

municipal system is inadequate and behind the times and might admit of a minority candidate being elected. Clause 7, relating to the subdivision of property, is in the same spirit if not the same words as a clause in the Road Districts Bill. The clause stipulating that an elector should not forfeit his vote merely because the rates on the property are unpaid is also in conformity with a clause in the Road Districts Bill. Although I admit there is room for a difference of opinion, I am prepared to agree to this clause because good arguments can be advanced on both sides. A tenant who pays his rent, and is not supposed to pay the rates, should not be disfranchised and deprived of his rights as an elector, because the landlord has neglected to pay the rates. Still, there is much to be said in favour of the existing law. A clause which should receive earnest consideration is Clause 5. I am inclined to think there is abundant reason for increasing the rating powers of municipalities, but it is open to grave question whether it would be wise to make so large an increase as is contemplated by this measure. At present the municipalities have the right to rate up to 1s. 6d., but this Bill proposes to increase their powers to 2s. 6d. That is a very large increase indeed and it is worthy of consideration whether we should not take a middle course and increase their rating power to, say, 2s. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, because of the many necessary and excellent provisions it contains.

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.36 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 2nd December, 1919.

	PAGE
Question: Arbitration Court agent	1886
Ministerial Statement: State Sawmills	1886
Motion: Parliamentary allowance, to increase	1889
Bills: Zoological Gardens Act Amendment, 1R.	1887
Discharged Soldiers Settlement Act Amendment, 3R.	1887
Ajana-Geraldine Railway, 2R., Com., report	1887
Loan, £3,339,000, 2R., etc.	1901
Treasury Bonds Deficiency, returned	1908
Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Loan Act Amendment, returned	1908
Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation, returned	1908
Traffic, Council's message	1908
Public Education Acts Amendment, 1R.	1908
Roads Closure, 2R., etc.	1908
Prices Regulation, Council's requested amendments	1909
Road Districts, Council's Amendments	1911
Vermin Act Amendment, Council's Amendments	1912
Fruit Cases, 2R., etc.	1913
Droving Act Amendment, 2R., etc.	1913
Loan Estimates	1902
Paper: Auditor General's Report	1889

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

QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT AGENT:

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: 1, What public departments have retained Mr. Alcock during the past two years as agent or advocate before the Arbitration Court? 2, What amount has been paid to Mr. Alcock during that period?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Railway Department, Public Works, Metropolitan Water Supply, State Saw Mills. 2, £1,766 5s. 8d.

Mr. O'Loghlen: You ought to resign as Premier and take on that job.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT, STATE SAWMILLS.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.38]: With the permission of the House, I should like to make a statement regarding the State Sawmills. On Friday last I promised hon. members that they would be given an opportunity to discuss the question of the sale of the State Sawmills before the session closed. I now have to inform the House of the position of affairs. A Bill to authorise the sale of the State Sawmills will not be brought down this session because the terms of the contract have not been carried out. The parties negotiating for the purchase of the State Sawmills had until the 30th November to put up £15,000 sterling. That was not put up to the satisfaction of the Government and, for this reason, the Bill will not be introduced.

Hon. T. Walker: It is off then?

The PREMIER: Yes. I mention this because I promised that members should have an opportunity to discuss the whole matter before the session closed.

BILL—ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

BILL—DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—AJANA-GERALDINE RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 28th November.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough) [4.40]: After the repeated advocacy of the claims of this portion of the State, members should be more or less aware of the actualities and potentialities of the Geraldine mining area. I do not wish to repeat on the second reading of this Bill many of the facts which I have previously advanced and which, I hope, have not proved wearisome to members. I should like to remind the House, however, that already a motion has been passed to permit the extension of the railway from Ajana to Geraldine as a Government undertaking. The position to-day is that the proprietors of one mine in the Geraldine area, having made contracts to ship certain quantities of ore, have thought it desirable in their own business interests to obtain the permission of Parliament to construct a light railway or tramway from the present head of the line to their mine at Geraldine. I am sorry in a measure that the Government have not seen fit to do something more than is outlined in this Bill. There is an old saying that the Lord helps those who help themselves. Putting the Government in the place of the Lord, the Government have given very little assistance to the promotion of this industry. According to the Bill, the Government have undertaken to make the survey of the route and the necessary assumptions at the expense of the owners of the Surprise mine. Provision is made in the Bill that when this light railway has been constructed, the owners shall be bound to carry not only goods traffic for the other mines in the Geraldine area, but also passengers. I hope that in Committee we shall eliminate the provision compelling the company to carry passengers. The line proposed to be constructed is only a light tramway. The owners intend to build it to obviate the excessive cost of cartage by road of 20,000 tons of ore within the next 12 months. If that amount of haulage were done on the roads, I think the Government would have to materially help the local authority to maintain the roads in good order. If we confer on other mine owners

the privilege of having their stuff transported over this light set of rails with low haulage power, the owners of the Surprise mine will have their work cut out to get their own stuff to the rail head at Ajana. The owners of the mine are prepared to help themselves, and are also prepared to agree almost in toto with the provisions of the Bill. To me it seems rather strange that the department should endeavour to cast a further obligation upon the mine owners in regard to passenger traffic on the line. They are agreeable to carry traffic as far as possible.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I should have thought that your district had had quite enough of private lines.

Mr. MALEY: No. In our district we have been rendered better help and better service by private railways than by the Government railways. One can do business with a private company much more expeditiously than with the Government. Really this proposed railway cannot be termed a private railway, being merely a private means of getting ore to market, and thus reviving an industry which has become almost lost to this State. The Northampton-Ajana line and the Geraldton-Upper Chapman line have been almost a dead loss to the State since the lead traffic closed down. As the passing of this Bill will create a great deal of traffic for the Government railways, I commend the measure to the House.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [4.50]: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill. Although firmly wedded to State control of railways, I think this measure safeguards the public interests in almost every particular. The line will be under private control, but the Government will have control over the rates, and the owners have to construct the railway in a certain direction. I would, however, like some assurance that the railway is to be of the same standard gauge as our Government railways. Without this, the option of purchase by the State is practically useless. The Minister for Works, when introducing the Bill, was not clear on the point.

Mr. Maley: The gauge is to be 2ft. 6in.

Mr. WILLCOCK: In those circumstances, this proposed line would be practically of no use to the State.

Mr. Maley: It is not being built as a State railway, but as a private means of communication.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Believing that the line would be of the Government standard gauge, I was prepared to support the Bill wholeheartedly. However, I shall not withdraw my support because of what I have learned. It would be advisable for the Government to supply the rails for this line, if possible, in order that it might be built to the standard gauge. I understand, however, that the hands of the Government are tied by the resolution of the House regarding priority of construction for the Esperance railway, and that, moreover, the Government are

short of rails, which are more urgently required elsewhere. Undoubtedly this railway will be of great benefit to the people engaged in the mining industry in the Northern area, and its construction will give employment to 500 or 600 men. As has been suggested, a townsite should be declared at the end of the railway, and the Government should obtain revenue in that respect. The construction of the line will lead to the carriage of 20,000 tons of ore over a Government railway which hitherto has not paid. Moreover, the owners of the railway, instead of paying £1 per ton cartage, will incur a cost of only about 2s. 6d. per ton railway haulage. This will mean a saving to them, on 20,000 tons, of about £17,500. The line will assist production, and do no harm to anybody, and therefore the measure has my support. The production at the terminus of the line will, within the next two years, exceed a million pounds. That will be a great advantage to the State, and undoubtedly the building of the line will give a great stimulus to the Northern lead-mining industry. For these reasons I am heartily in accord with the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George — Murray-Wellington — in reply) [5.55]: The member for Greenough (Mr. Maley) made reference to the fact that the survey of this line is to be at the expense of the lessees. It is only fair that those who are going to profit by the railway should bear that expenditure.

Mr. Maley: The State will also derive benefit from the construction of the line.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The reason why I insisted that the survey should be made by the Public Works Department, although at the expense of the promoters, is that if lead mining increases to the extent the hon. member and the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) believe it will, then a standard line of railway will have to be built there as soon as circumstances permit. With regard to passenger and goods traffic, the clause inserted in the Bill is the usual one. Personally I do not believe there is much likelihood of the line being largely used for passenger traffic. Still, no harm can result from the inclusion of that provision in the measure. If passengers should come along and these people carry them, it is well that the State should lay down regulations for the safe carriage of such passengers. I have recently been interviewed by a Mr. Trude, who is very anxious on this point. He seems to think that the line will become a monopoly for one particular mine, and that other mines will not be able to use it. I pointed out to him the provision that goods must be carried under conditions approved by the Government. So far as I am able to judge, the public are safeguarded in that respect. The member for Geraldton suggested that the Government should supply the rails for this line; but that is impossible; we have not the rails. A letter from

the gentleman promoting this Bill states that he has purchased the rails and rolling stock, and that should be sufficient. A 2ft. 6in. line can carry goods and all kinds of material very cheaply and at a reasonable rate of speed, and can also be made very useful in other respects. The objection to the narrower gauge, of course, is that when the trucks with the ore reach the junction with the Government railway, the ore will have to be transhipped. That, unfortunately, cannot be helped. However, the present cost of cartage is 18s. per ton, and the proposed railway will certainly cut down the cost of transport to about 5s. per ton.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Lands may be reserved:

Hon. P. COLLIER: This clause deals with compensation to owners or lessees of land which may be acquired for the purpose of constructing the railway. Who is going to determine the amount of compensation payable.

The Minister for Works: That is subject to the provisions of the Public Works Act.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And will the amount of compensation be determined under the Public Works Act?

The Minister for Works: It will be determined in the way all others are determined.

Mr. Pickering: Under the Act the Crown has the right to take the necessary land?

The Minister for Works: Under the Land Act the Crown has the right to take the land, the assessment being considered later.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—Land reserved or acquired may be demised:

Hon. P. COLLIER: Subclause (2) gives to the Engineer-in-Chief the sole power to determine what price shall be paid for the railway if ever the Government decide to buy it. I think the price should be left with the Governor-in-Council, on the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not like the provision. The Government will never purchase a 2ft. 6in. tramline, because it would be useless when attached to the Government system. There must be some understanding behind this provision.

The Minister for Works: No, there is not.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Such a tramline would be of no use whatever to the Government for railway purposes. Why, then, should we provide for its purchase? Even the rails would be of no use to the Government. I move an amendment—

That Subclause (2) be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Personally, I do not care very much about Subclause (2). There is no idea in the mind of the Government to purchase the line. It

was merely thought advisable to make provision for it in case it should seem advisable later. Members may reject the sub-clause if they think fit.

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

Clause 5—Survey construction, maintenance and use of railway:

Hon. P. COLLIER: Sub-clause (2) provides that the owners of the line shall keep the railway in good order. We ought to provide that the rolling stock also shall be kept in good order, so that the passengers may be carried in safety.

Mr. MALEY: It is not fair to ask the company to carry passengers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Oh, yes, it is. If the company has the right to build the railway, provision must be made for the carrying of passengers.

Mr. MALEY: Does that apply to the woodlines?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think so. The Governor-in-Council has power by regulation to compel the company to carry passengers.

The Honorary Minister: But they get out of it by carrying passengers free of charge, and so at the passengers' risk.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If a railway is constructed by any part of the State not already served by such facilities, provision must be made for carrying goods and passengers, and, therefore, we must see that the rolling stock is kept in safe repair. If it is necessary to provide that the railway itself must be kept in repair, it follows that we should also provide for the rolling stock being kept in repair. I move an amendment—

That after "railway" in line 4 of Sub-clause (2) the words "and rolling stock" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have now provided that the railway and rolling stock shall be kept in good and substantial repair. Who is to determine "good and substantial repair"? I move an amendment—

That the following be added at the end of the clause: "to the satisfaction of the Commissioner of Railways."

It will then be for the Working Railways to deal with, and their inspectors will inspect the road.

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

Clause 6—Carrying goods and passengers:

Mr. MALEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 the words "and passengers" be struck out.

The company will be prepared to allow passengers to ride on the trucks free of cost, but should not be called upon to make special provision for the carrying of passengers. Provision will have to be made, if passenger traffic has to be provided, for special rolling stock.

Hon. P. Collier: One little coach will be required.

Mr. MALEY: An obligation will be cast upon the company which is already prepared to allow anyone to travel on their lines, but they do not wish to be bound down by regulation so that they will have to make special provision for passengers.

Hon. P. Collier: If there is no obligation they can say they will not carry them.

Mr. MALEY: They will also be harassed in having to run to a time table.

Hon. P. Collier: On the woodlines they run their trains without a time table.

The Honorary Minister: If they do not charge they need not run to a time table.

Mr. MALEY: It appears to me to be imposing a further hardship upon these people by inserting that they shall provide for passengers.

Hon. P. Collier: It will all be subject to conditions imposed by the Government, which are sure to be reasonable.

Mr. MALEY: This is the only portion of the Bill to which the owners of the Surprise Mine have any objection. I do not think it is reasonable to bind them down in this way.

Hon. P. Collier: They are getting some consideration in having permission to run the line at all.

Mr. MALEY: I hope the amendment will be agreed to.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Schedule, title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the report of the Auditor General for the year ended 30th June, 1919, under the Audit Act, 1904, and order that it shall lie upon the Table.

MOTION—PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCE, TO INCREASE.

Debate resumed from 27th November on motion by Mr. Wilson—

That in the opinion of this House the Parliamentary allowance made to members is inadequate, and should be immediately increased.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.40]: I do not think much can be added to what the member for Collic (Mr. Wilson) has said in moving this motion. He put his remarks very clearly though it was in the early hours of the morning, and it is to be regretted that they were not published in the public Press so that the electors of the State might have had an opportunity of perusing them. There is no doubt that the amount of allowance paid to members at

present is inadequate. We cannot get beyond that question when we realise that a large number of members of the House have to give practically the whole of their time to their Parliamentary duties. Some hon. members who represent country interests, I know from personal experience during the last 12 months, have done scarcely anything with their farms because they have had to attend to their public duties.

Mr. Davies: And yet they are pledged not to vote for an increase in the allowance.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Some of these hon. members have had to employ labour in order to carry out their duties on the farm whilst they have been looking after the work of the electors. These members must be considerably out of pocket in consequence. Although I represent a metropolitan constituency, I realise the difficulties we have to contend with at the present time in the matter of the allowances which are made to us. For my part, if I had not some other work to do as well, it would be almost impossible for me to conduct my house and keep myself and family respectably on the allowance which is paid to me. Many people run away with the idea that a member of Parliament receives £6 a week. I would point out that £6 a week amounts to £312 per annum, whereas our allowance is £300 per annum less taxation, which works out at about £5 15s. 4½d. per week. Taxation would account for a deduction of 2s. or 3s. from that amount. I guarantee that every member who comes here cannot attend this House during the period of the session without paying out at least 25s. a week for his expenses. I am speaking now only of metropolitan members. You, Sir, must be aware also that if a union sends a man to represent it into the city of Perth, an allowance of at least 10s. or 12s. a day is given for expenses. It is usual to pay such a union representative altogether 22s. 6d. a day while he is in Perth. Members of Parliament, however, who are representing their constituencies in Perth, only receive about £5 15s. a week, and out of this have to pay all their expenses. It is true, as the Press have pointed out, that we receive free railway passes. A Parliamentary pass on the railways is, however, useless to me except in the performance of my public duties. I do not use it for anything else. I have no occasion to come to Perth on business of any description for myself more often than once in about every three months. Everything I do so far as business is concerned is done at Fremantle. Consequently, the pass which is issued, in my case is used entirely for Parliamentary business. I feel certain that the allowance we are getting to-day is not worth so much as it was prior to the last increase. I have often wondered how men who have to keep up their homes in the country and also a home in Perth and carry out their Parliamentary duties properly, manage to do this all on their allowance. I cannot see how it is possible for them to live as they should live, and as I am confi-

dent their electors would desire they should live.

The Premier: The members from the metropolitan area do not have the same electioneering expenses.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In my case it generally costs me from £60 to £70.

Mr. Wilson: It costs country members more.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The general impression is that Labour members have their electioneering expenses paid for them out of some union fund. I have not been fortunate enough to have this done for me; I have always had to pay my own expenses. Some people think that a fund has been established amongst the Labour party especially for expenses incurred in political campaigns. Every member of a union has to contribute the sum of 2s. 6d. a year, and out of this the expenses of the secretary have to come as well as the amount of his salary. The statement, therefore, that Labour members have their electioneering expenses paid for them is entirely wrong. I say, conscientiously believing it, that the electors, except possibly one or two of the civil servants—and I see that the secretary of the civil service is raising some objection—would be anxious that their representatives in Parliament should be paid an adequate allowance so that they might represent their electors in the manner in which they should be represented. There is no doubt that the electors would have no objection to this. They know that this has been advocated by the Labour party for years, namely that members should be paid a proper salary. I have said on the hustings on every occasion since this has been pointed out, and every member of this side of the House has acted in the same way, that members should be paid an adequate allowance. I am of opinion that the electors of Western Australia are not such that they would not agree to pay their representatives in Parliament such a salary as would allow them to live decently. I hope the motion will be carried.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [5.28]: I take it that each member of the Country party will use his own judgment in this matter. When I went upon the hustings I did so on a particular platform, one of the planks of which was that, before the Parliamentary allowance was either decreased or increased, the matter should be decided only by a referendum of the people. I appealed to the electors in 1917 and on that particular platform was returned to Parliament. I consider therefore that I am in duty bound to abide by the decision of the electors on that occasion. As regards the question of the increase itself, I am quite willing at the next election to advocate that there should be an increase in the Parliamentary allowance, because I feel with every member of this House that the salary we are now in receipt of is not adequate for our absolute requirements, and to enable us to carry on the hus-

iness of State. If it is the wish of the electors to pay a higher allowance to those members who represent them, and if they think that such increase is justifiable, then the decision in this matter will rest with them. I take it that they are supreme on this point, and I am of opinion that the decision should be left with them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You cannot go to them now.

Mr. HARRISON: We shall be able to go to our electors on this point next year, or when this Parliament is finished. If the matter were submitted to the people by way of a referendum we could go to them before.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And have the satisfaction, if we are turned out at the next election, of knowing that the other fellow will get the benefit of the increase.

Mr. HARRISON: It is for the people to decide whether they think their present representatives are entitled to receive an increase in their salaries, or whether that increase should be given to some new candidate. Difficulties have been referred to by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin). Country members experience those difficulties too, but at the same time we entered into an obligation with our electorates and we ought to abide by that undertaking during the term of the present Parliament. For that reason I shall have to vote in favour of the salary remaining as it is, until this Parliament has expired. At the same time I hold the opinion that members of Parliament should be more adequately remunerated for the services they render.

Mr. ANGELO (Gaseoyne) [5.33]: Whilst I agree with the remarks made by the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) when moving the motion, and also with the views expressed by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin), I am of the opinion that the present is an inopportune time in which to bring forward any measure having for its object an increase in the payment of the Parliamentary allowance. Parliament is now reaching the closing days of its third session, and it would be wrong for the House to alter the Constitution in the direction of increasing the salaries of members. As has been pointed out, we were returned by the electors at a salary of £300, and any alteration of that figure should only be made with the approval of the electors. I am in accord with the arguments advanced so far as the disadvantages under which members labour are concerned, and I agree that the country members suffer more than the metropolitan members. We have only to realise the difference there is between the two. The metropolitan members live in or about the city, and it does not cost them anything to come here to attend to their business.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Does it not?

Mr. ANGELO: The hon. member told us that he was not dependent on Parliament. Most of the metropolitan members have their own business to attend to, and they devote a certain time to Parliament and no more. The country member, however, is in a very different position. When I was elected to Parliament I was told that my attendance here would be a matter of four or five months at the most. Instead of that, however, I find that I am kept here all the year round, and that is what all country members must do if they desire to give service to their constituents—they must remain in the metropolis.

Mr. Roche: That applies to metropolitan members, too.

Mr. ANGELO: The metropolitan members are here all the time, but we country members have to maintain two homes, or spend a considerable sum of money in travelling to and from the electorate. I have been obliged to remain in Perth, and at the present time it is more than ever necessary for all country members to be here in order to assist the Government to the fullest possible extent in connection with the settlement of returned soldiers on the land, and placing them back in civil life. It is very important that country members, and of course town members as well, should be in close touch with the Government. I repeat, that the present is an inopportune time for altering the Constitution in the direction of providing additional remuneration for members. I really think, however, that country members are deserving of some consideration, because I am convinced that it costs them at least £100 a year more to attend to their Parliamentary duties. Holding that view, I therefore move an amendment—

That all the words after "House" be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—"an additional allowance of £100 per annum be provided for members of Parliament representing electorates outside the metropolitan area."

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [5.40]: On this question of extra payment of members, may I be quite candid and say that any man is a fool who enters Parliament from a monetary standpoint, expecting to get a decent living from the salary he is paid. I do not care whether he be a man sitting outside an office or inside an office. If he be outside an office, the salary he receives here does not amount to more than bread and butter; if he is sitting inside an office, and he has brains, he can earn his bread and butter there. If he has the ability to become a Minister of the Crown, and he cannot go outside and earn more than his pay as a Minister of the Crown, then he has not much ability. When it comes to a member of Parliament, who is receiving £300 a year, all I can say is that he is a very lucky man indeed if he can make both ends meet on that amount alone. We knew when we

came to this Parliament that the salary to be paid was £300 a year. I do not suppose that any man said more bitter things than I did over the Parliamentary grab of the Federal legislators, when they raised their own salaries. I am inclined to think that if we at this period raise our own salaries, we will be subjected to much the same criticism as I then levelled at the Federal Parliament. One has to be decently consistent, even in politics. I honestly believe that a majority of the people of the State do not want to see their members represent them at a loss; but it is hard to believe that, on opening many of the letters that I receive from my constituents. A member of Parliament realises when opening letters from his constituents that the constituents imagine that the £300 drawn by the member really belongs to them, and should be refunded to them by way of subscriptions. If I had my way, I would make it a supreme offence for any member of Parliament to give a subscription in his own constituency.

Mr. O'Loughlin: And those who could afford it would give under the lap.

Mr. GARDINER: It enables a man who can afford to give away his salary to be in a different position from the man who has to live on his salary. Those are my views. This is the last session I will serve in this or any other Parliament, consequently I do not think I would be justified in assisting to pass the motion. All the same, I do not think any member keeping a debit and credit balance of his Parliamentary salary would find that he could live on it. After all there are certain obligations which constituents look to a member to see fulfilled. Again, I do not agree with the amendment moved by the member for Gascoyne, because it makes a distinction. It would be rather ridiculous in a case like mine. I am a metropolitan man representing a country constituency, and I am to get £100 a year more than some other members.

Mr. Angelo: We are not all as fortunate as you.

Mr. GARDINER: I do not want to claim exemption because of my fortunate circumstances, but I may be the most incompetent man in this House and yet I get £100 a year more merely because I represent a country constituency, and I live in the city. I do not think a system of differential pay would appeal to any member in the House. When it comes to a question of travelling allowances we hear it said, "Look at the perquisites you get." I think I have used my railway pass to go to my constituency six or seven times in the last two years, and I never use it on private business, and neither do I use it on the trams. Everywhere else, even in little Tasmania, which is in nearly as bad financial circumstances as Western Australia, the payment of members has been raised. If I were staying in Parliament, at the next elections I should move for an increase,

but seeing that I was elected to serve at £300 and that I knew the circumstances, I do not think at the present juncture I would be justified in voting for the motion.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [5.46]: I confess I feel some difficulty in speaking in temperate language on the proposed increase of payment to members. Even under ordinary circumstances, if the finances of the State were as we should like to see them, it appears to me plain that a man who enters Parliament does so on the distinct understanding that he will accept and not increase the salary which is payable at the time of the election, unless he has definitely stated on the hustings that he proposes to advocate, and if possible get, an increase of salary.

Mr. Willcock interjected.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It is true that a man who takes an ordinary job can go to the Arbitration Court, but he cannot raise his own salary; he takes steps to get his salary raised by another authority. I would not raise this objection to increasing the Parliamentary salaries had it been an issue at the general election and if only those voted for it who put it forward as something they would vote for if they got an opportunity. This, however, is a very different matter, we having come in on a salary fixed and having, so far as I know, in very few, if any cases suggested that the salaries should be raised or that we would vote for the raising of the salary. At present we know that the condition of the finances is very serious. We know that during last month there was a deficit of £107,000. We know that that deficit is far greater than the deficit for the corresponding month of last year, when it was £63,000. The increase in the deficit for November, 1919, as compared with the corresponding month of 1918 is £44,000. The deficit for the five months of the current financial year is about £572,000, whereas the estimated deficit for the whole year is only £593,000. The financial drift is obvious, and surely nothing could be more unseemly than that we who are sent here for the purpose, amongst other things, of understanding what the financial condition of the country is should, by raising our own salaries, indicate in the plainest and most public way that in our view the financial condition of the country is satisfactory and such that we are justified in raising our salaries. I say in the circumstances it would be a grossly unseemly thing for this House to pass the motion which has been moved. If this House passes the motion I have no hesitation in saying that members will show themselves to be either grossly or brutally ignorant of the financial condition of this country, or callously indifferent to its welfare.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.50]: Notwithstanding the view expressed by the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), I intend to take the risk of being grossly and brutally ignorant or callous with regard to the finan-

cial condition of the State. The hon. member said he was scarcely able to approach the question in temperate language. I do not know that he followed up that opening statement by giving a substantial reason apart from mere generalities—as to why the allowances of members ought not to be increased. It all gets back to this, that if the country believes in the principle of payment of members—and it has shown for a period of 20 years or more that it does—it follows logically that the allowance should be adequate for the purpose. Just as we believe in the payment for services rendered anywhere else in the State so, if we believe in payment for services rendered by members of Parliament, such payment should be in keeping with the allowances or salaries paid for all other public services rendered to the State. This is the principle; there can be no getting away from it. It is idle to say there is something wrong in members of Parliament raising their own salaries. If Parliaments in the past had not increased their salaries without consulting the electors, what would the position have been to-day? Why, there would have been no payment of members at all! Even in the Home country, where the member for Perth comes from, in that old conservative England where they entertain very high traditions in matters of this kind, the salaries of members of Parliament—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Most of the old conservatives have left.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And unfortunately many of them have drifted to Australia. In the House of Commons, the traditions of which are at least as high as those of any Parliament in Australia, members increased their salaries by £200 a year in the midst of a session, without consulting the electors, and will anyone say that the members who voted for the increase in the Federal Parliament—men like the late Lord Forrest, the late Sir George Reid, and others who to-day are members of the Federal judiciary—that these men who voted for increased salaries without consulting the electors and without a mandate of any kind from them, were actuated by anything mean or mercenary, or possessed less honour than members who would refuse or scorn to vote for an increase?

Mr. Pilkington: They did not have to borrow the money to pay the increase.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The one argument of the member for Perth was the financial drift. He instanced the hundreds of thousands of pounds of deficits accruing month after month, and he is going to stop the whole drift by saving £5,000 a year. This is going to make the difference between solvency and financial ruin to the State! The amount is a mere flea-bite. This House has been voting during the past month hundreds of thousands of pounds without in every case investigating whether the expenditure was justified or not. In dealing with the Estimates, we have voted increases to members of the Public Service already in receipt of £700, £800, and £1,000 a year. The point was never raised

by the member for Perth that these increases would land the State in financial ruin; yet the question of £5,000 a year increase to members is going to make all the difference. It is very easy to say that, because members accepted the allowance of £300 when they were elected, they should continue to serve throughout the Parliament. That is all very well for men who are possessed of other sources of income. While this may cost the State another £5,000, there have been increases in many directions, increases perhaps which were not justified and which have cost this State much more. There has been an increase in the price of coal which is costing this State £30,000 a year. Would the hon. member, who is a shareholder in the Proprietary colliery, refuse to take his share of the increase which is going to cost this State £30,000 a year?

The Minister for Mines: He wants us to reduce the royalty.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member as a shareholder in the company did not consult his constituents or the public interests or the public welfare when the coal companies increased their charges to an extent which will affect the deficit ten times more than this increase will. There is nothing wrong about that in the hon. member's opinion. But what about the man who is not fortunate enough to be a shareholder in a company that does a little profiteering on the sly? The action of the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson), who moved the motion, has been responsible for placing in the pocket of the member for Perth, who has opposed the motion, an amount considerably in excess of what the increase to members will mean. The hon. member is worthy of his hire. The allowance to-day, owing to the high cost of living, limits the choice of electors. The member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) said that the man who entered Parliament, having no other source of income and believing he could live reasonably and maintain a family on his parliamentary allowance, was a fool. I agree with him. And does it not follow that if the salary, having regard to the cost of living, is such that it will not allow men with no other source of income to become candidates, the choice of the electors must be restricted to that extent? Men will not offer themselves.

Mr. Smith: You will never be short of candidates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Not of a class, but it must be understood that all the capacity and brains and ability is not confined to those in possession of more than a fair share of this world's goods. Sometimes we find in men not possessed of wealth more than a fair share of the world's brains and, if the public are to be denied the services of these men, it must be conceded that their choice to that extent will be restricted. I take no meanly-mouthed view of this question. If there were any other means to secure the increase, we would be justified in adopting it, but there is no other means than by moving through this Parliament. If there were an outside tribunal to which we could refer it,

I should be prepared to do so, but there is no such tribunal. We are the masters; we are the judges and, having regard to the circumstances which exist in comparison with those existing at the time when the salaries were fixed, namely, ten or eleven years ago, and the fact that £500 to-day is not equal to what £300 was at that time—

The Minister for Mines: No member will be compelled to draw a single penny from the Treasury.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, the Treasury will be happy to release anyone from the obligation of drawing the extra money if his conscience will not permit him to take it.

The Minister for Mines: Conscience money is always gladly received.

Mr. O'Loughlin: How many consciences will there be?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I shall not be amongst them, and I make no apology for the attitude I adopt. The present allowance is wholly inadequate to those men who have no other source of income; there is no question about that. To those who have unlimited incomes—

Mr. Smith: How many of such are there?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Such men are serving the country at a personal loss, and should not be called upon to do so. Having regard to the fact that we have established the principle of payment of members, no member should be asked to serve the country at a personal loss. Even if he can afford that loss he should not be called upon to bear it. For these reasons I have no qualms whatever about saying that the allowance is utterly inadequate, and that it ought to be increased if the representation of the people here is to be maintained, and if there is not to be a limitation placed upon the choice of the electors at the forthcoming election.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [6.1]: I desire to state my position on this motion. Having signed the requisition, I shall stick to my word. After signing I discovered that there was a certain plank forbidding members of the Country party to vote for an increase of their own salaries. Still, having signed the requisition for an increase, I shall abide by my pledged word. It has been stated here that every man is worthy of his hire. Members who put in their time in this House as stated by the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin)—and this applies particularly to country members—find it the hardest possible matter to make both ends meet. To judge by correspondence appearing in the Press, one would think members had nothing to do but sit in the lobby and smoke big, fat cigars and drink whisky. Let me deal with my own case. Since representing the York electorate I have worked very hard indeed; I do not think I have ever worked harder in my life than I have done since becoming a member of this Chamber. Had I remained in the business in which I was engaged before entering Parliament, I should be infinitely better off than I am to-day.

The Minister for Works: With your energy, undoubtedly.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have been compelled to sacrifice my farm and my business and everything else in order to do my duty by my constituents.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [6.5]: Before dealing with the subject of the motion, may I just refer to the financial position in some little detail. I know the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) thinks we are diifting to the bad month by month. But I want to tell hon. members that I am fairly confident that the result of this year's financial operations will not be any worse than the Estimates indicate; indeed, I think it will be better. Anticipating criticism of the kind, I got out a few figures. The deficit for last month was £107,181. The deficit for November of 1918 was £63,230. But during November of this year we incurred an expenditure of £8,671 in connection with the influenza outbreak. That expenditure, I hope, will not recur. In November of last year a sum of £25,000 was transferred to credit of revenue fund from the State trading concerns. No such transfer has been made for last month, although it might have been. I purpose making these transfers at the end of each half year, but not at intermediate terms. Further, we spent last month in rabbit extermination £4,700. That will not be a recurring expenditure, I hope. We thought we would do better this year by starting early. The loss to the railways from the goldfields strike cannot be estimated at less than £10,000 per month. These extraordinary items, added to last November's deficit, would make a total of £111,601. Of course, if one were to include all the items which have been affected by the strike, the total would be a vast sum. During the past five months the Government have had to pay a considerable sum in extra wages as the result of retrospective awards, and this has also aggravated the position. Such payments were particularly heavy in connection with the tramways. A great deal has been paid also in connection with the return of our soldiers. In the circumstances the revenue for the past five months has been all that one could expect it to be. The deficit for the five months ended on the 30th November last amounts to £572,580. For the first five months of last financial year it amounted to £425,671. The increase of £146,909 for the five months of this year is due to expenditure on account of the influenza outbreak £43,000, relief at Kalgoorlie £7,000, shortage of transfer from State trading concerns to credit of revenue £26,000, extra expenditure on rabbit extermination £4,700, and expenditure on butter and bacon factories £6,500; totalling £87,200. Further, we have set aside this year timber revenue amounting to £16,675, not one penny of which appears on the Estimates. It is revenue, but under the Forests Act it is set aside, and an adjustment will be made at the

end of the year. The loss of railway profits during these first five months, due to strikes and other troubles, we estimated at £40,000. In addition, we have had to pay £26,000 additional interest during the past five months. That, of course, cannot be deducted, because it will be with us permanently. Irrespective of that interest, however, we have had so far this year £143,875 of non-recurring expenditure.

The Minister for Mines: And then there is the accrued leave to returned soldiers.

The PREMIER: Yes. I am merely stating a few figures which have been got out in a hurry. One could, of course, get many other items which were not charged against revenue last year. One could show where extra revenue is expected during the next seven months. As a fact, we shall carry about two-thirds of our railway traffic during the next seven months. We have already spent £80,000 this year one way and another in connection with railway renewals etc. However, that may go on, and so I say nothing about it now. But there is every justification for believing that the deficit at the end of the year will not be greater than I have estimated. Indeed, I believe it will be a little less. I know, of course, that there have been some services affecting the cost of working our railways considerably; but that matter will be adjusted. There is also a considerable amount to be transferred to the credit of revenue each half year. For instance, interest on capital invested in State trading concerns is transferrable at the end of each half year. I could transfer to-day £133,000 on that account. The amount will be transferred eventually. Hon. members are aware that the adjustments at the end of the financial year make a very considerable difference. I do not say that the position disclosed even now is a satisfactory one. Naturally, I should like to see the deficit wiped out altogether. Next I wish to say that members of the Ministry will speak and vote as they please on this motion, which is, as a matter of course, one for hon. members themselves to decide. Payment of members was originally introduced so that the poorest man in the community could enter Parliament if the electors of any electorate chose him. There was no other reason whatever for the introduction of payment of members. I have no doubt that there were then, and that there are now, people who would give their time in Parliament without payment of members.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In some Parliaments members pay themselves.

The PREMIER: I daresay they do, by Royal Commissions and other means. Some members have assured me, and indeed have convinced me, that owing to absolutely unavoidable expenditure they have not more than £3 a week for the upkeep of their families. I have been told by several hon. members, who have gone into the matter with me, that when they deduct the cost of election, which is roughly £100 every three years, and the cost of coming to Perth to attend

Parliament week by week, they have not more than £3 a week for themselves. No matter how economically they live, they cannot reduce their expenses while living here in Perth below £2 per week. And I am well aware that members are compelled to be in Perth not only during the session. I am well aware that the business of their constituents brings them to the capital very frequently during the recess. I know it because I see them very frequently at my office in recess. The life of a member of Parliament is not now what it was some years ago. The establishment of all these State trading concerns has added very much to the work of members. Every member who has a State trading concern in his electorate is affected and I think we should have some regard to the position. I do not know that the increased cost of living is in itself a sufficient reason for the carrying of the motion. I do not agree that if members got £6 a week they could not live on £6 a week. But do they get £6 a week? If I thought they did, I would say there was no ground for supporting the motion. But we know they do not get it. I doubt if any member sitting here is as well off, from the aspect of the payment he receives for his work as a member of Parliament, as the man who draws £3 10s. per week in wages. And I am not paying any regard to whatever amounts members may give away. It is their own concern if they choose to give donations and subscriptions. I am dealing only with that expenditure which cannot be avoided and must be faced. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) has said that in some Parliaments members get their pay by other means. I believe they do. But, so far as I know, there has been only one Royal Commission of paid members of Parliament since I have been in this House; and I think that Commission was sitting some time before I came to the House. On the other hand, there have been a great many select committees, and a great deal of work has been done by select committees.

Hon. P. Collier: In other States that work is done by Royal Commissions.

The PREMIER: But those select committees are not paid. Members do that work quite apart from their Parliamentary duties. In fact, we do not allow members to sit on select committees while the Houses are sitting.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: Before tea, in reply to the charge that members were never appointed to paid Royal Commissions, I pointed out that select committees had done a tremendous amount of work, had sat on days over which the House had been adjourned, and that in one case their work had extended into the recess. I was then referring, of course, to the Royal Commission which dealt with the handling of wheat. If the motion is carried, a Bill will have to be brought down, and if a Bill is brought down I hope

every hon. member will be here to give the matter consideration. If political reasons alone weighed, I should most certainly oppose the motion; but I cannot oppose the right of hon. members to live decently. It has been said by some that members ought to get work during the recess, but I say that if members are to be of any use to Parliament, the ought to be continuing their Parliamentary work in recess. There are many questions to be considered, much information to be gathered, and many districts which ought to be visited during recess. The great weakness of the present position is that hon. members cannot possibly know the country, because they cannot afford to travel through it. Many members know nothing about the goldfields, others know nothing of our pastoral lands, while but very few know anything about the agricultural areas. If to-morrow we were to discuss the building of a railway in the South-West, how many hon. members would know from personal experience the value of the country to be opened up? If to-night we were discussing the State sawmills, how many members would know of their own knowledge anything about our timber assets? Of course hon. members will not admit that they know nothing of these subjects, but from experience I feel sure that many can know little, if anything, of them. I can quite believe that the present Parliamentary allowance does not give members a minimum of £3 per week. I further believe that the finances of the State will be straightened out, and that without additional taxation. If I could have come down to the House with a full explanation of the position during the last five months, I am certain members would have been convinced that the position is improving. In addition to those which I have mentioned, many of the charges which had to be made will not have to be made again. Under our method of bookkeeping, it is impossible to get all these facts in a day or a week, but I am so arranging the work of the departments that we shall have information when wanted on an occasion of this sort. Our methods of bookkeeping are prescribed by various Acts of Parliament and are not the fault of the officials. I hope to so arrange the work of public servants that their position will be very much better in future. It could be very much improved without any cost to the taxpayer, but it must be done by an alteration of the methods. The work is now in hand and I hope to achieve satisfactory results. A good deal of delving was done before my time, and the result of that has been fully available of. I have had petitions presented to me, although not signed by a majority of members. One petition was signed by 19 members of this House, and another from the Upper House was signed by 11 members of that Chamber. I also had a deputation from members of both Houses. Some of those members were not named on the petitions. They came to me, but because those petitions were not signed by a majority of members, nothing could

be done. The petitions asked that the salaries should be increased to £500. If anything is done, I hope the House will not ask the Government to agree to more than £400. If the motion is carried, Ministers will not participate in the increase. It is for the House to decide whether the motion shall be carried. If it is decided in the affirmative, a Bill will be brought down, and it will then be for members to oppose or reject it, and so take the responsibility. If I could conscientiously oppose the motion I would do so. However, I cannot conscientiously oppose it, because I do not believe that any member who has to live on his allowance can give his wife more than £3 a week to maintain the household. I refer, of course, to members who have to come here week by week when the House is sitting, and again in recess, to attend to the work of their electorates. The work of a member of Parliament to-day is very different indeed from what such work was some years ago.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [7.41]: I support the motion, and will oppose the amendment. It is always easy to find a plausible argument against an increase in salary. I have never yet known of an increase being granted without some endeavour being made to prevent it. The reasons given here are abundant to prove that an increase in salary is justified. The Premier summed it up in a sentence when he said it was the intention, when payment of members was first introduced, that every section of the community, regardless of wealth, should be represented in this Assembly. In my opinion, the chief value of the Assembly is that every shade of opinion and every class is here represented. I know of no better justification for the existence of the Assembly. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) has raised a question which is perhaps worthy of some consideration, namely, whether it is fair or equitable that members should vote themselves an increase in the face of our present deficit. The meaning of that is that members of the Assembly were the cause of that deficit. I entirely repudiate that. I say the public are just as much to blame as are members of the Assembly. Most of what happens in this Assembly is done by reason of influences outside the House. It would be obviously unfair that members of this Assembly should have cast upon them the whole of the responsibility for the financial position of the State. It is pleasing to learn that the Premier sees some light ahead. Let us hope that his anticipations will be fully realised. The argument of the member for Perth means, in effect, no results no pay. It is refreshing, coming from a gentleman representing a high and honourable profession that in its accounts never takes that into consideration. They are not paid on results. I cannot conceive the quivering hands of the member for Perth refusing to take a cheque because he did not have the good fortune to win the case. Members of his

profession do not work on results. If we are going to apply the principle that what a man can do in his private life will affect what he can do in his public life, it is unfair to say that members have no right to an increase. There have been one or two instances in Australia where increases have been made by members themselves. I know of no other means by which members can increase their own remuneration. We have no court of arbitration to go to as others have. In South Australia a few years ago Parliament had not sufficient courage to grant to its members an increase. Members, therefore, went to the people for it, and the people told them that if they did not know what they required for themselves they should go on short allowance, and they turned it down. On the next occasion, when members of the South Australian Parliament decided upon an increase, I do not think anyone raised an outcry. There will always be a considerable number of people in every community who are prepared to take all they can get for as little as they are compelled to pay. The same thing applies to public life. If we are to give every section of the community its fair representation we are only doing what is right in saying that those men who are called upon to perform these duties to the country shall be paid a remuneration, which will keep them in decency and comfort. If we do not pay our members directly through the Treasury, we will find outside organisations of one kind or another getting control over members, which would be highly undesirable. We do not want that in any way at all. I have no hesitation in saying that, notwithstanding any objection there will be on the part of some people, the majority of the people will agree that this is a fair and equitable increase to make to members of Parliament, in order that they may do their duty to the country and live in common decency, and give their wives and families that degree of comfort which others in the community with less to do and more security of tenure are permitted to give those for whom they are responsible.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [7.47]: I desire to make my position quite clear. I am the representative of my constituents on this question. At the last general election it was made quite clear that my constituents were entirely opposed to increasing the cost of Parliament.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They did not give it a moment's thought.

Mr. MONEY: On the contrary, they desired that there should be a decrease in the cost of Parliaments throughout Australia. I should have welcomed a resolution to the effect that it was desirable that the number of members in this House should be decreased. I am satisfied that, in view of the present position in which this State is, financial matters are the burning question which has to be grappled with, and I think that fewer members with better pay would meet the situation rather than to have so many members dealing with so many concerns,

which should never come before Parliament at all. I allude to many of those small trading concerns which really should be managed by a board of public works or a board of a similar nature. In view of the wishes expressed by my electors, I have no other alternative but to vote against the motion and the amendment.

Mr. SMITH (North Perth) [7.50]: I am a firm believer in the payment of members and at the same time paying them well. I do not think the salary that is paid to members to-day in this House is a fair one. I find that on this occasion, however, I must vote against the motion and the amendment. At my election I was pledged at every one of my meetings to do so. Until I can feel that I am honourably relieved from that pledge I cannot, in justice to myself and my electors, vote for any proposal to increase salaries. I recognise that the remuneration paid to-day is totally inadequate for the requirements of members and to enable them to live decently. We have now gone on for two or three years, however, through this time of increased cost of living, and I think it is undesirable in the middle of Parliament that we should bring this proposal forward. This question is one which should be put before the people, not necessarily by way of a referendum, for it can be done in another way. It can be made a question at the next general elections so that every member can state his opinions. If the electors supported the proposal to increase the salaries of members and the candidate were returned to Parliament, he would be quite justified in moving for the increase. If the question crops up at the next general elections, knowing what I know of the cost of living, I am prepared to tell my electors that the remuneration paid to members to-day is totally insufficient, and if a motion were brought before the House I would support it. I should then feel that I was relieved from my previous pledges, and if the electors chose to return me again I would have no hesitation in supporting a Bill to give to members proper and adequate remuneration. There is another reason why I think it is undesirable, and that is the reason brought forward by the member for Perth, namely, the present state of the finances.

Mr. Wilson: What about the members' finances?

Mr. SMITH: They must be subordinate to the finances of the country. The Premier has told us that things are not as bad as they look, and has referred to the system of book-keeping. No system of book-keeping will transform a certain loss into an imaginary profit. The loss is there, and by no means of book-keeping can we relieve the Government of the liability. He inferred during his remarks that things were not as bad as they appeared to be on paper.

The Premier: That is so.

Mr. SMITH: And that if we had a better system of book-keeping he would be able to prove conclusively that we were able to make both ends meet. There can be no doubt as

to the position of our finances. We periodically convert our deficit into a bigger deficit, and then transfer it to funded stock. That is not relieving ourselves of the liability; it is really piling it up. Whilst the country labours under these heavy financial burdens, we are not justified in deliberately increasing our own salaries, no matter how small the total amount may be, until we show the people that we have made a genuine effort to improve the position.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What do you mean by that?

Mr. Nairn: He means that he has not made the effort.

Mr. SMITH: I mean until we have made both ends meet—the House, the Government, and every one of us.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have not heard of any proposal from you to do that.

Mr. SMITH: I have been leaving it to the hon. member. Have we made any effort to reduce our expenditure or the cost of Parliamentary Government? The great grievance of the people is that the cost of Parliamentary government is too high. To add to this by £8,000, if we increase the salaries by £100, or £16,000 if we increase them by £200, is more than the people will stand. If the Government desired that members should be reasonably paid they could effect this without casting further burdens upon the people. They could do this by bringing forward a proposal to reduce the number of members in both Houses.

Hon. T. Walker: Knock out North Perth.

Mr. SMITH: We would want two members there on account of the increased population. The business of the country would be carried on just as well as it is to-day with a reduced number of members. We could thus save a considerable sum in the cost of Parliament, and the Government would be in a position to increase the salaries of members.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Did you support the motion for the reduction when it was on?

Mr. SMITH: It has been said that we have increased the salaries of the higher paid civil servants, and have passed those increases in every department with very little protest, and for that reason we are justified in increasing our own salaries. There is no doubt that for every highly paid civil servant who has had an increase there are at least half a dozen others who have had no increase at all, and who are feeling the pinch.

Hon. P. Collier: There are not any highly paid civil servants who have not had an increase.

Mr. SMITH: But there are half a dozen other members of the civil service for every one of those who has not had an increase.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not so. Every one has had an increase.

Mr. SPEAKER: Civil servants are not under discussion in this motion.

Mr. SMITH: The point has been made that whilst we have increased the salaries of highly paid civil servants we would also be justified in increasing our own.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can refer to that by way of illustration, but cannot argue the principle.

Mr. SMITH: Until we are prepared to pay all our civil servants an increase, we are not entitled or justified to increase our own remuneration.

Hon. T. Walker: We ought to do both at once.

Mr. SMITH: Until we do that first—

Hon. T. Walker: We ought to do it simultaneously.

Mr. SMITH: We shall not be justified in increasing our own salaries. I cannot vote for either the motion or the amendment.

Mr. ROBINSON (Canning) [8.0]: I intend to oppose the motion on the ground that I do not think the present state of the finances justify the granting of an increased remuneration, also for the reason that, in my last two elections, I was called upon in every centre of my constituency to pledge myself on this very subject.

Mr. O'Loughlin: And you pledged yourself about some bridges!

Mr. ROBINSON: I pledged myself to work for them.

Hon. P. Collier: You pledged yourself about State Trading Concerns also.

Mr. ROBINSON: I did nothing of the kind.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ROBINSON: I gave my pledge in connection with this subject because it was a burning question at the time, and I was tilted at by my then opponent, Mr. Scaddan. However, I gave my pledge on those two occasions that I would oppose an increase in the payment of members of Parliament and I see no reason to-day to alter my view.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [8.3]: I intend to oppose the motion and the amendment because like other hon. members in this Chamber I consider the time is not opportune for granting increased payment. I do not consider that members should act as an arbitration court to fix an award and increase their own salaries. There are many Government employees in this State who are living on a very small salary, and who have asked for increases from time to time, and the increases which have been granted to them have been very small indeed. I agree with the member for North Perth (Mr. Smith) when he states that if hon. members desire their salaries to be increased the proper method is to voice their opinion on the platform when they go before the electors, and tell the electors that if they are chosen to represent them they will ask for an increase in salary. If that is done they will then be justified in coming here and voting in favour of increased remuneration. I do not believe an increase is necessary. On the occasion of my last election I was asked the question on several platforms whether I would approve of an increase in the payment of members' salaries, and I

told my electors definitely that I would not agree to it. I would also point out that so far as the Country party are concerned, their platform is that whenever an increase to members' salaries is desired, the matter should be referred to the people.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Never talk about our Caucus again.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member belongs to a Caucus, and he has signed a platform.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I admit it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I admit also that I have signed a platform, and that one of the planks is to vote against increased payment to members. I consider it is a good plank, too. If the people think members of both Houses are worthy of an increase in salary, and it is desirable that it should be given them, they will undoubtedly vote in favour of the candidate who will move in that direction. I intend to vote against both the motion and the amendment.

Sir H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [8.6]: I do not wish to give a silent vote on this question. An amendment has been moved by the member for Gascoyne to the effect that the suggested increase should apply only to members representing constituencies outside the metropolitan area. I am entirely opposed to any differentiation of that sort. If members of Parliament are to be paid, all should be paid the same amount. We have established the principle of payment of members, and it has been in vogue now for nearly 20 years. It is a principle that has been adopted through the British dominions, and we cannot go back on it now. It must stand. I cannot vote for the amendment because, as I stated, I do not approve of differentiation of this character. At the same time I must say that the salary paid to members at the present time is quite inadequate, but the motion declares that the increase should be immediately granted. That is where I am stuck up. I seem to have got bogged on that point. I have always expressed the opinion that salaries of members of Parliament should not be increased, but I know that in the last few years circumstances have altered very much. Still, I am bound to adhere to the opinions I expressed when seeking the suffrages of those who sent me to Parliament, and, therefore, I do not feel that I can vote for an immediate increase of payment to members. The argument that members of Parliament are increasing their own salaries by agreeing to a motion for that purpose does not carry any weight with me, because no body of people, except members of Parliament, elected by the people, have any power to deal with this question. It is only this Assembly that controls the funds of the State, and it is only this Assembly that has to decide whether members' salaries should be increased or not. I am certain that the sense

of fairness of hon. members makes them realise that they have to answer to their constituents for any action they may take, and for any action which to them is the proper and right one to adopt. It is quite within the province of members in this House to vote for an increase in their own salaries.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You vote for mine, and I will vote for yours.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: But we may be gone to-morrow. We never know when our lives on this sphere may end. When an election comes round many of us may lose our political lives; consequently we are not voting for an increase in our own salaries, but we are voting for an increase of salaries of members irrespective of who those members are. I have been twitted with being old-fashioned. At the same time I always was of opinion that all classes of the community should be represented in this House, and I should be sorry to see members representing organisations, that is to say, that organisations should pay them for services rendered in Parliament, because members in such circumstances would be in the hands of those organisations entirely. Hon. members should be independent and free to do as their constituents tell them.

Hon. T. Walker: Then you think it is best that the salaries should be raised?

Sir H. B. LEFROY: I say that the salaries at present paid are entirely inadequate.

Hon. T. Walker: Then, if you have arrived at that conclusion, you must vote for the motion.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: I certainly cannot vote for the amendment, and I feel that I cannot vote for the motion, but, at the same time, I consider that having adopted the principle of payment of members, I would like to see the best men representing all classes of this community in the Parliament of the State, and I should like to see those members placed in such a position that they would be able to live without anxiety to themselves.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [8.12]: Like the hon. member who has just sat down, I am occasionally accused of being a little old fashioned, and I have not the slightest doubt that some hon. members will bear in mind my attitude in other years in regard to payment of members. I have always held the opinion that there should be sufficient men in the community, who have done well in the country, who should be willing to represent their fellow people in Parliament without remuneration. I also recognise that there are other classes in the community besides the wealthy that have the right to be represented in Parliament, and, although it may be curious for me to say it, I would not raise any objection if any particular class, desiring to have their special representative, should subscribe amongst themselves sufficient with which to remunerate that representative, as was

done in the old country years ago. There are, however, objections to that kind of thing. I know it can be said that if that is done, instead of a man being able to show his independence of thought and action, he would be in Parliament merely as a delegate to obey orders. So far as this debate is concerned, I would like hon. members to consider this point, that when payment of members was first introduced the salary was fixed at £200 a year, and it was considered that this would prevent those who were elected from being out of pocket in connection with their Parliamentary duties. As years went on the amount was increased to £300, and now it is desired to increase it to £400 or £500. We have to be guided by the circumstances in which we find ourselves. The purchasing power of the sovereign when the salary of members was £200 was different from what it is to-day. We find at the present time that all classes of the community, on account of the extra cost of living, have been given increased remuneration. It is an undeniable argument that the cost of living has increased tremendously of late and I do not think that the people in this State will refuse to apply the same argument to the members of this Chamber. So far as the question of leaving the matter to the decision of the people at the next election is concerned, to my mind—and I hope hon. members will not consider the remark I am about to make as an offensive one—that is absolutely rubbish. At any rate that is my opinion. If a member goes before his constituents and he feels a little bit uncertain as to the number of votes he may get, it will take a strong man indeed who will be able to force himself to advocate that increased payment should be given to members. It is one of the occasions when members can take their courage in their hands and say to the people of the State “the cost of living has increased enormously, and wages have been advanced all round. Why, therefore, deny additional necessary remuneration to those whom you sent to Parliament to represent you?” That is my view. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) put forward an unanswerable case. Nothing I have heard has refuted his arguments. As to the question of increasing the deficit, it might do so to a small extent, but, if it should turn out that a number of members who have been in this Chamber for some years and who have been educated as legislators find that they cannot because of the inadequate remuneration, again offer their services, it will cost the country more to educate new members than this extra payment will involve. Some people might think we are boosting ourselves, but in my time in the Railway Department I found that to educate a new man up to our ways cost £200 to £250. What would it cost to educate a member of Parliament?

Mr. O’Loghlen: It depends a lot on the material.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Exactly, but if the material is available, we have to educate it and make the best we can of it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I think I should use that at the next election.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At nearly every election, new members are returned and, with that enthusiasm which only lack of experience can foster and maintain they fill the Notice Paper at a very big cost to the State, through “Hansard” and other ways, whereas, when they have been in Parliament a little while and have learned the ropes, they can get their information without incurring this avoidable expense. New members in their excessive enthusiasm—

Mr. O’Loghlen: Fight every item.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and fight with a sublime ignorance due to lack of knowledge which sometimes rouses the ire of older members of the House. After the manner in which the motion has been put before the House by the member for Collie, I feel I would not be doing right if I did not vote for it. The country can better afford the increase than allow any of its representatives to be underpaid. Except a few aspirants for political honours who wish to make capital out of it, I do not think the great bulk of the people will utter one single objection. The same thing has been done in connection with every Parliament in Australia, but this Parliament has been particularly modest compared with some Parliaments on the other side. I shall record my vote for the motion.

Amendment put and negatived.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	..	9

Majority for 11

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Lambert
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Collier	Mr. Naira
Mr. Foley	Mr. Roche
Mr. George	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Walker
Mr. Holman	Mr. Wilcock
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Jones	Mr. O’Loghlen

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Broun	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Brown	Mr. Robinson
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Smith
Sir H. B. Lefroy	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Money	

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

For.	Against.
Mr. Green	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Troy	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Mullany	Mr. Durack
Mr. Munslie	Mr. Maley
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Underwood	Mr. Duff

Question thus passed.

BILL—LOAN, £3,339,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 28th November.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [8.24]: I do not propose to discuss the Bill at any great length, because the main discussion might best take place when we are considering the Loan Estimates. It has to be recognised that a Loan Bill giving authority to raise the loan funds necessary to carry on during the next 12 months is essential. The amount of the Bill is considerable, namely, £3,339,000 and, of that sum, it is proposed to appropriate in the Loan Estimates £3,188,000. This, as the Premier has explained, is due to the fact that it is intended to spend a very considerable sum during the year upon soldier settlement—no less a sum than £2,211,000. In respect of that sum, it is considered there will be no call upon revenue for the payment of interest, inasmuch as the settlers themselves will contribute $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest, and the Commonwealth are committed to make up the balance between that and the rate at which the money is raised. While it is essential to carry on works with loan funds, particularly in regard to soldier settlement, the utmost care will have to be exercised when raising loan funds. I do not know what price the Treasurer expects to pay for the money he proposes to raise but, looking at the market in Australia and in England, I believe he will have to borrow in Great Britain, and it seems that at least 6 per cent. will have to be paid for loans required in the immediate future. That being so, expenditure on public works should be reduced to the lowest minimum. If railways or other public works are carried out and are saddled with a higher rate of interest, their earning capacity in the future will be seriously affected. However, this can be considered when we are dealing with the items. I support the Bill, reserving to myself the right to point out where reductions might be made in the Loan Estimates.

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin) [8.28]: My sympathy goes out to the Treasurer. The time is coming, and coming rapidly, when we shall not be able to go on as we are going. It is all very well to bring down Loan Estimates totalling £3,339,000, most of which is for advances for land settlement. We are rapidly approaching the time when we shall have to ask where we are going to find the interest to pay for this borrowed money. These Estimates clearly show that we are going to make a pretty considerable loss on the interest Bill, and the loss will have to be made up. The Premier, while speaking on another question, said that things were not as bad as they looked. It is to be hoped they are not. I warn the Premier not to think he has anything up his sleeve in the way of book-keeping, for the same conditions applied—

The Premier: I do not say that we have.

Mr. GARDINER: No. But the same con-

ditions applied last year with regard to book-keeping as apply this year. The outlook is disquieting. If we take the five months of the present year and compare them with the corresponding five months of last year, we find that the revenue has increased by £133,000 during that time. But we are £147,000 to the bad as compared with the same relative position last year. Adding those two items together, we find that for the first five months of this year we are practically £230,000 worse off than last year.

The Premier: Oh no!

Mr. GARDINER: Oh yes! It is a simple matter to add the two amounts together, and to arrive at that result. It does not require an actuary to do that. The Government had a pretty good windfall last month in the shape of £33,000 probate duty; otherwise the position would have shown worse. I am not saying this in any spirit of carping criticism, but as a warning. During the next seven months there are at least four in which the Treasurer has to face a deficit of over £100,000 per month. The probabilities are that there will be five months in which he will have to face an actual deficit. As against that, he has December and June to pull him through; and he can take my word for it that, notwithstanding any outlook he may have, he is going to experience the greatest difficulty in finishing his financial year less than £300,000 to the bad. When, on top of that, we contemplate the interest on this Loan Bill, surely it is time that the State took a look at herself in regard to its finances. But the question seems of no interest at all to the people of this State. One might just as well talk to the empty air as try to tell the people of this country that the present condition of financial affairs cannot go on indefinitely. We are told that the position is going to be rectified by an increased population. It is one of the most absurd arguments I have ever heard. If we get more population, the effect is to be felt through the Customs. But this State has lost control of its Customs. Consequently, if we do succeed in attracting additional population, we can make them contribute only by direct taxation. And we have said that we are not going to have direct taxation. We were told that increased production was going to pull us through. We were told that there was going to be infinitely greater railway revenue, and that things were to be balanced in that way. But I do not know anything more disquieting than to look at the earnings of our railways. During the last five months the railway revenue has increased by about £64,000, and it has taken about £104,000 to earn that increased revenue. How are we going to get square by such means? The leader of the Opposition said the other night, "What is the good of talking of finance in this Chamber to empty benches, and to people who do not want to know, and who would not care if they did know?" That was a very wise question. I ask now, how long can we go on travelling to the bad at the rate of

£800,000 or £900,000 a year? How long can we go on doing it? If it cannot go on, how are we going to rectify it? No taxation; no economy; increased expenditure everywhere. To-day the Government, by way of justifying the railway position, make out that the increased wages under arbitration awards are going to cost a great deal more than men who have gone into the figures say they will cost. The Treasurer must come down to earth. He must tell us how the position is to be rectified. I do not envy him his job. So far as I am concerned, I will give him every assistance. But whether he likes it or not, he must face the position directly. At present he is not facing it, but playing with it. As long as one can come into this House and promise anything and everything, one is going to be intensely popular. But the day is coming when some man will be crucified for the hallelujahs of to-day. And that day is not far off. Money is going to cost six per cent. No man can deny that. And if this State's finances are to be kept sound, any money it borrows will have to be invested in something that will return six per cent., and not in something that will return three per cent. The Treasurer has my sympathy. His funeral might have been mine if I had not had enough sense to get out. But it will be somebody's funeral, and when it comes to the funeral the people of this State will say, "We could have stopped this thing if only we had had the courage to insist that our legislators should have some courage." All the influence outside Parliament is to induce members to ask for things that they have no right to ask for in this House, to induce members to make themselves popular in their constituencies by asking for works that they themselves know will prove utterly unpayable. The Treasurer may, in his reply, tell us the brighter aspect of things. It is up to the Treasurer to tell us, so that we who take an interest in the financial position of the State, we who honestly believe that there is serious trouble ahead, shall be enabled to help him towards the realisation of that which is better than it looks on paper.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell--Northam—in reply) [8.40]: The last speaker said that we shall have to face the situation. The situation is being faced just as well as it can be faced. The hon. member knows, and every member of the House knows, that for the past five months we have had strike upon strike paralysing trade. Earlier in the financial year there was a strike lasting some weeks which caused considerable loss of revenue to the railways and to the goldfields water supply. I told the House to-day that the deficit for the first five months of last year was £572,580. I also said that this year we were £146,909 worse off than for the corresponding months of last year. But the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) is wrong in supposing that the £133,000 additional revenue to which I referred is clear revenue. It was additional revenue, due

largely to increased railway earnings. The hon. gentleman pointed out that the expenditure incurred in order to earn that extra revenue was considerable. But if we spend £100,000 to earn £110,000, we are £10,000 better off. The increase of £146,909 for the five months of this year is due to expenditure on account of the influenza outbreak £43,000, relief at Kalgoorlie £7,000, shortage of transfer from State trading concerns to credit of revenue £28,000, extra expenditure on rabbit extermination £4,700, and expenditure on butter and bacon factories £6,500, totalling £87,200. Further we have set aside this year timber revenue amounting to £16,675, not one penny of which appears on the Estimates. The loss of railway profits during these first five months, due to strikes and other troubles, we estimate at £40,000. In addition, we have had to pay £26,000 additional interest during the past five months. In introducing the Loan Estimates I pointed out that a very small proportion of the interest on this proposed loan would be debited to public works. I drew attention to the amount that would be spent in the absolute certainty of interest not being charged to revenue. The hon. member knows, because he arranged this soldiers' loan himself. We guarantee the loss of interest on this account. Under the arrangement made by the Treasury we should have to lose £125,000 on every million. This £2,200,000 is money that can be spent here with the certainty that no portion of the interest will be charged against revenue.

Hon. P. Collier: That is, if the settlers are able to meet their interest charges.

The PREMIER: Of course. The Treasury made the arrangement itself. We are not likely to lose very much on this sum. However, I suppose the House will prefer to discuss the question on the Estimates rather than on the Loan Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin called attention to the state of the House; bells rung and a quorum formed.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1919-20.

In Committee of Supply.

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

Vote—Departmental, £28,430—agreed to.

Vote—Railways and Tramways, £261,034.

Item, Busselton-Margaret River area, £7,500.

Mr. PICKERING: In view of the resolution of last session, affirming the building of the railway, I think an amount should have been provided for that purpose.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The approximate estimate of the cost of the railway is £79,000. It is proposed to spend during the present year on clearing and earthworks, £7,500.

Hon. P. Collier: A pretty generous amount.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think it is generous, but I want to inform the hon. member representing the district that it will be as much as we can do, before the approach of winter, to expend that amount. Once the winter is on us it would be absurd to attempt works of any magnitude in a district with so heavy a rainfall.

Item, Surveys and new lines, £3,300:

Mr. HARRISON: Where is this amount to be expended? The survey of the Yorkkrakine-North Baandee railway should be taken in hand at an early date. In the Lake Brown district there is a large area suitable for soldier settlement and, seeing that there are in Perth 1,100 returned soldiers awaiting employment, I do not think the Government could do better than get this survey taken in hand at once.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have several surveys in hand. This amount will enable us to deal with some uncompleted surveys. I have not been able to put on a special item for the survey referred to by the hon. member, because the urgency of other lines previously authorised has given those lines precedence. The line has not been lost sight of and if, with the limited number of surveyors we have, there should be an opportunity of putting them on to do the work, it is intended to make a flying survey of the line. I think the surveyors are starting on the Beneubbin line, working towards Merredin. The survey party will probably be there within the next week or 10 days. It is intended to carry that survey through, but the exact terminus has not yet been settled. It is not yet decided whether the Kondinin-Merredin line should be continued to Merredin, or whether it should also join up at Beneubbin.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Bruce Boek.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. One of the reasons why the Kondinin line was not pushed on with was owing to the great quantity of land which was said to be wodgil country.

Mr. Harrison: But it is not so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Inquiries are being made to see whether that is so or not. I am of opinion that when the Kondinin line is carried on to junction with Beneubbin, the Kondinin-Merredin line should also junction at Beneubbin. That can only be decided when we have the full facts before us.

Mr. Harrison: I do not see that what the Minister has said will relieve the position at all.

Item—Wyalcatchem-Mt. Marshall extension to Dowerin-Merredin, £10,000:

Hon. P. COLLIER: With regard to the Wyalcatchem-Mt. Marshall extension to Dowerin-Merredin, the Minister has said that it was intended to make a survey from Beneubbin to Merredin. I take it that the survey is not yet completed.

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no authority to link that line up yet.

The Premier: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Therefore, the item of £10,000 for the construction of the line cannot be spent this financial year. No Bill has been passed for the construction of the line, and according to the Minister no decision has been arrived at as to the survey.

The Premier: That is in regard to the other line.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Wyalcatchem-Mt. Marshall extension has not been authorised so that it may link up with the Dowerin-Merredin line.

The Premier: No.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Before this sum is expended it will be necessary to bring in a Bill to authorise the construction of the line.

The PREMIER: This opens up a large area of country which is surveyed already for settlement.

Hon. P. Collier: The settlers are marooned out there now.

The PREMIER: A Bill must be brought down for the extension of the line, and I will do this to-morrow. We cannot bring in a Bill to link up the whole of the gap until the surveys are completed, but I will bring in a Bill for a short extension.

Hon. T. Walker: I shall oppose it unless you first start the Esperance Northwards line.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I should like to move for this amount to be deleted because it is not usual to have amounts like this set down before the construction of the line is authorised.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The survey has been authorised for 45 miles for some years from Mt. Marshall to Newcarrie, but we have not been able to complete the survey yet.

Hon. T. Walker: That will join the other route.

Item, Tramways, Perth electric, £46,900:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I should like some explanation with regard to this item.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The expenditure is made up of works in hand £27,000, and proposed works £13,450. The principal expenditure regarding work in hand is on the construction of 10 new cars which will cost £12,800, owing to the increased cost of material. The additions to the car barn and repair shops amount to £11,571. Land resumption in connection with the car barn will cost £1,500, and repairs to sheds, etc., will cost £2,600. The proposed new works

include a change room, etc., £2,600 and duplication of the track between Bagot-road and the Subiaco terminus £5,000. The Subiaco Council are remaking that road at present, and if we go on with the work there now it will save all the cost of pulling up the road and remaking it ourselves. The duplication of the track from the Weld Club terminus to the ferry is also provided for. This will mean that the trams can be run from Barrack-street down to the foreshore and back again on another line, instead of our continuing the present objectionable shunting methods. This will cost £3,500. We are putting in glass fronts and making other alterations to the cars in accordance with the order of the court, and are also altering what is known as the dog-boxes by taking out the partitions. This will account for £1,800.

Item, Electric power station, East Perth, £35,000:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There appears to be no provision here for duplication at the power station, which in my opinion is very necessary.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is in the Loan Bill, there being a sum of £101,000 provided for. This amount on the Loan Estimates will not take into account any duplication. What is provided here is a sum for the provision of additional material in order to provide for extensions. We have a number of big works coming on in the future which will require current, and we have to provide material with which to carry on the numerous works at present in operation. We have also to provide for new connections and equipment for new business such as the Australian steel works, which will take a large amount of current, and the Western Australian cement works and other sundry works which make up a total of £7,000. The grand total is £39,662. The management at the power station keeps records, as is done in other power stations, and from the last return received it appears that the operating costs of the power station at East Perth are practically the same as the operating costs of a similar station in England, the figures being .50 in the case of the English establishment and .506 in the case of the West Australian establishment. This does not take into account overhead charges. Although on the balance-sheet last year we show a loss of something like £5,000, as a matter of fact from the Treasury point of view there is a considerable profit. The figures shown do not really credit the power house with the actual cash received for sales of current, and do not take into account the expenditure which has fallen upon the Treasury, due to the fact that all Government departments are obtaining current that previously was costing a considerable amount. The tramways, for instance, previously cost us considerably over 1d. per unit for the generation of current but this is now costing .85 of a penny. That is not taken into account in the Treasury figures. All Government departments which were paying up to 2½d. per unit are now getting their current

at 1½d. There is an amount of between £9,000 and £10,000 saved to the Treasury by means of the cheaper current which is now being brought to the departments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have a good man in charge.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There is no question that we are more fortunate in that respect than many other institutions in the State. We have a man who is capable of taking on great responsibility, and I think he will rise to the occasion as he has done in other directions. As a matter of fact the power station is actually showing a profit of something like £6,000 per annum. There is an antiquation fund provided in connection with the power station which is tantamount to a sinking fund, so that in the long run the power station will be cleared of debt and will represent a valuable asset.

Mr. Harrison: A live asset.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. There have been so many misunderstandings with regard to the power station that I should like to extend an invitation to members to spend an hour some day or evening at the power station, so that they may see what a fine asset we have there. It is one of the show places in the State. When hon. members are told that last year the output was over 13½ million units and it is estimated that the output this year will be 20 million units, and that the operations are being carried on in a very simple manner with only five men on a shift, they will realise what a fine institution this is. Before the establishment of this power house we had 21 power houses in the metropolitan area providing not more than 50 per cent. of the current that is now being provided at East Perth. Everything is complete and up to date. The best evidence of that is that only one power house in Great Britain last year produced current at less cost than we did. That was due to the fact that their capacity was greater than ours, being 22 million units against our 13½ millions. When we get up to a reasonable load factor our cost will be below the .5 per unit.

Mr. Harrison: If it can be produced at so low a rate, why are the city council charges so high?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The question of what is paid to the city council for current and what they charge to the public is an important matter, and all I can say is that one of the first operations of the commission to be appointed under the Price-fixing Bill should be to inquire into the action of the city council in imposing the charge they do for current. My opinion is that they are the greatest profiteers in Perth. That, however is by the way. All I want to say is that from the point of view of the provision of cheap current, there is no place in the southern hemisphere that can compare with the power house at East Perth. I am glad to be able to state that new industries are likely to spring up as a result of the establishment of this power house. Already steel works are about to be built at West Guildford, and other works are in con-

temptation, the supply of cheap current having made this possible. That brings me to the question of the refining of base metals. The problem may be solved by the provision of cheap current. It is seen, therefore, that one of the best assets we have in the State from the point of view of the establishment of industries is the power house at East Perth.

Mr. Willecock: What is its capacity?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Approaching 24 million units. I do not want to mislead hon. members. We cannot run this power house constantly up to that maximum load. We must have a stand-by unit. In 1921 with the present plant and the present outlook for consumption, it would be impossible to run the place without an additional unit. We have, therefore, made provision in the Loan Bill for £100,000 to secure the new unit. The plant only is required. The foundations are already in, both for the boilers and the plant. In this regard, after having made inquiries, Mr. Taylor, the manager, is satisfied that we can produce a better type of boiler and that we can use waste coal from Collie. That, however, will not be done until the winter of 1921, when we hope to have provided the additional unit as a stand-by. I repeat that the power house at East Perth is not only the show place of Perth but it is a magnificent asset for the State, and I suggest that hon. members take an early opportunity of seeing it for themselves. When we established the station we had in view the possibility of the electrification of the railway system. To-day that is being done all over the world. It is recognised that for the suburban traffic, electric railways are the most suitable, both from the point of view of economy and cleanliness, and I am hoping later that we may be able to induce the Treasurer to consider the desirability of electrifying the system, if possible, from Fremantle to Northam.

Mr. FOLEY: There are one or two matters that I would like an explanation about from the Minister who controls the electric power station. I have endeavoured at various times to get information from other quarters but have not succeeded. The Minister says that steel works are being established at Guildford because of the cheap current which is available. We all desire to see industries established in our midst, but we were led to believe when the power house was mooted that we were going to revolutionise the price of current and that we would almost compel many of the commodities which we use to be made in the State. I am glad to hear the Minister say that industries are being established at West Guildford, and at other places, but I cannot understand why it is that those who desire to start new industries within the metropolitan boundaries are prevented from doing so. They make application to the city council for current and they find that the price asked is so prohibitive that it practically precludes them from beginning operations. I have an instance in mind. It was

desired recently to establish an industry at Belmont, but the price the people concerned were to be charged for current was such that they resolved on going in for producer gas instead. I would very much like to know what the arrangement is between the Government and the city council which compels the latter to make the charge for current prohibitive, whereas outside the city boundaries it is possible to get it at such a rate that industries have no difficulty in becoming established. With regard to the question of profiteering, to which reference was made by the Minister—

The CHAIRMAN: There can be no discussion on that question.

Mr. FOLEY: I was going to reply to what the Minister said.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow it to continue.

Mr. FOLEY: Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, you are anticipating what I was going to say. What I desired to remark was that the price charged by the Government has had a prohibitive effect, and I would like the Minister to explain why that charge obtains within the city boundaries. With regard to the electrification of the railways, I had never seen the electric railway system until recently when I was in Melbourne. There is no doubt that while the trains do not run as quickly on the suburban lines, the system is an improvement in many ways. For instance, it is possible to work the train from either end, which is an advantage.

The Minister for Mines: And they can run the whole 24 hours.

Mr. FOLEY: If, however, the Government propose to consider the question of electrifying the suburban railways I hope they will make inquiries about the most modern system, because in Victoria they have found many defects in the system which is in vogue there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am pleased to hear the Minister intends to increase the plant at the East Perth power house. It is necessary that that should be done. There is only one spare engine now and if anything went wrong with that in all probability serious difficulty would arise. The municipality of Fremantle is in the same position as Perth with regard to current, but the difference in the price of current is due to the fact that the city of Perth had to close down their own works and they have had to bear the loss of that. Moreover, they have to supply meters to every house.

Mr. Foley: They charge rent for them.

The CHAIRMAN: Hon. members are getting a bit off the track.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am endeavouring to show that there has not been the profiteering that the Minister spoke about.

The CHAIRMAN: We must keep to the four corners of the vote.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We pay .85 for current. We spent £40,000 on a station and we had to sacrifice the plant there. We distribute current all over the place, and it is

impossible for us to supply a small quantity of current at anything less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. We supply the Naval Base at that price, and it cost us £1,200 to do it. There are applications in now for current which we are asked to supply at the same rate that the Government are supplying current for at West Guildford, but it is an impossibility.

Mr. Foley: I would like to ask the Minister whether there has been any amendment of the agreement entered into between the city council and the Government.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Perth city council can charge as low as they like. The Government are entering unfairly into competition, and by their methods they are inducing people to establish industries outside the metropolitan area because there they can get current at a cheaper rate.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The principal users of current from the power house are the Perth city council 4,500,000 units, Perth tramways 3,827,000 units, Fremantle tramways 2,849,000 units, Peerless flour mills, 1,046,000 units, Midland shops 631,000, Midland Junction municipality 143,000 units. The hon. member spoke of unfair competition. We are concerned about making the power house a paying proposition. It belongs to the people and they are entitled to see that it is operated on business lines. It pays us magnificently to supply the Peerless mills with 1,046,000 units at .9d. because it gives an even load from Saturday night till Sunday night. When the loads are running up and down the works do not pay. So long as the price is fixed by the Perth city council above what they pay to the Government, they must show a profit. It does not matter whether they use 1,000,000 or 10,000,000 units.

Mr. Foley: There is an incentive not to use it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so, because it means more work and supervision to use a greater quantity.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is an incentive to use it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not at all. The ratepayers will not permit the city council to make huge profits on the turnover. The power house was constructed in the interests of the city council and the Government. It pays us magnificently to have a power house for our joint needs and we are producing the power cheaper than it can be produced in any power house in Great Britain except one. It is costing us about $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per unit to generate the current. While the Peerless mills get current at .9d. per unit, it pays magnificently to supply at that figure. The West Perth mill could not get current from the city council at a sufficiently reasonable figure and had to put in a huge gas plant. Yet we are producing current cheaper practically than anywhere else in the world.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Perth council could not supply it at a loss.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Certainly not. When the arrangement was made we were told that the cost of reticulation from the sub-stations would not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per unit within the 5-mile radius and that the cost of transformers, etc., would cost another $\frac{1}{4}$ d., and we left a fair margin between the .75d. cost and $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. which the Government are paying. All the capital cost of the power house falls on the Government, but the city council made nearly £30,000 profit last year. After charging all the expenses of manufacture, distribution, and administration, including loan interest, there remained a profit of £31,260 in the electricity and gas department of the city council. After all there might be method in their madness. Their method is to avoid having to borrow money for capital expenditure, but it is retarding our output.

Hon. P. Collier: They are not expending their profit on capital expenditure.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is not fair.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are not doing that at Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, the Fremantle authorities have been absolutely fair. Wherever it was possible to meet us and assist us to extend the use of the current, they have done it, but not so the city council. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) is correct in his statement that many industries have been forced outside the 5-mile area because two parties have been getting a cut out of the cherry. I do not intend to fight the issue. It is a matter for the city council and the ratepayers to settle amongst themselves. If due consideration were given to the undertaking, consumers should not be asked to carry unfairly the capital cost of an obsolete station, which should be charged against a loan account. This would assist industries and assist us to turn out current at a cheaper rate than at present. On every one of the $4\frac{1}{2}$ million units supplied to the city council last year, we showed a loss. We made a profit as the member for North-East Fremantle has pointed out, but if we could increase the output, we could generate the current far more cheaply.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Harbours and Rivers, £119,250.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There is no item for the Geraldton harbour, unless some provision is made under the general heading of improvements to harbours and rivers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no provision this year for the Geraldton harbour works. The plant is required at Bunbury and it would be useless to shift it from that port until we have finished the scheme. The Geraldton harbour scheme will take seven years to complete.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Minister's statement is not satisfactory to the people of Geraldton. We were told that, immediately certain work had been done at Bunbury, the

plant would be transferred to Geraldton. If the work at one harbour is to be completed before any other port receives consideration, the policy is a bad one and unjust to the other places.

The Minister for Mines: There is nothing provided for Albany.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Albany has a good natural harbour and does not require much expenditure. There seems to be a set against Geraldton. The place has been libelled. It was stated that wheat ships could not enter the Geraldton harbour although, when shipping was plentiful, ships used to take away 50,000 or 60,000 bags of wheat and they could do so still. Do the Government intend to expend all the money available for harbour improvements at Bunbury and Fremantle, and neglect Geraldton? For Bunbury £47,000 is provided and a similar amount for Fremantle and nothing at all for Geraldton.

The Minister for Mines: The Minister is reserving it until the election comes along.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I prefer that it should be done now. The few votes of the workmen would not influence me. The Government do not seem to have any policy. A railway is required in the district and we have to pay for it. Freezing works are wanted and we are subscribing the capital for them.

Hon. P. Collier: You are showing too much independence.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Do the Government intend that we shall provide harbour accommodation also? This principle of self-help can be carried too far. It is time the Government announced a definite policy regarding harbour improvements at Geraldton. The member for Greenough this afternoon said that 30,000 or 40,000 tons of lead would be exported from Geraldton during the next year or two. But if the facilities at Geraldton are not improved, that lead must either go by rail to Fremantle or else be shipped at Geraldton in unsuitable vessels. It has to be remembered, too, that one cannot pick and choose as regards shipping now in the same way as before the war.

The Premier: But it is no use spending a few pounds at Geraldton. The work will require a considerable sum.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is time something was decided.

The Premier: I promise you that your port will not be neglected.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I do not doubt the Premier's intentions, but when will they be carried into effect? Four or five years ago a promise was given that as soon as certain work at Bunbury had been completed the plant would be removed to Geraldton. When will the plant reach Geraldton?

The Minister for Works: There is certain work still to be done at this end.

Mr. WILLCOCK: All the money spent on harbour improvements by the Government during the past five or six years has been spent on two ports only. Let the Govern-

ment make some definite announcement as to what is going to be done for Geraldton, and let them stick to it. I am not growling about the £47,000 to be spent at Fremantle and the £47,000 to be spent at Bunbury, though it is a curious coincidence that each port should receive exactly the same amount. But let us know when something is going to be done for the outports. Geraldton may be in a position to export coal in the next two or three years, and shipping facilities should be provided.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: As regards Geraldton harbour, a definite promise was made by the Government in 1915, and certain work was commenced and the intention was that it should be continued.

The Minister for Mines: But the conditions were not agreed to; a protest came from Geraldton.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The protest came from only one man, and he had a friend who had some land in another part of the town and wanted to sell it. The schedule was agreed to by the Geraldton people generally and by the local chamber of commerce, and it was approved by the Engineer-in-Chief. That officer said that the work could proceed slowly at Geraldton until the Bunbury harbour works were completed. Geraldton now has only one berth which can be used by an overseas ship. Something should be done for Geraldton this year, seeing that the Bunbury breakwater is now completed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I must admit that the member for Geraldton has some cause for complaint. However, the matter of harbour improvements at Geraldton has not been lost sight of. When these Loan Estimates were prepared, we found that we simply had not the money for Geraldton. Bunbury is about the sixth port in Australia, and we have to arrange for a greater depth of water there, as otherwise the port would not be able to obtain shipping at all under present conditions. The Bunbury wharf is now being extended some 700 feet and is being widened by 90 feet; and it may be necessary to extend the mole a further 100 feet or 150 feet. So far, the mole has proved a complete success. With the extension in view, I was not inclined to favour any proposal necessitating the shifting of the plant required to extend the mole. Provision for the Geraldton harbour will be on next year's Estimates, and I shall be very pleased to make a start with the work. The Geraldton people have been very patient in regard not only to the harbour, but to the water supply also. The Government will endeavour on next year's Estimates to make an arrangement to put forward something practicable. Nothing can be done this year. There has been no avoidable delay in regard to the water supply. A good many thousands of pounds have been wasted on the old scheme, and we are not going to spend money on another scheme until convinced that it will be satisfactory. The whole of

the hon. member's speech was in favour of spending money in the district, if only to afford employment.

Mr. Willcock: I deny that.

Mr. ANGELO: I endorse the protest of the member for Geraldton. There seems to be a total absence of money for harbours north of Fremantle. When the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) held a Cabinet portfolio he visited Carnarvon and, on being shown the extent of the silting up in the harbour, promised to have something done. Every time the State boats call there with a full cargo, they get stuck in consequence of the silting. Cabinet has dispensed with the North-West representative, and as a result we are neglected.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is £4,000 on the Estimates for Carnarvon improvements.

Mr. ANGELO: That is only for replacing piles. What is required is the dredging of the harbour. I have not previously pressed the point, because I understood the Government were short of money; but when we see many thousands of pounds provided for Bunbury and for Fremantle, it is time a claim was made on behalf of Carnarvon.

Vote put and passed.

Vote — Water supply and sewerage, £78,300:

Mr. WILLCOCK: Will the Minister give us an indication of what is being done in regard to Geraldton water supply? Has he any later reports? I understand the engineer has some new idea. The Minister did not tell us of that. The department are going on with the experimental work, which has been in hand for two or three months, yet we have had no report as to the prospects.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Geraldton people have suffered from no water supply, from a bad water supply and from an expected water supply. They have suffered in patience. Great consideration is due to Geraldton. The Buller River scheme failed. The engineer, Mr. O'Brien, is not going to give a decision on the water supply until he is satisfied. His men have been searching for a site for a weir for some time past. Boring is now going on with a view to finding a sound foundation. There are no reports of any sort, nor can there be for a little time. Only the other day I gave the engineer £300 with which to carry on a little more boring. To show that we have some faith in the scheme, a sum of £15,000 is included on the Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Development of goldfields and mineral resources, £20,000—agreed to.

Vote — Development of agriculture, £2,459,340:

Item, Abattoirs, cold storage, freezing, chilling, and canning works, Wyndham; refrigerating works, export depot, grain sheds and sale yards, £81,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: What are these grain sheds; are they for the storage of grain?

The Premier: There is only a small amount included in this for grain sheds. I do not know exactly where they are.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The wheat sheds are not included in this. They have been completed.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Roads and bridges, public buildings, £45,760; Other undertakings, £171,300; Land Improvement Loan Fund, £60,726—agreed to.

This completed the Loan Estimates for the year.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILL—DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message received from the Council notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Assembly.

BILLS (3) RETURNED.

- 1, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.
- 2, Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Loan Act Amendment.
- 3, Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation.

Returned without amendment.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Council's Message.

Message received from the Council notifying that it insisted upon its amendment No. 8 and disagreed to the Assembly's modification of amendment No. 10.

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council and read a first time.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [10.18] in moving the second reading said: This is the usual Bill that we have presented to us each session. The first closure refers to a block of land opposite the Narrogin railway station. It is really not part of the street. It is a piece of land which was not surveyed but was included in the street. Hon. members will

recollect that it is really a block adjacent to the hotel. It is a vacant block. For a long time it was used as a camping ground, but now it has been planted with trees and beautified, and the Narrogin council desire to turn it into a recreation ground. I have the plan here which will show hon. members that it really is a block of land which is not portion of the street.

Hon. P. Collier: What is proposed to do with it?

The PREMIER: It is proposed to make it into a park. It is necessary that this should be done, and it is quite unnecessary as a road. It never was a road, but was only used as a cattle camp. The second closure of roads is also in connection with a street at Narrogin. There are several blocks of land used for various purposes, for a racecourse, for a show ground, and for a polo ground. The local authorities are anxious to be permitted to use the one block of land for all purposes. To do this it is necessary to enclose part of a street which really runs to a dead end and is not used by anyone. The council have no objection. I have visited the spot and see no objection myself. It would be a distinct advantage to have this road closed. In these small towns it is an advantage to have one ground which will be available for all purposes, and that is as a rule as much as the local people can afford to look after. The land that is to be utilised in connection with this reserve was bought at a cost of £20 an acre. It will thus be seen what importance the people of Narrogin set upon the closure of this street and the amalgamation of these grounds into one. Another road closure is also at Narrogin. By some mischance the butter factory was erected on part of the street adjacent to the railway line. I have visited the spot, and can see no objection to the closing of this portion of the street.

Hon. P. Collier: Are all these three questions included in this Bill?

The PREMIER: There are four altogether. The particular portion of the street, which it is desired to enclose, is a small portion adjoining the railway line. The deviation is arranged for over a common and there will be no compensation to pay for the land. It can make no difference to anyone, and the road is not in use now. This alteration can be agreed to by the House without any danger, and it will not interfere with anybody. It is necessary that the butter factory should be continued, but unfortunately a portion of the building was erected on the road. The reserve is a piece of valuable land, and is a great convenience to the people who come to the town and forms a resting place for them. The next reserve is connected with the Presbyterian Church at Peppermint Grove. The Presbyterian Church there have a block of land which extends along both sides of the right-of-way. It was put in when the subdivision was made by the

people who subdivided the land. The Presbyterian College is erected on this block. The right-of-way proposed to be closed is one which cuts into two portions the land owned by the Presbyterian Church, on one of which the college stands. This small bit of right-of-way can only be used by the people who own this land.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who owns the other side?

The PREMIER: The land is owned on both sides by the Presbyterian Church. The property extends from View-street to Forrest street, and the right-of-way extends from View-street to the Perth-Fremantle road. The Presbyterian Church owns the whole of the frontage of this subdivision, and the people who own land extending down to the Perth-Fremantle road will not be inconvenienced by the closing of this end of the right-of-way. It is desirable for college purposes that this should be done. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—PRICES REGULATION.

Council's requested amendments.

Schedule of amendments requested by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 3.—Add a subclause, as follows:—“(8.) In case of illness or other incapacity, or absence of a Commissioner, the Governor may appoint some person to be deputy Commissioner during such illness, incapacity, or absence. Every person so appointed shall, until his appointment is terminated by notice in the “Gazette,” have all the powers and perform all the functions and duties of a Commissioner, and be deemed for the purposes of this Act to be a Commissioner.”

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed, the Council's amendment made.

No. 2. Clause 7.—Add a subclause as follows:—“(4.) Each assessor shall receive such fees and allowances for his services as may be prescribed.”

The ATTORNEY GENERAL. This deals with the appointment of assessors and re-

muneration. It is a machinery clause and there can be no objection to it. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 3. Clause 11, Subclause (2).—After the word "Act," in line 9 of the subclause, insert the following:—"Provided that this part of the Act shall not operate where Section 16 of this Act has been complied with."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This amendment is more important. While one can guess what another place intended by carrying this amendment it is desirable to make it clear. I, therefore, move—

That the amendment be made, with the following modification:—"Strike out all the words in the amendment after the words "provided that this" and insert the following in lieu thereof:—"subsection shall not operate where section sixteen of this Act has been complied with, and the person on whose behalf or on whose place of business any foodstuffs or necessary commodities have been sold or offered for sale contrary to the provisions of this Act has, prior to such sale or offer for sale, given specific instructions in writing to the person who has sold or offered for sale any such foodstuffs or necessary commodities contrary to the provisions of this Act not to sell or offer for sale the same or any part thereof at a greater price than the maximum price fixed by this Act."

The amendment will make the intention of the Legislative Council clear. It will be noted that another place uses these words, "This part of the Act." The Act is not divided into parts. Another place means "Subsection" and I have adopted that word. Clause 16 was to the effect that—

Every wholesale and retail dealer in foodstuffs or necessary commodities shall conspicuously exhibit, and at all times keep exhibited on his business premises, a list of the foodstuffs and necessary commodities in which he deals, and the maximum prices and the conditions of sale, as determined from time to time under this Act.

It is hardly sufficient if we are seeking to exempt the employer from the operation of Subclause 2 of Clause 11. The clause has two objects. First of all Subclause 1 which was left alone, makes it an offence for any person to sell foodstuffs or necessary commodities at a greater price than the maximum price. That is really the gist of Subclause 1, and the gist of Subclause 2 is that it shall not be a defence for any employer to say that he gave instructions to his employee not to sell above the maximum price. To carry that out literally might impose a serious injustice on the vendor of goods who is quite innocent. It might place him in the hands of an employee who perhaps was not very loyal as regards the selling of goods above the maximum price and the employer

would have no defence. He could not turn round and say, "I told you not to do it." In common fairness some amendment is necessary. While it is easy of course for a man to say, "My employee sold contrary to my instructions," it is merely a matter of whose word should be taken. That should not be left open. Where an employer has, before the sale of goods, given notice in writing, to an employee not to sell above the price fixed by the Act, in that case it is only fair and reasonable protection to give to the vendor. The amendment I think is an ample safeguard and will tend to prevent any possible injustice which an innocent employer might be unfortunate enough to suffer through the negligence or the disloyalty of an employee.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know whether this is quite what the other place intended, but I imagine they had in mind the possibility of a disloyal employee deliberately charging a price above the maximum fixed under the Act, so that perhaps the employer might become liable and be prosecuted. In order to safeguard the employer against such a possibility it seems to me that what the members of another place desired will be met by this amendment.

The Attorney General: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If that is the case I agree with the amendment. It is an improvement upon the one which they sent to us.

Question put and passed, the Council's amendment made with a modification.

No. 4, Clause 11, Subclause (2).—Add at the end of the subclause the following:—"Provided that an employee by whom the foodstuffs or necessary commodities are sold or offered for sale as aforesaid shall also be guilty of an offence against this Act."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is not at all necessary, but it will not alter the principle. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 5, Clause 11, Subclause (3).—After the word "defendant," in line 7, insert "unless the contrary be proved."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is a reasonable amendment. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 6, Clause 15.—Insert the following proviso at the end of the clause:—"Provided always that where any condition, stipulation, or agreement as aforesaid, is approved in writing by the Commissioners, then the same shall be lawful, and shall not be deemed to be in restraint of trade nor be an offence under this Act."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This will make the clause a little fairer. Certain merchants have catch lines. Perhaps proprie-

tary medicines might be sold at ridiculously low prices. This would drive the article off the market.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is the best thing that could happen.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am only using proprietary medicines as an illustration. The provision would permit of any agreement approved by the commissioners being lawful. It is only a reasonable amendment. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 7. Clause 19—Insert at the end: "Penalty one hundred pounds or twelve months imprisonment";

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is a penalty for breach of declaration of secrecy. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is a tremendously heavy penalty.

The Attorney General: It is the maximum.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but the court is often influenced by the penalty provided in an Act of Parliament. One judge said that the Legislature evidently regarded a certain offence very seriously as a heavy penalty was provided, so he thought a substantial penalty must be inflicted. The only blot on the Bill is that the whole of the sittings of the commission will not be open to the public. Rather than have secrecy, the work of the commissioner should be done in public. It is quite clear from the reports of similar bodies in Victoria and New South Wales that their work is done in public. A week ago we had a fairly lengthy report regarding an application by the Vacuum Oil Company to increase their prices, and the decision of the court was announced so that the people had the information enabling them to judge the profits made by the company and the justification for their application. Under this measure, the public will know nothing about the proceedings until a report is presented to Parliament. Yet, in order to make more sacred the secrecy of the commission, another place requests a very drastic penalty. This is a better Bill than I expected another place to give us. Members of another place are queer specimens of liberalism and extreme conservatism. I do not know what actuated them, but the Bill is a very fair measure. A section of the Council made strenuous efforts to amend the Bill and I noticed that, on almost every division, there was a majority of one. Although the Minister for Education was responsible for the defeat of the Bill some years ago, I believed he argued this Bill very well and, notwithstanding the reinforcement of new blood, the Bill was satisfactorily passed by a majority of one. I do not think it worth while to disagree with this amendment, but the penalty is too high.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 8. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 19, as follows:—Secretary and other officers: "The Governor may appoint a secretary to the commissioners and such other officers to assist in the execution of this Act as may be deemed necessary";

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

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

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 16 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 24—Strike out the word "five" in the proviso and insert "four":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment is consequential on one of the divisions having been knocked out. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2. Clause 34—Strike out the words "or ward," in line five, and insert the following: "Provided also that where a district is divided into wards, and any person has qualifying land in each of several wards, he may select the ward or wards in which he desires to be registered as an elector, but he shall not have a number of votes for any ward exceeding the number proportionate to the value of his qualifying land in such ward, and the aggregate number of votes for any such person shall not exceed four";

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This provision could not be inserted here and I arranged for it to be inserted in another place. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3.—Clause 34, add to the proviso at the end of the clause the following: "subject to the next following section."

No. 4.—Clause 90, Subclause (1), strike out "for four weeks after such delivery."

On motions by the Minister for Works, these amendments were agreed to.

No. 5.—Clause 90, Subclause (2), strike out the words "four weeks" and insert "such time as the election can no longer be questioned";

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Three weeks is the limit within which elections can

be questioned. The Minister has to receive the ballot papers and preserve them until such time as there can no longer be any question raised as to the election. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 6.—Clause 148, strike out "ninety days" and insert "six months."

No. 7.—Clause 150, subclause (1), paragraph (b), insert the word "or" between the words "road" and "over."

No. 8.—Clause 154, Subclause (3), after the word "way," in line five of the subclause, insert "of twelve feet in width or under."

No. 9.—Clause 154, Subclause (9), add at the end of this subclause the following:—"Notice of appeal and of the time and place appointed by the Minister for the hearing shall be given by the appellant to the Board, and the Board shall be entitled to be represented on the hearing of the appeal."

No. 10.—Clause 154, insert a new subclause, to stand as Subclause (10), as follows:—" (10.) The owner of any land subdivided into allotments shall, if so required, by the board, assign a name to the subdivided area, but such name shall be subject to the approval of the board. If the name assigned to an area subdivided into allotments, after the commencement of this Act, is in the opinion of the board misleading, or otherwise objectionable, the board may require the owner to change such name to a name to be approved by the board, and the name shall be changed by the owner accordingly, and the use of the name objected to shall be discontinued: Provided that the Minister may, on appeal reverse or confirm any action of the board under this subsection."

No. 11.—Clause 159, Subclause (15), add the following at the end: "Provided that the board shall observe any order or direction the Minister may think fit to make or give for the prevention of any undue or unavoidable restriction of traffic."

No. 12.—Clause 194, after the word "mining," in line one, insert "or other," and insert the same words after "mining" in the last line but one.

No. 13.—Clause 213, Subclause (1), strike out the words "or appertaining thereto."

No. 14.—Clause 234, strike out the first line and the second line down to and inclusive of the word "shilling," and insert the following:—"a minimum sum of two shillings and sixpence in respect of the general rate, and a minimum of one shilling in respect of the loan rate may be levied on any ratable land."

No. 15.—Clause 269, after the word "board," in line 11 of page 111, insert "and the local authority under the Health Act, 1911."

On motions by the Minister for Works, these amendments were agreed to.

No. 16.—Add a new clause, to stand as Clause 151, as follows:—"151. The Minister for Lands, on the recommendation of the board, may close a road temporarily from traffic and grant permission to the owner of the land adjoining to fence across such road without erecting gates at the board's pleasure, when in the opinion of the board the road should not be permanently closed, but is not required for immediate traffic."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The new clause explains itself, and is a very wise provision. At an earlier stage of the Bill I gave an instance from my own district of a road which was supposed to be closed temporarily, but was later found to be closed permanently. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

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

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

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of three amendments made by Legislative Council in the Bill now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.—Clause 6, add the following words "and is further amended by adding after the word 'destroy,' in the second line, the word 'all'":

The HONORARY MINISTER: After the existing Act had been in operation for twelve months, it was definitely proved to be unworkable for the want of this amendment. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2.—Insert a new clause to stand as No. 2, as follows:—"2. Section two of the Vermin Act, 1913, is hereby amended by the addition of the following words:—"Provided that the power of imposing rates in the other portion of the State under any Act mentioned in the First Schedule to this Act shall be subject to a limitation similar to that contained in the proviso to Subsection (2) of Section 59 of this Act."

The HONORARY MINISTER: This amendment merely extends to landholders outside the South-West Division who erect rabbit-proof fencing the same privilege as is now granted to landowners in the South-

West Division who erect such fencing. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3.—Insert a new clause to stand as No. 8 as follows:—"8. Section 144 of the principal Act is hereby amended by the excision of the words 'the Chief Inspector shall, if so required in writing by the owner of any fence,' and the substitution of the words 'the owner of any fence may by writing under his hand require the Chief Inspector or the board of any district in which the fence is situated to inspect the fence or cause it to be inspected, and the Chief Inspector or board shall'";

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Government's legal advisers consider this amendment necessary, and I bow to their opinion. I move—

That the Council's amendment be agreed to.

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

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

BILL—FRUIT CASES.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott—Nelson) [11.12] in moving the second reading said: I have to point out that Western Australia is the only State which has not enacted a measure of this kind. The Bill will prove beneficial not only to the orchardist, but also to the consumer and the sawmiller. There being no standard size of fruit case in this State, millers are put to the trouble of cutting all sorts of fancy sizes for people who want a different case from that generally used. The regulations under the Commonwealth Commerce Act require that every export case shall contain one bushel, or 40 lbs. In the past, growers have lost a good deal of money through cases being supplied to them that were not in accordance with the Commonwealth regulation. Moreover, as Fruit Cases Acts operate in the Eastern States, our growers have suffered loss, when sending fruit to Eastern States markets, through their fruit having to be re-packed before being offered for sale. The Bill proposes four sizes of case—one bushel, three-quarters of a bushel, half a bushel, and a quarter of a bushel. These should meet all requirements. Exemption is provided in respect of dried, preserved, tinned, and canned fruit; fruit sold by weight, or number, in a quantity at one time of not less than 20 lbs. in weight; fruit sold in baskets, wooden buckets, or punnets; fruit sold in bulk to jam factories; and grapes sold to wineries and

distilleries. The Bill also makes provision for the limited use of secondhand cases. An orchardist situated at some distance from the railway would not dream of using secondhand cases, on account of the danger he would run of introducing disease into his orchard. On the other hand, growers in the immediate vicinity of the metropolitan area could use secondhand cases, under proper safeguards; and I think it is wise to allow them to do so. The measure has been discussed at length by the various conferences of fruitgrowers, who have unanimously decided that such a Bill is required in the interests, not only of the industry, but of the consumers also.

Hon. P. Collier: Is the Bill drawn in accordance with the recommendations of the select committee of another place?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The select committee proposed that the size of the case should be fixed by the Act, and not by regulation as provided in the Bill. It has since been pointed out to the select committee that this would leave us under a serious disadvantage in the event of a change in size being determined upon in the other States—where the size is fixed by regulation—because before we could adopt it we should have to bring in and pass an amending Bill. It is of the utmost importance that the size should be fixed by regulation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—DROVING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott—Nelson) [11.21] in moving the second reading said: The Droving Act was framed to protect owners of stock through whose property travelling stock might be passing or about to pass. Were it not necessary for drovers to notify the owners of property of their projected movements much trouble, inconvenience and even loss might be entailed on those property owners. The giving of notice obviates that. The Act provides for the giving of notice only in the case of stock being moved distances of 40 miles or over; but now that the country is becoming more thickly settled, particularly in the South-West, it is deemed necessary that notice should be given even when stock is being travelled only 20 miles. Provision is made in the Bill that the drover shall have a correct waybill showing particulars of the stock in his charge, so that it can be seen

at a glance that his stock are the stock which he is entitled to be droving and that no other stock are mixed up with them. A further provision makes it permissible to use a registered wool brand in place of the travelling "T." A new clause is inserted by which drovers are required to keep to recognised stock routes and not wander off across a pastoral lease, using pasture to which they are not entitled and incurring the danger of getting the travelling stock mixed up with other stock. The Bill was referred to a select committee of another place and to the Pastoralists' Association, and they concurred in it.

Hon. P. Collier: But the select committee was composed entirely of pastoralists.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The drovers also know all about it, and they have offered no objection. They are not subjected to any hardship under the Bill. It is intended to protect the owners of property against dishonest men. I have known cases of so-called drovers starting out on a journey with a few head of stock and finishing up with quite a respectable mob.

Hon. P. Collier: The owner for whom such a man is droving would get the benefit.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, the owner's stock is sold on owner's account, but the balance is sold on the drover's account. After the close scrutiny to which the Bill has been subjected in another place, hon. members here need have no fear of it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [11.26]: I hesitate to allow a Bill of this importance to go through without having been scanned. Every one of its 15 clauses is an amendment of the principal Act. It is not like a new Bill; to comprehend it one requires to read it in conjunction with the existing Act. Having regard to the composition of the select committee in another place, I am sure the Bill meets with the approval of the pastoralists, but how it affects the drovers I do not know.

The Honorary Minister: It will not hurt them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It must have some bearing on their work. I understand they operate on wages.

Mr. Foley: No, on contract.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Bill must affect them to some extent. I do not know whether they have had an opportunity for considering it. However, there are in another place some who have a knowledge of the drover's life, and if the Bill comes here with their imprimatur upon it I do not know that it is worth while my protesting at this late hour.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [11.29]: The Bill makes it imperative that the property owners shall be notified, even though the cattle are being moved only 20 miles. Seeing that the measure has been to a select committee of

another place, I do not think there is any occasion for us to regard it with suspicion. Most of the drovers work on contract now. Of the hon. members of another place who went into this question two at least are conversant with droving conditions. I should not like to see anything done to hamper the drovers. Most, if not all, of the stock that comes from the North-West comes to the railway centre in my electorate. After reading the report of the select committee I am certain that the Bill contains nothing that will fall harshly upon the drovers. The Bill makes it clearer as to what their rights are, and what the rights of those people are through whose land it passes.

Mr. MONEY (Banbury) [11.31]: I should like to know from the Honorary Minister if there is any limit to the number of stock that may be driven, and as to the distance that stock may be driven. Unless the owner or the manager of the stock actually drives it, the Bill states that it will be necessary to send a delivery note to the Chief Inspector of Stock in Perth.

The Honorary Minister: People can drive as many as they like.

Mr. MONEY: If a person drives, say, 20 sheep a distance of 20 miles, is a delivery note necessary.

The Honorary Minister: Your question is answered by the original Act.

Mr. MONEY: I did not see that the number of sheep was mentioned.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 3.

Mr. MONEY: Is there any limit to the number of stock that may be driven? Does this clause apply to one horse, one head of cattle or one sheep? Is it necessary in the case of small numbers of stock to go through all the formalities laid down in the Bill? If this applies to large mobs of stock only, the Bill should say so.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Strictly speaking, travelling stock means stock taken or driven or about to be taken or driven a certain distance. The provision is only intended to apply to stock which is being taken to grass at a considerable distance away from its usual grazing place.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3-15—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 11.40 p.m.