

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 26th November, 1947.

CONTENTS.

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Questions : Albany harbour, as to tabling plans and Mr. Tydeman's report ... | 2159 |
| Convalescent homes for aged, as to licensing, fees and inspections ... | 2159 |
| Motion : Railways, as to use of new steel coaches ... | 2160 |
| Bills : War Service Land Settlement Agreement (Land Act Application) Act Amendment, 1r. ... | 2159 |
| Native Administration Act Amendment, 3r., passed ... | 2161 |
| Companies Act Amendment (No. 2), 3r. ... | 2161 |
| Dried Fruits, amended report ... | 2162 |
| Wheat Marketing, report ... | 2162 |
| Industry (Advances), Com. ... | 2162 |
| Stallions Act Amendment, returned ... | 2167 |
| Gas (Standards), 1r. ... | 2167 |
| Iron and Steel Industry, 1r. ... | 2167 |
| Licensing (Provisional Certificate), 2r. ... | 2167 |
| Milk Act Amendment (No. 2), 2r. ... | 2168 |
| Judicial Proceedings (Regulation of Reports), 2r. ... | 2169 |
| Gas Undertakings, 2r. ... | 2170 |
| Child Welfare, Assembly's message ... | 2173 |
| Municipal Corporations Act Amendment (No. 2), Assembly's message ... | 2175 |
| Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 2), Assembly's message ... | 2175 |
| Street Photographers, Assembly's message ... | 2175 |

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

QUESTIONS.

ALBANY HARBOUR.

As to Tabling Plans and Mr. Tydeman's Report.

Hon. A. THOMSON (on notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) Will he table the copy of the plans for the improvements to the Albany harbour as promised on the 27th August last?

(2) Will he also table a copy of Mr. Tydeman's report on this subject?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) See answer to (2).

(2) Mr. Tydeman's report has not yet been completed.

CONVALESCENT HOMES FOR AGED.

As to Licensing, Fees and Inspections.

Hon. A. THOMSON (on notice) asked the Minister for Mines:

(1) What department or authority is responsible for issuing licenses in connection with convalescent homes for elderly people?

(2) Has such department or authority power to determine—

(a) the fees that may be charged for accommodation in such homes;

(b) the number of occupants per room?

(3) Is the Minister aware that elderly people are charged as high as five guineas per week, and as many as five herded into one room?

(4) (a) Are any inspections made of these homes?

(b) On what conditions are they permitted to operate?

(c) On what basis are fees and/or charges fixed?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) By the local governing authority as registered boarding houses, if the inmates do not require medical supervision.

By the Public Health Department as "C" class hospitals, if regular medical supervision is necessary.

(2) (a) No. This is controlled by the Prices Commissioner.

(b) Yes.

(3) No.

(4) (a) Yes. "C" class hospitals by Health Department's Inspectors.
Boarding houses by Local Government Inspectors

(b) Boarding House under Government by-laws.

"C" class hospitals by Health Department Regulations.

(c) Answered by (2).

BILL—WAR SERVICE LAND SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT (LAND ACT APPLICATION) ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Honorary Minister and read a first time.

MOTION—RAILWAYS.*As to Use of New Steel Coaches.*

HON. G. BENNETTS (South) [4.38]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, the newly constructed steel coaches about to be released from Midland Junction Workshops should be placed on the ordinary Goldfields express and other long distance country trains.

My reason for placing the motion before the House is that people in the outlying districts to which there are long runs such as to the Goldfields and other distant centres, have been very hostile since the new train has been placed on the Bunbury run. There is no doubt that that train is a credit to the State and it is an excellent job. It is beautifully illuminated with fluorescent lighting and has a staff of six and two buffet cars. We who have to travel to the Goldfields by the ordinary Kalgoorlie express, are convinced that the train is long overdue—

Hon. C. G. Latham: We all agree with you.

Hon. W. J. Mann: How much overdue?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Thirty-six years ago I was working on that train, and the only alteration that has been made since is that occasionally a two-berth car has been placed on the train. If that two-berth car is required for the "Westland," it is taken from the ordinary Eastern Goldfields train. For the last five trips, to my knowledge, only one two-berth coach has been placed on that train. The President and I travel on the train to Kalgoorlie and we get many complaints from Goldfields residents about the four-berth car.

Hon. A. L. Loton: How many passengers are placed in the four-berth compartment?

Hon. G. BENNETTS: Four. However, it depends on the loading. If that is light the number may be reduced to two, but the four berths are made up. To travel in this old type AQ carriage with four people is worse than travelling second class. In the second class there is room under the seat for luggage, besides which the second class berths are now supplied with sheets similar to those used in the first class compartments. The travellers say that the four-berth carriages are worth only 6s. per berth, which is the charge made for the second class sleeping berth. Nevertheless,

the charge is 15s. I would also point out that the train is 40 minutes slower today than it was 36 years ago, which goes to show that the service has not been improved.

The "Westland" is a faster train and has priority over the ordinary Goldfields train. We know why it should have priority, because it has a long distance to run and if anything happens to it, it is but right that the ordinary train should be side-tracked. Should anything go wrong with the engine on the "Westland" express, the engine on the Eastern Goldfields train would be taken off to replace the engine that had broken down, leaving the Eastern Goldfields train stranded. The taxpayers of this State are paying for the ordinary Eastern Goldfields train and it is but right that they should receive a service equal to that given on the "Westland."

The other day, Sir Hal Colebatch mentioned how important our Goldfields were to the State, and surely the people residing there are entitled to better travelling facilities, particularly as they pay a higher fare than do the Eastern States travellers. The first class fare which an Eastern States passenger pays is 10s.; he pays £1 for the sleeping berth and 7s. for meals, making a total of £1 17s. The second class Eastern States passenger pays 6s. 6d. for fare, 8s. for sleeper, and 7s. for meals, a total of £1 1s. 6d. The Goldfields resident, however, pays for his fare from Kalgoorlie to Perth £3 2s. 4d. first class, 15s. for sleeper and 7s. for meals, a total of £4 4s. 4d. The second class passenger pays £1 19s. for fare, 6s. for sleeper and 7s. for meals, a total of £2 12s. The Goldfields residents therefore consider that they are justly entitled to receive better service than they are getting.

It is said that we should encourage tourists to this State, but half of the tourists that come here only spend a holiday. What value are they to the State? Many of them perhaps travel on passes and therefore do not pay a fare. Then we have the aeroplane service between Perth and Kalgoorlie competing with the trains. On many occasions the train will carry only 14 first class passengers and about 20 second class passengers. Many people consider that train travelling is not

now worth while, as the fare by air is very little more. A person leaves Kalgoorlie by air at 10 o'clock in the morning and reaches Perth at noon. The staff on the plane cannot do enough for the passengers and the service is really 100 per cent. Can one wonder that so many people are electing to travel by air instead of by rail?

Something must be done to speed up our rail service. At present, it seems to me that we are trying to force people to travel by air. I am not only stressing the point that the Goldfields line should be better serviced. The Albany line is also due for a better service. Recently I went to Albany and there was the same type of four-berth carriage on the train. There were three persons in the cabin that I occupied. I think the time has arrived when these better class coaches should be placed on our long distance trains, which should have priority over the "Westland" in this respect. Let the "Westland" continue with what it now has. I hope I shall receive support for the motion from other members who have to make long distance train journeys. I should like to hear them express their views on the motion.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East) [4.48]: I support the motion, but I think all long distance lines are entitled to have these new coaches. I fail to see why the Eastern Goldfields line should have preference, as the Goldfields residents can perhaps travel on the "Westland" express, the service on which is far ahead of any other in the State, with the exception, perhaps, of the service rendered by the Midland Railway Co., which is a private concern.

Hon. W. R. Hall: Very few people can travel to Kalgoorlie on the "Westland."

Hon. A. L. LOTON: I said "perhaps." For that reason, I hope Mr. Bennetts will agree to alter his motion. I support the proposal in the hope that if the Goldfields can get the advantage of these new coaches, the Great Southern line will be similarly treated. If the coaches are half as good as the publicity which has been given to them would lead one to believe, I am certain it will not be long before there is such an outcry from the people on the Great Southern line that the Goldfields will not have a monopoly of them.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [4.50]: Members should support this motion. Apparently Mr. Bennetts has some information to the effect that when these new coaches are released they are to find their place on the "Westland," which travels between Perth and Kalgoorlie. I do not know what policy is to be adopted, but if Mr. Bennetts is correct in that assumption, I support his motion whole-heartedly.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Wait until the Minister replies and you will get some information.

The Minister for Mines: I do not know what coaches they are.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am speaking on the assumption that these new coaches are to be released and put into commission on the railways, and are to be used on the "Westland" and not on the ordinary Kalgoorlie express. If that is so, the motion might achieve some good by bringing the matter under the notice of the Minister, thus enabling him to make inquiries. If that is the case, I hope that policy will not be enforced. As Mr. Bennetts has pointed out, the present Goldfields express is by no means in keeping with what modern standards require.

The AZ compartment is certainly very comfortable, the conductors do their best to look after the public, the dining-car has shown a big improvement during recent months and generally, I think, the department is doing its best for the convenience of the travelling public. But frequently, people have to travel in the old AQ compartments, and at this time of the year, when it is likely to be extremely hot and dusty on the trip, conditions are not what they should be. I hope, therefore, this motion will achieve the purpose Mr. Bennetts has in mind, namely, that the new coaches will be made available for the Kalgoorlie express; and I do not exclude the other country lines, but members concerned with those districts can speak for themselves.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, debate adjourned.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Native Administration Act Amendment.

Passed.

2, Companies Act Amendment (No. 2).
Transmitted to the Assembly.

BILLS (2)—REPORTS.

- 1, Dried Fruits.
 - 2, Wheat Marketing.
- Adopted.

BILL—INDUSTRY (ADVANCES).

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 8—agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move—

That a new clause, to stand as Clause 8, be inserted as follows:—"The Treasurer shall as soon as possible in each financial year submit to Parliament a return of all advances made during the preceding year, setting out all conditions of such advances and also a return of all outstanding advances made under this Act."

It is not the function of Governments to make advances as provided by the Bill. In the old days, when there was no bank such as the Rural and Industries Bank, I know that the Treasury did from time to time make advances to help industries. Some members believe that my proposed new clause will mean undue publicity, and will probably prevent a person from making an application because someone else might come along with the necessary financial backing and be able to carry it out without assistance from the Government. It is extraordinary to suggest that a person who is prepared to do his own financing should have to step aside for another who requires Government money to build up an industry.

If a man has a worthwhile proposition there is no difficulty about his getting finance for it. Only in the case of new concerns do people generally have to go to the Government for assistance. I do not know of any new industries in this State that have in the past availed themselves of Government help. Some people wanted to produce paper from waste timber at the Pemberton Mills, and I believe a request was made to the Government for finance, but that was not a new industry.

The Minister for Mines: On a point of order! Is this a second reading speech or is the hon. member moving for the insertion of a new clause?

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member please connect his remarks with the new clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am surprised that the Minister should raise such an objection. I am endeavouring to convince the Committee that this new clause is necessary. My belief is that the Bill itself is unnecessary, but I would accept it if certain amendments were made.

The Minister for Mines: You accepted it on the second reading.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I am pointing out why this clause should be inserted in the Bill. If it is necessary for persons to go to the Government in connection with certain schemes, the taxpayers should know that their money is being used for that purpose. I do not know of any instance in which the details of these advances are set out by the Auditor General in connection with advances made by the Treasurer. Of course, when people get in arrears with their interest the Auditor General draws attention to that. If he provided this information each year there would be no need for me to suggest that Parliament should be told what advances had been made. The new clause can do no harm and I hope it will be agreed to.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Do we not get that information from the Auditor General?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: He draws attention to overdue accounts, which in the main are old ones, such as those dealing with the manganese proposition and the banana industry. There is no statement of accounts showing the amount of money advanced from time to time. Members may live to regret it if we do not make provision in the Bill, such as I have suggested, which would ensure that the taxpayers will know what advances the Rural and Industries Bank had been forced to make. The new clause should make future Treasurers more careful as to what advances are made to industries of a doubtful nature.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I support the new clause. By this Bill we are giving the Treasurer power to compel the Rural and Industries Bank to advance certain money free of interest. When the Industries Assistance Board was in existence, a report was submitted to Parliament every year showing

what advances had been made. We are now dealing with the Rural and Industries Bank, and are putting on the statute-book legislation that will enable the Government to instruct that institution what advances to make under State guarantee. Parliament should know what amounts are being handed out to various industries. I do not suggest that any Treasurer would make an advance that would result in a severe loss to the State. The report of the Auditor General discloses that large sums of money were advanced in connection with the manganese railway.

Hon. C. G. Latham: And the Lake Clifton railway.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The railway that was pulled up! I do not like the idea of giving blank cheques to any Treasurer in matters of this sort. Some safeguard is necessary and I am pleased that the new clause has been moved. In the interests of the State some information should be available as to how, when and why certain moneys have been advanced.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I oppose the new clause. We have already passed the entire Bill, which is only a re-enactment of what has been in existence since 1917. All down those years the Public Accounts have set out the amounts for which the Government is liable, and the information is also contained in the report of the Auditor General. Why is it necessary to set out more details in 1947 than were deemed necessary in 1917? If members turn to the Public Accounts for the 30th June, 1947, page 76, they will find full details of all guarantees. They will see, for instance, Chamberlain Industries £80,000, Evanston Gold No Liability £25,000, Griffin Coal Mining Company £48,000, Norseman Gold Mines £47,000, Western Australian Egg Marketing Board £30,000, West Australian Blue Asbestos Fibres Company £25,000, Westralian Plywoods Ltd. £10,000, and so on. In the summary we find:—

| | £ | s. | d. |
|---|---------|----|----|
| Metropolitan Market Trust Debentures | 16,520 | 1 | 3 |
| Workers' Homes Board Debentures | 167,674 | 12 | 10 |
| Agricultural Land Purchase Debentures | 122,991 | 19 | 1 |
| Guarantees | 402,663 | 12 | 1 |
| | 709,850 | 5 | 3 |

In his report for the 30th June, 1947, the Auditor General gives details of various transactions and also the amount paid from Appropriation. On page 61 it is disclosed that the W.A. Manganese Co. had principal amounting to £82,824, and that the interest came to £34,279. The whole history of that company was set out on the page. On that page is also a statement giving particulars of the outstandings under the various headings—banana growers, pearling, Griffin Coal Mining Co. Ltd., and others. Then there is a list covering concerns not operating.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I told you what the Auditor General's report contains.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Under the Industries Assistance Act, the rate of interest is 6 per cent., but if the amount is guaranteed by the bank, the interest is lower. Details are available of all those outstanding amounts. The proposed new clause has no bearing on the rights or wrongs of Governments in lending money, but it does ask that all conditions of such advances be given. This would entail the preparation of a lengthy legal document, and if it had to be presented each year, would involve a considerable amount of work. The conditions vary in each case.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It is not practicable.

Hon. A. Thomson: It is practicable.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Of course it is.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Most things are practicable, but it would be a lengthy document because a copy of every bill of sale and mortgage would have to be included to show the conditions.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you anticipate having so many transactions that it would involve so much work?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is an amount of £700,000 in these accounts, but probably the conditions would be more numerous in the smaller accounts. If the money were lent on debentures, copies of the debentures and debenture deeds would have to be included. Obviously some members have not read the reports I have mentioned, and is it likely they would read a voluminous report showing all the conditions? In many instances a lawyer would be needed to decide what the conditions were. Previously all particulars have been available to members, and a considerable

amount of unnecessary work would be entailed to comply with the new clause.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I do not wish to charge the Minister with misleading members, but his quotations from the Auditor General's report have no bearing on those referred to in the Public Accounts. It is all very well to try to bluff the Committee into believing that I want copies of debenture and mortgage conditions. We want to know whether the money is lent at interest or free of interest, the term of the advances and the security.

The Minister for Mines: Then why not say so?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Quite a number of enactments contain a provision requiring the Government to submit returns and they do not set out the conditions mentioned by the Minister. The statements in the Auditor General's report refer more or less to obsolete accounts. It was wrong to say that the details were contained in the accounts because the advances shown as guarantees total £402,663 whereas the total in the Auditor General's report is £102,004.

The Minister for Mines: You do not want the guarantees included.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The duty of the Auditor General is to report to Parliament. He has nothing to do with the making of advances. He will know of the Treasurer's authorisation to make advances under this measure and his responsibility is to report that advances have been made and that the interest has not been paid or that the loan has not been repaid.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And never will be.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: That is so. The manganese railway is an instance and the Lake Clifton railway is another. I believe that only one train ran on the Horseshoe line and no train at all ever ran on the Lake Clifton line, and it was not until we were asked to authorise the pulling up of the Lake Clifton line that that information was made available to the public. I intend to persevere with the new clause. We want to be clear and open in dealing with the State's finances. People do not generally approach the Government for a loan unless they have failed to get money from other sources.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: That does not always apply.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Nearly always. No banking concern to my knowledge would grant an advance free of interest, and therefore there is a greater reason why the Government should be careful. I have no objection to Governments making advances for which they have appropriation under statutes, such as to the Egg Board, but this is a different matter. If a person borrows money from an outside source, the information is published in the "Trade Gazette," and people generally take no exception to that. I object to the Minister's misleading members in the way I think he did.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I take exception to the remarks of Mr. Latham. I have not misled the Committee. Clause 3 provides that the Treasurer may render financial assistance by making advances or guaranteeing any advance that has been made. The Government now makes all its advances by guarantees and I thought the hon. member was referring to such advances, so if I misled him, he first of all misled me. Are we to submit a statement showing all the bad debts made by previous Governments? The words appearing in an Act of Parliament bear the same meaning wherever they appear. Subclause (2) of Clause 3 authorises the Treasurer to enter into an agreement with the applicant setting forth the terms and conditions of the assistance and of the industry to be assisted. The hon. member knows that when one seeks an advance from a bank, one does not merely go there and offer to pay 5 per cent. or 3 per cent. and agree to repay the loan in a certain time. A long legal document is drawn up setting out the conditions and the security. The new clause provides for all the conditions being given. It is quite unnecessary. All the particulars required are supplied and furthermore any member of Parliament, as the hon. member well knows, can ask questions.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They do not know anything about it to enable them to ask questions.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Your replies are not too intelligent either.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Take the reply to the question asked today concerning the tabling of certain plans. How can

the plans be tabled when the report is not to hand?

Hon. A. Thomson: There is a plan in existence.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member wants that plan, I will submit it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Will the Minister resume his seat? It would greatly facilitate the passage of legislation if speeches in Committee were shorter. I am afraid we are hearing long second reading speeches. It would be better if members would keep to the matter under discussion.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I apologise to you, Sir, and to the Committee. The amendment does not give effect to the remarks of the hon. member because it differs entirely from what he apparently requires.

Hon. L. CRAIG: A great mistake would be made if the amendment were passed. It is contrary to business practice. It would not be right for the details of any case in which the Government, through the Rural and Industries Bank, had provided an advance, to be the subject of open debate and the setting out of the conditions under which the money had been made available. That is what it would mean. There would have to be a detailed description of advances made for the assistance and development of new industries.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Not necessarily new industries.

Hon. L. CRAIG: But that is the main reason for advances. If a concern has good security there is no need to go to the Government for assistance; it could be obtained from a bank. People applying for assistance and receiving it are those who wish to establish an industry which the Government considers worth while but for which those concerned cannot as a rule offer adequate security. There is some risk attached to it. The Auditor General's job is to protect the public.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you not think Parliament should know the details?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not. In effect the hon. member is asking whether I think the public should know the details. Is it fair to the borrower for these details to become

available to Parliament? If they become available to Parliament they become public property, and that is not fair. Many of these advances are for industries in an experimental stage. The Government says, "We will back you and help you to develop something we hope will turn into a decent industry." Is it fair that the details of such advances should be made public property? Mr. Latham says that we are guardians of the taxpayers and anything affecting them should be made available to us in order that we may protect them. Advances made through an associated bank come from the money of depositors and no details are supplied to them. If such details are made public it will greatly curtail the opportunities for good industries to be established. The practice in the past has worked out all right. If default is made, it is the Auditor General's job to point out the errors in judgment.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It would be too late then.

Hon. L. CRAIG: This will not make any difference from that point of view. This return will be furnished at the end of the year after the advances have been made. It will not stop advances being made but will merely publicise the details.

Hon. H. L. ROCHE: The amendment is worthy of support because it will put a measure of restraint on advances that would be made. Under the Bill it is possible for advances to be made to concerns or individuals that have not a feather to fly with, that cannot borrow anywhere else. In effect, we are giving a blank cheque to whoever may be in charge of the finances of the State. Advances can be made to doubtful propositions—and they must be doubtful, otherwise there would not be any need for the advances provided for under the measure. We have a duty to perform and that is to provide some safeguard for the public.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I cannot imagine a businessman in this House supporting an amendment like this, the effect of which would be to slow down the development of new industries. Certain people or groups of people desire to start new industries and are prepared to risk a certain amount of money. The security is not satisfactory enough for them to obtain money from a bank, so the Government backs them. We

are not so well advanced in Western Australia as to be able to afford a brake being applied by legislation of this sort. I never imagined the time would come in this Chamber when the Lake Clifton railway would be mentioned. That was a tragic example of the mistakes of anti-Labour Governments.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: What about manganese? That cost twice as much and the Collier Government was responsible.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: This amendment would frighten away people willing to help the State—and themselves—for I cannot believe anybody would risk having his private affairs dragged before Parliament. The adoption of the amendment would be a serious mistake and I cannot imagine any Government accepting it that had the development of secondary industries at heart.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I think Mr. Latham may be commended for some of the things he has mentioned; but after giving the matter much consideration I must oppose the amendment, because I think it would be very unwise if the details of any loan made by the Government, even for a new industry, were prematurely made public. It is quite wrong for members to say that advances are sought only by those companies that are unable to raise sufficient capital to carry on a new industry in which they may be interested. I know from my own case that that is entirely wrong.

I was one of a party which approached the Minister for Industrial Development for assistance to commence a new industry in Western Australia. A certain sum would have been put up by a number of men interested and the Government was quite prepared to help that industry. Unfortunately the information leaked out and a large Eastern States firm stepped in and prevented the establishment of this industry locally. I know of other instances in which, if the details were made known, the business would probably be prevented from continuing. I am not satisfied with the information given to this Chamber at present either by the Auditor General or through the Public Accounts regarding advances made to industry. Year after year in the Auditor General's report is reference to losses sustained over a period of years in connection with various concerns

and on page 76 of the Public Accounts we have a list of guarantees. Am I to understand that all those guarantees are for operative companies working today?

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: They are not.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: No, of course not! Why are there not included either in this list or the list from the Auditor General the advances made to industry in this State—

The Minister for Mines: Look at page 32 of the Auditor General's report.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: —that have been a dead loss to the Government over the last two or three years? I cannot find any account of them at all. Large advances were made to the Speedy Gas Producer Coy. and a briquette company that I know have been a dead loss to the State. I have not been able to find them either in the Auditor General's report or in the Public Accounts. I think it would be too dangerous to amend the Bill as suggested by Mr. Latham, unless it can be done by providing that Parliament shall be furnished with the amount of the advances but not the details under which the advances are made.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: Mr. Craig tried to compare advances made by banks with those made by the Treasurer, and pointed out that a bank uses the depositors' money. That is true, but the bank guarantees the depositors' money. When the Treasurer makes advances the people of this State must carry the burden, unlike the depositors of a bank, who are protected. It is complained that too much publicity will be given to the transactions, but if I get an advance from a bank that is published in the "Trade Gazette."

The Minister for Mines: Only bills of sale and hire purchase agreements are published in the "Trade Gazette."

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: So are mortgages and promissory notes. Someone gives that information to the "Trade Gazette."

The Minister for Mines: The information is available, as the documents are registered with the court.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: All the information I would require would be whether the advance was free of interest and whether it was for a fixed period. Most of the industries referred to are not new industries in this State.

Hon. L. Craig: Of course they are!

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Albany Woollen Mills was a new industry to the State, as prior to its establishment there had been no such industry here. Businesslike concerns would not need to go to the Government for finance. If the Committee disagrees with my view, I still think the time may come when members will say that there was something worth-while in my amendment. I am only trying to protect the taxpayers, whom I represent.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I move an amendment—

That in lines 4 and 5 of the proposed new clause the words "setting out all conditions of all such advances" be struck out.

The Treasurer today has power to say that so much money shall be advanced, whether free of interest or not.

Amendment put and passed.

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

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Ayes | 16 |
| Noes | 11 |
| <hr/> | |
| Majority for | 5 |
| <hr/> | |

AYES.

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Hon. G. Bennetts | Hon. O. G. Latham |
| Hon. L. B. Bolton | Hon. L. A. Logan |
| Hon. R. J. Boylen | Hon. A. L. Loton |
| Hon. H. A. C. Daffen | Hon. W. J. Mann |
| Hon. G. Fraser | Hon. G. W. Miles |
| Hon. F. E. Gibson | Hon. H. L. Roche |
| Hon. W. R. Hall | Hon. A. Thomson |
| Hon. J. G. Hislop | Hon. C. F. Baxter |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch | Hon. H. S. W. Parker |
| Hon. L. Craig | Hon. C. H. Simpson |
| Hon. E. M. Davies | Hon. F. R. Welsh |
| Hon. R. M. Forrest | Hon. G. B. Wood |
| Hon. E. H. Gray | Hon. H. Tuckey |
| Hon. E. M. Heenan | |

(Teller.)

New clause thus passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—STALLIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Gas (Standards).

2, Iron and Steel Industry.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—LICENSING (PROVISIONAL CERTIFICATE).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. S. W. Parker—Metropolitan-Suburban) [6.1] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill which merely provides for provisional licenses to be extended. At present when the Licensing Court grants a provisional license for a new hotel the building has to be erected within 12 months or else the license expires.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is impossible these times.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In 1941 legislation was enacted providing that an extension should be granted of provisional licenses for a certain period, namely, until 12 months after peace had been declared. It is difficult to say when a war actually ends from the legal aspect. One contention is that the war ends when peace is declared—and that has been upheld by the High Court—or when a proclamation is made. A proclamation may be issued at any time. Several persons have been granted provisional licenses and there is a risk that those licenses may expire because it is impossible to build at the present time.

This Bill provides for an extension of time until 1951. One license was granted to the Rottnest Board of Control and it is questionable whether, under the existing law, that provisional license still exists. However, the Bill will permit that provisional license to continue. There are only two or three provisional licenses in actual force. One is for the Agnew Hotel, another is for the North Perth Hotel and the remaining one is that granted to the Rottnest Board of Control. Clause 3, which is the material one, fixes the time for the extension at the 31st December, 1951. I feel members should have no objection to the passing of this measure and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [6.4]: Apart from the necessity of protecting the Rottnest Board of Control, the Bill is also for the purpose of safeguarding holders of provisional certificates issued under the existing Act. The Rottnest Board of Control is not protected, and the Bill seeks to afford the necessary protection, which will also

apply to the holders of other certificates which were issued and which will now expire in 1951. In view of the shortage of material, I think we will be very lucky indeed if these hotels can be built between now and 1951, and possibly this legislation may have to be extended again. At the present time there is nothing definite about it, because if a proclamation were issued to say that the war had ended, it would mean that the hotels concerned could not be built within the time at their disposal, but by extending it to 1951 they are given a definite period. The Bill is necessary and no doubt the House will agree to it.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

BILL—MILK ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. G. B. Wood—East) [6.6] in moving the second reading said: This is a very simple Bill but nevertheless most desirable at the present time. Under the Milk Act as it now stands, dairymen have to contribute a certain amount on their production of milk to a compensation fund. Under Section 60 the amount which they contribute is prescribed by regulation but there is a maximum of one farthing. I do not think that maximum has ever been reached yet, but we have found that quite a number of stud herdsman are supplying milk for the metropolitan area and, of course, their cattle are very valuable. When such cattle have been destroyed under the present legislation, the owners do not receive adequate compensation. The actual amount one can receive for a reactor to T.B. is £20. The Bill provides that a stud herdsman shall contribute a maximum of one halfpenny and shall be subject to a greater degree of compensation than the ordinary herdsman, with a maximum of £42.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Is that for the whole of his stock, whether pure, bred or otherwise?

THE HONORARY MINISTER: It applies only to registered bulls or registered cows. The measure also covers the position of a dairyman who has an ordinary herd but with a registered bull as well.

I happened to be out at Osborne Park one day watching the examination of stock by experts and they were passing out quite a number of cows. In fact, they were finding about 43 per cent. of reactors. The owner had a very valuable bull in the herd and I was rather perturbed as to whether the experts would find something wrong with it because I knew that the owner would get only £20 if his bull proved to be a reactor. However, to my relief it was not so, and the animal did not have to be destroyed. It had occurred to me that if a man had an animal worth £50 or £60, which happened to be a reactor, he would only receive £20 in compensation. Under the Bill he will have the bull valued just the same. We want to encourage stud herdsman to supply milk to the metropolitan area because generally the conditions that stud people work under are better than those applying to ordinary dairymen.

With the large number of cattle that are being destroyed at present—and rightly so, too—there will be a possibility of a milk shortage perhaps in March, so the more people we can encourage to engage in this industry, the better. I think there are now at least eight or nine stud herdsman who supply milk to the metropolitan area. I have discussed this matter with some of them and they are very shy about becoming licensed dairymen, because they do take a risk. Their cattle have to be examined and tested for T.B. They say it is not worth while obtaining a license to supply milk if as a result of an examination of their herds they lose 40 per cent. or more as the case may be, and actually receive only small compensation in return. This legislation was requested by the Royal Agricultural Society and it is something which I had given consideration to previously. I think it is a very desirable measure and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [6.10]: I certainly support this Bill. The Royal Agricultural Society has given consideration to it and agrees that where people have valuable stud stock, £20 is not nearly enough compensation. However, in reading it through, I can see a weakness in the Bill. Clause 4 says:

Provided that an amount of compensation in excess of £20, but not more than £42, shall

be payable in respect of the destruction of any one diseased animal kept by a licensed dairyman whose whole herd is registered.

A lot of registered herds are held by people who also have grade cows.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Half of them may be grade cows.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes, in which case a registered animal may be a reactor and may be destroyed, but, as I have read that clause, the owner would not receive any compensation unless the whole of the herd was registered. I would be glad if the Honorary Minister would look into that. That is how it appears to me at the moment. The fact that one animal was a reactor but the owner would not be entitled to compensation unless the whole herd was registered is a distinct weakness in the clause. I think we could eliminate the word "whole" and it would then read "whose herd is registered." I think if the Honorary Minister would give attention to that, it would rectify the position.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS (REGULATION OF REPORTS).

Second Reading.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [6.13] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to regulate the publication and sale of reports of judicial proceedings in such a manner as to prevent injury to public morals. At the present time it can almost be said that newspapers in this State have carte blanche to publish the whole of the evidence given in divorce proceedings and in proceedings taken under the Married Women's Protection Act. The issue raised by this Bill is whether or not such an unlimited freedom and the use that is made of it by some sections of the Press, is for the good of public morals.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I was referring to the fact that under our existing law newspapers have almost carte blanche in the matter of publication of details of divorce proceedings and so forth. My contention is that the publication of the unfortunate

and unsavoury details which are frequently in evidence in these cases can have, and most probably have, a most harmful effect, especially on the minds and morals of young people. That applies more when the sordid details, relating mainly to adultery and misconduct, are written up in a racy, suggestive manner, frequently embellished and made more attractive by the publication of photographs of the unfortunate principals.

The exploits of inquiry agents are also given in great detail—almost glamourised, to use a modern word. These agents are made to appear as modern heroes or Robin Hoods. As I indicated earlier, I believe the time is long overdue for the introduction of legislation to correct this sorry state of affairs. Apart from what I contend, there is the obvious harm being done to public morals. There is the welfare of the individual to consider. I do not think it right, or in the interests of public policy, that all these unhappy details should be made available to the public. There are always innocent parties in every case, and the inordinate publicity sometimes given makes the innocent party suffer with the guilty.

Another unfair aspect is that if some well-known person finds himself figuring in these courts, his case invariably receives greater publicity than that given to the case of some less known individual. The idea, of course, is to provide attractive news irrespective of the feelings and interests of the unfortunate parties concerned. The main clause of the Bill makes it unlawful to print or publish, in relation to any divorce proceedings or proceedings under the Married Women's Protection Act, any particulars other than the following, which I consider are quite adequate:—

(1) The names, addresses and occupations of the parties and witnesses.

(2) A concise statement of the charges, defences, and counter-charges in support of which evidence has been given.

(3) Submissions on any point of law arising in the course of the proceedings, and the decision of the court thereon.

(4) The summing-up of the judge, and the finding of the jury (if any), and the judgment of the court, and observations made by the judge in giving judgment.

The word "particulars" is defined to include photographs of the parties and witnesses. The other clauses are more or less incidental and can be left to the Committee

stage, if the Bill reaches it. The whole measure is based on similar legislation existing in England and the Eastern States. It might be of interest to mention that the English Act came into force in 1926, and this measure, as well as the legislation in the Eastern States, is moulded on the lines of that Act.

From fairly wide inquiries made by me, I believe the Bill will meet with the approval of all sections of the community. The prevalence of matrimonial discord is one of the sorry features of the times. If passed, the Bill may not do much to remedy this evil and I make no claim that it will; but at least it will have the effect of limiting the unpleasant, useless and harmful publicity which at present is given to the evil by some sections of the Press. I have much pleasure in moving—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

BILL—GAS UNDERTAKINGS.

Second Reading.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [7.38] in moving the second reading said: Although this Bill is something new so far as Western Australia is concerned, that is not so in other States of Australia or in England. For a very great number of years, all gas undertakings that have been granted a monopoly have been under control. This State is the only exception. The provisions in this Bill are taken from legislation dealing with gas undertakings in England and from similar legislation in force in the other States of Australia. Since 1870, the British Parliament has always insisted that gas companies shall limit the amount of their share capital and the dividends which they may declare. So far as Western Australia is concerned, the only restriction has been as to the amount of capital which a gas undertaking may raise.

The statute governing the Fremantle Gas Co. stipulates that any new issue of shares can only be made to the existing shareholders. Such a provision has not appeared in any English Act governing gas undertakings since 1870. As a matter of fact, both in England and in the other States of Australia that provision has been excluded

from legislation dealing with gas undertakings. The Fremantle Gas Co. has been permitted at various times by Parliament—I think the last occasion was in 1940—to increase its share capital. I believe that in 1940 the value of a share in that company was 30s. or 31s.; but, owing to the fact that the issue of new shares was limited to existing shareholders only, a present was made to those shareholders of about 11s. per share, as the company issued the shares at par, namely, £1.

The practice regarding capital shares in England is embodied in this measure. The Bill also stipulates the amount of reserves that the company may hold. That point has been covered since 1847 by legislation in Great Britain. Since that year, Great Britain has also provided for a reduction in the price of gas if the profits of the undertaking exceed a prescribed amount. This Bill does not go so far in that direction, but it does limit the dividends to be paid. If the Bill passes, the dividend will be limited to 6 per cent. Members will no doubt agree that this is reasonable, inasmuch as the gas undertaking, which has been granted a monopoly, is not subject to the risks that a private company must take. That is the reason for limiting the amount of the dividend to be paid.

A committee of inquiry was appointed in England to investigate the gas position, and as a result of its recommendations the Gas Regulation Act was introduced. The inquiry was carried out about 1917 or 1918 and the report was submitted and legislation passed in 1920. One of the recommendations was that companies should arrive at a basic price for the supply of gas. Whilst it has not been compulsory for the companies to do that, I understand that most of the large companies in England have adopted that method. The process of arriving at the basic price is quite a simple one. It takes into account the amount to be set down for depreciation, the amount for reserves, the amount for superannuation, and it also provides for the distribution of surplus profits. This Bill contains clauses on similar lines. Exception might be taken to the method suggested of arriving at the price of gas. In Fremantle the charge is based on the cubic foot. The method proposed in the Bill is that gas shall be paid for on the B.T.U. value.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: How does the City of Perth Electricity and Gas Department charge?

Hon. G. FRASER: On the B.T.U. method. The directors of the Fremantle company, at a conference we had with them early this week, were not too happy about the change. But that has also been the attitude of all gas companies when this alteration has been proposed.

Hon. F. E. Gibson: What advantage is there in the new method?

Hon. G. FRASER: The consumers pay for what they get. When gas was first introduced it was used principally as an illuminant, but today it is not used for that purpose very much, but mainly for heating. It is used in that way in manufacturing establishments and in homes. The Bill provides that we shall pay, not for the cubic amount of gas we use, but for its heating qualities.

Hon. L. Craig: Can you determine that constantly?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, it can be determined. There is another Bill before the House to which I shall make only passing reference at the moment. It provides that the company must declare the calorific value of the gas.

Hon. L. Craig: Would it not vary from day to day according to the quality of the coal?

Hon. G. FRASER: I suppose it would. That is foreseen by the margin allowed between the amounts which the company may declare. A difference of 50 B.T.U. is permitted. In addition to the gas company having to declare the B.T.U., the State Electricity Commission has the right to check the company's statement. The quality of the gas, therefore, will be maintained at somewhere about the figure actually declared. At the present time we pay for the cubic feet of gas that we use, and the B.T.U. content might be very low. As a result we pay more for gas than we should. Since 1920 it has been compulsory in Great Britain for the charges for gas to be based on the B.T.U. content.

The same principle was established in New South Wales in 1935. I believe that Victoria, Queensland and probably South Australia are charging on the cubic foot

system. We have had complaints that the B.T.U. content of the Fremantle gas has been very low. That means that people have been using more gas than they should. What is proposed here is a fair method both to the gas company and the consumers. This system was adopted on the recommendation of a committee appointed in England, not by a Labour Government but by a Tory Government. The members of the committee certainly knew their job. Other provisions in the Bill permit of interest being paid on deposits. I know that some, if not all, of the electricity companies in this State take deposits from their consumers. I do not know if any of them pay interest. I believe that in the other States, interest is paid on the deposits.

Hon. L. Craig: What do you mean by a deposit?

Hon. G. FRASER: When an ordinary gas meter is installed, a deposit of £1 has to be made. That amount is held by the company until such time as the consumer leaves the district, when it is refunded to him. It is a sort of guarantee to the company that the bills will be paid.

Hon. L. Craig: It is a very small amount.

Hon. G. FRASER: It may be individually, but the Fremantle company has about 6,000 consumers which, at £1 deposit per consumer, means £6,000, which is a tidy sum. I understand the company works on overdraft, which means that it is saving interest at 4 per cent. on £6,000. The Bill proposes that the current rate of interest shall be allowed to the consumers on these deposits.

Hon. L. Craig: What will 2 per cent. per annum amount to on £1?

Hon. G. FRASER: Roughly, 5d.

Hon. L. Craig: That is not much.

Hon. G. FRASER: That may be, but if a consumer leaves his £1 with the company for 40 years it amounts to something. At present the consumers get nothing.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The City of Perth pays interest.

Hon. G. FRASER: I believe so.

Hon. L. Craig: You are assuming the company works on an overdraft. If it did not it would be paying interest on money it did not want.

Hon. G. FRASER: In that case, I assume the company would invest the money and get a greater rate of interest. However, the proposal is that interest be paid. It was suggested that this meant a lot of book-keeping, but the proposed method of dealing with this point is that at the end of each 12 months, when the bill is calculated, the amount of interest shall be worked out and credited to the individual consumers. As a result, no additional books will have to be kept.

Another clause has been taken from the Queensland Act, and it deals with the supply to a particular locality. This is essential so far as Fremantle is concerned. In the past, when Bills dealing with this company have been before the Legislative Council, the complaint has always been made by the Fremantle members that the company would not serve the territory over which it has rights. It has extended as far as Claremont, and yet sections within one mile or one mile and a half of its establishment have been clamouring for gas for 20 years without success.

The provision is that where 20 people in an area want a supply of gas, they can make application to the State Electricity Commission which will make an investigation, and if it is satisfied that by supplying the gas the company will receive a return of 20 per cent. per year on its outlay, instructions will then be given to the company to make the gas available. I see nothing wrong with that provision, and it will get over the big difficulty that has been experienced in Fremantle for so many years. Another bugbear, in connection with gas and electricity undertakings, is the question of meter rent. I do not know what other districts charge, but in Fremantle the meter rent for electricity meters is 6d. per month, and for gas meters it is 1s. per month in some places, and 9d. in others.

Hon. L. Craig: It covers maintenance.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, but I think the companies would show a pretty fair margin of profit at 9d. a month from each gas consumer. That applies to all meters except the slot-machines, for which no rent is paid. The Bill proposes that meter rents shall be abolished. The cost of maintaining the meters will be a legitimate charge against the ordinary funds of the company in the future.

Hon. L. Craig: What about depreciation?

Hon. G. FRASER: That is allowed for as a legitimate charge against the ordinary funds of the company. No charge is made for pre-payment meters or slot meters as they are known, and if a consumer with such a meter makes application for an ordinary meter, the company must make the change without charge to the consumer. These features have been in operation in other States and in England for a good many years, and the Bill represents an attempt to bring our legislation up to date.

One portion of the Bill caused the directors of the Fremantle company some anxiety until some of us met them the other day and discussed the matter with them. I refer to the clause empowering the local authority to take over the plant. I do not think the directors understood the intention of the clause, but after we had explained that the company, if the concern were taken over, would be paid the present-day value of the land and the structural value of all buildings on the land, but no goodwill, they were satisfied. I think they were under the impression that when the municipality took over the works, if ever, the company would have to sacrifice something in the way of value of land and buildings.

Hon. L. Craig: What about equipment?

Hon. G. FRASER: The value of land, buildings and equipment is to be assessed at present-day values. The Bill provides also for the company to pay pensions and create a superannuation scheme and to make donations to certain organisations. These amounts are to be allowed as legitimate charges against the revenue of the company. For the benefit of country members, I must mention that the measure will apply only to companies supplying over 25,000,000 cubic feet of gas a year. Therefore they need not be afraid that the Bill will apply to small concerns such as those at Geraldton and Albany. Until their output reaches that quantity, they will not be affected by the Bill.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What is the output at Fremantle?

Hon. G. FRASER: I have not the figures before me at the moment, but they are well above that total. I think I have referred to all the important points contained in the Bill, which is really one for consideration in Committee rather than on the second

reading. I have explained to the best of my ability the intention of the Bill. If members desire clarification of any point, I shall be only too pleased to give it when replying to the debate or in Committee. I commend the Bill to the House, as it appeals to me as being a step in the right direction. I have pointed out that, if the profits exceed 6 per cent. after making provision for depreciation and various other commitments, and a balance still remains, the company will be empowered to make co-partners of its employees, but an employee, to become a director, must have been in the service for seven years and must have £50 in shares. If the company does not adopt the system of co-partners, it may pay a bonus to the workers each year. The first call on the profits after meeting commitments, depreciation, etc., is to be in the proportion of three-fourths to be paid to the consumers while the other one-fourth will be divided between the workers and the payment of an extra dividend to shareholders.

Hon. L. Craig: A profit of over 6 per cent. will be permitted?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, after all other commitments have been met.

Hon. L. Craig: There would not be much left.

Hon. G. FRASER: The company will be permitted to make agreements with firms using large quantities of gas for supplies at a reduced price, but if the company charges above the basic price, it will not be permitted to pay dividends in excess of 6 per cent. I hope that the measure will be passed without amendment and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. F. E. Gibson, debate adjourned.

BILL—CHILD WELFARE.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to two of the amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 2. Clause 106 (1): Delete the word "fourteen" in line 16 and substitute the word "twelve."

No. 3. Clause 107 (c): Delete the word "fourteen" in line 1 on page 36 and substitute the word "twelve."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reasons for disagreeing are—

Nos. 2 and 3.—The reform required by the Bill is very necessary and should be effected. Children attending school, when engaged in street trading, are compelled to seek permission to leave school early frequently by more than half an hour a day. This in a year results in the loss of at least 100 hours of tuition, and is particularly detrimental to the education of such boys entering the post primary grades, resulting in an unfair handicap in these times of great competition.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the amendments be not insisted on.

Previously most of my remarks were based on the disadvantage to children through being deprived of their sport. I have since discovered that school teachers generally do not approve of children of 12 leaving school early in the afternoon. Some of them leave half-an-hour or an hour before closing time.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: I think you are wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That information was supplied by the Education Department. Newsboys may be seen in St. George's-terrace before 3 o'clock.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Do they leave school without permission?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Those boys must leave school up to an hour before the closing time, and in these days of competition, that must be detrimental to their education. We have been told of great men who started life as newsboys but they became great in spite of being newsboys, not because of it. The money they earned might have been of benefit to their families, but surely we have not reached the stage when families should be dependent upon the earnings of a child of 12! Surely we are making progress!

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope members will insist on the amendment. I believe that the first issue of the "Daily News" is at 2.45 or 3 p.m., but very few boys under 14 may be seen selling newspapers at that time in the city block.

The Honorary Minister: There are some.

Hon. G. FRASER: They are so few that I cannot conceive of the Education Department making a report on them. Outside the

city block, the afternoon papers are not available till 3.30 or 4 p.m., which is after school hours. The papers are not to be had in West Perth before 3.30.

Hon. G. Bennetts: They seem to be as slow as the Goldfields express.

Hon. G. FRASER: Deliveries in other suburbs are later. At Fremantle the time is about 4 o'clock.

The Honorary Minister: The papers catch the Albany train at 3.15.

Hon. G. FRASER: That would be the country edition. If newsboys are leaving school early, they would be only those who are selling papers in the city.

The Honorary Minister: When do you say they are first sold on the Terrace?

Hon. G. FRASER: About 2.45 p.m. They are delivered by van and do not get to West Perth until 3.30. The school is dismissed at 3 p.m. or 3.30 p.m. In the suburbs the time of delivery is later and well after school time. I hope the Committee will insist on the amendment from the point of view I mentioned during the second reading debate. I know a lot of businesses being conducted in the metropolitan area which will be ruined otherwise. In most suburban areas street selling occupies only 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour, the boys attending to their delivery rounds after that. The time taken in delivery is about an hour or an hour and a half, most them starting at 4 o'clock or 4.15 and finishing by 5.45. I would prefer these young boys to be doing that rather than boys of 14 doing nothing else all day and coming on in the afternoon to sell newspapers. I would prefer to see them engaged in some other occupation.

The Honorary Minister: You have said that all boys selling in the city are 14 and over.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is so, because they can get a bigger wage there than in industry, their wages approximating from £3 to £4.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I hope the Committee will insist on the amendment from the industrial angle. At 14 it is time a boy looked for a permanent position. He has a much better chance of becoming a first class tradesman if he can be engaged at

that age than would be the case later on. It is wrong to suggest that 12 years is too young for boys to sell papers. There are very few lads who leave school early. I would not question the Minister's information but I can hardly appreciate that boys would leave school an hour before dismissal time. Industry and business houses find it difficult to secure junior labour today. I myself have openings for at least eight or 10 boys with prospects later on of apprenticeship. If it is difficult to get these lads now, it will be worse if the age limit for selling papers is extended.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: One thing that seems to be overlooked is that these licenses are issued by the department voluntarily. A boy cannot demand a license. He applies for one and the department does not issue it unless satisfied there are good grounds for doing so. Amongst other things the department obtains a report from the school. I agree that if all children between 12 and 14 were allowed to obtain licenses, many abuses might creep in. But since the matter is regulated by the department I cannot see what objection there can be. The teacher is supposed to report to the department when required. and if he says that selling papers would interfere with a child's education, the department would have no right to issue a license.

Hon. C. H. SIMPSON: This affects a small proportion of boys and it affects them to a very small degree. There must be thousands of lads attending schools in the metropolitan area, yet we have the assurance of the proprietors of "The Daily News" that only 38 boys are employed, of whom 23 are under 14. We also have their assurance that these boys must have the consent of the Child Welfare Department and they are not required to sell the first edition. They are not required to go on duty until 4 o'clock in order to sell the edition issued at 4.10 p.m. So the schooling they lose, if any, must be very small.

Regarding the effect on education, there is more to education than attendance at school. In addition to academic education there is that which boys must have to fit them for the battle of life and the experience these newsboys receive is probably of more value to them than what they

would obtain by remaining at school. If the age is extended there will naturally be a greater call on boys over 14 to take the places of younger lads, so that fewer older boys will be available for jobs for which they are urgently required. I hope the Committee will insist on the amendment.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendments insisted on.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to the amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; Hon. E. H. Gray in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3—Insert after the word "months" in line 13 the words "providing the supply authority has made current available to the building."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reasons for disagreeing are—

1. Provision is already made in lines 8 to 10 in Clause 3 to ensure that the electricity supply is available from the supply authority.

2. It is the practice of supply authorities not to make current available to buildings until after they have been properly equipped with electrical wire and apparatus.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

This has been referred to the local authorities and it is considered that the amendment moved by Sir Hal is redundant and confuses the meaning of the clause because provision is already made in the Bill to cover the position the amendment was supposed to meet.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not insisted on.

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to the amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; Hon. E. H. Gray in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3.—Insert after the word "months" in line 14 the words "providing the supply authority has made current available to the building."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reasons for disagreeing are—

1. Provision is already made in lines 8 to 10 in Clause 3 to ensure that the electricity supply is available from the supply authority.

2. It is the practice of supply authorities not to make current available to buildings until after they have been properly equipped with electrical wire and apparatus.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not insisted on.

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

BILL—STREET PHOTOGRAPHERS.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 1 and 2 made by the Council and had disagreed to No. 3 now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in the Chair; Hon. C. G. Latham in charge of the Bill.

No. 3.—Clause 4, page 3: Add a further proviso to Subclause (1) as follows:—

Provided further that any applicant whose application for a license has been refused by the local authority shall have the right of appeal to the Minister for Local Government against such decision.

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is—

The right of appeal in such a case is not desirable.

The local authority is required to grant a specified number of licenses and in the majority of cases such an appeal would be only against the rejection of testimonials and the judgment of the local authority in respect thereof.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not insisted on.

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

House adjourned at 8.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 26th November, 1947.

CONTENTS.

| | Page |
|---|------|
| Standing Orders suspension | 2176 |
| Bills : Co-operative and Provident Societies Act Amendment, 1r. | 2176 |
| Censorship of Films, 1r. | 2176 |
| Stallions Act Amendment, 3r., passed ... | 2176 |
| Gas (Standards), further report, 3r. ... | 2176 |
| Government Railways Act Amendment, recom. | 2176 |
| Iron and Steel Industry, report, 3r. ... | 2177 |
| City of Perth Scheme for Superannuation (Amendments Authorisation), 2r. ... | 2177 |
| Public Works Standing Committee, message, 2r. | 2178 |
| Coal Miners' Welfare, 2r. | 2180 |
| Native Administration Act Amendment, returned | 2181 |
| Companies Act Amendment (No. 2), 1r. ... | 2181 |
| Western Australian Government Tramways and Ferries, Com. | 2182 |
| Child Welfare, Council's message ... | 2194 |
| Municipal Corporations Act Amendment (No. 2), Council's message | 2194 |
| Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 2), Council's message | 2194 |
| Street Photographers, Council's message ... | 2194 |
| Electoral Districts, 2r. | 2194 |

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Co-operative and Provident Societies Act Amendment.

2, Censorship of Films.

Introduced by the Chief Secretary.

BILL—STALLIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and *passed*.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The DEPUTY PREMIER: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the third reading of the Gas (Standards) Bill and the Iron and Steel Industry Bill to be taken at this sitting.

I have discussed the matter with the Leader of the Opposition.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: As notice has not been given of the motion, an absolute majority is required to pass it. There being no dissentient voice, I declare the question passed.

Question thus passed.

BILL—GAS (STANDARDS).

Report, etc.

Further report of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Railways, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 9.

In Committee.

Mr. Perkins in the Chair; the Minister for Railways in charge of the Bill.

Clause 9—Repeal and new sections:

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: When dealing with the proposed new Section 7 (3) (b) (iii), the member for Bunbury moved to alter the reference to the Perth Chamber of Commerce and I agreed to recommit the Bill to permit of the correct name of the organisation being obtained. I move an amendment—

That the words "Perth Chamber of Commerce Incorporated" be struck out and the words "Federated Chambers of Commerce of Western Australia" inserted in lieu.