

**Legislative Assembly.***Thursday, 25th November, 1926.*

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

### **QUESTION—MIGRANTS, CLERICAL LABOUR.**

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Premier: Would it be possible to influence the Immigration authorities in London against sending to Western Australia purely clerical labour—those who are unable to do manual or farm work—bearing in mind that so many clerical men are out of employment in the State?

The PREMIER replied: This does not appear to be necessary, as investigations regarding the last 12 boat loads of migrants show that out of 432 assisted migrants landed, only two males and one female were clerks.

### **BILL—DAIRY CATTLE COMPENSATION.**

Report of Committee adopted.

### **BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.**

Read a third time and passed.

### **LOAN ESTIMATES, 1926-27.**

Message from the Governor received and read, transmitting the Loan Estimates for the year 1926-27 and recommending appropriation.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

The House resolved into Committee of Supply for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates; Mr. Panton in the Chair.

*Vote—Departmental, £140,031:*

### **THE PREMIER AND TREASURER**

(Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.37]: The Government's proposals for the loan expenditure for the year are now before hon. members. It will be recognised that the general development of the State requires the expenditure of a considerable amount of money. If the State is to go forward, then the Government must be prepared to assist those who are engaged in its various industries. In this State the Government activities, one might say, are all-embracing. In every direction the Government are called upon for assistance and for the provision of funds, which in many of the other States of the Commonwealth are, as is well known, provided from other sources. The amount set out in the Estimates is required for the growing needs of the State. I am sorry to say that the attack that was made in London recently upon Australian finance may have the effect of making it somewhat difficult to obtain the necessary funds. In this respect at any rate, Western Australia's credit stands high. We know that the New South Wales loan of a month or two ago did not go off very well, but we shall not be going on the London money market until early in the new year. Having regard to the fact that shortly before then we shall be redeeming the Coolgardie Water Scheme loan, I do not anticipate that we shall experience any difficulty in obtaining the necessary funds. It is interesting to note that I received a letter last week by the English mail in which I was advised that the Belgian loan at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., certainly a very high rate of interest, had been subscribed 100 times over in less than five minutes. We shall, therefore, have to take into account the fact that some Continental nations and other countries in the world are needing money, and are prepared to pay a relatively higher rate of interest, quite apart from the question of security. I do not wish to reflect upon the security offered by any other nation or country, but it is quite evident that there were substantial grounds for so high a rate as  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. being offered. Our Australian loans have got down to  $5\frac{1}{4}$  per cent., so we must recognise the competition of other countries

in the London money market. It is satisfactory to note that Western Australia's credit stands high, and I do not anticipate we shall experience any difficulty in getting the money we require to carry on the developmental work upon which the State has embarked. I am asking for £4,816,557 this year. To that must be added £15,790 that was spent from the Loan Suspense Account last year, making a grand total of £4,832,347. The amount asked for last year was £4,748,795 or £83,552 less than it is estimated will be required this year. I need not say that this is a large amount, but we have reached a stage in our development at which it is extremely difficult to keep loan expenditure as low as one would like. From all quarters we are receiving urgent demands for improved equipment, for the extension of existing facilities and also for the provision of new lines. The railways point out the necessity for putting lines and equipment on a better footing to handle the increasing traffic economically. Rolling stock must be added to if we are to cope adequately with the larger harvest this year, and the growing traffic we may reasonably expect from the good season being experienced. A greater strain will be imposed upon the capacity of the available rolling stock. Then again the requirements of the country demand more money for water supplies, and efforts must be made to meet the requests we receive in that direction. Then, too, increasing amounts have been required during the last few years for country roads. The needs of harbours at our outports are stressed and the extension of existing larger harbours must also go on. In addition, a large amount is required for group settlement purposes, and to continue the advances to settlers under the control of the Agricultural Bank. Of course, as settlement extends in the farming areas, railways must be constructed to carry the produce, so that altogether the difficulties from a financial point of view are increasing. As hon. members know, it is not desirable to allow development to go too far ahead of immediate requirements, and care is taken to see that this is not now being done. We are bound to provide facilities for existing settlement. New railways must be built to open up additional country in order to meet the existing demands for our farming lands, and the new lines provided for have in nearly every instance been promised for years. The bulk

of the money asked for is required for country development, but we must also see that the demands of the metropolitan area—which is growing—for increased water supplies and tramway facilities are taken into consideration. The extension of the metropolitan water supply has been in hand for three years and will be continued along the same lines. Certain new lines of tramway, recommended some time ago by a Royal Commission and later by a committee of departmental officers, will be constructed. Three of them will be built this year. No one will deny that those extensions have been urgently needed for some time, and now that we have had experience over a year or two of the competition of motor buses and motor transport, we are in a position to say that in certain directions tramway extensions are justified, notwithstanding that competition. Liability was incurred in 1924 for another unit for the electricity supply and provision made in this year's expenditure for that liability. From what I have said it will be seen that the Government policy does not go beyond the growing needs of the State. We are only meeting the liabilities that are being forced upon us by the growth of the State and the increase of primary production generally. Funds for certain works provided for will come under the agreement with the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments. It is well to remember that a considerable sum, we hope, will be cheap money. Although our scheme of expenditure under the migration agreement has not yet been approved, it is now being investigated by the Migration and Development Commissioner, members of which are visiting this State at present. There seems to be no reason to doubt that a considerable amount of the money we require will be made available to us at a rate of 1 per cent. for the first five years, and at a low rate of interest for the next five years. If that should be so, there is no reason why we should hesitate to take advantage of the agreement, and so assist the expansion of the State by providing necessary funds to enable people engaged in our primary industries particularly to increase their activities.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We shall be pretty slow if we do not use the 1 per cent money.

The PREMIER: We are using it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We should deserve to be kicked if we did not.

The PREMIER: The provision of cheap money justifies a considerable increase on the loan expenditure of previous years when the full rate of interest had to be paid. In some years, during the hon. member's term of office, we had to pay 6 per cent. and even 6½ per cent. for money.

The Minister for Lands: For some of it the rate was £7 5s. 6d.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That was soldier settlement money in respect of which we received a rebate.

The PREMIER: Anyhow we paid as much as 6½ per cent. for some of our loan money. Development with such dear money naturally becomes a serious problem. With the fall in the rate of interest to 5½ per cent., and to 5¼ per cent., and with the assistance of the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments, we are justified in taking advantage of the cheaper money.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Cheap money wisely spent is the way to make this country.

The PREMIER: Undoubtedly. If we are fortunate enough to get cheap money, so long as we spend it wisely, as I think it has been spent in the past, we are justified in going ahead. Much of our loan money has been spent on works of a developmental character. Railways must be built, harbours must be constructed, land must be drained, water supplies must be provided, and in the agricultural areas new roads must be built if settlement is to proceed and the industries of the State are to grow.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have a jolly solid asset for our expenditure to date.

The PREMIER: I think we have. I cannot imagine that any set of financiers, if they made a valuation of the State's assets, would hesitate to take over the liability and even pay a considerable sum for the privilege of being permitted to do so. I have no doubt that we have substantial assets for the money that has been expended in the past. If it were not so, we should not be able to point to the extraordinary increase in production that has taken place during the last 20 years. With the aid of loan funds in the years that are ahead, and with the wise expenditure of cheaper money, there is no reason why production should not increase at a greater rate than has been the case heretofore.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are paying our interest from an annual crop, wheat and wool.

The PREMIER: That is so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is important to remember that it is an annual crop.

The PREMIER: While the Government are the borrowers of a good deal of money, we are passing it on to other borrowers who lend it out to other people, and they in turn are utilising it in the direction of increasing the production of wealth. So long as we continue to do that, all will be well. As has been frequently stated in the House, we have reached a stage when, if we are going to bring our Crown lands into occupation and production, it will be necessary to build a considerable mileage of railways. That is the position confronting us to-day. I do not wish to touch upon the aspect of the question whereby we might bring into use and occupation considerable areas of land already served by railways. This branch of the Parliament has for years affirmed, through the Bills it has passed, the need and desirability of making some of that land available for use. As we approach the stage when most of our Crown lands are taken up, the land held privately in large or even comparatively small holdings and not utilised to its fullest extent will have to come into the scheme of things and contribute fully to the production of the State. The amount of loan money asked last year was £4,748,795 and the expenditure was £4,078,686. Thus there was a saving of £670,109 on the estimate.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It was not expended.

The PREMIER: That is so. Various causes operated to effect that saving, but the amount was spread over practically the whole of the sections of the Estimates.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It was a saving of expenditure, not of money.

The PREMIER: Yes, a saving on the estimate. The hon. member knows that very rarely indeed has the full amount of the Loan Estimates been expended.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not suppose that ever has the aggregate amount been expended.

The PREMIER: The estimate usually falls short of expenditure by many hundreds of thousands of pounds. It is necessary to make provision when the Estimates are being considered because it is difficult to tell exactly where savings—if I may use that term—might be effected; in other words, it is difficult to tell whether the amount considered necessary at the time will actually be required.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You do not ask us to vote it until five months of the year have passed.

The PREMIER: That is so, and it is frequently found that various departments have asked for amounts that they are not in a position to expend economically.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That money will have been expended by now.

The PREMIER: Yes, the expenditure has gone on, of course. The result last year was that we spent £670,109 less than was set out in the Loan Estimates of last year. Although I am asking for over £4,800,000 this year, I have no doubt that the experience of previous years will be repeated, and that we shall find our expenditure at the end of the financial year considerably below that sum. I hope we shall. Last year I provided for an expenditure of £117,937 under the heading Governmental, and the actual expenditure was £111,430. Of other big items I may mention the following:—

	Estimated Expenditure.	Actual Expenditure.
	£	£
Railways, Tramways, etc. ...	887,651	745,629
Harbours and Rivers ...	261,559	210,567
Water Supplies and Sewer- age	740,886	657,330
Development of Mining ...	106,000	82,640
Development of Agriculture	2,250,300	1,997,324
Roads and Bridges, etc. ...	220,962	175,210
Miscellaneous ...	168,500	98,547

Under the heading of railways, etc., I have provided for an expenditure of £1,050,885, as against an actual expenditure of £745,629 last year. That increase is spread over a number of items and provision has been made for several new lines of railway. A sum of £200,000 is required for additions and improvements to opened railways, which sum is more than £100,000 above last year's requirements. The bulk of the £200,000 is for relaying, regrading, strengthening bridges, etc., and £45,000 is set aside for the Hay River-Denmark deviation, a work for which the Railway Department have long been asking. A sum of £10,000 is required for remodelling the Bunbury loco depot. That is another work that is long overdue, inasmuch as the depot at Bunbury consists of the same yard and buildings and is in the condition in which it was laid out 25 or 30 years ago. I have been forced

to cut out a number of works that were desired, for the reason that I was unable to provide the requisite funds. There is an estimated expenditure of £150,000 for rolling stock, which amount is £10,000 more than last year. The money will be spent principally on trucks and locomotives. The present programme includes the construction of 370 trucks—

Mr. Lindsay: It would be better if the number were 3,700.

The PREMIER: I could wish that it were more—and 10 "P" class locomotives, also the super-heating of other engines, while the work of installing electric head lights on 200 locomotives is being continued. Provision has been made for additional tarpaulins. The delay in the construction of rolling stock has been caused by the coal strike in Great Britain. I do not know how the railway authorities will get through the ensuing season; I suppose we shall have the usual budget of complaints. We have been handicapped because the coal strike in the Old Country has prevented our getting material for the additional rolling stock.

Mr. Lindsay: Wheat carting has been started much earlier this year than usual.

The PREMIER: The transport of the wheat will have to be spread over a longer period; I see no other way out of the difficulty. I suppose those who are concerned will have to be prepared to have the shifting of the harvest spread over a pretty lengthy period.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: I think the matter can be mutually arranged.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Every man in the railways is working hard to get it away.

The PREMIER: They will get it through. It must be understood that the State cannot incur the expenditure of a huge sum of money in the provision of rolling stock in order that the harvest may be shifted in the shortest possible time, for a considerable portion of that rolling stock would be lying idle earning nothing at other times of the year.

Hon. G. Taylor: We shift the harvest as quickly as is done in the other States.

The PREMIER: Yes. The State is not obliged to move the harvest except within a reasonable time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you get the trucks plus the willingness of the men, that should be quite sufficient.

The PREMIER: I think that is fully realised, and that everyone connected with the railways is co-operating in that direction. From the top to the bottom of the railways everyone is working so that there may be no undue delay.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is most gratifying to see it.

The PREMIER: I am informed by the Minister for Railways that at the conference held yesterday with the wheat agents, those people expressed themselves as satisfied with what they were told would be done for them. The hon. member knows, from his experience on the Treasury bench, that the demands of the Railway Department for money for rolling stock every year are very considerable. On the other hand, the needs of the Treasury in other directions as well are such that those demands will have to be cut down to a great extent. We have reached the stage when I fear we shall have to be prepared to find a considerable sum of money for rolling stock over the next few years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I hope so.

The PREMIER: Yes. It is all to the good. In addition to an increased area under wheat and a greatly increased yield, we are adding a substantial mileage to our system every year by the opening up of new railways.

Hon. G. Taylor: We are opening up pastoral lands, too.

The PREMIER: If we are adding to the mileage of the system, opening up new territory, and increasing our yields and production, we shall have to find the money. It will not be a very serious difficulty to have to do that in order to increase the amount of rolling stock, because our State is expanding and growing. It would thus be a necessary expenditure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would be a good thing if we could get another  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles out of each truck. That would overcome the trouble.

The PREMIER: A good deal has been done in the way of regrading so as to render that possible. In the early stages railways were built without much attention to grades. It was not then anticipated that they would have to carry the loads that are carried today. We have found it wise economy to expend a considerable sum in regrading work, so that the engines may draw heavier loads. I know generally that the load has been increasing from year to year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The engines are bigger, too.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And we now have the electrical signalling.

The PREMIER: Yes. We are regrading, using heavier rails, and bigger engines and drawing bigger loads. That will enable us to an extent to meet the difficulty of shifting the harvest, and also, in a way, to reduce expenditure. If we are to be obliged to build new rolling stock, it is desirable that the work should be carried out in our own workshops. Additional expenditure would be required there in the provision of plant needed for the increased work. Provision has been made on the Estimates for the commencement of new lines as well as the completion of those that were in hand last year. The principal works completed were the Lake Grace-Newdegate line, the Esperance Northward line, and the Piawaning Northward line. Substantial progress was made with the Dwarda-Narrogin railway and the reconditioning of the Jardee-Pemberton line at a cost of about £50,000. The major portion of the Dwarda-Narrogin line was constructed last year. The Jardee-Pemberton line was operated by the sawmills as a light line. It has now been relaid and taken over by the Working Railways, and is part of the system. The construction of the line from Norseman to Salmon Gums was started last year. It is hoped that it will be completed early next year. The Albany-Denmark extension was put in hand after the close of the financial year, and a sum of £100,000 has been provided for the work on this year's Estimates.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is a deviation, too.

The Minister for Railways: No, it is an extension in connection with Nornalup.

The PREMIER: It is a new section. The work is being pushed on. It is intended to go on with it, as members will see from the estimate of expenditure of £100,000. Of the lines already authorised, only the Brookton-Dale and the Yarramony Eastward lines have not been actually commenced. Provision has been made in the Estimates for the preliminary work to be done in connection with these lines, and with others which Parliament is being asked to authorise this session.

Mr. Brown: What will the preliminary work consist of: surveys?

The PREMIER: I think most of the survey work has been done.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: There is provision for further surveys.

The PREMIER: On other lines. Provision has been made for the survey of the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook line. Further survey work is being done in this case, because the Engineer-in-Chief considers it will be possible to obtain a better grade.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is well to do that because it is costly to shift a line. We never have provided enough money for these surveys.

The PREMIER: That is so. Once a railway has been laid, no matter what the grade may be like, it is hard to obtain the necessary money afterwards for regrading. This sort of thing has operated for years, and in some cases for generations, without any regrading being done. I think this line is part of the through line to Armadale.

Mr. Brown: We hope so.

The PREMIER: It will be some day. This makes it the more essential that a good grade should be obtained if possible, even if more money has to be expended on the original construction of the work.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: The first expenditure is the cheapest.

The PREMIER: Other surveys provided for are in connection with the Ejangding Northwards railway, the Kalkalling-Bullfinch railway, and the Mt. Barker-Pemberton railway. These lines have been authorised and will be completed as early as possible. These are not new proposals, and have been under consideration for some time. They have been rendered necessary by existing settlement that has gone ahead of the lines in the six districts I have mentioned. A small sum has been set aside for the preliminary work in connection with the Lake Grace-Karlgarin railway, the Bill for which is now before the House.

Mr. Brown: That will be for the survey?

The PREMIER: For the preliminary work.

Mr. Corboy: It will not stop there.

The PREMIER: No. One would be very glad to be able to find the money for all these railways. When we come to examine those that have been authorised, and those now before the House, and others that have been suggested or proposed, it is very difficult to select one from the other and say which is the most important.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: The Lake Grace-Karlgarin railway was promised.

Mr. Stubbs: It was promised many years ago.

The PREMIER: I do not know its past history very well.

Mr. Corboy: There are 90,000 bags of wheat to be shifted there, 40 miles from a railway.

Hon. G. Taylor: It is just as well to leave old premises where they are.

The PREMIER: No doubt they were made in good faith. If they have not been fulfilled, it was because of the difficulty experienced in finding the money with which to build all these railways. I should like to be able to build them all, though they would run into many hundreds of miles and cost a large sum of money. It would be a good thing for the State if we could do this within the next year or two. It would go far towards greatly increasing the production of the State. The difficulty is that there are so many needs for the money in other directions, which are considered to be equally urgent. No one can gainsay that water supplies in agricultural districts are badly needed. So it is with works in other directions. It is a pity that some of the activities that fall upon Governments have not been carried out by other bodies, so as to leave the State freer to borrow money for essential and big national works that are required. We have spent money in many directions in the past in this State, and have had to find it for works which are purely of a local character in many ways.

Hon. G. Taylor: And domestic, too.

The PREMIER: Yes. I should like to see such things as water supplies, that are purely for local use, say in the metropolitan area, and for which the people are paying rates and taxes, controlled by those they serve. But the State has to find money in all directions. We must, therefore, be careful not to come down with Loan Estimates so huge as to create a possible doubt in the minds of those from whom we have to borrow the money. It will be remembered that an attack was recently made in London upon Australian borrowing. This was based on the score that Australia generally was borrowing too rapidly and increasing its public debt too fast.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think our Agent General gave a good reply.

The PREMIER: Yes. The Agent General would have replied at once. At all events he would have replied a day or so after the attack was made, but for the fact that the Prime Minister was in London at

the time. As the attack was not upon Western Australian borrowing, but upon Australian borrowing generally, it was a matter for the Prime Minister.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Prime Minister put up a good case, but I think our man put up a better one.

The PREMIER: Yes. Our Agent General would have replied earlier but that he had to wait until the Prime Minister had had his say.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They both put up a good case.

The PREMIER: Yes. I think they succeeded in shattering a good deal of the case that was made out. Nevertheless, from newspaper cuttings which I receive from the Old Country by every mail—cutting from powerful and influential sections of the Press—there is no doubt a feeling exists in England that perhaps Australia generally has been going somewhat too fast. The general criticism has not done much harm, and much of it is understood to be exaggerated and without foundation.

Mr. Teesdale: It emanated from a small financial group. It was not general.

The PREMIER: At the same time, it has an effect in financial circles, so much so that it is considered advisable that no Australian State should go on the loan market this side of Christmas. We, of course, do not desire to do so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We still get our overdraft if we want it?

The PREMIER: Yes; but when we do get an overdraft, we must go on the market at given intervals in order to clear it off. It is highly desirable that when that time does arrive we should not experience any difficulty in obtaining the money we require. I am not anticipating any difficulty at all. We can get practically unlimited overdrafts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There has never been any trouble about that.

The PREMIER: No. So far as I am aware, it has never yet been suggested that a limit should be placed upon the amount of our overdraft. Therefore I do not think we shall have any difficulty.

Mr. Brown: Will these various railways be built in rotation, as they were passed?

The PREMIER: I cannot give the hon. member that assurance. Sometimes a railway Bill as the result of merely accidental circumstances passes ahead of others that may be more deserving. I think as regards only one line authorised in the State, was it

laid down that the line should have priority of construction.

Hon. G. Taylor: We do not want any more of that.

Mr. Teesdale: Good old Esperance!

Mr. Lindsay: Was not that done so as to take the line out of its order?

The PREMIER: I am not sure about that.

Mr. Teesdale: The member for Toodyay should give notice of that question.

The PREMIER: I think the course adopted was taken because the line had been badly treated. It was jostled at the turn, and the idea was really to restore it to the position which rightfully belonged to it. Therefore it was taken from the rear and placed somewhere in front. At all events, that is my recollection of the matter. It has to be remembered, too, that during the past two or three years we have had extraordinary expenditure in some directions. Of the expenditure on the metropolitan water supply and sewerage works we should be free in another year or two, though perhaps it is rash to speculate on that subject. Half a million pounds every year for several years to be expended on metropolitan water supply and sewerage has prevented the construction of railways. That work has diverted money which would otherwise have been available for the construction of railways and other undertakings.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes, and building railways is a function of Government while the other is more a function of the local authorities.

The PREMIER: The other happens to be a function of Government too, and the money had to be found. The work could not be delayed any longer. As I mentioned, £80,000 is required for tramway extensions this year—another work which cannot be delayed except at the cost of grave injustice to the people interested. It will be apparent to everyone that as the country grows and develops, so do the city and suburbs expand; and this means that money must be found for transport facilities in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Stubbs: I hope the tramways extensions will not run parallel with the railways.

The PREMIER: I hope not, though it may not always be possible to avoid that. I am quite certain that the proposed extensions will pay from the very commencement, because settlement has gone on well ahead of them. The population is there already, before the tramway extensions are built. An amount of £150,000 is provided

for the Electricity Supply. Approximately £100,000 is required for the fifth unit, which is already in hand; and the balance for ring mains and extensions of mains generally. Here again, in common with other concerns which I have already mentioned, the demand is continually increasing. These works serve a most useful purpose, and have an important influence on the industries of the metropolitan area.

Mr. Stubbs: They are run at a loss too, are they not?

The PREMIER: I do not think so, although if we had a better contract with the Perth City Council we should perhaps be showing a considerable profit.

Mr. Stubbs: That contract was a mistake.

The PREMIER: I am inclined to agree with the hon. member.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who made the agreement?

Hon. G. Taylor: Do not bother about that. It is made.

The PREMIER: Open confession is good for the soul. I do not think it is a good agreement, and I own that I was a member of the Cabinet that made it. For harbours and rivers £233,285 is asked this year. The expenditure last year was £210,567. A small sum has been made available for improvements to the Esperance harbour. These improvements are rendered necessary by the construction of the Esperance railway. The Engineer-in-Chief will shortly put up a comprehensive scheme for the Esperance harbour, and there again a large sum of money will be required within the next few years for the provision of harbour accommodation. That necessity arises from the construction of the railway and also from the development of our wheat lands in that district.

Hon. G. Taylor: I think the report will blow out the theory that Esperance harbour is a good harbour. A lot of money will have to be spent on it.

The PREMIER: I believe it is in many respects a fine harbour.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes, but it will want a lot of money.

The PREMIER: Representations have been made to me also regarding the necessity for providing more harbour accommodation at Busselton. It has been pointed out that ships frequently have to pass that port because there is no room for them to berth. As a result, contracts have been cancelled and timber has had to be

railed from Busselton to Bunbury. Accordingly I have asked the Engineer-in-Chief to report on the question of harbour accommodation at Busselton also. On these Loan Estimates I have provided a sum so that the work may be commenced this year, when the report has been received.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But £5,000 will only do the investigation.

The PREMIER: The total estimated cost is not much—only £16,000. It has been proposed that the jetty should be extended.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A new head is wanted.

The PREMIER: The total cost of the improvements is estimated at £16,000, and seeing that nearly half the year has passed £5,000 will probably be sufficient for the work that can be done during the current financial year. The Engineer-in-Chief has also investigated the situation at Bunbury, and he will shortly be in a position to make a recommendation regarding the works necessary to improve conditions there. This year £15,000 is provided for Bunbury harbour. Work will be continued at Fremantle and Geraldton, at which ports steady progress was made during the year. The work at Fremantle last year consisted principally of renewals to Victoria Quay, dredging the entrance channel, and constructing a new grain shed at the North Wharf. I am asking for slightly less this year on account of water supply, the principal reason for the reduction being that the expenditure on the metropolitan water supply is not now quite so heavy. The hills scheme was proceeded with last year, and a large number of extensions of mains were made. The mains from Wongong, Canning and Churchman's Brook were completed. It is intended to push on with the Churchman's Brook dam, to make a commencement with the Wongong reservoir, and also to continue laying large mains and to recondition the 12-inch main from the Victoria reservoir. For these works £269,425 is set down as against last year's expenditure of £381,901. Last year, under various votes, country water supplies absorbed £177,400. This year I have provided £196,000. I hope that our friends on the cross benches will not consider they have any cause for complaint on that score.

Mr. Stubbs: Does that amount include town water supplies in agricultural areas?

The PREMIER: No. The amount is for country water supplies.

Mr. Stubbs: I mean, does it include supplies for country towns?



The PREMIER: I am not going to give the hon. member any information about that Wagin supply just now, but he may be able to elicit some satisfactory answer when the items are reached. As regards country water supplies, the demands are increasing year by year; and I think the Government may fairly claim that they are meeting those demands. New tanks and reservoirs have been completed, improvements have been effected in the water supplies of country towns, wells have been sunk, and other tanks are in hand for completion at the end of the year. The sewerage of Subiaco has been progressing satisfactorily, and various works have been carried out in both Perth and Fremantle during last year. For sewerage works I am asking £115,975 on these Estimates. The work of sewerage of the Subiaco district, as hon. members know, was not commenced until most of the other metropolitan districts had been completed in that respect. The out-flow sewer to the ocean is costing a considerable amount of money.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are you making any provision for sewerage Oxford-street and Mt. Hawthorn?

The PREMIER: I am not sure about that. Extensions and reticulations are going on all the time.

Hon. G. Taylor: In the localities I refer to nothing has been going on for years.

The PREMIER: I am not sure whether the mains have been constructed there.

Hon. G. Taylor: There are no mains.

The PREMIER: That, probably, is the difficulty.

Hon. G. Taylor: Those localities are connected up as far as the mains.

The PREMIER: Considerable sums have been expended on agricultural extensions from the 30-in. water main, and further works will be placed in hand shortly. The 30-in. main is 25 years old now, and demands continual renewals. Considerable expenditure is occasioned in this direction. A large amount of drainage work has been carried out, principally in group settlement areas; and further drainage work will be done during this year. For the development of mining the usual provision of £100,000 is made. That is the amount which has been granted year after year. This year, however, it will be in addition to the amount provided from the Federal Disabilities Grant. The development of Agriculture is again the largest source of expenditure, over £2,000,000 being required. I think the exact amount is £2,109,798.

Hon. G. Taylor: And then the farmers are not satisfied!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, they are satisfied.

The PREMIER: I would remind hon. members that this amount represents only direct expenditure on agriculture. There is expenditure in many other directions which I claim is properly to be classed as expenditure on agriculture.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course we are getting a lot of money back. You know there is £1,200,000 coming back.

The PREMIER: Some of it is coming back. But money spent on new railways, money spent on rural development, money spent on country water supplies is all money spent on agriculture. Money spent on additions to opened railways, money spent on provision of additional rolling stock, is expenditure that has been rendered necessary largely by the development of our agricultural industry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not a penny of this money would be spent at all but for the agricultural industry.

The PREMIER: Of course, some of the expenditure is less directly for the benefit of agriculture than other expenditure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If it were not for agriculture, we could reduce the number of members here to 10.

The PREMIER: I would not be so pessimistic as all that about the other industries.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you were making disparaging remarks about the agricultural industry.

The PREMIER: No. There is no doubt that a very large proportion of our loan expenditure is made, either directly or indirectly, in connection with agriculture.

Hon. G. Taylor: If we could get some return for the services rendered to the farmer, it would be all right.

The PREMIER: I believe that in time the farmer will mend his ways.

Mr. Teesdale: I wish we had some farmers up North. We should then get better treatment.

The PREMIER: And then there would be no cause to talk about handing over the North to the Commonwealth. An occasional reminder about the North, and mining, and other things does not do any harm. Group settlement is responsible for £1,370,000 of the total of £2,109,000 set down.

Hon. G. Taylor: And still their representatives are not satisfied!

The PREMIER: For advances by the Agricultural Bank there is provided £250,000. We spent slightly less than that last year. Then there is a similar sum, £250,000, for soldier settlement advances, and we have provided £100,000 for the purchase of wire netting for settlers. That, of course, will be recovered from the Commonwealth under the agreement with them. We are in a position to supply wire netting as required. Now we come to another line of large expenditure. The sum of £196,000 is provided for roads, as against an expenditure of £86,000 last year. This £196,000 is exclusive of the money obtained from the Commonwealth.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is our share.

The PREMIER: Provision is made on these Estimates for our expenditure of £196,000.

Mr. Stubbs: That is for main roads?

The PREMIER: It is for roads. Of course the increase, as against the £86,000 of last year, is due to the new agreement, under which provision is made for largely increased expenditure. As is well known, under that agreement the Commonwealth will provide £384,000 each year on condition that we spend from our funds 15s. for each 20s. advanced by them. Our contributions have provided under this Vote £181,300, and under the Agricultural Group Settlement Roads and Drainage Vote £15,000, making the total the £196,300 I have mentioned. Even then we shall not be expending right up to the amount to be expended under the agreement. Under the new agreement we should have provided £288,000, or approximately £90,000 more than we have provided. We have not done that, because nearly half the year has gone and it would not be possible to expend the whole of the sum in the time. But the Commonwealth grant does not lapse with each year, and any amount unexpended in one year will be available the next year. So it is probable that a much larger sum will have to be found next year, because by then the machinery of the Main Roads Board will be in operation and we shall be able to expend the full amount, which we are not able to do this year because of delay in completing the agreement, and because of the late start consequent on that delay. We have other votes provided to cover the cost of special roads, portion of which do not come under the Commonwealth agreement. We shall be spending a considerable

sum on roads, apart altogether from the Commonwealth agreement. We have provided for roads and drainage in group areas £170,000, and provision to the extent of £15,000 is made for reconstructing the Fremantle-Canning road. This road is being constructed under the provisions of the Traffic Act, which give the Government power to construct roads in the metropolitan area and to charge interest and sinking fund on half the cost of the work. So it will be seen that very substantial provision has been made for road construction. Approximately there was expended from all sources last year on roads £356,000, and provision has been made for expenditure this year of £460,000. There is no occasion to dwell on the need for a road construction policy in this State. If we can go on under the new agreement, most of the difficulties as they affect the people of the State should be over by the end of the ten year period, although the difficulties of the Treasurer each year in finding the money will not be lessened.

Mr. Stubbs: It will all come back indirectly.

The PREMIER: As Treasurer I find that all things come back indirectly. But there is not in our books of accounts any item for indirect revenue. If we had such an item, where we could credit this year a sum representing money to come back in future years, it would be much easier to balance the ledger.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Money wisely spent must bring its return.

The PREMIER: But sometimes even money wisely spent does not give an immediate return. With all the experience accumulated in the Eastern States and in other parts of the world, we should be able to make roads that would stand up to the traffic. That question was fairly fully discussed earlier in the session. It seems to me folly to spend money on roads, only to have them smashed to pieces within a few months because they are not capable of standing up to the traffic. For public buildings we have provided £98,000, as compared with an expenditure of £72,404 last year. This, of course, is for schools, hospitals, and public buildings generally. In addition, money has been provided for the erection of country hospitals. The demand for this is continually increasing, and the general principle is that the expenditure should be on a pound for pound basis. Members representing country districts will

know that there has been considerable activity in the erection of hospitals for some years past. This will have to continue as the country grows. Funds for preliminary work in respect of the Fremantle road and railway bridges have been provided. That is another financial problem that will have to be faced within the next few years. The Engineer-in-Chief will have his report on the proposed site ready for presentation to the Government shortly, and of course we shall have to be largely guided by that as to what is to be done. The sum of £5,000 is provided for the preliminary work. It seems there can be no escape from the construction of that bridge.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course, Parliament will have to be consulted before it is built.

The PREMIER: I should think so, for it will be a very big work, running into a huge sum of money. There is rather more than usual set down for trading concerns.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is a somewhat controversial question.

The PREMIER: Yes, but I think I shall be able to allay the fears of members when I say that most of it is for the two new ships. Particulars of these purchases are well known to members, and there is no necessity to again refer to them further than to say the final payments are due this year. The two ships are responsible for the big increase in the Vote. The first of these boats, the "Kybra," has been in commission for some months and the second one, the "Koolinda," is expected to arrive in January.

Mr. Coverley: The North-West coast could do with still another boat.

The PREMIER: I believe it could. Those two boats account for the big increased expenditure in the Trading Concerns Vote. It has also been necessary to provide new machinery for the State Implement Works in order to effect economies, and to provide for extensions of the State Brickworks, running into about £10,000. There is also a sum provided for the State Sawmills, principally for the erection of a new mill at Holyoake and for the transfer of the old mill at Wuraming to a new site, while certain additions have been made to the plant at Carlisle. I think that covers most of the items set out in the Estimates. Although the amount seems large, it will be found

that every penny of it, and more, is required. After all, if we only continue to expand and grow and develop as the State has been doing for some years past, there need be no fear that we are over borrowing, especially when portion of the money is cheap money. There can be no fear as to the ability of our people to meet the interest and sinking fund charges. There can be no doubt at all about that. When we see the country stretching out, developing on all hands, we need not hesitate to provide the money required, without which the extension and growth cannot take place. I have had deputations asking for new railways, deputations in the course of which a number of settlers have pointed out that they have been for some years away beyond the reach of railway communication and have been largely wasting their time, doing very little work, in consequence of which production is held up. Given railway communication, the land could be cleared and under cultivation, to the advantage of the State. I believe we shall be able to so add to our developmental works during the year as to enable the State to go on progressing, and to increase its production in the years ahead of us.

Progress reported.

## **BILL—GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS**  
(Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [5.45]  
in moving the second reading said: Members are aware that there has been an appeal board in connection with the Railway Department for a great number of years, and that it has worked fairly well. As the years have gone by, it has been shown that some of the machinery connected with the board has not been altogether satisfactory, and the need for amendment has become apparent. One section of the Railway Act has not been availed of for four or five years, and as the Act was being amended it was thought that the opportunity could be taken to remove it from the statute. It is the section that gives the department power to punish an employee instead of by way of a fine, to collect an amount of money which might be part of the cost of the damage done by the employee.

Hon. G. Taylor: Due to his negligence?

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :** There is the right to punish an officer by dismissal, and also the right to deduct from his wages part of the cost of damage that might have been done by reason, perhaps, of carelessness, or even as the result of accident. That section has given cause for dissatisfaction, so much so that the department a few years ago decided to abolish that form of punishment. Seeing, therefore, that there is no longer any need for the section to remain in the Act, it has been agreed by the Commissioner and the unions concerned that the best interests of all will be served if it is repealed. Another section of the Act limits the right of appeal to those who have served continuously for 12 months. The Bill reduces the qualifying period to six months, which is the period required to make a man eligible for other privileges in accordance with awards. Those are the main principles it is intended to alter, but there are several amendments to the machinery sections of the Act. Section 70 of the Act deals with the construction of the appeal board, and provides that one member and a deputy shall be elected by each of the three sections, the salaried staffs, the wages staffs and the locomotive branch. The weakness here is that it gives a man employed in the loco branch two votes, viz., one for the locomotive and one for the wages representative. The amending Bill gives one member and deputy to the salaried staff of the Railways, one to the salaried staff of the Tramways and Electricity Supply branch, and one each to five sections of wages staff, viz., Traffic and Stores, Loco Running, Loco workshops, Ways and Works, and Tramways and Electricity Supply. It has sometimes happened in the past that the elected member sitting has not been in close touch with the work of the branch or section concerned. The proposed amendment remedies this fault and will render the board more acceptable both to the staff and to the Commissioner. There has been a desire expressed by various sections of the service that the men on the appeal board should be men representing the class of work in respect of which an appeal might be taking place. The desire is that the representative should have a thorough knowledge of the class of work being dealt within the appeal, and so be able to give the benefit of his advice and experience to the other members of the court. The Bill therefore provides that instead of having one man

for the salaried staff, one for the wages staff, or locomotive branch, there shall be members as I have enumerated them. It means that for about 8,000 employees, with the exception of the tramway employees, each member of the appeal board will represent about 1,500 members of a branch of the service. Each member will sit only in connection with an appeal affecting the branch he represents. The chairman of the appeal board will be a magistrate. The additional subsection to Section 70 provides for any member elected being so employed as to permit of his attendance on the board, thus removing any disability from men employed in remote districts. The amendment means that any man representing a particular section will have his employment so arranged that it will be possible for him to attend the appeal board sittings without any trouble. For instance, the representative of the loco branch will not have to be stationed at Meekatharra.

Hon. G. Taylor: Say he is located at Meekatharra, and it is desired that he should attend at Geraldton. Will he be transferred to Geraldton?

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :** Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But he need not take the job.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :** No, but by virtue of the fact that he has submitted himself for the position, it is assumed that he will take it. The system of voting will be preferential, similar to that in vogue at Parliamentary elections.

Hon. G. Taylor: I see you have made provision for a deputy in every instance.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :** That has always been so. The elections will take place every three years, and it is not desired that they should be held more frequently. The deputy will take the place of the member of the board, in the event of that member's inability to attend. The member himself may have an interest in the appeal.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They will not sit very often.

**THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS :** Fortunately there has been a spirit of justice in regard to punishment meted out to employees. It has been generally recognised that the punishment has been fair and that there has been no necessity to appeal to a board which would probably uphold the decision of those in authority. Frivol-

ous appeals have not taken place. As a matter of fact, such appeals have been discouraged by the unions and by the advocates, and indeed by the board also. Another amendment will make it mandatory for a deputy to sit on the board. The Act merely permitted a deputy to act. In the event of the member or the deputy not being able to appear, the original Act provided that the person concerned should have the right to nominate someone to sit on the board. There was no organisation existing which was sufficiently representative to be able to nominate anyone. Unionism being recognised as a principle in connection with our industrial life, the Bill provides that the particular union concerned shall have the right to nominate a person to sit on the board.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The union to which the appellant belongs.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There would be three or four unions, and this particular union would be the union substantially representing the branch interested. Such an event, however, is hardly likely to occur. Section 72 enacts that appeals shall be heard within 30 days of their lodgment, but makes no provision for any redress in the event of this limit being exceeded. That is to say that if an appeal is not heard within 30 days, the appellant has no right to redress because of the expiration of that period. This has been altered and the Bill provides that if the hearing be not commenced within 30 days, the punishment shall be revoked and the appellant's loss reimbursed. Section 74 deals with procedure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will take us a month to get through this Bill.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There is nothing very much in it. I do not think anyone in the department or anyone else can have any objection to the principles it contains. There are only four or five amendments to the Act, and they mostly are machinery clauses, which have been shown to be necessary.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I agree that there is no wish to do anyone an injustice.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The Bill has been submitted at the request of the unions. There is no hostility to it from any quarter. The hon. member can rest assured that all parties are in agreement, and that there is no opposition to it. Section 74 deals with procedure. Under the amending Bill the authority of the board is strengthened by providing penalties for

non-compliance with a summons to attend as a witness. The right of a witness to recover travelling expenses is also established. Section 74 deals with procedure and Clause 8 of the Bill provides an amendment for the issuing of summonses for the attendance of witnesses.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will those witnesses give evidence on oath?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, that has always been done.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will this apply to people outside the railway service?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes, and it will be necessary for those who have been summoned, to attend before the board to give evidence. In addition, the person who subpoenas the witness will be responsible for the payment of his fees, which will be recoverable in the law courts. In the past instances have been known where persons have been in a position to give material evidence relating to an appeal case. Such people have indicated that the matter had nothing to do with them, and have refused to give evidence. The result has led to injustice being done. These are the principles that are covered by the Bill and the fact that both the department and the unions concerned are in agreement, should be sufficient to merit commendation of the Bill at the hands of the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

## BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [6.2] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is along somewhat similar lines to that of the previous one. In this instance, however, the measure deals with the creation of an appeal board for the Police Department. It is the policy of the Government that appeal boards shall be available for Government employees in whatever branch of the service they may be engaged. The railway employees have had the advantage of an appeal board for many years and the House has recently been discussing the provision of an appeal board for the teachers in the Education Department. In this instance the Police Department is to be dealt with, and the members of the force have been asking for

the provision of an appeal board for many years past.

Hon. G. Taylor: Will the appeal board deal with punishments only?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Hon. G. Taylor: Not with promotions.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No, the Railway Appeal Board does not deal with appeals in respect of promotions, nor is it proposed that the police appeal board shall do so either.

Hon. G. Taylor: Under the New South Wales Police Act the appeal board can deal with promotions.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There is a lot to be said for and against promotions being dealt with by an appeal board. I do not propose to ask the House to provide for the board exercising that function. It should be the responsibility of the administrative officer in charge of the Police Department to make definite recommendations regarding promotions. I do not see how an independent board, with no experience regarding the ability, temperament, tact, or character of an officer, and with the advantage of merely the evidence of one or two people who would favour the appellant, could properly deal with such a question. Naturally, anyone who had anything to say against the interests of the appellant officer would stay away, and the true facts would not be placed before the board. The administrative branch, to use a colloquialism, would not "put the gun into" the appellant officer. The administrative officers are concerned with the efficient working of the department, and should take the responsibility attached to recommendations for promotions. When some union or an individual officer considers a flagrant case of favouritism has taken place in connection with a promotion, a special board may be established. During the time I have been Minister for Railways, two such special boards have been created to deal with charges of favouritism. That is sufficient to overcome that difficulty.

Mr. Lambert: Do you think that, generally speaking, promotions in the police force have been satisfactory?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Not entirely. For that reason, when about 25 senior officers were to be appointed 18 months or so ago, regard was taken to the fact that for many years past dissatisfaction has been apparent in the police force in connection with promotions. It was considered desirable in that instance that a board should be created to deal with those promotions.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If a man were reduced or dismissed, would he have the right of appeal?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Would a man in Constable Lambert's position have the right of appeal?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, that is a particular point concerning the Bill. If an officer should be dismissed or removed from the police force, as Constable Lambert was, he will have the right of appeal to the board. I was anxious to provide that such officers should have the right of appeal to the board instead of to the Minister, because it is more satisfactory to deal with such cases in open court, where evidence can be called by both sides before an impartial tribunal, and judgment entered on the facts. Thus, the Police Act is to be amended so that cases such as that of Constable Lambert, can be dealt with by the appeal board. If a man is punished by the Commissioner of Police for neglect of duty, that case will come within the jurisdiction of the board. The Bill provides for appeals against punishments inflicted as a result of inquiries by the Commissioner or by an officer acting on behalf of the Commissioner, and for constituting an appeal board to deal with such appeals. At present there is no provision in the Police Act for a member of the force to appeal against punishment. In the event of a subordinate officer dealing with a complaint lodged against an officer under his control, before the punishment is inflicted, the Commissioner must express his approval of the punishment meted out by his subordinate. Something may have happened at Broome and the inspector of police there may be asked to investigate the charge against a constable, and to make a recommendation. That inspector may be a man possessing a very high sense of duty and he may regard a lapse, that another inspector might consider was trivial, as something much more serious. He might recommend a punishment that the Commissioner of Police, who deals with the whole personnel of the force, might consider too drastic altogether. The Commissioner would deal with the position in accordance with the facts submitted to him, and would be able to mitigate the punishment, should he consider it advisable to do so. It is, therefore, provided in the Bill that the Commissioner must approve of any punishment inflicted by a subordinate officer. Then, if the man who is punished considers

that he has a grievance, or that the punishment is unjust, he will have the right to appeal to the board against the treatment meted out to him. At present there is no such right of appeal against punishment. The procedure under the present Act is that a member of the force may elect to have his case dealt with by the Commissioner, or may apply to have it dealt with by a board. Such a board would consist of a resident magistrate, a justice of the peace and an officer of the police force, and the decision of the board is subject to confirmation by the Executive Council. There is, however, no appeal from the decision arrived at by the board. That, briefly, is the system now operating and the Bill is intended to alter that position. Clause 2 provides for the repeal of Section 19, under which an officer may be fined £10 or imprisonment for one month, if found guilty by two justices of the peace of neglect or violation of duty. We have reached a stage in our development when it is hardly necessary for such powers to be contained in the Police Act. If an officer has committed some offence, even though it may be a comparatively serious one, the power to dismiss him from the force should be sufficient without the right to imprison him for a month. Sections 23 and 24 of the principal Act also provide for a term of imprisonment for insubordination or misconduct. If a policeman is found guilty of misconduct, it is possible for him to be put in gaol for three days. The exercise of such powers might be all right in connection with the military forces, but it is regarded as an anachronism in connection with civil life, such as the police are engaged in. It is certainly an anachronism in these days that an employer shall have the right to imprison one of his employees. Of course, I do not think those powers have been used for years, but still that power exists in the Act to-day. It was passed 26 years ago, and as we were amending the Police Act, it was thought wise, and in accordance with industrial conditions of to-day, to delete the sections altogether. Under Section 26, which is to be repealed, power is given for the appointment of a board to hear appeals from members of the force who have been charged with misconduct, and the decisions of such boards have to be confirmed or otherwise by the Governor in Council. The trouble about that provision is that boards, consisting of different people, deal with similar cases and impose varying punishments. A case may be

dealt with by two local justices at Pinjarra and they may give their decision. A similar case may be dealt with by another board in some other part of the State and a decision arrived at that will be totally inconsistent with that arrived at by the Pinjarra board. In order to arrive at greater consistency, it was thought that appeals against punishments should be dealt with, as far as possible, by one board.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

**THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE:** I have dealt with most of the provisions of the Bill with the exception of the machinery clauses, which are based on those in the Government Railways Act Amendment Bill. Machinery is provided for the election and constitution of the board to deal with the appeals. For years the police have been endeavouring to get a board which would ensure some uniformity in the appeals against punishment. Their representatives have seen me on several occasions and they are in agreement regarding the provisions of the Bill. The administrative staff of the department consider the Bill eminently fair and they feel that it will bring a measure of contentment that has long been desired in the administration of the department. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

## **PRIVILEGE—"HANSARD" COPIES REMOVED.**

*To Inquire by Committee.*

**MR. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [7.32]:** Before the next Order of the Day is called on, I desire to rise on a matter of privilege. It is somewhat distasteful to have to mention the matter, but I have made inquiries of other members and I find that apparently most of us have suffered the same experience, namely, that No. 13 "Hansard" has been removed from our desks.

Hon. G. Taylor: I have missed mine.

Mr. Sampson: An unlucky number.

**MR. CORBOY:** It is a number that contains rather important debates so far as two or three members of the House are concerned, and the position unfortunately is that the Government Printer has no further

supplies of that number. There are no spare copies in the House and we cannot get them anywhere else. To my surprise I found, on consulting you, Mr. Speaker, that even your copy had been removed from your desk. If members cannot leave papers on their desks in the House with a feeling of absolute safety, it is a serious matter. I do not know who removed the copies of "Hansard"; I do not know who would desire to do so unless it were a member.

Mr. Sampson: A strange taste!

Mr. CORBOY: That might be. I notice that the Minister for Lands, with the typical instincts of a Cornishman, having found his No. 13 "Hansard" is putting it under lock and key in his drawer. Apparently his is the only one that has not been removed. At any rate, every member with whom I have spoken has missed his copy. On looking around the Chamber I find that two or three members indicate that their No. 13 "Hansard" has not been removed, but I was not aware of that before. I merely wish to mention the matter because I consider it very serious that papers belonging to members should be removed from the Chamber. Having ventilated the matter I hope we shall never have a repetition of anything of the kind. I know that one particular member was desirous of getting half a dozen copies of that particular number and he found it impossible to do so. Additional copies were unobtainable. No. 13 copy belonging to that hon. member had been removed, and he did not possess one. Having registered my protest, in order to comply with the Standing Orders, I move—

That a committee be appointed to inquire into the matter of the removal of No. 13 copy of "Hansard" from members' desks.

MR. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [7.35]: I second the motion, and in doing so I should like to ask whether we would have any power to expel a member or otherwise deal with him if we found that he had removed these numbers from members' files. I should like to hear your opinion, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: If any member is found to have been guilty of any act of disrespect, he may be dealt with as the House may think fit.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not desire the motion to go to a division. I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [7.36]: I do not think the matter should be allowed to rest there. It seems quite clear that some deliberate attempt has been made to purloin that particular number of "Hansard." I notice that mine has disappeared.

Several Members: So has mine.

The PREMIER: It is a serious matter if any member is free to steal a number of "Hansard" from other members' desks. I think a committee ought to be appointed so that we may ascertain just what has happened.

Hon. G. Taylor: Some action ought to be taken.

The PREMIER: Whoever was responsible, it was a very improper thing to take away copies of "Hansard" from members' and Ministers' desks.

Mr. Corboy: Highly improper.

Mr. Teesdale: I have lost mine. It is quite easy to know where they have gone.

The PREMIER: If the matter is allowed to pass on this occasion, the offence might be repeated. I hope the hon. member will allow the motion to go to the vote.

Question put and passed.

Ballot taken, and a committee consisting of Messrs. Lambert, Lindsay, Millington, Taylor, and the mover appointed, with power to call for persons and papers, sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and report on Tuesday next.

## **BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of five amendments made by the Council now considered.

### *In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.—Clause 5. Delete all words from "beginning" down to and inclusive of the word "hours" in line 7.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—  
That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2.—Clause 5. Delete the word "thereof" in line 8 and insert in lieu thereof



the words "of Section 6 of the principal Act."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3. Clause 8, Subclause (4).—Delete the words "general secretary of the Miners' Union in lines thirteen and fourteen, and insert in lieu thereof the words "the accredited representative of any industrial union of workers who are engaged in the coal mining industry, and whose wages are determined on the basis of the tonnage of coal raised."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to subject to the insertion after the word "workers" of the following words:—"Registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-1925."

This will put the amendment in order, and bring it into conformity with the law of the land.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Can we have an industrial union of workers that is not registered?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But it would not be recognised by the court.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There is only one coal miners' union in the State. Are there any industrial bodies at Collie that are unregistered?

The Minister for Mines: There may be dozens.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not think the Minister's amendment is necessary.

The Minister for Mines: The Council's amendment is not necessary.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: But the Minister has accepted it. The Bill affects only those who are engaged in the Collie coal industry.

Mr. WILSON: If it is necessary for the industrial Court of Arbitration to deal with the matter of hours, it is also necessary that it should deal with the matter of inspecting weights. The miners come under the jurisdiction of the court on the question of hours, although another place has struck out the hours.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Everyone affected by the Bill would be registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act. There is no one at Collie against whom we need legislate. Industrial organisations are here to stay, and if the workers have any sense they will see to it they continue as such. The principle of industrial organisation is

sound. It is the only way in which the workers can protect themselves. Why should we be afraid of anyone? There is no inducement to any people to interfere with the Collie organisation.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: They have done it in the past.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not afraid of its being done at Collie.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member is arguing that there is no reason for the Council's amendment, but that the clause should remain as it was first printed.

Hon. G. Taylor: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is the only inference that can be drawn from the hon. member's remarks.

Hon. G. Taylor: You cannot misrepresent me like that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot interpret the hon. member's words in any other way.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are dealing with your amendment.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the Leader of the Opposition will be quiet for a moment I will proceed. Another place struck out the words "General Secretary of the Miners' Union." The member for Mt. Margaret argues that it is unlikely there will be more than one union at Collie to be dealt with.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Council's amendment is sound. It means that the general secretary of any one union shall not be the only person responsible.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member is changing his mind.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are changing yours.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We should only recognise registered unions. We say that before a union can be heard it must be registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act. We also insist upon disputes being settled by arbitration. We must ensure that the representative indicated here shall be the representative of that organisation which is registered under the law of the country. It may happen that two unions become registered if one does not carry out its proper functions. But even if two are registered, we are then not confined to this provision. Having said that the proper place to determine the matter is the Arbitration Court, this Chamber, recognising that principle, should insist that the representative of the union shall be the representative of that

union which is registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act. I am not going to leave a loophole for any bogus union or any blackleg union.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, drop that here!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Why?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is no suggestion of any such thing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Do not we know that such things exist?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member does know that such a thing exists. It existed during his administration of this country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Where?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: On the goldfields. I refer to the alleged Coolgardie Miners' Union.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It was a registered union.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It was not registered, and it was a bogus union.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Nothing of the sort.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member pretends to be in favour of arbitration and unionism but he cannot listen to an argument.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I cannot be high and mighty.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: On occasions the hon. member cannot even be ordinarily civil. I ask this Chamber to agree that the representative of the union shall be the representative of that union which is registered under the law of the country. Hon. members opposite, to be consistent, cannot object to that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Minister has tried to put into my mouth words which I have never used. I said I could defend the first part of the amendment made by another place if it were necessary to do so, and I went on to say that as the Minister for Mines had accepted that part, there was no need for me to justify it. The Minister wants to provide that the union must be registered under the Arbitration Act. What does the Council's amendment say? "The accredited representative of any industrial union of workers." What is an accredited industrial union of workers? The Minister says a union can have no standing before the Arbitration Court unless it is registered. The Council's amendment speaks of an accredited repre-

sentative. An accredited representative must be the representative of a registered union. If the union has no standing before the Arbitration Court, its representative will not be there.

The Minister for Mines: He could be the accredited representative of his own union.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The reason for the Minister's amendment on the Council's amendment is that there is only one union of coalminers in Western Australia. The delegate, therefore, would have to be a delegate from that union of coalminers, and if any other union of coalminers started in this State, this measure would have to be altered before that other union could appoint a representative to see coal weighed. It is no use for the Minister to try to pull wool over members' eyes. If there is any fear in the minds of members opposite that some miners are going to secede from the Collie union and form themselves into another union, let me point out that such a union could not be recognised because it would not be registered. Such a union could not function, and therefore could be of no value to its members. My friends opposite must have the wind up. Perhaps they realise that the Collie miners are getting tired of the present union and may want to start another one. If the Minister thinks there is going to be a breakaway, as breakaways are the order of the day—we know how a Labour Ministry is hanging on in another State—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the hon. member to speak to the amendment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is the sole object of the Minister's amendment. He is afraid that there will be a breakaway from the miners' union, and that a representative will be appointed by another miners' union, because the members of that other union will be hewing coal at Collie or in other mines. I have no desire to assist the men to break away. If it is necessary to compel men brutally, by this amendment of the Minister, to remain in the present union, if that is the proper thing to do, I will not fight the question any further.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The original wording was that the general secretary of the union, and no one else, could make requests for the miners. The Council's amendment declares that anybody can be the accredited representative of the union. It does not mean that the general secretary can-

not be appointed as representative, but that someone else can be so appointed; that the union can appoint anyone it pleases. The Council's amendment merely makes the clause a little broader.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: But it says "the secretary of any other union."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: "Engaged in the coal mining industry." It does not say that the union of the member for Forrest could appoint her as the coal miners' representative. What the Minister fears is that some other union may be formed.

Hon. G. Taylor: A bogus union, as he calls it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A black-leg union, he calls it in his delicate language.

Mr. Chesson: The coalminers will look after themselves; you can rest assured of that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Notwithstanding the ill temper of the Minister, I see no objection to his amendment. The only danger is that if the union became de-registered, there might be a bit of trouble.

The Minister for Mines: That is one of the penalties.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not providing penalties. Those who work in the coal mines have the right to appoint someone to check the weighing of the coal, but the work would go on all the same if no representative were appointed, because the men themselves would see that the weights were right. However, the clause gives their official the right to be there at the weighing, just as the employer, the mine owner, has the right to be there. I hope the Minister will agree to have the matter adjusted in accordance with the suggestion which has been made.

Mr. WILSON: I am very pleased that a coal miner of 50 years' experience should come here and learn wisdom from men who never worked in a coal mine.

Hon. G. Taylor: You say the last word in coal mining. •

Mr. WILSON: The hon. member interjecting says the most foolish word. After all the efforts of the Inspector of Mines, of the Mines Department, of the managers and of the miners in framing this Bill, the result is to be thrown to the winds simply because somebody sees some danger in it. The amendment speaks of "any accredited union representative." He will be paid by results, that is, the tonnage of coal. Let us analyse

that. There are three engine-drivers in a mine who haul, say, 1,000 tons of coal per day. Those engine-drivers cannot be paid by results.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are they paid by results now?

Mr. WILSON: Never mind!

Hon. G. Taylor: You are resorting to subterfuge.

Mr. WILSON: I know of cases where they have been paid by results. That system obtained at Newcastle.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is not at Collie, though.

Mr. WILSON: I can also tell the hon. member that there has been such a thing as a wheelers' union, the members of which got one-twentieth of the representation of the other men. The same thing applied here, and the result would be that each section of the men would have an accredited representative. I am not afraid of any black-legging at Collie, but the Council's amendment is so silly that I am surprised at the Committee wasting time on it. We should restore the original wording.

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

No. 4. Clause 12.—Insert after the word "only," in line four of Subclause (2), the following:—

"Provided that nothing in this subsection shall prevent any person acting as general manager of two or more mines, if each of such mines has in charge thereof a certificated manager who is not engaged in the management of any other mine."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—

That the Council's amendment be not agreed to.

It is quite superfluous, for the Bill makes no reference to a general manager, but merely states that each mine shall be managed by a certificated manager. The Bill does not prevent a company having as many general managers as is desired, so long as each mine has a certificated manager. The amendment is not even relevant to the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the Committee will agree to the Council's amendment. All that the Minister can want is given him in the amendment, namely, that each mine shall be managed by a certificated manager; leastways, the Council's amendment does not seek to take away that provision in the Bill. Having thus agreed with the Minister, the Council say there may be

appointed a general manager in charge of two or more mines. What objection can be taken to that? The Minister is wrong in opposing the amendment, and doubly wrong since he agrees that the Bill does not say that a general manager shall not be appointed over two or more mines.

Mr. Chesson: A managing director can exercise control over a whole group of mines now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then why not accept the Council's amendment? There must be something behind the thing, prompting my friends to oppose it. If they were opposed to a general manager having control over two or more mines, I could understand it; but they say distinctly they are not opposed to the appointment of a general manager, so long as there is a properly certificated manager in charge of each mine. That being so, they might reasonably agree to the Council's amendment. It is ridiculous to oppose that amendment since it does not in any way interfere with what the Minister wants.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: We are safeguarding the miners by providing that there shall be a certificated manager in each mine. The amendment does not interfere with that. It simply provides that a company may have a general manager over two or more mines, if desired. That leaves the Minister's own provision unimpaired. Yet the member for Collie says it is a silly amendment. I do not see anything silly about it. So long as we safeguard the miners by providing for a certificated manager in each mine, what harm can there be in allowing the company to appoint also a general manager overlooking two or more mines? I hope the member for Collie will show us the danger, if any, in this amendment.

Mr. WILSON: It is a silly and superfluous amendment. At present there is an uncertificated general manager in Collie, and no one is interfering with him. Mr. Fred Howett is over five mines in Collie. If there were any question of suing a company, it would be the mine manager who would be sued. Why, then, should we put above him a man who cannot be touched? It is only loading the Bill and making it look ridiculous.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Since the companies have the right to appoint general managers, the amendment is superfluous, for the Bill does not take away that right. The Bill in no way deals with gen-

eral managers, or consulting engineers, or financial managers, but leaves all those to the discretion of the companies. The Bill has nothing to do with the management of coal mines.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh yes, it has.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The certificated mine manager is included in the Bill, but not a general manager. So the Bill does not take away from any company the right to appoint general managers, financial managers, and the like. The amendment is quite unnecessary, and can only result in confusion.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	22
Noes	..	..	..	..	17
					—
Majority for					5
					—

#### AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. North
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Denton	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Maley	Mr. C. P. Wansbrough
Mr. Maun	Mr. Richardson
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

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

No. 5. Clause 19, Subclause (2).—Delete all words after "employed," in line four down to the end of the subclause.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I move—  
That the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

Reasons for modifying one of the Council's amendments and disagreeing with another drawn up by a committee; the reasons adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

**BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.***Council's Amendment.*

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Schedule, Part I.—Add at the end of the following paragraph:—

“All that portion at the end of York Street in the Municipality of Albany where it junctions with Middleton Road and other streets, containing 0.72 perches, and being a circle with a radius of 12 links, having the Hordern monument in the centre.”

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the Bill was before this House no request had been made by the Albany Municipal Council for the closure of this particular area. When the Bill was being considered in another place a member there secured the inclusion of the area in the schedule. On this area there stands a monument. The member in question communicated with Albany and asked the council whether they wished to have that area declared a reserve. To my knowledge the monument, known as the Hordern monument, has been in its present position for nearly 40 years. The question was never raised before me. The Legislative Council consider their amendment necessary, and as it will do no harm, I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

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

**BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT.***Council's Amendments.*

Schedule of two amendments made by the Council now considered.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 6.—Add the following sub-clauses:—

(6.) In the case of beer (ale, porter and stout) the undermentioned vessels shall be deemed to contain the standard measure, if

the actual contents are not less than the quantities stated in the following schedule:—

Hogshead—52 gallons.  
Barrel—35 gallons.  
Half-hogshead—26 gallons.  
Kilderkin—17 gallons.  
10-gallon keg—9½ gallons.  
9-gallon keg—8½ gallons.  
5-gallon keg—4½ gallons.

(7.) This section shall not take effect until the expiration of six months from the commencement of this Act.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I cannot agree to this amendment, for it is a negation of the principle governing the Bill. That principle, as between the buyer and the seller, means that the buyer knows the quantity he is buying and the price he is to pay. The Council's amendment means that notwithstanding that a hogshead of ale, porter or stout is recognised by the trade as containing 54 gallons as a standard measurement, the hogshead may contain 52 gallons only. Should the brewer supply a hogshead containing 52 gallons, that will be deemed sufficient within the meaning of this Act.

Mr. Marshall: And what will be the good of the Act at all?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Everyone else will be bound by the principle, and will be required to sell just weights of various commodities, but this one particular industry or class of business is singled out for differential treatment!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If they charge for 52 gallons only, it will be all right.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, but that will not be the position. Under this amendment it will be possible for a brewer to supply a hogshead containing 52 gallons, but the charge will be for a standard hogshead of 54 gallons. Similarly, the standard contents of a barrel of ale, porter or stout are recognised by the trade as being 36 gallons, whereas the Council's amendment allows 35 gallons only; a half-hogshead contains 27 gallons standard measure, whereas the Council's amendment will allow for 26 gallons only; a kilderkin is recognised by the trade to contain 18 gallons standard measure, whereas the Council suggests that 17 gallons will be sufficient.

Mr. Sampson: What is the object of the differentiation, ullage or evaporation?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: No, the casks get knocked about.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In the ordinary course of trade barrels have to be cut down and refitted.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot keep them absolutely full.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: When these liquors have to be conveyed over long distances, some of the contents have to be taken out, otherwise fermentation might result in loss of the liquor.

Mr. Sampson: According to Dr. Annandale's Concise Dictionary, a hogshead contains 52½ gallons.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Well, the trade here recognise 54 gallons as the standard measure for a hogshead. The practice of not supplying the standard measure has resulted in dismissals of barmen in the past. For instance, a kilderkin of beer has been sent to outside centres, such as Cue, and the hotelkeeper has told his barman that as the kilderkin contains 18 gallons, he expects to get a percentage on the sales that will return him, say, £3. When the kilderkin is emptied, the hotelkeeper may find that he has received £2 16s. only. In many instances the employer considered his barman had stolen the money, and dismissals have been recorded on those grounds. In some cases the hotelkeeper has known that the barman would not do anything of that sort, and has had the contents of casks measured by the inspector of weights and measures at Kalgoorlie. As a result, the inspector has found that instead of containing 18 gallons, a kilderkin has contained 16½ gallons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then why do they pay for more than 16½ gallons?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Because it has been sold as an 18-gallon keg and paid for as such. A gallon is a standard measure; a hogshead is not a standard measure. Thus when we come to a 10-gallon keg of beer, the Council propose that 9½ gallons will be sufficient. A grocer or a baker is prosecuted if he sells goods that are not up to standard weight, yet here a brewer is to be allowed to supply less than standard measures.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It merely means that if the brewer supplies a hogshead containing 52 gallons, you cannot prosecute him for short measure.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No, it means that the brewer can supply a hogshead containing 52 gallons, and that he can charge for 54 gallons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The best thing you can do is to drop this till next session and find out what it means.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The people who introduced the amendment know what it means! The hotelkeeper who has to pay for more than he receives knows what it means, and the barman who has been sacked knows what it means, too! If payment for 52 gallons only were allowed, it would be all right. Why should this particular commodity be singled out?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is difficult to say exactly how much is contained in a barrel of beer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is not so. With the gauges that are used, experts can tell to within half a pint what a barrel contains. What justification is there for the proposal advanced by the Council? Are we to provide that every commodity except beer shall be sold according to weight or measure?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the man who moved this amendment must have been a prohibitionist.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I understand that barrels shrink and may contain a little less than the recognised quantity. Because of this the excise officers charge on only the quantities mentioned in the amendment, but I understand that the breweries charge for 54, not 52 gallons.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not many hotelkeepers would pay for more than they get.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Every hotelkeeper in this State has paid for more than he has got.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It does not pay hotelkeepers to kick up a row with the people who are financing them. However, I do not wish to say anything about brewers or commercial morality. Beer should be sold by the actual content of the container, so near as it can be gauged. If we agreed to this amendment, what would become of the principles of the Bill?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I daresay it is a pretty rotten Bill.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The hon. member was prepared to proclaim the 1915 Act, but he had not the facilities to give effect to it. He did not complain of the principle of the measure. I see no justification for the amendment and, if any member can, I should like to hear him.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We do not know anything about beer. We want the Minister for Lands to tell us.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Could any body of men with any degree of honesty sanction ?

legislative act the supplying of 52 gallons of beer to be charged for as 54? If there is evaporation, let allowance be made for it.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If they cannot do that, let them charge for the quantity they supply.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is so. If a housewife orders 10 lbs. of sugar and the storekeeper gives short weight, he is guilty of fraud. The same should apply to beer. I object to legalising the supplying of less than the quantity charged for and shall oppose the amendment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When people order a pint of vinegar or 10 lbs. of sugar, they will not get any more in the future than they have got in the past. The only difference is that there will be a check. I do not know of private people who buy 50 gallons of beer, and the hotel keepers are able to look after themselves.

The Minister for Justice: I have had two or three deputations and I assure you the hotel keepers are absolutely dissatisfied.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Minister could ensure that when a man ordered a glass of beer he received half a pint, or that a bottle contained three half pints, he would be doing something. To put 10 gallons of beer into a keg and expect to find 10 gallons two or three weeks later, is out of the question. All the amendment means is that if there is not more than half a gallon short in a 10-gallon keg, there shall be no prosecution, but the purchaser would pay for what he received. I have not heard one complaint about the shrinkage of containers. I heard that at Kalgoorlie barrels supposed to contain 18 gallons had only 17 gallons, and that when it was discovered, the hotel keepers were informed that they would pay for only 17 gallons in future.

The Minister for Justice: No; when it was discovered, the hotel keepers were told they would not be supplied unless they paid for 18 gallons.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I take it the beer was sold at a fixed price.

The Minister for Justice: No, so much per gallon and 18 gallons to the barrel.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose it could be declared that a 10-gallon barrel did not contain more than 9½ gallons?

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the container were marked nine gallons, I do not suppose the brewers could charge for 10, although the keg contained 10.

The Minister for Justice: The amendment says that, although a keg contains 9½, they can charge for 10 gallons.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, the amendment provides that there shall be no prosecution if a 10-gallon keg contains 9½ gallons.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: If you cannot prosecute a man for selling 9½ gallons for 10 gallons, what does the amendment mean?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It means that if a barrel capable of holding 10 gallons contains only 9½, there can be no prosecution, but the hotelkeeper would not pay for 10. The amendment will not make the slightest difference between the brewery and the retailer. The quantity charged for has nothing to do with the question; it is a matter of prosecution. The Minister admits it would be impossible to put 10 gallons of beer into a 10-gallon keg and send it to Cue. If a keg is found to be a pint short a prosecution can be lodged. It would be impossible to make up the quantity by adding water to the contents. Small buyers are not protected to half the extent we imagine they are. It is not a question of the quantity of beer sold, but of prosecutions.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am in accord with the member for Mt. Margaret when he says we should not allow persons to charge for more than they sell. Why should an individual be charged for 12 lbs. of sugar that is sold in a bag that will not hold more than 11½ lbs.? The standard measure of a hogshead of beer is 54 gallons. If it contains 52, it can be sold as containing 54. It is wrong to legislate on that principle. If the amendment said the hogshead was only to be charged for as containing 52 gallons, there would not be so much objection to it. The principle is not applied to any other commodities, and Parliament should not adopt it.

Mr. MANN: I understand this is likely to conflict with the Customs and Excise Department.

The Minister for Justice: No.

Mr. MANN: I am informed that one brewery has not been given reasonable consideration with regard to the knocking down of its barrels and re-staving them. I am given to understand that if a barrel is sent out two or three times it is necessary, when it returns, to knock it down and put in an extra stave in order that it may hold the original amount of beer it was made to hold. A barrel may reduce in size to the extent of half

a gallon. Reputable breweries employ a special staff to knock down the barrels and insert the extra stave to restore their holding capacity. Notwithstanding their efforts sometimes barrels hold half a gallon less than their reputed contents.

The Minister for Lands: The contents could be stated on the barrel and charged for accordingly.

Mr. MANN: The Excise Department will not allow that.

The Minister for Justice: They will.

Mr. MANN: One brewery recently imported 600 barrels from the Eastern States, because it was impossible to secure the services of local coopers. The barrels were ordered to contain half a gallon more than the usual quantity in order to provide for the shrinkage.

The Minister for Justice: The Commonwealth Act would not allow that.

Mr. MANN: That is so, but it proves that reputable breweries are not trying to rob the public. I have been advised that the Bill was drafted for one particular brewery that has not taken the same care that has been observed by other breweries.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: This Bill has not been drafted for one particular brewery.

Mr. MANN: The Honorary Minister knows the brewery to which I refer.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, but the Bill was not introduced for that purpose.

Mr. Corboy: You mean the amendment.

Mr. MANN: The amendment allows a margin of half a gallon. I understand in one case the difference is two gallons. Reputable breweries find it impracticable to give the exact amount a barrel is supposed to contain.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Let them charge for what they do give.

Mr. MANN: That is not permitted by the Excise Department.

The Minister for Justice: The principle of the Bill is that everything shall be sold according to its proper weight and measurement.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Council have provided that this shall not take effect until the expiration of six months from the commencement of the Act.

The Minister for Justice: That deals only with the preceding paragraphs.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: From the interjections that have been thrown across the Chamber it might be inferred that I was par-

ticularly opposed to breweries. That is not so. I realise the difficulty in which the brewers find themselves, but I am not prepared to legislate in such a manner as to permit illegalities. Therefore I am not prepared to support the amendment, the carrying of which would mean that some people would be permitted to do a thing which, if done by other people, would render those others liable to prosecution. It is absurd to propose such an amendment in a Weights and Measures Bill.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will not vote for the amendment, which proposes something absolutely illegal. Under it people would be paying for what they were not receiving. The matter does not seem to me to admit of argument. The discrepancies which the amendment proposes to allow are simply absurd.

Mr. DAVY: It is admitted that a person selling beer by the barrel or hogshead cannot possibly guarantee that the full quantity is here.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Probably he cannot do that. That is admitted.

Mr. DAVY: Then it would appear that unless some margin is allowed, such a person is almost bound to break the law. As regards a hogshead, the amendment asks for a margin of two gallons—52 gallons as against 54. It is admitted that the brewers cannot guarantee that a hogshead will contain 54 gallons. They could hardly guarantee that even with hogsheds made of metal. The amendment asks that they shall not be prosecuted for infringement of this measure if the hogshead contains not less than 52 gallons. Perhaps 52 gallons is too little; but, admittedly, some margin must be allowed because of the peculiarities of the container of the beer. Opponents of the amendment have made out a good case for some margin.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I have no objection to the margin, so long as the brewer charges only for what he actually delivers.

Mr. DAVY: The Bill does not deal with charging.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes, it does. That is the principle of the Bill.

Mr. DAVY: It appears that as regards large quantities of beer the exact number of gallons cannot be guaranteed.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: I admit that, but the amendment implies that if the hogshead con-



tains 52 gallons the brewer shall be allowed to charge for 54 gallons.

Mr. DAVY: I should have something to say about that.

Mr. Sleeman: You would make a noise if the law of the land permitted that to be done.

Mr. DAVY: I should make an extreme noise, and my noise would be entirely successful. The difficulty would be overcome by inserting after "shall be deemed to be" the words "for the purposes of this Act." Anything this Bill may say will not enable a vendor to charge for a larger quantity than he delivers. This is not a price-fixing Bill.

The Minister for Justice: It is a measure-fixing Bill.

Mr. DAVY: Some latitude must be allowed to people who are permitted to sell beer in these types of containers. I do not know what the percentage of margin ought to be; but it seems unanswerable, in view of the admissions of both Ministers, that some margin is required.

The Minister for Justice: I did not say any margin was required.

Mr. DAVY: Then the Minister for Justice disagrees with the Honorary Minister.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: No. We both say the same.

Mr. DAVY: Then I am bewildered. The Bill is extremely rigid, and some margin or other should be allowed.

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

No. 2—Clause 17, insert after "repairers" in line two of paragraph (q2) the words "other than persons employed by and working under the direct supervision of a licensed scale repairer":

On motion by the Minister for Justice, the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

Reason for disagreeing to one of the Council's amendments adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Council.

## BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

### *In Committee.*

Resumed from the previous day. Mr. Pantou in the Chair, Hon. J. Cunningham (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 2 (partly considered) put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Repeal of Section 31 and substitution of new section:

Mr. SAMPSON: Will the Minister tell us why it is necessary that a vessel should be surveyed every year?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Previously the survey had to be made every six months. This extends it to 12 months. For the proper safeguarding of lives and valuable cargo it is essential to see to it at least once a year that these vessels are in a thoroughly seaworthy condition.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Insertion of new section after Section 55:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I should like to know from the Minister what is meant by the term "marine motor engine drivers"?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It distinguishes between motor engine drivers engaged in vehicular traffic on land and those engaged on vessels.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will they have to pass much of an examination?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It is not a very difficult examination. It will be laid down by the Chief Harbour Master, who is empowered to prescribe the examination.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Along our coast at Busselton, at Albany, at Bunbury and at other ports there are motor boats used for fishing and at the same time licensed to carry passengers. The man in charge of such a boat would require to have a marine driver's certificate. It may be that some of those men, although perfectly competent, would find difficulty in passing anything like a stiff examination.

Hon. J. Cunningham: It is provided that where a person has been in charge of a motor for at least 12 months out of the previous five years, he shall be entitled by right to a certificate of competency.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think he ought to be competent when in charge of a boat carrying passengers. Also there should be some protection against fire on those boats. Recently there have been two instances of boats firing. One was a naval boat in Prince Frederick Harbour, and the other was the property of the owner of an

oyster bed in Sydney Harbour. I notice that these marine motor engine drivers have to pay the prescribed fee for their certificates. It seems to me we are loading people with all sorts of payments.

The Minister for Lands: If we do not get paid for administering an Act we have to load up the people with taxation.

The CHAIRMAN: I think hon. members who are conversing so much ought to hold their meetings outside the Chamber. It is almost impossible to hear the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is provided that this section shall not apply to any ship used exclusively north of the 27th parallel of south latitude. Consequently, if a vessel were used south of Carnarvon she would come within the section. I should think navigation in the north was more difficult than down here.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The chief object is to exclude pearling vessels.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Practically the whole of the North-West will be excluded. I do not think it would matter much if the measure were not enforced anywhere, because the present position will not be much improved. Would Captain Brown, of the Fisheries Department, require a certificate to drive the fisheries launch? He should not, because he is quite competent.

The Minister for Lands: He has been doing it for the requisite time to entitle him to a certificate without examination.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are asked to hurry through a great many measures in a wholesale fashion, and they will have little effect except to annoy people without protecting them.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I am not hurrying this measure.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must discuss Clause 12.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are trying to put through Clause 12 in a few minutes, and that clause is part of the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 13—Offences:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why has the fine been fixed so high as £50?

Hon. J. Cunningham: That is the maximum.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Fifty pounds is a stiff penalty, especially as most of the offences will not be serious. We are

getting into a bad habit of fixing heavy fines for comparatively trivial offences.

Mr. Teesdale: That is because the Government are hard up.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we fix the maximum penalty at £50, a court might deem it its duty to inflict a heavier fine than if the penalty were fixed at £5.

Mr. MANN: If we fix the maximum penalty at £50, it will mean that under the Justices Act the maximum penalty will be one-fifth, or £10.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

## BILL—LAKE BROWN-BULLFINCH RAILWAY.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 23rd November.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [10.10]: Although this measure fills the bill for a certain number of people on the eastern edge of the wheat belt, to many others I represent it is a bitter disappointment. It may be advisable that I should give a resume of what led up to the introduction of the Bill. I am not broaching the subject in any acrimonious spirit, or with the idea of putting up any opposition. I want the House to realise what has taken place. I admit that members of the Railway Advisory Board are honourable men, and that they have reported on the project to the best of their ability. Notwithstanding this, I believe a mistake has been made. It was in the year 1910 that I first went through the Lake Brown and Goomarin districts. At the time there was a boom there. The country was being settled rapidly. A year or two later I again passed through the district, but found it practically deserted. Fencing had been erected, dams constructed and clearing done, and scores of thousands of pounds had been spent there. The district, however, resembled Goldsmith's "Deserted Village." In the Goomarin district there remained two or three settlers who were quite satisfied that they were not too far east for the growing of wheat. The 1911 drought caused the people to leave the place in a wholesale manner. It was then deemed to be too far east. In 1920 a large number of men were coming back

from the front. The then Premier (Sir James Mitchell) was hard put to it to know how to cater for these returned soldiers in the matter of land. Something like 109 returned soldiers met the Premier. I want the Leader of the Opposition to understand that I do not blame him because certain things were not carried out. A promise was made, but at the time the excessive price of rails and the shortness of money made it practically impossible for the Premier to extend the railway. He met the wishes of the Lake Brown central people by extending the railway to its present terminus. I have here the report of a conference held in Merredin some time ago, when the president of the Returned Soldiers' Association, Mr. Mulqueeny, made a statement. He said that 109 soldiers had approached the Premier in the Lands Office, and had been told that if they settled in the Lake Brown-Goomarin area, they would be linked up with the main line of railway. A large map was placed before them on which a broad red line showed the proposed route for a railway terminating at Nukarni.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You ought to get the notes of that deputation from Mr. McCay.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Apparently this was put forward as an inducement to these men to take up the land. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition will recollect the deputation waiting upon him asking that the line should be taken to the east instead of to the west of Talgomine Hill and should junction with Merredin.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You had better get the notes; they will be accurate.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A survey was made and a railway advisory board appointed. Mr. Mulqueeny says, "We were told that if we would tackle this job the land was there for us and we would get the railway. We hopped over. We went into the district and we have done work there second to none so far as clearing and development go." Mr. Mulqueeny can bring other soldiers to back up what he said. He also gave a brief outline as to what led up to the settlement of Lake Brown. He said the 109 returned soldiers were promised that they would be linked up with the main railway in two years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: In the office there will be the notes of the deputation, taken at the time.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I want this to be impressed upon the House, that a promise was made to these men.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Who told you? You were not there.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No, but I have heard this statement repeated.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not say it was not so, but we should have the notes here.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: When the Minister for Works was at Lake Brown a deputation waited upon him, and the same statement was made that had been made in Merredin.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I could make a statement, too.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In the circumstances I do not blame the Leader of the Opposition because certain things were not done.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I object to your statement that I promised a thing when I did not promise it. The notes will show what I did say.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Mr. Mulqueeny said a number of things that were not very kind. As they are of a political nature, I will not repeat them. He said the line had been recommended by the advisory board, that there were 80 soldier settlers at Lake Brown and 50 settlers at Goomarin, half of whom were returned men. A certain promise was made to these settlers who went on the land and did their bit in consequence. In his speech the other night the Minister for Works said the Goomarin people had done magnificent work. I can bear out that statement. The Railway Advisory Board say that considerable development has occurred in the Goomarin and Campion districts, and in the new area of Geelakin, that the settlers are of a fine type, and large areas have been fallowed for cropping this season. Since the visit of the Advisory Board, land further east of the rabbit-proof fence has been thrown open, and applied for. I can bear out in toto everything that has been stated as regards the Minister and the Railway Advisory Board. There is that much unbiased testimony to the Bill. I now propose to state what the men in the Goomarin area have done. It is those men for whom I am specially pleading to-night. The report of the Railway Advisory Board states that there are 9,000 acres of land distant 14 miles from the proposed railway. The report has been laid on the Table. I want to tell the House that owing to the

contour of the country and the existence of two immense lakes there, some of the settlers are distant 19 miles from the proposed line. It will be said that they are 14 miles from it as the crow flies. Very good. Unfortunately, however, those settlers cannot transport their wheat across Lake Brown by aeroplane. To say that they are 14 miles from the railway is much the same as saying that South Perth is a mile from Perth. By road it is four or five miles.

Hon. G. Taylor: Seven.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Such is the position as regards the people at Lake Brown. The Railway Advisory Board, even if it is admitted that they acted as they thought right, have not taken into consideration certain essential factors. They say that they have gone into the matter further, as the Premier promised they should do. The members of the board sit down in their offices in front of a plan and make out, by means of a ruler, that the settlers are only 14 miles from the railway. There are 50,000 acres of land distant 15 miles by road from the railway, and not 9,000 acres. The 50,000 acres are held by returned soldiers, for whom I am putting up a special plea. I do not wish to deny the other settlers their railway. Now let me state what the soldier settlers have done in response to the recommendation that they should get on and do their bit. South of Lake Brown 35,000 acres of land have been cleared, and 22,000 acres have been cropped this year. According to the first figures given me, it was expected that 75,000 bags of wheat would go from that centre. To-day I am told that that is a very moderate estimate, and that some of the crops which were expected to yield 4,000 bags would in fact yield 4,500. The cartage will cost about £4,000. The district is one in which the rainfall for the past 15 years has averaged 12½ inches. I want to show that the area has established itself as a proved wheat-growing district. The late Mr. Woolgar two years ago won the first prize for the zone in wheat growing. Mr. Dumsday came seventh in the competition for the whole State, when he met such cracks as the growers of Wvalecatchem, Minnivale, and Dowerin, which places have the higher rainfall. In the zone competition Mr. Woolgar was first and Mr. Dumsday second. A few days ago Mr. Sutton attended a field day in this area. Another settler, Mr. Randolph, is now 25 miles from a railway. I

do not know how many miles he will be from the proposed line, because he will have to go by a circuitous route. Mr. Randolph had experimental plots which highly delighted Mr. Sutton, especially those of New Merredin 15, which is expected to revolutionise wheat growing in the eastern districts. If that area produces 75,000 bags, it must certainly be regarded as a proved wheat-growing district. A Press report states—

Mr. Woodward (Goomarin), said the settlers of Goomarin strongly resented the present recommendations of the Advisory Board to continue the railway from Kalkalling to Bullfinch, instead of carrying out the distinct promise of Sir James Mitchell to continue the line through the Goomarin district to Merredin. He quoted the article "In Justice to Goomarin," appearing in these columns on the 10th inst. He asserted that the Advisory Board's report was wrong in stating that only 9,000 acres in the Goomarin and Campion districts were more than 12½ miles from the railway line. There were over 50,000 acres more than 14 miles from the railway line by the nearest road, whilst others were 19 miles from the Kalkalling station, one or two deviations having to be made in order to cross the lakes. The Agricultural Bank had advanced £150,000 to 50 settlers, and 35,000 acres had been cleared. This year over 22,000 will be in crop, and should produce over 75,000 bags, which will cost the settlers £4,000 to cart to the nearest siding. The rainfall for the past 15 years had averaged 12.50 inches per annum. He hoped the delegates would evolve a workable scheme for the general good. (Applause.)

That statement is correct in this sense, that on the plan, measuring with a ruler, those people on the little belt of 9,000 acres are only 14 miles from the railway line, though not necessarily from the siding, which may be a few miles further on. On paper with a ruler it can, no doubt, be figured out that those settlers are only 14 miles from a railway. In point of fact, not one of them can now get to a railway by travelling less than 15 miles. I will mention the individual settlers and give the numbers of their blocks. If the Railway Advisory Board can prove that those settlers are within a reasonable distance as stated, I shall have no further faith in mankind, or at all events not in the people who have given me this information. I think, however, that it will be pretty difficult to disprove the statements I am making. Take the case of Mr. Woodward. The first time I went through the area I found Mr. Woodward there. That was in 1910. He has been in that locality for 16 years. He is one of the settlers who stayed to prove that the area was not too

far east, but was a region in which wheat could be grown successfully. To-day, after all his battling, Mr. Woodward, with a few others like himself, is 19 miles from the proposed new line. Owing to the peculiar nature of the country he has to travel  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles southward from his block, 3 miles eastward, 4 miles to the lake, 3 miles across the lake, and then  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles to what will probably be his siding, a place called Deadhorse, making a total of 19 miles. According to the plan he is within 14 miles, but his actual distance is 19 miles. That man is taking off an average of 21 bushels to the acre this year, as indicated by the figures up to date. He informs me that he will be carting 4,500 bags of wheat, which will mostly go to Newearnie, and that his cartage is going to cost him £393. Mr. Randolph will cart 2,000 bags over a distance of 15 miles, and he is one of the settlers supposed to be within the 14-mile limit—according to ruler and plan, perhaps within 11 or 12 miles. He has to cart 15 miles, and his cost of carting, at 1s. 3d. per bag, runs out at £125. One of his great difficulties is the want of a reasonable crossing over the lake. The rabbit-proof fence authorities will not allow the settlers to cross the lake where something in the nature of a crossing exists. Then there is Mr. Diss, who will have 2,500 bags and will have to cart them  $19\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Mr. J. Jenks is  $20\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the line at Burracoppin and he will have to cart 16 miles, whereas according to the plan he is within  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the line. Mr. F. Ward will have 3,000 bags, and will have to cart them 16 miles. He is supposed to be seven miles from the line. Mr. Higgins, on blocks Nos. 14,028 and 14,029, is in the same position as Mr. Woodward, being distant 19 miles from the railway. Edwards has block No. 14026, which is about three-quarters of a mile nearer than Woodward's. He will be about  $18\frac{1}{4}$  miles away from the railway. Stan Williams' block is No. 13993 and he will be from  $15\frac{1}{2}$  to 16 miles from the line. Jones has blocks Nos. 14024 and 13999. He will be 18 miles from Burracoppin, or  $10\frac{1}{2}$  miles from the new line. The Minister stated the other night that they were satisfied that only about 9,000 acres would be 14 miles from the railway. Ford has block No. 14027, which is about  $13\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Burracoppin or 18 miles from the new line. Pitt, whose block

is No. 13976, will be 16 miles away from the new siding, and Hodgins, whose block is No. 13978, will be 15 miles from the new siding. Then there are the following, whose blocks are distant from Burracoppin as I shall indicate:—Follett,  $14\frac{1}{2}$  miles; Randolph, 15 miles; Ward, 16 miles; Woodhouse,  $17\frac{1}{4}$  miles; Diss, 19 miles; Dossetter,  $17\frac{1}{4}$  miles; and Burns,  $18\frac{1}{2}$  miles. If those settlers have to take their produce to Dead Horse, they will have to travel upwards of 20 miles. Hon. members can understand from these details the feelings I entertain regarding these settlers who went to the district 16 years ago and have proved its capabilities. They are now asked to allow the line to be taken away, so that they will be stranded as far away as ever. The proposed railway will be of no use to them. They will have to continue carting from 14 to 16 miles to the siding. I have explained the position to show the treatment meted out to these returned men, who have been left in the lurch and are now "getting it in the neck." A conference was held at Merredin some little time ago when the settlers heard of the position that was likely to arise and realised what it meant to them. Settlers were present from Talgonine, Goomarin, Campion, Lake Brown, Geelakin, North Walgoolan and Westonia. About 60 delegates were present, including representative people from the districts concerned. The chairman of the local road board presided. The people of Merredin did not act in any parochial spirit. They did not seek to drag the line into Merredin; their object was merely to help the Goomarin settlers to get a fair deal. Mr. H. W. Teasdale, the president of the agricultural society, according to the report of his speech, said—

The line did not affect him personally as he was too far south, but he considered a great injustice had been done to the soldier settlers of Lake Brown, Goomarin, and Westonia. There had been too many conflicting forces, and he was glad to see the spirit of compromise at that meeting. The farmers who took up the abandoned holdings in the Goomarin district had fought a hard battle, and they deserved the utmost consideration at the hands of the Government. They had plenty of first-class land, and if the district showed a united front he felt sure they would get the railway.

This was the proposition—

Mr. Mulqueeny moved: "That the line be constructed from Lake Brown through the Goomarin district following the present survey to a point on the main line suitable to the

Westonia settlers east of Merredin, preferably Carrabin."

That motion was carried unanimously. When I put this matter before the Premier when the deputation was taken to him, I tried to make him realise the position. I do not think he thoroughly grasped it. The proposition was not restricted to the interests of Westonia, which is well supplied; the interests extended principally to the Goomarin area and the district known as Golden Valley. The idea was that the line from Goomarin northwards would go into Westonia and that would make three curved lines that would adequately serve the area. At the meeting I refer to the following proceedings took place—

Mr. Nugent moved: "That this meeting of delegates representing the settlers of Talgamine, Goomarin, Lake Brown, Campion, Geelakin, North Walgoolan and Westonia districts strongly oppose the recommendation of the Advisory Board, and request that they be waived in favour of the previous motion," because—(1) a definite promise of railway facilities was made by the Hon. Premier, Sir James Mitchell, to settlers in the district concerned. (2) that upon the faith of that promise a large area of good land has been taken up and developed; (3) that the route now recommended by the Railway Advisory Board will not, as alleged, provide such railway facilities and will occasion a grave injustice to many pioneer settlers; (4) that the proposal now made by the delegates from various leagues will serve the interests of all the settlers immediately concerned.

Seconded by Mr. Woodward and carried.

Mr. Nugent moved: "That a deputation consisting of a member from each district be sent to interview the Premier and to convey to him the resolutions of the meeting."

Seconded by Mr. Hall and carried.

When the deputation came to Perth to put the position before the Premier, I believed that he was impressed with the fact that the position that had arisen was not so fair as it could have been. I thought he realised that some mistake had been made. At the time I pointed out to the Premier that we would like an opportunity to discuss the whole matter, because an injustice was sought to be done. The Premier promised that we should have that opportunity. I think I got on the Premier's nerves, because I was too hasty in approaching him to get some information as to whether the Railway Advisory Board had been asked to go into the question to ascertain if some other plan could be adopted by which the Bullfinch people might be served, so that a larger section of the people would benefit as well. Yester-

day I was told by one Minister that it was "this railway or nothing." That is not the way to approach a question of this description. That is not the way to give a fair deal to these settlers who were told they would be brought within a reasonable distance of a railway. Is justice being extended to them? Hon. members will realise that the action proposed is neither fair nor just. They should not be turned down in this way. After I spoke to the Premier I expected that something would be done in the direction of getting the Railway Advisory Board to go into the question fully. Now we are told that they have gone into the facts and do not see any reason to alter their views. In view of the statements I have made regarding the distance so many of the settlers will be away from the line, I do not think the members of the advisory board did go into the question thoroughly, particularly from the settlers' point of view. They may have casually looked at the map, run off the distances and satisfied themselves that everything in the garden was lovely. On the contrary, I have shown that the position is not satisfactory and I have placed before members the suggestion of the conference I referred to, which was that the line should be constructed from Lake Brown through the Goomarin district, following the present survey to a point on the main line, suitable to the Westonia settlers east of Merredin, preferably at Carrabin. The Bullfinch proposal, the board say, will serve 417,000 acres. That makes it a question of acres as against settlers. Here we have one of the finest belts of timber country in the State. I have been through that country this season and have seen some rotten crops and some fine crops next adjoining, which goes to prove that only proper methods of farming are required. The proposal that the line should be swung round to follow the Dowerin curve seems to me a solution of the difficulty. But members say we have appointed the Railway Advisory Board to take the responsibility off Parliament. That is all very well, but we have two railway advisory boards, one advising that the Premier's policy be carried out and the survey being made directly afterwards, and six years later we have another advisory board saying, "Circumstances have changed. Never mind what has been promised to you. You are unlucky. We cannot help it. On paper, at least, you are within 14 miles, and you will have to put up with it. It is that or nothing." I wanted the

advisory board to go into the question of the northern railway, and then go into the question of this loop. They say that 417,000 acres will be served by that line. Of course, what I am saying is very much like beating the air. Members will declare it is not our responsibility; that it is for the advisory board. But surely to goodness there should be some means of seeing to it that promises made shall be carried out. At the conclusion of this conference Mr. Nugent said he considered that a distinct promise had been broken, and that the present Government were trying to evade carrying out the promise of their predecessors. He said that along the promised route in some cases it was necessary to survey a 4,000-acre block. Of course, a certain proportion of that country is very fine grazing country. Presumably that is why he remarked about the large areas. He said the early pioneers ought to get first consideration, and that in order to serve the Westonia district, the line could be diverted to Burracoppin, Carrabin or Bodallin, and the home station would still be at Merredin. I do not want to say anything about Bullfinch. There are some very fine settlers there, and fine work has been done there.

Mr. Davy: They have a bad member.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I suppose he is as good as he can be.

Mr. Davy: That is worse than what I said about him.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The member for Yilgarn will be able to talk about his own district better than I can. I am merely giving the House what people said at the deputation.

Mr. Corboy: People who have not seen the place.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It was stated that the settlers had had a distinct promise, but were now sadly disappointed. It was also said that at Bullfinch in some instances 4,000 acres were required to make a farm.

Mr. Corboy: That is absolutely untrue. There is not at Bullfinch one farm of so much as 2,000 acres, let alone 4,000 acres.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I presume he was speaking about the country north-east from Westonia. I believe that north of Bullfinch there is some very fine country on an eight inch rainfall during the growing season. However, I will know more about this to-morrow. I saw Mr. Lefroy to-day, but we did not have time to go into the matter. I wanted to satisfy myself of the facts.

This is the Railway Advisory Board's report—

When in 1920 the board recommended Merredin for the extension of the Bencubbin-Lake Brown railway, it did so because of the recognised belief at that time that the profitable cultivation of wheat in the districts adjacent to Southern Cross was doubtful on account of the recorded rainfall, which was considered inadequate. Since that time, however, wheat-growing methods have improved, and in consequence payable crops are now contemplated.

I hope something better will result than appeared in the Press last night. I was bitterly disappointed when I got the figures about Southern Cross, because it has been the dream of my life that we were going to extend the wheat belt very much farther east. The low yield may be due to bad farming. Another thing that might well be considered is the relationship between the moisture falling there and the temperature during August, September and October, which has a very important bearing on the growing of wheat. The report continues—

The results at the Merredin Experimental Farm, particularly those of last year, confirm this belief. This belief is also reflected in the departmental policy, which has caused a large number of blocks to be thrown open for settlement in the Bullfinch-Southern Cross area. Though suitability of this area for wheat growing has not yet been definitely proved, still, in view of the settlement that has taken place, the additional area now subdivided for settlement and the better results following the adoption of improved methods with the consequent increased possibility of success, the board now consider it would be a wise policy to extend the line from Lake Brown to Bullfinch rather than to Merredin, and recommend accordingly.

I want to make mention of this district as being a proved one and as being an area of almost unbroken forest right through to Westonia. The settlers for the most part are on 1,000-acre farms. There we have settlers with goods to deliver in respect of the railway, and with a proposal to run the railway through to Bullfinch across country as yet practically unsettled. Those people have proved the place. When everybody else deserted, they hung on and proved it. By this new railway, the railway they have been promised, they will be from 19 miles away to a distance quite as far as they are at present. Whilst I have nothing to say against either Bullfinch or Southern Cross, I want to see the wheatbelt extended. We have the people settled on those blocks and a promise was made to

the men. We have shown them a plan with a railway marked on it; the route has been surveyed and the Advisory Board have recommended it. To those men we gave great lip service when we were trying to get them to enlist for active service. The parrot cry of those days is forgotten to-day, and the men are now being penalised. Not only is it a question of what we owe to the soldier settlers; it is a question of what we owe to the pioneers who stuck out and proved that it was possible to grow wheat in that part of the State. There is a phase regarding the Advisory Board and their trip to which I wish to refer. Mr. Sutton did not accompany the board on the trip; he said he knew the country. No doubt he did, but I maintain that when the board were considering the extension of the railway through a tract of country then practically unsettled, it was most necessary that Mr. Sutton, with his experience and knowledge, should have accompanied the board so that he could see the nature of the soil and determine whether it possessed the quality of being able to retain the moisture, which quality is so necessary in that part. The old preconceived ideas about wheat growing in that district have been set aside as being wrong. The settlers are now being told to go on the lighter country, while, according to the Agricultural Bank officials who visited the district the other day, the morrell country is to be completely barred. The board did not traverse the country between Kalkalling and Bullfinch. For that section they relied upon the reports of the inspectors. The board should have inspected it. Of the other portions of the district I believe they made a very good examination and obtained the fullest information, but a little more time devoted to the portion where there is no settlement would have been more satisfying to us, who feel that we are not being given as fair a deal as we should like. It has been contended that the Advisory Board were appointed to determine the route of the line and that Parliament, having removed that responsibility from its own shoulders, should not interfere with the board's recommendations. Let me put another phase. First of all we had the Advisory Board recommending that the line should go to Newearnie. Then a deputation waited on the Premier and got him to alter the route to Merredin. The men were in his office and had before them a map with a

broad red line indicating the route, and on the strength of that they settled on that land. Now the 1926 Advisory Board, when requested to reconsider their report, say there is nothing to show that their first recommendation was not correct. The Advisory Board may be acting in good faith, and according to their lights may be doing what they consider is right. I have travelled over the country and know practically every track through it, and I maintain that the nine or ten settlers on the area of 9,000 acres referred to will be not 14 miles distant but up to 19 miles distant from the railway. True, if a rule is placed on the map they appear to be only 14 miles distant, but it may be two or three miles more to a siding, and it must be remembered that they cannot convey their wheat to the railway by aeroplane. They have to follow the road. The Premier suggested to the deputation that it might be possible to do something in the matter of roads. If he has any idea of shortening the distance by road, there will be a devil of a stretch of lake country to cross. It will be necessary to go miles in order to get a suitable crossing.

Hon. G. Taylor: Well, we have passed a Navigation Act Amendment to-night.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We had the promise of the Premier, and then another Advisory Board brushed that promise aside. They said in effect, "We cannot help it; it is your bad luck."

Hon. G. Taylor: Who said that?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That in effect is what the Advisory Board said. They said that these settlers would be 14 miles from a railway, but in the best interests of the whole community the new line should take the route through country in which there is very little settlement.

Mr. Lindsay: The report shows that the Advisory Board make mistakes at times.

Mr. Corboy: The conditions may have altered.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The Advisory Board argue that the conditions have altered. In the circumstances am I not justified in entering a protest? We have had two reports by the Advisory Board and the conditions are said to have altered. The board now say, "Never mind the promise made to those men; we are acting in the best interests of the community." When I am reminded that it is a question of accepting this railway or



getting nothing, well, all I can say is it is a very poor explanation. I think the distance from Kalkalling to Bullfinch is 48 miles; to Southern Cross it is 22, to Carabin 42, and Merredin 21. At Merredin a flour mill is being started and a great quantity of wheat from the Goomarin centre will go to Merredin. That wheat will have to be conveyed over those distances of 48, 22, 42 and 21 miles in order to reach the mill, most of which represent unnecessary haulage. Merredin, by its geographical position, is destined to be one of the big distributing centres of the State. I believe the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) has an idea at the back of his head to start the manufacture of asbestos sheets there.

Mr. Sampson: Union plaster boards.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Perhaps the hon. member may as well have the advertisement. If he gets his supplies of gypsum at Yellowdine and establishes works at Merredin, he will have the advantage of a railway system radiating to all parts of the State. Thus Merredin promises to become a great centre. This is the kind of correspondence I have received on the subject; the letter comes from a settler at Gooramin—

At the Goomarin field day we took the opportunity of putting our case for railway consideration strongly before Mr. Sutton. By his remarks it appears to me a decision has been arrived at that it should go to Bullfinch, no matter what reasons or arguments are against it. If that is so, our only hope lies in our representative strongly advocating that it should come south of the lakes and inside the No. 1 fence, skirting along the southern boundary of the lakes and then proceeding to Bullfinch. It means about another eight miles in length, and bringing it at one point to within 20 miles of the goldfields line.

The statement concludes with the following—

It is the only hope of Goomarin ever getting a service at all. Our present position and past achievements of the State should count for that much, to say nothing of this being a soldier settlement district, that it should have this consideration. Have politicians forgotten their parrot cry, "Nothing we can ever do will repay our debt to our soldiers."

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 11.1 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 30th November, 1926.*

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3.0 p.m., and read prayers.

### QUESTION—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT, AMENDMENT.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: Is it the intention of the Government to introduce during the present session a Bill to amend the Municipal Corporations Act, 1906, as desired by the recent municipal conference?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The Government regret that time available this session will not permit of the careful consideration of the Bill.

### BILL—STATE INSURANCE.

*Third Reading.*

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

That the Bill be now read a third time.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) I move—

That the debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the House.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Why?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I have not had an opportunity to speak on this Bill and I understood that the Chief Secretary intended to make some new proposal to-day; otherwise I should have been prepared to proceed.

Motion put and passed; debate adjourned.