observe the law as a white man does. There would be no objection to a certificate-holder visiting a mission, just as there is no objection to a white man visiting a mission, but there would be a strong objection to such a native staying for any length of time at a mission or on a native reserve, unless he had obtained a permit from the department, just as a white man has to do. In the case of the man instanced by Mr. Seddon, there would be little difficulty about his visiting a mission.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Assume that a native is a trained man and has the rights of citizenship and that he desired to help with mission work, the measure would present an insuperable difficulty.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That native would have the same right as a white man has under the Native Administration Act. He could apply for a permit, and if the

Commissioner or the Protector were satisfied that he was bona fide, the permit would be granted. I can imagine the Commissioner and the Protector being only too pleased to grant such a man a permit in order that he might use his influence, either in training the natives or indicating what they could do if only they would try. I would not anticipate the slightest trouble in the case mentioned by Mr. Seddon.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clause 5—Evidence to be adduced in support of an application under this Act:

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

> That in line 1 of paragraph (d) before the word "leprosy" the word "active" be inserted.

I gave reasons for this amendment when speaking on the second reading. The fact that a native has suffered from leprosy should not be a bar, but the fact that he is suffering from active leprosy and therefore isolated should be a bar. The term "suffering from" has been used to mean "in possession of" and is not a sufficient definition. We should protect persons who have reached the cured stage, even though such persons are in possession of a chronic disease which might recur and necessitate treatment. Further, is it desired that all persons seeking certificates should submit to a blood test? If the other two diseases mentioned in the paragraph are included, they are purely acute diseases that can be cured.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member had better confine his remarks for the moment to the amendment to insert the word "active."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have no objection to this amendment, but I must oppose the other amendment indicated by the hon. member. The diseases in question are specified mainly because in another place the clause was regarded as too general and there was a desire that it should be more specific in regard to diseases. The Commissioner of Public Health, who was consulted on the subject, has informed me that he agrees with the insertion of the word "active" but that he is strongly opposed to the deletion of the other words.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the Chief Secretary at present confine himself to the insertion of the word "active."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I move an amendment—

> That in line 2 of paragraph (c) the words "syphilis, granuloma or yaws" be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This matter also has been discussed with the Commissioner of Public Health. The last two of the diseases specified are to a great extent peculiar to natives. Perhaps Dr. Hislop will agree that persons affected with them are apt to be mentally upset as the result of knowledge that they are so affected. Under the Native Administration Act we would be able to treat such natives and cure them of those diseases. It does not necessarily follow that because a native suffers from one of them, he will be debarred from holding a certificate for all time; he will be debarred only until he produces a certificate that he is not so suffering. I hope the amendment will not be carried.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: The position as I see it is not so much a medical question as one of ordinary, plain commonsense. If a native before receiving citizenship is to submit to a Wassermann test, what about the rest of us? We gave the native the disease; we brought it to him. A blood test is needed to decide whether or not a native is suffering from one of these diseases. We can vote while we suffer from an infectious disease such as scarlet fever or measles; then why not the native? A later clause provides that the Commissioner may suspend a certificate of citizenship if the native acquires one of these diseases. In that event the native would have to go back to the leprosarium and resume the habits of tribal natives. Certainly we should provide in a statute a prohibition as regards chronic diseases. I do not consider the paragraph fair or essential to the working of the Bill.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: I support the Minister in his attitude. He takes a realistic view of the subject. Some people are forgetful of the fact that the native's upbringing and outlook are utterly different from those of white men. The department has to keep that fact in mind. The Bill represents an endeavour to lift the native above his old environment and associations. That is

essential if he is to attain a white man's status.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: If the words are to be retained, why retain only one form of venereal disease? Why not retain both?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Too much importance is being attached to the right to vote. The words find a place in the clause for a specific purpose. There are many privileges which a certificate-holder will have that the ordinary native does not enjoy. The two last-named diseases are tropical diseases wholly confined to natives. If a native contracts either of them, it will be good evidence that he has been in contact with tribal natives. On the second reading I said that experience of the working of the measure might prove that some of its provisions could be modified. I hope the words will not be deleted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.18 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 14th November, 1944.

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

PETITION—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB.

Mr. NEEDHAM presented a petition from the Western Australian Turf Club praying for the introduction of a Bill to resolve certain doubts concerning the power of the Western Australian Turf Club under the Western Australian Turf Club Act, 1892, to enter into agreements for the acquisition by purchase or otherwise of and to acquire by purchase or otherwise and hold and otherwise deal with real and personal property for the purposes of the Club.

Petition received and the prayer of the petitioner granted.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB (PROPERTY) PRIVATE.

Introduced by Mr. Needham and read a first time.

Referred to Select Committee.

On motion by Mr. Needham, Bill referred to a Select Committee consisting of Messrs. Cross, Leahy, Shearn, Thorn and the mover, with power to call for persons and papers, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned and to report on Thursday, the 16th November.

QUESTIONS (5).

WHEAT.

As to Transport to Coast.

Mr. DONEY asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) Has he read a statement appearing in "The West Australian" of the 8th November by the Superintendent of the W.A. section of the Australian Wheat Board—setting out that there are 13,000,000 bushels of wheat awaiting movement from railway sidings, but that rail transport is so hampered by (a) coal shortages, (b) disinclination of train crews to work on Sundays, and (c) the inability of the railway authorities to move more than 50 per cent. of weekly port requirements; that the board finds it impossible to meet the demand for wheat?

(2) Does he realise that this situation if not corrected—wholly or in part—will contribute substantially to food shortages in a period when food supplies threaten to become desperately short?

(3) Is the output of coal increasing?

(4) If not does he anticipate an increase (a) when, (b) on what grounds, (c) by how much?