

# Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 5th December, 1925.

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

## QUESTION—RAILWAYS, STRONACH-DUTTON SYSTEM, ETC.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Works: Can he state when the views of the Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Stileman) on the Stronach-Dutton road-rail system, the Deauville light railway system, or other systems, and the possibility of their application to our far-out pioneer wheat areas, will be available?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: A road-rail traction system requires a substantial road bed to take the traction wheels. The cost will depend upon the local availability of suitable road material, and investigations of the site are essential before comparative estimates of cost with other forms of transport can be put up. The time of the Engineer-in-Chief is very fully occupied at present, but he will make a fuller report as early as possible.

## QUESTION—TIMBER INDUSTRY.

*Safe Working, Housing Accommodation.*

Mr. WILSON (for Miss Holman) asked the Premier: 1, Do the Government intend to introduce this session legislation for the safe working of timber mills and the timber industry generally? 2, Do the Government intend to introduce this session legislation dealing with housing accommodation for employees in the timber industry?

The PREMIER replied: 1, It is regretted that time will not permit of introducing any such legislation this session, but a Bill will be prepared for introduction next session. 2, This is not practicable.

## QUESTION—KENDENUP, PINE PLANTING.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that there is a proposal or suggestion that the Kendenup estate be acquired by an Eastern States company for the purpose of planting pine trees? 2, As this estate has a railway and a main road running through it, will he cause inquiries to be made with a view to purchasing the remaining portion for the purpose of group settlement, as there is plenty of waste land available for pine plantation?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, This matter has already been under consideration at the instance of the member for the district.

## QUESTION—RAILWAYS COMMISSIONER, APPOINTMENT.

Mr. THOMSON (without notice) asked the Premier: As indications show it is the intention of the Government to close the session of Parliament on or about the 18th December, is it proposed to appoint a Railway Commissioner and to give the House an opportunity of discussing and of confirming or rejecting the appointment?

The PREMIER: The question is one of which notice may well be given.

## BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Industries Assistance Act Continuance. Without amendment.
- 2, Vermin Act Amendment. With amendments.

## BILL—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Lands) and read a first time.

**BILL—BRITISH IMPERIAL OIL COMPANY LTD. (PRIVATE.)**

*Adoption of Select Committee's Report.*

On motion by the Minister for Works, ordered: That the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Bill be adopted and the Bill be reprinted accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. Lutey): I have to report that the several provisions of the Standing Orders relating to private Bills have been complied with in respect of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That in view of the favourable report of the select committee, the lateness of the session, and Standing Order 52, relating to private Bills, the second reading be proceeded with forthwith.

Question put and passed.

*Message.*

Message from the Governor received and read notifying that, in accordance with No. 51 of the Joint Standing Orders of Parliament relating to private Bills, having been informed of the purport of the Bill, he gave his consent, as far as His Majesty's interest or the interest of the Government was concerned, to the Legislative Assembly to do therein as they thought fit.

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: I am sorry that it is necessary to proceed with the second reading of the Bill straight away, but, as hon. members are aware, the Standing Orders specify definite times that must elapse between the different stages in connection with private Bills. This makes it necessary to proceed with the measure. Members have the Bill in its reprinted form and the select committee's report before them. The Bill merely provides the right for the company to lay pipes along certain thoroughfares at North Fremantle. It is the intention of the company to import oil in bulk, and they are providing large storage accommodation at North Fremantle. The company are in negotiation with the Government for a long lease of portion of the foreshore at North Fremantle. Oil will be imported in bulk, not only for the use of

shipping. All the tinning and casing will be done in the State, and oil will be transported to the country districts, largely in bulk. The company propose to spend over £60,000 straight away and will employ between 80 and 100 men.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What will they think about your petrol tax?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The company operate elsewhere throughout the world where there is a petrol tax. I have no doubt what their attitude will be in Australia. They propose to do a lot of work inside the State that formerly was done outside the State. They are prepared to undertake the construction of the works immediately. A company showing such enterprise should receive encouragement and the Bill will provide the necessary right to lay pipes along streets. An agreement has been arrived at with the North Fremantle Municipal Council and the company have compounded with the council respecting the rates and taxes, by agreeing to pay £35 a year in lieu of rates that may be levied against them. The company desire to go right ahead with the work, which will be of considerable benefit to the State, and particularly to North Fremantle.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Will the lease with the Government be submitted to Parliament?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. Negotiations are proceeding with the Minister for Lands. I am hoping that he was able to finalise the agreement in Melbourne. He was to confer with the head office of the company there on the few points that remained to be settled. There is some Crown land adjacent to the old abattoirs along the sandhills situated on the neck towards the North Mole along the beach frontage. It is waste country at the present time and contains about six or eight acres, which are to be taken over so that the company may construct large oil tanks there. The works will be nearer to North Fremantle, where the canning and casing will be done. This will mean retaining a considerable amount of money locally. This is no monopoly, because the Anglo-Persian Oil Co. secured the passage of a similar Bill through Parliament some years ago, and have a large storage plant in the vicinity of Monument Hill. They do not do their canning or casing locally. The British Imperial Company are purely British and propose to do all

their work locally. Although I have not been approached, I am informed that another oil company will be preferring a similar request presently, and they propose to bring all their oil here in bulk and can and case it locally. That will mean a similar expenditure, and employment for more men. The Bill provides the right for the company to lay their mains down the streets, which will enable them to supply oil to the boats.

Mr. Sampson: Is the right for a definite period?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No period is set. Every safeguard has been provided. The provisions are really enabling, but everything is subject to the approval of the Government. The company cannot proceed with works or interfere with water mains, sewerage pipes or culverts without the approval of the Government. Of course there would need to be substantial reasons before any objection would be raised to their operations. The whole cost has to be borne by the company. The representatives of the local authorities and of the company, together with the Crown Law and Harbour Trust authorities have been consulted, and there is no difference of opinion on the provisions of the Bill. This will be a good proposition for the State in that it will keep within the State a considerable amount of money that is now sent outside. I am only sorry that all the other oil companies have not made similar proposals. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.47]: It is a pity that a Bill of this kind should be rushed through the House.

The Premier: It was referred to a select committee.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have not heard the report of the select committee read, and it is usual to have such reports read. I do not know what the select committee reported. We have not had the report.

The Premier: Yes, it has been presented.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: When was it presented?

The Premier: The select committee reported that they agreed to the Bill subject to certain amendments.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But members should have an opportunity to peruse the report.

The Premier: Apart from proposing certain amendments, the report contains nothing.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not oppose the Bill; I do not wish to stand in the way of enterprise. I am glad that these people are coming here to establish works. What I object to is the way in which this measure is being rushed through. We should have an opportunity to consider the select committee's report. The Minister wants power for the company to lay mains. That pre-supposes a lease. The Government cannot give a lease of many six-acre blocks at North Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: We have three or four times that area.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are hopeful that some day bulk handling of wheat will be adopted and the machinery will be located at North Fremantle. When Bills of this description are presented to Parliament, it is usual to submit a plan showing the area to be leased.

The Minister for Works: The lease is not included in the Bill. It is entirely separate.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Minister desires to give the House the fullest information, a plan should be presented. The Bill merely gives power to the company to lay mains, but the Minister might have informed us what it is intended to lease to the company and the terms and conditions of the lease.

The Minister for Works: The lease of the land is entirely separate from the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But doubtless the Minister knows just what land is to be leased. He would not have submitted the Bill had he not known that.

The Minister for Works: There are a couple of points in the lease still outstanding.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This Bill is designed to give pipe access to the land. We should have been told what land is to be leased and the conditions. If the House approves of the Bill, as doubtless it will, the lease will be entered into. I have no objection to granting the right to lay mains. I am glad the company propose to do their canning and casing of oil here instead of overseas.

**MR. THOMSON** (Katanning) [4.52]: I support the second reading. The lease of the land on which it is proposed to erect the storage tanks was not discussed by the select committee. All we considered was the agreement entered into by the North Fremantle Council and the company, giving the right to lay conduits along certain roads. For that right the company have agreed to pay an annual rate of £35. The rating of the sheds and tanks on the site ultimately to be leased to the company will be made on the ordinary basis. I welcome the establishment of these works. The erection of storage tanks and the distribution of bulk kerosene and petrol in the country districts should lead to a cheapening of the working of agricultural machinery.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will save some of the 3d. tax?

**MR. THOMSON**: It will not save that. There was little for the select committee to discuss. The Bill is a simple one to validate an agreement between the North Fremantle municipality and the company. I welcome the expenditure of a sum estimated at £60,000 on works that will employ up to 100 men. The more works of the kind we have established here, the better it will be for the State.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [4.55]: I support the second reading. It is an indication of the progress of the State that big works are being established at Fremantle, and I believe it will mean the effecting of some economy. The company have shown great enterprise. They have to face a rather remarkable position regarding the case wood and block tin used. Manufactured cases and cans containing kerosene and benzine are admitted free of duty, but case wood in the form of shooks and block tin have to pay duty. That is an anomaly. The Premier will recall that a similar principle has been adopted in Dublin, where pipes have been laid along streets and ways to convey Guinness's stout.

The Premier: In 30-in. mains, too.

**MR. SAMPSON**: That is a very inviting spectacle. The pipes have a capacity of 15,000 hogsheads per day, and the stout is conveyed from the brewery through pipes to the canal, where the hogsheads are filled.

The Minister for Works: Have the pipes been known to burst?

**MR. SAMPSON**: I cannot say, but there has been no public protest.

The Premier: It is really the only industry in Dublin.

**MR. SAMPSON**: Yes. Here we have not the facilities to convey stout through pipes, but perhaps we are approaching that, in view of the fact that we are providing for pipes to convey petrol. Perhaps the next step will be—

The Minister for Works: The linking up of the Swan Brewery?

**MR. SAMPSON**: No; perhaps the next step will be a good supply of water.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

**MR. LUTY** in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Notice to be served, and plan deposited before breaking up streets:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Before the third reading is gone on with to-morrow I shall have all the particulars supplied to members with regard to the lease of six acres.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Penalty for breaking up without notice, or delay in reinstating:

**MR. MARSHALL**: The Minister is being rather lenient to the company. Should they neglect any particular thing or do any damage the only penalty provided is one of £50.

**MR. J. H. SMITH**: That was increased from £5.

**MR. MARSHALL**: Another Bill provides that if an individual fails to furnish a return under the petrol tax he is liable to a fine of £100. The penalty in the case of this company should be at least £500.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 to 17—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

## BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE** (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: This Bill contains practically only one clause and the schedule. The Act limits the interest that may be paid by the Fire Brigades Board on borrowed money to 6 per cent. The board when endeavouring to borrow money to carry out necessary works found that they could not borrow at 6 per cent., and had to pay  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. They arranged with the Commonwealth Bank for a loan of £20,000 at  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., but could not proceed with the loan until the bank had some authority for collecting in case the Fire Brigades Board defaulted. All the Bill seeks to do is to give the bank power to put in a receiver in the event of such default. The Government have already given a letter to the Commonwealth Bank stating that it was intended this session to introduce the necessary legislation. The matter has been submitted to the Crown Law authorities. The legal advisers of the Fire Brigades Board and of the bank also agree that this Bill is necessary, and that it covers the object sought. The moneys that have been raised are particularly for the purpose of equipment and the construction of new stations in the metropolitan area and country districts.

**Hon. G. Taylor:** And some accommodation too.

**Hon. S. W. MUNSIE:** No. It is not for the purpose of quarters. I do not want to misrepresent the position. The board have purchased a block of land adjoining the present fire station in Perth for the purpose eventually of extensions, and portion of this money will be used to pay for the land. New stations will be built at Subiaco, North Perth, Fremantle, Midland Junction and Guildford. In the country, additions will be made to existing stations at Albany, Beverley, Busselton, Canning, Collie, Katanning, Kellerberrin, Northam, Merredin, and Wagin, and a new station will be built at Narrogin. This list of works, it is anticipated, will, when completed, absorb a little more than the £20,000, but this is what the board are prepared to spend at present.

**Hon. Sir James Mitchell:** Have they power to build cottages for firemen at Northam?

**Hon. S. W. MUNSIE:** No. An amendment to the Act providing for that was suggested, but either withdrawn or defeated. This Bill has nothing to do with quarters. It provides only that the bank shall appoint a receiver in the event of the board defaulting. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

## BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [5.12] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill, designed for the purpose of slightly broadening the existing franchise for the Legislative Council. It seeks to amend paragraph 2 of Section 15 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899. That paragraph deals with the householder within the province occupying a dwelling-house of a clear annual value of £17 sterling. The Bill proposes to eliminate that paragraph, and substitute for it what is known as the household franchise. The other qualifications for the Legislative Council, such as the freehold estate within the province of a clear annual value of £50 sterling, the leasehold estate within the province of a clear annual value of £17, and the license from the Crown to depasture, occupy, or mine upon Crown lands within the province of a rental value of not less than £10 per annum, are still to be retained, but the Bill will abolish plural voting. At present any person who possesses any one of the qualifications I have read in any or all of the ten provinces which make up the electoral provinces of the Council, is entitled to a vote in each one of those provinces if he possesses the necessary qualifications. The Bill proposes to substitute the household franchise for the £17 clear annual value franchise, and to abolish plural voting, but the right to vote once in any one of these provinces, provided that the elector has the necessary qualifications, is retained. I think it will be agreed that this is a very moderate Bill. It does not go as far as I should like to see it go, but it goes as far as we may expect approval of such a measure to extend at the present time. Personally, I have never been able to understand just why the sum of £17 annual rental value has been

fixed as a qualification. I have never been able to see any special virtue in the payment of £17 a year, or in, say, the person who pays 7s. per week rent as against the person who pays 6s. or 5s. The amount of £17 seems to have been fixed without any principle whatever, so far as can be discovered. It appears to have been adopted as a guess.

Mr. Thomson: On the basis of 6s. 6d. per week rental.

The PREMIER: But why 6s. 6d. rather than 5s. 6d. or 7s. 6d.? If the figure of £17 was chosen in the belief that it would practically enfranchise every householder, in the belief that even the humblest habitation would be of the value of 6s. 6d. per week, then there can be no possible objection to this Bill, which seeks merely to say that every householder shall be entitled to vote for the Legislative Council regardless of the rental value of his premises.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: In the metropolitan area I think only two small houses on the Causeway would be excluded by the present qualification.

The PREMIER: Even those, I believe, would carry the qualification. The present qualification has turned out to be an occupational or geographical qualification. In some parts of the State, possibly because of local conditions, rental values are very low, so that the occupant of even a house that affords a family a fairly comfortable home finds himself without the necessary qualification. In other parts of the State persons similarly circumstanced would be entitled to the franchise. I may quote the case of the timber workers in the South-West, whose rental—although they have comfortable four-roomed houses—as the result of an arrangement with the employers has been fixed at about 4s. per week, while in Perth similar houses would bring at least £1 per week.

Mr. Sampson: Generally speaking, weatherboard houses are not allowed to be built in Perth.

The PREMIER: When I say Perth, I mean the metropolitan area. Even to-day it is permissible, I think, to erect weatherboard houses in the suburbs.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, it is.

Mr. Sampson: It should be so. The restriction is too severe.

The PREMIER: Probably. However, I am pointing out that in the metropolitan area cottages similar to those in the timber

districts would bring a rental of not less than £1 per week. In this respect, therefore, the qualification is geographical. The same argument applies on the goldfields, though possibly to a less extent. Houses or homes there may be humble, and worth very little in money, but they provide habitations for the people who live in them and afford the essential requirements of a dwelling place. Simply because they are situated on the outback goldfields, their rental value is small, and consequently the occupiers are debarred from exercising the Legislative Council franchise. That anomaly should be rectified, and it would be rectified if a household franchise qualification obtained. Apart from that aspect one might argue that the day of property rights in the matter of electing representatives of the people has long passed by. Certainly that is the case in many countries. It has passed away as regards some phases of Australian political life. When, 25 years ago, the Federal Constitution was being framed, no provision was made for a property qualification. It may be argued that there is considerable difference between the vote value in relation to the Senate and the House of Representatives respectively, but that is so merely because the Senate was supposed to be fixed on a State basis.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a State House.

The PREMIER: Yes, and so the State representation in the Senate was fixed regardless of the population of a State, whereas for the House of Representatives the basis was fixed at one vote, one value.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Senate is purely a party House now.

The PREMIER: Yes; and if I were disposed to digress for the purpose of expressing my views with regard to the Senate, I would say that that House ought to be abolished, at any rate as now constituted. The Senate has become a perfect farce. Reverting to the Bill, let me say that the position would be different if the franchise for a second Chamber were conferred upon persons who had rendered great service to their country, or even if there were an educational qualification. Either of those bases would be more logical than the mere possession of a certain amount of property. To-day the person who owns a block of land of the value of £50 in every one of the 10 provinces is entitled to exercise a vote

in each of the 10 provinces. But an artist or an educationist or a poet or even a statesman residing at the Palace Hotel, or in lodgings in the city, and not possessing property in land, would be an outcast so far as the Legislative Council was concerned.

Mr. Hughes: Such a man might be paying £4 4s. a week for board and lodging.

The PREMIER: Yes. A Macaulay, a Bernard Shaw, a Shakespeare, or some other genius could not vote for our Legislative Council unless he possessed the property qualification. The time has come for such an antiquated principle to be thrown overboard.

Mr. Sampson: In the days of Shakespeare the possession of property was regarded as an evidence of intelligence.

The PREMIER: In some quarters it is so to-day. But the property must be real property. A man might have £10,000 in the bank or in Government bonds, but that would not count. Property only counts for the purposes of the Legislative Council if it is real estate.

Mr. Thomson: The man owning real estate cannot move out in five minutes.

The PREMIER: That is the old argument about the man with nothing at all walking out in five minutes. The property qualification is an absurdity which ought to have been rectified long ago. At present there are 202,046 electors enrolled throughout the State for the Legislative Assembly, and only 57,401 for the Legislative Council. That is to say, there are 144,645 persons who are qualified and entitled to exercise a vote for the election of members of this House, but who may not vote for the election of members of another place. Surely that is an absurdity. Surely it is unreasonable to say that that large body of adults, of men and women, who may go to the polls to vote for our good selves, shall not vote for the lords who rule over us in the Legislative Council. It is strange to observe—I do not know whether this is due to the fact of people becoming indifferent—that there are fewer electors for the Legislative Council to-day than there were 12 or 15 years ago.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The people are careless about the franchise.

The PREMIER: That may be so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are more houses to-day, anyhow.

The PREMIER: There should be. The enrolments for the Legislative Council, however, are not as numerous now as they were 12 or 15 years ago. Even this Bill will not rectify the great anomaly of fully 144,000 of our citizens being disfranchised for the Legislative Council. It will not nearly remedy that injustice, but will go some distance towards doing so. We have to recall, too, that of the 57,000 names on the Legislative Council roll, a good many are duplications—how many I cannot say. Quite a considerable number of the 57,000 electors are on the roll for more than one province—many of them, perhaps, for all 10 provinces. However, I have no figures as to that aspect.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not many would be on the roll for the whole of the 10 provinces.

The PREMIER: There would be some, and there would be many on the roll for two, three, or four provinces, having the necessary qualification in each of that number of provinces. Our Legislative Council is less amenable to the will of the people than is the old, historic, Conservative House of Lords itself, an institution that has held sway in the government of Great Britain for eight or nine hundred years. The British Constitution a few years ago was so amended as to make the House of Lords responsive to the will of the people. Certain procedure has to be followed, but in the lapse of two years it is quite possible for any Government in the House of Commons to secure the passage through the House of Lords of any legislation it may deem desirable. And so that conservative institution has been made responsive to the will of the people. But our Legislative Council may go on defying the will of the people, rejecting measures that the vast majority of the electors have requested year after year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think they put too much legislation through.

The PREMIER: During the past two years they have shown that they are prepared to ignore the will of the people so far as it can be ascertained by the election of members to this Chamber. One need only look down the list of Bills rejected or mutilated last session, and which appear to be in a fair way to receive the same treatment this session.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: My word, they ought to!

The PREMIER: That is what the hon. member may think, but the majority in this Chamber think otherwise. And it is for both Houses of Parliament to give effect to the will of the people. Members of another place are not elected to legislate according to their own views and regardless of the desires of the will of the people.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you looking at the Minister for Works?

The PREMIER: No, the Minister for Works has been carrying out a policy for which the vast majority of the people have asked.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No fear! They would not touch it with a 40ft. pole.

The Minister for Works: Then what are we doing over here?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do now know. I cannot understand it.

The PREMIER: There is no doubt the 57,000 electors responsible for the Legislative Council are able to set aside the desires of the 144,000—

Mr. Sampson: I understand they have set aside the views of the minority of the 202,000 Assembly electors.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We are representing the majority.

The PREMIER: The majority of the votes cast. But there are on this side of the House 11 seats for which no votes were cast, there being no contests in these 11 constituencies. Had there been those additional contests, it would be found that a substantial majority of the votes cast at the last election were cast for members on this side of the House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Let us have a redistribution, and so settle it.

The PREMIER: I am not going to pursue that line or argument, but there can be no question as to where the majority of the votes were, last time at any rate.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They were not cast at all.

The PREMIER: The votes cast at the election of a member to another place on one occasion showed that only 15 per cent. of the electors took the trouble to go to the booth. At that election the member returned secured a majority of only the 15 per cent. of those who voted. Yet he is one of the greatest obstructionists to-day, taking to himself the right to pull Bills about and disclaim against the Minister for Works, and talking about the Minister's autocratic attitude. Yet he repre-

sents merely a majority of 15 per cent. of the electors of the province! I do not know whether his activity just now is caused by the fact that he has to go before the electors next year, when more than 15 per cent. of the electors may go to the poll.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are you reflecting on a member of another place?

The PREMIER: No, I am merely stating facts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They never discuss us, you know.

The PREMIER: They never discuss the Minister for Works, do they?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They ought to.

The PREMIER: Yet when he, in the corridor, discusses one of them, they become enraged about it. I do not like using a hackneyed phrase but I cannot help saying that the Council occupies a position that is not conducive to peace, order and the good government of the country. This cannot but have a disturbing effect on the minds of those 144,000 electors.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They do not care a jot.

The PREMIER: But they do, especially when, session after session, they see rejected Bills for which they have been asking for many years. So long as any considerable section of the people are debarred from the right to elect members to another place, so long will that tend to the promotion of industrial unrest.

Mr. Latham: It does not save it in Queensland, where they have abolished the second Chamber.

The PREMIER: I do not know that any unrest is there, outside the seamen's union.

Mr. Latham: And the railways.

The PREMIER: There may have been trouble once or twice.

Mr. Latham: Well, do not blame another place.

The PREMIER: Will the hon. member say that if, by the action of another place, the amending Arbitration Bill should fail to become law this session it will not have a tendency to promote industrial unrest amongst those dissatisfied with the existing Act?

Mr. Latham: I do not think it will interfere with them.

The PREMIER: I do not desire to say a word that may be constructed into a threat, but I know that if, by the action of another place, something in the nature of a reason-



able Arbitration Bill be not passed this session, probably we shall not have—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will get a reasonable Bill all right.

The PREMIER: I hope we shall. But if we may judge of the manner in which it has been dealt with so far, we may be pardoned for doubting the measure of reason that will be in the Bill when it is finally passed.

The Minister for Works: A man would be pretty optimistic to think otherwise. There are two sheets of fresh amendments for to-day.

The PREMIER: Amendments made in that Bill in another place entirely deprive that House of the right to be regarded as a House of review. Absurd, preposterous, stupid amendments were made in another place by a House who, when this Bill comes up, will say that their existence is essential to the good government of the country in order that they may check hasty legislation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think it was hasty, too.

The PREMIER: Then what might be said of the haste that characterised some of the amendments, haste or indifference or want of knowledge that was responsible for some of the amendments made in another place? However apart from that, I say that on the basic principle, the principles of democracy—I do not like using the word, for it has been used for so many improper purposes. A great man once remarked, "Oh liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!" These days we might substitute the word "democracy" for "liberty" and still use that phrase. However, as I say, we cannot escape the fact that adult men and women in this country should have a greater voice in the election of another place than is possible for them to-day.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Some 50 per cent. of them do not want a voice in the election of members here.

The PREMIER: I do not know. The percentage of votes cast for this House last time was over 60.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh no.

The PREMIER: Well, I do know that the percentage of votes to enrolments in my constituency at the previous election was 84. That was not allowing for those who had left the district, or died, or were absent, or, for other causes, ineligible to vote.

Mr. Sampson: The average at the last election was under 52.

The PREMIER: I thought it was slightly over 60. Still, it is certain that a proportion of the 50 per cent. were men and women who were precluded from exercising a vote for the Council. That is only a fair assumption. When, a few years ago, the country was in danger and called upon to defend itself, no property qualifications were demanded at Francis-street. No young man who walked up there and offered to enlist was asked whether he owned a block of land of the value of £50, or paid an annual rental of £17 10s. He was accepted to defend the people and the property of this country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A lot did not go.

The PREMIER: But a very great number who did go were young men not entitled to vote for the Legislative Council.

Mr. Davy: And you took them over 18 and now you won't let them get a beer if they want it.

The PREMIER: I would not mind giving the boys a beer. But there is the fact, and to-day there are thousands of those young men who, having returned from the war, have gone back to their usual occupations and still have not the necessary qualifications entitling them to vote for the Legislative Council.

Mr. Heron: Although rearing families, as many of them are.

The PREMIER: Yes, that is so.

Mr. Latham: Well, they must be entitled to vote.

The PREMIER: No, down in the timber areas and on the mills, not one of them is entitled to be enrolled for the Legislative Council. Of some 2,000 odd electors for the Assembly electorate of Forrest, only a very few of them, not more than 60, have the necessary qualifications for the Legislative Council.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The majority of them live in Perth.

The PREMIER: Hundreds of these men to-day are returned soldiers. There were no property qualifications then. If in time of trouble a man is called upon, or if he offers his services to the country, or if the nation takes the right to demand his services, at least that man should be entitled to the rights of full citizenship.

Mr. Latham: He is so entitled to-day if he takes up a piece of land.

The PREMIER: Of course he is, but if he does not desire or has not the opportunity

to do so, why should he be denied the rights of full citizenship?

Mr. Latham: He could get a worker's home.

The PREMIER: Can the man who is working on the hon. member's farm get a worker's home?

Mr. Latham: If he is a married man he can.

The PREMIER: Even if he is a married man he may try over and over again and may not be successful. Let the hon. member look at the position in a logical light. Suppose he has a man working for him on his farm, that man is not entitled to a vote for the Council, but if he applies to the Workers' Homes Board, and is lucky enough to get a home, he secures a vote. Is he then a better citizen than before he had that home?

Mr. Sampson: Possibly.

The PREMIER: He has the responsibility of paying for that home.

Mr. Sampson: He has a direct interest.

The PREMIER: Has he not at any time a direct interest in the country in which he lives? If he should live at the Palace Hotel and pay board there, has he not a direct interest in the country just the same?

Mr. Sampson: He would be likely to have a greater interest in the country if he had some land.

The Minister for Works: The hon. member has not a farm.

The PREMIER: There are many hon. members who have not even as much land as would go into a flower pot. They would not like to be told that they had not a direct interest in the country.

Mr. Latham: But why display all this interest when you want to abolish the Legislative Council?

The Minister for Works: You have to get your men in there before you can vote it out.

The PREMIER: The member for York, for his youth, possesses most extraordinary Tory characteristics. Any man who is inclined to be conservative can grow democratic as he becomes older, but the hon. member has reversed the principle and it may even be that in his old age he will become a radical.

Mr. Latham: You do not know that I am going to support your Bill.

The PREMIER: The hon. member did not say so. I know him pretty well and his attitude towards Bills of this description. He

has always taken a most conservative line of action. But there is hope for him as he grows older.

Mr. Latham: I may reverse the order.

The PREMIER: Yes, and become a democrat. With the household franchise the plural vote should go. The property qualification was devised and adopted away back in the early days.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: There were no Labour Governments then.

The PREMIER: The hon. member lived on Padbury's plasters. Those were the days when the country stood still for 60 years.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They were very good days.

The PREMIER: Yes, free from the disturbing influence of those labour fellows. "Them was the days!" All the same, the State has not gone backward since the Labour element became a factor in this country. However, we need not raise jealousies of that kind between hon. members who are good Western Australians and myself. I did not have the good fortune to be born here, but I have a great regard for the old Western Australians who certainly faced great difficulties and dangers too. They held an outpost of the Empire, an outpost that did not have an Agricultural Bank or an Industries Assistance Board, or in fact a Government post to lean against. I think I will leave it at that. I repeat that this is a modest measure of reform that it is sought to introduce. When we have regard to the facts that I have set out, it merely reduces what is to-day a 7s. a week rental qualification to household qualification. It was frequently argued that the £17 a year was a household qualification. Now it will be realised what a very moderate advance we are seeking to make. That, and the abolition of plural voting are the objects of the Bill. I am looking at my friend the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy). I have great faith in the young Australians and perhaps it is because the member for York (Mr. Latham) does not happen to be a young Australian that he does not hold democratic views similar to those held by the member for West Perth. I hope that the House will agree to pass the Bill. At least let us make a little headway along the road to reform. There has not been amendment of the Constitution in this respect since 1910. In Queensland there was a nominee Chamber, but that has been abolished. In New South Wales there is a nominee Cham-

ber, but it is possible in that State for the people to secure their will. Where there is an elective body and where members are elected for six years, retiring at intervals of two years, the position does not commend itself to the majority in the State. That has been shown over and over again by the very little interest that has been taken in elections for another place. If the franchise be liberalised, there is no reason why the people should not take the same interest in the elections for the Council as they do in the elections for the Assembly. Therefore I hope that the House will agree to the Bill, and if it be passed we shall make a solid move along the pathway of reform.

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

### **BILL—MINERS' PHTHISIS ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.55] in moving the second reading said: Members are aware that the Miners' Phthisis Act was passed in 1922, but was not proclaimed until 4th September of this year. The examinations provided for in the Act are now taking place in Kalgoorlie and a great number of men employed in the mines have already been examined and it is expected that the whole of this work will be completed by about May of next year. The Act provides that any man found to be suffering from tuberculosis shall be prevented from continuing to follow his occupation in a mine, and it is also provided that a registry shall be kept of those who are so prohibited. Any such person shall receive compensation equal to the wages he was receiving at the time he was ordered out of the employment, and provision is made for him to continue to receive that payment until suitable employment is found for him by the Government. "Suitable employment" is defined in the Act as follows:—

For the purpose of this section "suitable employment" shall mean such work as the principal medical officer or such deputy of the Wooreloo Sanatorium certifies to be suitable employment for the person to whom it is offered and being either work on, in, or about a mine.

If a miner suffering from tuberculosis has been notified that he has the disease, and

is forced to leave his employment, he must do so and, as I have stated, he must be found suitable employment and given wages equal to those he was receiving at the time he was taken from his employment as a miner. If he should refuse to accept employment, he has no further claim on the Government. The short experience we have had of the operation of the Act and the examinations that have taken place, show that the Act is only a skeleton and does not provide for future needs. The reason for the Bill is to make provision for the miners' dependants. Under the parent Act the obligation is cast on the Government to find work once. When that work has been found for the miner, even if it be for one day or a week or a month, the Government's obligation ceases. No matter what the man's state of health, or his opportunity to secure employment may be, the Government have no further obligation.

Mr. Sampson: That is manifestly unfair.

The **MINISTER FOR MINES**: It is. The amending Bill makes it obligatory on the part of the Government to find work whilst the person affected is able to work, or if work be not found, the Government must pay compensation provided the miner is able and willing to work. The parent Act also provides compensation for men who have been forced into idleness by the Government but no provision is made in respect of the man who, because of illness is incapable of doing any work. No provision is made respecting a man suffering from tuberculosis and whose illness is such that it enables him to follow some occupation. The Bill contains an amendment to secure compensation for a person in that position. The Bill also sets out that if the worker should become unable to do any work whatever, the obligation will not cease altogether, but the Government will be required to provide compensation not less than that payable under the rules of the Mine Workers' Relief Fund. Therefore should any person be prevented from following his occupation as a miner because of illness, that amendment will enable him to receive compensation at a rate not less than that payable under the fund I have mentioned, while on the death of the worker his dependants will be entitled to receive payments similar to those provided under the Mine Workers' Relief Fund scale. Tuberculosis alone would not give rise to a claim under the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act,

1924, because that disease is not peculiar to the mining industry. The disease can be contracted by workers in many other industries. But if tuberculosis supervenes on any miners' disease, then the worker will have a claim under the Workers' Compensation Act. In the Bill it is provided that if such a person comes within the scope of the Workers' Compensation Act and is entitled to compensation because of tuberculosis supervening upon miners' complaint, he will not come within the scope of the Miners' Phthisis Act as well as under the Workers' Compensation Act. If he comes under the Workers' Compensation Act he will be exempt from the operations of the Miners' Phthisis Act. As it is possible that a number will come under the Workers' Compensation Act because tuberculosis has supervened upon miners' complaint, we do not think such cases should be provided for under both measures. Since the proclamation of the Miners' Phthisis Act it has been ascertained that a number of men have been debarred from any benefits because at the time of the proclamation they were out of employment and may have been out of work for a few days, weeks or months. Then again, they may have been out of work merely because of circumstances that are so natural in an occupation such as mining. In that industry there are always a number of men unemployed. The Miners' Phthisis Act applies only to the men who were employed at the time the measure was proclaimed, but we have heard of a number of cases of hardship in which men have not come within the scope of the Act because they were not in employment at the particular time when the Act was proclaimed. The Bill overcomes that difficulty and provides that a person shall be deemed to be engaged in mining operations at the commencement of the Act if he were so engaged within three months of such commencement, notwithstanding that he may have been temporarily out of work when the Act was proclaimed. That provision will give relief in certain quarters to men on whose behalf representations were made to the Government. These are the small amendments embodied in the Bill, but they are necessary if the measure is to prove successful. In the circumstances I commend the Bill to the goodwill of the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

## BILL—SWAN RIVER IMPROVEMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [6.6] in moving the second reading said: The Bill deals with improvements to the Swan River and affects the reclamation of the foreshore and improvements, particularly in the vicinity of the Causeway and further up the river towards Maylands. At the present time that part of the Swan River is anything but a beauty spot and algæ is growing there to such an extent that instead of the Swan River being a beauty spot and a natural feature of which Western Australia may be proud, it is fast developing into a nuisance. Water in the backwash by the Causeway at present is nearly as thick as mud, and the algæ is growing to such an extent that during the hot evenings it gives off a most offensive odour. That marshy part of the foreshore is a breeding ground for mosquitoes and is by no means a healthy or picturesque spot. Not only is the algæ growing there but it has extended further and at South Perth and even down to Crawley and, so I am told, to Peppermint Grove, it is making itself apparent, and people who have spent considerable sums of money in providing beautiful homes for themselves there will find that unless something is done soon the values of their properties will be considerably decreased and the river, instead of being an advantage to them, will prove a positive disadvantage. We are all proud of the Swan River, and it is the best asset the City of Perth has. We boast of it, and it would be a thousand pities if the river were allowed to drift, as the indications are now, into a condition that will make it anything but a healthy waterway or an advantage to the city. Experts advise that algæ will not grow in a greater depth of water than 4ft. or 5ft. We are told that a depth of 5ft. will be sufficient to prevent algæ from growing at all. The idea is to dredge the river in the localities I have referred to according to a plan that has been drawn up. I have laid two plans of the proposed work on the Table so that hon. members may make themselves acquainted with the proposals. It is intended to reclaim both sides of the river and make an island in the centre near the Causeway. It will have an area of between 40 and 50 acres and

instead of continuing the present unsightly conditions and the offensive odours that are apparent we propose to make a fine boulevard right round the river as far as Maylands. On the Perth side of the river some 30 acres will be reclaimed and that will enable the Esplanade to be continued right round the river banks. The island will be used as a botanical gardens and sports ground. Bowling greens and tennis courts will be laid out and the work generally should make the approach to the city from that end a beautiful one. There will be a roadway at least 66ft. wide on each side of the river, and the balance of the reclaimed ground will be laid out in lawns and will be reserved for the use of the people. This will considerably enhance the value of the properties adjacent to the city. A lot of that land is at present under water, while in many parts it is merely marshy country not worth anything at all. The Bill provides that the work can be done without the people being in a position to lodge a claim against the Government for any deprivation of property rights. The Bill is similar to that passed by Parliament in respect of Melville Water and Freshwater Bay in 1912. We could do the work under the Public Works Act, 1902, but the Bill is necessary to guard against liability in respect of deprivation of property rights if such claims should occur in respect of property along the foreshore. There may be some trouble in connection with severances, because some of the properties may have been sold with river frontages. While those frontages now consist of marshy and swamp country of no use to anyone, reclamation works such as are intended will materially enhance the values of those properties. The Bill provides that we can resume such properties at present and any disputes as to price will be settled in the usual way by arbitration.

Mr. Teesdale: You can get some of the land pretty cheap at present values.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The present value of much of the land is nil. I do not think there will be any trouble in negotiating with the owners of the properties. In the past the agreement was arrived at between the owners of properties on the Esplanade when that work was undertaken along to the Causeway. If the owners of property affected by the Bill enter into a similar agreement in respect of the severance of rights there, the work will proceed and their properties will be considerably en-

hanced in value right round. I do not think there will be any difficulty in connection with the owners further up the river, but the fact remains that it would require only one owner to stand out of an agreement and the whole of the work would be upset. It is considered advisable, therefore, to pass the Bill to provide for the Government having no liability in respect of this work.

Mr. Sampson: Is it not already illegal for buildings to be erected on some of the land you are referring to?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, the City Council will not permit them to be erected.

Mr. Sampson: The Health Act regulations prevent it, too.

Mr. Thomson: Will the work to be undertaken prevent people living on the foreshore from gaining access to their boats on the river?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Such people will have to cross the esplanade and the road in order to gain access to the river, the same as applies further down towards Freshwater Bay. I think there is only one house now where a boat can be taken into the backyard of a property. That will not be possible when the contemplated works are completed and the people will have to go across the esplanade to reach the river.

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

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The work will be spread over a number of years. All we hope to do this year is to obtain some plant. There is a small item on the Loan Estimates for that. How long the work will take will depend upon the funds that can be made available each year. The City Council have agreed to contribute £500 a year for the first five years and £1,000 a year for the next seven years. At the end of the 12 years the financial arrangement between them and the Government will be reviewed. The agreement with the cement company for the dredging of shell has eight years to run, and it is not expected that our work will advance to the zone of their operations in that time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will not raise shell?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. It is probable that fresh deposits of shell will be found, and they will be of assistance in the work of reclamation. By the time the cement company's lease expires, that portion of

the river over which the company have a lease will probably be cleaned up. There is nothing new in the principle involved in the Bill. Similar powers have been given for other work of this kind. It will make for the improvement of the city and will increase the beauty of the river.

Mr. Stubbs: And get rid of the mosquitoes?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; that is a big consideration. It will also lead to the conversion of smelly mud flats into sports grounds and gardens, with a nice boulevard along the river, thus making an approach worthy of the city. Something will have to be done at some time, because no community could allow the growth of algæ to continue as at present. In time it would mean the ruination of our beautiful Swan River. It is better to start the work now on a definite plan and spread it over a number of years.

Mr. Stubbs: Will that work eradicate the algæ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Experts tell us that algæ will not grow in water of a greater depth than 4 feet. We propose to dredge to 5 feet or 6 feet.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But a lot of the river will not be dredged.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am referring to that portion which is the source of the trouble. We have complaints now from as far down stream as Peppermint Grove. As the river is dredged a better out-flow will result, and the experts are satisfied that the scheme will do away with the algæ at the source of the present trouble. The experts state that the septic tanks do stimulate the growth of algæ, but even if the septic tanks were removed, the algæ would not disappear. The river must be deepened.

Mr. Stubbs: Why start it in a small way?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Because we have not the money to make a splash. We must do the work gradually. The new Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Stileman) is recommending the adoption of a light dredging plant fitted with cutters and suction appliances. It will take the first 12 months to assemble the plant. I do not wish to start the job unless I have up-to-date plant. To tackle it with obsolete plant would make it more costly. Members can rest assured that the Engineer-in-Chief will see we have up-to-date plant. When the

work is completed it will have the effect of removing the present nuisance, enhancing the value of adjacent property, and making Perth the first city in the Commonwealth in point of beauty. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

## BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [7.38] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to amend the Act of 1915, which measure has not been proclaimed by successive Governments. The original Act of 1899 stands as the only law on the subject, and it provides that the municipalities throughout the State shall administer the law. Under the Act of 1915 the responsibility was taken over by the Government. Municipalities are not refusing to administer the 1899 Act, but the law has been more honoured in the breach than the observance, until it can be said that at present it is non-existent. That is very unsatisfactory. The reason why the 1915 Act was not proclaimed may be found in the fact that it was passed in wartime, when it was difficult to obtain the necessary standards. Those standards were obtained in 1921, but the then Government were unable to provide the necessary accommodation for the administration of the Act. Since then things have drifted. When the present Government took office an effort was made to secure accommodation.

Mr. Sampson: Who will administer the measure?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Police Department. When I was searching for accommodation, the then Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Thompson) resigned, and it was necessary to make another appointment. Some people expected things to be fixed up within a few months. A gentleman in New Zealand was appointed Engineer-in-Chief, but he did not accept the position. Then applications were called throughout Australia and in the United Kingdom, and the successful applicant went so far as to book his passage, and he was expected to arrive seven or eight months ago. On the eve of his departure, however, he went the way

of the previous appointee. We then arranged for Mr. Stileman to take the position. He has arrived and, as expected, has desired his officers to be housed in the building in which he is located. Last week or late in the week before, a scheme was completed for the housing of the officers, which will have the effect of making available the requisite accommodation, and early in the new year the Act will be proclaimed and administered.

Mr. Sampson: Does the number of officers give rise to the difficulty of getting special housing accommodation?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. We shall not require a big staff. We propose to secure a 25-ton weighbridge, which will cost a considerable amount to purchase and to instal. It was of no use installing it at great expense if, immediately afterwards, it was found advisable to alter the accommodation, thus necessitating the removal of the weighbridge. Standards are very delicate instruments. They should be in an office where they would not be subject to vibration and other influences that may affect their correctness. When we take over the administration, it is necessary to have suitable accommodation, so that the weighbridge can be established and the standards housed where they are not likely to be disturbed.

Mr. Sampson: Could the motor license offices in Francis-street be utilised?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. They belong to the Commonwealth. We have only a temporary lease of them. We would not have gone there but that the accommodation of the officers administering the Traffic Act was so inadequate, disgraceful and disreputable that we had to move to other quarters. Since the passing of the 1915 Act it has been shown that certain amendments are necessary. As that Act was based on the New South Wales Act, almost entirely, we obtained a report from the other States as to the necessity or otherwise of amending the Act prior to its proclamation. We received an excellent report from Mr. McAlister, superintendent of weights and measures in New South Wales, indicating that our Act required amendment, and suggesting a number of alterations which have practically been incorporated in this Bill. These amendments will make the Act more efficient in the light of the experience of New South Wales. The present fees are in-

corporated in the schedule of the Act. The changing value of money has shown that these fees are now inadequate. It is proposed that they shall be slightly altered to conform with the New South Wales provisions. When we introduced the Jury Act Amendment Act we sought to alter the incidence of payment to jurors. At that time the fee was 10s. a day. In 1902 that was regarded as a generous payment, seeing that the ruling rate of wage was about 7s. 6d. In these days, however, it is about one-third less than the basic wage laid down by the Arbitration Court. This shows the changing value of money.

Mr. Teesdale: The department would not make a profit out of the administration of the Act?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. In these measures for the safety and safeguarding of the interests of the public it is not intended that a profit should be made. It cannot be said that this Government, or any State Government of recent years, have endeavoured to make taxing machines of something which might rightly be termed a public utility.

Mr. Lambert: Would you say that of the Fremantle harbour?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am not discussing that. The scale of fees is so arranged that it is expected the expenditure will hardly meet the income.

Mr. Teesdale: You will have a hard time inspecting the various store weights.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The fees to be charged are fair and reasonable.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All these sums added altogether make a considerable charge.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There are very few high charges. It is expected that the verification of standards will take place only once in two years. If a fee of 2s. is paid on such occasions it will not be an impost upon industry, and yet will safeguard the interests of the public. Power is sought to include buyers in the Act, they being distinctly excluded at present. The buyer is a trader in some instances. The man who buys gold is a trader. He must have the weights, he fixes the price, and makes the purchase. The same thing applies to chaff. The chaff purchaser has the weights, and it is in the interests of those who are dealing with him that he should be included. Another amendment is in regard to the sale of commodities in packets. It is desired that these packets should conform to

some sort of standard. It is the custom to put these packets up in different weights or standards. Pepper can be bought in pound tins, half-lb. tins or quarter-lb. tins. It can also be bought in packages that may weigh  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ozs. or 7 to  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ozs. It is desired to have fair competition in the selling of these commodities, so that the public may know that a particular packet weighs exactly what the label on it says it weighs. It will, therefore, be laid down by regulation that pepper must be put up and sold in tins of 1-lb.,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -lb., and  $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is pepper imported?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. It is usually put up in packets or tins here. We provide that those commodities which are imported will have to be guaranteed by some person in the State to the effect that the packages contain the quantities they are supposed to contain as set out in the printed label.

Mr. Teesdale: I suppose a reasonable time will be given to get rid of the old containers?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. At present wholesale dealers are not required to conform to the Act, which refers only to the person actually selling to the public. The wholesale dealer might put up packets of commodities in various weights, dispose of them to a retailer, who might pass them on to the public, accepting the declaration of the wholesaler as to the contents. We now say that the wholesaler, selling commodities that are supposed to contain certain weights, shall be responsible to the retailer, just as the latter is responsible to the public.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This law cannot be enforced until it is assented to.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Act has never been proclaimed, and is therefore, not in existence from the administrative point of view.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And is it proposed to proclaim this one?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, as soon as we have the office accommodation. It is expected that everything that is to be sold will be sold at different weights or measures. That may lead to hardship or to the creation of an almost impossible position. It is proposed to take power to provide by regulation that certain commodities may be exempt from the Act. Firewood is specially referred to in the Bill. Firewood

may be sold in the country where there is no weighbridge available. If the weighing were insisted upon, the wood merchant could not sell any wood.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Under the 44-hour week he would not have time to walk a mile to a weighbridge.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so obvious a difficulty that special provision is made for exempting firewood and other commodities, in cases where weighbridges are not available.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Firewood ought to be weighed if it can be weighed.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes. There may be other commodities in regard to which there is similar difficulty, and so we provide for their exemption where necessary. Apart from this everything will come under the Act. In order to secure a conviction, it is at present necessary to prove intent to defraud on the part of the dealer. It is easy enough to prove that a man has defrauded, but it is difficult to prove that he set out with the obvious intent of defrauding. We now say it is his responsibility to see that he has the correct weight. Failure in this direction will be prima facie evidence of a breach of the Act, if he has goods light in weight, or is selling goods not of the proper measure. It is also sought to provide that the penny in the slot machines, which ought to be correct if they are to be of any value, shall be brought within the scope of the Act. They will have to be tested and verified to see that they register the weights they purport to register. An entirely new system of measurement has recently been introduced. I refer to the petrol machines that are to be found throughout the city and in most country towns. They are automatic measuring machines and at present are not provided for by legislation. Therefore we make provision in the Bill for verification of the measurements of these automatic instruments.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What about water meters?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: They are all right.

Mr. Teesdale: They run amok sometimes.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Power is also taken to inspect at various times. Some instruments do not require frequent verification; indeed, the majority of the ordinary weights will not be inspected oftener than once a year, or once in two



years. In other cases inspection will be needed more frequently. The matter will be determined by regulation. There is a provision to control, by regulation, people who may term themselves scale adjusters. When the measure is brought into effect, all weights and measures will have to be verified; and it is possible that people who know nothing about the business may proclaim themselves adjusters and may ruin expensive scales. Again, the retailer may think that because a so-called scale adjuster comes along and does something to the scales, everything is all right. The retailer might, in fact, be doing an injustice to the public quite without knowing it, or possibly be doing an injustice to himself. Persons who call themselves scale adjusters will have to obtain authority from the department to act.

Mr. Lambert: How much will be charged for that?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I think it will be agreed that if these amendments are incorporated in the present Act, all necessary steps will have been taken to safeguard public interests, and this without unduly harassing business people. The honest trader will have nothing whatever to fear. Verifications will be made at comparatively long intervals.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: To give the trader a chance in between a bit!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The trader will not be put to the expense of having his instruments verified at comparatively short intervals. There will not be a position enabling officials to say to a trader, "We verified your instruments two or three weeks ago, but they may have been tampered with since, and we will verify them again."

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What about the Railway Department?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Railway Department have a staff continually employed in going around the country verifying scales and weights.

Mr. Panton: Racecourse scales should be included.

Mr. Lambert: Will all Government scales come under the operation of this measure?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Government would be expected to conform to the measure. However, no one connected with the Government has any incentive in the shape of personal gain, as a dishonest trader has. For example, it would not bene-

fit the Commissioner of Railways personally if he had all his weighbridges wrong to the extent of 33 per cent.

Mr. Lambert: Not long ago I had the experience of paying £22 excess because a water meter had gone mad. After a lot of trouble the amount was refunded to me.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Still, no particular individual employed by the Government makes any personal gain if his instrument is wrong. In the case of the dishonest trader the position is altogether different.

Mr. Lambert: But 99 per cent. of our public servants will swear on the Bible that an instrument is right because it is a Government instrument.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There is, in my opinion, this saving virtue, that in the case of the Government no direct pecuniary benefit accrues to any individual. The member for Coolgardie seems to have been unfortunate in his dealings with the Government.

Mr. Lambert: Not at all.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I repeat that the honest trader has nothing to fear from the Bill. Verification may be to his advantage: his scales may be weighing against him. I think I have now dealt with all the proposals in the Bill. If there is anything I have missed, I shall be glad to give further information in Committee. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, debate adjourned.

## LOAN ESTIMATES, 1925-26.

### *In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 3rd December; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

*Vote—Departmental, £117,937:*

MR. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [8.12]: No doubt many members were, like myself, a trifle alarmed on first looking through these Loan Estimates. On investigation, however, I have come to the conclusion that it would be indeed difficult to select any particular item of these Estimates which admits of reduction with advantage to the State generally. It is indeed pleasing to know that the present Government are continuing the great development policy as regards the

agricultural industry. All of us, whether residents of the metropolitan area or of the country, must realise that this State cannot continue to advance unless attention is given primarily to the rural districts. The Opposition Leader has laid it down that 64 per cent. of loan funds should be allocated to the development of agriculture year by year. The proportion indicated is not reached in this instance, the amount allotted to agricultural development being barely 50 per cent. of the total. That fact, however, is due to the heavy expenditure on water supply and sewerage in the metropolitan area. It is not difficult to visualise what Western Australia will be in 40 or 50 years' time if one has travelled through the State during the last eight or nine years and observed the rapid advancement that has taken place, especially in the agricultural industry. There can be no doubt in the mind of such a person that the money expended in the country districts has been spent wisely and well. The effect of that expenditure is reflected in the metropolitan area, which is growing, and growing rapidly. Whilst the agricultural districts continue to develop, undoubtedly the metropolitan area will advance. I venture to assert that if Western Australia continues along the present lines of progress, the lines adopted by the last Government and that now in office, it will be necessary as the years go on to borrow even more largely than we are borrowing to-day. Even increased borrowing will be justified provided we continue to spend on agricultural development as we have been doing during the past few years. It is quite easy to see that with continuous development our repayments will be made quickly. My personal belief is that we shall be forced to make even more rapid development, since every man who comes here and assists in opening up our lands will make more work, not only in his own district, but in the metropolitan area as well. From this there must result greater incomes all round. As a result of this the Government will be justified in making further borrowings with the idea of developing the agricultural areas. Therefore I do not feel particularly alarmed when I find that each year we are gradually increasing our loan funds. It is easy to contemplate that, in the course of the next 25 years, Western Australia will treble her population. It will not then be felt nearly so hard as it is to-day to treble our loan funds. The more we can borrow and lend

out to agricultural settlers, with reasonable means of gathering in our interest, the more rapidly can we advance the development of the State. I venture to predict that in the years to come we shall find this loan fund increasing more and more. I am pleased that the Government have continued the group settlement policy. No doubt many mistakes have been made, but those mistakes are gradually being rectified and to-day the group settlement scheme is in a better position than ever before. A new agreement has been concluded, with the result that we are getting cheap money. So long as we can get cheap money and spend it wisely we are justified in developing on a large scale. Perhaps the Government in the course of the next year or two may be able to see that they can extend more rapidly, and will approach the Imperial and Federal Governments with a view to getting still larger sums and so having a greatly increased flow of migrants. It is certain that we cannot get along unless we develop all our agricultural areas. I cannot profess to know anything about the far North, but from what I have heard from members representing northern constituencies I am convinced that we have up there a great heritage which, in the near future, we must begin to develop. Presumably the Government are endeavouring to do as much as possible for that part of the State, consistent with the financial position. I do think they might give some attention to the framing of a definite policy for the development of the North, and perhaps place a substantial sum on next year's Loan Estimates for that part of the State. Whether it be this Government or some other Government that tackles the task, they will find themselves up against many difficulties. However, there is no job too big to be tackled by a Government such as we have. It has been said that not sufficient is provided on the Loan Estimates for railway construction. I agree with that. However, I realise that in all probability the Government have placed on the Estimates just as much money as they were able to find for the purpose. When we travel over vast areas of the State we must realise that there is a big task ahead in point of railway development. However, it is pleasing to see that roadmaking has taken on some prominence. Good roads constitute a first class auxiliary to railways, and very often temporarily take their place.

Now that we have motor traction all over Western Australia, the Government are adopting a wise policy in laying down all the roads they possibly can where railways cannot be constructed. In many instances railways at first considered doubtful propositions have resolved themselves into profit-earning concerns. The greater the railway facilities given to the people, the more will the people travel. I can give an instance from my own electorate. Many doubts were expressed about the advisability of building the Daglish railway station, the latest built in the State. Yet from its very opening that station has proved payable. When the ex-Minister for Railways definitely announced that he was about to build that station he said also that on its completion he would see about opening up the Daglish townsite, previously set aside for railway purposes, and selling it in building blocks. He believed that it would be a great factor in making the Daglish station pay. When the station was completed the Subiaco Municipal Council approached the present Minister for Works, who readily saw that there was something good in their proposition. The townsite has since been surveyed and sold. Of 110 blocks, 96 were sold the first night, and the remainder shortly afterwards.

Mr. Panton: The blocks are rather on the small side.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I agree with that. However, they are not bad blocks at all. The illustration shows that there is land hunger in the metropolitan area, that men are anxious to buy building blocks where railway facilities are offered. Very big prices were paid for these blocks and all of them were readily sold; so, as I say, where travelling facilities are provided people will travel, notwithstanding that since the building of that station motor buses have taken a lot of the traffic, the railway revenue has shown an increase and so, too, has the tramway revenue for that particular district. Truly, to grant travelling facilities is to increase traffic. It is necessary that as we push out further and further into the country each year additional railways should be built. During last year, as the result of the great development that has taken place in consequence of 64 per cent. of our loan funds being advanced to agricultural settlers, large additional quantities of wheat and other commodities are being carried on the railways, and so to-day the railways are

showing quite a good profit. That being so, the Government will be quite justified in building new railways wherever they are required, and it is practicable to provide them. Notwithstanding that several necessary railways have no place in the Loan Estimates, I hope the Government will endeavour to make a start with one or two of them. I think it was the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson) who pointed out that there was in the country districts necessity for further hospital accommodation. I agree with that. Also there is similar necessity in the metropolitan area. For many years past have I advocated the establishment of baby clinics. We have in my electorate the King Edward Maternity Hospital, well run by the Government and acknowledged to be one of the best of its kind in Australia. Without any very great expenditure there could be established at that hospital a ward for baby clinics. We have quite a number of child welfare associations, infant health centres and baby clinics, all voluntarily run by ladies in the metropolitan area. Those ladies are doing a great deal of exceedingly good work. But they are only touching the fringe of the great human wastage going on in our midst. I hope the Government will be able to see about building a ward wherein mothers with their infants may be given aid and advice. It is remarkable that in Western Australia we are losing hundreds of infants yearly. Those in a position to know declare it is because of want of experience on the part of the mothers. Here, then, the King Edward Maternity Hospital is a place where arrangements could be made for the giving, free of charge, of necessary advice to mothers. It would stop a lot of the wastage of human life going on to-day. We are encouraging migrants from overseas, but the best migrant is the child born and reared in Western Australia. If we can do anything to save even 10 per cent. or 20 per cent. of the infant lives now being lost, the Government will be justified in spending a great deal of money to bring about that happy result. I want to touch briefly on the question of metropolitan water supply. During the past four or five years there has been a very great shortage in many of the metropolitan districts, and the cry has been for an abundance of good water. But immediately the Government set about the meeting of that demand a number of critics arise and advocate alternative schemes. I myself have advocated the tapping of Mundaring

for a temporary supply for the metropolitan area. But I have at all times recognised that it could only be a temporary supply. If members will try to realise what the metropolitan area will be in another 35 years, they will see that it is of no use tinkering with small water schemes. It is necessary to set about building up a big scheme that will supply water for the metropolitan area for the next 50 years. Not being an engineer, I cannot say whether the scheme now under construction is the best; but I am willing to listen to experts whether local or brought from the other States to report upon the position. All the experts have agreed that the scheme at present under construction is the best that can be evolved at present for the metropolitan area. I hope that the assurance given by the Minister for Works that there will be no shortage during the present summer will be realised. If that assurance is not carried out, the Minister will be worried day in and day out by people in the metropolitan area and by members of this House as well. There is every prospect of the scheme being successful, and notwithstanding the fact that it is going to cost a lot of money, I do not believe that the people who desire to have good water and plenty of it will ever create much disturbance if they have to pay a little more for that commodity. It appears to me that during the last few years people in the metropolitan area have been paying for water that they were not able to use. It was not run through the pipes strongly enough for them to get their quota. At all times they said, "If we can get the water we shall be prepared to pay for it." No one cares to pay for a commodity when that commodity is not delivered, but if the Government give the people a scheme which will provide an adequate supply, I am convinced that there will not be any complaints regarding whatever reasonable cost may be charged. In connection with sewerage, I am interested in that from the local standpoint. I noticed a statement published in a newspaper the other day to the effect that the sewerage works at Subiaco were about completed. That is misleading, because I learn from the department that the first connections are not likely to be made until about next June, and the completions will take probably some three to five years. I desired to draw the attention of the electors in my particular district to that statement, because many of them have

expressed great pleasure at the thought that they were going to have the connections made within the next few months. It is a congested area, especially in the eastern portion of the Subiaco electorate, and so far as I can learn that will be the last section to be linked up. The work is being done from the western end, but I hope that the Government, now that they have started the work, will push along with it in as rapid a manner as possible, so that the congested part to which I referred may be connected up at the earliest possible date. We in Subiaco are suffering from an obsolete system, and besides being obsolete it is costing the municipal council many thousands of pounds to keep the area entirely clean. I have not much more to say except that when the Government decided to open up the Daglish estate, it was considered that there were building allotments on the estate that might well have been utilised for workers' homes. I understand that a fair portion of the estate has been set aside for that purpose, but I regret that there is nothing on the Loan Estimates to induce me to believe that the Government intend to carry out this policy in the near future. I lodge a strong protest against the absence of money on the Loan Estimates for this purpose. There is an insufficiency of houses in the metropolitan area to-day; rents are extremely high, and as the Government have set aside a portion of the Daglish estate for workers' homes, I am at a loss to understand why they have not taken steps to continue their policy in that direction. Probably the Premier will say that the Government were not able to finance it. That is quite possible, but I trust that if there are to be workers' homes built in the forthcoming year, the Government will bear in mind the Daglish estate and not allow another 12 months to pass by before making a start. Workers' homes are necessary to enable that section of the community who are prepared to embark on these undertakings to do so, so as to reduce their cost of living. Generally speaking, I have no serious objection to any of the items included in the Loan Estimates. I could have wished that a little more had been provided for the development of agriculture because we are proceeding on reasonable and safe lines so long as we advance for that purpose 64 per cent. of our loan money. Whilst it may not be possible to do that each year, if that were laid down as a general prin-

ciple, there would be no difficulty about our receiving interest. The other 36 per cent. would probably be spent on reproductive works, which, likewise, would also return interest and sufficient for a sinking fund.

**MR. SLEEMAN** (Fremantle) [8.37]: I find that £93,956 authorised in 1915 for the road and railway bridge across the river at Fremantle is still to be carried over, and I also find that a sum of £72,405 authorised in 1923 for the deviation of the Fremantle railway line is being carried over. Seeing that in 1915 the then Government authorised something like £100,000 to be spent on necessary works at Fremantle, it is time we went on with the job. If it was necessary in 1915 to authorise the expenditure of £100,000 on the works to which I have referred, surely it must be more than ever necessary at the present time. Every year the railway bridge is becoming a greater danger, and it is time that we woke up and did a bit of work. It is all very well to carry over this sum of money from year to year, but if the works are to be carried out, and it is admitted that they are necessary, it is about time that something was done.

**Mr. North**: Do you favour any special site for the bridge?

**Mr. SLEEMAN**: I have no definite views on that subject, but if we could only decide to do away with the existing bridge we could soon determine on another site. I hope it will not be long before we shall be using that £93,000 instead of continuing to carry it over from year to year.

**Mr. E. B. Johnston**: It was proposed to put the bridge below Rocky Bay.

**Mr. SLEEMAN**: I am not much concerned as to where it is built, whether it is built where the present road bridge is, or whether it is constructed at Rocky Bay. All I want is that something shall be done so as to remove the existing danger. With regard to Rottnest Island, a few months ago something like £5,000 was spent in dredging a site for the new jetty in the vicinity of the existing settlement. Then after spending that sum of money we find that the department have gone back to patch up the old jetty. It will take a considerable sum of money to make that jetty safe. Things are pretty shaky in that particular quarter, and it is only a few months since the jetty was actually swinging and was hardly safe for the "Zephyr" to tie up to. Moreover, the site is two

miles from the existing settlement and people have either to walk to it or take the old horse tramway. After having spent £5,000 on the preliminary work for a new anchorage, I think the department should have gone on with the work. I notice that there is a sum of money on the Estimates for public buildings, and in this connection I would like to make an appeal on behalf of the Fremantle hospital.

**Mr. Panton**: It is pretty shaky.

**Mr. SLEEMAN**: As the member for Menzies says, it is very shaky; he never made a truer statement. If he were to walk around some of those verandahs he would have to do so carefully, otherwise he would fall through the floor and perhaps break his ankle. The wards are nearly as bad as the verandahs, and the medical and surgical wards particularly are in a bad state. The children's ward is a disgrace to any town. During the hot weeks the place in which the children are treated, was a veritable furnace, and, I have no doubt, accounted to some extent for the death of three infants. There are one or two electric fans in use, but they are of not much avail. I went through the hospital on a recent hot day, and the heat in that particular ward was enough to kill anything. The Minister should be able to tell us how much will be devoted to the Fremantle hospital. The kitchen at that institution is also a disgrace, and it is not right that the women should have to work in it when the temperature is so high. Women who are engaged in hospital duties should be given a little more than ordinary consideration. I have always said that people who are prepared to help themselves should be helped a little. The tuckshop there is not fit for anyone to go into for a cup of tea. With the expenditure of a few pounds, a small room could be provided near the gate or in front of the hospital where visitors could rest and enjoy a cup of tea in comfort, and the ladies' auxiliary would be able to make a few more pounds in the interests of the hospital and the inmates. In the little tuckshop they have now, those ladies are making about £4 a week, but if a decent room were provided they would probably double that return and more money would be available for the comfort of the inmates of the hospital. Then there is the Fremantle Harbour Trust which the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) made such a fuss about the other night. He talked about the

profits, but I hope that this year the Trust will make at least £14,000 more than they did last year, owing to the fact that that amount is due on account of the overseas ships that were attempting to bottle up the Fremantle harbour some weeks ago.

Mr. Thomson: That was an infernal shame.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It was a shame that such an attempt was made to bottle up the harbour.

Mr. Thomson: It was not the fault of the shipowners.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The ships stayed there and bottled up the harbour.

Mr. Thomson: Your men would not allow them to shift.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is a deliberate misstatement.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is perfectly right that the oversea shipping companies should pay those dues to the Harbour Trust. They remained in the harbour and would not, for the sake of a few pounds, pay the amount necessary and thus free the harbour. If we take the case of the Orient liner "Orsova" we find that by the payment of £400 she could have taken her departure for her Home port; but rather than do that she remained in the harbour bottling it up and helping to fight the seamen, at an expenditure of about £4,000. That was the liability the shipowners were prepared to incur rather than spend £400.

Mr. Thomson: Yours is quite an impartial judgment, of course!

Mr. SLEEMAN: I hope that the whole £14,000 will be collected and the next time these people pick on a battle ground they will not select Fremantle.

Mr. Thomson: Who picked it?

Mr. SLEEMAN: The overseas shipping people and Lord Incheape.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: I thought it was Mr. Houghton.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must keep to the subject.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Well, the member for Katanning was allowed to roam around the whole of the items the other night.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the hon. member was dealing with something concerning harbour works.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I notice that £10,000 is placed on the Estimates for new machinery for the State Implement Works. For some years past the works have been starved by

previous Governments. Of course we know that they did not sympathise with such a State trading concern, and had they got their way those Governments would have sold the works. I am pleased that the present Government are making an effort to bring the machinery up to date, and I hope that the works will be able to turn out many more implements of top quality in the course of a few months.

Mr. North: You do not consider that £10,000 is sufficient for that?

Mr. SLEEMAN: No. I trust the farmers will realise their responsibility to these works and will help to make them a success, especially when the new machinery is installed and the State Implement Works are able to turn out farming implements equal to the best that can be imported.

MR. C. P. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [8.50]: I will not traverse the whole of the ramifications of the Loan Estimates but merely deal with a few items to which I desire to allude. With the member for Subiaco (Mr. Richardson), I agree that it is only fair that those who are to enjoy privileges should pay for them. I am not so much concerned, however, with the metropolitan water supply as with agricultural water supplies. I would like to see a much larger vote than is provided on the loan schedule this year. Nothing in my opinion will be more conducive to bring about contentment amongst settlers than adequate agricultural water supplies. I consider that instead of £100,000 being set aside for that purpose, at least £1,000,000 should be earmarked. As it is, the provision of £100,000 covers drainage and irrigation works as well, and I am afraid that when the money under that heading is taken out, there will not be much left for agricultural water supplies. In conjunction with proper water supplies throughout the farming areas must go a more comprehensive railway policy than has been in existence for some time past. I agree with the statement made by the Premier to a deputation regarding the Karlgarin railway. I re-echo the Premier's wish that by this time next year there will be before Parliament a thumping big agricultural railway vote for the purpose of providing these much needed facilities. I am bitterly disappointed, in consequence of the restricted railway programme set out by the Government. For many years past

railways such as the Yarramony-Yorkrakine-Baandee, and the Brookton-Dale River railways have been promised. I believe that the Government should make provision for all these long-promised railways so as to enable them to be taken in hand straight away, or else wipe them off the slate so as to allow people to know where they are. It is about 20 years since promises were made to the settlers in the Yorkrakine district regarding the line out from Yarramony. The policy of wait, wait, wait is heart-breaking to the settlers concerned. We have had a long series of broken promises from various Governments and the people despair of ever getting their line constructed. If the Government launched out upon a bold policy, under which all these long-promised lines would be carried out, Parliament would stand behind them. The Brookton-Dale River railway has developed into a much bigger project than was at first anticipated. I wish to enlist the sympathies of the metropolitan members, more particularly those representing the Fremantle district. It is proposed to extend the Brookton-Dale River railway so that it will be practically a trunk line to Fremantle, thus cutting out the bottle necks in the metropolitan area and the heavy freight charges and heavy grades involved in the operations between the city and Chidlow's Well. I believe that if the Government were seized with the real situation they would not hesitate for one moment. The district is equal to any other part of the wheat areas that have been opened up in the State. It is essential that the freight from those areas should go to the natural port for the district, namely Fremantle, by the most direct route. The present railway system leads east from Brookton and there is the advantage of having 50 or 60 miles already constructed, although the grades are not altogether suitable, and may have to be altered. But from Corrigin eastward extending from Kondinin and Karlgarin the Government should take the line on indefinitely to the east, south or south-east, with Fremantle as the natural port, and it is a shame that the settlers have to incur the extra freight involved now in taking their goods around through Narrogin or through Merredin. I hope the Premier will be able to redeem the promise he made the other day and that before the next Estimates are introduced we shall see a larger provision on the Loan Estimates for agricultural railways. I am grateful to the

Honorary Minister controlling hospitals for the sympathetic manner in which he has met various requests from constituents in my electorate. I hope the Treasurer will advance him more money to enable him to pursue the good work he is engaged upon. I have been fortunate in securing several new schools and I hope to be in a similar position next year in the interests of my electorate. As to the State Implement Works, I think the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), who talked so much about that subject has a good deal to learn yet.

Mr. Sleeman: I do not think you have too many of the State implements on your farm.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: They will have to be a lot better before I have them. If the implement works were able to turn out a good article, naturally the farmers would not import their machines, because, although nine out of ten farmers may not agree with the policy of State trading concerns, they would not import machines from the Eastern States if they could secure them equally as favourably here. There is no chance of bludgeoning the farmers into taking State implements if they do not consider they are suitable. Regarding the State hotels, I thank the Treasurer for having made available money that will at least enable one State hotel in Western Australia to be placed on a proper basis. I refer to the hotel at Corrigin. By the expenditure of the additional funds we will have a more presentable building and the travelling public should experience more comfort there than has been the case in the past.

**MR. MILLINGTON** (Leederville) [9.0]: All the items relating to rural production have been dealt with in a loud and confident tone, whereas anything affecting the metropolitan area has to be introduced almost in a whisper and with due apologies.

Mr. J. H. Smith: What about the metropolitan water supply.

Mr. MILLINGTON: There are matters that affect the metropolitan area, and that do not figure so prominently in the Loan Estimates as they should. I think I can demonstrate that provision is as justifiable there as is the provision for some of the primary production items. The metropolitan area contains a large number of primary producers—market gardeners and milk producers. Perth would not have a milk supply but for Osborne Park, which provides about

75 per cent. of the milk. It also provides the same percentage of vegetables consumed in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Sampson: Do not forget the south-suburban districts.

Mr. MILLINGTON: They would benefit if the more important part of Osborne Park were attended to. I wish to refer to the need for a central metropolitan market. Last session a select committee inquired and recommended that, as at that time the Government could not find the necessary money with which to construct a central market, the City Council should be given the necessary authority to do so. That recommendation was voted out by this House. It was contended that we would not be justified in giving the City Council power to provide the market. We were told that in good time the State would accept its responsibility. Already the Government have a suitable site which is being put to little use, and the City Council also have a suitable site, but we are still humbugging along with obsolete markets, and the producers who depend upon the metropolitan market are being handicapped.

Mr. Sampson: And the present markets are scattered all over the city.

Mr. MILLINGTON: As late as Monday week the market gardeners of Osborne Park held a meeting. They are getting desperate. Theirs is a wonderfully productive district. It produces about a quarter of a million pounds worth of produce a year. From land fronting a mile of road, no less than £60,000 worth of produce is taken per annum. Because of the lack of market facilities, it is difficult to supply people direct. The select committee pointed out that Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney have up-to-date central markets, and that there the producer and the consumer alike benefit. We are lagging behind. On Monday week, a meeting at Osborne Park was attended by over 100 market gardeners. When so many hard working men give their time to attend a meeting and attempt to organise markets, it shows that their position is desperate. Since the Government will not provide a central market or permit the City Council to do so, those growers made inquiries about getting a central market for themselves. They had a site, but the city health authority insisted upon the floor space being concreted. That would have meant considerable expense and loss of time. The producers concluded that

they could not undertake the work, but decided to co-operate with the growers at Spearwood and the growers mentioned by the member for Swan. They have arranged to meet the Minister by way of deputation and ask the Government to take immediate steps to provide a central market. The reports of the various market gardeners would satisfy anyone that it is impossible for these men to carry on profitably under present conditions. Reference was made to what had been done at Spearwood. The onion growers there were compelled to co-operate for their own protection. Onions were selling at such a rate that it was impossible for growers to make a living. They formed a sort of co-operative society with a view to limiting the quantity of onions marketed each week, and by doing so they are able to command about 11s. per cwt. The market gardeners at Osborne Park reported that they had sold onions as low as 2s. 6d. per cwt. Representatives of Spearwood growers were present that night, and they decided to co-operate to limit the supply in order that they might get a reasonable price.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: On the same day you could not buy onions in the metropolitan area for less than 3d. per lb.

Mr. MILLINGTON: That is the difficulty. One of the auctioneers was present, and he agreed that the position was becoming desperate. The growers contend that Eastern States producers close to the metropolitan areas are able to sell their stuff by private treaty. Producers at a distance can sell through agents or auctioneers. Unless local growers have this opportunity, it is claimed they cannot possibly continue. If a central market were established, growers could market their produce direct without treating through agents or auctioneers. They could trade with the public, with retail or with wholesale distributors. Given one central market they would be able to co-operate and to an extent fix a reasonable price, but the first essential for their organisation is a central market. Since everyone is asking the Government to assist and since it has been the policy of the Government for years past to assist, they want to know the reason for the continued delay. They have been waiting for the Government to move, especially after the Government refused to give the City Council power to erect a central market.

Mr. Panton: It was Parliament that refused to give the City Council that power.



Mr. MILLINGTON: When the report of the select committee was rejected, we pointed out that the position would be unaltered for 12 months, but we were laughed at. Yet nothing has been done during the last 12 months. The present Government have the opportunity, and can find money for nearly everything else. A good deal of the loan money being provided for country development is for the benefit of individuals. The money we require for a central market and to which we are entitled—failing the granting of it, the City Council should be given power to establish a market—would benefit not only a large body of producers but the general public. I understand that elaborate buildings would not be required; great expense would not be entailed to provide a market. It is estimated that £25,000 would be sufficient to meet present needs. I do not wish the Government to go further than erect the markets, control them, and act as landlords. The growers would be able to do the necessary organising. A central market would make it possible for producers to earn a decent living, which they cannot do at present. I regret that no mention has been made of provision for a central market. Members representing country constituents who have so much to say about assisting the producers must realise that the big question confronting this State is that of providing markets and better marketing facilities. I am aware that for certain commodities the demand exceeds the supply, but in view of the increased production, the difficulty soon will be to find markets. Producers have found it hard to get a reasonable price for their milk. A deputation waited on the Government to ask for assistance for a co-operative company that had been formed, and the Government acceded to the request. A site has been secured and the erection of a central building has been started, and I believe the Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Company will be able to handle not only their own product, but the product from the Peel Estate. We are informed that there are 2,000 cows on the Peel Estate. An attempt was made to get the Peel Estate producers to contract to sell their milk at 1s. 2d. per gallon, whereas the recognised price in the metropolitan area is 1s. 7d., that being considered just about a paying proposition. Unless the Government had assisted the Osborne Park milk producers and given them an opportunity to help the

Peel Estate producers, as well as those in the outer metropolitan areas, these men would have been sweated to the extent of having to sell their product at a hopelessly unpayable price.

Mr. Sampson: Do you know the milk producers are finding £7,000 for it?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, and the Government are doing their utmost to assist the co-operative company. I wish the Government could also be induced to assist the primary producers at Osborne Park. All they ask is that a market should be provided. It is noteworthy that the auctioneers and agents in the various metropolitan markets agree that the present system is obsolete, and that a central market should be instituted. So we have unanimity at last. The grower, the producer, and the middleman agree that we should have a central market, but nothing is being done to start it.

Mr. Sampson: Will voluntary co-operation bring about unanimity?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I believe part of the difficulty is that market gardeners and fruit growers have been misled. When we should have been discussing marketing facilities we have been discussing an alleged fruit marketing Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not discuss that particular legislation.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Seeing that a general demand exists for marketing facilities, more attention should have been given to them and less to the theoretical side. We have practically the unanimous opinion of growers in the metropolitan and country areas that they want central markets. Those engaged in the trade have also agreed on the point, and all concerned are justified in asking that the Government should provide them. If the Government are not prepared to find the money they should give the City Council the necessary power, because that body is prepared to go on with the business.

Mr. Sampson: It is the right body, too.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Government must not adopt a dog-in-the-manger attitude, and refuse permission to the City Council if they will not do the job themselves. In the circumstances the growers in the metropolitan area, in Fremantle, and surrounding districts have every right to demand that this question should receive immediate attention. I now come to the question of water supplies. My constituency has suffered more than any other from shortage of water. I

give credit to the Minister for Works for the active steps he has taken to improve the reticulation. That has considerably improved the supply. As to what should be done to replenish the supply is a matter for experts. There is no doubt the scheme will have to be continually extended. Even now, I understand, supplies are being cut down, otherwise it would be impossible to make the water suffice. Whoever is in control of the metropolitan water supply will have to see to it that extensions are continually being made. That is the experience of all great cities. Perth has suffered in the past because insufficient attention was paid to providing for the future. Possibly we are spending more than we should spend because the supply of water has not been equal to the demand. The Government have no reason to apologise for the amount that is on the Estimates. The question will have to be closely watched; otherwise there will be another general shortage. The money on the Estimates is justified, and will doubtless have to be increased as time goes on in order that ample provision may be made for the metropolitan area. I am also interested in the question of roads. I refer particularly to the main road that starts from Charles-street and goes through Wanneroo. If that is not a main road, I do not know what it is. It is a difficult matter to keep it in repair. It is almost impossible with the rates that are levied on the struggling settlers to keep it in proper condition. It is almost impassable in many places. I hope something will be done to assist the local residents in keeping that road in order. I now come to the question of tramway extensions. A board was recently appointed to inquire into this matter. I believe if they had power they would recommend certain extensions. The system is suffering because these extensions have not been made. The buses are to a certain extent robbing the trams. Unless more trams are provided for the metropolitan area, other means of transport will be found.

Mr. North: They cannot have it both ways.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Since the Government take the responsibility of providing adequate transport, it is their responsibility to see that the necessary extensions are made. It is no use whining about the buses unless we provide an adequate and proper tramway system for the metropolitan area.

Mr. Panton: Why not put on a few more buses?

Mr. MILLINGTON: It is suggested that the buses are unfairly competing with the trams, and that possibly the tramway system has become obsolete. Wherever buses have been established the demand by the public is that the tramways should be extended. I refer particularly to the Cambridge-street extension, the Angove-street and the Walcott-street extension. In each of these cases a bus service has been instituted, and robs the tramways to a certain extent. The population is growing in all these centres. I believe these extensions will be recommended by the board.

Mr. Panton: They cannot get out of it.

The Minister for Railways: What about Lord-street?

Mr. MILLINGTON: Others can talk about that.

Mr. Teesdale: And Cambridge-street?

Mr. MILLINGTON: If the board is a competent one, and I believe it is, that will be its first recommendation.

Mr. Corboy: Would you accept the board's recommendation?

Mr. MILLINGTON: If it is made after hearing evidence. This extension should have been made 20 years ago. We are going to see to it that it is not delayed much longer. I hope we shall have a definite pronouncement from the Government with regard to metropolitan markets. A deputation will wait upon the Minister on this matter within a few days. We should also like to know that the report of the Tramway Board will be presented at an early date. Our people have been patiently awaiting the result of the inquiry, and want to know what is going to be done. I trust these two matters will receive proper consideration.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [9.25]: There are a few matters concerning Claremont and Cottesloe to which I would like to refer. A lot of the trouble we have on the Loan Estimates is due to the State being overloaded with enterprises it cannot maintain or extend. In many cases the business is being offered, but the State cannot extend its enterprises, and cannot give the service. I am pleased to think that the water works mentioned on last year's Estimates have been completed. The main pipes have been laid and the reservoir has been finished. Unfortunately, the water is not yet available to run through the pipes, and Claremont is as yet without a good water supply. I understand that a booster pump will shortly be

installed at the Claremont reservoir, which will add to the pressure of the water supply for Claremont and Cottesloe. That is a temporary expedient, but will no doubt last until the main scheme water arrives. The fact that £75,000 has been spent in new mains and a reservoir at Buckland Hill shows little cause for complaint. It is unfortunate the water is not yet available. I am glad the Minister has made available the services of the Engineer-in-Chief to look into sewerage questions in my district next year. A conference of local bodies will be called to devise a scheme for overcoming the difficulty faced by other districts where the deep sewerage has been installed. I believe that during the next few years we shall be able to devise a scheme for the installation of a separate system for each house at a cost of about £25, and that such a scheme will overcome the sewerage difficulty and save an outlay of about half a million of pounds. Money certainly cannot be wasted in a district like Claremont. There is difficulty on the part of local bodies in maintaining their roads. I refer particularly to the Claremont and Cottesloe municipalities, and the Peppermint Grove, Cottesloe Beach and Claremont road boards. All those five bodies have no call on the usual taxation every year in the way of traffic fees, which are taken from them. They see measures like the Bill for the taxation of petrol brought forward, but from these they will not benefit one jot. Yet they have their own road work to maintain, while enormous numbers of cars are using the local roads. This is a matter for the Minister for Works to consider. Unless the question is settled speedily, the local bodies will have great difficulty in maintaining roads. The State is anxious to enter into trading enterprises, and therefore I must refer to the matter of electric cooking extension in Cottesloe. About 18 months ago Mr. Taylor, the manager of the Government electricity supply, went to the Old Country, one of his objects being to bring back the plant necessary for the installation of electric cookers in Cottesloe. Unfortunately, however, the Government turned down the provision, on these very Estimates, of £2,000 for cookers, the reason being the expense. This shows how awkward it is when Governments take on such enterprises and will not go the whole hog. The Government have a monopoly of current, and all the streets in the districts are now installed to carry the current for the stoves, but the stoves themselves are not

forthcoming. The housewives expected to be able to go somewhere and hire stoves, but unfortunately that cannot be done. The stoves not having been provided, the local bodies are now negotiating for installation of gas—a retrograde step, because gas cooking is not comparable to electric cooking. It seems a great pity that for the sake of an additional £2,000 needed to inaugurate the scheme, about a thousand houses should lose the benefit of cheap electric cooking. The Government have expended £30,000 or £40,000 in installing the electric plant, but for the sake of the proverbial haporth of tar they do not complete the work, and in consequence are able in the main only to supply current for lighting. This is a small matter, but the present is the only opportunity of bringing it before the Government. I urge the Minister, even at this juncture, to go into the question with his officers, and see whether the stoves cannot be supplied; otherwise gas will be installed, and all this good custom will go to a company instead of to the Government. Mr. Taylor was to have manufactured the stoves here, which would have meant another local industry. I hope the question will receive adequate consideration from the Government. On another small matter, the question of subways and ramps, I would point out that throughout the metropolitan area there are many overhead bridges. As the steps wear away, it would be advisable to replace them by sloping ramps or approaches. At Cottesloe the station master is anxious that this should be done; the cost will be about £80. It seems wrong to go on year after year replacing steps when ramps, which are much more convenient, especially in wet weather, might be installed. On the subject of tramways extension, Claremont residents are anxious that the Government should make a slight connection—about a quarter of a mile is involved—between the present Claremont tram and the Crawley tram, thereby reducing the time of transit to the city from 45 minutes to 25. The Claremont citizens regard this matter as important. Next, and lastly, I would ask the Premier and the Minister for Railways to consider whether the 3ft. 6in. gauge is going to remain with us for all time—whether they consider that it should apply to railway extensions for, say, the next 20 years. The Federal Government have shown activity during the last

three or four years in extending the standard railway gauge. The present might be a favourable time for bringing the matter to the notice of the proper authorities in the Old Country. Those who most criticise our 3ft. 6in. gauge and the break of gauge, are visitors from Home. The occasion might be taken to hit them back by letting it be known that if the British Government like to put the matter in order for us we shall be only too glad to accept money for that purpose. Instead of merely talking about the matter, it would be well to spend 10 or 15 millions in rectifying the position. If, on the other hand, our Government consider that the 3ft. 6in. gauge is to be our standard and that the break of gauge, with all its difficulties and economic losses, is to continue for all time, I have no more to say. My opinion is that the British Government, now they have been shown that Western Australia is a place in which they can settle many thousands of people, may regard the present as a good time to face the question of putting our railways in order. It would mean a huge army of employees here for a time, and many of them would eventually become group settlers.

**MR. A. WANSBROUGH** (Albany) [9.40]: Like other members I desire to raise my voice on behalf of my district. I greatly regret that these Loan Estimates make no provision for the construction of the Denmark-Nornalup railway. Possibly under the new migration agreement something might be done towards the construction of the line. If the Government decide to build the railway under that scheme, I hope there will be no undue delay. The railway would mean great encouragement to group settlement. I am also disappointed at finding on the Estimates no mention of the Tudor-Denmark deviation. That deviation is essential prior to the construction of the Denmark-Nornalup line, because the present grade is one in 40, whereas the deviation would make it one in 80. The two projects in question have been before us year after year, and it is high time something was done. Many members have spoken about the supply of additional rolling stock for our railways. Some of them have complained, but I fail to see that there is much to grumble about. Only minor delays have occurred, and these are due to the diversion of wheat from its natural ports, in some instances involving unnecessary haulage of as much as 150 or

160 miles. It is not reasonable to expect the Government to spend thousands of pounds in building trucks which will be lying idle for six months out of the 12. Another regret I have to express is the absence from these Estimates of an item to provide office accommodation for the official staffs attached to the Assembly. Members will agree that something should be done, and that the existing unsightly iron offices should be done away with. We ought to have something up to date in their place. The other evening I had the pleasure of going into the Chief "Hansard" Reporter's room at 9 o'clock, and he was there dictating the speeches of members to a lady typist. Both the Chief "Hansard" Reporter and the lady reminded me of two boiled lobsters. This was due to the heat of the room. Better accommodation will, I am sure, be welcome by the "Hansard" typistes and reporters.

**MR. HUGHES** (East Perth) [9.44]: After the eloquent address of the member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) I must say a word for the Lord-street tramways extension, a matter of only three-eighths of a mile. Certainly, the present Government have shown themselves particularly sympathetic to the metropolitan area. Indeed, the metropolitan area has received more consideration from the present Government than from any other Government of the last 10 or 12 years.

**Mr. Teesdale**: You need not show them up like that.

**Mr. HUGHES**: I hope the board inquiring into the building of further tramway lines will consider the advisableness of levying a tax on the owners of unimproved land that will be served by tramway construction. If the board went into the improved value of vacant land brought about by the extension of tramways, the figures would be found to be astonishing. I know a property at the northern end of the city covering several acres. About a mile of tramway extension was put in, and the value of that land went up by leaps and bounds. If the Government are to find money to build tramways past large areas of vacant land, and the landowners are to take the unearned increment, it will be very unfair.

**The Premier**: I think some of the agitation for extensions is due to the land-

holders, who want the trams because of the increased values they bring.

Mr. HUGHES: One gentleman was most persistent that I should introduce a deputation to the Minister for Railways asking for a tramway. However, I discovered that most of the land to be served was owned by the gentleman in question. I know a man who held two blocks of land for just on 20 years and would willingly have parted with them for £40. Suddenly he found the Como tramway passing quite close to his land, whereupon he had no difficulty in selling his blocks for £90. In that instance the State made him a gift of £50 by putting down a tramway. The board should go into the improved values of land adjacent to tramways, and the House should then pass legislation to bring to the State that unearned increment. The member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) expatiated upon the ability of the board. If the board really be a competent one, I feel sure they will first of all build the Lord-street extension. All the proposed extensions are justified, but the Government are being called upon to find money in order to make gifts to private landholders. I suggest that the Premier authorise the board to go into the question of improved land values consequent on the building of tramways, with a view to bringing down legislation that will return to the State the money that naturally belongs to the people.

*[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]*

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [9.50]: I want to bring a few matters of importance under the notice of the Committee, principally relating to the opening up and developing of the South-West generally. I regret to find that in many instances money that should have been made available on the Estimates is not made available. Railways that have been promised for a number of years have not been taken into consideration. A certain amount has been placed on the Estimates for the relaying of the railway from Jarnadup to Pemberton. That is a very necessary work. But no provision has been made for the continuation of that line from Pemberton to Denmark. It is the policy of the Government that settlement shall not be encouraged beyond 12½ miles from existing railways. I want to ask the Government how they reconcile their action in not placing money on the Esti-

mates to continue this railway when they are expending vast sums of money on group settlements more than 30 miles from the line?

The Premier: But close to one of the best roads in the State.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That shows the Premier's lack of knowledge of the climatic conditions of the South-West. It is the policy of the Government to make the road boards maintain the roads after they have been constructed by the Government. How can the Warren Road Board maintain that road, when it passes through 14 miles of State forest from which no rates can be collected?

The Premier: Oh, well, the board will do like everybody else, come to the Government for assistance.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: And be sent away empty-handed, as they have been by previous Governments.

The Premier: Empty-handed? Then what is this 4½ millions for?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier must know that those roads will not stand up to heavy traffic in wet weather. I want to know whether the Premier is going to carry on that railway.

The Premier: Now you have just passed the 23 million mark.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Well, the country warrants it. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst group settlers, not only at Northcliffe, but in the Denmark area also.

The Premier: That is a £20,000 per mile job.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, I know that, but only down to the Warren River, about six miles; and those six miles will serve to feed the Pemberton mills with splendid timber. I am sorry that railway is not provided for on the Estimates. The people down there will be disheartened. They have had to face great difficulties and are becoming more disheartened every day. The present Government came in with a direct mandate to build that line. They have cheap money available for the purpose.

The Premier: We will build it if you give us time.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is an absolute breach of faith that the line is not being proceeded with. The greatest critic of group settlement, the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) says he is quite sure the group settlers south of Manjimup will make good. That district is going ahead by leaps

and bounds and requires only railway communication. The other night the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) referred to the Yorkraikine railway, which he said had been promised for 17 years. I agree that the settlers are entitled to that railway. But settlers have been out between Boyup Brook and Cranbrook for the past 60 or 70 years, and have been promised a railway ever since Lord Forrest's time. Yet there is no money on the Estimates for even a survey of the line. I have had innumerable letters from those settlers, and to-day I received a wire asking me to arrange still another interview with the Premier on the subject. So much do the Government think of that country south and east of Bridgetown that not one acre is open for selection; it is all held by the Government for group settlement.

The Premier: There is an enormous sum of money for the South-West on these Estimates.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But what is the use of expending a great deal of money in the South-West when the settlement is 30 miles from the nearest railway? Only by railway can the heavy traffic be carried over that country during the wet season. If we had only a light railway, with but two trains a week, it would do to begin with. The Government at long last decided to throw open the town blocks at Pemberton. The prices they realised reminded one of a gold rush. It must be encouraging to the Government to know that people from all over the State considered that country had great possibilities, and consequently were prepared to pay such high prices for blocks for trading purposes. I want to know whether it is the intention of the Government to carry out their original policy. I give them credit for having opened up that country by establishing the State sawmill, which was part and parcel of their programme. The Government should go further and connect that State sawmill with Flinders Bay and in that manner save heavy haulage and at the same time open up a magnificent area of country.

The Premier: What route would that take?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: From Pemberton to Flinders Bay, a distance of about 50 miles. It would really open up the finest country in the South-West and there are no engineering difficulties of any description. I do not see any provision made on the Estimates for the establishment of butter factories to serve the groups. This State, the English Gov-

ernment and the Commonwealth Government have a lot of money invested in the South-West, and the State Government must know that it is impossible for the people down there to make good as dairy farmers unless they have butter factories almost at their doors. If we are to establish people in the South-West we must give them ordinary facilities which will help them to make good. Otherwise we might just as well be throwing our money into the ocean. Private enterprise made an attempt to start a milk refining factory there and a butter factory, but the propositions fell through, because not sufficient money could be raised. It is impossible to expect a new settler to take up £10 worth of shares in such a concern. Therefore it is the duty of the Government to establish these factories. Later the Government can go to the settlers and say "These factories cost us so much. It is your duty now to see that they pay."

The Minister for Agriculture: But you are always squealing about State enterprises.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Nothing of the kind. It was my vote that saved State enterprises. I wish to say a few words about the re-grading of the railway lines in the South-West. A great deal of time and money is lost through the difficult grades that exist.

The Premier: We have done more in the last few years in that direction than was ever done before.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am aware of that, but the Government have not been re-grading those lines that require the work to be done urgently. The re-grading is being carried out where it is not urgently necessary, for instance between Perth and Bunbury where the line is as level as a billiard table. Re-grading should have been carried out between Donnybrook and Manjimup and between Brunswick and Collie. The grades there should be one in 70 or one in 65. At the present time between six and eight trains a day are run along grades of one in 40 and they carry 150 tons, whereas as soon as they get on to level country the load is increased to a tonnage of from 750 to 1,000. I have been advocating this for years and I have always pointed out that it was bad engineering in the first place. We should borrow a great deal of money for railway construction, especially when we have such very fine country to open up. If the Premier would only throw open some of the forest reserves, considerable revenue could be obtained. The forestry officers could mark the

trees that have grown to maturity and which are to-day deteriorating. Because they are under 80 inches, no one is allowed to cut them. The Minister should use his authority and open up these Crown lands and so enable the State to derive a good deal more revenue. We should remove the trees that are deteriorating and then establish a proper system of reforestation. I hope that the Premier will see his way clear to order a survey to be made of the railway between Boyup Brook and Cranbrook which was so strongly recommended by the Advisory Board. He should also tell us whether he intends to get a survey made of the line between Manjimup and Mt. Barker.

The Premier: There is an item on the Estimates for surveys of new lines.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I will take the opportunity to speak on that later. The Government should realise that there are many group settlers 25 and 30 miles from a railway and they should proceed without delay with the construction of the railway that has been already authorised. I would make it a criminal offence to settle people on land that was more than 12 miles from a railway. The people who are at Northcliffe require all the assistance we can give them. It has been said that the line would cost £20,000 a mile to build. I am given to understand that after the first six or seven miles, when the Warren River has been crossed, there are no engineering difficulties. The £20,000 a mile is the bogey that has been put up. After the Warren River has been crossed the line goes through plain country and it can be laid for £5,000 a mile. I trust that the Government will see their way to extend facilities to the settlers at Northcliffe.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Railways and Tramways, £887,651:*

Item, Additions, Improvements to opened railways, £100,000:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I would like to know from the Minister for Railways whether anything has been done to cope with the dust arising from the woodworking machines at the Midland shops. I would also like to know whether steps are being taken to establish communication between the north and south side of the township of Bassendean.

Mr. THOMSON: I would like to know whether any provision has been made for an overhead bridge at Tambellup.

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: Has any provision been made for an overhead bridge at Mt. Barker? Three serious accidents have happened there during the last few years.

Mr. MANN: Has the Minister given consideration to the advisableness of adopting a uniform system of weighing produce consigned from the country to the city? Merchants complain that upon getting a truck of chaff or grain they frequently find that it weighs from 5 or 6 to 10 or 11 cwt. short, the difference being always against the customer, who pays freight on the larger quantity. Either the system of weighing is deficient or the country weighbridges are obsolete.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: That statement is not right.

Mr. MANN: Merchants complain that they pay freight on large quantities of produce which they do not receive, and that they have to apply for refunds.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: As the member for Guildford knows, his proposals involve an expenditure of £12,000 or £13,000. I am sorry that at this stage it is not possible to find that amount of money for those purposes. The items for the Railway Department on these Estimates originally totalled £980,000, which amount has been cut down to some £400,000. Like previous Governments, the present Government endeavoured to do such things as are for the undoubted convenience of the public, but matters of a reproductive character must receive prior consideration. Indeed, many items that would be reproductive have had to be cut out because the Premier could not find the necessary funds. The Bassendean bridge would certainly be a convenience, but the expense involved is at present too heavy. The same remark applies to the dust-removing plant, which would be a great convenience to the Midland Junction workshops employees. I was particularly keen on that item, because I consider that a Government department has no right to shelter itself behind the fact of being a State concern. If it were a private concern, action could be taken under the Factories and Shops Act. I am strongly sympathetic towards the proposal, and trust that it will appear on next year's Estimate.

Item, Perth Electric Tramways and extensions, £23,000:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Tramway Advisory Committee are developing in an

extraordinary manner. Apparently they have been appointed to review work already accomplished. A Royal Commission went into the question of tramway extension, and I understand the then Opposition agreed that the Commission had done their work and that the decisions were to be honoured if the then Opposition were returned to power. Various members, myself among them, have pledged themselves on the hustings to the Royal Commission's conclusions.

The Premier: There was no concurrence so far as I was concerned. I did not pledge myself in any way whatever regarding tramway extensions. Of course every candidate could pledge himself in any way he chose.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I understand that the party as a party agreed to the Royal Commission's conclusions, including the order of construction. By the appointment of the Tramway Advisory Committee the Government might placate one section to the detriment of another. I do not like these boards and committees, because their decisions and recommendations frequently result in nothing but complication.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Royal Commission referred to by the member for Guildford was appointed by the previous Government. We held a number of sittings regarding proposed tramway extensions in the metropolitan area. I never heard that either the then Government or the then Opposition were bound by the Commission's recommendations.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We took your advice.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, as far as it suited the late Government to do so. However, the member for Northam was away in England at the time. In his absence the previous Government started the Como tramway, after the Commission had been appointed but before they had begun their investigations. Had the Commission sat earlier, the Como fiasco would never have occurred. Like the member for Guildford I was surprised at the appointment of the Advisory Committee. The late Government also disregarded the Commission's recommendations regarding the route of the Claremont tramway.

Mr. CLYDESDALE: The reason for the appointment of the Royal Commission was

a request made by metropolitan members. It had been argued that bus competition interfered to such an extent with tramways that this was not a proper time to extend them. I feel sure the Advisory Committee will give the lie to that assertion. If the Royal Commission had not been appointed, the old bogey would have been trotted out all the time, "We cannot construct any further tramways while we have the motor bus competition."

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Harbours and Rivers, £251,795:*

Item, Fremantle Harbour Works, £75,000:

Mr. SAMPSON: I regret that again there is no provision for a pre-cooling shed. Time and again our fruit shippers have stressed the importance of pre-cooling fruit that is going aboard. As the quantity of apples, pears, and oranges being sent overseas is increasing, it is important that the decision arrived at some years ago should be carried into effect. However, I can find no reference to it.

The Premier: That being so, you cannot discuss it.

Mr. SAMPSON: Then the Government are not giving consideration to the fruit-growers. It is a great pity that the increasing demands of the fruit industry should not be considered by the Government.

*Item—Improvements to Harbours and Rivers, £15,000:*

Mr. SLEEMAN: I take it this includes the Rottneest jetty. Does this mean that the Government are going on with the new jetty, or that they are to patch up the old jetty?

The Premier: To patch up; that is all.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Water Supply and Sewerage, £740,886:*

*Item—Water Supply in Agricultural Districts:*

Mr. LINDSAY: I should like to know from the Minister whether there is any intention of going on with the No. 1 scheme.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: That matter is under consideration. The Premier, when introducing the Loan Estimates, referred to an



amount of something like £250,000 for the rock catchment areas.

Mr. SAMPSON: I should like to ask the Minister whether provision is made for the Parkerville extension?

The Premier: That is not an agricultural district.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, it is.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Parkerville extension, like others from the 30in. main, will receive consideration during the year. Up to the present the Parkerville people have not complied with the conditions. When they do, their request will be considered.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £106,000:*

Mr. CHESSON: I should like to know if there is anything here for diamond drill boring. Some time ago the Minister promised that three diamond drills would be made available. Also I should like to know whether there is any provision for installing at State batteries a fire assay plant for the use of people endeavouring to run big propositions where panning does not give any indication of the value of the lode. In such instances, the only satisfactory way is to take sectional samples and submit them to fire assay. Some provision should be made either for installing fire assay plants or for utilising the services of the manager of the State battery to assist the prospector in arriving at a true value.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am pleased that the Government have seen fit to provide additional money to develop some of our mining areas by diamond drilling. A recent example is to be found at the Wiluna mines where some highly satisfactory work has been done. Diamond drilling is a very expensive process, and it is of no use attempting it except under proper supervision. There are in Western Australia large known ore bodies that should be prospected with the diamond drill. It is almost impossible to interest private enterprise in this work, and so if it be necessary that gold mining should continue, it is necessary that this initial work should be carried out by somebody. When Sir James Mitchell was Premier and the proposal was submitted to him, he said, "If we diamond drilled one of those areas and found values, what would we do with the mine?" My reply was, "It

is easy to dispose of a mine once you locate it." It could be sold by tender or auction.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Or worked as a State trading concern.

Mr. DAVY: Even the member for Guildford would not relish it as a State trading concern.

Mr. LAMBERT: If a mine were located, speculators or investors would be sufficiently interested to offer a price. I hope a vigorous policy will be carried on. Within a mile of the Coolgardie post office over a million pounds worth of gold was produced in a comparatively few years, and only one shaft is down to a depth of 900 feet. I hope the recommendations of Mr. Kingsley Thomas will not be overlooked, and that some diamond drilling will be done in the Coolgardie area.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We propose to do some diamond drilling this year. The Under Secretary for Mines has been instructed to make arrangements for diamond drilling at the north end of Kalgoorlie, where an area has been reserved for the purpose, and after that we shall go on to Coolgardie.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote — Development of Agriculture, £2,250,300:*

Mr. HUGHES: Some time ago it was pointed out that an air compressor installed at Fremantle had been debited to the Wyndham Meat Works. It is unfair to debit a State trading concern with machinery supplied to a competitor. Have the proper adjustments been made?

The Premier: I do not think so.

Mr. HUGHES: So that Wyndham is still paying interest and sinking fund on that compressor.

The Premier: If it was so at the time.

Mr. HUGHES: It is most unfair that Wyndham should be charged up with the £12,000.

Mr. THOMSON: I agree with that.

Mr. HUGHES: An adjusting entry should be put through.

Mr. SAMPSON: Some fruit submitted for competition in the packed export class won a prize, and it was suggested that it should be held in cold storage to be exhibited at the August show. The grower did something helpful to the industry, and he should not be called upon to pay the cold storage charges. Yet I understand that the regula-

tions do not permit of fruit being held in this way without charge. I hope the Minister will consider amending the regulation.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Roads and Bridges, public buildings, etc., £220,962:*

Item, Perth Causeway reinstatement, £200:

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: A small amount is to be spent on the Causeway. It is necessary that the traffic congestion on the Causeway should be relieved by the construction of another bridge between the Causeway and Guildford in some convenient part of the metropolitan area. Bayswater is probably the ideal place for another bridge. Will it be possible for something to be done in this matter at an early date?

(Mr. Lutey resumed the Chair.)

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no thought of constructing any other bridge over the river this year, or of doing anything more to the Causeway this year.

Item, Public buildings (including sewerage and equipment new buildings), £97,126:

Mr. THOMSON: I would draw the attention of the Minister for Works to the accommodation provided for the officers of the Katanning branch of the Agricultural Bank. The accommodation is quite insufficient. It is suggested that the courthouse should be used for the bank, and that a new courthouse should be erected.

The Minister for Works: The matter has not yet come before me.

Mr. SLEEMAN: What is it proposed to spend on additions to the Fremantle Hospital?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A start will be made with the work this year, but I cannot say how much will be done.

Item, Loans and grants to local authorities for erection of country hospitals, £19,185:

Mr. THOMSON: This amount appears very small.

The Premier: It is more than the amount spent last year. We have been very generous in the matter of country hospitals.

Item, Urgent minor works throughout North-West, £4,568:

Mr. LAMOND: What does this item include?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The items are all set out on page 29 of the Loan Estimates.

Vote put and passed.

*Votes—Other undertakings, £163,500; Lands Improvement Loan Fund, £31,498—agreed to.*

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 9th December, 1925.*

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

### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. E. Rose, leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (South-West) on the ground of urgent private business.

### BILL—BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and passed.

### BILL—LAND DRAINAGE.

Report of Committee adopted.