

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Then the clause is stupid as well as unnecessary. I suppose the Colonial Secretary thinks there must be different arbor days in different parts of the State.

The Colonial Secretary: Not that there must be, but that there will be.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If the clause passes, I intend to see that the Minister does set apart a day and enforces planting on that day. The less the department has to do with arbor day the better under present conditions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not strike out the clause. The trees are all provided by the Forestry Department, and surely it is wise that the department should set apart a day in the season of the year best suited to the district.

Hon. A. Sanderson: What if the trees do not arrive at their destination?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That will be the fault of the Forestry Department.

Hon. A. Sanderson: It will be the fault of the Railway Department.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 74—agreed to.

[The Deputy President resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

BILLS (3)—RECEIVED FROM THE ASSEMBLY.

1, Discharged Soldiers Settlement.

2, Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment.

3, Church of England Diocesan Trustees and Lands.

Read a first time.

BILL—VERMIN.

Assembly's Message.

Message received from the Legislative Assembly notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 6, 9 to 18, 20 to 31, 33, 36, and 41 made by the Legislative Council, but had not agreed to amendments Nos. 1 to 4, 7, 8, 19, 32, 34 and 35, for the reasons set forth in the schedule.

House adjourned at 10:22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 5th December, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. BROWN (for Mr. Thomson), leave of absence for one month granted to the member for Albany (Mr. H. Robinson) on the ground of ill health.

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1, Discharged Soldiers Settlement.

2, Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment.

3, Church of England Diocesan Trustees and Lands.

Transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [4.45]: In moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill. It has been found necessary to amend the Act of 1904, because in certain cases it did not apply as it was intended it should apply. It was about 14 years before we were faced with a case similar to that of the stranding of the schooner "Geraldton." The practice has been to hold preliminary inquiries. In fact it is almost always necessary to hold an inquiry in case of any accident to a vessel and for the harbour master to go aboard such vessel. In the case of the "Geraldton," objection was taken to this and, when the legal position was inquired into, it was found that there was no power under the Act to allow him to go aboard. This Bill is merely to remove that fault in the previous Act. The other clauses are in operation in other countries and it is that any officer or engineer, whose certificate is to be questioned, or who is called upon to show cause why his certificate should not be cancelled or suspended, has to be supplied with the evidence taken at the preliminary inquiry. It is not necessary to say anything further in regard to the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.47]: For a period of 14 years in the Eastern States it has not been even necessary to hold a preliminary inquiry.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): They have never struck any objection before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then they have been holding preliminary inquiries.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Not altogether.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They must have done. This Bill seeks to give power for the holding of preliminary inquiries; therefore we must assume that the power is not in the Act at the present time. Further than that, if preliminary inquiries have been held in the past, they must have been held without statutory authority.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): That might be.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That must be. Under the present Act there is power for a court of marine inquiry to be held, but I suppose that court cannot sit until some time after an accident has happened, or cause for inquiry has arisen, and it has been found that occasionally it is necessary that a preliminary inquiry should be held on the spot as early after the occurrence of an accident as possible. There are two points in the Bill. The first is to give power for the holding of a preliminary inquiry, and the second is that any officer or master of a vessel shall not have his certificate cancelled until he has been presented with the report of the preliminary inquiry and also a copy of the evidence. That is quite right. I do not know that there is any reason why the court of marine inquiry should not sit at the earliest possible moment after the cause for sitting has arisen, and therefore if it did it would fulfil the functions of a preliminary inquiry. Having regard to the famous statement which was once made, that a Bill like this will do no harm, I intend to support the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—POSTPONEMENT OF DEBTS CONTINUATION.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.53] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to continue the operation of the Postponement of Debts Act. This was one of the emergency measures passed in the early days of the war and it has been in existence for a little over four years. It is as well that we should allow things to settle down before deciding to bring the measure to an end. The Commissioner, who is appointed under the Act, has power to advise the Government from time to time to proclaim a moratorium and it has been customary in the past to do this. The measure provides that if at the end of three months it is found necessary to discontinue the operation of the Statute, it can be discontinued. I think, however, that for some time to come the measure should remain in existence. It is not necessary for me to explain the provisions of the Bill. They are well known to hon. members. The

silently, to the advantage of many people concerned. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.55]: I would like to know whether the Premier can give us any information as to the benefits conferred by this measure, the number of persons who have taken advantage of it, and the relief which has been given. As the Premier stated, it has worked silently, so silently in fact that hon. members have had no opportunity of knowing whether the Bill has been of any benefit at all. A number of cases have come under my notice, cases in which relief has been sought under this Act, but the people concerned have failed to secure it. They were forced to look for assistance, not through any fault of their own but through causes arising entirely out of the war. Can the Premier tell the House the number of people who have obtained relief under the measure?

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore—in reply) [4.56]: I cannot give the hon. member the information he seeks. I know, however, that a considerable number of people have taken advantage of the Act and the Commissioner has been called in and has been able to settle difficulties which have arisen, satisfactorily to both parties. The number is not very large, but still I have evidence that many people have expressed their satisfaction at what has been done for them, debtors and creditors alike.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—ROADS ACT CONTINUATION.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray—Wellington) [5.1] in moving the second reading said: This measure is simply to continue the Act already in operation. It had been hoped that it would be possible to have the new Bill passed this session, but it is now hardly reasonable to expect that. The Government having decided to withdraw that Bill, it is necessary that this continuation measure should pass. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.2]: I regret that it should be necessary to bring down this continuation measure. The first reading of the Road Districts Bill was passed on the 10th September, and at that time the department must have had the Bill practically ready for presentation to Parliament. In view of that, I claim that the Road Districts Bill should have been before us long ere this. Promises have been given session after session that the Bill would be brought down. The Bill would have been put before Parliament in 1916 had the Labour Government remained in office. The annual roads board conference has repeatedly asked for the new Bill. Now at the end of

the session, we are faced with still another postponement. The tactics employed do not reflect much credit on the Government.

The Minister for Works: It is not a matter of tactics at all; it is merely force of circumstances.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am as anxious as anybody to close the session, but the Road Districts Bill is an urgent matter, and we should have had it. The course adopted is not in the best interests of those who give their time day after day to the work of local governing bodies. If it were possible for the roads boards to carry on without this continuation measure I should like to see the hands of the Government forced by members insisting upon their bringing down the main Bill. However, the local authorities cannot carry on without an Act of some sort. There has been ample time this session for Parliament to have passed the Road Districts Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [5.6]: No one regrets more than I that the main Bill cannot be proceeded with this session. All that is necessary has been done by the department. There has been some delay, in consequence of which we have only recently received the print of the Bill from the printing office. I cannot give all the reasons that led to that delay, because I am not acquainted with them all. It is not a question of tactics, but merely a case of not being able to get the Bill up. I expected it to be ready within six or seven days after I gave notice of the first reading. I had a deputation this morning from the roads boards representatives asking for copies of the Bill in order that they might go through it and see whether any amendments were necessary before the Bill comes down. I have the promise of the Premier that the Bill will be one of the first to be brought before Parliament next session.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Continuation of Act:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 the words "thirty-first day of December" be struck out with a view to inserting "thirtieth day of September."

I do so for the reasons outlined by the member for North-East Fremantle. Unless we confine the period to some date early in next session we shall be in danger of having a repetition of to-day's proceedings. It savours of a farce to be bringing down continuation Bills year after year. This is not a temporary war measure. It has been promised to the roads boards for years past. If the amendment is carried, the Government will have three months from the opening of next session in which to pass the Roads Districts Bill. The amendment will serve to keep the Government up to the mark in regard to the promised Bill. The Minister has given no satisfactory explanation of the

delay in regard to the Bill. The first reading was passed ten or twelve weeks ago, and the Minister now says that he did not receive the print of the Bill until a week ago. The reason, of course, was that those who should have been preparing the Bill were, by instruction of the Government, engaged on other work of much less importance. Who has asked for the amendment to the Criminal Code Act, or for the amendment to the Prisons Act? No one at all except the goody-goodies who love to deal in these questions. The Government must take responsibility for not having passed the Road Districts Bill this session. They have had the House engaged on business of far less importance. If the amendment is carried the Government cannot come down at the eleventh hour next session and explain that they require another continuation Bill.

Mr. BROWN: I would support the leader of the Opposition if I thought the amendment would achieve his object. Even under the amendment the Government could bring in a similar continuation measure next session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But it would be early in the session, and so the House would be justified in refusing to agree to it.

Mr. BROWN: It is essential that we should have a new Bill, because the Act is obsolete. I hope the Minister for Works will make a special effort to bring the consolidating Bill down next year.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not willing to accept, either for myself or for my department, any blame from the leader of the Opposition in this matter. The responsibility for the delay rests with the Parliamentary draftsman and the Government Printer. I hope the amendment will not be carried. The consolidating Bill contains between 300 and 400 clauses; and if it is introduced as soon as Parliament meets, then, if the House goes into it clause by clause, it will take about three months. If introduced next August, the Bill would not be passed by the end of September. I have the assurance of the Premier that the measure will be introduced early next session.

Mr. HARRISON: I cannot support the amendment, because we are in an abnormal period and have no idea what the future will bring. Therefore, let us not hobble the Government. Having been a roads board member for some years, I know that the men sitting on roads boards do much good work for the State, and do it gratuitously. Let us bear in mind that our men are coming back from the Front.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The last speaker's reasons do not strike me as very weighty. Is the hon. member apprehensive that the soldiers are going to interfere with the business of this Parliament? How does the reduction of the period by three months hobble the Government? By the end of September next this House will have been sitting for three months, and there is nothing to prevent the Government from doing something effective in that space of time. Only a few clauses of the Bill would be debatable, and to say that its consideration would occupy three months is nonsense. The Minister places

the blame on the Parliamentary Draftsman and the Government Printer, but he knows very well that those officers are not responsible at all. They take the Bills in the order of precedence instructed by the Government. The matter is not left to the discretion of either officer. According to the Minister's statement, the two officers are the masters of the Government in this respect. I do not say the Minister for Works personally is responsible for the delay, but his Government are responsible. If members of this House who frequently cry out for the consolidating Bill are sincere, they will vote for the amendment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Seventy-five per cent. of the clauses of the consolidating Bill represent merely re-enactment. The amendments are few in number and minor in character. To say that the consideration of the Bill would occupy three months is ridiculous. In reply to the member for Avon, I have to point out that the limitation of the Act to 12 months was inserted by another place, which had not an opportunity of dealing as it desired with the measure. The consolidating Bill could have been introduced last session, or this session; indeed, it could have been introduced in 1916, when it was already in print. If members of the Country party, in particular, would let the Government know that they do not intend to extend this Bill beyond September, Ministers will recognise that they must introduce a consolidating measure at an early stage of next session.

The PREMIER: I ask the Committee not to agree to the amendment. In common with hon. members generally, I regret that the consolidating Bill has not been brought forward this session. Having been a member of a roads board for 30 years—29 of them as chairman—I know something of the working of the Roads Act. Although I gave up membership of a roads board—one of the premier roads boards of this State—only 12 months ago, I experienced no difficulty in working under that Act. I admit there are small amendments, and not so very many, necessary in the Act; and I assure the Committee that next session the consolidating Bill will appear right at the top of the Notice Paper.

Mr. Munsie: That happened this session.

The PREMIER: I promise, further, that next session the Bill will be given premier consideration. Sometimes, however, the debate on the Address-in-reply takes three or four weeks; and, if this amendment is carried, it might be disastrous if we do not get the consolidating Bill through before the end of September. I know that many roads boards are anxious that a consolidating Bill should be brought in.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am rather surprised at the opposition of the Premier and the Minister for Works to the amendment, because the whole of the arguments they have used go to support the proposed limitation. What is wrong with carrying the amendment if the consolidating Bill is sure to go through by the end of September next?

The Premier: We cannot be sure that it will go through.

Mr. MUNSIE: If anything happens, there is nothing to prevent the Government from introducing another Continuation Bill. If abnormal conditions prevail I am sure hon. members would grant the necessary extension of time to the Government to enable them to introduce a Bill. We have a definite assurance from the Premier that this will be the first Bill of the ensuing session, but of what value is such an assurance?

The Premier: All Governments are alike.

Mr. MUNSIE: The present Government are not so bad, but I do think there is a danger of our not getting the Bill as promised. I have numerous letters from my constituents urging that I should bring some influence to bear upon the Government to have this Bill introduced at an early stage, and I am somewhat afraid that we shall not get it at all next year. I see no objection to the amendment.

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

Ayes	12
Noes	21

Majority against .. 9

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Locke
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Troy
Mr. Collier	Mr. Walker
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Jones	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)
Mr. Munsie	

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Maley
Mr. Broun	Mr. Money
Mr. Brown	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Draper	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Duff	Mr. R. T. Robinson
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. George	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Lefroy	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

The Speaker resumed the Chair.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—VERMIN.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 41 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Insert the following clause, to stand as No. 2:—"This Act shall apply to the South-West Division of the State, except such portion thereof as is situated northward of the Government fence running

westward to Bluff Point, but shall not apply to any other part of the State''.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I think the Committee will agree that it is advisable that the Bill should apply only to the South-West division of the State. The formation of these vermin boards can be handled so much better in that portion of the State than in the north and other parts. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We should know something about the geography of the South-West. What is meant by the South-West Division? If we had a map in the Chamber, with a line drawn across it, members would have a better idea of what was intended. Where is Bluff Point?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It is between Shark Bay and Geraldton.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is not very far north of Geraldton. We know the object of the amendment is to shut out from the operations of the Bill practically the whole of the pastoral country of the State from Bluff Point to the south coast.

Hon. T. Walker: It excludes all the pastoral areas.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: How can hon. members locate the area within which this Bill shall operate?

Mr. Hickmott: What is the object of shutting out the pastoral areas?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is what we shall want to know, but first we want to know what we are cutting out.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I do not think hon. members know what the south-west division is. It starts from Phillips River, runs through Westonia, through to Mill Peak on the rabbit-proof fence, and from there westward to Perenjori, then northward to Mullewa into Bluff Point, which is 100 miles north of Geraldton. It practically cuts out all the pastoral leases.

Mr. TROY: I hope hon. members will not agree to the amendment. It is the most monstrous piece of class legislation ever perpetrated in any Parliament. It imposes on the struggling agriculturists the task of exterminating rabbits, while the adjacent areas of the lordly and wealthy squatters are exempt. This proposal means that even the pastoral areas protected by the No. 2 fence, in the immediate vicinity of the Wongan Hills line. Mullewa and Geraldton, will be exempt, while their neighbours, the agriculturists, will be penalised. Could any proposition be more preposterous or more unjust? It makes me feel indignant. I am situated in the same position as the squatter and I am compelled, out of my limited resources, to exterminate rabbits, whereas those men, having the same advantages as I have, cheaper land, and protected by the two fences, are exempt.

Hon. P. Collier: And their rabbits come in on you.

Mr. TROY: Exactly. How dare they introduce such legislation as this? I will be amazed if this Parliament does not resent

legislation of such a character and send it back to the Upper House in a peremptory manner and notify them that we will not agree to it for a moment. Those people who are protected by the fence are going to have breeding reserves for the rabbits and the poor unfortunate farmer will be penalised and will have to carry the burden of extermination.

Hon. P. Collier: Only a brazen squatter would introduce such a proposal.

Mr. TROY: I am sure the Minister does not understand the proposition or he would never have put it forward.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I must also oppose the amendment. The only justification for introducing an amendment of this description would be if there were a rabbit fence on the imaginary line which has been shown us on the map, but under the present circumstances there is nothing there but an ordinary wire fence.

Mr. MALEY: I hope the House will not agree to the amendment, because for their own protection pastoralists will have to create a vermin board in the Gaseoyne area and if the rabbits are going to be a menace there they will be a menace in other areas. If the Bill is brought into force for all districts, and is to be applied in the event of the necessity arising, the necessity has already arisen in the Gaseoyne area and most certainly will exist as time goes on in other parts of the State outside the present line. For that reason I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Mr. ANGELO: I hope the House will agree to the amendment. The Bill was framed on the recommendations of a committee consisting of agriculturists who were to a great extent ignorant of the conditions applying to pastoral areas. Up to the present time there is legislation existing to deal with the rabbit pest. This Bill is really an agriculturists' Bill and it contains many provisions which it would be impossible for a pastoralist to carry out. The measures for the fencing of water supplies, for instance, would be impossible in the North-West and there are other matters which make it very hard for the pastoralist to carry on his industry. The Minister in another place has stated that the amendment carried there was fully considered by the officers of the department and they were convinced, after due consideration, that the Bill could not be successfully carried out in the pastoral areas. We are not asking the House to exempt the North-West from legislation in this direction. The legislation is already there. It has worked well and, as Mr. Baxter has said, let the present legislation continue in the North and let this proposed legislation apply to the South for a year or two, and at the end of that time Parliament will have had an opportunity of ascertaining how both measures are working. Then we can bring down a measure to apply to the whole State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And in the meantime ruin the farmers adjoining the pastoralists.

Mr. ANGELO: It has been recognised and proved that rabbits travel north and west.

That has been proved all over Australia. Rabbits have never been known to travel in other directions.

Hon. T. Walker: How did they get from the East to here?

Mr. ANGELO: They travelled west and north.

Hon. P. Collier: And then, after travelling west, did they not travel south to the agricultural areas?

Hon. T. WALKER: I am amazed at the affluent squatter saying that the Bill, as originally introduced by the Government, will ruin the industry of the squatter.

Mr. Angelo: It would hamper it considerably.

Hon. T. WALKER: If it is going to do that to the squatter, with his unlimited wealth, what is it going to do to the agricultural settler, with a margin of only a few pounds?

Mr. Angelo: It is the size of the holding that renders it impossible.

Hon. T. WALKER: There are all sizes of holdings. What is the settler on his small area to do when the squatter on his enormous holding is doing nothing whatever to eradicate rabbits? The existing Acts referred to by the hon. member are all embodied in the measure before us, and therefore there is no point in what the hon. member says. There could not possibly be a more selfish conception of duty to the State than is to be found in the Council's amendment. Under this the breeding grounds of rabbits are to be left untouched. The whole of the burden of destroying the pest is to be placed on the small settler, the builder of the country. The hon. member tells us there is no danger to the farmer from the rabbits in the north, because they never travel south.

Mr. Angelo: They would never come out of the Gascoyne district to the districts of the south.

Hon. T. WALKER: The rabbits have come south. If the rabbits will not come down here, what is the use of the Bill?

Hon. P. Collier: Which is to be made to apply to only the south?

Hon. T. WALKER: Exactly. Could anything be more absurd? If the Bill represents too great a burden for the wealthy squatters, where is the justice in seeking to impose it on the small agricultural settlers?

Mr. Troy: The squatters are not exempt in the Eastern States.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. It has been left for our National Government to accept this provision.

The Premier: It was not in the original Bill.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the point. The Government meekly accept it from a National supporter. If the Premier were to give his candid opinion upon the amendment he would declare it to be unjust, iniquitous. Instead of burdening those who are building up the country through the development of small farms, we should be doing our best to relieve them of all unnecessary imposts. I cannot conceive that the Committee will agree to the amendment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At least we ought to have some argument in support of the amendment. So far we have had none. The Government have accepted the amendment, and moved that the Committee agree to it. The Bill was not drafted hastily. It was before Parliament last session, and was considered by two select committees. After all that investigation it was not suggested, either by the select committees or by the Government, that the amendment should be inserted. Clearly, then, the Government did not intend that the north should be exempt. But when the amendment is brought forward in another place the Government accept it and come and ask this Chamber to agree to it. I have an open mind, and if a good case can be made out for the amendment I am prepared to vote for it, but I am not prepared to vote for it on the information we have had in support of it so far. The amendment is of the most vital character, yet the Minister recommended it to us in merely a few sentences. The only tangible evidence we have in support of the amendment is the statement by the member for Gascoyne that the rabbits will not travel south. Rabbits in the Eastern States travel to all points of the compass.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 pm.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not propose to labour this question. I believe the good sense of the Committee will reject the amendment. Whoever was responsible for the drafting of the Bill can have had no very definite or clear ideas regarding its provisions. The measure has been drafted to apply to the whole State; and yet, in another place, an amendment proposed by a private member excluding the North from the operation of the measure is supported by the Minister in charge of the Bill. From the record of proceedings in another place, it appears that the Minister intimated there would be difficulty in applying the measure to the pastoral areas of the North. He said the officials of the Rabbit Department agreed with that view. But it is amazing that the Minister did not obtain that information from the Rabbit Department before finally adopting the Bill as it was printed. I am inclined to believe there are portions of the north-western pastoral country in which it would be difficult to apply some of these provisions. But the amendment draws the line of the pastoral areas much too far south, even bordering on the agricultural settlement. Moreover, there are pastoral holdings in the South-West; and the holders of them, who will be subject to the provisions of this measure, pay double the rent charged in respect of the exempted pastoral areas of the North, which are much more valuable land. I feel certain the amendment will not be agreed to.

Mr. ANGELO: An aspect of this Bill which may have been overlooked by various members of this Committee, which comprises no direct representative of the pastoral industry, no experienced pastoralist—

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): I represent the pastoralists of the North-West in this Chamber.

Mr. ANGELO: Another place contains members who have spent their lives in the pastoral industry. The select committee of this Chamber which considered the Bill was composed mainly of agriculturists. When the measure reached the Upper Chamber, the pastoralists there immediately recognised the danger of some of its clauses, and they pointed out this danger to the Minister in charge of the Bill there, and he agreed with their views. Many clauses of the measure have been passed elsewhere on the understanding that they were not to apply to the pastoral areas of the North, but only to the agricultural districts. If this amendment is not agreed to, many objections are likely to be raised in the Upper House to other provisions of the measure. The leader of the Opposition and other members have contended that it is unreasonable and unfair that the squatters of the North should be exempt from payment of rates for rabbit extermination. But existing legislation provides that those pastoralists must clear their holdings of rabbits, and must pay rates to that end.

Mr. Lambert: Under what legislation must they do that?

Mr. ANGELO: Under the Act relating to rabbit destruction in the Gascoyne district the amendment now under consideration, therefore, does not exempt the northern squatters, but only relieves them of some clauses which are objectionable when applied to large holdings, though not when applied to farms. I have said that rabbits travel west and north. Incursions of rabbits into this State have always travelled west, until they encountered an obstruction, such as a fence, whereupon they turned north.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The last speaker, although he has been in the North, knows very little about it. He says the north-western squatters are not represented here. But I claim to represent them. On behalf of the squatters I say, "We are not growling in any way; you can carry this Bill if you like; we have no rabbits in the North as yet, but if they come we are quite prepared to pay our share."

Mr. LAMBERT: Another place gave an unparalleled exhibition of audacity in endeavouring to circumscribe the operation of this measure. I am very pleased with the speeches which have been made against the amendment. The rich pastoralists, who can well afford to shoulder their share of the burden of getting rid of the rabbit pest, should be compelled to do so. As regards the South-West, I believe it has been found impossible to breed rabbits there. I am surprised at the attitude of the Government. The Honorary Minister knows this is virtually a consolidating measure. The urgency of this was realised by this Chamber when an effort was made to have the Bill brought on in another place. Another place, however, has had the check and audacity to

make these amendments. I do not know what the Minister in another place was thinking of when he agreed to them, because they entirely do away with the usefulness of the measure. I hope it will be shown that we resent the action of another place. We are asking the farmers, whom we are assisting, to take on the responsibility, and that the men who are growing fat in the bigger pastoral areas of the State shall be exempt from any responsibility. I cannot understand the member for Gascoyne putting forward the suggestion he did.

Mr. Angelo: They are not dodging any responsibility.

Mr. LAMBERT: They are not prepared to take any.

Mr. Angelo: They are under the existing Act.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Rabbit Act and the Vermin Board Act will be repealed by this measure. I hope the Committee will resent the suggestion of class legislation on the part of men who are apparently regardless of the interests of the State so long as they can look after their own interests.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am convinced the Council's amendment will not be agreed to. We ought to have a really national measure, and ought not to put upon a section of the community the whole of the burden of exterminating the rabbits. It ought to be a Government concern. It would then be the duty of the Government to see that the pest was exterminated throughout the State. The member for Gascoyne says that if it had not been for the Minister agreeing in another place to eliminate the North-West the squatters would have made enormous alterations to the Bill. Is that a bribe?

Mr. Angelo: There is no bribe about it.

Hon. T. WALKER: They got what they wanted, and therefore did not object to the rest of the Bill.

Mr. Angelo: Others have treated it as an agricultural Bill.

Hon. T. WALKER: It was then purely an agricultural Bill. The settlers had to bear the whole of the burden of exterminating the rabbits and vermin of the State. The squatters were quite satisfied with that. When the Minister accepted the amendment in another place he said that the Bill as originally drafted was intended to apply only to the South-West. That was not stated in this House, and we should never have heard of the amendment had it not been for a member of another place, who is a squatter, moving it. The amendment is in the interests of the squatters of the North-West.

Mr. Troy: And of the South-West.

Hon. P. Collier: If it was only for the South-West why did the Minister not bring forward the amendment himself?

Hon. T. WALKER: We were told in another place by the Minister that the Bill was only to have a sort of trial for about two years. Who was to make the trial?

Mr. Angelo: The Government.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, the farmers and settlers, the poor men of the State, and after two years the Government intend to bring in

an amending measure to include the whole of the State, and also the squatters. I am aware that we cannot apply all the provisions of this Bill to the North-West. No one would expect that, but whose fault is this? It is the fault of making it purely an administrative measure run by boards instead of a national measure run by the Government. In the North-West it has been run by the Government under the old Act, and for the benefit of the squatters the Government will carry out all the provisions of the machinery for the extermination of the pest; but in the farming areas the farmer has to bear the burden and make the experiment to show what shall be done two years hence. I believe the Government will repudiate the Council's amendment. I strongly resent this transparent effort to place the burden of this upon a section of the community, whilst the wealthy portions get off scot-free.

Mr. PIESSE: It does not require a second thought to show that this amendment should not be entertained. It would exempt the Encla division from the operation of the Bill, and it is here that the rabbits first made their appearance. I cannot understand why another place should have agreed to amend the Bill in this way. Common sense demands that the Bill should apply to the whole State.

Mr. HICKMOTT: I intend to oppose the amendment. The rich man will get off scot-free, while the struggling man will carry the burden. The argument about rabbits only travelling west or north is absurd. I believe there are rabbits at Dumbleyung and in other portions of the Great Southern. I cannot understand the object of the amendment. If any portion of the State is affected by rabbits it must be attended to.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2. Original Clause 2—Strike out the words "are hereby repealed to the extent therein stated, but notwithstanding such repeal," and insert "shall cease to have effect in that portion of the State to which this Act applies: provided that":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: It will not be necessary to have this amendment now, as it is consequential upon the previous amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Original Clause 2, page 2, line 6—Strike out the words "any Act hereby repealed," and insert "the said Acts":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT I move—

That the Council's amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 3—In the definition of "Government fence" after the word "erected" in line 8, insert "by the Minister":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This amendment does not alter the original meaning of the Bill, and I cannot see the necessity for it. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am inclined to think that most of the amendments from another place have some object behind them, so far as this Bill is concerned, and I cannot help thinking there is some motive for this amendment. The insertion of the words "by the Minister" is capable of altering the obligations which may arise, under the term "Government fence." Are there any rabbit-proof fences or vermin fences in the State that have been erected by public moneys, and not erected by the Minister?

Mr. Troy: Yes, there are.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Was there not a fence on the Gascoyne erected out of public money but not erected by the Minister? The money was advanced. There are certain obligations upon the residents in the district concerned with regard to the maintenance of this fence and this will exempt the fence erected in the Gascoyne district because that fence was not erected by the Minister out of public funds.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Do you agree with the amendment?

Hon. P. COLLIER: No.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: I have moved that it be disagreed with.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I thought the Minister had moved that it be agreed to. The Minister in another place accepted it with open arms and I thought the Honorary Minister would fall in line with his colleague in another place. It is another indication showing how closely this Bill was watched in another place and amended on class conscience lines. There is no more class conscience institution than the Legislative Council. Most of the amendments which are made there are made in members' own personal interests. There are members whose main object is to legislate for their present interest and for no other purpose. Those are the men who proclaim against class legislation promulgated by members on this side of the House.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 3—In the definition of "holding," after the word "lease," in line four, insert "including or granting right to the surface of the land":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I do not know what this amendment means; I have not the faintest idea what it means. Therefore, not knowing whether or not there is a nigger in the wood pile, I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 3—Strike out the definition of "vermin" and insert "Vermin means and includes any animal or bird mentioned in the third schedule to this Act, and such other animals or birds the names of which the Governor may by proclamation add to the said Schedule": Provided that the Governor may in like manner remove the name of any animal or bird from the said schedule, and any such proclamation shall have effect as fully as if the addition or removal therein referred to had been expressed in the Second Schedule to this Act:

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This simply provides that birds as well as animals may be considered as vermin. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think it is a wider and better definition.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 7. Insert the following clause, to stand as No. 7:—"This Act shall not apply to unalienated lands of the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia, Limited, except such areas thereof as are certified by the Chief Inspector to be vermin infested or the breeding ground of vermin, and such areas as having been the subject of agreement for the purchase thereof as abandoned by the purchaser and except as provided in Section 81. For the purposes of this section lands under contract for purchase thereof shall be deemed to be alienated":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I welcome the attitude of the Minister in opposing this amendment, but it reveals an most extraordinary state of affairs. This amendment was moved in another place with the object of exempting the lands of the Midland Railway Company from the operations of the Bill. It makes one feel so dubious about this Bill as to question every line of it. It makes one wonder whether the Government have any idea of the main provisions of the Bill. This amendment was accepted by the Honorary Minister in the Legislative Council on behalf of the Government and he said that the Government had gone into the matter and had approved of the amendment. It just shows how necessary it is to be vigilant with regard to the passage of these Bills and the amendments that are made. It seems to me that the Government are running away from their policy because they are afraid to defend a provision of this kind. After the debate that took place with regard to the exemption of pastoral lands, seeing what little support they received in this Chamber, the Government have now entirely reversed their policy or their principle, as I can see by the Minister in another place accepting this amendment and the Minister in this House asking us to reject it. It makes one have very little confidence in the administration of the affairs of the State by this Government. It makes one wonder whether the Government are prepared to support the proposal to sneak into a Bill by some subterfuge provisions which they would not stand up to openly and defend if they thought it was possible to do so by escaping the vigilance of hon. members of this House. There was a division in another place on this amendment, and both the Colonial Secretary and the Honorary Minister who was in charge of the Bill voted for it. The amendment exempts the lands of the Midland Railway Company, and to-night we have the Minister in this House moving to disagree with what his colleague did in the other House. If this is responsible Government, then we have a change from it

the better. What confidence can members have in a Government with two policies; one policy in another place on a vital principle in a Bill of this character, and an entirely opposite policy on the same question in this Chamber. I confess that there is not a sufficient number of members in the party on this side of the House to keep an eye on all the clauses of Bills to exercise that vigilance in connection with all measures which apparently it is necessary should be exercised if the interests of the State are to be protected. Representatives of this company approached the Government to secure these exemptions and the Government agreed.

Mr. Smith: After the nasty things they said about us.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, after libelling this State throughout England and throughout Australia as well.

Mr. Smith: They went out of their way to do it by printing and distributing literature.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, they libelled the people of this State and notwithstanding that although we had an assurance from the Premier that he would take steps to refute those libels, the Government quietly tell them, "We agree to exempt your lands from the operations of this measure." This, too, notwithstanding the fact that the settlers all around the Midland railway line will have the provisions of this Bill applied to them. Even those men who bought the lands of the Midland Company are to have the provision of the Bill applied to them, but all around them the lands not alienated and belonging to the company are to be exempt. If that is to be the policy of the Government well and good, but what I cannot understand is that we have had an exhibition to-night of the very negation of responsible government when Ministers divide the House and vote on one side on a vital principle and one of the most important principles in the Bill, and in this House they take an opposite attitude. I can only say again if this is the stage of responsible Government that we have come to, it makes one wonder where we are going to end, and at least it will make me exercise a little more vigilance even though my time now is fully occupied in dealing with all these Bills. If a provision of the kind can be slipped through without members being aware of it, it is a serious matter. The Government were quite prepared to have the lands of the Midland Railway Company exempted, but when they found that they would have to face a debate and a division in this House, they turned down their colleagues in another place. However, I am content to know that the Government are not supporting the amendment.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: As I have been connected with the Midland Railway Company for some years past the remarks of the leader of the Opposition might convey to the outside public that, as one of the officers of the Midland Railway Company, I had approached the Government on this question.

Hon. P. Collier: No, no. I had no such intention.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am quite sure the hon. member had not any such intention. I have severed my connection with the Midland Railway Company, this being one of the sacrifices I have to make for being a Minister of the Crown. Let me state that, as a member of the Government, I have steadfastly refrained from saying one word whenever any question concerning the Midland Railway Company has been before the Government. Whilst admitting that there is some force in what the leader of the Opposition has said in regard to the settlers on the Midland Railway Company's land, I must say there are other things in respect of the company that require consideration. Let me be quite fair, even if I am smarting. There is along the Midland railway an immense area of unoccupied land adjoining unoccupied Crown lands. We cannot say to the Midland Railway Company, "You must keep down rabbits on your lands; although the rabbits from the Crown lands can come across the imaginary boundary and annoy you." So probably there is some justification for saying that whilst the lands sold by the company to the settlers should not, be exempt, yet where there are vast areas of the Midland Railway Company's land and of Government land, separated by only an unsurveyed line, it would be unfair to declare that the company must keep down their rabbits, although the rabbits are allowed to flourish on the Crown lands.

Hon. P. Collier: But the same argument applies as between the company's unoccupied land and the land they have sold to the settlers.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Of course the position is a little different in localities where there is settlement. I rose merely to make it clear that, personally, I have not used any influence with the Government in regard to the Midland Railway Company.

Mr. TROY: There might be something in the argument adduced by the Colonial Treasurer if the Bill did not provide that the Government have to make arrangements for the eradication of rabbits on Crown lands. If the Government and the settlers on the Midland Railway Company's land have to do this, why should the Midland Railway Company itself be exempt? The position of the Midland Railway Company is in no respect different from that of a new settler who has areas of land which he is for the moment unable to use. The settler has to keep his land clear of rabbits. The burden imposed by the Bill on the Midland Railway Company is in no way different from that imposed on the settler. I have a word of commendation for the Hon. V. Hamersley, a member of another place, who said emphatically that if the Midland Railway Company's land was exempted while the adjoining settler was compelled to keep his property clean, there would be civil war. Mr. Hamersley pointed out that the Midland Railway Company's land ran to within three miles of York, and that the settlers in that district could not get any of the land for their sons.

The Colonial Treasurer: Long ago they asked me to have some of it cut up for them, and I did so.

Mr. TROY: The Midland Railway Company have sold their land up to £3 and £4 per acre.

The Colonial Treasurer: No.

Mr. TROY: Yes, at the first auction, held at Three Springs, some of the land brought over £4 per acre, while Crown land was sold for 10s. per acre. The land of the Midland Railway Company, if exempt from the operations of the Bill, would be a breeding ground for rabbits. I do not think for a moment that the Treasurer would use his position in the House to secure a concession for a company with which he was connected. I regret that the Ministers in another place voted for this amendment, and I commend both the Hon. V. Hamersley and the Hon. J. Mills for their opposition to the proposal.

Hon. T. WALKER: I was delighted to hear the speech of the Colonial Treasurer. Whatever the Government have done in this connection he cannot be included in it, because, as he told us, he has always refrained from taking part in any discussions concerning the Midland Railway Company. It is an extraordinary thing that a member of the Government in another place should have stated that he did not think it was ever intended by the Government that the Bill should apply to the lands of the Midland Railway Company. The exemption was to have protected the Midland Railway Company but not the settlers on the company's land. It would not be possible to conceive a more egregious piece of class legislation than this proposal. It was hoped that it would get through quietly, that it would not be noticed. Had it not been watched it certainly would have become law. It is remarkable that the Minister who accepted the amendment in another place said that the Government had never intended that the Bill should apply to the Midland Railway Company. That it was so intended is proved by what has been said to-night. The Minister here says it was intended to apply. The Colonial Secretary and Mr. Baxter both voted with the supporters of this amendment in another place. Now the Ministers here are practically going against the amendment. Where is responsible Government when we can have divisions of that kind? Why does the Honorary Minister move as he has moved? Is it from fear of being beaten?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: No; and you ought to know it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not sure. Have Ministers disowned their colleagues in another place? Or have those colleagues sold the Ministers? Had there been a chance of getting the amendment through this place the Honorary Minister's motion would have been the opposite of what it is. But the trick has been exposed, and the Government cave in. If Ministers cannot stand together, it is time they disbanded.

Mr. MALEY: This is, perhaps, the only Bill which has passed through another place during the four months of the current session.

and members elsewhere have had ample time to consider the measure. Along the Midland railway the east side land is all Government land, and that is the worst portion of the land. It is almost impossible to conceive that the intention was to grant exemption to the Midland Railway Company in respect of a huge area of agricultural land in the middle of the State. Though there is no legislative obligation on the Government to destroy rabbits on Crown lands, there is the pressure of public opinion to compel the Government to use their efforts in that direction. The chief harm may be done whilst the rabbits are breeding up, before they are observed to be present in considerable numbers. A very prominent pastoralist of this State recently drew my attention to this amendment of the Council, and said, "Are you people prepared to stand by and allow the Midland Railway Company to go scot free? Under the rating provisions we shall not be able to collect sufficient funds in our district to provide for proper inspection."

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 8—Clause 16, transpose the proviso to Subclause 6 to Subclause 3:

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The proviso is in the proper place.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you looked carefully into this?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 9—Clause 19, strike out the word "under," in line 5, and insert "not exceeding":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This improves the wording of the clause.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 10—Clause 25, after the word "elected," in line 5, insert "and shall fix the date of retirement of such persons and subject thereto":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

It is advisable that those words should be inserted.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 11—Clause 43, Subclause 2, line 1, strike out "several" and insert "two or more":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This alteration is desirable because it expresses the meaning better.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 12—Clause 50, strike out the word "hereinafter," in line 1, and insert "herein":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

The Council's wording expresses better what

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 13—Insert a clause, to stand as 50:—
"The Board shall, within a month after the expiration of every financial year, forward to the Minister a statement in writing, in the prescribed form, of, (a) the rates levied by the Board; (b) the rates collected; (c) the rates not collected; (d) the manner in which the rates and other moneys received by the Board have been expended":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Without this clause, the Minister would have no means of knowing what the various boards in the State are doing.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 14—Clause 71, add the following words: "Provided that nothing herein contained shall give power to cut down fruit-trees or trees used for purposes of shade or wind-breaks or ornament, or to remove buildings":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I really fail to see the necessity for adding these words.

Hon. P. Collier: They are an absolute insult to you.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

The PREMIER: There may be something in the amendment, perhaps. Of course, no board would ever think of doing what the Council's amendment prohibits.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The amendment is indicative of the eternal vigilance with which this Bill was read in another place. These safeguards may be necessary, in the light of certain experiences. The clause gives power to a board to enter upon lands for the purpose of cutting timber for fences and so forth. It is rather absurd to suppose that any board would cut down ornamental trees. However, we have known instances where magnificent trees growing on public roads have been wantonly destroyed by officials. It is quite possible that some official of one of these boards may destroy shade trees. We might well pass the amendment on the understanding that it is no reflection upon the Honorary Minister.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I hope the Committee will not pass this amendment. It is bad enough to have one Minister interfering with a special matter, but if we are to have another where will the orchardists come in?

Mr. TROY: I intend to vote for the amendment, because I think there is some reason for it. Often when a settler has cleared his land he finds he has made no provision for wind breaks for his stock or fence, and therefore he allows the trees to grow up again along his ring fence. It has been said that rabbits shelter under this timber, and it is quite possible that some interfering official may come along and insist upon the destruction of those trees. This would be a loss to the farmer.

Question put and negatived; the Council's

No. 15. Clause 73—Strike out the words "it was" in line 2:

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I do not know why these words are to come out. They do not affect the meaning of the clause in any way. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 16. Clause 74, Subclause (3)—Add the following words:—"but if any such fence is, with the consent of the Minister or the board, made use of by the owners of adjoining holdings as a dividing fence in fencing their holdings, each owner shall be liable to pay to the Minister or the board an annual sum equal to interest at prescribed rate per annum on a moiety of the cost of such alteration, repair, improvement, or renewal."

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

It is provided that any person making use of a Government or board fence shall pay a fair share for the construction and maintenance of such fence.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 17. Insert a clause to stand as 74—"It shall be unlawful for any person to use or make use of any Government fence or any fence erected by or under the control of a board without first obtaining the consent in writing of the Minister or the board controlling the same":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This will prevent people from using a Government fence, or getting the benefit of it without paying a fair share of its value.

Mr. Brown: Why is this necessary?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: It is quite necessary, and I think the Bill would be improved as a result.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 18. Clause 76, Subclause (2).—Add the following words:—"Provided that in the case of unfenced land adjoining such vermin fence or rabbit-proof fence then such right shall not vest nor liability arise until such time as any fence thereon is erected to connect with or adjoin such vermin fence or rabbit-proof fence and until such notice as aforesaid be given":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This protects the settlers from having to pay for rabbit or vermin proof fences when they obtain no benefit from them.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 19. Clause 76, Subclause (4), paragraph (b).—Strike out the words "shall be assessed according to the benefit derived, and to be derived, from the fence":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I do not like this, and I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: According to the amendment a person shall only be assessed upon the benefit derived or to be derived from the use of the fence. The object of

striking out the words appears to be that he shall pay one-half of the contribution regardless of what benefit may be derived.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Amendment No. 18 obviates the necessity for this.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I understand the difficulty in assessing the value of the benefits that a person derives from the fence. It is impossible to say how far the fence protects anyone. I see no harm in the clause standing as printed, if it is possible to assess the value of the benefit to be derived.

Mr. Angelo: I think it means it would do away with the necessity of putting up a fence for himself.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A man knows that he gets some benefit, but how are we to assess the value of the benefit he is likely to derive?

Mr. TROY: I think it means that if a holder connects up with the rabbit-proof fence he gets the benefit from his not having to incur the expense of fencing for himself. At present a large number of the pastoralists are connected with the rabbit-proof fence, and to that extent the fence assists them in getting something for which they have not had to pay.

Question put and negatively; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 20.—Clause 79, Subclause (4).—Add the following words:—"or as may be mutually agreed between the parties":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 21.—Clause 81, after the word "fencing," in line 4, insert "or other approved appliance." Insert the same words after "fence," in line 3 of the proviso and after "fencing" in line 3 of subclause (2), and in lines 3 and 6 of subclause (3), and in line 4 of subclause (6), and in line 2 of paragraph (a), and in line 2 of paragraph (c) of subclause 7:

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 22.—Clause 81, Subclause (3), add the following words:—"subject to the proviso in Clause 71 hereof. (See amendment No. 14):"

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 23.—Clause 81, Subclause (5), strike out "then," in first line, and after "occupier" insert "and such owner makes default in complying with the requirements of any proclamation to enclose all water supplies as aforesaid, then the occupier may comply with such requirement and the cost of the work shall be a debt due by the owner to the occupier and be recoverable by action as aforesaid, and shall be a charge on the land subject to Section 98 hereof but":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This makes provision that if the owner of the property will not fence in the water supplies the occupier may do so at his expense. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 24.—Clause 81, Subclause (5), after the word "owner," in line 2, insert the words "as to repairing and keeping in thorough repair the said fencing":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This provides for the occupier keeping the fence in repair. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 25.—Clause 81, Subclause (6), add the following:—"subject to the provisions in Clause 74 hereof." (See amendment No. 14):

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This refers to fruit trees. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 26.—Clause 81, add the following subclause to stand as No. 11:—"This section shall apply to the lands of the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia, Limited, on which its railway is constructed, and which are used in connection with the railway":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This amendment provides that the Midland Company will have to fence any water supplies on the lands they use for railway purposes. It is necessary that the Minister should have the power to compel this to be done. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 27.—Clause 83, Subclause (6), strike out all the words after "mortgage," in line eight, and insert "the Minister or the board with the approval of the Minister may enter a caveat in the prescribed form against the land of the owner and such caveat shall have the same effect as if the mortgage had been executed by the owner":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This provides that if the owner refuses or neglects to enter a mortgage, a caveat will be entered which will have the same effect as a mortgage. In some cases this will save a lot of trouble. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 28.—Clause 83, Subclause (6), after the word "between," strike out the words "an occupier and the owner," and insert "any occupier and owner for the time being":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I cannot see that this affects the clause. Personally, I think it reads well without the amendment.

Member: It will do no harm.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 29. Clause 87, Subclause (1).—Add the words "or imprisonment for not exceeding six months":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This provides as an alternative that in the event of the fine

not being paid, imprisonment may be imposed not exceeding six months. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 30.—Clause 89.—Before the word "secretary" insert "inspector whose residence shall be nearest to the holding or the," and after the word "Penalty" insert "not exceeding":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 31.—Clause 90.—After the word "Penalty" insert "not exceeding":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is what I would call a finicky amendment.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes, it is.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Some of the best draftsmen in Australia have always been averse to using verbiage. The late Mr. C. C. Kingston, of South Australia, always cut out unnecessary language and at the end of a penalty clause the words merely stated "Penalty: £20," or whatever the fine may have been. Anyone knows that those words mean that the penalty is the maximum, but in the Legislative Council hon. members thought that some fool magistrate would believe that it was his bounden duty to impose the full penalty if the end of the clause read merely "Penalty: £20."

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 32. Clause 91.—Add the words, "and demonstrate to the owners, if required, the best methods of getting rid of the vermin":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This provides that inspectors if necessary, shall give personal instructions.

Hon. T. Walker: That is a big order.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Yes, but I have found repeatedly that people had poison sent to them and did not know how to use it. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Hon. T. WALKER: We do not desire to make this measure absurd. It states, "the best method of getting rid of the vermin."

The Premier: It is not Parliamentary phraseology.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is absurd to expect every man to know what the best methods are. I do not think we should agree to this amendment.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 33.—Clause 93.—After the word "Penalty" insert "not exceeding":

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 34. Clause 94.—After the word "vermin," in line ten, insert the words, "care shall be exercised that the lives of stock, pigs, and poultry are not endangered":

Hon F. E. S. WILLMOTT: It is most absurd to ask us to insert these words in the clause. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. DUFF: It is a very necessary amendment. I can assure hon. members that stock are dying all over the place as the result of the poisoning.

Mr. BROWN: The amendment should be agreed to, because the inspector is empowered to lay poison over a holding, and the inspector cannot know where the stock is free to run.

Mr. TROY: The inspector may lay poison in a paddock where sheep are running, and the settler may have no other place in which to put those sheep. I will support the amendment.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of all the amendments made in this or any other Bill, surely this is the most utterly ridiculous. It is to be inferred that the inspectors imagine that unless we put it in the Bill that they must not poison the pigs, there is no reason why they should not do so. Did anybody ever before see in an Act of Parliament advice tendered to Government officials? Why not have a slip of advice attached to every clause prescribing the powers of an official? If the inspector cannot be good, he must be careful. Surely we may take it for granted that the inspector will be careful. And if he is not disposed to be careful, is it likely that the amendment will exercise any improving influence over him? Again, if the inspector declines to be careful and the pig is killed, will the amendment give the farmer any redress not elsewhere provided in the Bill?

Mr. LAMBERT: I think the amendment has a more important aspect. It implies a responsibility on the part of the Government.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 35. Add a new clause, to stand as 96:—“(1) It shall be the duty of the board to secure the enforcement against all owners and occupiers of holdings within its district of the provisions of this Act relating to the suppression and destruction of vermin; (2) If, in the opinion of the Minister, a board has neglected to exercise its powers or perform its duties in the suppression and destruction of vermin, the Minister may cause all such means to be taken as he may deem necessary, and the cost incurred shall be a debt due to the Minister by the board in default”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This, first of all, defines the duty of the board and prescribes that it is compulsory on the board to carry out the provisions of the Act, failing which the Minister may do it at the expense of the board. It is somewhat drastic, and, moreover, I think it is already provided for. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 36. Clause 97—After the words “private land” in line 2 insert “not wholly paid for by the owner or occupier”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This provides that a fence on land in process of being alienated shall still continue the property of the Crown. The amendment has been deemed necessary to make the provision more complete. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 37. Clause 99, Subclause (1).—Add “and it shall not be essential that the fence shall in all respects comply with the descriptions contained in the Second Schedule”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This gives the inspector discretionary power in regard to fences. In the schedule the fence is of a most expensive description, and it is desirable that where there is a good vermin-proof fence the inspector should have discretion. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 38—Clause 104, Subclause (1), after the word “purposes,” in line 6, insert “excepting for transferring stock from one side of a Government fence to another,” and add the following proviso:—“Provided that this subsection shall not apply when a Government fence, or any fence erected by or under the control of a board as aforesaid is lawfully made use of by an owner or occupier in fencing his land, and the cattle or sheep are confined within the land so fenced”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This amendment affects only persons whose boundary is the Government rabbit-proof fence, and who are paying for the use of the fence. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 39—Second Schedule, Part 1, after the word “ground,” in line 5, insert “iron standards not less than 1¼ inches by ½ inch; not more than 20 feet apart; 15 inches in the ground; not less than 54 inches out of the ground”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

It means that in certain places where timber is very expensive, or unprocurable, iron standards may be used.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 40—Second Schedule, Part 1, in line 16, strike out the words “No. 10 gauge,” and insert “No 12½ gauge steel wire or No. 10 gauge iron wire”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This amendment explains itself.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 41—Insert a schedule, to stand as the third: “Rabbits, foxes, dingoes, dogs (run wild or at large), sparrows, starlings”.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: This amendment simply defines vermin. It is really a consequential amendment. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Hon. T. Walker, Mr. Piesse, and Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister) drew up reasons for disagreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

Sitting suspended from 9.35 to 9.55 p.m.

Reasons adopted and a Message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUATION.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL and MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [9.58] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill for an Act to continue the operation of the Industries Assistance Act, 1915. We have been in the habit, from year to year, of continuing the operation of this Act, the provisions of which expire on the 31st March next. The object of the Bill is to continue the operation of this Act until the 31st March, 1920, which is done simply by altering the figures in the particular section concerned. Hon. members are familiar with the provisions of the Industries Assistance Act, and the use it is to the community, and the great benefit it is to the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—SALE OF LIQUOR ACT REGULATION CONTINUATION.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [10.0] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is to continue the operation of the Sale of Liquor Regulation Act, 1915. It is commonly known in Western Australia as the "9 to 9" Act. It has for some time past been renewed from year to year and has been found to give beneficial results to the whole State. I do not know that there is any reason why it should not be renewed for another 12 months. It is proposed now that the Act should be continued until the 31st December, 1919, but no longer. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.2]: When the Act was passed in 1915 it was understood that it was to be only a war measure. The

Bill was introduced for the purpose of reducing the hours during which the hotels were to remain open. This was principally on account of the war. Now that the war is over the whole question of the licensing hours will have to come up for re-consideration. I recognise, of course, that although the war is over it would be impossible to consider any alteration of the existing hours during the present session. It will be recognised also that a Bill of this character cannot be a continuing measure from year to year. There will have to be something in the nature of definite legislation next session. Of course we know that demobilisation will occupy perhaps another 12 months and the conditions which have obtained during the war will to a certain extent obtain during the ensuing year.

Mr. Nairn: They will be more acute.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think we should have an opportunity of considering the matter before December of next year.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT CONTINUATION.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [10.6]: The object of this Bill is to continue the operation of the Licensing Act Amendment Act, 1914. It will be remembered that this Act was passed in the early days of the war to give the Government power to close hotels on certain occasions or to limit the hours of the operations of hotels on occasions. Those occasions were expressly declared by the Government at the time to be such occasions as to prevent riotous conduct or disturbances which might lead to breaches of the peace. The provisions of the Act have never been exercised, but the fact that the State Government have this power has had a most salutary effect. These powers, however, have been exercised in a similar Act by the Commonwealth, but if the Commonwealth did not exercise their powers when we thought they should have been exercised, the State would have stepped in. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin) [10.8] in moving the second

reading said: The reason for the introduction of this measure is threefold. In the Land and Income Tax Bill, provision was made for an allowance in mining development work to be made for the main shaft. This did not appear in the Dividend Duties Act, and the object of introducing this amendment is to put, in that respect, the mining companies affected by that Act on the same basis as the mines under the Land and Income Tax Act. In addition we are granting a further privilege to the mining companies, with a desire to assist as far as possible the operations of those companies, when they take up options. The money that they spend on developing options will be allowed to be deducted from their profits in the same way as if it had been expended on their own particular mine. I have gone carefully into this matter, and while it may reduce the return from dividend duties to the extent of £2,000 or £3,000, I think the House will agree that if one good mine is discovered as a result of this concession, it will be a very fine return for the State to receive. Clause 3 extends to companies generally the exemption from duty of interest on Western Australian Government securities. This is also a provision which obtains in the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, but was not inserted in the Dividend Duties Act, the consequence being that so far as the life insurance companies are concerned—many of whom have invested largely in our stock—as the Dividend Duties Act now reads, they would be liable to pay duty on interest received from investments. We have always proclaimed to them in taking up our bonds that they were free from State income tax, and I just want to put this beyond doubt in the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: Are those who are paying under the Land and Income Tax Act getting this concession now?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: Have these companies been paying under the Dividend Duties Act?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: We make them pay on their investments and when they showed their investments to the Income Tax Commissioner, the Commissioner said that unless I introduced this amendment they would have to pay duty on the interest received from investments, whereas we have always proclaimed that our bonds are free from income tax. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.12]: I support the principle involved in this Bill with regard to that portion of it dealing with the liability for the payment of dividend duty on money expended on development work. That has been sought by those interested in mining for many years. I think in the Dividend Duties Act of last session we did provide for that. This goes as far as they have ever asked. It renders them free from payment of dividend duties upon moneys expended and material also, and further, on moneys expended on options. I think that is a wise provision because after all money expended on options cannot in any way be called profits. In nine cases

out of ten the money is lost and the options are not exercised. With regard to the other, of course it is only bringing into line and making clear a principle that has always been in existence, namely, that our bonds should be free from payment under this Act.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [10.15]: I support that principle of the Bill in respect of the allowance for mining development, but I should like to hear something more about the provision that the bond-holders should be exempt from taxation. I do not see why we should perpetuate a principle unless there is some good reason for it. If it is a sound proposition to exempt the person who has money to invest in bonds, why should we penalise the person who puts his money into the development of the country? Both are entitled to encouragement. Why give one special consideration against the other? The interest from investments in bonds is exempt from taxation because the State requires that money for development, but the person who puts his money into the development of the State is giving an equally good service. Why has he not the same consideration?

The Colonial Treasurer: It simply means that we should not get any money.

Mr. TROY: The person who invests in bonds might invest his money in other directions, but he would have to pay taxation. In this case he gets the better security and is exempt from taxation. It is the same principle as, until recently, was applied to the raising of money for war purposes. The Government were compelled to exempt war bonds from the payment of income tax. It does not seem a fair proposition that one man should receive greater consideration than another who is doing similar service.

Hon. P. Collier: It is very hard to obtain money for these purposes.

Mr. TROY: It is hard to obtain money for any purpose. The only excuse for this is necessity, because people will not otherwise invest.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin—in reply) [10.20]: I am afraid that if we did not exempt the bonds in view of the rate of interest we should not get any taken up. We get our money at a reasonable rate of interest because the interest is free from taxation. It is the custom in all States. Except in the last war loan the Government exempted the interest from payment of either Commonwealth or State taxation. Personally, I should prefer to take the risk and put it out on mortgage, but these sums represent the savings of small investors.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Colonial Treasurer in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interest on Western Australian stocks:

Mr. SMITH: I am not quite sure how this will affect private holders of debentures or inscribed stock and Treasury bills. It appears to me that only companies are to be exempted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The others are also exempted.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—TREASURY BONDS DEFICIENCY. Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon: J. Gardiner—Irwin) [10.24] in moving the second reading said: As the House is aware, our deficit is temporarily financed from Loan and Trust Funds. In 1917 an Act was passed authorising the issue of Treasury bonds the proceeds of which were to recoup the amount of the deficit financed from those trust and loan funds. The Act made provision that the currency should not exceed 30 years and the rate of interest should not exceed six per cent. per annum. The first authorisation was for £1,500,000 and the second authorisation, last year, £650,000. I now ask for an authorisation of £750,000, which will make a total of £2,900,000. This, I consider, will be sufficient for the time being, although the present deficit is more than that. Last year the House agreed that the sinking fund might be suspended by the Governor until such time as the Government might think fit. His Excellency was doubtful; he wanted to be quite clear that this would not affect the London bond-holders under the provision passed in 1901. He therefore sent the Act Home for the purpose of ascertaining if it would so affect them. Of course we know that it will not. However, up to the present we have not received it back, and in order to prevent any question occurring on this score, the Bill repeals paragraph (b) of Section 6 of the Treasury Bonds Deficiency Act, 1916, which reads as follows—

The contribution of the sinking fund for the redemption thereof shall commence to accrue on the 1st day of July, 1917.

The House agreed with me in the view I expressed the last time, that it was idle borrowing money to provide sinking fund for a deficit. If we continued to pay the sinking fund I should probably have to ask for another £60,000 or £70,000, and to pay five or five and a half per cent.; and if I had to invest it I should not get more than four per cent. Up to the present we have issued Treasury bonds to the amount of £1,488,055, the longest date of maturity being 1927. All our loans raised during the war period are short-dated loans, none of them being more than nine years or 10 years, and when we come to finance those loans it will give a good deal of trouble. The average rate of interest so far paid is about £5 6s. per annum and all the bonds have been issued in Australia. Those are really the main points of the Bill. The House knows exactly what the object is.

Hon. P. Collier: You are asking for a period of three years in which to raise this. Why?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: We use this when convenient. We have only floated £1,480,000 odd up to the present. The Commonwealth have to give us £700,000 and they have not asked us for those bonds and are not likely to ask us for another 12 months or more. The three years was in the original Act and it has been copied into this. We will operate as the opportunity occurs. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—INCOME TAX.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin) [10.32] in moving the second reading said: This is merely a short Bill to put into the Act passed last session the method of calculation. It was accidentally omitted from that Act. The purpose is to give an example enabling taxpayers who have not the income tax ready-reckoner, to see exactly what they have to pay. The examples are clearly shown, and would enable anyone to estimate exactly the amount of his tax. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.33]: Is it necessary to pass a Bill in order to enable the Commissioner of Taxation to collect under this schedule? I should have thought that under the Act it was open to him to calculate in this way or in any other way, so long as it was within the four corners of the Act.

The Colonial Treasurer: I have doubts about it myself, but the Crown Law Department suggested putting these examples into a Bill so as to make the matter quite clear.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The examples could have been got out, and broadcasted throughout the country. I am surprised to find it is necessary to pass an Act for that purpose. The rates set out very clearly in the Act of last session should have enabled the Commissioner to calculate under the provisions of that Act without the need for getting authority to promulgate a schedule of this kind. However, I have no doubt the form will be of great assistance to taxpayers. I doubt whether the column setting out Commonwealth payments is up to date, inasmuch as the Commonwealth has been amending its Act almost from week to week by simply saying that the rates payable shall be increased by 20 per cent. I am inclined to believe the Commonwealth payments are considerably higher than those shown in this column. However, that does not concern us as State legislators.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

BILL—GOVERNMENT TRAMWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS (Hon. C. A. Hudson—Yilgarn) [10.37] in moving the second reading said: This is a very short Bill corollary to, or consequential upon, the Bill which went through this House last night. The Government tramways are at present under the control of the Commissioner of Railways, and if the Bill dealt with last night be carried through its remaining stages the tramways will need to be placed under three Commissioners. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.38]: I take it this Bill was prepared and placed upon the Notice Paper in anticipation of the passing of the three Commissioners Bill. This present measure seems somewhat premature, since we do not yet know that another place may not reject the Bill we passed last night.

The Premier: In that case another place will reject this Bill also.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We are following that Bill with another Bill which may be unnecessary. Apart from that aspect, this Bill, I take it, means that if the other Bill secures the assent of Parliament, the tramways of this City will be placed under the control of three Commissioners instead of, as now, under the control of one. The time is opportune to have something to say about the management and general control of the tramway system of Perth. Unless we are going to get better service and better management from the control of three Commissioners than we have obtained from the control of one, I should be inclined to vote against the second reading of this Bill, with a view to removing the tramways altogether from the present control and placing them under some entirely separate control.

Mr. Smith: Local authority.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and they would give a better service than we give at the present time. I have been astounded that the people of the metropolitan area have acquiesced silently in the general service which has been given to them by the Tramway Department. It is no use the Minister telling the House year after year that there are difficulties here and difficulties there in the way of providing something like a decent service, or securing additional rolling stock. The time has arrived when the House should refuse to accept that explanation. It was told us in this House four years ago. As a matter of fact I was the first to make the statement. It was a fact then but it has gone on from year to year, and it seems to me, because the House has been content to accept that explanation, the powers that be say now "Oh it is all right, all we have to do is to make this plausible excuse and it is accepted. Therefore, why bother." They have

had stock in the Railway Department for some years with the exception perhaps of some small portion of the undergear. No genuine effort has been made by the authorities to provide rolling stock. We have seen on holiday occasions a state of things that would not be permitted in some of the South Sea Islands. Thousands of people have been compelled to walk from the city to the outer suburbs in order to reach their homes.

Mr. Smith: It occurs every day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know what the management is like. We often see a thousand people standing at the Weld Club corner waiting for trams.

The Minister for Railways: This Bill is to improve the management.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no faith in the management and it is time that the disabilities under which the people suffer in regard to the tramway service were ventilated and an improvement insisted upon. While crowds are waiting at the Weld Club corner we often find that at the other end, at the Inglewood terminus, a tram will be standing perhaps for a quarter of an hour. If I were a metropolitan member I would not accept any of the tales that are told by the management. I would insist upon some improvement being made. On the occasion of a recent celebration I walked down to the Weld Club corner to get a tram and will it be believed, that the whole city was crowded into that locality and they waited for a space of 40 minutes without a single tram leaving that corner for North Perth. When the first tram did come along it was found that the conductor or the gripman had permitted it to be filled at the town hall corner and the passengers journeyed to the Weld Club corner in order to make sure of getting seats on the return trip.

Mr. Smith: They paid two fares. They do that every day so as to make sure of getting a seat.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether they did or not on that occasion. I assume that they were merely getting in ahead of the crowd who had been waiting so long at the Weld Club corner.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The conductors could not possibly collect all the fares between the town hall and the Weld Club corner.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The next tram that came down from the town hall was empty, and while crowds were still waiting there, this tram ran to the jetty and waited there for 10 minutes or more for a ferry boat to arrive. That is the way we have trams idle about the city on days of that kind. I do not know who is in control of the trams and I do not know how they are run. It seems to me that the Commissioner of Railways takes very little interest in the tramway service. It is a sort of side line and the man who is superintendent receives the munificent salary of £375 a year.

Mr. Smith: The Commissioner gets £500 for doing nothing.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The general manager on whom the responsibility rests receives £375, the same salary he received when he was appointed four years ago. The man who was

managing the tramways for the company received £1,500 a year, while the accountant in the company received £500.

The Minister for Railways: When you were increasing the salary of the Commissioner for Railways you said that the manager of the company received £2,000 a year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Very likely, and I also know that there was more than one officer under him getting £500 a year. Yet our superintendent is receiving £375 and the officer next to him gets something like £150. How can we expect to have the service conducted on business lines when we pay such paltry salaries? The crowding is a positive disgrace, not only at holiday times but during the busy hours of the day, in the morning and in the evening. We can often count no fewer than 16 people standing on the back platform while the passage way in the car is also overcrowded with people standing. The result is that there is considerable loss of time by reason of the fact that it takes so long for passengers to alight. There is no other town in the world with the population of Perth that would give its people such a disgraceful service.

Mr. Smith: And we charge the highest fares.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We often see people standing at the town hall corner, who are waiting for trams to take them to the Inglewood terminus or to Walcott-street, having to continue to wait while the trams are crowded with people who perhaps go only half way. There should be special cars for Inglewood and Walcott-street. Instead of that, the passengers who have to go the whole distance are left behind, and others going only a half or a quarter of the way crowd into the trams. I cannot understand why those in control of this service do not make small alterations of this kind. The improvements could easily be effected by some alteration in the fares. Having had the experience we have, I do not know whether it would be wise for the House to take the management of the tramway service away from the Railway Department, and place it under separate control, or hand the service over to the City, where it would no longer be a reflection upon the people of the State, as has been the case for the past few years.

The Minister for Railways: That is justification for the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

MOTION—HARBOUR BOARD, BUNBURY, TO DISALLOW REGULATION.

Order read for the resumption of debate from the 16th October on motion by Mr. Money, "That Regulation 104a of the Bunbury Harbour Board laid upon the Table of this House on the 8th October, be disallowed."

On motion by Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (Honorary Minister) debate further adjourned.

DISCHARGE OF ORDERS.

On motion by the PREMIER the following Orders of the Day were discharged:—

1. Road Districts Bill.
2. Traffic Bill.
3. Land Drainage Bill.
4. Dog Act Amendment Bill.
5. Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [10.59]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 7.30 p.m. on Friday, 6th December.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 6th December, 1918.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 7.30 p.m., and read papers.

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

BILLS (11)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Government Railways Act Amendment.
 - 2, Postponement of Debts Act Continuation.
 - 3, Roads Act Continuation.
 - 4, Industries Assistance Act Continuation.
 - 5, Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation.
 - 6, Licensing Act Amendment Act Continuation.
 - 7, Dividend Duties Act Amendment.
 - 8, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.
 - 9, Income Tax.
 - 10, Government Tramways Act Amendment. Transmitted to the Council.
 - 11, Navigation Act Amendment.
- Passed.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [7.47] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is to enable water boards, which may have not sufficient revenue to fully meet their expenditure and engagements to raise