

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose limited coasting voyage is included because a boat will require a license to carry passengers for a short and approved run. If that is so, I have no objection to the clause.

Hon. J. Cunningham: That is so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That was not what the Minister said previously. If the Government are imposing this limitation with a view to safeguarding the general public, I approve of it.

Mr. THOMSON: The definition of vessel is a wide one. It includes any ship or boat or any other description of vessel used in navigation. What does that mean?

Hon. J. Cunningham: You have already told us.

Mr. THOMSON: The Act refers to every description of vessel not propelled by oars. Apparently the Honorary Minister wishes to include every dinghy or tin canoe on the river. Why has this been done?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The principal Act refers only to ships, but the Bill refers to vessels. It is necessary to widen the definition because of the number of new craft that are now afloat. We now have motor-driven vessels. For instance, we have the "Kybra." It is necessary to have a wider definition. Many small craft ply for hire on the river. Some of them carry 10 or 15 passengers, who have to pay their fares. It is deemed necessary in the interests of public safety that competent men should be in charge of these vessels.

Mr. Thomson: Should they have to pass the same sort of examination as would have to be passed by the "Kybra" engineers?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Men who handle the engines on small craft must be competent to do so. The definition with regard to coastal voyages is intended to relieve the position in respect of the class of craft that carries stores between ports.

Mr. THOMSON: It appears to be intended to force a man, who is in charge of a small vessel plying for hire, to undergo the same class of examination as is necessary in the case of an engineer on the "Kybra."

The Premier: It would not be the same examination.

The Minister for Lands: It is only a certificate to prove that he can handle the engine.

Mr. THOMSON: Sometimes an Evinrude engine is attached to a dinghy. Before the

dinghy can be used must the man in charge have a certificate?

The CHAIRMAN: That matter can be dealt with in a subsequent clause.

The Minister for Lands: Some of the vessels on the river are dangerous, and should be blocked.

Mr. THOMSON: The Bill has passed another place, and I do not intend to fight the question.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.51 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 25th November, 1926.

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

SITTINGS—ADDITIONAL HOURS AND DAY.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.35]: I move—

That on and after Tuesday next, and for the remainder of the session, the House do meet at 3 o'clock p.m., on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

It is the desire of the Government that the present session of Parliament should terminate not later than the 16th December. There is still rather a lengthy programme of legislation to be dealt with, but much of it is in no way contentious, and I have no

doubt at all that if we extend the hours and days of sitting as proposed in the motion we shall be able to conclude our business on the date mentioned, the 16th December. Moreover, this can be done, in my opinion, without leaving ourselves open to the implication that any measure has been hastily considered. With the exception of a Bill dealing with the Collie electric power scheme, I am not aware that any legislation other than that which is at present before both Houses of Parliament will be submitted by the Government. It is quite unnecessary for me to solicit the co-operation of hon. members in connection with the progress of business in this House, as such co-operation has always been forthcoming, and has been particularly marked during the present session. I do not intend at present to ask the House to take any new business after 10 p.m., and the first Friday's sitting will not take place till next week. It was at exactly this time last year that I moved a similar motion, and we then had a lengthier list of legislation to deal with—including some intricate measures—and the session ended on the 18th December.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.37]: Does the Chief Secretary think that much is to be gained by meeting at 3 o'clock, seeing that an extra sitting day is being put on? Looking through the Notice Paper I see very little business which appears to me controversial, and I am afraid that if we meet at 3 o'clock we shall on many of these days finish by 6 o'clock.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are an optimist.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I do not think that is desirable, seeing that we ought to be here when messages arrive from another place. It is better to be here a little later than perhaps to adjourn at 6 or 6.15 p.m. because we have finished our paper. I consider that if we continue to meet at 4.30 p.m. and sit the extra day per week, we shall do all that is necessary. In my opinion we shall facilitate business rather than hinder it by adopting that course.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [4.38]: There are 25 Bills requiring consideration, though many of them, as I mentioned before, are not of a contentious nature. I wish the House to be in a position to give ample consideration to all the measures, and in the circumstances I consider it necessary to meet at

3 p.m., and later on, perhaps during the last week, at 11 a.m. That course may enable us to close down earlier than the 16th December.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Minister is pessimistic now.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No. I am taking into consideration what we did last year.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We do not want a repetition of that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We met at 3 p.m., and I gave the House an assurance that the session would close on the 17th December. During the last week we met at 11 a.m. The session would have closed on the 17th December had it not been for the conference on the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill, which conference lasted 19 hours and went into the 18th December. I am certain that after giving every measure the consideration that it merits we shall be able to close down on the 16th December and defy public criticism.

Question put and passed.

BILL—RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. J. R. Brown, and read a first time.

BILL—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.45] in moving the second reading said: The Bill seeks to make two important amendments in the provisions of the Constitution Act with regard to the franchise for the Legislative Council. In the first place it introduces what is known as household franchise in lieu of the present £17

householder qualification, and in the second place it abolishes plural voting. The last occasion on which the franchise was liberalised was in 1911, when the Wilson Government were in power. That Government introduced a Bill that, among other things, aimed at reducing from £25 to £15 the qualification necessary for a householder to secure the franchise. However, this House refused to go so far, and made a compromise by fixing the figure at £17. If this Bill be passed it will mean that any person who is a householder, or who is the occupier of a dwelling-house of a permanent character which is ordinarily capable of being used as a habitation, whether it be a mansion or a humble cottage, will be qualified as an elector of the Legislative Council. In matters of constitutional reform Western Australia is behind the times. There has not been any broadening of the franchise of this Chamber for 15 years, and there have been many changes during that period. The war has brought home to most people that the exercise of effective citizenship should not be confined to a comparatively small section of the manhood and womanhood of the country. Great Britain took the lead not many years ago, when the franchise for the House of Commons was extended to millions of people who had not enjoyed it before. Here in Western Australia a grave anomaly exists. While there are 206,545 electors for the Legislative Assembly, there are only 70,057 electors for the Legislative Council. Nor does it mean that those 70,057 who are on the Council roll represent the same number of different persons. As everybody who has studied the question knows, it is possible for one person, by reason of his property, to have a vote for every province, and therefore ten votes for the Legislative Council. That is a state of affairs that cannot be justified by any process of logical argument.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What about the pocket boroughs, Menzies and the rest?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We can deal with those later on. The hon. member will have ample opportunity to speak, and I to reply to him. Even if Parliament concerned itself merely with matters relating to property, the system could not be defended, though to a certain extent it might be excused. But the jurisdiction of Parliament extends far beyond that. In Western Australia its authority is limited only by the

few powers retained by the Imperial Parliament and certain great powers of a national character that have been transferred to the Commonwealth. Outside those powers, which I admit are the more important, it still exercises a wide jurisdiction. Not only can it make laws relating to property, but it can make laws affecting the lives and liberties of the people. In view of that position it should be recognised that any system under which the franchise is framed that permits one person to exercise greater political power than another in shaping the Legislature simply because of his larger acquisition of wealth, is unsound and unjust and therefore cannot be justified. This applies, more or less, to the franchise as a whole, but more particularly to plural voting. Besides that, the present system has striking anomalies. The £17 household qualification is not a scientific method of assessing a man or a woman's qualification for the franchise. In the city any sort of dwelling would bring more than £17 a year. But in many of our country towns, where rents are low even though the houses are decent, there are scores of persons who are disqualified from getting on the roll, though the very same persons would be qualified if they lived in a much inferior dwelling in the metropolitan area. Locality of residence is, therefore, the determining factor under the present system, as to whether or not a person shall have a vote for the Legislative Council. This is what occurs from time to time: A man, perhaps married, occupies a dwelling in a small country town where rents are as low as £15 a year. He has no vote, and it is impossible for him to get a vote. Circumstances bring about his transfer to the city. He rents a residence not nearly as good as the one he left, but the rent is in excess of £17 a year, and he immediately becomes eligible for the franchise. He is no better a citizen since he left the country, his intellect has undergone no change, his responsibilities have not increased; yet because he has come to the city and been obliged to pay more rent, he instantly blossoms into a qualified voter for the Legislative Council. The introduction of household suffrage would simplify matters considerably, for low rentals in the country and high rentals in the city would not affect the situation in any way. So long as the applicant for the franchise lived in an ordinary habitation, he or she would be able to get on the roll. There is no doubt the people

of Australia are drifting towards unification, and the power and influence of the Federal Parliament is increasing as the years roll by. The remarks I propose to make are not directed against any party in particular. In the early days of the administration of the Federal Government its sphere was very restricted. But it is gradually getting a strangle-hold on the State. As I have said, I am not indicating any Federal Government or any party in particular; my remarks apply generally. Enormous sums are raised by taxation and through the Customs—which, we are told, is not taxation—there are huge surpluses; and instead of distributing these surpluses among the State or substantially reducing the taxation, a system of bonuses to industries and grants towards public utilities has been instituted that should be no function of the Federal authorities. The Federal Parliament has been enabled to do all these things because of the democratic leaning of the Australian people. A large proportion of them find that they have no adequate representation in the Legislative Councils of the different States, and they naturally turn to some other source for relief. If two Houses can be elected without any property qualification at all to constitute the Federal Parliament; if the people may be safely trusted to exercise the full rights of voting for that Parliament, which deals with the larger questions of our national life, does it not seem strange that they should not be trusted to elect a Parliament to deal with the smaller questions that have to be decided by a State Legislature? I have said that property alone is represented in this House. By that expression I do not mean all forms of property. It would be more correct to say that only land is represented here, and it may be vacant and unutilised town blocks, which the owner is holding until the industry of others enables him to sell at a big profit. That is a state of affairs that could arise. It would be wrong to say that all classes of property are recognised under the provisions that extend to citizens the franchise for this Chamber. For instance, a resident of the State may have made hundreds of thousands of pounds by personal effort, and invested the bulk of it in inscribed stock to assist the State in developing its resources. That man would be a benefactor to his State. But if instead of renting a house he put up at one of our best hotels, he would be denied the franchise—notwithstanding all his financial help to the Government of the country—

unless he decided to invest, and did invest, £50 of his money in the purchase of a block of land. In those circumstances he would have a vote for the Legislative Council. Then again, educational attainments count for nothing in the direction of securing the franchise for this House. A university professor, a graduate of a University, a teacher possessing a certificate of fitness to train the intellect of the young, a barrister of the highest attainments, or a military officer who has rendered signal service to his country—all these are barred unless they can boast the £50 block of land, or have a landlord and occupy his house the annual value of which is not less than £17. The Bill does not aim at removing all these anomalies. It goes only a short distance in the way of reform. One of the usual arguments against broadening the franchise for the Legislative Council is that there has not been a demand for it. I need only say that the party to which I belong was for a long period so incessant in their demands for it, without any appreciable result, that they made abolition of the Legislative Council a plank in their platform. I do not know in what way an effective demand could be made. It could hardly be expected that the people should assemble in their thousands before Parliament House shrieking for the extension of the franchise. But I would point to the fact that the present Government were returned to power by a majority of 27 to 23, and in the second Chamber it has only five direct supporters. In the days of the Scaddan Ministry things were even worse. There were 34 in another place, and only six here. That position cannot be defended on any ground of fair play. The question is not whether there has been a demand for it or not. No rational member would consider for a moment that aspect of the question in deciding what is right and just. It is not a question as to who has asked for it, or what may happen in the future, or how long we may resist it, but shall right or justice be done. The Council has the power to reject this measure, and refuse to liberalise the franchise as proposed in the Bill. But the very fact that it has this power, should make it slow to exercise it—should compel it to take the larger and broader view—that the privilege we possess should not be kept for ourselves; that we should consider the position of others who, while they have to obey the laws which we are here to make, have no voice at all in the framing of the legislation under which all have to live. I trust

we may be able to rise superior to all petty prejudices in considering this question, and that the result of our deliberations may be such that, in the future, a greater percentage of the people of this State, than can now be shown, may be able to take, with self-respect, an active interest in everything that appertains to the Legislative Council. I will conclude by reading from "Hansard" of 17th July, 1893, the words of the late Lord Forrest—then Sir John Forrest—when introducing a Bill for the abolition of the property qualification for voters of both Houses; and the liberalisation, extension and simplifying of the franchise for both Houses. That great and patriotic statesman said:—

As for those who think that, by extending the franchise, more persons would be allowed to vote—persons who are said to be without a stake in the country—I believe, myself, that there is wisdom in the majority. I have had opportunities in this colony of witnessing things taking place which I thought at the time were perfectly dreadful, and I feared the end of the colony was coming speedily, and that something disastrous must happen; but, after further experience, I have come to think that after all those things were quite wise, that the minority was wrong, and that I was wrong. You may depend upon it that when any large number of people have views in accord, there must be some considerable wisdom in them. In fact, an idea has gone abroad that there is wisdom in numbers, and this idea is expressed in the saying, "Vox populi; vox Dei." That saying has become a proverb, and I am not so sure but that there is a great deal of truth in it. We must not think that all the wisdom and all the honour and uprightness are centered in a few. We must give the mass of the people, to the people as a whole, credit for as much honour and unselfishness as we claim for ourselves.

On motion by Hon. A. J. H. Saw, debate adjourned.

BILL—WIRE AND WIRE NETTING.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [5.7] in moving the second reading said: Having in mind the many references recently made in this Chamber to trading concerns and socialistic legislation, I was somewhat sceptical about handling this Bill, but recognising the laudable object it has in view I do not think, after all, that I am presuming too much in anticipating an easy passage for it. The Bill deals with wire netting already supplied to

farmers and with the supply of netting for future requirements. We are aware of the destruction of crops that has resulted from rabbits and other vermin, and many organisations throughout the State have urged the Government to submit legislation of the kind I am now introducing. Realising the need for such legislation, the Federal members representing this State, also took up the question with the Federal Government, with the result that the latter have set aside three millions sterling to be distributed amongst all the States. The scheme that has been put into operation will enable settlers to obtain netting on reasonable terms. Of the three millions the sum of £606,945 has been allocated to Western Australia. The Commonwealth and State Governments have for some time past discussed the proposition and finality has been reached in some instances: The agreement provides that the settlers shall be supplied with netting and that the repayments are to spread over a period of 25 years. The maximum rate to be charged for interest will be four per cent., and there is to be a sinking fund amounting to two per cent., and a trust fund of one per cent.; the last named being required for the supply of additional wire netting in the event of its being needed. In the agreement, however, no provision was made for administration costs, but after representations the State Government received the consent of the Commonwealth Government to make a charge of £1 per mile for such costs. Unfortunately the agreement has not reached finality with all the States. South Australia and Tasmania have not yet decided to come into the scheme, but it is hoped they will do so in the near future. It will mean a lot to Western Australia if they should not decide to come in; the effect may be to tie up the proposition or the Federal Government may decide not to continue to make wire netting available. In respect of Western Australia, however, time is the essence of the contract, and having that in mind, we decided not to wait but to complete our agreement so as to be able to supply farmers with the netting which they urgently required. We have purchased 2,000 miles of netting at £45 13s. 9d. per mile, which represents a total of £91,375. Immediately after that contract was made, the Commonwealth Government advised us that the sum of £50,000 was available in their Treasury, that it had not been applied for under the 1923 Act by the other States.

Under that Act provision was made for the supply of wire netting, payment to be made over a period of 20 years free of interest, but the settler had to pay sinking fund. It was obviously advisable to obtain as much as possible of this free of interest netting, represented by the £50,000, and accordingly applications were forwarded to Melbourne by every mail. Of that £50,000 it is satisfactory to know that Western Australia secured £29,917. We proceeded to supply settlers with netting out of the 2,000 miles ordered. Repayments to the amount of £8,651 having come in from settlers who had already been supplied enabled us to allocate that amount towards the 2,000 miles ordered. We were able immediately to supply wire netting free of interest for 20 years out of the extra money received from the Commonwealth together with the repayments from settlers. Under the 1923 Act the total value of wire netting supplied free of interest to settlers is £90,576. The position of those settlers who were lucky in obtaining the free of interest netting is better than those who did not. On the 30th June last the money for supplying wire netting free of interest ran out, and settlers who will obtain netting in the future will be required to pay interest. As the money costs Western Australia considerably more than the Commonwealth are charging settlers for wire netting, it is quite impossible for the State to supply it at the value placed on it by the Commonwealth. Therefore farmers desirous of obtaining wire netting from the State will pay £8 ls. 2d. per cent. for 25 years. That amount includes interest, sinking fund, and administration costs. The terms of the mortgage provide that when the Commonwealth agreement is finalised, the farmer will then be charged Commonwealth rates. At the end of 25 years the whole cost will be wiped out. The Government up to date have actually supplied 2,007 miles of netting, and there are 200 applications now on hand that have been approved. These will be finalised as soon as the papers come back. In this way the difficulties existing 12 months ago have been overcome. A condition has been made that first claim on the netting shall be given to the district suffering most from the rabbit pest. In addition to wire netting, barbed wire and other wire are provided for in the Commonwealth agreement, as mentioned in the Bill. Although that agreement is not yet

finalised I wish to emphasise the fact that both the Commonwealth and State Governments are in accord on the matter, and we are now only awaiting the other States to agree. The definitions in the Bill will give the purposes for which wire netting may be used. It is hoped that the other States will come in; otherwise it may happen that the Commonwealth might refuse to continue to supply the netting. The title of the Bill indicates the purposes for which the wire netting is to be used, and it is hoped that the other States will come into line in the near future. In order that the scheme may proceed with the least possible delay, legislation should be passed empowering the Government to complete the negotiations with the Commonwealth Government as soon as that Government is in a position to complete the business. It is necessary, therefore, for the Bill to be passed this session, so that the Government will be in a position to negotiate with the Commonwealth authorities the moment the other States fall into line.

Hon. J. Ewing: But have you not received money already?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, money has been advanced. But if the legislation is not passed this session, we may have to wait another 12 months, which would be a retrograde step. An endeavour has been made to encourage farmers, where four or five of them live comparatively close together, to establish boundary or ring fences, thus obviating the necessity for greater expenditure. It will be seen by hon. members that I have an amendment on the Notice Paper to add the words "or of freehold land" in the interpretation of "settler" in Clause 2. In a 1,000-acre leasehold property of a settler there may be included a freehold homestead block of 160 acres. If the Bill be passed in its present form, it could not be applied to the freehold property of that settler. Hence the necessity for the amendment. A brief summary of the clauses of the Bill may be helpful. Clause 2 deals with interpretations. It will be noted that fencing wire is included. This is because the proposed agreement with the Commonwealth included fencing wire as well as wire netting. Although we are confining our attention to wire netting for the wheat belt for the moment, on account of the great urgency for protection against the rabbit pest, we will be in a position in the future to supply

fencing wire to agriculturists and pastoralists. It will be seen that the term "settler" includes pastoralists for this purpose. Regarding the authorisation of expenditure, which is dealt with under Clause 3, £605,945 is the amount, the Commonwealth Government advise us, of our proportion of the £3,000,000 that the Commonwealth propose to make available by legislation to the various States. Clause 5 deals with the repayment of the cost of the wire and wire netting. It will be seen that the cost of the wire netting will be the price paid, plus handling charges at the port of entry, and interest and sinking fund contributions. The amount will be payable over a period of 25 years by equal half-yearly instalments. Subclause (2) is self-explanatory. It is, of course, necessary to take adequate security. Then as to Subclause (3), it is essential that as the wire or wire netting is for the protection of the products of the land, it should rank side by side with Agricultural Bank advances, and have priority over advances by the Industries Assistance Board. The advances are made available under more liberal conditions than either the bank or the board can give, and will be still more liberal after the Commonwealth agreement is finalised. The security, therefore, must be a negotiable one, which it would not be if it took effect subsequent to the securities of the bank and the board. Apart from this, there are many instances in which wire netting is urgently required, and it is being supplied to clients who are already up to their limit with the bank and the board. In all other cases we will require a first mortgage. We have already signed an agreement with the Commonwealth whereby a total of £606,945 will be made available to the State in equal amounts spread over a period of six years. That agreement provides for loans to the State at not more than 4 per cent. per annum as interest, plus 2 per cent. per annum for a sinking fund, over a period of 25 years. A settler will be required to pay 1 per cent. in addition, which will be utilised by the State for the purchase of further supplies. Unfortunately, owing to the fact that all the States did not sign the agreement, the Commonwealth Government did not introduce the necessary legislation during last session, and therefore the State Government purchased 2,000 miles of wire netting and are supplying it under the conditions specified in

Clause 5. In these circumstances it will be seen that the object of the Government in negotiating with the Federal authorities is to assist the primary producers, who have been confronted with serious difficulties owing to the lack of wire netting supplies. It is hoped that much good will follow as a result of the passing of this legislation, and that the crops and other produce will be protected from the ravages of rabbits and other pests. No one will be penalised to any great extent, and many of the disabilities under which primary producers are labouring to-day, will be removed. I do not think I am presumptuous in anticipating no great opposition to the Bill, because it provides necessary assistance that is so essential for the future prosperity of the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move an amendment—

That in line seven, after "1893," the words "or of freehold land" be inserted.

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

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Payment of cost:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The clause provides that priority has to be given to the Government, by way of mortgage, over all other claims by banks or others who have lent money to persons who will be affected by the Bill. When the Industries Assistance Board was established, the Government insisted upon a similar priority, with the result that later on, although the properties were free from debt to the I.A.B., the persons concerned still sheltered themselves behind the prior claim of the Government, to the disadvantage of others who had lent money to them in the days of their adversity. It may be that that position has been cleared up now, but I wish to find out whether such a position is likely to obtain in view of the

clause under discussion. It seems to me that under Clause 5 we shall be giving the Government priority, and that for 25 years after a transaction for wire netting, other mortgagees may be put in a very awkward position. There is another matter that requires consideration. A man might obtain netting to fence his boundary, which might adjoin the holding of another farmer who does not need to avail himself of netting. Do the Government intend in such an instance to take a lien over both properties?

THE HONORARY MINISTER: The Agricultural Bank trustees investigate the affairs of each client and, if a settler is under an obligation to a local storekeeper, he is not permitted to shelter himself behind the bank. When he is in a position to discharge his obligations he must do so before he can obtain a discharge from the bank.

Hon. V. Hamersley: But some of them would not take their discharges from the bank, although they were in a satisfactory financial position.

THE HONORARY MINISTER: The Agricultural Bank authorities are endeavouring to protect the interests of business people who stood by settlers in the time of need. As to the question of one settler netting his boundary and his neighbour not requiring the protection of netting, I do not think such an instance is likely to arise, but if it did it could be overcome in a common-sense way. Further than that I cannot reply to Mr. Hamersley at present, but if I am told that a farmer will not require netting under these conditions, I have nothing more to say.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Subclause 2 provides for security not only by the settler as a first charge on his holding, but "on other land improved by the use of such wire and wire netting." Apparently it is mandatory for the Minister to take security over an adjoining block in the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Hamersley. If the adjoining farmer will not agree to give security, what will be the position of the Minister? Might it mean that one settler requiring netting could not obtain a supply because his neighbour had no use for netting at the time?

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6, 7, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: Owing to a lack of co-ordination amongst the agricultural societies in Western Australia, the Royal Agricultural Society and also the affiliated societies have been asking for an Act of control under which they would be able to carry on their administration and activities. There is a general desire that some officially recognised body should be capable of dealing with the machinery associated with the holding of the periodical agricultural shows, including the regulation of dates, which in some districts conflict and militate against the success of such shows. By the common consent of the country agricultural societies, the Royal Agricultural Society has functioned unofficially for some years. This may be regarded as a recognition that it is the body which should be vested with the necessary authority as the governing head of the societies generally in this State. The existing connection between the Royal Agricultural Society and the country associations has served a very useful purpose, but on occasions it has been found that neither the Royal Agricultural Society nor the country societies had the necessary power to deal with different difficulties as they have arisen. The agricultural societies play a very important part in the development of the State because, in addition to the educational and social side, they advertise the respective localities and create a spirit of rivalry between the competitors in the district that cannot but prove advantageous to the district and to the State. There are 60 societies affiliated with the Royal Agricultural Society and, for the purpose of effective administration, the societies are grouped into zones. The Royal Agricultural Society assists the country organisations, not only by arranging dates but also by providing judges to act in collaboration with the local societies. I am given to understand that the affiliation fee is one guinea. Some societies are not affiliated, but they work under the Royal Agricultural Society and are able to participate in the exchange of stock, etc., which go with affiliation. They are exempted for a period until it is proved whether they can conduct a show successfully on the recognised lines. The

societies desire the powers provided in the Bill, because they have no control over the exhibitors and very little real control over their own show grounds. For instance, it has happened that an exhibitor has assaulted a judge on a show ground, and neither the local body nor the Royal Agricultural Society was in a position to prevent that man from exhibiting elsewhere.

Hon. J. Cornell: He could have been summoned in the police court and fined.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Quite so, but he could still exhibit at various agricultural shows affiliated with the Royal Agricultural Society. It also happens that the show authorities make arrangements for exhibitors to exhibit. Train arrangements have been made and pens provided, and the exhibitors have failed to carry out their promises and engagements. Consequently the societies and the railways have been put to unnecessary expense in some instances. The societies have no power whatever, I am given to understand, to deal with persons of that character. When Sir James Mitchell was Minister for Agriculture, at the time when the Government were subsidising the agricultural societies, he called a meeting of societies and insisted upon affiliation. A draft of his Bill is still in existence. He did prepare some legislation in connection with the matter, but for some reason the measure was never presented to Parliament for consideration. I will deal briefly with the different clauses in the Bill. Clause 2 defines an agricultural show. That definition affects only agricultural and pastoral products. Flower shows are often held in various parts of the State, both in the city and in the different towns, but these shows would not come under the purview of the Bill. Under Clause 3 no society, club or organisation may hold or promote an agricultural show unless the organisation has been registered with the Royal Agricultural Society. The reason for this has already been stated by me. Put in a nutshell, the object is to secure co-ordination in the conduct of these shows, in order that the greatest possible good may be achieved in the direction desired. Subclause 2 of Clause 3 indicates how registration with the Royal Agricultural Society may be secured. Registration cannot be refused to those bodies already established for the purpose of holding agricultural shows. As a safeguard against arbitrary refusal, which is not likely, but which should be provided for, an appeal

may be made to the Minister for Agriculture, whose decision must be accepted. Clause 4 provides that the Royal Agricultural Society shall keep a register of all societies registered under this Act, and this register will be open for public inspection. Under Clause 5, if any organisation decides to hold a show contrary to the provisions of the Act, the Royal Agricultural Society may take action in order to secure an injunction to restrain it from carrying out its purpose. Clause 6 gives power for the making of uniform by-laws for the government of agricultural societies. The exercise of this power is not restricted to the council of the Royal Agricultural Society. It can only be exercised by the council of the Royal Agricultural Society and the delegates of the registered agricultural societies present, and meeting together at a conference convened from time to time by the Royal Agricultural Society. Hence the Bill, insofar as the basis of administration is concerned, does not permit the institution at headquarters to dominate the position, but stipulates that all shall have an equal voice in the determination of the by-laws which are to apply to registered societies. It is expressly provided in this clause that at the conference already mentioned each member of the council and each delegate present shall have one vote, and in the case of an equality of votes the chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It will be possible to have 63 delegates present.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will be possible to have 60 delegates present, and each of these will have an equal voice with each of the members of the council of the Royal Agricultural Society.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Is that desirable, when the numbers will be two to one greater than the council?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think it is democratic. At the same time, power is given to every registered agricultural society to make by-laws for the regulation of matters of local concern. If there is an agricultural society in the York district, the society will be perfectly free to make by-laws governing matters of local concern, but not inconsistent with the uniform by-laws made at the conference, when not only the council of the Royal Agricultural Society would be represented but the whole of the agricultural

bodies in Western Australia. All by-laws are subject to the approval of the Governor, who also has power to make regulations enabling the cancellation of the registration of agricultural societies for a breach of the by-laws or for other sufficient cause; also to prescribe for the carrying out of the provisions of the Act. The Act will come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

BILL—LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. Drew—Central) [5.52] in moving the second reading said: Very few words are necessary from me to explain the reason for the Bill. Its object is to give the attendants and employees at the Hospital for the Insane an independent board of appeal, that is in connection with disciplinary offences, on the same lines as was recently approved by this House for the teachers when the amendment to the Education Act was under consideration. The only difference here is that the machinery has already been provided in the Act, and all that is essential now is to amend the Act so as to alter the existing constitution of the board of appeal. At the present time the board consists of the board of visitors, whose chief function is to make inspections of the hospital from time to time, and report to the Minister; and the attendants and employees have no representation on the board of visitors. If this Bill be passed the board of appeal in future will, instead of being a board of visitors, comprise one member appointed by the Governor, who shall be the Chairman, one member appointed by the Inspector General for the Insane, and one member shall be elected by ballot from time to time and in the manner prescribed by regulation under the Act, by the attendants and employees. There has been a board, similarly constituted, in existence for many years in connection with the administration of the Fremantle Prison. This has given no reason whatever for its abolition, but every reason for its continuance. There has been great harmony amongst all concerned, both amongst the warders and the gaolers, since

a board of appeal was established there, but I do not think it has been availed of to any great extent during recent years. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.55]: The Bill goes further than has been explained by the Leader of the House, and in my opinion goes too far. It introduces a very dangerous innovation. The law, as it now stands, provides amongst other things that if it shall be proved to the satisfaction of the Inspector General that any attendant or employee in any hospital for the insane, or reception house, or hospital for the criminal insane, has been or is guilty of certain misdemeanours, such as disobedience, negligence, inefficiency, incompetency, disgraceful or improper conduct, it shall be lawful for him to dismiss the attendant or employee, or reduce him to a lower class or grade, or fine him a sum. That is all right. The Act goes on to say that—

If the superintendent of any such institution as aforesaid shall have reason to believe that any such offence or matter as hereinbefore described can be imputed to any attendant or employee, he may formally charge the attendant or employee in respect thereof by written notice given to the Inspector General, and shall forthwith serve a copy of the notice on the attendant or employee, and may suspend him pending the hearing of the charge, etc.

The Bill proposes to set up another authority, and to insert after the word "aforesaid" the words, "or other officer having authority over the attendant or employee concerned." I am not going to agree to that.

The Chief Secretary. What are your reasons for opposition?

HON. J. CORNELL: I have my own reasons. The Hospital for the Insane is an institution to which we should all be prepared to devote the utmost attention. In my opinion it should be controlled by the Inspector General for the Insane. If the officer of the institution who is immediately under the Inspector General cannot convince the head in the ordinary way, as has always been the case, that certain action should be taken, that is *prima facie* evidence that such action should not be taken. My rendering of the proposed amendment to the Act is that the officer immediately under the Inspector General, or any other officer, can take action whether the Inspector General

likes it or not. There can be only one head of an institution. If the head approves of certain action it should be taken. If on the other hand he does not approve, such action should not be taken. If the head of the institution is wrong, the responsibility is his. Personally, as the matter appears at present, I will not be a party to passing that portion of the amendment. I hope the House will ask for ampler explanation on what appears to be the most important point of the Bill. The proposal is to alter a set of circumstances that has existed practically since the inception of the law relating to lunacy in this State. I am entirely in accord with the establishment of an appeal board, but I have a few remarks to make on that subject. We have arrived at a stage in our development when we ought to give the matter of appeal boards fuller and more careful consideration than we have yet done. To-day appeal boards only begin to function after an employee has been put on the road. Often a chasm is created between the discharged officer and the head of the department, a chasm that an appeal board cannot bridge. The effect of an appeal is not to restore the situation as between the officer and the head, even if the officer is reinstated in his position. As regards not only Government institutions, but also private institutions, we might as well make a departure from our present method and take a leaf out of the Canadian and American books. That is to say, such boards should function before rather than after dismissal, and in any case before dismissal. In America the tribunal in question is not called an appeal board, but a grievance committee. The trouble or bother is inquired into before the parting of the ways has been reached. The question is referred to the grievance committee before a dismissal takes place. The grievance committee decide either for the employer or for the employee, decide who is right and who is wrong; and the decision is final. In very many cases the man overhead or the employer is found to be wrong. In any event, the employee has his case examined before he is dismissed. Our practice here is to inquire after a State employee has been dismissed or at least suspended. In those circumstances there is created a feeling which does not arise when the matter in dispute is considered calmly and dispassionately before a dismissal takes place. I throw out that suggestion to the Minister because it represents an innovation which might well be

adopted here. I am sure that it would be welcomed by all concerned, and that it would work out to the benefit of everybody—including private employers as well as Government departments.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Do not these boards and committees always reinstate?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Not always. Does not a canker exist; is not ill-feeling engendered, when dismissal takes place before inquiry? Of course. But if there is machinery whereby the matter can be sifted before extreme action is taken, the feeling between employer and employee, head and official, will be much better. A Canadian gentleman explained to me fully the methods of grievance committees. That gentleman has under his control the employees of the National Railway Workshops, numbering some 5,600 men. A grievance committee functions all the time in those shops, and the committee consists mainly of workmen. He said to me, "I submit all my grievances to that committee, as regards inactivity or incapacity on the part of men, and as to what they are doing or not doing in connection with the work. I abide by the committee's decision; and the men, having submitted their case, also abide by it. We allow no outsider to come in, and consequently trouble is averted and disputes are settled amicably." I said, "We inquire after the discharge." He replied, "Then you begin at the wrong end." I hope the suggestion I have made will bear fruit. We have known employees in this State and in other States to declare that a lesson ought to be taken from the Yankees as to how the workmen comport themselves in regard to their employment. My observation has led me to the conclusion that the greatest factor in the continuity of understanding obtaining in Canadian and American industries is the system of inquiries by grievance committees, as a result of which difficulties are almost invariably adjusted before extreme action is resorted to. I throw out that suggestion to the Government. Except as regards the aspect which I have illustrated, I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill; and I shall be ready to withdraw even my limited objection if the Minister can justify the Government's proposal in that regard.

HON. J. E. DODD (South) [6.7]: There is just one feature of this Bill to which I desire to refer. I am speaking solely on the basis of the Chief Secretary's explanation. Time and again I have mentioned in

this House that there seems to be a kind of aristocracy of labour set up as regards a great many of these appeals. I believe in appeals; I hold they are necessary; but what has always concerned me is that the man down at the bottom is discharged at a moment's notice, without any reason being given for his discharge and without any right of appeal. The dismissal may sometimes be a matter almost of life and death. Still, there is never any appeal for that man. In connection with all Government institutions a system of appeals has been set up. That system should be extended, or some uniform system should be inaugurated which would be open to all Government employees. I have known cases of men being discharged unjustly from Government and from private employment, no reason whatever being assigned for their discharge. I have seen miners with large families dismissed at a moment's notice. Everyone knows that other things besides ability and integrity sometimes creep in to bring about a discharge. I shall support the Bill, as I have supported all measures of this kind; but I do consider that something should be done to place all Government employees on the same footing in the matter of appeals.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [6.9]: Dealing with the objection raised by Mr. Cornell, I may explain that when the 1922 Act passed through Parliament there was an Inspector General and also a Superintendent of Insane. The positions were separated as the result of a recommendation made by the Royal Commission on Lunacy. During the last 12 months the original state of affairs has been restored, and the Inspector General has also been Superintendent, because the Royal Commission's recommendation was found to be impracticable. The work of an Inspector General is to inspect institutions. That is all right in Victoria, where there are 17 different mental hospitals, but it is all wrong in Western Australia, where there is only one large mental hospital. Besides the institution at Claremont, we have the Whitby Falls establishment and the Soldiers' Mental Hospital. The Royal Commission's recommendation was that the Inspector General should be away from the hospitals. That means that the only duty the Inspector General has to perform is periodically to inspect the institutions at Claremont and Whitby.

I do not think the continuance of that state of affairs can be justified.

Hon. J. Cornell: I regard the delegation of powers as too wide and too vague.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: I therefore did as I have done on a previous occasion; I conferred the duties of Inspector General and Superintendent on the one man, firstly Dr. Anderson, and more recently Dr. Bentley.

Hon. J. Cornell: Good men both.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Dr. Bentley is now both Inspector General and Superintendent. This means that he not only inspects—and there is very little inspection work to do—but also superintends. By reason of that reform, if reform it can be called, the amendment to which Mr. Cornell objects is necessary.

Hon. J. Cornell: I say the delegation of powers is too wide.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Without the amendment the section in question would be nonsense. As proposed to be amended, the section reads—

If the superintendent of any such institution as aforesaid, or other officer having authority over the attendant or employee concerned, shall have reason to believe that any such offence or matter as is hereinbefore described can be imputed to any attendant or employee, he may formally charge the attendant or employee in respect thereof by written notice given to the Inspector General.

At present the Superintendent could not issue a written notice to the Inspector General except by sitting down and writing a notice to himself. Consequently it is necessary to amend the section in question. There is no other reason for the amendment. The only object is to make the section harmonise with existing conditions.

Hon. J. Cornell: Will the Inspector General still have the final say after a recommendation has been made?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: The Superintendent reports to the Inspector General, and the latter has the final say.

Hon. J. Cornell: Then I withdraw my objection.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Everything depends on the Inspector General. The matter is reported to him, and he sits and judges it, and there is a right of appeal. As regards Mr. Cornell's suggestion of a grievance committee, I believe something of the kind exists in connection with the Wyndham Meat Works and has prevented a great deal of trouble.

Hon. J. Cornell: Of course. It functions at the right end.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member's suggestion, and also Mr. Dodd's, are worthy of consideration. Personally I have done all I possibly can to ensure that State employees under my control are provided with boards of appeal. In the absence of a board of appeal, if a man permanently employed is dismissed I see that inquiry is made. Sometimes I refer the matter to a board, and sometimes I decide it myself.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

In Committee.

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

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. A. Burvill, Bill re-committed to further consider Clause 2. Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2, Amendment of Section 187a:

Hon. A. BURVILL: Subclause 4 contains an innovation. I move an amendment—

That in line seven, the words "elected by ballot" be struck out, and "selected" inserted in lieu.

I have no objection to the employees being represented on the appeal board, but I do not approve of their representative being elected by ballot. This system is not provided for in any other Act of Parliament that I have consulted. When we were dealing with the Albany Harbour Board Bill, the Chief Secretary said that no outside body should have the right to elect their representative on that board. The procedure to be followed, he said, would be that the Government would consult the body to be represented, and so the representative of that body would be appointed. If that system is good enough for the Albany Harbour Board, and for the metropolitan market trust, it should be good enough here. If the primary producers and the shipping people are not to be allowed to elect their own representatives, I do not think the system should be permitted here. If those other

people were allowed to elect their own representatives, I should not object to the employees under this Bill doing the same.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot follow the hon. member's objection. Apparently it is based on opposition to the system adopted in respect of the Albany Harbour Board. But this is a very different body. It is to be an independent board of appeal on which the employees are to have representation. It seems to me therefore that to provide that the representative of the employees shall be elected by ballot is the proper course.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not believe in the system laid down in the clause, especially this election by ballot. A man so elected might prove to be a menace to the appeal board. It would be far better to have the Governor in Council make a selection from amongst the employees.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. Nothing could be fairer than that the attendants should elect their representative by ballot. It is the only equitable way in which it can be done. No other system could be fairer.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: So long as the ballot is properly conducted.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Certainly. It is no argument for Mr. Burvill to say the Government would not allow the primary producers or the shipping people to elect their representatives to the Albany Harbour Board.

Hon. A. Burvill: Or to the trust to control the market.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Who is to say that it will not be allowed under the marketing Bill? In respect of the Albany Harbour Board, even the primary producers would not insist on an amendment giving them the right to nominate their representative, because they said the Government would not agree to it. How did they know the Government would not agree? And even if the Government did not agree, it is for the House to decide. Next we have the marketing Bill, providing for a trust on which the primary producers will be represented; and here is one of the primary producers objecting to the election of representatives. I never heard of such a thing.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: I hope the amendment will not be carried. If the

employees are to have a representative on the appeal board, surely it is fair that they should have some voice in the election of that representative; otherwise it might be said that that representative was a partisan. On the other hand, if the employees elect their own representative, no fault can be found with the constitution of the board. We should be careful as to our attitude in this instance, because there will be other instances before the session is closed. We should see to it that all are on the one basis. We should avoid putting ourselves into an awkward position by providing for an election for one board, and for some other system in respect of another board. There must be uniformity. All the employees must have the right to select by ballot the man that they wish to represent the case for them.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The other evening Mr. Burvill was singing the praises of the Timber Industry Regulation Bill which provides that the workers shall elect their representatives. He even put up an amendment that there should be a ballot and that regulations should be framed so that it should be conducted in a proper manner. Now he objects to a ballot. He is not logical.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Seeing that the House the other evening voted out my amendment, I expect it to be consistent and do the same now. I still hold the belief, as I did the other evening, that the members of the proposed harbour board should be elected. If the method suggested by the Chief Secretary is not good enough for the primary producers, it is not good enough for the employees of the Hospital for the Insane. I intend to withdraw the amendment.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Burvill declared that the Bill had been brought along suddenly. As a fact, it has been on the Notice Paper for some days.

Hon. A. Burvill: What I meant to convey was that I did not get possession of the Bill until to-day.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Bill again reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—METROPOLITAN MARKET.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 17th November.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [7.51]: I congratulate the Government on having brought forward this measure. The matter involved has exercised the minds of the people of the city and all the producers and consumers for a long time. It has been expected for a great many years that the City Council would have provided markets for the better handling of produce in the interests of producers and consumers alike. But there has been a consensus of opinion in favour of markets being established by the Government. A previous Government resumed an area of land for market purposes, and many private individuals and firms who had thought of erecting markets for themselves, stood by, thinking that they would all be brought into one central place that would be erected by the Government of the day. Unfortunately nothing was ever done. Certain money was expended, and buildings erected, but the upshot was that those buildings were destroyed by fire. Further, all the firms dealing in produce have been at sixes and sevens, not knowing whether to establish markets themselves or to get together and form a company, as has been done in other parts of the world, and so enable the producers to take the whole of their produce under the one roof and permit of sales being held in the one place. That has been the desire of the purchasers as well as the sellers, but so far nothing has been done. There has been a state of chaos, and therefore I congratulate the Government on bringing forward the measure. I have had many letters from different parts of the province I represent, all eagerly requesting that the Bill should be passed without any attempt at drastic alteration by way of handing control over to the City Council. The writers urged that if it was found necessary to make any alteration, it should be in the direction of giving greater representation to the producers. Rather than lose the Bill by which the markets are to be established, my correspondents are quite ready to accept the measure as it is. It is generally recognised that in the past the consumers have been well catered for.

Members: Producers, you mean!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I reiterate, there is a consensus of opinion that the con-

sumers generally have had a fair deal, but the poor old producers have always had to put up with the knucks. It is probable that that has given rise to the expression contained in the letters I have received that they shall not be handed over to the tender mercies of the City Council.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You had better peruse a few that I have here.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I perused a few at the time the Prices Regulation Commission were sitting, and what I have said is the view of many who are interested in the trade. A great number of the producers recognise that they have not had the best of the deal; they feel they would have done much better if all their produce had been brought together under the one roof and under the one selling system, where there would be the greatest number of purchasers.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That would be provided by municipal markets.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I do not pretend to know the reason, but there certainly is a feeling that the producers do not wish to be brought under a system different from that proposed in the Bill. The Government have wisely and considerably given expression to that view. When the market is established, I sincerely hope it will be a big one and that those responsible for its erection will look a long way ahead. A market should be constructed, not only for to-day, but for many years to come. The Government are better able to command funds than are the City Council, and I presume they will not be niggardly when the work of building is commenced.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And they will pay no rates.

Hon. J. Nicholson: They will make it more difficult for the consumers.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I am looking forward to the market becoming a much bigger proposition than it is to-day, even though the amount of produce marketed to-day is very large.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There would be no market if the people were not here.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I do not wish members to run away with the idea that this market will be for Perth only.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Then what will it be for?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Perth is simply a clearing house for the rest of the State.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Fiddlesticks!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The hon. member should know that a large proportion of the supplies are bought in the Perth markets for the shipping at Fremantle.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: It need not be bought there.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Large supplies come from Geraldton to Perth; from along the Great Southern railway as far south as Denmark and Albany, and from other centres as well. I presume large supplies come from the South-West and later on will come from the group settlements.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We had some of their butter to-night.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: A strange thing is that in almost every instance, large quantities of the supplies from outside centres go back from Perth to the very centres from which they were despatched originally..

Hon. A. Burvill: And some go to other outside centres, too.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Perth is the clearing house for vegetables for Kalgoorlie and for the farming districts, too.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Goods from Toodyay can go to the goldfields!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Large supplies come from Toodyay to Perth and a portion of them are despatched back to Toodyay.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is the fault of the Toodyay producers.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Yes, that is a reflection upon them.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It shows their appreciation of Perth.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask hon. members to allow Mr. Hamersley to proceed without interruption.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The markets proposed are not markets for Perth. The city, apparently, wants to feel that it is the only pebble on the beach.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: No.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I, as a producer, recognise what a tremendous lot has been done for Perth by the producers throughout the State. We feel proud of the city, but we also feel that we should make use of Perth to the extent that when a large and satisfactory establishment, such as I hope the markets will prove to be, is provided, it will not be controlled by Perth, with the idea that it was constructed for Perth alone.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And without paying any rates, either!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I am not concerned about rates. This is a proposition that directly concerns the producers.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And that is how you want to help Perth!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Everyone who gave evidence before the Prices Commission held that the consumer was well catered for, and I agree with that contention.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We do not agree with it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It is necessary to encourage the producer because, without the supplies that are forwarded, healthy competition, such as will obtain when sales are conducted under one roof, will not be possible. That healthy competition cannot be apparent when the goods are disposed of in several markets in different parts of the city. The best arrangements cannot be provided under those conditions, and even the firms associated in the marketing business have not been able to put the necessary capital into it. They have been waiting for years for a Bill of this description to be agreed to, and for the Government to carry out the necessary work. They waited for many years for the City Council to provide markets.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: The council never had any such opportunity.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Now there is a definite proposition before us, I hope the best facilities possible will be provided. I hope that all the necessary inquiries will be made so that the markets may be established along up-to-date lines, and under the best-known conditions. I trust nothing will be done without the most careful scrutiny. We know that the Wyndham Meat Works were constructed without sufficient data being available at the outset. The result was that many hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent that should have been saved. Had the scheme been properly investigated, and a complete knowledge obtained as to what was necessary, we would not have seen those works constructed in such a haphazard manner. Much of the original work had to be pulled down before it had even been completed. We do not want a repetition of that experience.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Was that a Government work, or work carried out by the City Council?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Of course it was Government work, but that does not alter the fact that grave mistakes were made in that

instance, that I hope will be avoided this time. I trust that provision will be made not only for sales by auction, but for growers of vegetables and other produce to sell their goods under much the same conditions as obtain at the kerbstone markets to-day. Such growers, rightly or wrongly, want to control their own business.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Do that at Toodyay, or somewhere else where they don't want it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: They want it in Perth.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Yes, without paying for it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The provision I suggest is made in Adelaide and in Melbourne.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: It has proved a dead letter wherever it has been inaugurated.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: There is no reason why that provision should not be made. There are many other aspects that require investigation.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You feel that there is nothing to justify your claim.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I know that there is everything to justify my claim. The producers are aware that one-third of the produce that comes to the Perth markets, goes out again.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Well, take your produce out of it!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Of the remaining two-thirds a proportion is distributed overseas.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Well, take it out of the markets.

Hon. A. Burvill: That is a kind remark to make!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: When the group settlers send their produce to the markets here, it will probably be found that gluts will occur. I presume provision will be made for a certain amount of grading and freezing, and I presume that in the event of a glut the markets will make provision for the shipment overseas of some of the surplus produce.

Hon. A. Burvill: That is the reason why the producers want representation on the trust.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I do not know that we can secure better representation than is provided in the Bill, but I would like the growers to have some say as to who their representatives shall be. It was a terrible blow to the wheatgrowers, whose produce has done such a tremendous lot for Fre-

mantle, when they found that they had no representative on the Fremantle Harbour Trust.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There are some good men there.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: And they had good men in the days gone by. I well remember that whenever shipments of phosphates or bags came in, and whenever a ship arrived to load wheat—I refer to days prior to the present system—we recognised a certain tendency that resulted in the best berthing accommodation being available for certain shipping.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Have you ever had a direct producer on the Harbour Trust at Fremantle?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes. It was only after years of struggle that we were able to secure the appointment to a position on the trust of someone we felt was directly in touch with the producers. When we lost that direct representation, the producers felt they had no fair opportunity of securing a representative on the board. That still exercises the minds of a large number of producers.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That will not happen to-day.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The House should scrutinise the measure carefully to determine whether some provision can be made to enable the producers to have a representative elected to the board, rather than that he should be appointed by the Government. I will not labour that question but will emphasise the fact that the producers feel that they represent a vital part of the marketing problem, and are deeply concerned regarding what will happen in connection with the construction of markets in Perth.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Irrespective of the fact that the people of Perth do not want the markets as you want them?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: If the people of Perth do not want the markets as we want them, it is for the people of Perth to put up their case.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You should listen to them fairly.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: If the people of Perth put up their case and referred it to all the people who are so vitally concerned in the raising of the produce that will go through the market, the people of Perth would be in a majority and would help themselves.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: They have never helped themselves yet.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: All the evidence goes to show that the consumer has had a very fair deal.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The consumer has been of very great benefit to the producer. Do not forget the action of the commercial men of the metropolitan area in showing their interest in the College of Agriculture by contributing £10,000.

The PRESIDENT: I remind the hon. member that Mr. Hamersley is addressing the Chair.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I congratulate the Government on having introduced the Bill because it will give effect to a motion that was passed in another place two years ago. The object of the motion was to give control of markets to a board composed of representatives of the primary producers, consumers and distributors.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: Why did not another place amend the Bill?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: This Bill is in keeping with that motion.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: But later a Bill was introduced on the same lines. Why did not another place amend it?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Many producers were not satisfied with the existing system of marketing and clamoured for the establishment of kerbstone markets.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: There was no clamour for the kerbstone markets.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The kerbstone markets are in existence at present. Some of the producer's wanted the right to sell their produce direct to the consumers, and that right has been recognised for some time.

The PRESIDENT: I point out that hon. members will have other opportunities to reply to the remarks of the speaker.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The producers have appreciated the kerbstone markets, and similar open markets have been established in other centres. I have seen them in the suburbs and in many of the neighbouring towns, and they are proving successful. Many growers prefer to have a stall in the kerbstone markets and to sell their produce direct to the consumers. Many growers grudge the time necessary to dispose of their produce in that way and prefer to have it auctioned. Consumers have found the kerbstone markets a wonderful help to them. They have been able to get their produce

direct from the growers, in fresh condition and probably at cheaper rates than if they purchased from street hawkers or from the retailers who buy at auction and deliver at the door. Whatever system is adopted I hope the markets will be conducted on the lines indicated in the Bill. I wish members would get out of their minds the idea that a metropolitan market is for the benefit of the City of Perth only.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We have not that idea at all.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The metropolitan market is the clearing house for the rest of the State, and it is the rest of the State that is vitally concerned in the market to be established. The cheaper and better the system inaugurated for the distribution of supplies to the inland areas, the better it will be for the people residing therein.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Well, establish your markets in the inland areas and it will be all right.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: There are markets in the inland areas, but it is necessary to send to the central market to get the quantities of produce required. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [8.22]: I wish to support the Bill. We have had the assistance of correspondence which appears to have been received from many quarters by every member.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is the inspired correspondence?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Some inspired and some not inspired. I have received three letters from representative bodies at Fremantle, one from the municipal council, one from the Melville Road Board, and one from the Spearwood producers. The Spearwood producers want the Bill; the Melville Road Board want the Bill; the Fremantle Council resent the attempt to take control of marketing activities from the City Council. In a progressive community where there was a municipal council thoroughly representative of the people, the conduct of a market of this description would be one of their functions. In the old country especially the various municipalities have made wonderful progress when dealing with activities of this description.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But under municipal control.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Quite so. However, there is a vast difference between a municipal council in the Old Country and the municipalities in this State with their restricted franchise. The Perth City Council do not represent the people of Perth; they represent only a small proportion of the people.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. GRAY: That is borne out by every election that takes place.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Not at all.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Municipal elections were held throughout the State yesterday, and the people who matter most did not have a chance of indicating their opinions at the polls. Seeing that the Perth City Council, under the present system of plural voting and the unjust franchise, represent only a small proportion of the people, it would be highly dangerous to entrust them with the administration of a measure of this kind.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the Fremantle Council?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I say the same about Fremantle.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You had better not let the people of Fremantle know.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: They will know tomorrow, I hope. We want a marketing Bill. I do not agree with Mr. Hamersley that the consumers have had a fair deal. There is an enormous waste under the present system of marketing produce, because there is a horde of people who gain a living from it and have no right to do so. The sooner we can alter the system by giving the producer as much as possible for his labour while ensuring to the consumer a fair deal, the better it will be for the community generally. Nothing is gained by cheapness. We want the producer to get a fair return for what he produces, and we can do that only by establishing a fair system of marketing. I am not greatly concerned about the request of the primary producers for additional representation on the board. So long as we have good men on the board it does not matter much where they come from. The provisions of the Bill will ensure fair representation for all parties. Certainly the consumers will be represented; the producers will be represented; the City Council will have their nominee, and the Government will have fair representation. A prominent auctioneer, speaking to me about this Bill the other day, said, "It does not matter about

the representation on the board. What we want is the Bill. The markets will run themselves once they are properly established."

Hon. V. Hamersley: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That is what we say would result if the City Council were given control.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I have stated my objection to the City Council controlling the market.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Suppose the City Council changed the voting system, what then?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: When the Bill reaches the statute-book, and the market is established, we shall be a step forward.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Suppose the franchise for municipal elections were altered, what then?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I would alter my opinion about this.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You would?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: There would then be a more efficient municipal council and we could reconsider our attitude.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You would not get the Bill then.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Perhaps it would be too late then.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Well, save time by voting for municipal control now.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: In view of the past activities of the Perth City Council and of other municipal councils, it would be unwise to give the municipality control of this important undertaking.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: That is a most unfair statement.

On motion by Hon. W. H. Kitson, debate adjourned.

BILL—TIMBER INDUSTRY REGULATION.

Second Reading—Amendment, "Six Months."

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. E. H. GRAY (West) [8.28]: I support the second reading. I was pleased at the reception given to the Bill by almost every speaker, but I was astonished at the remarks made by Mr. Nicholson last night. While he was speaking I felt that he could not have any knowledge of the timber industry. On reading through the Forests

Department report, however, I was astonished to find that he did have an intimate knowledge of the industry inasmuch as he is personally interested in it. Although I may be wrong in my opinion, I think that if a justice were on the bench and he adjudicated in the case of a relative brought before him, say, on a charge of drunkenness, there would be a howl from one end of the State to the other. Also if a member of the Perth City Council attempted to use his position to secure preference for or urge the interests of his family there would be an outcry from one end of the State to the other. Members of Parliament represent all the people in the State. When matters of this character come before us and our private interests are affected by them, we should do one of two things; either support the Bill even though it is against our private interests, or say nothing against it in case our attitude may be misunderstood by the general public. The opinions expressed by Mr. Nicholson in his lengthy speech are discounted because his own personal interests are at stake.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I ask the hon. member to withdraw that statement. When I come into this House I put my own interests last. I want the hon. member to understand that. I will not allow him or any other member of the House to make a statement of that sort concerning me.

The PRESIDENT: I take it that Mr. Nicholson is objecting to Mr. Gray's remark on the ground of it being personally offensive. I ask Mr. Gray to withdraw the remark.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: What remark must I withdraw? I said that Mr. Nicholson's remarks may be misunderstood by the general public, because he is personally interested in the matter before the House.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must withdraw that remark.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: If it is out of order I will withdraw it, but all the same—

The PRESIDENT: It must be withdrawn unreservedly.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I unreservedly withdraw anything I have said that is untrue.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must withdraw the remark unreservedly.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I unreservedly withdraw it. I listened with keen interest to Mr. Nicholson's address. One must draw conclusions, and I say that his opinions are discounted because I find that many of his statements were incorrect, no doubt un-

known to himself. The hon. member has some interest in mills in the State. He referred to many of the things that the Bill deals with. He ridiculed some of its provisions, and said that the Factories and Shops Act covered most of the ground. I am informed by a man of repute—

Hon. J. Nicholson: I also referred to the Inspection of Machinery Act, to the Health Act, and to other Acts.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: In each case my information is that the surmises of the hon. member are incorrect. My informant is a man of 30 years' experience of the timber industry. He says that the mill in which the hon. member is interested is one of those which the Bill is designed to affect, because it is recognised as one of the worst of its kind in the South-West, both in regard to management and the health and physical well-being of the employees. The hon. member gave us a long discourse. He quoted some statistics that had been given by Mr. Burvill, but he placed a wrong construction on the figures. In the matter of accidents he quoted the number reported as it affected a membership of 900 on the accident fund of the union, but I think he increased the membership to 7,000.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I took the numbers given by the Honorary Minister.

The Honorary Minister: Incorrect.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: He assumed that there would be 6,000 odd workmen who did not come under the Act. It is impossible to say how many accidents happen to these men. The manner in which the hon. member quoted the figures was misleading. I am informed that Western Australia is the only State in which there are not ample safeguards for the timber industry. In England, America, Switzerland, New Zealand and in every other State of the Commonwealth—even under the Factories Act in some places—there is effective supervision over the industry, and a great deal of responsibility is placed upon the mill manager. It is right that this should be so. The industry is of great value to this State. In many parts of the South-West no supervision is exercised over health questions at the mills. The local authorities are not able to carry out that duty. In many of the mills the sanitary arrangements are revolting, and dangerous to the health not only of the men, but of their families.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: You are not talking of the permanent mills.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Yes.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Are there no health inspectors about?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Very often the local road board secretary is the local health authority, and he has an enormous number of duties to perform, and cannot supervise health questions.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is there no central board of health under the Government?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The board of health is the local road board. The central board has not a sufficient staff at its disposal effectively to supervise the mills.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: The Health Act gives power to provide the necessary staff.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: We must judge the position at the mills by the way in which they have been managed in the past. There is not sufficient supervision from the health standpoint, or from the standpoint of safeguarding the lives and limbs of employees. Under the Inspection of Machinery Act and the Factories and Shops Act the Government do send out inspectors to the mills occasionally. Why waste a large sum of money in appointing under the present legislation, as Mr. Nicholson so persistently suggested, a number of extra officials to do work which can be performed by the inspectors appointed under this Bill?

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It is intended to appoint at least four inspectors under this Bill.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: An inspector under either of those two Acts could visit a mill to-morrow, but would be powerless to do anything in connection with the railway lines, the bush landings, the building stacks and any other of those things that form the daily business of a mill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Would they be powerless in regard to machinery?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then why insert that in the Bill?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: In order that we may have effective supervision over the whole of the operations of the industry, we must have this Bill or comprehensive amendments of existing Acts to meet the situation.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you propose that all this power should be duplicated?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: No Government would duplicate their inspectors by sending out officials when they would be sent out under this Bill.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: The Honorary Minister said this would be done.

Hon. F. H. GRAY: It is not done now. I am voicing the opinion of departmental officers themselves. The industry should be effectively supervised, and this Bill is the easiest way by which to do it. Mr. Nicholson appealed to the Honorary Minister to have sufficient inspectors appointed under the present Acts to save duplication.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is the proper way to deal with the matter.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It cannot be done effectively in that way.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Because those inspectors would not have sufficient power. They can supervise only a portion of the mill.

Hon. J. Nicholson: They have the power.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: A factory inspector might be sent down to look at the belts on some of the machinery. He would be unable to have dangerous trees removed or to inspect bush landings, or have anything else to do with the operations of the mill. He might see happenings of great importance going on, but would be unable to do anything. This Bill seeks to give the Government power to appoint inspectors to do the whole job in one operation. If Mr. Nicholson would look at the matter in that light I am sure he would recognise that the men engaged in this important industry deserve protection, and should get it, and that the best way to give that protection is to pass the Bill. I support the second reading.

HON. A. BURVILL (South-East—on amendment) [8.43]: I understand there is an amendment before the Chair.

The PRESIDENT: Did not the hon. member speak before?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I understand an amendment has been moved that the Bill be read this day six months. I wish to give my reasons why I think the Bill should be passed now.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member is speaking to the amendment?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Yes. Mr. Nicholson did not give the full facts before he moved his amendment. He contrasted mines with sawmills. He went over the evidence given by the sawmills union and said it was not reliable. The particular evidence to which I referred, and which is reliable, he entirely ignored. He stated that there were only

two per cent. of accidents in the mill companies.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I said three per cent.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The hon. member has gone up one.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I said that, worked out on the scale of figures given, it was under three per cent.

Hon. A. BURVILL: According to the evidence given before the Commonwealth Royal Commission on National Insurance, on March 3rd, 1924, by representatives of the United Ancient Order of Oddfellows, the sick pay in 1922, which included sickness and accident because it is difficult to separate the two, in the coastal and district metropolitan area amounted to 19s. per annum. For the goldfields the amount was 22s. 8d., for the agricultural areas 11s. 8d., and for the timber districts 23s. 1d. Those figures apply to the year 1922. In 1923 the amount for coastal districts and metropolitan area was 21s. 6d., for the goldfields 24s. 9d., for the agricultural areas 10s. 4d., and for the timber districts 25s. 3d. It will be noticed that in both years the figure for the timber districts was the highest, the goldfields figure next, and the figure for the agricultural districts by far the lowest. As every member knows, agriculture is a healthy occupation and involves few accidents. Hence the figure of 11s. 8d. for one year and 10s. 4d. for the other year. Every member who has had anything to do with timber mills knows that the work is extremely healthy, apart from accidents, and also apart from insanitary conditions, which, however, are not too prevalent. Therefore one has to take 11s. 8d., the agricultural figure for 1922, from 23s. 1d., the timber figure for the same year, and 10s. 4d., the agricultural figure for 1923, from 25s. 3d., the timber figure for 1923, in order to obtain an idea of the high percentage of accidents in the timber industry. With regard to the goldfields figures of 22s. 8d. and 24s. 9d., I may point out that working on the goldfields is particularly unhealthy, apart from any consideration of accidents. The high figure for the goldfields, therefore, is not attributable to prevalence of accidents but to the unhealthiness of the occupation. It follows that the statistics show conclusively that it is in the timber areas accidents are most numerous. According to the Royal Commission, many sickness claims come from the timber and mining areas, and a large number of them

are in respect of accidents, with which the question of age has nothing to do. Another aspect altogether ignored by Mr. Nicholson is one which disagrees with the figure of between 2 and 3 per cent. as representing accidents in the timber industry. In 1912 Millars' Timber and Trading Co., Ltd., submitted to the State Arbitration Court a return of accidents. I have been an employee of that firm, and I will say that Millars are the best timber employers in the State. In the matter of care for their men they compare very favourably with any other timber firm here. I repeat, Millars are, in my opinion, the best of our timber employers and have the lowest percentage of accidents. Nevertheless in 1913, according to a return submitted to the State Arbitration Court by Millars, the percentage of accidents among their employees was 10. This percentage refers to 2,000 employees, including the staff. Therefore the figure to which the percentage relates includes a number of clerks and other workers in whose cases accidents are almost nil. Yet, in spite of that fact, the accident rate is 10 per cent. How does this compare with Mr. Nicholson's statement that the accident figure is between two and three per cent.? Further, Mr. Nicholson belittled the benefit fund of the Timber Workers' Union and tried to camouflage that fund with the insurance money received by timber workers. Out of the insurance fund there was recovered by the employees between the 1st October, 1915, and the 19th October, 1926, a total of £14,628. That amount, however, has nothing whatever to do with the money obtained from the union's accident fund. Moreover, quite a number of men not in the union participated in the total compensation of £14,628. Mr. Nicholson tried to confine accidents to those occurring under the mill shed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Where did I say that?

Hon. A. BURVILL: That is an inference I gathered from the hon. member's remarks.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I never suggested anything of the sort.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I apologise if I drew a wrong inference. However, that is the inference which I did draw. After many years' experience of sawmilling and of work in the bush, and after many years' observation of work on the timber tramways, broad-axe work, and work with timber jacks, I am in a position to state that it is in the bush most of the fatal accidents

occur and the most serious accidents occur. Mr. Nicholson said that plenty of inspection is obtainable now through the Inspection of Machinery Act. I do not want to be quite definite, but I am fairly clear as to what happened in connection with steam boilers in the district where I live, and where there have been one or two sawmills. The inspector of boilers as a rule came down once a month, having given due notice of his coming so that the boilers might be blown out and ready for inspection.

The Honorary Minister: Once a year, not once a month.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Once a year. Inspecting boilers is a trade of its own, and requires a great deal of experience.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Act does not say that the inspector shall inspect only once a year. It says he can inspect either by day or by night, at any time.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am trying to impress on hon. members what actually occurs.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Why do you not quote the Act, which says that inspection shall take place not less than once in a year?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I believe that is what the Act says.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is what the Act says, and it is the custom.

Hon. A. BURVILL: What use is a boiler inspector for inspecting the ramifications of a sawmill extending 10 or 15 miles in every direction, and with the bulk of the fatal and serious accidents happening in the bush? If the boiler inspector went out in the bush, he could not tell the proper way to avoid accidents, and he would not know whether a thing was being done in a way likely to bring about accidents. In any case, when he visits the mill, the machinery is at a standstill. Moreover, he has not the experience necessary for inspecting timber operations.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There are other inspectors under other Acts.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I congratulate the Government on the provision that no man shall be appointed an inspector under this measure unless he has had five years' experience in the trade. That experience should have been gained not only in the mill, but also outside the mill. The inspectors under the Factories and Shops Act who visit the sawmills once a year can have next to no knowledge of the proper means of preventing accidents apart from machinery. Again, as regards the machinery they

are at a disadvantage because it is at a standstill. Therefore they cannot carry out their duties as they should be carried out.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But they are not responsible in that respect.

Hon. A. BURVILL: To illustrate how existing legislation operates, I mention that when a telephone inquiry was sent to the Chief Inspector of Machinery regarding the number of accidents in the timber industry, he replied that for 1924 no fatal accidents and no other accidents had been reported to him, and that for 1925 two fatal accidents and two other accidents had been reported. Now, it is obligatory to report accidents to the Chief Inspector of Machinery. Presumably the report has to be made by letter sent to his Perth office. What actually happens is that if a serious accident occurs—

The PRESIDENT: Is the hon. member quoting from "Hansard" of the current session? That is highly disorderly.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am sorry, Sir. I quoted one particular paragraph which had slipped my memory. The Chief Inspector of Machinery writes asking for a report from the employee who was hurt. He does not go to the scene of the accident and examine the matter for himself. That is the sort of inspection which obtains at present. I have been a mill employee, and I know a little about what used to happen years ago, and I do not think the position has altered much in the meantime. If a man employed on a timber station meets with an accident and the Chief Inspector of Machinery writes to him asking for a report on the conditions in the mill or on the log landing or wherever the accident happened, and the man furnishes a somewhat drastic report as to how he came to be hurt or lose his leg or his arm, then he will not find himself in the very best position if he is still employed on that timber station after he recovers from the accident. The inspectors should inspect accidents on the job, and they do not do it.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Will you tell us why they do not do it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Because there is nothing in existing legislation to compel them to do it.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Are they not under the supervision of the head of their department?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not know about that, but I do know that inspection is not carried out.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not?

Hon. A. BURVILL: This Bill is brought down to alter the position.

Hon. J. Nicholson: This Bill, if passed, will not alter the position if it is administered in the same way as existing Acts.

Hon. A. BURVILL: The only conclusion I can draw from Mr. Nicholson's speech and from his interjections—if I am wrong I will apologise—is that he is far more concerned about the present want of inspection continuing and the mills being permitted to carry on in their own sweet way, than about guarding against loss of life and limb.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Mr. President, I think that is most unjust.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The hon. member must withdraw that.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I withdraw the remark, Sir. What I want to bring to the attention of hon. members is that it is quite possible for Mr. Nicholson, who has far more legal capacity than I have—I have practically none—to indicate how this Bill may be amended on the same lines as the State Insurance Bill. The latter measure was so amended as still to afford immediate relief to the miners. During the whole of the time I was in the timber industry, and ever since I left it, the sawmill employees have been desiring legislation of this sort, and it is high time that some such legislation as this was enacted.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: There are seven Acts relating to the industry now.

Hon. A. BURVILL: But there is no inspection whatever on the sawmills. If this Bill were enacted subject to the same limitation as the State Insurance Bill, namely, for a term of 12 months, it would be proof of an honest desire on the part of hon. members interjecting to show some humanity to the mill employees. The time for that is overdue. I hope hon. members will reconsider the Bill, and see if it cannot be adapted so as to afford immediate relief in cases of accident. I urge hon. members to adopt that course instead of throwing the Bill out, which would mean that another 12 months must elapse before relief can be granted. I trust hon. members will pass the second reading. If they want the Bill amended in Committee, I say let it be amended. Let us, however, have a Bill which will give relief to an industry in which accidents are far too frequent and in which there is no supervision whatever.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [9.0]: I give place to no one, not even Mr. Burvill, in humanitarian feelings. Every member desires that proper protection shall be afforded to every employee in this and every other industry. Mr. Nicholson has been twitted with having some interest in this industry, and showing it to affect his judgment of the Bill. At all events I have no interest in the timber industry, notwithstanding which I am largely of the same opinion as Mr. Nicholson. If the Bill had been brought down as a consolidating measure it would have had something to commend it to the House. But, as I said when speaking previously, the Bill is only an addition to the existing seven Acts.

Hon. J. Cornell: If we already have seven Acts, why not have an eighth?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: I object to this multiplicity of legislation.

Hon. A. Burvill: What about the want of inspection?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: That does not affect the Bill at all for, under all the existing Acts, especially those relating to machinery and to factories, provision is made for the appointment of as many inspectors as may be required to see that the works are carried out in a proper manner and that proper consideration is given to life and limb. Mr. Gray contended that because in some districts no money was available, it was a reason why the regulations respecting sanitary conditions at a timber mill should not be fully complied with. In such circumstances all that is necessary is that the central health authorities should be notified. In all probability they would then send along an officer to see that improvements were effected. The Honorary Minister, when moving the second reading, stated definitely that although these new conditions would prevail, the other Acts would still remain in existence. That is to say, the machinery inspector, the factories inspector, the health inspector, and all the other inspectors, would still have the right to go along and inspect.

Hon. A. Burvill: You think they would all wake up at once?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: You should wake up those in the positions now. Whilst it is necessary that proper consideration should be given to the conditions under which the men work, we have no fewer than

seven Acts dealing with those conditions. If sufficient inspectors are not available, there is power in all those seven Acts to create further inspectors. And now we are to have another Act for the creation of a new set of inspectors. If we cannot under seven Acts get all that is required, how can we hope that the eighth shall be more effective?

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is the point.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: It is the multiplicity of legislation that I object to. If we require an example, it is furnished in nearly every clause in the Bill. Mr. Burvill talks as though he were the only member with humane feelings.

Hon. E. H. Gray: He is trying to give expression to them.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: I have as much humane feeling as has Mr. Burvill, and just as much regard for the safety of life and limb, but I view with misapprehension this multiplicity of legislation in order to meet what are believed to be the existing conditions. The conditions in the timber industry will not be remedied by the creation of an eighth Act. When we put into force the provisions of the seven existing Acts, proper inspection can be made.

The Honorary Minister: Have you counted the cost?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: The cost will be no greater. It is very foolish to think that a timber mill shall be working for 12 months and be inspected only when the boiler is practically blown out. Apart altogether from the condition of the boiler, the machinery ought to be inspected three or four times a year. Power is already given under each of the existing seven Acts to carry out every one of the conditions proposed to be carried out under this eighth Act.

On motion by **Hon. G. Potter**, debate adjourned.

RESOLUTION—RAILWAY GAUGE UNIFICATION.

Debate resumed from the 2nd November, of the following motion by **Hon. G. Potter**:—

That the Council concurs in the following resolution transmitted by the Assembly:—
 "That in the opinion of this House the time has arrived when the Federal policy of extending the standard railway gauge should be consummated in Western Australia."

HON. A. BURVILL (South-East) [9.8]: It is most desirable that we should have a uniform gauge. Having so many different gauges throughout the Commonwealth does not make for economical transport. There cannot be proper intercommunication by rail with so many different gauges. When Lord Kitchener was here in 1910, he was reported to have said that from a defence point of view our railways were a menace to us and of assistance to the enemy, if they should be in command of the seas. He recommended the standardisation of our railways. I am not so much concerned about the defence point of view as about the land settlement and economic points of view. According to the evidence adduced, it would cost £57,000,000 to have the railway gauges of Australia standardised and £21,000,000 to have a standard line connecting the capital cities. Also it is stated that every year we leave this problem it will cost another million. The estimated cost of standardising the line between Perth and Kalgoorlie is £5,000,000, the State's share of which would be £1,500,000. It is impossible that the State should find all the money for this scheme. It is necessary that we should construct more and more railways to open up the unoccupied and partly occupied lands, so that we might get our State as quickly as possible into the productive stage and increase our revenue from the export of primary products. It is almost impossible to get secondary industries in this State, and so our only hope if revenue is from primary production. The only way to get our primary production into the condition in which it should be, is by providing transport. So, if we are to spend $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions to get our gauge standardised, we are going to keep that $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions from production. I say it would be better to spend that money opening up lands for settlement. There is only one way in which we can help to bring about the uniform gauge, and still go on with our developmental railways. That is by providing that when new railways are under construction they shall be so built that when it is necessary to convert them to a wider gauge it can be done without unnecessary extra expense. If we were to convert any of our existing railways to the standard gauge, one of the most awkward items of expenditure would be what is known as clearance. That is to say, every railway station would have to be reconstructed, and all the platforms would have to be shifted to

make provision for the increased width of gauge. Then we should have to widen all the bridges and all the cuttings. We could avoid that in the future construction of railways by making provision for their ultimate conversion. Some members have said the Commonwealth Government are to provide a great deal of capital to be expended on bringing about a uniform gauge. I understand that is to be done on a proportionate basis, according to area throughout the Commonwealth. So Western Australia will be entitled to a considerable sum of money from the Commonwealth to provide for a uniform gauge. The only suggestion I have to offer to expedite the matter is that the Commonwealth Government should supplement the money already voted by the State to build railways, and so enable the State to build those railways with due regard to clearance. They would then be laid down in such a way that when the time came we could get the wider gauge without this extra expense. It might be a novel method of putting up the matter, but it is the only feasible way by which we can assist to bring about a uniform gauge. It may also be pointed out that this would fall in with the idea of defence and quick transport to various parts of the State. We have the Brookton-Armadale railway project in the air, and that will form a main artery from the wheat-fields to Fremantle. If the line is built, it will then be ready for the wider gauge. The same thing will take place in connection with the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway, the Bill for the construction of which is now before the House. That railway will tap the coalfields of this State, and if we should be in a state of siege we should be able to connect up with the wide gauge of the Commonwealth, and carry coal to any destination. I have pleasure in supporting the motion, but I fail to see how it will be possible to carry out the project unless it is done in a manner such as I have indicated. This State has all it can do to provide its own railways for the future settlement. We are the only State in the Commonwealth that can provide for migrants from Great Britain, and we must give them our undivided attention. Although I am in favour of the broad gauge throughout the Commonwealth, I fail to see how the State can take any part in such a scheme unless it receives financial assistance.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

BILL—EJANDING NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [9.23] in moving the second reading said: In submitting the Bill I wish to say that in these days of progress we have reached a stage when transport by road or rail is very necessary for the marketing of produce. The object of this railway is to provide means of communication for settlers east of Wongan Hills as far as Mullewa. At one time it was thought that a line eastward would be more serviceable, but subsequently it was discovered that such a route would leave isolated a substantial area of approximately 250,000 acres. That being so, it was decided to reinvestigate the whole question of railway communication in that district. The major portion of the 250,000 acres to which I have referred is scrub and plain country. There is good subsoil interspersed with patches of forest. Some members of this House are acquainted with the district, more so that I am, but the settlers there believe that the country should be linked up with the railway system. Similar opinions are held by experienced farmers in those parts. They have said to me that the country can grow wheat and oats, and that it is good for grazing purposes. In years gone by that country came under the category of light land. The real justification for the introduction of the Bill is perhaps the report of the advisory board.

Hon. J. Ewing: Where will the railway terminate?

THE HONORARY MINISTER: It will run parallel with the Wongan Hills line. Successive Governments realised to a great extent, if not to a full extent, that reports of the advisory board are sufficient justification for the Government taking action in connection with the building of railways. In this particular instance the advisory board reported to the Premier as follows:—

As instructed by you, the Board have again inspected the country Northward from Ejanding and Westward towards Dalwallinu, and have also met the local authorities and interested settlers with a view to considering afresh the proposal to provide railway facilities for the country East of Pithara, and, if possible to also serve the country between the Wongan Hills and Koorda railways that would be left unserved if the railway started from Pithara.

2. The area between the two railways that would be left unserved by a line running Eastward from Pithara, thus forming a "Pocket," comprises about 280,000 acres, the bulk of which is scrub plain country with a clay subsoil, interspersed with small patches of forest. All the local bodies and settlers in the Dowerin district, who were interviewed, were in favour of railway communication being provided for this country, and evidence was brought forward by experienced farmers that this scrub plain country was capable of being turned to good account, and, while not so productive perhaps as the forest country, would with proper handling produce payable crops of wheat in conjunction with oats for grazing.

3. In view of the evidence submitted as to the value of this land and the fact that it is within an assured rainfall, the Board are of the opinion that consideration should be given to a modification of the original proposal for railway communication East of Pithara, and put up on 13th November, 1922 with the object of providing also railway facilities for the "pocket" referred to.

4. A line running Eastward from Pithara for a distance of 45 miles would serve 662,590 acres, of which 218,685 acres are alienated: the total area, including most of the Mollerin settlement, providing for about 287 holdings.

5. A line running Northwards from Ejanding to a point about due East of Pithara, and with a length of about 55 miles, would serve about 723,000 acres, of which about 285,000 acres are alienated: the total area providing for about 312 holdings.

6. This line, however, would not serve the Mollerin settlers, but by the construction of a branch line about 15 miles, making a total mileage of 70 miles from Ejanding, a total area (including the Mollerin settlement) of about 934,130 acres would be served, of which 354,339 are alienated and about 400 holdings would be provided for.

7. The attached financial returns, as prepared by the Railway Department, show that:—

- (i) Line "A" 45 miles Eastward from Pithara will give an estimated profit of £1,550 per annum.
- (ii) Line "B" 55 miles Northward from Ejanding will show an estimated loss of £100 per annum.
- (iii) Line "C" 55 miles Northward from Ejanding, with a spur line of another 15 miles to include the Mollerin subdivision, will show an estimated loss of £100 per annum.

8. The advantages of the starting point for the proposed railway being at Ejanding, as against Pithara, are as follows:—

- (a) The forest country East of Pithara would be served equally as well as if the starting point were at Pithara and at the same time about 280,000 acres of additional land in a good rainfall would be served.
- (b) The Ejanding Northwards line would provide a much shorter route to Fremantle for the wheat growers, being 178 miles from Mollerin via Ejanding, against 219 miles via Pithara, a very important consideration, and

(c) In the event of the country East of Lake Monger and towards Warriadar proving suitable for mixed farming, the line will form the first stage of a line to open up that country.

9. For these reasons we think the benefits derived by the settlers and the State generally would be more than sufficient to outweigh the slight estimated loss. We, therefore, recommend the construction of the line Northwards from Ejanding for about 55 miles with a spur line of about 15 miles to serve the Mollerin settlers, as shown in firm blue line on attached lithograph.

The publicity that has been given to this line from time to time has made members conversant with the conditions that obtain. Some years ago it was decided to build the Mullewa-Wongan Hills line to connect the northern areas with the southern parts. That was a decided step along the path of progress, for it opened up one of the most prosperous wheat belts in the State. In this instance the line will not pass through any poor country at all, and even the light lands to be traversed represent good country. It will perhaps tap the Warriadar country. Large areas are available there within a known rainfall. It is country where there are settlers who have done the pioneering work. They have every faith in the country; they are not "blow-ins" for, as the Advisory Board have pointed out, they are men who have had experience in other parts of Australia or in other parts of the State. As a result, the Government decided to introduce the Bill so as to enable them at a later stage—we hope it will not be very long—to construct the railway. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing, debate adjourned.

BILL—BOYUP BROOK—CRANBROOK RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [9.33] in moving the second reading said: I have not the same knowledge of the country to be traversed by this line as I have concerning the Ejanding Northwards railway. However, there are members who have first hand knowledge of the district, and realise the importance of the Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does this railway represent an urgent necessity, or a strategic necessity?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If we may judge by the agitation that has gone on during the last 20 years, I should say it is an urgent necessity.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Urgent for 20 years!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Quite so. The railway will open up a tremendous belt of country, over part of which I have travelled. It will open up country extending from Boyup Brook and Bridgetown over to the Great Southern railway and through to the coast.

Hon. J. Cornell: Approximately, what is the distance?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is set out in the Bill. The Railway Advisory Board were requested to report upon the best scheme to serve the area and to link up the country concerned with the existing railway system.

Hon. J. Cornell: What is the estimated cost per mile?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The thoroughness of the inquiries made can best be indicated by reading the Advisory Board's report, which is as follows:—

1. As instructed, the Railway Advisory Board have made an inspection of the country between Bridgetown to Manjimup railway, Boyup Brook and the Great Southern railway, with a view to reporting on the best route to be adopted for a railway to open up the country between Bridgetown and Mt. Barker.

2. During the inspection the Board interviewed representative settlers at Boyup Brook, Cranbrook, Mt. Barker, Frankland River, Corbalup and Manjimup, many of whom came considerable distances to put their views before the Board, and from whom much valuable information was obtained as to the capabilities of the country examined.

3. For about 20 miles South-East of Boyup Brook the country is well settled with very little Crown lands available for selection, while the same state of affairs exists for about 30 miles West of Cranbrook and about 12 to 15 miles West of Mt. Barker. The remainder of the area is sparsely settled, due no doubt to remoteness from railway facilities.

4. The Board were very favourably impressed with the class of country travelled over and, while it has to be admitted that a considerable portion of the large area between Bridgetown and Great Southern railways and Kojonup and Denmark railways must be looked upon as second class, are satisfied from an inspection of departmental plans and from personal observation that there is a very large area of first class land that, in conjunction with the second class country, is admirably adapted for dairying and allied industries, while the well watered nature of the country and the fine climate render it well suited for close settlement.

5. The total area of country between Manjimup and Mt. Barker outside the 12½-mile radius from existing railways, and exclusive of that to be served by the authorised Pemberton-Denmark railway, is about 1,800,000 acres, the greater portion of which is Crown lands.

6. Assuming 800,000 acres to be not available for agricultural settlement, being either not suitable for that purpose or required for permanent timber reservation, there remains an area of about 1,000,000 acres of land suitable for settlement consisting of first class land and second class land that can be turned into valuable pasture country, but which require railway facilities before it can be profitably developed. On a basis of 400 acres per settler this should provide for 2,500 holdings.

7. The Board have given the matter the fullest consideration, and are decidedly of the opinion that the opening up of this district by railway is well warranted. It is obvious, however, that it would be impossible to serve such a large district by the construction of one railway only, and two (2) lines will be required at approximate distances apart of from 20 to 25 miles, which with the construction of the Pemberton-Denmark railway, will completely serve the whole of the country between the Bridgetown and Great Southern railways and the South Coast.

8. Mr. Anketell, a member of the Board, has made further investigations since the Board's visit to the district, and has located approximately the two (2) routes with ruling grades of 1 in 60.

9. If this district is to be opened up, the Board recommend the construction of light railways from Boyup Brook to Cranbrook and from Manjimup to Mt. Barker, each a length of about 107 miles, as shown in blue lines on attached lithograph, at an estimated cost of about £2,300 per mile.

10. Attached lithograph also shows the Pemberton-Denmark railway survey to illustrate the proposed railway development between the Kojonup line and the South Coast.

As the result of the report the Government decided to introduce a Bill to authorise the construction of the line, thus adopting the recommendation of the Advisory Board.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: How do you propose to construct the line, by contract or by day labour?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is a matter for further consideration.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The Government would be foolish to construct it by contract.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That aspect should not affect the passing of the Bill. The matter for consideration is whether the line is justified.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And when it will be built!

The HONORARY MINISTER: Many people have advocated the line proceeding in

various directions, but all have been unanimous that a line is required to open up the country. Unbiased people outside and also hon. members in the Legislative Assembly have endorsed that opinion.

Hon. J. Cornell: Can you inform the House when the Yarramony-Newearnie line will be built?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not know that that line is under discussion at present.

Hon. J. Cornell: Its construction was authorised years ago.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The construction of the line dealt with in the Bill will afford justice that has been long denied to this particular part of the State. The representative of the district in the Assembly says that he has advocated it for over 20 years, and others have done so as well. By agreeing to the Bill, the House will authorise the Government to construct the line in due course.

Hon. J. Cornell: I am not opposing the line.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I quite understand that. There is seldom any opposition to the construction of an agricultural line. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Burvill debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.43 p.m.