

Progress reported.

BILL—STATUTES COMPILATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker) in moving the second reading said: This is a measure which has already passed the other Chamber, and has been waiting for some time for consideration by this House. It is a simple measure, and I do not intend to occupy the time of the House for long in explaining it. The object is to remove certain anomalies and difficulties which have been found by experience to exist since the passing of the Compilation Bill of 1905. The object is to remove certain difficulties that stand in the way of making these compilations after motions have been carried by the Chamber. The measure consists of only a few clauses, and I assure members it is one that is urgently needed. Under the Compilation Act 1905 certain formalities had to be complied with which have been found almost impracticable when we have attempted to put them into operation. In consequence of that a compilation of the Criminal Code which is a very important measure, as members must admit, has been delayed. This measure desires to simplify and to make more practical the process of compilation. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Mr. Holman in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

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

Read a third time and *passed.*

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 10th December, 1912.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

The PRESIDENT: I have to lay on the Table the twenty-second report of the Auditor General.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: 1, Papers relating to the removal of the Dinninup school buildings (ordered on motion by Hon. R. D. McKenzie). 2, Report of the Inspector General for the Insane for the year ending 30th June, 1912.

RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report Presented.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East) brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into this Bill.

Ordered to be printed.

QUESTION—WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Colonial Secretary : 1, Are there any official records kept of the aggregate amount of insurance premiums paid by companies, firms, and persons insuring against the liability provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act, 1902 ? 2, Is the aggregate amount paid as compensation under the Act available ? 3, If not, is it the intention of the Government in future to compile statistical records in this direction ?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied : 1, No. 2, No. 3, The matter has been under consideration for some time past in so far as Government Departments are concerned in their relation to the question of a State Insurance Department, covering Fire, Life, and Workers' Compensation claims. Under the last mentioned heading (Workers' Compensation) I may inform the hon. member that the following claims have been paid:—Public Works Department, £4,340; Railway Department, £3,515; Department of Agriculture, £128 5s. 4d.; Mines Department, £22.

MOTION—OBSERVATORY RESERVE.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East) moved—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should not transfer any portion of the Observatory reserve to the Federal Government.

He said : A few days ago I asked the Colonial Secretary whether it was the intention of the Government to grant to the Federal Government any portion of the Observatory reserve for the purpose of erecting offices for the Meteorological Department, and the Colonial Secretary replied that a request to this effect had been received from the Federal authorities and was under consideration. It is in order to have an expression of opinion from this House as to the undesirability of alienating in any way from the State any portion of this reserve, either by giving it to private institutions or by

granting it to the Federal authorities, that I have brought forward this motion. I do not intend to speak at any length upon it, as I am fully aware that now the time of the House is precious and that we have a considerable amount of work to do; I have spoken to the Colonial Secretary and he has consented to allow the decision of the House to be come to right away so that there will be no adjournment. The whole thing need not take many minutes. I know from my own experience that the Observatory is in the wrong position. It has been in the wrong position from the very start; it should have been placed outside the city altogether; in fact the present site is absurd for an Observatory. However, it was placed there. The Commonwealth Constitution provides that the Commonwealth can take control of the whole of the work carried out by observatories, namely, the astronomical and meteorological work, but the Federal Parliament have only elected to take over the meteorological and not the astronomical work, consequently the State is still carrying on the astronomical portion of the work and for the past three or four years the Commonwealth has undertaken the meteorological portion. The Federal instruments, such as they are—they are not of very great moment, because they are not as costly as those of the Observatory—are placed about the Observatory grounds, but the Federal offices are in St. George's-terrace. The observations are taken in the Observatory grounds, but they are computed and the office work is done in St. George's terrace. So far that has been the position, but we are now informed by the Colonial Secretary that application has been made by the Federal authorities for a portion of the Observatory reserve on which to erect meteorological offices. There is really no need for the offices to be there at all; they can just as well remain where they are in St. George's terrace, because in regard to meteorological work the nearer the offices are to the central post office the more convenient it is; otherwise there would need to be a special telegraph line connecting

the Observatory reserve with the General Post Office. We are informed that the request of the Commonwealth Government to the State Government for a portion of the reserve to be granted for these meteorological offices is under consideration, but I think it would be very detrimental to the work of the Observatory should any portion of the Observatory reserve be given for the purpose of erecting any buildings. If it is essential that the Commonwealth Government should have offices close to the Observatory why can they not go across Malcolm street and build there without infringing on any portion of the Observatory reserve? Because to build on the Observatory reserve would materially affect the work of the Observatory. I do not know what was the opinion of Mr. Cooke, our late Astronomer, before he left to take up the appointment of Astronomer in New South Wales; but certainly while I was his Minister and while he was here, in the course of numerous conversations he had with me, he said that he was distinctly against any other building or structure being built nearer to the Observatory than could possibly be helped. Mr. Kingsmill in debating the High School a few days ago read the opinion of Mr. Cooke given 10 years ago, in which Mr. Cooke strongly protested against any buildings being erected on what is known as the High School reserve, but if buildings on the High School reserve are objectionable they must be ten times more objectionable on the other side of the Observatory. Seeing that the Observatory must have clear air in order to take the necessary observations and seeing that the wind on which the Observatory depends comes invariably from the south west, and as any buildings to be erected must be on the south side, any nuisance arising from these buildings would necessarily go towards the Observatory buildings. That objection would not lie so far as the High School reserve is concerned. Yet the Government Astronomer at that time strongly objected that the buildings should go even on that site. What will follow will be this: In five or ten years

time that site must cease to be of further use for an Observatory. There is no question about that. All the buildings, smoke stacks, etcetera, in West Perth and the buildings which have been erected of recent years have materially obstructed the work of the Observatory. I was informed by the late Government Astronomer some years ago that the development which was going on in the vicinity of the Observatory was lessening the time during which he could carry on his observations, and as that development went on the work would become more difficult. All this was accounted for by the proximity to the Observatory of large buildings and factories which rendered the air less clear. The only thing that has saved the observatory up to the present time is the existence of King's Park which happens to be situated on the side of the Observatory from which the prevailing winds blow. My point is that during the next five or ten years, it will be no longer possible to carry on the work of the Observatory on the present site, and then the Commonwealth Government, if they are now granted this site, will then have the whole of this reserve. That is what we should try to avoid. It certainly is not a state of affairs which should be brought about, and that is the object I have in view in submitting the motion to the House. At the present time there is a good deal of work that should be carried on at the Observatory, but it is not possible to do it on the present site. Recently the King's Park board received an application from the Department of Lands and Surveys stating that they had certain magnetic observations to carry out and as it was impossible for the work to be done at the Observatory, they made application to the board for permission to use a site in the park for this purpose. In their letter to the board they stated—

It will be at once apparent, in a growing city, a site must be selected which might reasonably be supposed to be free from influence that might have a disturbing effect on the magnetic currents. The proximity of electric tramways, electric wires, masses of

iron or steel, gas or water pipes, buildings of stone or brick would be fatal, and the construction of any such works in the vicinity of a station would defeat the object that the department has in view. One-third to a half mile from other disturbing influences have been found in general to be a safe distance. It is for these reasons the department now finds the Observatory enclosure unsuitable.

I only quote that to show that I am right in saying the Observatory will have to be removed in the not very distant future. The Observatory, in my opinion, should be erected on the ranges at a good distance from settlement and at a good elevation. If the Commonwealth Government are granted any portion of the present site for their meteorological officers it will only be a matter of a few years before the whole property will be in the hands of the Commonwealth Government, because the State Government will have to vacate the site for a more suitable one. When Mr. Cooke, our former Government Astronomer, received the appointment of Astronomer in New South Wales, he immediately induced the New South Wales Government to select a new site for an Observatory 30 miles from Sydney and on an area of 35 acres of ground and in an elevated position. That supports my argument that ours is not a suitable site, and it goes without saying, as I have already stated, that it will not be very long before it will be found necessary to select a more suitable site on which to carry on the work.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): I do not suppose it will cause any violent surprise when I announce that it is my intention to support this motion and to endorse the protest against the possibility of the transfer of this magnificent reserve or any part of it to other than State purposes. The hon. member has dealt with the question from the point of view of the scientific requirements of an Observatory. There is another aspect which I wish to put as briefly as possible, and that is, looking at it from my own point of view, that of a citizen of Perth and also as one of the representatives of the

citizens of Perth, and indeed, I might go further and say as a citizen of the State. I wish to enter an emphatic protest against any portion of this reserve, the best site in Western Australia for a public building of any magnitude, being given over for an unimportant purpose and passing away from the control of the State Government. I hope the State Government will be well advised and if it is necessary for the Federal Government to have their meteorological observatory close to the City, that they will give one of those less important sites which would not be desecrated by a mean style of building, and I do not speak disrespectfully when I say that the building which would be erected for a meteorological observatory would necessarily be of a mean style. I trust the Government will take this matter into consideration and if it is necessary to give a piece of ground to the Federal Government, that they will give one which perhaps is more on the outskirts of the City and which would be just as well suited for the purpose for which it will be required. I do not think it is necessary for me to use any further arguments on a question which has been argued directly and indirectly at considerable length in this House during this session. I hope the Chamber will carry the motion moved by Mr. Connolly and that the Government will pay due observance to the opinions of this Chamber.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South): There is only one aspect of this question that appeals to me and it has not been touched upon by other hon. members who have spoken. At the present time so far as the announcements made in this House are concerned, the Commonwealth and State Governments are engaged in negotiations in connection with the transfer of the Observatory to the Commonwealth authorities. The State Government, very properly I think, are endeavouring to get the Commonwealth Government to take over the control and the working of this institution. I think it is desirable that the institution, if it is to be continued, should be continued under the control of the Commonwealth, and if we pass this motion it may tend to

hamper the negotiations and tend to restrict the State Government in the terms they may be able to arrange with the Commonwealth authorities. The question may arise in this way: the Commonwealth authorities may take the stand that they will not take over the Observatory unless they get this site, and it is for this House to consider whether we ought to be prepared to surrender that site or abandon the idea of the Observatory being taken over by the Commonwealth.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: We have passed a motion to the effect that if the Observatory is taken over, the site should be transferred to some other place.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: When was that passed?

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Three or four weeks ago.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I have no recollection of it. This motion, if it be passed, may bind the hands of the State Government. After all it is merely a pious expression of opinion by this Chamber, and at this particular period when an endeavour is being made to close the work of the session this week, the time of the House might be better occupied in discussing more important matters.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That is a matter of opinion.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I am merely expressing my opinion and I believe it is that of the majority of members that this is hardly the time to bring forward a motion such as this which can only have the effect of hampering the State authorities in their negotiations with the Commonwealth. Personally I do not suppose it will matter very much whether the motion is carried or not, but I hope the Government will do all they can to ensure that the Commonwealth authorities will take over the control of the work of the observatory, at present a source of expense which a small community such as that of Western Australia should not be called upon to bear.

Question put and passed.

On motion by Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Ordered "That the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly for concurrence."

BILL—STATE HOTELS (No. 2).

Report Stage.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) moved—

That the report of the Committee be adopted.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): I think this is a stage at which the extraordinary procedure which has been adopted in connection with this Bill can well be brought before the House. The first clause of the Bill is the short title. The second clause gives power to establish certain State hotels. It reads as follows:—

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Licensing Act, 1911, to the contrary, (a) The State hotels at Gwalia and the Caves House, Yallingup, shall be deemed to have been lawfully established, and (b) It shall be lawful for the Colonial Treasurer (1) to establish a State hotel at Wongan Hills and at Rottneest Island, and (2) to carry on by his authorised agent, in all the said State hotels the trade and business of a person holding a publican's general license.

Those are the provisions of the Bill. I ask hon. members if they can, by any stretch of imagination, construe anything in those provisions into an appropriation of revenue or the imposition of a tax? Yet we find the Bill comes before us from another place bearing this superscription—

This public Bill originated in the Legislative Assembly, and the purposes for the appropriation of the revenue were first recommended to the House by Message of the Governor during the present session, and the Bill having been this day passed is now ready for presentation to the Legislative Council for its concurrence.

That is to say, this comparatively unimportant measure, having no connection whatever with the appropriation of revenue or the imposition of a tax, has been made a money Bill by the fact of its being introduced by a totally unnecessary Message. I do not know what the object of another place is in so acting, or the object of the Government in making

this Bill a money Bill; perhaps they hope to make every post a winning post by making every Bill a money Bill. But it is entirely a wrong procedure. This House has never taken any objection to proceeding with money Bills in the proper manner, but it is an undoubted hampering of the power of this House in regard to amendments when we have introduced as a money Bill a Bill which is nothing of the sort. With regard to the appropriation of revenue, which is mentioned in the superscription, whatever appropriation of revenue for the purpose of State hotels is required is made on page 35 of the Revenue Estimates, where, in division No. 21, headed "State hotels and inspection of liquors," Item 13 is as follows :—

State hotels, maintenance, including salaries and wages of managers, staff, etcetera, £36,000.

Truly a very liberal provision for the purpose of this little Bill before us, liberal even in respect to the state in which it was introduced to this House, and more than liberal in respect to the state in which it will leave this House, because the measure has been shorn of part of its importance in this House. But may I ask the leader of the House to tell the House why a Message is necessary for a Bill of this unimportant nature; and if a Message is not necessary what is the motive of those in another place responsible for this procedure, initiating a procedure totally new and, in my opinion, improper, because it is, I think, sought to limit the powers of amendment in this House conferred by the Constitution? If the explanation forthcoming from the Minister is not satisfactory it will be for this Chamber to decide as to whether a point of order should not be raised on the ground that this procedure renders the Bill such as should be discharged from the Notice Paper for having been improperly introduced.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) : What the Government have done they have done strictly in accordance with the ruling of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, who rules that such Bills must be classed as money

Bills. The procedure adopted in this instance is due entirely to the ruling of the Speaker of the Assembly.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East) : May I ask if this particular Bill was submitted to the Speaker? Personally I am not very much concerned whether it was or not. We have certain rights and privileges, and it is the duty of every member to guard those rights and privileges. I cannot understand any person classing the Bill before the House as a money Bill.

Hon. D. G. Gawler : Does not the establishment of State hotels involve the expenditure of money?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY : Well, then, every Bill introduced is a money Bill. We have had introduced such measures as Municipal Bills, Roads Bills, and Health Bills, and certainly they are money Bills in a much greater sense than is the one before the House. There is no direct appropriation. It is a coincidence that this should be done only by a Government who make it one of their principles that this House should not exist at all. The thanks of the House are due to Mr. Kingsmill for having drawn attention to this. We have all noticed the tendency to make every Bill a money Bill. As a matter of fact it does not restrict the privilege of the House, it simply hampers the House in making amendments. On a future occasion, if any such thing happens again, I shall take the sense of the House as to whether the Bill should not be discharged on the score of irregularity.

On motion by Hon. E. M. Clarke, debate adjourned.

BILL — INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

Assembly's Message — Conference Manager's Report.

Order of the Day read for the consideration of the Assembly's Message containing the conference managers' report.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) moved—

That the following Message be sent in reply to Message No. 63 from the

Legislative Assembly:—"That it being impossible to set down in a Message all the alterations rendered necessary in the Bill to carry out these understandings, a Message be sent to the Legislative Assembly requesting them to make all the alterations rendered necessary by the agreement come to by the joint managers of the two Houses, and that on receipt of a Message from the Assembly complying with this request, the Bill be read a third time.

The Bill is being reprinted. It requires an immense amount of work to redraft the Bill in accordance with the alterations. When it is sent back here from the Assembly hon. members will have an opportunity of perusing the measure to see that it is in accordance with the report of the managers.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: While I have no objection to the course proposed I may point out that the motion involves a good deal, in that it proposes that the amendments should be embodied in the Bill and then the Bill be brought down and read a third time. It will be necessary to have some certificate to the effect that the Bill is in accordance with the alterations made by the managers. The Chairman of Committees should be able to give a certificate that the Bill is a fair print of the Bill as amended by the Committee. Unless we have some such certificate it will be necessary for the Committee to go through the Bill clause by clause again.

The PRESIDENT: The Chairman of Committees will in all probability have an opportunity of giving the Committee such a warrant when the Message comes from another place.

Question put and passed.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Order of the Day discharged.

Order of the Day read for the resumption of the consideration of the Bill in Committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I intend to move that this Order of the Day be discharged. I regret that it should be necessary to resort

to so drastic a step, but in view of the clearly expressed intention of the House not to allow the Minister control of the collection and distribution of license fees within the metropolitan area, it would be a waste of time to proceed any further with the Bill. What the Government proposed to do was in accordance with the desires of an overwhelming majority of the delegates to the conference of local authorities. The principles of this Bill were endorsed by an overwhelming majority of the local authorities within the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: How many delegates were present altogether?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will give hon. members the information.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: By the people not concerned.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is unfortunate from the point of view of the local authorities that the Bill will not be passed, but it will mean to the Government a saving of £3,700 in the next half-year, or altogether a saving of £5,400.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Why should it mean that saving?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I will tell the hon. member presently. We have made provision to subsidise the local authorities to that extent apart from the general grant. There would have been £1,000 for the metropolitan area and £2,700 for the outside districts which would have been at the rate of £5,400 a year.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is not this very late news?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That information I think was supplied to the House. I do not think the whole of it was supplied; it was not furnished to me. I supplied the information with regard to the £1,000.

Hon. W. Patrick: Would it not mean a new administrative officer?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not see how it could. Traffic inspectors might have been necessary, and would have been appointed. For several years the roads boards conference and roads boards generally have been urging the

Government to amend the present Cart and Carriage Licensing Act. The Acts dealt with by this Bill are very ancient and out of date, and after an exhaustive discussion the executive of the roads boards association recommended that a Bill should be prepared. The Bill was prepared and submitted to the roads boards conference held last July, and a special date was fixed for the consideration of this measure, and the conference went through it clause by clause and agreed to the Bill. With regard to the metropolitan area to which so much exception has been taken, this was included in the Bill at the instigation of the metropolitan local authorities themselves at the conference held in the Perth Technical School on Thursday, 18th April. The motion agreeing to the handing over to the metropolitan area to the Minister in regard to the collection and distribution of the license fees was carried by a majority of 14 votes. There were 18 for the motion and four against. The city council's representatives put up a very strong protest on the ground that the City would lose money, but the conference was otherwise unanimously in favour of handing the metropolitan area over to the Minister for Works for the purpose of collecting and distributing the license fees. I beg to move—

That the Bill be discharged.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): Of course I assume that the Government can deal as they like with their own Bill, but I object most strongly to the reasons given by the Colonial Secretary that any action of this House should be taken as an excuse for the attitude now adopted by the Government. The Minister tells us now that the Government meant in connection with this Bill to make an extra subsidy to the country roads boards. This House had no objection to that whatever, nor can I see any reasonable excuse in the action this House has taken for withdrawing that subsidy. If the intended subsidy is now withheld, it will be an act of penalty so to speak for this House daring to try to improve a Government Bill. I happen to know that influence was brought to bear on certain

local authorities in the country that they might get their representatives to support this Bill on the strength of this intended subsidy. I do not think that is a proper course for any Government to take.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It has been pretty futile.

The Colonial Secretary: Do you accuse the Government of that?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I do not, but by some means the impression was sent through the country because I myself had representations made to me by officials of country roads boards that in order to secure this additional subsidy of some £2,000 or £3,000 it would be perhaps desirable to swallow any Bill at all rather than lose to them their share of the additional subsidy. I say to the Government straight that if the funds of the country will admit of a further subsidy to the local authorities they are in duty bound to grant it, and any action on the part of this House with regard to a particular provision in the Bill would not alter the ground for that intended subsidy. The provision for transferring to the Minister the control of traffic in the City is entirely a separate provision from the parts of the Bill which refer to the country local authorities and any action of this House with regard to that special provision affords no warrant on which the Government should punish the country local authorities. I say this House is bound to prevent the intrusion of the Government into one department of municipal government in the City, and the action of the Government will be construed into a petulant desire to punish the innocent country roads boards.

The Colonial Secretary: Not at all.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I was very sorry to hear the speech from the Minister and I hope that when the Government look calmly into the matter, they will come to the conclusion that if the funds will admit of the subsidy they intended to give to these country roads boards being paid, by all means that extra subsidy should be given.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I want to protest against the action of the Government in withdrawing this Bill.

There is nothing wrong with the measure as it affects country local authorities, and so far as I can see the only alteration that has been made affecting the country is in the direction of indicating that the Minister is not going to have things all his own way. The House disagreed with the provision in this connection. I object to the childish action of the Government which is worthy of nothing more than a parcel of school boys in withdrawing the Bill simply because the clauses dealing with the metropolitan area have been struck out. I raise this protest because I think that the Government's action is just the action of a lot of school boys.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): As one of the members of the metropolitan Province I have not the least objection to the withdrawal of this Bill, although I think that if the amendments which are on the Notice Paper had been carried, the Bill would have been a useful one. I do not see why the Government should withdraw it. If their method of signifying their disapproval of the decision of the House that the metropolitan area should not become, so to speak, an appendage of the Minister for Works, is in withdrawing the Bill I have nothing to say against it, and I will not vote against the motion. At the same time I am firmly of opinion that if the amendments had been carried, notice of which appear in the Notice Paper, it would have been a useful Bill and a good one for the country districts. I sympathise with Mr. Cullen and Mr. Piesse and other country members on the position in which they find themselves, being robbed of a workable Bill because this Council objected to a bureaucratic system being established within the limits of the metropolitan area. I support the motion of the leader of the House.

Question put and passed; Bill discharged.

BILLS (8)—FIRST READING.

1. Roads Act Amendment.
2. District Fire Brigades Act Amendment (No. 2).

3. Permanent Reserves.
 4. Government Tramways (No. 2).
 5. Workers' Homes Act Amendment.
 6. Employment Brokers Act Amendment.
 7. Roads Closure.
 8. Perth Streets Dedication.
- Received from the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—STATUTES COMPILATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 5th December; Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

First Schedule:

Hon. D. G. GAWLER moved an amendment—

That in line 4 of sub-paragraph 1 of paragraph (a) of Clause 1, the word "four" be struck out and "three" inserted in lieu.

The effect would be to reduce the amount payable in case of death by £100. In New South Wales the corresponding amount payable was £200, in England it was £150, in New Zealand £200, South Australia £200, Queensland £200, and Tasmania £100, so that members would see in some cases the schedule provided as much as 200 per cent. more than was provided in other States and 175 per cent. more than the amount provided in England. The cost of living was greater here and wages were higher, but there should not be such an enormous increase.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In a previous clause the amount which the worker might earn to enable him to come under the provision was increased to £300; at present the Act provided that the amount should be £250. If the Committee were to be consistent, at least we should make some advance in the amount proposed by Mr. Gawler. Personally he thought the amount in the Bill was fair. In New

Zealand the amount was £500, here the Bill provided £600.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: The limit was £500 in New Zealand but the amount corresponding to that provided in the paragraph referred to in New Zealand was £200.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The amendment would bring the amount back to precisely the amount provided in the Act at the present time.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: The present Act provided £200.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The amount should stand as printed, but if members were against that he hoped the Committee would not go below the amount suggested by Mr. Gawler. Wages were higher in this State, and the cost of living greater, therefore it was not unreasonable to pass the amount provided in the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER moved a further amendment—

That in line 6 of sub-paragraph 1 of paragraph (a) of Clause 1, the word "six" be struck out and "four" inserted in lieu.

In New South Wales the amount provided was £400, in England the limit was £300, in New Zealand £500, in South Australia £300, Queensland £400, and Tasmania £200.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Had Mr. Gawler proposed £500 that amount would be somewhere nearer the mark, for he recognised there was no hope of the amount remaining £600 as proposed in the Bill. In New Zealand the amount was £500, and wages here were higher than in New Zealand; in Great Britain the amount was £300, a reasonable compromise would be £500.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: It was to be hoped that the amendment would be carried; £400 was a large sum of money, it was given as a free insurance when there was no negligence on the part of the employer. There was nothing to prevent the worker putting by 6d. or 1s. a week and insuring himself to supplement the amount that must be paid by the employer. He would like to see the amount £1,000 if a life was lost, but could the

industries of the State stand this amount? The proposal was a great extension in every respect, and members should not ask too much. The amendment meant 20 per cent. more in the rates of insurance.

Hon. J. E. DODD: So far as the Bill had yet gone there was very little extension of privileges, although the operations of the measure were extended to a more numerous body of workers. It was an easy matter for the worker to take out an insurance policy if he had the money to pay for it, but the majority of workers, especially those engaged in hazardous occupations, had not the money with which to do that. There were so many calls for other things, medical fees, friendly society contributions, and continual subscriptions for the relief of needy people that the workers had very little to spare. On the goldfields there was scarcely a fortnightly pay but a subscription was taken up for some widow or some poor fellow who had been rendered incapable of working. In reference to the Employers' Liability Act, only three years wages at the outside could be recovered under that statute, and that was very little more than the £400 which could be obtained under the present Act, whilst, so far as the common law was concerned, it might be said that it did not exist in relation to compensation for injuries. The worker was practically out of court at common law.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: It was impossible to accept the arguments that the worker was so ground down that he could do nothing to assist himself. This country was a working man's paradise, in which higher wages were paid than in any other part of Australia, where the worker was able to patronise picture shows and entertainments of all kinds and where one could go to a racecourse and see the working men enjoying themselves to their hearts' content, and forming one of the best dressed crowds in any part of Australia. He was glad that the working men had all those advantages, but for Mr. Dodd to say that the worker had so many burdens to shoulder that he could do nothing for himself was too absurd.

altogether. It was true he had his subscriptions to friendly societies and other bodies, but for them he obtained free medical attention and medicine, and the Committee could not be asked to believe that he could not put by a shilling a week to procure additional insurance for himself. As we increased these payments we increased the cost of production and that meant increasing the cost of living which would all come back on the worker. The State was doing very well in compelling the employer to give his employees a free insurance policy for £400.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: This question must not be looked at from the point of view of mineowners and rich companies. The Bill extended to all classes of employers and the liability would fall on some men not so well able to make insurance provision as the men they employed. The alteration of the amount from £400 to £600 would apply not only in cases of death and total disablement, but to every description of accident, because the Second Schedule showed what compensation a man would receive for every particular class of injury. If the £600 remained in the Bill it would apply to that schedule as well, so that for the most trifling accidents there would be an increase of 50 per cent. in this free insurance policy.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The Committee were dealing only with the amount payable in case of death, not with the amount payable in cases of permanent incapacity. The liability of £600 would be payable only to those who were absolute dependants. For those who were not left absolutely dependent only a proportionate amount was given, and that would be fixed by the resident magistrate. Hon. members might think £600 too unreasonable, but £400 would be equally unreasonable.

Amendment (to strike out "six") put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL moved an amendment—

That the word "five" be inserted in lieu of the word "six" struck out.

The wages all round in New Zealand, where £500 was paid, were lower than

those in Western Australia, whilst in Great Britain, where £300 was paid, they were just about one half what they were in this State. Mr. Moss seemed to think that the wage earners were well able to put by a little money for a rainy day, but he defied any man on the goldfields to live reasonably, pay his debts, and put by even one shilling a week on a wage of 10s. per day. He admitted that £400 in Perth was of perhaps greater value than £400 paid to dependants on the Eastern Goldfields, but it must be remembered that wages and the cost of living had increased since the existing Act was passed.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: One is the cause of the other.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Moss had said that the workers would have to pay for the increased liability of the employer through an increase in the cost of living. He was satisfied that they would have to pay, but the Committee had to consider what was fair and reasonable compensation, and he considered £500 little enough.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: If all the employers were gold mining or timber companies, one could understand the suggestion for a compromise at £500, but the Bill now applied to all classes of employers including farmers, and a farmer might find himself liable for an amount which was greater than he earned in the whole year. If an employee was killed on a farm the employer would be absolutely ruined.

Hon. F. Davis: He can cover himself by insurance.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: That was so, but those men would not insure; they would take the risk and they would be ruined.

Hon. B. C. O'BRIEN: The Bill aimed more at industries such as the timber and mining industries where the risks were great, but opposition was raised on account of the pastoral and agricultural industries where the risks were very small. In the latter case, as the accidents would be only 10 per cent., the premiums would be very light.

Amendment (to insert "five" put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	10
Noes	14

Majority against	..	4
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AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornell
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. A. G. Jenkins
Hon. C. McKenzie	(Teller).
Hon. E. McLarty	

Amendment thus negatived.

Amendment (to insert "four" put and passed.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER moved a further amendment—

That in lines 6 and 7 of paragraph (b) of Clause 1 the words "ten shillings" be struck out.

This paragraph dealt with total or partial incapacity resulting from an injury, and provided that the weekly payment should not exceed £2 10s. In New South Wales, England, South Australia, and Queensland the weekly payment was £1, and in Tasmania it was £1 10s. In New Zealand the provision was on a separate basis. The Act in operation in Western Australia provided for a payment of £2, and the object of the amendment was to restore the weekly payment to that figure which, even then, was 10s. higher than the highest paid in any other State.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In New Zealand under the latest Act the payment was £2 10s. The paragraph provided for 50 per cent. of a man's earnings, not to exceed £2 10s. a week. If a man earned £5, surely he was entitled to half his wages in a case of total incapacity. During the ten years since the passage of the

Act the cost of living had gone up considerably.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER moved a further amendment—

That in the last line of paragraph (b) of Clause 1 the words "six hundred pounds" be struck out with a view to inserting "three hundred pounds" in lieu.

In England there was no limit to the total liability of the employer in respect to total or partial incapacity for work resulting from accident. In New Zealand the limit was £500, in South Australia it was £300, in Queensland £400, and in Tasmania and New South Wales £200. We provided in our Act for a limit of £300. His object was to amend the paragraph to leave it the same as in existing legislation.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: While we should reduce the amount from £600, in view of the fact that £400 was the limit in Queensland we should fix it at £400 for this State.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It would seem that the further we progressed the worse the position was getting. The amendment would make the position worse than it was in the other States. The United Kingdom had no limit, and there was no limit in Alberta, Canada. As to New South Wales, there was a fund contributed to by both the State and employers which might possibly account for the smallness of the sum.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Will you make it £400?

Hon. J. E. DODD: That would be better than £300.

Amendment (to strike out "six hundred pounds") put and passed.

On motion by Hon. D. G. GAWLER, "Four hundred pounds" was inserted in lieu.

Hon. M. L. MOSS moved a further amendment—

That paragraph (a) of the proviso to Clause 1 be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—"If the incapacity lasts less than two weeks no compensation shall be payable in respect of the first week, and."

This would bring the Bill into line with the Imperial Act, and would provide that if the incapacity lasted over two weeks compensation would date from the date of the accident.

Hon. J. E. DODD: There would be no objection on his part to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM moved a further amendment—

That paragraph (b) of the proviso be struck out.

This provided that in the weekly payments of a worker who was under 21 years of age, and whose average weekly earnings were less than 20s., 100 per cent. should be substituted for 50 per cent. If a man was earning 15s. a week instead of receiving 22s. 6d., under the new provision he would get 30s. a week. That would be a strong argument against employing young people under 21 years of age. It was a fair thing that the paragraph be struck out.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It might be pointed out that it would be only when a person was earning less than 20s. a week that the 100 per cent. would apply.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Never mind the age; leave it at the money.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If the amendment were carried it would be very hard on apprentices who worked at a low rate of wage.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: There was no desire to press the amendment, and by leave of the Committee he would withdraw it.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. CORNELL moved a further amendment—

That the following stand as paragraph (d) of the proviso:—"In addition to the compensation payable under this section there shall be payable a sum equal to the reasonable expenses incurred in respect to medical or surgical attendance (including first aid) on the worker in respect of his injury, but not exceeding £1."

Hon. M. L. MOSS: Is it worth while adding that?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It was worth while. It was word for word with a

similar section in the latest New Zealand measure. It would not affect the present conditions on the Golden Mile. A worker had the right to this provision which was a liberal one and which should be placed in the measure.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved a further amendment—

That the following words be added to Clause 4:—"and shall absolutely cease unless he submits himself for examination within one month after being required so to do."

These words were in the present Act, and it seemed essential that some provision of this kind should be inserted. If a worker deliberately refused to submit himself for examination the clause would provide his right to compensation being suspended until such examination had been made.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: This was an important omission and if the amendment were not carried the employer would have claims hanging over his head for all time. In the existing Act it was provided that if the injured worker did not within a month submit himself to the medical examination he lost his right to the compensation. There could be no reason for altering the section in the existing Act on that point.

Hon. J. E. DODD: On the face of it the amendment seemed reasonable, but he could hardly say how it would act when it became law. The wording of the clause was taken from the South Australian Act, and it was word for word also with the English Act.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: But the words sought to be put in are in our existing Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. J. E. DODD: It was just possible that a worker might be asked to submit himself to a medical examination when something was standing in the way. He would not like to see anything go into the measure which would work unjustly to either side. It was possible that an employer might desire to submit a Kalgoorlie worker to a Perth doctor, and in such event the amendment might impose some hardship.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: The practice followed by the Perth Electric Tramways Company was to send their own doctor immediately upon notification that one of their workers had been injured. It was highly desirable that from the outset the employer should know exactly the condition of the injured man. This practice followed by the Tramways Company had become a custom with all big employers. The amendment was a distinctly reasonable one.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 10—Investment in Insurance Society:

Hon. M. L. MOSS: This clause read as follows:—

Any sum which under this schedule is ordered to be invested may be invested in the purchase of an annuity from the State Insurance Department or a mutual life insurance society approved by the Magistrate investing such sum.

Of course there was no State Insurance department in Western Australia. Would the Minister explain why this provision had been included? Was it contemplated that such department should be initiated this session? If not, it would be necessary to make an amendment.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The drafter of the Bill evidently had contemplated the foundation of a State insurance department, but as there was no such department there was no occasion for the reference to it. He moved—

That in line 2 the words "the State Insurance Department or" be struck out.

Amendment passed.

Clause 12—Periodical medical examinations:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved—

That the following be added at the end of the clause, "And shall absolutely cease unless he submits himself for examination within one month after being required so to do."

Hon. J. CORNELL: There had been better reason for this amendment when made in Clause 4. Unfortunately many of the accidents sustained called for attention by specialists, and in the past Western Australia had not had a large num-

ber of first-class specialists. It might easily happen that as a result of an injury a worker would require to go outside the State for the attention of a specialist, in which case the amendment would work a hardship. So far as he could see, that was the chief objection to the proposed amendment.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: There was no difference whatever in principle between the proposed amendment in this clause and the selfsame amendment as inserted in Clause 4. The medical practitioner would be provided and paid by the employer, and the employer would not do this unless he was dissatisfied with the certificate of the medical practitioner acting for the worker. Surely if the employer was making weekly payments he was entitled to have the opinion of his own doctor.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Clause 13 provided for the making of regulations by the Governor in respect to these medical examinations.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 16—Lump sum in redemption of weekly payments:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved an amendment—

That in line 1 the word "three" be struck out and "six" inserted in lieu.

It would be scarcely possible to determine within three months that the injuries sustained by a worker were of a permanent nature.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In a large proportion of cases of permanent injury the permanency was easily determinable within three months. If a man was permanently injured, why should he be required to wait six months for a settlement?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: He is getting his full weekly allowance all the time.

Hon. J. E. DODD: But the sufferer might wish to get away.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: What about the employer?

Hon. J. E. DODD: The employer would have to pay just the same.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: The provision is six months in the Imperial Act.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Yes, and it was six months in our existing Act. At the same time he failed to see why an em-

ployee permanently injured should not be able to get a settlement at the end of three months. If the man was malingering, the doctor would discover it long before that.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: This provision applied not only to permanent injuries but to partial incapacity, which might last for, say, twelve months. A man suffering such an injury could come along at the end of three months and demand a lump sum. If the period were made six months, many safeguards would be provided which were not offered by the shorter period. It was regrettable to have to keep on reiterating the fact, but the truth was this legislation had been a very fruitful source of malingering. He had personal experience of a number of remarkable cases. A man was struck with a piece of coal. The employer was sued, and the man appeared to be paralysed. He got his compensation, and two or three weeks afterwards he was walking about. If the case was legitimate no master would stand in the way of ending his liability. A lapse of time was necessary so that there would be an opportunity to detect a case of malingering.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: A considerable time was necessary to ascertain whether some cases were genuine. When the accident was legitimate no objection would be raised by an employer to an opportunity to end his liability. He knew of a man who fell out of a train. He lay on his back for seven months. The doctor learned that a similar case had occurred in another State, and, on making inquiries, he ascertained that the same man had secured compensation similarly before. As soon as the man found that the game was played out, off he went. He had heard of another man who received handsome compensation, and a month later he was working as lustily as anyone.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: There was a proviso setting out that parties might come to terms the day after the accident. That was an addition to the present Act.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. M. L. MOSS moved a further amendment—

That the words in Clause 16 "Either the worker or" be struck out.

The Imperial Act and the existing Act in this State provided that after weekly payments had continued for six months the liability might be redeemed by the payment of a lump sum. In this instance it was proposed that the payment might be redeemed on the application of the employer or the employee. The basis of such a provision should be to allow the employer to get rid of his liability. The reason which induced the Committee to agree to the previous amendment should lead to the passing of this amendment, because the clause as printed would be another means of introducing malingering.

Hon. J. E. DODD: To say that an employer should have the right to get a weekly payment commuted and to deny that right to the employee would be a grave injustice that no one should tolerate. The clause was taken from the South Australian Act which, excepting the Victorian measure, was the latest he knew of. What a power would be placed in the hands of an unscrupulous employer if he alone had the right of deciding whether the payment should be redeemed! Could anything more pitiful be imagined than the case of a man irretrievably injured waiting until the weekly payments equalled the full sum. He could not realise anything more pitiful. If a man got a lump sum he might be able to do something to help to tide over his difficulties.

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

Ayes	15
Noes	9

Majority for	..	6
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AYES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. C. A. Piesse
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. D. McKenzie	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. E. McLarty	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Consequentially on an amendment already agreed to, he desired to make provision for the recovery of surgical and medical attendance fees. He moved an amendment—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 25 of the schedule:—

"Any money payable under this Act in respect of the expenses of the medical or surgical attendance on an injured worker may be recovered by action in the local Court in accordance with this Act at the suit of that worker or at the suit of any person by whom the said expenses or any of them have been incurred, or at the suit of any person entitled to receive any payment in respect of the said attendance.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is that all for the pound?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The schedule did not provide how compensation under the new proviso was to be recovered. This amendment would make that provision.

Amendment put and passed; the schedule as amended agreed to.

Second and Third Schedules agreed to.
Fourth Schedule:

Hon. J. E. DODD: This schedule would have to be struck out as it was consequential on a previous amendment.

Schedule put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

Second Reading—Amendment (six months) carried.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: This is the second time I have had the pleasure of submitting this Bill for the consideration of hon. members. On the last occasion and on the first occasion it met with very short shrift at

the hands of hon. members. I hope, however, that on this occasion wiser counsels will prevail and that the Bill will find a place on the statute-book. Last year the main grounds of objection were, first, that the cost of administration of the measure would be heavy, and secondly, that the Bill practically amounted to the appointment of another Cabinet Minister. The second contention or objection was based briefly on the first proposition, and was obviously absurd. It is said that an enormous amount would be spent in fees, as much as was paid to the first Cabinet Minister appointed under Responsible Government. That was a very ridiculous statement to make and can only have been given birth to by extremely erratic imagination. Whatever may have been thought then, this contention can no longer hold good, for there is a provision in the Bill that the total amount of the fees shall be limited to £1,000 a year. It may not reach £1,000, but members can rest assured that it certainly cannot exceed that sum. The travelling expenses are not likely to be unduly high. When we come to consider that the works which will be inquired into will be those the estimated cost of which will be in excess of £20,000, there is not a vast number of works constructed in Western Australia which exceed that figure, and they would be very poorly paid Cabinet Ministers indeed who would receive or enjoy the guinea a day provided under the Bill. New South Wales has seven members on its committee, and they receive—the chairman three guineas a day, and the other members two guineas a day each, or a total of fifteen guineas a day for every day they sit. In Western Australia, under the Bill, we would have five members on the committee, four would be paid one guinea a day, and the other one would be a Cabinet Minister, who would receive no remuneration whatever beyond his ordinary salary. The total fees in Western Australia for a sitting would be, as I said before, four guineas a day, and when we take into consideration that the Minister would not be paid, it would mean less than one-third of the amount paid for a sitting in New South Wales.

The whole cost of administration in New South Wales for 1910 was £6,200. That included fees, travelling expenses, shorthand writing, office expenses, and salaries. To make a comparison between the public works undertaken in New South Wales and those undertaken in Western Australia, take the railways, for instance, because it mostly happens that the cost of the construction of railways is in excess of £20,000. I take it this committee would be engaged principally in connection with the investigation of the justification of the construction of railways. In New South Wales in 1910-11 the expenditure on railways was £2,471,285, while in Western Australia the expenditure in the same year was only £529,054, or a little less than one-fifth. Thus in Western Australia, with less than one-third of the fees to pay and between one-fourth and one-fifth of the works to be investigated, the cost of the administration and upkeep of this particular board could not be a very high figure. The Bill is framed on the New South Wales Act, which has been in existence for fully a quarter of a century. It was re-enacted twelve years ago, and I think we may take it from that fact that it still has the approval and best wishes of the people of New South Wales.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They cannot get rid of it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There has not been an attempt, and as I have already stated, the law was re-enacted twelve years ago. Victoria has also a public works committee, but that public works committee simply investigates railway proposals. It does not go outside of that. The New South Wales Act makes provision for the investigation of all works in excess of £20,000. It is not so in Victoria. Recently in South Australia the Victorian method was adopted, and the reference takes place to members of the House of all proposals in South Australia in excess of £20,000. During the present session select committees have been appointed for the purpose of investigating railways and I must admit, and the Government admit, the committees have done very valuable work, especially the committee in connection

with the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway. There was a recommendation made by the committee inquiring into that line, and that committee altered the decision of Cabinet, because the Government recognised the advice was of the right kind, and those who tendered the advice were actuated by a conscientious desire to serve the best interests of the country.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Will this Bill apply to works already authorised but not yet commenced?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. It might be said that the committee would be composed of a majority in favour of the Government, but I do not think the fact that even if there was a majority, which there would be in the first place in support of the Government of the day, that circumstance would at all influence their judgment. It was not so in connection with the select committee on the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway. There was a majority, I think, against the Government on that select committee. Still, the question whether they were supporters of the Government or not was not taken into consideration and their recommendation was accepted by the Government of the day. The Government under present conditions would have two representatives in the Assembly and the Opposition would have one, under the proportional system of voting.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is, the Government would have three out of five.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Government would have two in the Assembly.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: And the Minister.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is three, and the Opposition would have two, for we may rely on it that the member selected from this House would not be a supporter of the present Government.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The Government would carry everything.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Does the hon. member really think this would be a faction vote?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Of course, an absolute fiasco.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If such a position did arise, no doubt the

committee would serve no useful purpose at all, but I do not think that could possibly arise.

Hon. M. L. Moss: It would be party voting just the same as in the Assembly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: On the other hand the select committee is certainly not the best means of obtaining an unbiassed opinion. It comes into existence owing to the dissatisfaction of a member with one particular work in his district, or perhaps because some particular work is constructed in another district to which he objects. The whole thing is born in prejudice as a rule, when a select committee undertakes an investigation of that nature.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Why not a non-political advisory board?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Besides, select committees would not have the time to investigate all the works the cost of which exceeded £20,000 each. They could only meet while Parliament was sitting, and probably the main work would require to be done during recess. It might be asked why we should not continue with the Advisory Board. The answer to that is that those gentlemen are highly paid officials, and I think they can serve the State much better in carrying out the duties of their offices rather than in travelling round the country making investigations in connection with the necessity or otherwise for the construction of proposed new lines of railway. Then again, the Advisory Board would report to the Minister, whilst, quite differently, a Standing Committee of Public Works would report to Parliament. This standing committee would be representative of both Houses of Parliament, and would be able to furnish hon. members with all possible information in connection with a contemplated project. This Bill is practically the same as the one introduced last year. The only difference is that the chairman will be a member of the Executive Council, and in his absence the deputy chairman will be paid a guinea and a half instead of a guinea for each sitting. The provision which appeared in last year's Bill making arrangements for a sectional committee has been deleted, because it has been recog-

nised that it is better that these works should be investigated by the whole of the members of the committee than by a section of the committee. I dealt with this Bill at great length last year, and I have placed the principal points before hon. members this afternoon. I therefore beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. M. L. MOSS (West): I think the hon. member who has just resumed his seat recognises to the very fullest that the exhaustive debate which took place in this Chamber last session furnished all the arguments that could be furnished in favour of the Bill, and he knows the overwhelming case that was set up against it.

Hon. J. Cornell: Time maketh no alterations.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: Time can make no alteration in the attitude of those who were in opposition to the Bill then. So far as I am concerned, I feel as strongly to-day as I did then, that this is an expensive piece of legislation which is going to do no good at all, beyond the fact that it is going to give to certain members of Parliament, a majority of whom will be in another place, a large accession to their Parliamentary salary and put them in receipt of a salary greater in amount than is received by the first Minister under responsible Government. It would be idle to waste the time of the House in repeating *de novo* all the arguments that were then adduced. Hon. members have only to turn up *Hansard* for last session and they will find that all the arguments then put forward against the Bill stand out as prominently against it now as they did then. The Colonial Secretary recognises, of course, that this Bill having come from another place, he must perform his duty to the party and introduce it here, but is it not idle to suppose that hon. members are going to reverse the overwhelming vote given against the measure last session? In those circumstances, and in view of the desire that all business should be finished by Friday next in order to bring to an end an unusually long ses-

sion, I do not propose to repeat all the arguments against it, because such repetition could serve no good purpose. I beg to move an amendment—

That the word "now" be struck out, and "this day six months" added to the motion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	8

Majority for 9

AYES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. D. G. Gawler
Hon. E. McLarty	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornall
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	

Amendment thus passed; Bill rejected.

BILL—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

The Assembly having disagreed to three amendments made by the Council, the reasons for the same now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 2: Strike out paragraphs (b) and (c), and insert the following paragraph, to stand as paragraph (b): "For loading and unloading vessels owned by the State Government":

The CHAIRMAN: The reason given by the Legislative Assembly for disagreeing to this amendment was, "The provisions are required for the satisfactory working of the business of the port."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority against .. 13

AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornall
	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. C. McKenzie	(Teller).

Question thus negatived; Council's amendment insisted on.

No. 2; Clause 3—Strike out this clause:

The CHAIRMAN: The reason given for not agreeing to the amendment was that the provisions were required for the convenience and protection of persons doing business at the Port.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and negatived, the Council's amendment insisted on.

No. 3; Clause 4—Strike out this clause:

The CHAIRMAN: The reason set out by the Assembly for not agreeing to this amendment was that the clause was requisite as consequent upon the adoption of amendment No. 1.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and negatived, the Council's amendment insisted on.

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

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 5th December.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): This is a small Bill and probably an inoffensive Bill, but at the same time it is quite unnecessary. True, it may effect the saving of a little expense, but I do not think the saving is warranted. The Bill amends Subsection 2 of Section 24 of the principal Act of 1911 by omitting the words "once in every year" and inserting in place thereof "once at least in every three years." It is provided in Subsection 2 of Section 24 as amended by the Act of 1911 that an amalgamation of each roll with its supplements and a subsequent reprint of such amalgamated roll shall be made once in every year. The amendment in the Bill now before us is that it shall be made every three years. While that may be good as applied to the Legislative Assembly, whose elections take place every three years, it is not good as applied to this House; because it will be a decided inconvenience to members of this House when going up for election if they have to deal with the roll and all the supplements for three years without having an amalgamated roll. It will be very inconvenient to have to go through all these numerous supplements extending over three years. The present provision is that these rolls shall be amalgamated and reprinted once every year.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: What about the expense?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Expense must be incurred. I think the Minister says it is about £1,000 a year, but if we are to have proper inspection of rolls and proper elections for this House, it is a necessary expense. Every consideration has been given to the Legislative Assembly in drafting this amendment and apparently no consideration was given to the rolls for the Legislative Council, and in justice to the Legislative Council I consider the Act should remain as it is at present. I did not quite catch from the Minister the reason why Clause 3 is pro-

vided for re-enacting the words "as soon after the last day of March, June, September, and December in each year as practicable and not later than the last day of the month next following," which it is proposed to substitute for the words "as often as instructed by the Chief Electoral Officer." The original Act was amended in 1907 by providing that supplementary rolls should be printed and issued just as often as instructed by the Chief Electoral Officer, and not every quarter.

The Colonial Secretary: The amendment now is to provide for supplementary rolls being printed every quarter.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I think the amendment providing that they should be printed as often as instructed by the Chief Electoral Officer was brought in by myself in 1907 at the request of the Chief Electoral Officer. However, my objection is to Clause 2 of this Bill. Apparently the only reason for the amendment is on the ground of the expense of printing an amalgamated roll once every year. I would point out that if we leave it at three years there may be two Legislative Council elections in that period, and not to have decent rolls is not a fair thing and not conducive to a good poll or a clean vote at an election.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): The point raised by Mr. Connolly in regard to the Council elections is a very important one. There may be two Legislative Council ordinary elections within the period of the closed general roll, and to depend on perhaps eight supplementary rolls would be exceedingly inconvenient. The most practical solution would be certain discretionary power with the Chief Electoral Officer so that he could, in good time before a general election, have a consolidated roll printed. If that cannot be incorporated in the Bill, it would be well for the Government to withdraw the measure and bring in some such Bill as will give that discretion to the Chief Electoral Officer who is a non-party official. I am satisfied it would be a practical solution of the difficulty. It is not desirable to have £1,000 spent every year if it can be avoided; on the other hand, it is very undesirable to have an election carried

out with a main roll and six or eight supplementary rolls all of which may have to be examined for the proper carrying out of the election. I am satisfied the Bill will be a complete disappointment and will give satisfaction to nobody.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): I agree with the remarks made by the preceding speakers in regard to the rolls affecting the Legislative Council. From my experience of the working of election matters it is necessary to have all the rolls in one roll in an amalgamated form, because where there are supplements it often happens that poll clerks and even presiding officers honestly say that persons' names are not on the roll simply because they have not looked up the supplementary rolls. It is very confusing to all concerned. For that reason, seeing that an election for this House takes place every two years, it is advisable that a roll in the amalgamated form should be printed by the Chief Electoral Officer. I shall move to make an alteration to that effect when we are in Committee. I am satisfied that though this Bill may work well for the Assembly it will not work well so far as the Council is concerned.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East): I support the second reading of the Bill from very much the same view as Mr. Davis. It appears to me that Clause 2 may be amended by adding a proviso that rolls for the Legislative Council shall be compiled not less than three months before each ordinary election for the Legislative Council. That should meet all objections.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but in doing so I desire to say a word in condemnation of the past administration in regard to the compilation of the rolls. I do not exempt any Government in this regard.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: It is not the Government; it is in the hands of the Chief Electoral Officer.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It is not a party matter.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If it was not for the party activity displayed at election

time a vast percentage of electors would be disfranchised. Too much consideration cannot be given to the compilation of clean and up-to-date rolls, and no question of expense should stand in the way.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Then you are not in favour of Clause 2?

Hon. J. CORNELL: No. In the last election campaign when I was a candidate there were conditions prevailing during the enrolment that should not be tolerated. Had it not been for the activity of the party with which I was associated, many would have been disfranchised. We were responsible for getting 850 names added to one roll and 900 to the other roll on the Eastern Goldfields, otherwise the rolls would not have been satisfactory from our point of view or from a Liberal point of view. Both parties exercised a considerable amount of activity, and the amount of correspondence thrown out to the electors was enough to stagger any intelligent person who had any experience in the matter of enrolment. There was another matter at the last election. The municipal valuation was taken as the qualification, but in Boulder they took the previous year's valuation, and those who were on for £3 on the municipal roll were to be struck off despite the fact that in the meantime they had built a house with £30 annual value.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): With regard to Clause 2, I am largely in sympathy with Mr. Cornell in wishing to see the amalgamation of the rolls made at shorter intervals than three years. Of course it is provided that they may be amalgamated at least once in every three years, but it is possible that the Chief Electoral Officer may take advantage of the full three years. My experience of the supplementary rolls is that it is a great inconvenience to dovetail them into the ordinary rolls, and every candidate experiences this difficulty. Of course there is a separate list published alphabetically, but it is difficult to read that with

the other rolls, and it is not an easy matter for a candidate to find out whether he is on the roll, because he often forgets the existence of all these supplementary rolls. If there are half a dozen of these it might be easy to mislay one, and you must make sure that you have them all when you are looking after the claims of electors. It is provided under Section 24 of the Act of 1907 that the rolls are to be printed and issued under the hand of the Chief Electoral Officer whenever he thinks fit. I think the word "rolls" in that section means general rolls, not supplementary rolls. However any amendment of the law which will make it necessary to issue the supplementary rolls more frequently than every three years will receive my support. I cannot see my way to agree to Clause 2.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): The position under this Bill is that the Chief Electoral Officer will be obliged to publish the rolls, that is, the whole of the amalgamated rolls, at least once in every three years. Under the present law he must publish them once every twelve months, and as he says they lie on the office shelves and this work costs £1,000 and it serves no purpose.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Except when there is a by-election.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Under Section 24 of the Electoral Act of 1907, the rolls are to be printed and issued under the hands of the Chief Electoral Officer whenever he thinks fit, that is whenever there is necessity. I cannot see how any abuse is likely to arise unless it is done deliberately, because the whole responsibility is thrown upon the Chief Electoral Officer under that section. It will be noticed that this section refers to the rolls, and everywhere else when it is desired to indicate supplementary rolls, the word "supplementary" is used.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Does it not say to amalgamate them?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Section 26 provides for the supplementary rolls being published, and Section 28 says that supplementary rolls may be printed in an amalgamated form. There is no

amendment to that. The roll means an amalgamated roll.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Why does this amendment say the amalgamation shall take place at least once in every three years?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Because the Act of 1911 states that the amalgamation shall take place every year. That is mandatory, now it will be optional, and it will rest with the Chief Electoral Officer to print the rolls more frequently than once in every three years.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—KALGOORLIE AND BOULDER RACING CLUBS ACT AMEND- MENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill and requires very little explanation, and as no great principle is involved, I do not anticipate that very much of the time of the House will be taken up by its consideration. For various reasons it has been decided by those who control horse racing on the goldfields to reduce the number of racing dates. At present the three registered race clubs on the goldfields held meetings in March, June, August, and September. A conference was held between these clubs and the W.A. Turf Club, which controls the whole of the registered racing in this State, and at that conference it was agreed that the goldfields clubs should hold meetings at two periods of the year only, April-May and August-September. Section 38 of the Act, under which these clubs were established, provides that the books of the clubs shall be balanced up to the 30th April each year, and Section 39 provides further that a copy of the annual statement shall be transmitted to the Registrar General by the 1st June of each year. The clubs in a recent communication pointed out it was impracticable to balance their books during the holding of a race meeting. It is proposed, therefore, in this short Bill to amend the principal Act by de-

leting the words "30th April" and substituting "a date to be fixed," and consequentially amend the date by which the annual statement has to be forwarded to the Registrar General. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): What I am going to say cannot be altogether foreign to the purpose of this Bill inasmuch as I understand one of its objects is to lessen the number of race meetings on the goldfields. What I desire to say is that I wish the Government would at some early period bring in a Bill dealing generally with racing in this State with a view to largely lessening the number of meetings.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Particularly the unregistered.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I was going to say particularly dealing with unregistered proprietary clubs and incidentally with the question of betting. I am one who firmly believes that these unregistered clubs exist solely for the benefit of the proprietors, and they are greatly to the detriment and against the interests of racing and of the public generally. Anyone who goes along St. George's-terrace on two or three days of the week will see that the thoroughfare is taken charge of, both on the roadway and on the footpath, by a number of men who, so far as I can gather, simply and solely meet there to get their bets settled and to indulge in betting. It cannot be said that it is a credit to the State that such a thing should be allowed to exist. I asked the Colonial Secretary a question in this House on this subject a little while ago, and he assured me that the Government intended to take the matter into consideration. I hope that they will deal with that matter, and deal with it as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—VICTORIA PARK TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading, said: The object of this Bill is to repeal clause 19 of the provisional order set out in the Victoria Park Tramways Act, 1904, as follows:—

The promoter shall pay to the Minister for Works an annual rent of one hundred and twenty pounds commencing from the time the promoter begins the construction of the tramways on Albany-road at the east of the causeway, being interest on the cost of strengthening and widening the causeway; such rent to be paid by equal half-yearly instalments on the first day of April and on the first day of October in every year. If at any time default is made by the promoter in payment of such instalment of rent, and such default continues for two weeks after such instalment becomes due the promoter shall be liable, without further notice, to a penalty of five pounds for every week or part of a week such instalment remains unpaid.

Under that clause the Victoria Park Municipal Council, who were the promoters of this tramway, have been paying £120 annually for the upkeep of the causeway. That sum approximately represents the amount of revenue derived by the Council from the operation of tramways. The Council borrowed £5,000 at 5 per cent. in connection with the construction of the trams: consequently they regard the charge of £120 a year as unfair, and in that contention the present Minister for Works and his predecessor in office concur. As members are aware the purchase of the Perth tramways by the Government has been arranged, and included in that purchase the Government have secured an option over the Victoria Park trams. The tramway company had intended exercising that option, and it is now the intention of the Government to do so. Members will notice that there is a clause in the Bill that on the completion of the option the moneys so provided by the Municipal Council

shall be applied by the council to any works or undertakings specified under the Municipal Corporations Act. This has been inserted in the Bill for this reason: The ratepayers of Victoria Park recently vetoed a proposal by the council for raising £5,000; it was known at the time that the tramway company proposed exercising the option of purchase, and it may be that the ratepayers were influenced in their decision not to permit further borrowing at that juncture, because they were aware that the council would be in possession of that sum of money in the near future from the sale of the trams. It is proposed therefore that the council may devote the money to municipal purposes, but a proviso is added, that before doing so the council shall treat it entirely as a new loan; that is to say, a poll of the ratepayers must be taken on the question after proper notice by the council of its intention, together with full particulars as to the proposed expenditure. That proviso has been thought necessary in order to protect the interests of the ratepayers. If the ratepayers refused to sanction the proposed expenditure it would have to remain locked up until the original £5,000 had matured. The object is to place the control of this money in the hands of the ratepayers. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: This Bill is required to give effect to the amalgamation brought about in the various water supply administrations which are now combined, and have been so combined during the last few

months, in one department. The only alterations effected by the Bill deal with the questions of administration and finance. The provision hitherto obtaining of the control of the Goldfields Water Supply being vested in a board consisting of the Minister for Works and two other members, one of whom must be an engineer, is continued under this Bill. The Water Boards Act which controls water supplies for towns outside those under the Goldfields Water Supply administration and the Metropolitan Water Supply contains provision that the supplies shall be controlled by the Minister alone or by a board. That policy is also continued in this measure. Experience has shown that it is sometimes desirable in the interests of efficiency and economy to vest the control of a particular supply in a board, and if such a course be deemed wise in respect of any particular supply it will be possible to adopt that principle in this Bill. An obvious omission from the existing Act is supplied in this Bill, by which the Governor-in-Council is empowered when the necessity arises to dissolve a board constituted under the Act. In regard to finance it is proposed that the gross earnings of the department shall be paid into Consolidated Revenue, and the money required for the department will be provided out of moneys appropriated by Parliament, as in the case of all other departments. The whole of the water supply operations of the State are thus brought immediately under the control of Parliament and consequently Parliament has as complete a check as possible. This has not been the case to the same extent in the past. Hitherto the revenue derived from the Metropolitan Water Supply was paid into a separate account in the Treasury, the money being applied direct to the defraying of expenses, and the payment of interest charges, etcetera, and any balance remaining over being, at the discretion of the board and the controlling Minister, devoted to construction works. It is not proposed in this Bill that anything of the kind shall continue. The whole of the revenue must go into the Treasury chest and if there is expenditure, as there will

be expenditure, it must be drawn out in the manner usual with other departments. The Water Supply Department will take over the construction, maintenance, etcetera, of wells, dams, tanks, and other sources of water supply required in connection with the development of the agricultural and pastoral resources of the State, and from these of course, very little revenue may be expected. The Bill directs that separate accounts shall be kept for each undertaking, necessary and proper charges being made in the books against every undertaking for interest and other charges which will be fixed by the Minister. Balance sheets showing the various accounts must be prepared annually and submitted to the Auditor General, whose reports will be made available to Parliament. The true position of any water supply undertaking will then be available to members of the House and to the public generally. One direct advantage from this will be that where any individual undertaking is found to be more than paying its way, the Minister will be in complete knowledge of its financial circumstances, and will thus be in a position to give consideration to the desirability of remitting or reducing, as the case may require, the charges borne by the consumers. I do not think there is any further information I can give members in connection with this Bill. It is purely what it purports to be, a measure to give effect to the recent amalgamation of the various departments, and I do not think that much objection to its provision will be found by hon. members. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. D. Connolly debate adjourned.

BILL—TIMBER LINES TRAFFIC.

Second Reading—Amendment (Six months) carried.

Debate resumed from the 21st November on the motion for the second reading and on amendment by Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom to strike out "now" and add "this day six months" to the motion.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): It is not my intention at this late stage of the proceedings to occupy the time of the House for more than a very few minutes, but in doing so I must look at that timber industry as being one of the most important in this State. I am rather surprised that there should be such hostility to a company like this. In view of the things that are happening, and the possible industrial trouble in the South-West, it is an unfortunate thing that at such a stage anything should be said or done which would tend to embitter or give colour to such trouble. I regret very much what has been said, not that I hold a brief for any particular company, but I realise that when any capitalists enter into enterprises in this State and thereby develop our resources they are entitled to every consideration. One might say that this particular company is almost the pioneer of the timber industry in Western Australia. Of course some would carry my memory back to the time when I was a little boy, but we do not wish to drag up ancient history like that. We may take the history of the industry for a period close on 40 years ago, and these companies have worked it up to its present stage.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The hon. member was a boy then.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: Quite so, but that is altogether beside the question. Unquestionably the goldfields are the thing that came along when the timber industry was going and gave the Colony such a lift as it never had before, and no one more than myself appreciates the finding of gold and the development of it, because it lifted the Colony out of its stagnation; but all along with that the timber industry was going, and I know that two-thirds of the money circulated 30 years ago in the South-West was through the timber industry—I do not say by Millar's combine, but I speak of the earlier stages of the industry, even when it was entered into by two men on top and another below, cutting the timber in that laborious manner in saw pits. What do we find when the goldfields have been developed? There is this difference between the timber and the gold, with all

respect to the gold, that when the gold has been taken out of the ground it is gone for all time, and it is up to the prospectors to find something more; but it is not so with timber. I think I have made use of the same words before. Timber trees have been maturing and going to waste for tens of thousands of years, and were they not cut down they would still go on. While the goldfields do not restore themselves once the gold is taken out, the sooner the timber is cut and turned into money the sooner will the young forest grow up and reproduce itself for us to go in and get it again. The question of tuart has cropped up very often. I say advisedly that while Western Australia wants a considerable amount of tuart, she will never require the whole of the amount of tuart which I can show any one in a few hours from here. I would rejoice to see some mills going in for that industry, more than there are, as I realise that, while we want some of the tuart, what we require is a mere bagatelle of what is down on the lakes about 40 miles from Bunbury. Why is it that this particular company should be in a way harassed by demanding that they should carry passengers and goods? It is obvious that they cannot carry passengers on trains loaded up with logs; there is no safety about it. Indeed there is no necessity for the Bill; because I can assure the House that any one who chooses to travel along these lines, if he is civil, can get pretty well everything he wants. I fail to see why we should turn a timber train into a passenger train. The whole thing astonishes me. I want to deal with this question as a South-West man. The timber industry to a very great extent has been the making of the South-West. What would the port of Bunbury be at the present time were it not for the existence of the timber? I believe it is true that the exports from Bunbury exceed the whole of the other exports from the Colony put together, and I think I am right in saying that Bunbury comes about fourth in tonnage in the whole of the Commonwealth. I think they stand about in this position—Sydney, Melbourne, Newcastle, and next Bunbury. That in itself shows this in-

dustry should be fostered. It has been said, and it is a dangerous thing and is calculated to lead to trouble, that this is a monopoly. It is no more a monopoly than some other things that have been characterised as monopolies. I need not allude to them, but we know they do not exist. But how can this be a monopoly when I make this statement, which can be borne out by facts, that there are a dozen different mills of greater or less output working in this State, and that this company or this corporation only totals about one-half of the output of the colony? And then we have to add to this dozen mills that are cutting timber, a mightier power, to wit the Government of Western Australia, who are cutting against the companies. So we have in addition something like a dozen different mills and two Government mills. It seems to me utterly ridiculous to say that it is a monopoly. It has been said that we can buy timber in Melbourne at a trifle less than we can buy it for in Fremantle. I deny it, and I know perfectly well that figures and books can be produced to prove it is false. But even if it is absolutely true, there is this startling fact that a few years ago butter was sold in London, tons and tons of it, at a less price than I could buy it for from the agents in the States where it was manufactured. Again, to come right straight home to business, I could buy Bunbury butter in Perth by the bulk and rail it back to Bunbury and get it at less price than I would pay for it at the Bunbury butter factory door. What was the reason for that? It was simply the surplus. I will undertake to say that if any contractor goes to one of these companies and asks for a quote for a huge quantity of scantling he will get it at a very much reduced price. There is always a great quantity of scantling which they have a difficulty to get rid of. Any one travelling on the South-West line can see huge mountains of floorboards stacked alongside the line, and I think they have been there for years. They have to cut this little stuff with the bigger orders, and it is obvious that they simply sell to Melbourne the surplus they cannot sell in Western Australia.

The PRESIDENT: I would remind the hon. member that the Bill is the Timber Lines Traffic Bill.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: I want to show that this is not a great octopus or something of that sort that it is painted by some people. As I have said before, I am not here to defend their cause; but knowing the good they have done, I want to see that they get a fair deal. They pay in railway freight and wharfage the small sum of £120,000 per annum.

Hon. J. Cornell: And look for a profit on it.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: Of course, no one does a thing for the fun of it; it is idle to say they do not look for a profit. What does a working man look for but some profit on his labour? And is it not legitimate to do so? This company employs 3,000 men—I do not think this can be combated one iota—and it brings into the colony £500,000 per annum. I want to know what these people have done that they should be regarded in the light of a monopoly, that they should receive anything but fair play at the hands of the House. I have very little more to say about this, only just to ask members to bear in mind that it looks to me now as if for a company to employ a lot of men is for the public to think that it is something criminal, that there is something wrong about it, that it ought not to do it. We have always to bear in mind, and no one knows it better than myself, that the interests of the community are where capital and labour work hand in hand. No one can deny that. I ask where would this 3,000 men be were it not for the existence of this company? So I say it is wrong, till we know that some abuse exists, to pounce down on any company like this. It is true they are working for themselves, but in doing that they are doing good to the community at large. I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West): The timber lines are constructed by private enterprise, and I think that the public are fairly well accommodated, and, so far as I have heard, the companies have

never refused to carry passengers or goods. I do not suppose they impose any excessive charges, so I can hardly see the necessity for the Bill. Of course in isolated stations if the companies refuse to carry goods for the employees there might be some reason why the men should not be boycotted, but I do not think that this reason exists. All the companies carry whatever they get, and I have never heard any complaint about the charges. I take this opportunity of expressing the opinion that I would like to see less timber mills put in the karri country, that is if they are to be constructed at the expense of the State. I have only one opinion about karri, and I shall be very glad to have it recorded, and that opinion is that it will be an utter failure for railway sleepers. I am quite satisfied the lay will come—I may not live to see it—when the State Government and the Federal Government will regret extremely that they ever laid a karri sleeper on the Trans-Australian railway. I shall be very glad indeed to see the Government open up the karri timber. It has its uses, it is a very valuable timber for certain purposes, but I regret very much to find the Government are going to such an enormous expense to put down mills and build railways for the purpose of supplying sleepers that I am satisfied will be a huge failure. I can see no necessity for this Bill and I support the amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): I oppose the amendment. My constituency is affected by the Bill. There are three wood lines in operation in the South and North-East provinces. I will say this of the wood lines, that they carry passengers and charge the passengers nothing. So those companies are doing more now than the Bill asks of them. The two hon. members who preceded me got somewhat wide of the mark. Will the Bill impose undue hardship on the companies in the South-West? I hope it will not. I think the companies should endeavour to meet as far as possible the provisions contained in the Bill, without any Act of Parliament at all.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They do it now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If that was so the Bill would not be before us. I have had the unpleasant experience of travelling on the Jarrahdale line, paying twice the rate I would have been called upon to pay on a Government line, and this, too, for riding in what was nothing more than a Jim Crow carriage, not even second-class. They only supply one class, and that is equal to about fifth-class.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They do not profess to carry passengers.

Hon. J. CORNELL: But where there is direct railway communication, say from Jarrahdale to Mundijong, no undue hardship would be placed on the timber companies if the House insisted that they provide for the transport of passengers.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They do it now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The only objection the hon. member can have is that the Bill proposes that there shall be a reasonable charge made for carrying passengers. If they are allowed to charge equal to a second-class fare on a Government railway it should be sufficient. The Bill proposes the same rates for the carriage of goods as the Government railways are charging. Is that any hardship? Take the Jarrahdale train, returning from Mundijong to Jarrahdale.

Hon. A. Sanderson: How far is that?

Hon. J. CORNELL: About nine miles, I think.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: Why they are one and the same place.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Oh no; I have had the privilege of travelling on the train from one to the other. If there is any hardship at all imposed it will be in evidence when the train is running back practically empty. I hold that the Bill is a reasonable one. The only objection which can be raised is that the Bill has for its object the getting at of the combine on a timber concession. It appears to me the position is that where the timber companies do carry passengers they do not provide decent accommodation, notwithstanding that they charge exorbitant rates. The same thing applies to the goods. I hope the House will agree to the Bill and so assist those men who,

as Mr. Clarke has admitted, are a great asset to the country. I am well aware that all these timber companies have stores, even those on the Eastern Goldfields, and if possible they practically insist on the men dealing from those stores; and in consequence of having no law governing the carriage of goods any employee who has the temerity to bring his goods over their line, if they permit it, will have to pay a freight which would render it cheaper for him to deal at the company's stores.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: Why the same companies build little stores for the men to put their parcels in.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Well then, the only effect will be to make their generosity permanent.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: But the lines are the private property of the companies.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The railway lines in Great Britain are private property, but I believe there are provisions in the British law which regulate the conditions of those railways and provide practically that to all intents and purposes they become national lines. I hope the House will agree to the Bill.

Hon. F. DAVIS (Metropolitan-Suburban): Mr. McLarty has said that the companies never refuse to carry passengers or goods over the lines; yet in the face of that the hon. member is inclined to vote against the Bill. Surely that is inconsistent reasoning. If the companies do not refuse to carry passengers over their lines, why make it compulsory that they shall do so?

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: One is compulsory and the other permissive.

Hon. F. DAVIS: It is evident that there must be some reason which is not disclosed why the particular company referred to should wish that it remain permissive.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Because the lines are not built for passenger traffic.

Hon. F. DAVIS: But that is not the real reason. There is evidently some other reason for objecting to passengers being carried over the lines. Mr. Clarke referred to Millar's Company, and con-

tended that the Bill would be a hardship on that company. But Millar's is not the only company in existence in this State; there are many others which will come under the operations of the measure, notably those on the goldfields. I fail to see why the proposition should be considered solely from the standpoint of Millar's Company. The men working for the company are just as worthy as the company itself. The chief opponent of the Bill was Sir Edward Wittenoom. In reviewing the Bill he made certain assertions not borne out in fact. Some of the statements he made were obviously correct, but on the other hand some can be proved to be incorrect, or at any rate based on a misunderstanding. First of all he contended that the lines were not built for passenger traffic. That is obvious to anyone. They were built for timber traffic. But incidental to that traffic it is necessary that those engaged in it should be taken from one part of the concession to another, and it may happen on occasions that others not engaged in the industry require to travel over those lines. I am informed by one who has travelled over them many times that in one case they refuse to carry passengers over a certain section; therefore it should be made mandatory that those who wish to travel over the lines shall be given that right. There can be no justification for making any part of the State a State within the State, and carving it out from the rest of the State as one man's land or one company's land. It belongs to the State, and every citizen of the State has a right to travel over the line. One objection taken was that it would mean a good deal of expense to the firewood companies in the direction of station staffs, booking conveniences, shelter conveniences and covered vans. Mr. Sanderson will bear me out in the statement that the Canning Mills timber line, which for many years was purely a timber line before it was taken over by the Government—

Hon. A. Sanderson: No, that is not right; there were special provisions originally for that railway to carry passengers.

Hon. F. DAVIS: At any rate I know from my own experience that all the convenience that they had was simply a guard's van. I have suffered in it myself on several occasions. The guard issues a receipt for the fare paid, written on one of the ordinary receipt books with carbon insertions between the leaves. The provision of those books was all the practical cost to the company, so far as carrying passengers was concerned. The guard's van was used for their own purposes at ordinary times, and so, too, in regard to the shed at the end of the line. No special expense was entailed, nor would there be under the Bill. No shelter sheds and no station sites would be required.

Hon. A. Sanderson: There was a shelter shed on the Canning line.

Hon. F. DAVIS: At the end of the line, yes.

Hon. A. Sanderson: No, at Gooseberry Hill.

Hon. F. DAVIS: Possibly by courtesy it might be called a shelter shed, but I would hardly dignify it by that name. So far as the terminus was concerned, the shed was simply for the storage of their own goods. Nor would any expense be entailed under the Bill as suggested by Sir Edward Wittenoom; all the difference it would make is that they would have books from which the guard could issue receipts for the fares collected. It was also contended as one of the reasons for the amendment—

Hon. J. F. Cullen: We have no time to read it now.

Hon. F. DAVIS: I am sure the hon. member does not want the second reading to be passed. It was said it was impossible to carry passengers and goods at Government rates or that it would not be remunerative to do so. I suppose the last sentence is the essence of the whole of the opposition to the Bill. The companies do not wish to do it because it would not be remunerative.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: That does not influence them a bit.

Hon. F. DAVIS: This is the first time in my experience that timber companies have posed as philanthropists and from

the interjection we can regard them as nothing else.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: These lines were not built to carry passengers and are not fit for it.

Hon. F. DAVIS: The reiteration of that statement is peculiar.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: The lines were built for carrying timber and developing the timber country.

Hon. F. DAVIS: But it is being done daily and it is futile and ridiculous to make a statement which on the face of it is incorrect, because the timber lines do so day after day and year after year.

Hon. C. Sommers: They have the right to refuse.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must not interject while out of his seat.

Hon. F. DAVIS: Another reason why the Bill should not come into operation at once, according to Sir Edward Wittenoom, was that it would not be of much advantage having goods carried at bulk rates. Possibly from the standpoint of those Sir Edward Wittenoom represents it may not be, but the holders of the concessions are not the only people to be considered. Those who help to make the profits are worthy of some consideration, and if the companies desire to obtain profits in addition to those from the labour of their employees—in the shape of goods supplied—we can understand their objection to the Bill. Employees might obtain goods in bulk in Perth or Bunbury and get them much cheaper than they possibly could on the concession, and if obstacles are placed in their way of obtaining goods they cannot expect to get them much cheaper than if they purchased from the company on the spot.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: It is at ten per cent. profit.

Hon. F. DAVIS: It would not be so bad if it was ten per cent. only, but the hon. member mentioned draw lines. The companies seldom or never fix their profits on the basis of draw lines. They certainly take advantage of fixing 10 per cent. on the ordinary cost price as displayed by shops and not on draw lines. The difficulty of fixing a ten per cent. advance on a fluctuating market is so

great that the balance is always in favour of those who provide the goods on the spot. There is one point which does not appeal to me as being reasonable or one that ought to be advanced in this connection, and that is the statement that there will be a responsibility in delivering stores and all sorts of things which these lines were never intended to carry, that is in the event of goods being carried in bulk over the lines. If the companies carry goods in bulk over these lines, they will take no more responsibility than they do at present. The goods will be taken to their destination and the people will have to go to the landing and get them, so that no more responsibility will be entailed than at present, and I fail to see why objection should be taken on that score. It is hardly necessary to deal with the question of sly grog selling, as that is apart from the question. I wish to simply deal with the Bill on its merits. It was said that the measure will put up the cost to a large extent. I have pointed out that no shelter sheds are stipulated and no station staffs are required to carry out the provisions of the measure, and therefore it cannot increase the cost to a large extent as stated by the hon. member. A remark was made by Mr. Cullen that the Bill was brought in by a private member instead of by the Government, and that member possibly had in view some profit from an electioneering point of view.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: Do not treat it seriously.

Hon. F. DAVIS: The hon. member contended it would be possible for the framer of the Bill to state to his electors that he had brought forward the measure and that it had been rejected by the Legislative Council and that a case would lie against this Chamber for being an obstructive body. The framer of the Bill had no reason to do anything of that kind. He has what is practically a safe seat so far as another place is concerned, and there was no reason to bring it forward from an electioneering point of view. It would be immaterial so far as his seat was concerned whether the Bill was brought forward or not, and the

remark was not necessary but was out of place. I trust the amendment will not be carried, but that some measure of justice will be afforded to those who are an asset to the State, as has been suggested by several members.

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

Ayes	14
Noes	12
Majority for .. .	2

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. C. A. Piesse
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. R. J. Lynn	Hon. J. F. Cullen
	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. W. Kingsmill
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. R. D. McKenzie
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. A. Sanderson
	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed; Bill rejected.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew) in moving the second reading said: It may be accepted as gratifying evidence of the development of the State that it has been found necessary to again this year introduce a Bill to Parliament for the purpose of increasing the scope of the Agricultural Bank. The authorised capital of the bank to-day is three million pounds, and it is proposed under this Bill to increase the capital by another half million, placing the capital of the bank at three and a half million pounds. Members will remember that the provisions of the Agricultural Bank Act were considerably liberalised last year. The result of that has been that the usefulness of the bank has been considerably extended during the intervening twelve months.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: Not on the lines you promised of allowing money on existing improvements.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We can only lend money on good security. The Government are convinced that if Parliament approves of the proposal for the extension of the scope of the bank the coming year will witness a very considerable advance on last year's figures. While members generally recognise that the bank has been of great service in assisting settlers I am doubtful as to whether the full measure of that assistance is generally known. Up to the 30th June last the total amount advanced by the bank was £1,946,184. Of that sum £665,453 has been repaid, leaving outstanding loans to the value of £1,280,731. During the last financial year the instalments paid totalled £405,942, of which £43,267 represented liability repayments. £31,004 was for the purchase of stock and £3,013 for the purchase of agricultural machinery. The amount expended by settlers in developmental work with the bank's assistance was £328,658 made up as follows:—clearing 161,787 acres, ringbarking 240,210 acres, fencing 195,135 acres, blackboy and poison grubbing 12,929 acres. A sum of £25,110 was also expended in water conservation and drainage works. That I submit, in spite of what Mr. Piesse has suggested, is a very good record for one year. It seems to me it fully warrants Parliament in saying that the facilities for our settlers to trade with the bank shall be made as liberal as they can be with caution. That the bank is growing in popularity with the agriculturists is shown by the fact that 1,334 new accounts were opened last year. The number of accounts closed was 461 and those remaining on the books at the end of the financial year were 7,101. In the concluding year of the previous Administration the total sum advanced through the bank was £283,000. For the year ended 30th June last, following on a partial failure of the harvest, this Government advanced no less than £405,942, and for the first four months of the current year the Treasurer has found for the assistance of farmers £223,000.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is that through the bank?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, we are dealing now purely with the Agricultural Bank. That amount is almost as much as was advanced during the whole of the year preceding the advent of this Government.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But it is the bank, not the Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Well, through our administration. Surely we are justified in taking some credit for it seeing that last year we brought down a Bill which made this possible. Besides increasing the capital of the bank this Bill proposes an amendment in other directions. Hitherto the funds required for the purpose of the Agricultural Bank have been drawn from the Savings Bank. In view of the rapid extension of the Agricultural Bank operations and the further fact that a fairly considerable demand is made upon the Government Savings Bank from other directions, and is likely to be continued in the future, and in view of the contemplated establishment of the Commonwealth Bank, it is possible that other avenues for raising money for the purpose of the Agricultural Bank will have to be resorted to. It will be admitted by everyone there could be no more convenient form of obtaining funds for the Agricultural Bank than per medium of the Government Savings Bank, but as we are faced with the necessity for finding other avenues the new conditions which occupy a place in this Bill must be kept well in mind. It is practically certain that in the future we shall have to pay more for our Agricultural Bank money than we have done in the past. In the past we have only paid 3 per cent. to the depositors of the Government Savings Bank, but the funds of the Government Savings Bank will certainly not be sufficient in the future to carry on the operations of the Agricultural Bank. It is therefore proposed in this Bill that advances for other than improvements shall bear interest at the rate of six per cent.; that is, if a man requires money for other purposes than to carry on improvements on his block he will be required to pay six per cent.

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Hon. J. F. Cullen: For the repayment of loans?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To pay off his liabilities. The period during which such loans are to be repaid is to be fixed by the trustees in their discretion in any term up to 25 years. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East): Whilst supporting the second reading of this Bill I wish to intimate that there is one clause which I propose to move shall be struck out when the Bill reaches the Committee stage. I cannot agree with the Minister that this Bill increases the scope of the Agricultural Bank. Certainly it increases the capital and it is necessary that there should be periodical increases of capital.

The Colonial Secretary: I said it provides for an increase of the capital.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I understood the Minister to say that the Bill was intended further to increase the scope of the Agricultural Bank. As a matter of fact it restricts the scope of the bank very considerably. Under the old Act before the amending Act of last year was passed, the Agricultural Bank was an institution for the making of advances against improvements, and every settler when he made his improvements had the statutory right to his advance. But under the Act as it exists at the present time it is merely a bank for the making of advances against security at the discretion of the trustees. The old Act provided a limit of £800, and this was amended last year to £2,000. Had the bank carried out what the Ministry at that time promised it would do, instead of the small increases in the advances shown by the figures quoted by the Minister, there would have been fully double the advances last year over those of the year before. In fact I might say the advances would have been three times as much. The mere fact that we increased the limit from £800 to £2,000 should have brought about a corresponding increase in the advances, but as a matter of fact advances were refused to settlers every day during the last 12

months. Day after day settlers were met with refusals, not because they could not offer sufficient security, but apparently because the bank was not provided with enough money, and if the bank had been prepared to properly carry out the promise of the Ministry when the maximum advance was increased from £500 to £2,000 the suggested increase of capital by £500,000 would not have been nearly adequate. Now instead of providing sufficient capital for the purpose the Government propose to admit failure to admit that it cannot advance to the extent of £2,000 at five per cent. interest, and, therefore, Clause 3 provides that the rate of interest shall be raised to six per cent. except merely for improvements. This is the clause that I intend to move shall be struck out when we reach the Committee stage. The existing Agricultural Bank Act which is not amended in this particular restricts the trustees to paying four per cent. interest for the money they borrow. What excuse, therefore, can there be for charging the settler six per cent. and so giving the bank two per cent? It is not intended to make this a profit earning institution. The intention seems to be to discourage people going to the bank so as to make the limited capital at the bank's disposal serve the requirements. It has been said that one reason for the increased interest is that the bank will not be able to draw on the funds of the Savings Bank in the future. Mr. Moss has been endeavouring for 18 months past to ascertain what action is contemplated in order to defend the Savings Bank funds. We have never been able to learn what action the Government intend taking in this direction, and now we have the Minister deliberately telling us that because of the encroachment of the Federal Government on the Savings Bank funds the money for the farmer is to be rendered dearer. It is a candid admission that because of the action of the Federal Government the cost of developing our agricultural lands is to be increased. That is the reason given for increasing the rate of interest to be charged to farmers. This is an admission that the Minister was unable. I suppose in the interests of truth,

to avoid making, but it is an omission which I do not think will be forgotten in the country, that because of the action of the Federal Government in taking the Savings Bank funds it is necessary to charge a higher rate of interest to the farmer.

The Colonial Secretary : In establishing the Commonwealth Bank.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : Because they have taken the Savings Bank funds. There was no necessity for the Commonwealth Government to take away the Savings Bank of the State, but that is not a question I propose to argue now. Apparently the Government have made no effort to save these funds until now when they come forward with the admission that they have to increase the rate of interest to the farmer because the Federal Government have stepped in and collared the Savings Bank funds. Perhaps the chief effect of the original Agricultural Bank Act was this, that it lent money with very little security, merely the fact that the improvements were made, at a cheap rate of interest, with the result that the other banking institutions were encouraged to come into the field and do the same thing. There were very few private banks at that time willing to lend money on agricultural securities, but after this Act had been in operation for some years they were only too glad to advance money. The old condition was far better than the present condition, even with the limit at £500, though I admit that limit needed increasing. Under the present condition a man has no right to an advance and can only get it by the will of the trustees. Now the effect of this amending Bill, if Clause 3 is carried, must be to make interest generally very much dearer. The private banks will certainly take advantage of it and say, "If the Government cannot afford to lend you money at less than six per cent., how can you expect us to let you have cheap money?" I say it is altogether unreasonable that just because for the present there is a shortage of money, this increase in the rate of interest should be proposed. At the present time we are supposed to be floating a four per cent. loan

in London at £99, just under par. The trustees are prevented by their act from paying more than four per cent. and it would be just as well, if we find that we cannot lend money for less than six per cent., to go out of the business altogether, because the agricultural industry cannot afford to pay six per cent. Any one acquainted with the industry will admit that it has just three requirements, land, money, and labour, and if we put up the price of money we are going to decrease in the same ratio the productive value of the land and the earnings of labour. We cannot have high wages and dear money because the industry cannot stand both. I hope that when the Bill gets into Committee members will agree to the striking out of the clause which increases the interest to six per cent., even though it should mean a limitation of the operations of the bank, because there is no country in the world which professes to lend money to the farmers and charges them six per cent.

The Colonial Secretary: What do the private banks charge them?

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: What will the private banks charge them if the Government say they cannot lend the farmer money at less than six per cent? Under the old Act the Government advanced money to make improvements, and asked for very little security. The settler had almost a right to demand a loan, but under this Bill the Government take away that right and say to the settler, "You are entitled to nothing; make your application and if your security is good enough we will advance money to you." It is to be no longer a bank to advance money on improvements and to take risks; it is to be a bank to advance on security. If the Minister can tell me one country in the world where there is a similar bank that lends money to the settlers at six per cent., I will withdraw my opposition, but this Bill will be a bad advertisement for the country, it will injure the settler, and from every point of view it would be better to knock this particular clause out.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I have listened with great interest to the

Colonial Secretary and the criticisms by Mr. Colebatch, but I cannot go all the way with Mr. Colebatch, because I recognise there is a vast difference between the State advancing money at the cheapest rate at which it can get it for improvements that are carried out, and the State taking over encumbrances from other sources. I am satisfied that as the money market tightens there will be a disposition to unload an enormous number of these encumbrances upon the Agricultural Bank, and I recognise that there must be that transition in the methods of the bank which the hon. member seems to deprecate. When the bank first started it was practically a paternal institution. The manager of that bank knew everybody and he was like a second father to every settler who went to him; and although there was no statutory obligation to find money for every settler who applied, yet the manager was able, by reason of his personal influence and knowledge, to make it a safe thing to lend practically to everybody who applied. But in the nature of things this bank must advance somewhat towards the basis of commercial banking. The moment the business of the bank became too large for the paternal administration of Mr. Paterson it had to become in great part a commercial concern and the trustees were bound, when they could no longer maintain that close intercourse with the borrowers, to lay down very careful rules upon which they could lend. If they had not done so Parliament would have rightly called them into question and said, "We are doubtful whether you are safeguarding the interests of the public in your anxiety to help the settler." I am loth to criticise the bank. I know the difficult administration it is. I know the managing trustee of the bank has a far more onerous position than that of general manager of any private banking concern in the State, and I would be the last to hamper that bank by criticism from outside, criticism that could not possibly weigh all the difficulties the manager has to meet. And I say before I vote against the raising of the rate of interest for outside purposes such as the taking over

of old loans, I have to look much more carefully into the matter. I am sorry this rate should have to be raised, and if after discussion the House can see its way to still lend for all purposes the trustees may approve at five per cent., I am sure the House will be glad to do it. I want in the kindest way to urge on the trustee a slight alteration in one respect. I have no doubt that at times the trustees have been hampered through lack of money, but I want them to avoid delays, and above all to avoid letting their customers get into the false position of counting on money at a certain date and not being able to get it. Any one accustomed to financial transactions knows that delays may be interposed for which it is impossible to bring forward a direct remedy, and yet which might have been avoided. For instance, many of the settlers who borrow are not accustomed to the technicalities of raising loans, and may make such mistakes and oversights as will give reason for delays in giving them the money, but I hope the trustees will, as far as they can, follow Mr. Paterson's earlier paternal attitude and impress upon all their officers that it is their duty to help the settlers in all the technicalities and details which must be gone through as a protection to the money lender. There is all the difference in the world between the old paternal system and the merely commercial administration. I hope that these trustees will steer an intermediate course, and while insisting on all necessary securities will yet say that each settler is something more than a mere customer; that the bank is interested in the progress and success of every settler, and that they will help him in the most friendly manner. It is lamentable that undue delay should ever occur, if a settler on the strength of his negotiations has incurred expenditure and is then put in the false position of being unable to pay. I am not speaking theoretically but of cases that have come under my own notice, and where just a little more interest between the bank official and the customer would have saved delay. I am not willing to be-

lieve that these delays were all caused through shortage of money, but if there has been delay on that account I appeal to the Government to at all costs get money for the Agricultural Bank. It has done magnificent work and is capable of doing immensely more in the interests of the settlers. I shall help the Government in the matter all I can.

Hon. C. A. PIESSÉ (South-East): I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill, and in doing so I want to draw attention to the fact that the Government have not carried out their promise to the people during the previous year. Despite the raising of the limit to £2,000 and the promise of the Government that the Agricultural Bank would be to the settlers a sort of State bank to assist them in many ways, the full extent of the assistance promised has not been given. I have nothing but praise to say of the trustees; they have done wonders in the circumstances. The Government placed the trustees in an awkward position by promising the people certain things and not giving the trustees the money with which to fulfil the promise. In the face of the huge development that is taking place I am sorry that the Government have not seen their way clear to increase the capital by a million pounds. I am afraid that the rules of procedure prevent me from moving that the amount should be increased, but the time has gone by for these additional authorisations of £500,000. We want to talk in millions, of a million annually for several years to come. The people are paying for it; they are not under any obligation to anybody. This is not like workers' compensation, a one-sided thing; they pay interest for everything they get and the Government should do what was promised and help them with advances for other purposes than improvements. If the Government are going to do this, they will require at least a million pounds added to the capital of the bank. This £500,000 is only a drop in the ocean. Where there was one application a few years ago there are 20 to-day, and such is the rate of development that where there are 20 to-day there

will be 30 to-morrow. The bank is offered the best security that the State can give, a security that increases in value every year. There should be no difficulty in increasing this capital so as to give the trustees a free hand and enable them to fulfil the promises made by the Government in all good faith. I know of one instance of where a man with excellent security was told by the local inspector of the Agricultural Bank that he could get a small loan of £300 on improvements that represented £1,500 over and above what he already owed to the bank. In spite of that excellent security the bank would not allow him to have that advance. If he went to a private institution and secured the advance they would bring him up every twelve months and worry him. They are the worry of the farmer's life, no doubt about it: these financial institutions bring these men up every twelve months and say "What are you going to pay off your overdraft?" or "We find we have to increase your interest." I consider that the Government should increase the capital of the Agricultural Bank by one million pounds if they are to fulfil their promises to the people. They said it was the intention of the Government to advance for existing improvements, but when the people go to the trustees the trustees say, "We have not more than enough money to keep pace with the demands in which the applicants are promising to do certain improvements." I think it is time the eyes of the people were opened in connection with this matter, and I trust the Government will honestly say so, if they are not in the position to advance to pay off existing liabilities. Why not honestly say, "We find we have not enough money, and all we can do is to keep on on the old lines and advance for improvements only"? I agree with all Mr. Colebatch has said, and I am sorry my colleague is not with him also. I think 5 per cent. is ample, and I trust the House will see eye to eye with Mr. Colebatch. I trust he will move in that direction in Committee. I have nothing further to say, except that I want to emphasise once more my appreciation of the work done by the trustees.

but it is impossible for them to fulfil what the people expect unless we give them more money. I am sorry the Government have not increased the capital by a million pounds instead of £500,000.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North): I propose to say one word in this connection. I listened to the remarks of Mr. Colebatch with great interest, and I think they merit the greatest consideration. At the same time there are circumstances at the present moment that I am afraid make it almost obligatory for the Government to charge a little higher interest than usual. We must always remember this in connection with the Agricultural Bank: That institution makes use of most of the money in the Savings Bank, and I look on the money in the Savings Bank as a sacred trust. No risk should be taken with that money. It is the collections of the people who save small sums, and if anything occurred whereby that was lost it would be a national calamity. The rate of interest going up to 6 per cent., as proposed by the Government, seems to me almost an endorsement of the universal opinion uttered that the Federal Government are going to take our Savings Bank sums away. If that is so then we must use borrowed money, and if we have to use borrowed money and have to pay 4 per cent., and leave a margin of only 2 per cent. it will be little enough margin for management. There must be a certain amount for management unless the Government propose to run the Agricultural Bank on philanthropic principles, instead of on business principles, and make up any loss out of Consolidated Revenue.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: They have made it pay on a 5 per cent. basis all along, and have paid 4 per cent. for the money.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I understood they got the money at 3 per cent.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: The Agricultural Bank pay 4 per cent., and they cannot pay more than 4 per cent. under the Act.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I do not see how they can manage it unless with a 2 per cent. margin. If they pay

4 per cent., I do not see how they can manage without charging 6 per cent.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West): I have always felt some doubt as to whether it was wise to increase the amount that can be borrowed to £2,000. The primary object of the bank is to assist new settlers and small men going on the land to develop their holdings, and to give them a start, and I am inclined to think that where there was one applicant for the large sum there were twenty for smaller sums, and perhaps forty. It will take an enormous amount of capital to run this bank and satisfy the demands if we keep on increasing the amount that can be advanced. People who are in a position to borrow £2,000 can make use of the financial institutions, if they have the security. The Agricultural Bank was never intended to lift mortgages and pay off other banks. So far as my experience goes, the settlers have been fairly treated by the financial institutions. If they have the security those are the institutions to go to. I would not advance £2,000 to any one settler, because to do that and keep pace with the development going on all over the State a million of money will go a very small way towards meeting requirements. The Agricultural Bank has certainly been the very best institution that has ever been established in the State. It has been the means of developing the country and bringing about the enormous advance in agriculture we see to-day. Without the Agricultural Bank where would the country be? There are hundreds of people to-day who owe their positions, and very comfortable positions too, to the help they have received from this institution in their initial stages. I think that if the Agricultural Bank assists the small man to clear and build and fence, it is the final duty of the bank, and that to increase the amount to £2,000 is going too far and is not carrying out the purpose the bank was intended to fulfil. However, I suppose that when we are borrowing five or six millions, half a million is a mere bagatelle, and if it is used as I have tried to indicate, to assist the small man with small sums, it will do good. Where there is one settler requiring an advance of £2,000

we will get 20 settlers perfectly satisfied with advances of £500 and less, and those are the men who should be accommodated. Great credit is due to the trustees of the bank for the admirable way in which it has been managed. No doubt the institution is in very safe hands. My fear is that if we keep on liberalising and liberalising, the bank will eventually sustain losses. It reflects great credit on the management that with the enormous sums of money loaned we have had absolutely no loss, while great results have accrued from it. I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I would not like the second reading of this Bill to go forth without expressing my appreciation of the good work the bank has done. I agree in the main with the remarks that have fallen from Mr. Colebatch, but I cannot altogether support him in his intention to strike out Clause 3. It differs from the original measure in that the 6 per cent. is to be charged on improvements which are other than direct improvements to the land. It applies to mortgages probably taken over from other banks or advances of machinery and stock. In taking over these things the bank is running a far greater risk than with bona fide improvements to the land itself. When money is advanced to settlers to buy horses and stock with which to equip their farms, as years go by these horses grow older, and markets change; and it is the same with machinery, as the life of machinery is a very short one. It is more than probable that the Agricultural Bank would take a much greater risk in lending money on these advances than on actual bona fide improvements to the land. As I understood the clause, there will be no alteration in the interest charged upon the direct improvements on the land itself. I realise the great benefit the bank has been to the State, but I agree with Mr. Piesse that it is only playing with the business at this stage to ask for £500,000. I am quite sure the present management of the bank would very safely see their way to place double that amount very readily. I do not think Mr. McLarty need

worry very much about the other institutions. They always seem to have a very happy knack of being able to look after themselves. I remember before the operation of this bank got to any great stage one individual went to a private institution to borrow £500 on 7,000 acres of freehold. That was 14 years ago. He was not able to get a penny. That was the stage upon which these private institutions based their values on agricultural land then. The late Hon. George Throssell and many people in the State thought it would be advisable to have a land tax in this country to burst up some of the large estates, although the individuals holding some of those estates could not borrow any money from the private institutions with which to develop their holdings. That was the origin of bringing in the Agricultural Bank Act, that the State would advance the money which the private institutions refused, and the operations of the State bank were so good that private institutions discovered there was any amount of land still available for settlement which was well worth advancing money on, and there was a general rush of the private institutions to advance money, in many cases at a low rate of interest. Now of course we realise the time of stress has arrived, and these institutions which were so eager to get in with their operations on some of the propositions that had been rendered valuable by the State overreached themselves in many instances, and would be glad now to relieve themselves in some instances by returning the liabilities to the State bank. In doing so I think it is only right that the Government should safeguard themselves by securing the six per cent. upon these risks other than bona fide improvements. I again repeat I am sorry the Government have not come down with a much larger amount, because money expended in this direction under the careful management of the trustees of the Agricultural Bank is very much better expended than on many other public works being carried out. There is nothing that will be more in the interests of the State than finding cheap money for the men who are developing the land.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in

reply): I am very much surprised indeed at the attitude taken up by Mr. Colebatch, representing as he does one of the most important agricultural districts in the State. In my opinion it is a very ungenerous attitude. While he was quite prepared to give all possible praise to the trustees of the Agricultural Bank, he had not one good word to say for the Government. He refused even to admit that they had extended the scope of the Agricultural Bank last year. The very figures I quoted go to show that the action of the Government in introducing the Bill of last year had a very great effect in extending the operations of the Agricultural Bank. I showed on the second reading that during the four months of this financial year the Agricultural Bank had loaned nearly as much as was loaned under the previous Government during the whole of a twelve months period. If that is not increasing the operations of the bank and extending its scope. I do not know what is. For the twelve months ended 30th June, 1912, £283,000 was loaned by the bank, while for the first four months of this year we loaned, or rather the trustees of the bank loaned, £223,000. It would not have been possible to loan that money on good security if the measure passed last year was not in operation. The hon. gentleman was fair enough to point out that the increase of six per cent. was only in respect to moneys loaned for the purpose of discharging existing liabilities. Other hon. members have not made any reference to it.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: And also for stock and for machinery.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: What is the position in regard to private banks? We heard the chairman of directors of the West Australian Bank say the other day that their rate of interest would have to be increased all round. Then we are told the Government are to blame because in regard to loans other than for the purpose of making improvements it is proposed to increase the rate to six per cent. Why are they obliged to increase it in this direction? Because more money is required, and the avenues of the past will not supply the money necessary under the Bill, which

extends the scope of the Bank. More money is needed, and we propose to go to London for half a million for Agricultural Bank purposes. We will have to pay four per cent. for that money. Do hon. members expect us to lend it out at five per cent. ? As Mr. Cullen and Mr. McLarty said, the cost of administration under the present conditions, under the Act of last year, is much more expensive than it was formerly. They merely dealt with small loans until the Amending Act was passed, but now they deal with big loans, and there are demands from every direction. Inspectors have to be sent out, and the cost of administration is much higher than it was two years ago, but with very good results. Hon. members insinuated that very little money is being loaned from the bank at the present time. But I have quoted figures which show unmistakably that we are lending 300 per cent. more in a given period than was loaned under the previous Administration. That is the position.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interest on and repayments of advances otherwise than for improvements :

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : It was his intention to vote against the clause. The question of security had been raised in the course of the debate, and he felt bound to call attention to the remarks made by Sir Edward Wittenoom in regard to the lending of Savings Bank money on security of this kind. It was astonishing that a gentleman of Sir Edward Wittenoom's commercial attainments should use such a ridiculous argument. The hon. member had said it was wrong to risk the savings of poor people. Surely the hon. member knew that if every penny was lost the savings of the poor people would be protected. The State was responsible for the money deposited in the State Savings Bank, and if

the State made a bad deal in operating that money the State would lose it. It was nonsense to talk about risking the savings of the poor. Did the hon. member wish that the Government should do with the money what the Federal Government was doing with the money deposited in the Commonwealth Savings Bank in the other States? The practice there was to quietly turn round and loan the money out to private banks at four per cent. That was being done to-day. Surely it was far better to loan money out to our own people at five per cent. The clause provided for six per cent. interest on all moneys for other than improvements. What was the difference between advancing against improvements and lifting a mortgage which had been used for improvements? If the Bill were to pass in its present form it would not be long before we had another Bill making the general rate for money advanced by the bank 6 per cent. It was an admission on the part of the Government that they were not able to do what they had undertaken to do. At the last election they had declared they could lend money up to any amount at five per cent., but they had since found that they could not do this, and now they were putting up the rate to six per cent. and so encouraging private banks to do the same? The Minister had not replied to the statement that the trustees were prohibited from paying more than four per cent. for their money.

The Colonial Secretary : The Government pay depositors three per cent.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : And the Savings Bank added one per cent. for expenses, charging the Agricultural Bank 4 per cent., while the Agricultural Bank lent the money out again at 5 per cent. The fact that money was a little dearer at the present moment was not sufficient reason for permanently increasing the rate of interest. It was only reasonable to expect that after the termination of the war money in the old world would become cheaper.

Hon. A. SANDERSON : Mr. Colebatch should remember that we were dealing with a purely business proposi-

tion which was very curiously placed, because we had the Government going on to the financial market, not only as borrowers but as lenders. The question was, should we charge six per cent. ?—and the answer was “Needs must when the elderly gentleman drives.” That was the position at the present moment. Mr. Colebatch had asked, “Why not have this six per cent. all round.” It was possible, if things went on as they were going, that we would have to do that. To justify one’s support of this one had to examine the position, not only of the State, but of the Federal Government also. The Government would be glad to lend at five per cent.; but would we be justified in interfering with all the expert advice and opinion, and with all their desire to meet the requirements of settlers ? The Minister for Lands would be the first to make it four per cent. if he could. If the amount was increased by a million the situation would be relieved. On financial grounds he could not vote against the clause. It might be a slap in the face for the Government and he would be very glad to give it to them, but it would injure the settlers more than the Government.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: The amendment would have his support. The Government did not take the animal or the machinery as security. They gave an advance for machinery or stock, but took the land as security and he could not see why there should be five per cent. in one case and six per cent. in the other.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: They say they cannot make it pay.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: The Agricultural Bank did not want to do more than pay its way. Not having seen the report, members were somewhat in the dark as to what was being done in regard to clearing and cultivating. The applicant paid one per cent. extra for the first year and that would pay the working expenses of the bank. When it was considered that the applicant paid all the expenses of inspection—

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Not on small loans.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE: On the bulk of

the loans. Inspectors often did three or four farms in one day. Therefore the settler was no expense to the State in that way.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: From Mr. Piesse and Mr. Colebatch he differed. There was a vast difference between lending money for improvements on the security of the land, and lending money for stock and implements or for the discharging of encumbrances from the property. If the bank borrowed money at four per cent. plus the little expense and lent it at five per cent. any number of these mortgages would be rolled off on to the Agricultural Bank, which ought not to be put on to that bank. There should be a slight surcharge for those sent by the commercial banks to the Agricultural Bank. Even as regarded stock and implements, the land was still taken as a security. Any commercial man would say it was a very different proposition, and money should not be lent for stock and implements at the same rate as for putting permanent improvements on the land. Would it not be wise for the Government to make the rate $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.? If the Government were borrowing at three per cent. and lending at 5 per cent., and now had to pay four per cent., it would not be feasible to go on lending the money at five per cent. for outside objects, but it was undesirable to send abroad a notification to the effect that the Agricultural Bank was becoming more stringent and that its conditions to settlers were less favourable than they had been. The Government should not take a penny more than would leave a safe margin for running the bank, and $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. would be a proper rate.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The Government would have his support. He regretted the increase in interest, but we had to realise that some of the chickens were coming home to roost, and that rates were likely to be increased in all directions. Those who could secure money from the Agricultural Bank would be better off than those who got it from the financial institutions. As this rate was only for advances which were for other than bona-fide improvements on the land,

it was fair. It was unfortunate that any agreement had been made with regard to handing over the Savings Bank to the Commonwealth, but if we had to pay a higher rate for the money the State must recoup it self by charging a higher rate. Farmers would gladly pay six per cent. on money advanced for stock. Very often when stock was purchased a proportion of it got poisoned, and a greater risk was entailed than when the security was on the land. The security would be on the stock and machinery.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: It is not.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Having been in the Agricultural Bank he knew that was so.

Hon. E. McLARTY: The amendment would not have his support. The question must be regarded from a business point of view. The interest on money expended on improvements was not being increased. The Government had made a mistake in including the purchase of machinery and stock in the six per cent. schedule at all. He could not understand why the Government should put on one per cent. on necessary things like machinery and stock, because the security was on the land.

Hon. W. Patrick: They take a bill of sale on the stock.

Hon. E. McLARTY: But they had the security on the land as well. It was wrong to put one per cent. on the settler in this way. At the same time if the rate of interest on repayments of loans and mortgages were left at five per cent. the Agricultural Bank would be so rushed by people to pay off that millions of money would be required. He had not much sympathy with that portion of the measure at all. Provision must be made to cover the working of the institution.

Hon. T. H. WILDING: The amendment would have his support. It was to the interests of the country to give the settlers as cheap money as possible. He would like to know if the bank so far had lost any money or whether the manager had asked for an increase of one per cent. Anyone obtaining a loan had to pay an extra one per cent. on application, which meant six per cent. for the

first year, and that being so the rate should not be increased. If the Government had borrowed a million or a million and a half of money to tide the settlers over the difficulties of the last year, they would have done a great deal for the State.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The remarks of the hon. member were a fair sample of the inconsistency of several other hon. members who wanted the rate of interest to remain as at present, namely, 5 per cent., and at the same time expect the Government to borrow a million and a half of money to put into the bank. As he had stated before, the reason for the introduction of this measure was the extension of the bank's operation. There were hundreds of applications from farmers throughout Western Australia to the Government and to the Managing Trustees of the bank to take over their liabilities from the private institutions, and some of the latter were doing all they could to bring pressure to bear upon the farmers in order that they might unload their securities on the Government. Where the securities were risky the bank would not take them into consideration, but there were many which were not, and if the Act had to be administered to the fullest extent a large amount of money would be required, and it would be necessary to pay something like four per cent. for it. If we paid four per cent. interest it could not be lent at five per cent. and carry on the administration of the Agricultural Bank which was more costly than it had ever been. Mr. Wilding asked whether the Trustees had made a request in this direction. The matter had come up repeatedly, and the Managing Trustee had pointed out that it would be impossible in the near future to run the bank with the small margin of interest hitherto obtaining, namely, one per cent. We had to regulate that money, and the farmers at the present time were paying as much as seven and eight per cent., which was a regular thing, and we were told the rate of interest had increased, and yet when money was advanced in order to take over these liabilities from the private institutions, hon.

members were complaining about lack of generosity on the part of the Government and also that the Bill was extorting one per cent. more than was actually necessary.

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

Ayes	17
Noes	4

Majority for 13

AYES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. V. Hamersley
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. J. D. Connolly	(Teller).
Hon. T. H. Wilding	

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 4, 5—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.8 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 10th December, 1912.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: Plans showing routes of the proposed Esperance-Northwards, Newcastle-Bolgart Extension, Wagin-Bowelling, Armadale-Brookton, and Hotham-Narrogin Railways.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Annual Report of the Inspector General of the Insane for the year 1911, and Financial Report for the year ended 30th June, 1912.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have here the first part of the Auditor General's report. I want to advise hon. members that the report is not complete. The Auditor General has sent portion of it; the second portion is now in print and will be submitted to the House before prorogation. Copies for distribution have not yet come to hand, but immediately they are received they will be distributed.

QUESTION—STATE VETERINARY SERVICES TO COMMONWEALTH.

Mr. LÄNDER asked the Premier,—What was the amount of money received from the Federal Government on behalf of veterinary services rendered by the State veterinary officers?