

**Legislative Council,***Tuesday, 8th December, 1925.*

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

**QUESTION—DRAINAGE, BENDER.***Potato Crops destroyed.*

Hon. A. BURVILL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that the potato growers of Benger were awarded damages for the destruction of their crops, caused by the construction of certain drainage works in that district by the Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Department? 2, If so, what was the amount of damages awarded?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The claim of one grower (Charles Lionel Clarke) was submitted to arbitration, and £420 was awarded as damages.

**PAPERS—WATER SUPPLY, HARVEY WEIR.**

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, ordered: That there be laid on the Table of the House—1, copy of the letter giving the capacity of the Harvey weir, including the river flow, as appears on departmental file; 2, cost of weir; 3, copy of the recommendation by Mr. A. E. Arney for raising the weir by means of a shutter, dated 12th August, 1921; 4, copy of letter from Mr. O'Brien approving, dated 1st September, 1921; 5, copy of letter of endorsement by Mr. Thompson, ex-Engineer-in-Chief, dated 27th September, 1921; 6, copy of letter from Mr. O'Brien urging this work, dated 10th November, 1921; 7, copy of letter by Mr. Munt refusing recommendation, dated 19th November, 1921; 8, copy of Minister's refusal to the ex-Engineer-in-Chief's recommendation, dated 22nd November, 1921.

**BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.***Recommittal.*

On motion by Chief Secretary, Bill re-committed for the purpose of reconsidering Clause 7, and adding a new clause to stand as Clause 9.

*In Committee.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 7—Closure of a way through the land of Muresk Agricultural College:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not desire to proceed with the Committee stage to-day. I intend to move the insertion of a new clause. Members may desire to know the effect of this, and I will therefore place certain plans on the Table for their information.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is it intended to close another road?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is possible that it will necessitate the bringing down of a new Bill.

Progress reported.

**BILL—BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT.***In Committee.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Fire protected areas:

Hon. T. MOORE: I am not satisfied with this amendment of Section 7 of the Act. I have been informed that in the South-West, if the settlers do not burn off between October and April they are not going to burn off at all, and that any restrictions imposed upon them during those months will hamper them considerably. Sections 6 and 7 of the Act seem to cover everything required for the protection of the forests and to give the Conservator all the power he needs. The difficulty in the past has been to catch offenders.

Hon. H. STEWART: Pastures should be included within the scope of the clause. In the Great Southern district many people endeavour to protect their properties by a double firebreak, and at this time of the

year they burn at night between the two breaks. Such action, although strictly speaking illegal, should be encouraged, as without it there is serious risk of destruction of crops and sheep. Burning off the strip between two breaks can be done with perfect safety provided it is done within certain hours. The clause should not limit the distance of burning to 10 chains from a dwellinghouse or other building. On re-committal I shall move an amendment in Clause 3 with a view to protecting pastures.

Hon. T. MOORE: I believe an attempt will be made to confer on the Conservator of Forests the right to decide when burning may take place in the South-West. Under the Bill the Governor-in-Council will be empowered to declare fire-protected areas, and that is the point. Thus great difficulty may be caused to South-Western settlers as regards burning off. It should not be necessary for a settler to be always on the lookout for a departmental officer to authorise burning.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I agree with Mr. Moore, but I also agree with the proposed restriction on fires. In the South-West, however, the only time to clear timber efficiently and cheaply is during the summer, and that is the time when all South-Western settlers do their clearing. The awkwardness of the situation arises in respect of the fire-protected areas. Under the Bill a great deal of circumlocution will be caused, unless, say, the road board secretary is made an officer of the Minister for the purposes of this measure. People who are hindered by red tape will be apt to take French leave to burn off, and so possibly burn out their neighbours. In the absence of a local authority, such as I have suggested, the measure is likely to prove unworkable.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I regret that members have not given notice of their proposed amendments. Mr. Moore is critical regarding the powers of the Conservator of Forests. That officer already has large powers, and the Bill does not propose to extend them. From the aspect of fire-protected areas the Bill is State-wide, and does not refer only to the South-West. The safeguard is the proviso as to application to the Minister for Lands. It is at that Minister's instigation the Bill has been brought forward, and he is most anxious to facilitate land settlement. The measure can, if necessary, be recommitted, though I see no need for amendments.

Hon. J. EWING: I realise that the points raised by Mr. Moore and Mr. Stewart should receive some consideration, but I have sufficient faith in the Minister for Lands and his officers to believe that the interests of the settlers will be safeguarded.

Hon. T. Moore: But the Minister for Lands has no officers around the jarrah hills.

Hon. T. EWING: At any rate, I think we can leave the matter in the hands of the Minister for Lands and no harm will result.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 and 7—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. H. STEWART: I suggest that the Minister agree to making the third reading an Order of the Day for to-morrow, so that the points raised by Mr. Moore and myself may be looked into.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I ask leave to withdraw my motion as one or two members desire to give further consideration to the measure.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

## **BILL—PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCES ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 4th December.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [3.35]: I propose to be very brief in my remarks. It is my intention to vote against the second reading of the Bill. I shall do so for two reasons. One is that I made a promise to my constituents that I would oppose any increase in the allowances made to members of Parliament. Secondly, I consider that until such time as the financial position of the State has improved, and until the electors have had an opportunity of expressing an opinion, one way or the other, on this important question, there should be no increase in those allowances. The question that naturally arises is, who pays these increases? Those who pay are the electors, the taxpayers of the State. They will have to pay whatever increases we may vote to ourselves. I suggest that

as the taxpayers have the responsibility of bearing this burden, they should be given at least some voice in some way, as to whether or not they favour the proposal. A suggestion was made regarding a referendum. I agree with the various speakers who stated it would be impossible to carry out such a proposal. There is another way, and that is by postponing the question until the next general election, when the taxpayers will have an opportunity of saying yea or nay to it. I recognise, in common with other members, that there are many sound arguments that may be advanced, particularly by country members, in justification of the proposed increase. I realise that country members have many expenses and burdens to bear that cannot be met out of the present allowance. For example, in many instances members representing country constituents are compelled to maintain two homes, one being at the centre of their electoral province, where they were previously resident. Because of the close application to their work that is necessary during a session of Parliament, they have found it incumbent upon them to establish a second home in the city. No one could possibly contend with any degree of reason that the present remuneration is adequate when one takes this fact into consideration, and also remembers the many calls made upon members of Parliament. We are all familiar with them. While my vote may appear inconsistent with these views, I cannot depart one iota from the promise I made to my constituents, and therefore I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [3.40]: Unfortunately I was not here when the Chief Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill, but I have had an opportunity of perusing his remarks and also those of other hon. members who spoke on the Bill. The Chief Secretary delivered a very thoughtful speech, and I should say he made the best of a bad job. He certainly set up that members were not well paid and had calls upon them that helped to deplete their allowance of £400 a year. I notice that he and other members who spoke in favour of the Bill side-tracked the main point and the main issue. There is neither a legal nor a moral obligation upon those hon. members or members in another place to remain in their positions as members of Parliament unless they so desire. That point has to be

remembered when we are dealing with a question such as this. In most instances, I should say, many members of Parliament were never asked to come here; on the other hand, they came forward and battled to get there. They begged and beseeched the electors to send them to Parliament, and in 99 cases out of a hundred the question of an increase in salary was kept entirely in the background. It is idle to talk to me about the inconvenience and hardships that members of Parliament have to put up with. That is their fault, because, as I intimated before, they had no right to come here; in many cases they were not asked to come here; if they do not like remaining here with the present salary, they can leave of their own accord. If some hon. members took up that attitude to-morrow and quietly walked out of the House because they considered £400 a year was not sufficient, I guarantee there would be three candidates for every vacancy at the present salary of £400 a year. That has been the position in the past and will be so in the future. The trouble at election time is to fine down the candidates to get a clear-cut issue; it is not a question of £400 a year being too little at that time, but rather one of too many candidates to fill the vacancies. To my mind, the only honourable course for any hon. member to pursue if he is dissatisfied with the remuneration for which he undertook to perform his duties is to tender his resignation and walk out of the House. I hope members will realise the responsibility that rests upon each and every one of us. If the Bill be carried it will, I think, nullify the effect of the Federal elections recently held—at any rate in Western Australia. I will explain what I mean. The voice of Australia has declared against job control. There is no doubt about that. Hon. members who are supporting the Bill in this Chamber have stumped the country in opposition to job control. I ask what is this, if not job control in its worst form? I can take off my hat to the man who refuses to work for the remuneration provided, and says, "I will starve rather." But what can we think of a man who undertakes his job for six years at £400 per year and, having fulfilled one year, votes himself £600 per annum for the remainder of the term? For any member of Parliament who has undertaken to discharge his duties at £400 per annum to vote himself £600 per annum, is establish-

ing job control in its worst form. What could be worse than for a man to undertake the duties of representation of the public in an honourable position at a remuneration of £400, and then vote himself £600? Many of those who propose to vote themselves this increase had the audacity during the recent Federal elections to talk about the attitude of poor unfortunate men on £9 a month refusing to work; and now, when the election is over, they come back and vote themselves an increase of £200 per annum. I refuse to believe there is in the House a majority who will support a Bill having for its object job control in its worst form. Only yesterday, when 300 miles away from here, I found that I could not get home by railway. Yet I could not blame the men responsible, for the law makers of this country had incited them to rebel against the conditions imposed upon them by the laws of the land.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Midland railway trouble is not an innovation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But there is an innovation to be found in the records of this House. It was set up when I introduced an amendment to the Industrial Arbitration Bill making it mandatory on the registrar of the Supreme Court to take action in the event of a strike, lockout, or stop-work meeting. Under that amendment the registrar in those circumstances shall take action, and shall have at his disposal the officers of the court, the sheriff, the bailiff, the police, in order to enforce the laws made by this House in conjunction with another place. Members here, in their capacity as lawgivers, force conditions on the industrial under-dog and then ask the country to pay them £600 instead of £400. The workman has to obey the awards of the Arbitration Court or go on strike and see his wife and children starve. Is it not only fair that such a man should rebel when the Parliament that enforces those laws and conditions on him quietly helps itself to what it thinks it ought to have? If there is one thing more than another that will turn over a page towards rebellion, it will be the passing of this measure by this House. On the same page of the "West Australian" on which the Minister's speech in support of the Parliamentary Allowances Bill was reported, we find also the Minister's reply to Mr. Duffell's motion for police pensions. In that reply the Minister said that it would mean £9,000 per annum for pensions

for the police. Yet the Bill he introduced into this Chamber proposes to allocate to members of Parliament an additional £16,000 per annum. This Government that cannot provide £9,000 for police pensions can provide £16,000 additional remuneration for members of Parliament! Yet this Parliament, by its legislation, is pushing the police into physical danger and sheltering itself behind them. In certain circumstances the registrar of the court shall take action and, if necessary, have police assistance with rifles and bayonets; and while lumps of iron are being hurled at them it is the police who, without hope of pensions, are pushed into the front line when violence is afoot. Meanwhile, members of Parliament vote themselves and additional £16,000 per annum. During the recent Federal election a great deal was talked about law and order, and the honouring of agreements and the obeying of awards. Can we as members of Parliament insist that awards and agreements shall be obeyed and observed by the under-dog, and still hope that our action in voting ourselves this increase in salary shall be overlooked? I do not think we can. We have no right to vote ourselves an increase in this manner. Before I sit down I hope to tell the House how I think the increase should be brought about. I understand that, apart from this increase of £16,000, there is being introduced in another place a Bill the object of which is to create more portfolios.

The Chief Secretary: That is not so.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Well, I am glad to hear it. We are told that members of Parliament have so much to do that they are entitled to greater remuneration. But in pre-Federation days, when we had the whole business of posts and telegraphs, defence, and many other things to deal with, we had fewer Ministers and less pay, notwithstanding which the job was done much better than it is to-day. Of course I know that the introduction of State trading concerns, necessitating the Government of the country dabbling in all sorts of business, create increased work.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: We had no agriculture to look to in those days.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know that many members of Parliament who have sat here during the last 15 years have done so much towards the development of agriculture as to justify them in asking for a

salary of £600 when they have agreed to do the job at £400.

Hon. J. Cornell: I never agreed to do it for £400.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Members of the Ministry have a bigger job to-day than ever before.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: This Bill means that 10 members will benefit to the extent of about £1,000 per annum each. Mr. Brown is one of them.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Why pick me?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I will deal with the lot before I finish. Mr. Brown, I understand, is to vote for the Bill. It is the policy of his party to raise wages wherever possible. If that really be the policy he sits behind, I have nothing further to say. I understand that Mr. Kitson is in favour of the Bill. Mr. Kitson has a good deal to say in this House on the question of what is right and what is wrong, and I shall look to Mr. Kitson when the division is taken. Mr. Gray is one of the members going out in May next. I think he will then find in the West Province a good deal being said about the salary question. There are 10 of us to go to the country in May next, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Duffell, Mr. Gray, Mr. Glasheen, Mr. Harris, Mr. Kirwan, Mr. Moore, Mr. Nicholson, Mr. Willmott and I. I am prepared to go to the country in May, advocate the raising of the Parliamentary allowance to £600, and then come back and pass the Bill. I will support every member prepared to do the same thing, but I am not going to vote myself £600 first and then go out and ask for authority. The Chief Secretary has said that it is impossible to consult the electors, since there is no general election for this Chamber. But one-third of our members go out every two years, and the 10 I have named will have to face the music on the £600 question. As to whether any of us will get back, I do not know.

Hon. V. Hamersley: But is it a question for only those ten?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Although we have a House of 30 members, yet any member with nine others behind him can carry practically anything in the House, for the records of the House show that the attendance seldom exceeds 20. The whole of the Workers' Compensation Bill last year, the most important measure we have ever had, was fought out in a House of 20 members, notwithstanding that 30 were being paid

£400. And we are told a majority of those 30 now want their salaries raised to £600, despite the fact that one-third of them is continually absent from the House. These facts will be put up to the electors in May next by me, if by no one else. We cannot allow Parliament to be brought into ridicule and sneered at, a risk to which some of our recent actions have undoubtedly exposed us. Another matter I want members to bear in mind: this House is asked to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for another place. Ten members of this House have to go to the country in May next, and the members of another place evidently thought it would be wise to introduce the Bill this session. If they had deferred its introduction until next session, the question would be fresh in the minds of the electors when they had to go to the country. By bringing the Bill down this session, the 10 members of this House will have to face the anger of the public.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not think 3 per cent. of the community know that the Bill is before Parliament.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I turn to the vote of 1919, the last occasion on which members' allowances were increased, the increase then being from £300 to £400 a year. Of the 14 members of this Chamber who voted for the measure, only six are left. The nine members who with me will retire next May should remember that.

Hon. J. Cornell: Threatened men live long.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Of the 10 members who voted against the measure, eight are still with us, one—Mr. Greig—is dead, and the only man missing is Mr. Allen, who had to face the full force of Labour opposition at Fremantle. Of the 14 members who voted for the measure, eight have gone, and yet Mr. Cornell says the public do not know anything about it. Don't they know? They will know if I have to tell them.

Hon. J. Cornell: With two who were beaten the issue was never raised.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Does the hon. member still contend that the public are not interested? I have known the hon. member for some years, and respected and admired him as a personal friend, but I was downright astounded when I found he had made a speech in favour of the Bill. I gathered from his remarks that the ques-

tion had not been raised by the electors after the previous increase and was not likely to be raised on this occasion. If it was not raised during the last Council elections, I suggest that was the time when it should have been raised, and not now. It was then that the hon. member should have said, "We shall have £600 a year or we will not go back to Parliament." He should not have kept the question in the background until he was returned with five years of service ahead of him and then voted himself an additional £200 a year.

Hon. J. Cornell: No elector raised the question of the £400. You would not expect me to raise the issue.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If that is the hon. member's contention, I am greatly disappointed in him. Surely the dictates of conscience should convince him that that was the time to raise the issue, and not now when he is still secure in his position for another five years, hoping that the electors will have forgotten the matter before that period has elapsed. It is a mistake to think that the electors are apathetic regarding this question. They feel hurt about it. I travel from one end of the country to another and I know the electors feel hurt that the Parliament they respected and to whom they have looked up should be guilty of increasing their own salaries by 50 per cent. During the course of debate a few evenings ago, reference was made to some insurance canvassers. Mr. Kitson spoke of the poorly paid canvassers attached to the life assurance societies and complaint was made that those men had come here and interviewed members with a view to getting their conditions improved.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Were they not asked by certain people to come here?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When members complain of their having come here, it makes the position worse.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The members who asked them were not the members who complained.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If those men were asked to come here, there should be no complaint of lobbying against them. As a matter of fact there has been more lobbying on the question of members' salaries than on any other measure that has been before us. Business affecting the welfare and development of the country has been

relegated to the bottom of the notice paper, and the Bill dealing with the salaries of members has been brought right into the front rank.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is better than leaving it until the last night of the session when the standing orders are suspended, as was done on the previous occasion.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If some members had their way, I think the standing orders would have been suspended on this occasion. I take the position as I find it. Here is the notice paper with a Bill providing for salary increases to members pushed quite near to the top, while quite a number of measures affecting the welfare of the country are kept low down. During the lobbying that has been going on there have been several changes of attitude on the part of certain members. At the outset certain members volunteered to me that they were entirely opposed to the Bill, but at another stage, for some reason or other, they changed over. I cannot reconcile how members, who in 1919 voted against the increase to £400 and were prepared to accept the £300 then paid, should now vote in favour of £600. How they can alter their vote now is beyond my comprehension.

Hon. E. H. Harris: A greater increase, I suppose.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I would not like to say that. Does Mr. Harris suggest that the greater increase would buy a member from one side of the House to the other? No other construction can be put upon his remark.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I was not here.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The members who voted against the Bill in 1919 were Messrs. Allen, Greig, Hamersley, Holmes, Miles, Nicholson, Rose, Saw, Stewart, and Lovekin.

Hon. J. Duffell: I, too, voted against it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Duffell paired with Mr. Dodd, against and for the Bill respectively. If any one of those members casts a different vote on this Bill, I cannot imagine how he can possibly justify it. If any member does change over, then it will be my duty when the time comes to tell the public what happened.

Hon. T. Moore: Do not make a threat.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is no intimidation about that. In 1922 I stood on the platform in my native town and said "I do not want to get mixed up in this election because I belong to a non-party House. I do not want to take sides because, whoever

you send to Parliament, I shall have to work with him. I deem it my duty to tell you that I have known the candidate for many years, and I have never known him to do anything dishonest. He has stood up for right in season and out of season." When the fate of this Bill has been decided I hope to be able to speak of him in a similar strain. I do not think I shall be exceeding the limits of Parliamentary language when I say that if this Bill be passed, the ten members who are going to benefit to the extent of £1,000 each will be burgling the Treasury for that amount, and that this Bill is the skeleton key by which they will obtain possession of the £1,000. What would be thought if a number of robbers were discovered in the Treasury armed with skeleton keys? Would that be considered sufficient evidence that they were robbers? And what can be said of men who would gain access to the public funds by a skeleton key in the shape of this Bill to obtain possession of £1,000 each? If they choose to do that, it will be a sad day for this country, because it will bring Parliament down to a lower level than it stands in the estimation of the public to-day. Whose money is this that they propose to vote themselves? It is money collected from the general taxpayers, money that the public would not object to being allocated to the extent of £9,000 to pensions for the police who have to bear the brunt of any battle. But they would object to members of Parliament voting themselves £16,000 per annum in the manner suggested by this Bill. Let us consider West Province. One member is retiring next May. I know the man who is going to contest the seat against the retiring member. Imagine a member of this House, belonging to the same party as the new candidate, going on the platform to support that candidate for the West Province in opposition to the candidate who voted for £400 a year when he himself voted for the £600 after having agreed to serve for £400! The hon. member would not dare go on the platform with a new candidate for fear of defeating his possible new colleague. If that happens it will be another reflection on this Chamber, and will indicate that men are prepared to say within these walls what they are not prepared to say outside them. I have thought seriously on this matter. It is no use saying the public do not care. I once said if a Bill of this kind was passed I would walk out of the House and never enter it again. If I con-

sidered my own feelings in the matter I would walk out of the House if this Bill were passed, and would abandon politics for ever. I am told, however, that my duty is here. My friends say, "Never mind what the other fellow does. You stay here and box on, and expose these proposals, and do what you can to uphold the dignity of Parliament."

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Who told you that?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the hon. member objects, in May next he can "come on," and I will fight out this question or any other with him. If I go out, I shall have gone out fighting.

Hon. W. H. Kitson: Did you not say you would support this at the next election?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There are nine members going up for election in May. Let them say, "We will no longer work for £400 a year; we want £600 a year." I will make the tenth. Could anything be more fair than that? I shall be prepared to tell the people that I am no longer willing to work for £400 a year. If they send us back, when we have told them that, we shall have a mandate from the people, and I shall be the first to support a Bill of this kind. That would be an honourable procedure, and nothing else would appeal to me. With regard to pensions for the police, which would cost a matter of £9,000 a year, the Chief Secretary said, "The Government are of opinion that, taking into consideration the money required to be expended in other departments, it was not reasonable to expect that such a large expenditure as was involved in the police pension scheme should be made." I cannot understand the Chief Secretary telling the people, that to the police, to whom he looked for protection and to see that law and order were maintained, the Government refused to give these pensions, and on the same afternoon expressing his willingness that the Government should pay another £16,000 a year to members of Parliament, who took on the job at the lesser amount, and who, if not satisfied, should make room for others. I would warn members individually as to their responsibilities with regard to this Bill. The trouble in this country is that we have not been able to get the judgments of the Arbitration Court satisfactorily enforced. Parliament has set out to make additions to the Arbitration laws to which effect shall be given. We provide that the police shall be called in to give effect to our wishes. Hav-

ing done that, how can we expect the police to obey the laws we make to put down job control, when Parliament under this Bill is initiating what I consider is the worst piece of job control ever witnessed in this State.

Hon. J. Cornell: All that could be said right through the piece with regard to the payment of allowances to members.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It could not be said of an increase that is brought about in the right way.

Hon. J. Cornell: It can be said of every increase that has been given in the past.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It has already been said, with the result that eight members have gone out, and six out of the 14, who voted for the increase, remain. We shall see whether the public care or not, in due course.

Hon. J. Cornell: The public are not likely to lack liberality.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Let us do nothing that will bring this House into disgrace or dishonour. Is it not dishonour or disgrace to take a job for six years at £400 a year, and at the expiration of one year raise the salary to £600? If this Bill passes it will be the worst piece of legislation this House has ever put through. I hope it is not yet too late for members to adopt the same view that I hold. There is only one course open to them, and that is to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

HON. W. H. KITSON (West) [4.22]: Mr. Holmes suggested that he would be keeping his eye on me when the division was called on this Bill. I intend to support the measure. I believe that every member who has spoken in this Chamber should also support it. Everyone who has spoken has absolutely justified it, and admitted that the present allowance of £400 a year is insufficient for those who occupy seats in Parliament. I wonder how it is we find two or three members who are prepared to justify an increase and yet say they are sorry they cannot vote for the Bill. I have come to the conclusion that it is because those particular individuals are possessed of more of this world's goods than others who are in the main supporting it. Apparently, too, they hold the opinion that there is only room for representation in this Chamber of one section of the community, namely, those who are endowed with this world's goods. The member who has to rely solely upon his Parliamentary allowance, cannot do what

he is expected to do, and should do. It is only the wage of a tradesman, but the calls that are made on his pocket from time to time are such that if he attempts to emulate the acts of some other members he cannot do the right thing either by himself or his family. There has been no increase in the Parliamentary allowance since 1919. With perhaps one exception there is no occupation, the followers of which have not had their remuneration increased during that period, by 40 or 60 per cent. From that point of view the Bill is justified. The labourer is worthy of his hire. The duties that a member of Parliament is called upon to perform are well worth an allowance of £600 a year, and, I claim, an even greater amount. The £600 a year will allow members who rely solely upon that income at least to carry out, in a reasonable way, those things that are looked upon as their duty. Mr. Cornell put the position fairly when he said that poverty should be no bar. He meant to say that because a man is not endowed with something in addition to his Parliamentary salary he should not be debarred from taking a seat in either House. There can be no question that many men have refused to stand for Parliament because it would not be possible for them to carry on in a reasonable way, even if they were successful.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They would not know they would be likely to receive £600 a year.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: It has been suggested that the opinion of the public should be obtained. There seem to be varying ideas on that point. Mr. Holmes suggests that the 10 members of this Chamber, who go up for re-election next May, should advocate the increase in salary, and that when they were returned they would be prepared to support this Bill. If he is willing to do that there is all the more reason why he should be prepared to support it now. He says he will advocate the increase in the allowance, and that whichever of the 10 are successful when they return they will see that they get the £600.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I said, "If we get back," and I hope we will.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: Mr. Lovekin referred to what took place in the case of a company. In these days almost every company of standing is prepared to pay the highest possible salaries to those who occupy executive positions. In this case I



assume that the State is a company and Cabinet represents its managing directorate, which is responsible for the progress of the company. The directors have submitted this proposal, and they will have to take the responsibility for it at the next meeting of shareholders. Not only the members of the present Government, but many members of the Opposition, including the Leader, have declared that the present allowance is inadequate and should be raised as proposed. Members of the Government are in just the same position as the managing directors of a public company, in that it is within their power to increase or decrease the salaries of the executive officers of the company.

Hon. A. Lovekin: But managing directors do not increase the salaries of directors.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: The managing directors of the State, being convinced that the present allowances are inadequate, have a perfect right to bring forward such a measure as this.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They should recommend the proposal to the shareholders.

Hon. W. H. KITSON: One member pointed out clearly that practically all members of this Chamber, and also I presume of another Chamber, make sacrifices in one way or another upon entering Parliamentary life. The man who has a business cannot, after entering Parliament, continue to give it the whole of his time. A professional man is in the same position relatively to his practice. But other members find it absolutely impossible to carry on their old avocations once they enter Parliament. I speak more particularly of those members who represent the party to which I belong. In the main they are men who have had to earn their living by manual labour. Many of them have received only small wages, and it would be an impossibility for them to enter Parliament and also to continue in their old occupations. Therefore it is necessary to see that those men, holding responsible positions as representatives of the people, are so situated that they shall not be, as it was phrased by one hon. member, poverty stricken. They are expected to maintain the dignity of the position, and to do many things which in private life they would not be called upon to do. It is impossible for them to fulfil those conditions on the present Parliamentary allowance. Notwithstanding what I look upon as a kind of

threat from Mr. Holmes, I do not think that any member going up for election next May will lose in prestige as a result of voting for the Bill. I make bold to say that in my own electorate the proposal is approved of. I have discussed the matter with numerous representative people in my district, and I have yet to find one who considers the present allowance sufficient. Without exception those whom I have consulted have expressed the view that the allowance should be increased, and that a member of Parliament should not be expected to carry out his duties on the present meagre allowance. I fail to see the logic of the argument as to breaking a contract. During my own election the question of the Parliamentary allowance was never raised. It may be said I knew the allowance was £400 a year. Certainly I did. At the same time there is the fact that in this Parliament and in every other Australian Parliament, including the Commonwealth Legislature, there exists only one means of either increasing or reducing Parliamentary allowances, and that is by a vote of the legislative body. A reference of the question to the electors is impracticable, and a reference of it to any other body has never yet been made. Some members have at various times refused to accept the increase voted, but if those members had been in the same position as the majority there would have been no question as to their attitude; they would have been only too pleased to take the increase. Simply because they happen to be blessed with more of this world's goods than the average man, they consider they are entitled to hold themselves up as a pattern to other people less fortunately circumstanced. In another Chamber this Bill was carried by a very large majority. There is no mistaking the intention of the so-called popular House. Every one of the members of another place will have to answer to the country in 15 months' time, whereas of this Chamber only one-third will go before the electors some 12 months before the general election. In view of the vote recorded elsewhere, we as a Chamber of review should not stand in the way of granting an increase in the Parliamentary allowance, but should support the proposal in the hope that when the measure becomes law members of another place will find themselves in a position to carry out their duties to their constituents without the sacrifice which is now demanded of many of them.

I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I trust it will receive fair consideration at the hands of members here and that a majority will be found in favour of it.

On motion by Hon. J. E. Dodd, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—RACING RESTRICTION ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 24th November.

**HON. E. H. GRAY** (West) [4.40]: This Bill is not of as grave importance as the one which has just been discussed; nevertheless I hope members will give it their serious consideration and grant Fremantle its just due. Mr. Stephenson's speech astonished me, though I know very little of racing. If I say I have been to a dozen race meetings in my life, that would be about the total number. In the event of my holding such opinions concerning racing and trotting as Mr. Stephenson has expressed, I should do my utmost to terminate every variety of the sport, and certainly I should resign from any racing body of which I happened to be a member. I fail to understand Mr. Stephenson's attitude. I have been to a trotting meeting, and I know thousands who attend such meetings, and I say unhesitatingly that Mr. Stephenson's statements constitute a gross and totally unwarranted reflection on multitudes of estimable citizens, both men and women. In my opinion men and women would be better occupied in going to a trotting meeting than wasting their time in the streets. As regards drinking on the trotting grounds, I consider Mr. Stephenson's statements to be a gross exaggeration, in fact utterly incorrect. If the position were as he has stated, we should long ago have heard complaints from the thousands of attendants at trotting meetings. I support the Bill because of late years sporting and other amusements, football for instance, have little by little been taken away from the port. Fremantle is a growing city, and not a diminishing one; and that is one argument why the recreation of the people of Fremantle should be catered for. Another argument in favour of the Bill is that large numbers of visitors come to Fremantle, and that the community should do everything possible to cater for their amusement on

the spot, instead of letting them go past the port to Perth. The shipping business brings thousands of visitors to Fremantle every year, and it is only a reasonable and proper ambition of the people of the port to furnish their visitors with the means of recreation and pleasure. An outstanding feature of the situation is that there has been no opposition to the Bill voiced to us by the residents of Fremantle. If the matter were of such vital importance to the people, and if they were against the proposal, surely dozens of powerful organisations of men and women of all creeds and all parties would have expressed disapproval of the measure. As a member for the West Province I therefore ask this Council to give Fremantle the Bill, in order that the pastime of trotting may be extended to the port. As Mr. Kitson has said, Fremantle is a sporting community. From some of the speeches made in this Chamber one might think that the people of Fremantle wanted looking after specially, that they were not grown up. Fremantle, like every other large port, has a vigorous and cosmopolitan population with a strong love of sport. Fremantle can stand on its own and demand this concession, seeing that every other port in the Commonwealth has sporting clubs of one sort or another. The demand is not unreasonable, and I hope members will regard it in that light. A number of horses are trained in Fremantle, and a number of sporting people already live there. I hope the second reading will be agreed to.

**HON. G. POTTER** (West) [4.46]: When we consider this question, shorn of all the innuendoes, exaggerations and misstatements investing it, it is seen that it is only a very modest and natural request on the part of those people of Fremantle who see in trotting a means of healthy enjoyment and recreation. As pointed out by Mr. Gray, Fremantle has no other means of catering for its large influx of summer visitors, and all those other visitors who remain in port only a few hours: so trotting should be part of the equipment of Fremantle, one of the principal ports of the Commonwealth. Those who wish to see trotting in Fremantle do not wish to import any outside influences in order to thrust the sport down the throats of others: neither are there any great vested interests at stake, nor is it sought by a

false cloak of puritanical reform to practice something much more hideous, namely proprietary racing. Those people who say they will guard others from ills and evils, what have they done to purge the community of the avarice and selfishness to be found in proprietary racing? Here we have the ambition of a number of people who say, "If we can get 10 dates per annum we shall be able to indulge in sport of our own choosing, in our own midst." An hon. member reminds me that there are to be 12 dates. But really 10 are asked for, the other two to be allotted for charity purposes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you say that Fremantle is asking for this?

Hon. G. POTTER: I say the trotting club of Fremantle has been asking for it for a long time past. It weighs strongly with me to know that if trotting is established in Fremantle the Fremantle hospital will be freed from its financial difficulties. Supporters of proprietary racing condemn the Bill. Their arguments are not worthy of consideration, for they do not ring with the sincerity that carries conviction. Of course there are others who object to it from either the high moral or the religious standpoint. Their objections are worthy of consideration, for they are at least sincere. But the perspective of such people, I sometimes think, is not quite a true one; for, living secluded lives and not coming into touch with the majority of people, and not frequenting racecourses, they have to rely entirely upon the statements seen in the Press, or those made to them by others. Some people, having offended against society and finding themselves in the law courts, frequently put forward the plea that they have lost their employers' money at the races. On many occasions those people, under cross-examination have been unable to tell either the names of the horses they were backing, or of the bookmakers with whom they were operating. If anyone with a criminal mind wants a short cut to disaster, undoubtedly this is one. But why should an attempt be made to impute to the reputable gentlemen of the West Australian Turf Club the motive that they are trying to corrupt a community by holding races? Those gentlemen regard it from the highest viewpoint; they see the purity and beauty of these tests of speed, which are really tests of

breeding. Through the various breeds of successful horses becoming known, the stations from which they come derive considerable benefit. When the members of the West Australian Turf Club are so highly respected, surely it is not too much to ask that gentlemen of equal social standing and integrity of purpose, attached to the Trotting Association, should not be suspect because they are catering in a non-proprietary way for the wishes of people who, it may be, are unable to pay the heavy imposts necessary to keep going what is known in the vernacular as galloping. Each Saturday night when trotting is conducted in Perth, hundreds of Fremantle people leave Fremantle for Perth. While that may be good for railway or charabanc revenue, it is economically unsound for Fremantle. It will be said that by establishing trotting in Fremantle we are increasing the means of gambling. If anyone could assure me that by the abolition of all racing, gambling would be abolished, I should do all I could to abolish racing. But those who would close up all racecourses would by that be doing the worst thing possible for the rising generation. Rather would I see the trotting grounds opened in Fremantle and the Fremantle streets purged from betting on Saturdays. That is where the young people are led astray. I know of no sport more closely hedged around with restrictions for the protection of young people than is the Trotting Association. There is no other racing association that imposes and carries into effect restrictions with greater ardour than does the Trotting Association. So the argument that by introducing trotting we shall introduce increased gambling facilities, does not hold water.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Has there been any request from Fremantle for this?

Hon. G. POTTER: Yes; for many years has it been requested; in fact, a large block of land there is set aside for trotting purposes.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who owns the ground?

Hon. G. POTTER: The Trotting Association.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Yet they will not conduct trotting on it?

Hon. G. POTTER: Additional dates are required to enable trotting to be held at Fremantle.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Is there anything to prevent their conducting trotting there now?

Hon. G. POTTER: Yes. In the first place the track is not in suitable order for racing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Bill will not improve the track.

Hon. G. POTTER: It will give the trotting club some security for the putting of the track into proper order.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why side-track the issue? You know that the Association owns the track.

Hon. G. POTTER: I wish the hon. member would not impute wrong motives to a perfectly respectable and honourable body of people such as the Fremantle Trotting Club.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I am not imputing motives. I say the Association owns the ground.

Hon. G. POTTER: The hon. member can give his own views on the subject. I am carrying to the Chamber a request from a number of reputable people in Fremantle for trotting in their own midst, instead of having to come to Perth, 12 miles away, for it. I hope the House will see to it that Fremantle people have trotting in their own district. I will support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. W. H. Kitson, debate adjourned.

## BILL—RESERVES.

### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Reserve 5574:

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Unfortunately there is some conflict of opinion in South Perth with reference to the desirability of the alienation of the reserves mentioned in this clause. I have a letter from the secretary of the South Perth Road Board which reads—

My board respectfully desires to bring before your notice a Bill which is shortly to come before the Legislative Council in regard to reserves. Amongst other things the Bill provides for alterations of certain reserves in South Perth whereby my board will be en-

abled to form and control an excellent recreation ground on a vacant area of land opposite the Zoological Gardens in South Perth. I am directed to mention that the Bill, if passed, will be the means of giving effect to the desires and efforts of the majority of South Perth people extending over a period of 20 years. Both the South Perth Road Board and the Zoological Gardens Committee, the two bodies affected by the provisions of the Bill, are in absolute unanimity in their endorsement of it. My board trusts that the measure will be afforded your sympathetic consideration during its passage through Parliament.

Personally I have every sympathy with the desire of the South Perth Board to obtain the ground for recreation purposes, whereby such sports as cricket and football may be carried on, but the total of the reserves it is proposed to hand over embraces an area of 21 acres, and I am informed by competent authorities that seven acres is a quite sufficient area for a sports ground on which it is intended to play cricket and football. The Melbourne cricket ground, I understand, is eight acres in extent. The Perth cricket ground, so far as the reserve itself is concerned, is  $6\frac{1}{2}$  acres. I understand that an area of four acres is quite sufficient for the ground itself and that seven acres is all that is required for the ground and the appurtenances such as pavilions, etc. So that to hand over 21 acres for cricket and football does not seem desirable. There is still a further objection, and it is that although the South Perth Road Board are in favour of the proposal, a number of the residents of South Perth, and particularly in the west ward in which the reserves are situated, are totally against it. I have a letter signed by 212 of those residents reading as follows:—

We the undersigned owners, ratepayers, and residents of the West Ward, South Perth Road Board, desire to protest against the proposed alienation of Class A reserve No. 5574 now dedicated for the purpose of botanical gardens, for transfer to the South Perth Road Board as a sports ground and parking area for motor cars. We had no knowledge that such a measure was proposed until we saw the second reading of the Bill had been carried by the Legislative Assembly.

The names include those of well-known residents of South Perth—F. M. Stone, Gibb Maitland, Dr. Simpson, Professor Shann, R. L. Herbert and others. All these people object to the proposal contained in the Bill. It will be noticed that they say, "We had no knowledge of such a measure until we saw that the second reading had been carried by the Legislative Assembly." Therefore, they have had no time to do anything beyond

voicing their protest against the alienation. These residents object to the reserve being alienated for the purpose of a parking ground for cars. Looking at the available space as one walks along Labouchere-road, one sees a large area on the lefthand side of that street that might well be utilised for parking cars. It runs for a considerable distance alongside the Zoo fence. There is no footpath there, and there is not likely to be one there for many years to come. There is no reason why that ground should not be used for parking cars. In order that the residents of the west ward may be able to voice their protest and perhaps induce the South Perth Road Board to make some other arrangement, I intend to oppose the clause. Possibly some other arrangement may be amicably made.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I endorse the remarks of Dr. Saw. The letter from the South Perth Road Board would ordinarily carry weight with us. On the other hand, we have the petition signed by over 200 people living in that ward, and that cannot be carelessly laid aside. As Dr. Saw has pointed out, seven acres should be ample for a recreation ground for cricket and football purposes. Therefore I think we might be justified in asking the Chief Secretary to report progress so that an understanding may be arrived at between the interested parties.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I, too, endorse the remarks of the previous speakers. I received some letters on the subject and I took the opportunity to motor across and see the locality for myself. I agree with Dr. Saw that the available ground in Labouchere-road, outside the Zoological Gardens fence, might well be used for parking cars. There is a very long strip there and 20ft. of it could be used for that purpose. The road is wide and there is no possibility of a footpath being made there for a long time to come. It would be a pity to destroy the whole of the natural bush at present on the reserve. There surely need not be any necessity to do that because from the reserve the seven acres that will go to make up a cricket and football ground could be taken, and the remainder of the reserve allowed to stand in its natural state. We should preserve every acre of natural bush to be found in the metropolitan area, seeing that at the present time there is so little of it.

Progress reported.

## BILL—MAIN ROADS.

### *In Committee.*

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interpretation:

Hon. H. STEWART: Certain amendments were placed on the Notice Paper by the Government, one of which related to Clause 1, in which "1924" was to have been altered to "1925."

The CHAIRMAN: That amendment is consequential.

Hon. H. STEWART: The members of the select committee appointed to consider the Bill examined the amendments proposed by the Government and agreed to them with the exception of such as are mentioned in the Committee's report. Regarding the definition of "petrol," I understand the Minister will move to have the Bill recommitted and we can deal with that matter then.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I wish to explain the attitude of the Government in connection with the amendments recommended by the select committee. Those amendments are, generally speaking, acceptable and I shall not at this stage offer any opposition to them. Later on I will move to have the Bill recommitted with a view to placing before the Committee a few amendments.

Hon. H. STEWART: I move an amendment—

That the following words "'Chief Engineer' means the chief engineer of main roads appointed under and for the purposes of this Act" be struck out.

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

Clause 4—Main Roads Board:

Hon. H. STEWART: I assume that every hon. member has read the report of the select committee, which was presented by seven members of this Chamber, and have read the recommendations which have been approved generally by the Government. The committee recommend that the main roads of the State shall be administered by a Main Roads Board consisting of three members, acting as a body corporate, two of the members being engineers qualified by training and experience in modern road making, and the third a skilled administrator. The committee also recommend that the three

members shall be appointed by the Governor in Council for a term of five years. I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause 2 “five” be struck out and “three” inserted in lieu.

The effect of the amendment will be that the board shall consist of three members instead of five.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, subclauses 3 and 4 struck out.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5—Term of office:

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart clause amended as follows:—Subclause 1, line 1, the words “except the chief engineer” struck out, and in line 2 the word “three” struck out and “five” inserted in lieu; Subclause 2, lines 3, 4 and 5 the words “but a vacancy in place of a member who was appointed on nomination shall be filled only on the like nomination” struck out; and in Subclause 3, line 2, the word “officer” struck out and “similarly qualified person” inserted in lieu.

Clauses 6 and 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Meetings of board:

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, clause amended by striking out “three” in line 1 of Subclause 2 and inserting “two” in lieu.

Clause 9—Minister to be a body corporate:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, clause amended by striking out “Minister” in line 1 and inserting “board” in lieu, and in line 2, by striking out “Minister for Works” and inserting “main roads board” in lieu.

Clause 10—Appointment of engineers and inspectors:

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, clause amended by striking out all the words after “the” in line 1 and inserting the following in lieu:—

(1.) Board, with the approval of the Minister, may make use of the services of any of the officers and employees of the Public Service, and the Governor in Council may appoint any persons to be officers or employees of the Board for the purposes of this Act: Provided that all casual employees required by the Board for works of construction and maintenance may be employed by the Board.

(2.) Any member, acting member or officer of the Board who, at the date of his appointment to or under the Board by the Governor, was an officer of the Public Service shall, in

the event of his office on or under the Board being discontinued, or in the event of the dissolution of the Board, be eligible on the recommendation of the Minister, to be re-appointed to some office in the Public Service corresponding in classification and emolument to that which he held at the date of his appointment to or under the Board, as if he had not held any office on or under the Board.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Has Mr. Stewart considered the question of safeguarding the rights public servants would have for a period of service? The amendment merely gives to the Minister the right, if he so chooses, to make a recommendation. It does not give a man the right to a position without the recommendation of the Minister. An officer with five or ten years' service might join the board as a member or officer, and his services might be terminated after a period of years with the board. Would his previous term with the Government still be credited to him as regards any rights he might have as a civil servant, or would he abandon his rights on joining the board?

Hon. H. STEWART: The amendment will make the measure similar to the law in Victoria and Queensland. The main roads board will be a corporate body, not another Government department, and it is not anticipated that the officers will be lifted from the civil service.

Hon. J. Ewing: Some of them will be.

Hon. H. STEWART: We expect the fullest opportunity will be given to get men most suitable for the positions. Any officer would take a position with the board with his eyes open.

Hon. J. EWING: Will the main roads board provide similar privileges to those enjoyed by men in the civil service?

Hon. V. Hamersley: If a man has given 20 years' service to the State, why should the board be responsible?

Hon. J. EWING: It is not clearly set out that the board should continue the privileges enjoyed by an officer from the civil service.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Why should portion of the money provided for the making and maintenance of main roads be set aside for paying pensions? Officers in the Government employ will not apply for service with the board unless they think they will be better off out of the public service.

Hon. J. Ewing: It is a bad position to put them in.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It is not. Why should the main roads funds have to provide

pensions for men who have spent a lifetime in the civil service? Those who accept positions with the main roads board will know that they forfeit all rights to pensions and emoluments. It is a good provision, because it will mean the introduction of new blood for the main roads board. If there are men in the public service possessing the qualifications, the inducement to join the main roads board will be increased pay. The money raised under the measure is to maintain roads and not to pay pensions and emoluments.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: The select committee considered the position of men who might be taken from the public service. If a civil servant applied for a position, the board should not be trammelled with public service conditions.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Ewing went further than I intended to go. I am merely anxious that a man, taken from the Government employ and later ceasing work with the main roads board, should not be prejudiced in his pension or other rights by reason of his service with the main roads board. There seems little doubt that civil servants who may take office under the board will lose their pension rights.

Hon. G. W. Miles: There is no need for them to apply for the positions.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is so. All I ask is that there should be added after the word "emolument" in Subclause 2, the words "with pension or other rights."

Hon. J. EWING: Apparently the Government have accepted all these amendments from the select committee.

The Chief Secretary: The Bill will be re-committed.

Hon. J. EWING: This particular subclause is designed to keep the best engineers in the service, for if they join the board they will lose all their privileges, and they will, therefore, refrain from applying.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If a civil servant decided to join the corporation he would abandon his pension rights for the time being, but when he re-entered the service his pension rights would be revived.

Hon. J. Ewing: What if he died in the meantime?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: His relatives would not have any claim upon the Government. The time during which civil servants served with the board would not count as service under the Government. Seeing that pensions were abolished in 1904 it

is not likely that many officers would have any right to a pension.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Any man who had been in the service since 1904 would be so bound up with red tape and other departmental restrictions that I would not be a party to having him appointed as a member of the board. We want up to date and qualified men to serve on the board.

Hon. J. Ewing: It is not right to hamper men in the service in the way proposed.

Hon. H. STEWART: Some of this legislation has been in operation in Victoria since 1912. The select committee adopted the most liberal sections that could be found in the Eastern States Acts with regard to the co-operation of members of the service on these boards. We have gone as far as we felt we could go.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11—Engineer and inspectors to be subject to control of Minister:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, "Chief Engineer," in line 1, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu; "Minister," in line 4, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu; and the words "and of the board when acting under delegated powers pursuant to Section 25" struck out.

Clause 12—Main roads may be proclaimed:

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, the following subclause was added: "The board, before recommending to the Governor-in-Council (a) that any road be a main road; (b) that the maps, plans, and estimates of any proposed new main road or deviation from an existing main road be approved; (c) that plans and estimates of any permanent improvements to any main road or any part thereof be approved; shall serve on each local authority in whose district such road is or new road or deviation is proposed to be made, or improvements are proposed to be made, notice of its intention to make such recommendation. Such notice shall fix a day not less than 30 days from the service of the notice upon which any objections which may be made by any local authority concerned will be considered by the board before making any recommendations. Provided that any local authority which feels aggrieved by any such recommendation may, within 30 days after the consideration of such objections, appeal to the Minister, who may vary or disallow such recommendation."

Clause 13—Power to provide main roads:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, the word "Minister," in lines 2 and 3, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu.

Clause 14—Main roads vested in Minister:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, "Minister," in line 5, struck out and "Crown" inserted in lieu; and "Minister," in line 11, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu.

Clause 15—Powers of Minister:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, "Minister," in line 1, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu; and "on the recommendation of the board," in lines 1 and 2, struck out; in Subclause 3 the words "of the Minister acting on the recommendation" struck out, and "Minister," in line 3 of the subclause, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu, and "Chief Engineer," in lines 6 and 7, struck out and "board" inserted in lieu.

Clause 16—Chief Engineer to conduct experiments:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, the words "Chief Engineer shall conduct, or cause to be conducted, experiments with different materials to test their relative durability and suitability for the construction and maintenance of roads, and shall make investigations to ascertain" struck out, and "board so far as any moneys legally available for the purpose permit shall (1) carry out all such surveys and investigations as may be necessary or expedient to ascertain (a) what roads shall be main roads" inserted in lieu; the following inserted to stand as paragraph (d): "What deviation (if any) in existing roads or what new roads should in its opinion be made so as to facilitate communication and improve conditions of traffic"; the words "and shall record, publish, and make available for general information the results of such investigations in such manner as is directed by the Minister" struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: "(2) record, publish, and make available for general information the results of all such surveys and investigations; (3) purchase all land, machinery, tools, implements, and materials that may be needed for the purposes of this Act: Provided that no contract involving an expenditure by the board of an amount exceeding £1,000 shall be entered into by the board without the written consent of the Minister being first obtained."

Clause 17—Other duties of the Chief Engineer:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart, "Chief Engineer," in line 1, struck out, and "board" inserted in lieu; in paragraph (a) "as directed" struck out, and "when so desired" inserted in lieu; in paragraph (b) "his," in line 3, struck out and "its" inserted in lieu; in paragraph (c) "Minister" struck out and "board" inserted in lieu; paragraph (d) struck out; in paragraph (e) "act as the Chief Engineer for" struck out and "supervise" inserted in lieu.

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

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart the following amendments were made:—

Clause 18—Chief Engineer may request local authorities to furnish information:

In line 1 delete "chief engineer" and insert "board." In line 2 delete "him with." In line 5 delete "chief engineer" and insert "board." In line 5 delete "or officer" and insert "within one month."

Clause 19—Duties of assistant engineers and inspectors:

Hon. H. STEWART: This clause is unnecessary, and should be struck out.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 20—Power to lay tramways for transporting materials:—

In line 1 delete "Minister" and insert "board," and delete "on the recommendation" and insert "with the approval." In line 2 delete "Board, authorise the chief engineer to" and insert "Minister." In line 5 delete "his" and insert "its." In line 5 delete "authority" and insert "approval." In line 6 delete "chief engineer" and insert "board."

Clause 21—Developmental roads may be proclaimed or provided:

In line 1 of paragraph (b) delete "Minister" and insert "board."

Clause 22—agreed to.

Clause 23—Powers in respect of developmental roads:

In line 1 insert after the words "the Minister," the words "the board."

Clause 24—agreed to.

Clause 25—Minister to delegate powers to board:

Hon. H. STEWART: In accordance with the recommendations of the select committee, this clause should be struck out.

Clause put and negatived.



Clause 26—Protection of board and officers:

In lines 1 and 2 of Subclause (1) delete the words "the chief engineer or any inspector or other officer" and insert "any of its officers." In line 4 delete the words "chief engineer, inspector or officer" and insert "any of its officers." In lines 1 and 2 of Subclause (2) delete the words "chief engineer, inspector or other officer" and insert "any of its officers."

Clause 27—Substitution of proclaimed area for metropolitan area in the Traffic Act:

Hon. H. STEWART: In accordance with the recommendations of the select committee, this clause should be struck out. There is no necessity for it.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 28—Main roads trust account:

Delete paragraph (b) and insert in lieu thereof the following:—"All revenue obtained from motor spirit used in road transport."

Delete paragraph (c) and insert in lieu thereof the following:—"All moneys paid to the Treasurer by any local authority in respect of permanent works and of the maintenance of main roads and of the maintenance of main developmental roads."

Insert a paragraph to stand as paragraph (f) as follows:—"All moneys received by the board under the provisions of this Act."

Clause 29—Appropriation of main roads trust account:

On motions by Hon. H. Stewart clause amended by striking "Minister" out of line 2 of paragraph (b) of Subclause 1 and inserting "Governor-in-Council"; also in line 1 of Subclause 2 striking out "Minister" and inserting "Board" in lieu.

Clause 30—License required for sale of petrol:

Hon. H. STEWART: I intend to ask members to vote against the clause as the Government have other means of dealing with this question. As a matter of fact, a Bill is now before another place.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 31—agreed to.

New Clause:

Hon. H. STEWART: I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—"All moneys received by the board under the provisions of this Act."

New Clause.—Insert a new clause, as follows:—

*Apportionment of the amount expended on permanent works and maintenance.*

(1.) The board shall, before the thirtieth day of June in each year, apportion half the amount expended on permanent works and maintenance on main roads and the cost of maintenance of main developmental roads during the preceding year between the various districts benefited thereby in the following manner:—It shall, before the thirty-first day of January in each year, determine—(a) The permanent works and maintenance from which each of the districts respectively has benefited; (b) The proportion of the amount as aforesaid to be apportioned which is allocated to each such district having regard to the benefits it has obtained from the expenditure; (c) The amount of the contribution which each local authority of each such district shall pay in respect of the proportion so allocated. The contributions from the local authorities need not be at a uniform rate, but may be varied in the case of each local authority according to the benefits from the respective works: Provided that the total amount of the contributions from all local authorities concerned shall equal the amount as aforesaid to be apportioned. A district may be benefited by expenditure on permanent works and maintenance, although such permanent works and the roads maintained are not situated within the district, if substantial traffic to or from the district passes over, or in the case of new roads will in the opinion of the board pass over, a road on which such expenditure has been made. (2.) Notwithstanding anything in this section, the board, with the approval of the Governor, may in the case of any local authority reduce the amount of the contribution of such local authority determined as aforesaid in respect of the maintenance of any road where it is proved to the satisfaction of the board that the cost of maintenance is excessive and that such cost is due to motor traffic not of local origin or to timber traffic. In exercising this authority the board shall take into account the revenue, valuation, and rating of the local authority, and also its financial obligations on account of liability for loan expenditure incurred in respect of permanent works under this Act. (3.) Before finally making the apportionment in subsection one hereof mentioned, the board shall serve a notice upon each contributory local authority setting forth:—(a) The amount which is to be apportioned between the districts; (b) The permanent works and maintenance, each separately stated, from which each of the said districts respectively is deemed to have benefited and the amount expended thereon; (c) The proportion of the amount expended on the said permanent works and maintenance, each separately stated, which it is proposed to allocate to each of the districts benefited; (d) The several proposed contributions of the said local authorities; (e) In cases where the contributions are not proposed to be charged at a uniform rate, the reasons for the variation. Such notice shall be served not later than the twentieth day of

February in each year, and shall fix a day, not less than sixty days from the day of the service of the notice, up to which objections to the proposed apportionment will be received. (4) The board shall consider all such objections, and if deemed necessary amend its apportionment accordingly. In so doing, it may include a district and local authority thereof not previously included (in which case, however, such local authority must first be notified and given the opportunity to object), or may exclude a district and local authority thereof previously included. The decision of the board as to the amount each of the said local authorities shall pay in respect of permanent works and of maintenance shall, upon confirmation by the Governor in Council, be final and conclusive. (5.) The amount of contribution from a local authority in respect of permanent works determined under this section shall, notwithstanding anything contained in any other Act, be and be deemed to be a loan for a period of thirty years advanced by the Treasurer to that local authority on which that local authority shall pay six per cent. per annum to cover interest and sinking fund, and the loan shall be deemed to have been advanced on the first day of July next ensuing after the apportionment of such amount. Provided that the Minister may, if he thinks fit, declare any part of the district of such local authority to be a benefited district with respect to the works in respect of which the contribution is apportioned, in which case the special rate so to be levied shall be a separate rate levied in and for such benefited district. (6.) Where several local authorities are liable to contribute towards the amount expended pursuant to this Act on any permanent works or maintenance—(a) The board may, in any case in which the works are not completed, postpone the apportionment of any such amount until the works are completed; and (b) In every such case the interest on that portion of the capital cost for which such local authorities are liable shall be calculated to the thirty-first day of January next preceding such apportionment, and be added to the said portion of the capital cost, and shall be paid by the local authorities together with the said portion of the capital cost accordingly.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## **BILL—LAND DRAINAGE.**

### *Recommendation.*

On motion by Chief Secretary, Bill re-committed for the purpose of further considering Clauses 60, 64, 72, 83, 89 and 97.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

### *In Committee.*

Clause 60—Construction and maintenance of works:

Hon. A. BURVILL: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be added:—(c.) Obtain from the Engineer-in-Chief a certificate that he is satisfied that the proposed works will be of sufficient capacity to carry off all waters which are likely then or at any future time to flow into such works from the catchment area which will be served thereby and that proper and sufficient outlet to the sea has been provided.

If the amendment be agreed to it will assure that in future drains to be constructed will be sufficiently large, taking into consideration the requirements of the watershed. In answer to a question I put to the Leader of the House, we were told that the Government had to pay damages on account of flooding. In the Bengier district the potato growers lost portion of their crops owing to faulty drainage. As the drain was not large enough to cope with the water, it broke away and flooded the crops, with the result that the Government had to pay compensation. If my amendment had been included in the Act, the work in question would have been referred to the Engineer-in-Chief who would have had to take into consideration the whole catchment area before determining whether the drain to be constructed was large enough. If the amendment had been incorporated in the Act the Government would have been saved thousands of pounds.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. The department has a strong objection to it. In a report to me the departmental officers state that the proposition should not be entertained because the Engineer-in-Chief would require to have the watershed defined and a comprehensive survey made. They point out that the amendment is on all fours with that which Mr. Burvill moved to Clause 11. The departmental officers consider that it would be next to impossible for the Engineer-in-Chief to vouch for the capacity of a work to be undertaken for all time, and they add that they have had experience in the Great Southern already, where, while a culvert was sufficient originally, now a bridge with three or four spans has had to be provided to cope with the extra flow of water, owing to the cultivation of the country miles away from the culvert.

Hon. H. STEWART: The departmental reply conveyed to the Committee by the Minister is strongly in support of the amendment. The officers point to the difficulty in determining the amount of water to be coped with and from their reply, one having no technical knowledge would think that the survey of a watershed would be an expensive matter. On the contrary, it is an easy matter and quite inexpensive. I regard the departmental argument as paltry. As a trained engineer I would say that their reply is an excuse for the neglect of what should be essential preliminary work. The experience in Western Australia so far should be sufficient to bring within the knowledge of engineers a reasonably close estimate of what may be expected in regard to the drainage problems. Take the Wagin water supply where a dam was constructed at a cost of £15,000, to hold 18,000,000 gallons of water. The dam was sold to the Wagin people when it was proved that it would not carry 5,000,000 gallons. If 10,000,000 gallons of water flowed into it, the dam could not hold it. The member for the district and the municipal council were complimented upon having secured from the Government for £6,000 what it took £15,000 to construct. Now the people bitterly regret having paid that amount because the supply of water is not there. The amendment should be agreed to because it will involve a small amount of inexpensive work, but will also necessitate proper precautions being taken.

Hon. J. EWING: I cannot understand the departmental statement furnished by the Minister. The essential part of a drainage undertaking is the preliminary work. The amendment should be agreed to. The experience of the Bengier settlers shows that if some provision had been included in the Act, it would have saved the Government £15,000 which it has taken to settle claims arising out of damage due, in my opinion, to the incompetence of engineers. They did not provide drains of sufficient size to carry off the water. It is essential that the watershed should be surveyed if a drainage scheme is to be undertaken and the Engineer-in-Chief should be in a position to certify as to the adequacy of the work supposed to be carried out. I do not think the departmental engineers should oppose the proposal which, if agreed to, will save the Government from being mulcted in damages in the future.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I hope hon. members will vote for the amendment. Even if it cost £100 to carry out the survey and the necessary preliminary work, it would be worth while when we take into consideration that in the one instance I have quoted it cost the Government £15,000 damages for compensation. Another instance I know of related to the construction of a 7ft. drain. As I warned them at the time, the drain was not sufficiently large and now the engineers have to incur additional expense in the provision of another main drain. That unnecessary expense could have been avoided if a preliminary survey had been carried out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Committee should realise that the expense involved will have to be borne by the settlers. The survey of a watershed as suggested by Mr. Burvill would necessitate the employment of a large number of surveyors, and it would take a considerable time to complete the survey of an area that may be 15 miles by 10 miles.

Hon. J. Ewing: It would not take long.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In nine cases out of 10 the work may not be necessary, but, if the amendment be agreed to, the survey will have to be undertaken in every instance. All that will mean extra expense for those settled on the land.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I cannot understand how officers of the department could put down a drain to carry away water without knowing how much it would carry. This only goes to show the rule of thumb methods adopted by the department. We find that in the Water Supply Department no proper system is employed and when the officers embark upon certain work they do not know what they are going to do. As they proceed with the work they find that alterations are necessary; mistakes are covered up, the State pays and no one is the wiser. That is why many works are costing 50 to 100 per cent. more than the estimated amount.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I agree that it is necessary for some such survey to be made, but I object to throwing the onus on the Engineer-in-Chief of giving a certificate for what appears to be a small matter of detail. The Engineer-in-Chief will have a great deal of highly responsible work and he should not be loaded by having to give a certificate for small matters of detail.

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

Clause 72—What shall be rateable property:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraphs be added:—“(3.) Land belonging to any religious body, and used or held exclusively as or for a place of public worship, a Sunday school, a place of residence of a minister of religion, a convent, nunnery or monastery, or occupied exclusively by a religious brotherhood or sisterhood. (4.) Land used exclusively as a public hospital, benevolent asylum, orphanage, public school, private school being the property of a religious body, public library, public museum, public art gallery, or mechanics' institute. (5.) Land used and occupied exclusively for charitable purposes. (6.) Land vested in any board under the Parks and Reserves Act, 1895, or in trust for agricultural or horticultural show purposes, or zoological or acclimatisation gardens or purposes, or for public resort and recreation. (7.) Land held or used as a cemetery: Provided that—(a) any land exempted by Subsections (3), (4), or (5) of this section shall be deemed rateable property while the same is leased or occupied for any private purpose; and (b) any land used or occupied for any of the purposes mentioned in Subsections (4) and (5) of this section shall be deemed to be rateable property if such property is held under lease or rented from any owner except the Crown: Provided, further, that no exempted land shall become liable to be rated by reason of such land being used for the purposes of any bazaar, or as a place of meeting for any religious, charitable, temperance, or benevolent object, or for a polling place at any parliamentary or other election.”

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is no necessity for the amendment. Subclause 1 empowers the Minister to exempt from rating any ground that by its situation, configuration, or other physical causes is excluded from deriving benefit from any works. Some of the bodies referred to in Mr. Nicholson's amendment might hold large areas that would be drained, and if those areas were leased they should certainly pay the rate.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: My desire was to bring the measure somewhat into conformity with the Road Districts Act. Subclause 1 would not permit of the exemption of land other than that which by its situation, configuration or other physical causes derived no benefit. If the clause be passed as printed, land held for an agricultural society or a cemetery could not be exempted unless it came within the definition of Subclause 1. If the Committee do not favour the exemp-

tion of all the bodies I have suggested, we should exempt the trustees of parks and reserves, agricultural societies and cemeteries. I have safeguarded the position by providing that, if any land is leased, it shall be taxable.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I support the amendment. I know of land used for an agricultural society and for sports. It is not used for profit and should be exempt from rates.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Dr. Saw has pointed out to me that the clause does not extend to University lands, which also should be exempt. I move—

That the amendment be amended by adding to paragraph 4 the following words:—“Or lands held in trust under the University Endowment Act or any amendment or re-enactment thereof.”

Amendment on amendment put and passed.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: This would mean that a small section of people in some districts may have to bear the whole cost of drainage works. It is a very dangerous amendment.

Hon. G. POTTER: I support the objection. Already the presence of enormous tracts of University endowment lands in various districts imposes great penalties upon the settlers, and jeopardises their prospects.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The University owns large areas of endowment lands, which cannot be disposed of, and which only in rare instances can be made use of except from the leasehold point of view. Practically no rent is derived from them. If the University is to be saddled with the payment of drainage rates, it would be better that it should lose the land.

Hon. J. EWING: If these endowment lands are valueless unless they can be disposed of, they should be excluded from the Bill. If, however, they could be sold to the advantage of the University they should not be excluded.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The amendment is altogether unnecessary. No church is built on a swamp, which would have to be drained. If valueless endowment lands were made valuable through drainage, the charge for the work should not be cast upon the surrounding settlers.

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

Clause 88—Board authorised to strike rates:

Hon. E. ROSE: It is ridiculous to charge a rate of 2s. in the pound on the unimproved value of land in some parts of the South-West. The backs of the settlers are being broken. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2, paragraph (a) the word "two," line 1, be struck out and "one" inserted in lieu.

Hon. J. EWING: I support Mr. Rose's amendment. Existing rates are almost sufficient to cripple the man on the land, and this proposed rate of 2s. seems to me the last straw that will break the camel's back. Let us wait for a year or two to see whether a higher rate than 1s. is necessary. The maximum could be raised next session. Moreover, much of this work should be of a national character.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Whenever a measure of this kind is introduced, we hear references to "the crushing burden of taxation." The present Bill, however, seeks to render valueless land valuable. Instead of taxation, there will be under the Bill contribution towards reproductive work. There must be power to rate sufficiently to cover expenses. The work under the measure must not be done at the expense of the general taxpayer. The cost ought to be borne by the people who are advantaged by the work.

Hon. A. BURVILL: With differential rating the 2s. maximum would not be too high. A flat rate of 2s., however, would be altogether too much. In this connection I shall have an amendment to move later. On high-class lands the settlers would be perfectly willing to pay a rate of 2s.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Clause 89 clearly states that rating is to be differential. The 2s. is a maximum. Land not greatly benefited might be rated at 9d. The maximum will not be imposed unless it is necessary.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I am advised that under Clause 89 differential rating will not operate unless it is applied for.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 89—Differential rating:

Hon. A. BURVILL: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided that any person feeling himself aggrieved through his land not being graded

under this section may, on appeal to the board or a local court under the provisions hereinafter contained, raise as a ground of appeal that the land is entitled to be graded under this section, and the board or court may make such order thereon as shall be just."

Without this proviso, I am advised, a holder of land deriving very little benefit might be subjected to a flat rate of as much as 2s.

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

Clause 97—Grounds of appeal:

Hon. A. BURVILL: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to stand as Subclause 6:—"That the land or part thereof does not derive the benefit as resolved by the board under Section 89."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to stand as Subclause 7:—"That the land or part thereof is entitled to be graded under Section 89, and the rates fixed as shall appear just."

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

New clause:

Hon. A. BURVILL: I move—

That the following new clause be added after Clause 64:—"Powers of Minister with respect to drainage of lands which are not within a drainage district.—(1.) Whenever the Minister shall be of opinion that the construction of drainage works is necessary in order to drain two or more adjoining pieces or parcels of land owned by different persons, and not being within the limits of any district, he may, by notice under his hand served on several owners, require them to construct such works to his satisfaction, and such owners shall thereupon be lawfully authorised to carry out the requisitions of such notice. (2.) If such works are not constructed for one month thereafter, or such longer time as may be specified in the notice, the Minister may construct and complete the same and recover an aliquot part of the cost (to be determined by him) from each of such owners in any court of competent jurisdiction. (3.) Such notice shall specify the nature and situation of the works required, and such works may be constructed as well outside as within the limits of the land aforesaid. (4.) For the purpose of exercising any authority conferred or complying with any requisitions made under this section, the Minister or the persons on whom the requisition is made shall, so far as necessary, have and be subject to the powers and liabilities of a board as set out in sections sixty-five to seventy, both inclusive. (5.) The provisions of subsections six, seven, eight, nine, and ten of section sixty-four shall,

*mutatis mutandis*, apply to and in respect of any works authorised or constructed under this section as if such works were a branch drain within a district and the Minister were the board of the district, and the lands afore-said were situated within such district."

There are areas of only 200 or 300 acres held by two or more persons. There is nothing in the Act to provide for the drainage of those land when the owners do not agree about it. Therefore I propose that the Minister shall administer those areas just as if he were a drainage board. There are in my electorate several instances of disagreement between small owners, all of which will be covered by the proposed new clause.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: It is very necessary that the Minister should have this power, and he already has it in the Bill. He can make a drain, declare it a State drain and levy taxes on the owners or occupiers. All the powers that Mr. Burvill would confer upon the Minister are already conferred upon him by Subclause (3) of Clause 9. Therefore the proposed new clause is unnecessary.

Hon. A. BURVILL: That being so, I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Bill again reported, with further amendments.

## **BILL—METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading—Amendment six months.*

Debate resumed from the 4th December on motion by the Chief Secretary "That the Bill be now read a second time" and on amendment by Hon. H. Seddon to strike out "now" and add "this day six months."

Hon. T. MOORE (Central) [9.13]: I am surprised to think that Mr. Seddon, representing a country district, should have moved his amendment that the Bill be read this day six months. It is surprising that anybody from a country district should ask that the people of the metropolitan area should get their water cheaper than water is supplied elsewhere. If the people in the outer districts have to pay excessive rates for water, certainly the people of the metropolitan area should be asked to pay a fair rate. The people of Geraldton, having a

water scheme that was put in by the Government, have to pay a rate of 3s. in the pound, while the people of the metropolitan area pay only 1s. in the pound, and when this Bill is passed will be asked to pay only 2s. Millions of pounds are to be spent on water supply for the metropolitan area during the next year or two, yet some members appear to think that the people of the metropolitan area should pay no more for the additional water they are to get. A heavy loss is being made on the metropolitan scheme, yet if the amendment is carried, people in the outer districts are to be asked, not only to pay for their own water, but to contribute by taxation also to the money required to meet the loss on the metropolitan scheme.

Hon. H. Seddon: Not necessarily.

Hon. T. MOORE: I see no other way out of it, because the deficit must be met. The hon. member admits there is a deficit. Some of our members set themselves up as engineers and perhaps they may know something about engineering. Then they secure an appointment to a select committee and inquire into the working of a water scheme. They call in engineers and ask those engineers to tender evidence and advice, and then these hon. members try to ascertain what is right and what is wrong. They are at a great disadvantage in arriving at a correct conclusion. It is absurd for a layman to meet engineers and try to tell those engineers what they ought to know about their business. Let us see how consistent the select committee have been. In connection with the amendment put up by Mr. Seddon, he referred to the question of meters. He said that if we were to instal meters around the city the amount of water now being wasted would be reduced, and economies would be effected.

Hon. H. Seddon: Did I say that?

Hon. T. MOORE: The hon. member's speech indicates that to me.

Hon. H. Seddon: I did not say that.

Hon. T. MOORE: If there is anything in the speech that would tend to show how a saving can be effected, it is that one thing. He pointed out that a saving would be effected if the waste were stopped, and that if we had meters, the saving effected would amount to £50,000 a year. What is the point the select committee put up in connection with meters? The select committee went into the question of meters and also investigated the length of time the meters lasted.

Mr. Shaw told the committee that the price of the meters was £3 10s., and it was made quite evident that they could not be made for the money. The select committee reported to this effect—

Mr. Shaw showed to your committee some of the meters in which the brass internal workings had been completely destroyed after the passage of only 25,000 gallons of water. The price paid to the implement works for these meters was £3 10s. each, but it was evident they could not be made for the money. Mr. Shaw stated that he had applied for an increased price to £4 17s. 6d. per meter and hoped to be able to get it.

The hon. member has taken up a new attitude. He, being one of the select committee, has put up this report and now comes along and says that a saving could be effected on the question of meters. The committee show that for every 25,000 gallons of water used there would almost be required a new meter, and that these meters were costing £3 10s. each. But the 25,000 gallons after all would only give us 25s. so far as excess water was concerned, and it would seem to be better to allow everybody to take excess water without being charged for the meters, and then we would show a saving. Mr. Seddon now says that we want the meters.

Hon. H. Seddon: On a point of order, the hon. member is misquoting the remarks I made in connection with the Bill. What I referred to was the question of introducing the system of garden areas.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member's remarks are a little outside the question. The question is whether the Bill shall be read this day six months.

Hon. T. MOORE: I looked into the hon. member's amendment to find out what reasons he advanced in support of it. I see only one in the whole of his speech which would indicate how the waste could be stopped, and that one is, the question of meters. That is the only point raised. If I leave that alone I shall have nothing to reply to. The price we are asking people to pay to day in the metropolitan area is fair and reasonable compared with what is charged in other parts of the State. In Geraldton we have to pay 3s. per 1,000 gallons for excess water. I hope that members will not give this question more consideration than it deserves. The people in this great State have many forms of taxation imposed upon them. In the metropolitan area, owing to the fact

that the town is built on sand, water is expensive. Much more water is used here than in the Eastern States, because we have people trying to build gardens on sand. In other parts, too, we have disadvantages. But when we find that the outlying parts of the State are called upon to pay what they are charged, it is only fair that the people in the metropolitan area should also pay what is proposed in the Bill we are discussing, which, after all, is very much less than is paid by the people at, say, Meekatharra. There they pay 2s. 6d., while Geraldton, as I have already told the House, pays 3s. The people of the metropolitan area are to be asked to pay 2s. at the most. In connection with the other parts of the Bill it would seem that the hon. member had nothing to say; at all events he did not raise any other points. I hope that members will not be found voting for the amendment.

**HON. J. NICHOLSON** (Metropolitan—on amendment) [9.25]: The Leader of the House, in speaking to the amendment, offered his congratulations to Mr. Seddon and those associated with him on their strategy in connection with the amendment that has been submitted. So far as I am aware, Mr. Seddon has presented the amendment entirely on his own initiative. When I spoke on the second reading of the Bill I was not aware that it was Mr. Seddon's intention to move the amendment, and I knew nothing about it until he actually submitted it. Therefore I hope the Leader of the House will recognise that what Mr. Seddon has done has been done entirely after due consideration and as the result of his association with the select committee which has submitted a report to the House. Mr. Moore expressed surprise that Mr. Seddon, representing a goldfields province, should take this step. Mr. Seddon was obviously selected as a member of the select committee because he was recognised as eminently suited to fill the position. Surely, then, he is acting within his rights as an hon. member.

Hon. T. Moore: I never questioned his rights.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is quite within the province of Mr. Moore, even, to have submitted such an amendment.

The PRESIDENT: I think Mr. Moore only expressed his surprise.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Any member may move an amendment, so long as he conforms to the rules of the House. A member has to consider not only the interests of his own province but also the interests of the whole State. At times I have expressed an opinion on matters outside my particular province. Mr. Seddon is rather to be congratulated, and I admire him for his courage. I take it also that, as a member of this select committee, Mr. Seddon has gathered a good deal of information which is an open book to him. That information the select committee have endeavoured, through their report, to communicate to other members. The report shows that there has been a considerable loss and waste, and I can only conclude that Mr. Seddon, in bringing forward this amendment, did so with the one object of emphasising his disapprobation of the manner in which the select committee considered the work has been carried out. We desire to see Government works carried out in the most economical way possible. If they are carried out in an extravagant manner, who will be the sufferers? Surely hon. members realise that the people will have to bear the burden, and the only way they can voice their objection is through their representatives here. If Mr. Seddon or any other hon. member desires to express his dissatisfaction with the Bill or any other measure that comes before us, he is perfectly justified in taking whatever action appeals to him as best. The Bill provides for doubling the present maximum rating powers under the Act. We know there has been a deficiency, but it is a small one when we look at the figures involved in a service of this kind. The people of the Metropolitan Province are not asking the Government to provide a water supply for nothing. What they desire to emphasise is that they wish to get good value for what they pay. They do not want to be saddled with a huge capital cost in connection with these works which, according to the select committee's report, would appear to be the position. If the capital cost is enormously increased the explanation may be that the work is carried out under day labour conditions instead of by contract, and, if that is to continue, the burden must be borne by the people.

Hon. T. Moore: Do you think the metropolitan people should get water cheaper than the Geraldton people?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not maintain that at all. If Mr. Moore had protested as I am doing now he might have been able to procure a cheaper water supply for the people in the province he represents.

Hon. T. Moore: We did not have a chance.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If the works are carried out at such a great cost, the service rendered may be at too great a cost to the people.

Hon. H. Stewart: It would not be the first time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Probably not. As to the rate to be charged, it was never contemplated that the water rate would be more than 1s. in the pound. I would call the attention of the Government to the fact that the hills water board, a board comprising thoroughly competent engineers reported in 1907 on the water supply question. In their report they showed that the probable rate respecting the Helena No. 2 scheme, which was not gone on with, would be about 9d. in the pound in 1925. To-day the Government ask us to agree to a maximum rate of 2s. in the pound.

Hon. J. Ewing: Did the committee consider the hills scheme?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes. Respecting Helena No. 2 scheme which also was not gone on with, the board estimated the probable rate in 1925 at 9d. in the pound. As to the Canning scheme, one of the schemes at present being undertaken, the board estimated that in 1925 the water rate would amount to 11d. in the pound and the estimated price of water per thousand gallons would be 1s. 4d.

Hon. E. H. Gray: We have had a war since then.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is so. The Canning No. 2 scheme was also reported on and the board estimated that the rate in 1925 would be 9d. in the pound, and the estimated price per thousand gallons 1s. 1d. Then the board also reported on the Kelmcott scheme which was the one opened yesterday, and they estimated that the rate in 1925 would be 9d. in the pound and the estimated price of water per thousand gallons 1s. 1d. From this it will be seen that the estimates have been largely exceeded. Unless we exercise great care in the construction of these works and make sure that



they are carried out on thoroughly economical lines, the cost will be enormously increased and the metropolitan taxpayers will find themselves with a service rendered to them at an exceptionally dear price. The residents of the metropolitan area would be the last people to object to paying what they regard as fair and just, but they protest against extravagance.

Hon. J. Ewing: You would not vote against the Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I recognise that I would not be justified in supporting Mr. Seddon's amendment. On the other hand I observe that the Minister for Works, at the opening of the Kelmscott scheme, referred to certain works that had been carried out under the Estimates. Is that the true basis for determining such a matter? Surely it is not a fair test to say that works are carried out under such estimates.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is what the contractors try to do.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I suggest that the proper way is to throw these works open to public tender and then have the departmental estimates as well. The Minister would be guided by the reports of his expert advisers as to the cost of the undertaking. He would get the tenders and then he would be able to see whether or not the estimates provided by his experts coincided with those of outside contractors.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is what they do now.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The works have been carried out by day labour which is more costly than under the contract system. The mere fact that officers prepared estimates and have carried out the works under those estimates does not afford any proper test at all. I hope the Government will recognise that Mr. Seddon has launched his amendment simply by way of emphasis as a protest against a method which he and others regard as wrong in the carrying out of such public works. Everyone wishes that these schemes will prove successful and we desire to see the work carried out. As I have already indicated, it was never intended that the maximum rate should be increased above 1s. On the other hand, it was intended that the rates would be greatly reduced as time went on.

Hon. T. Moore: But the purchasing power of money has decreased since then.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We realise that. I cannot support the amendment moved by Mr. Seddon and I do not wish to block the Government in connection with the Bill. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I think the maximum rate might be reduced. I believe the Government are sincere in their desire to carry out the work and if they see that the works are undertaken as economically as possible they will earn the hearty approbation of the great majority of the people.

**HON. A. BURVILL** (South-East) [9.45]: I oppose the amendment. Remarks have been made that the members of the select committee set themselves up as engineers, together with other references of a similar nature. The select committee did not intend and actually did not set themselves up as engineers, but they had before them the evidence of engineers, and they found it was so conflicting that they submitted it as argument. If a man were building a house he, as the administrator of his own funds, would pick out the best possible workmen to do the job. I take it that Mr. Seddon, in moving his amendment, desired to enter a protest against the maladministration of funds, especially in the Water Supply Department.

Hon. H. Seddon: That is the point.

Hon. A. BURVILL: There is not the slightest doubt that that has happened. The collapse of the filter beds showed it.

Hon. T. Moore: The select committee put up arguments about Mundaring Weir.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Let me deal with the collapse of the filter beds. That was due not so much to the fault of the engineers as to the maladministration of the department from the Minister down.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It was due to rushing it too much.

Hon. A. BURVILL: It was not a matter of rushing it. The scheme was never referred to the Engineer-in-Chief until he came before the select committee, and he condemned it. It was referred to Professor Tomlinson and he condemned the plan. When the select committee found such things, they were justified in voicing their complaints. It was the same with the work at Churehman's Brook. Until the collapse of the filter beds, the officers intended to put in a concrete core without a stable foundation. The select committee referred the

question to the Engineer-in-Chief. It should have been referred to him by the Minister in the first place. The Minister is the man to blame, not Mr. Lawson, who seemed to be a good administrator but not the best of engineers. At least this instance did not prove him to be a good engineer. When the matter was referred to the Engineer-in-Chief, the concrete core was cut out. It was then decided to go down to a proper foundation, and the intention now is to put in a core of clay. I do not know what members think of laymen as engineers, but when evidence of that description is adduced, it makes one think. I am not favourable to the country bearing the burden of these mistakes. The country has to bear the burden of its own mistakes. The other day I asked questions about the Harvey irrigation works and I wish to compare the proposals there with these works. At Harvey where the weir is not strong—one can see cracks in it which I think do not add to its safety, although Mr. Oldham says it is safe—there was a desire to increase the output for irrigation purposes. It was proposed to put a barrage 2ft. 6in. high on top of the wall. That proposal was approved by Mr. Arney and Mr. O'Brien, endorsed by the Engineer-in-Chief, and further urged by Mr. O'Brien, and Mr. O'Brien is the man who would not consider having a barrage on the Mundaring Weir. The Harvey proposal was turned down by Mr. Munt, the Commissioner who has charge of the irrigation work, and the Minister refused to go on with it. The reason given was, "The ex-Minister decided that, as the ratepayers were not meeting their obligations, he was not justified in adding to the capital cost." I saw the file. If the weir had been raised 2ft. 6in. it would have increased the capacity of the reservoir by one-fifth or one-fourth, and it would have been possible to irrigate and bring under closer settlement nearly twice the area now in the Harvey scheme. But because the present ratepayers had not met their obligations, the Minister would not proceed with the work. Therefore it was stopped, although it promised to be a productive work. Unless the people in the metropolitan area are willing to bear the added cost, even though it be due to bad engineering or bad administration, the work should be stopped. Judging by what has happened, the people were perfectly willing that this work should be proceeded with. When Sir James Mitchell announced his pro-

posals, the people entered no protest. The work has proceeded so far now that it would not be economical to go back to the Mundaring scheme.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Nor satisfactory, either.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I hear that the new Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Stileman, intends to use the Mundaring water. However, the new works have advanced so far that it is necessary to continue with them, and the people must pay for them. I am aware that Mr. Lovekin is against this proposed rate. But he has dealt with this matter before. On the 11th September, 1923, he moved to disallow certain charges, and he fought for a considerable time and at last got his motion carried by 14 votes to five. The five members against him were Messrs. Ewing, Moore, Rose, Willmott, and Burvill. Mr. Lovekin managed to secure the support of nearly all the country members. As a result, the department lost a lot of money. Mr. Lovekin tried to prove that if the accounts were drawn up properly, there would be no loss. The 6d. per thousand, however, was cut off and this resulted, as the Minister told us, in a loss of £5,000 a year. Later on the country suffered. When the Appropriation Bill came down, instead of its containing a large sum of money for the country water supplies, for enlarging dams and for irrigation works, the whole of the money available, with the exception of £30,000, was devoted to the metropolitan area. The metropolitan rates were lowered and water was used to a far greater extent than before, and there was a shortage. That caused the Mitchell Government to inaugurate the new works. The rate charged was a low one and the people were careless in the use of the water. In many instances there are no meters and there are no means of checking the consumption, and a tremendous quantity of water is wasted and is not paid for. While that goes on, the present supply cannot suffice; it must be enlarged. This in turn must affect the country, and that is why I shall not vote for the amendment or for a reduction in the proposed rate. Let me read what I said in 1923 when the Appropriation Bill was being considered:—

I was much interested earlier in the session when Mr. Lovekin desired to disallow certain increases in the rates levied for water supply in the metropolitan area. I congratulate that hon. member on his success. He practically forced the hands of the Government in the city areas. I recognise that the metropolis

must have a water supply, and I am in sympathy with hon. members who have spoken in favour of the supply being placed under a board or under municipal control. Country members, especially those from the wheat belt, realised that in helping Mr. Lovekin to secure the disallowance of the regulation, the price of water in the metropolitan area was reduced by 6d. per thousand gallons. As the result, the people here receive cheaper water, and the Government have had to face an increase in the deficit. When Mr. Lovekin's motion went to a division it was carried against the Government by 14 votes to five. Practically all the members from the wheat belt areas and, in fact, nearly all the country members, voted with Mr. Lovekin to secure the reduction in the price of water. A little later Mr. Stewart was particularly anxious concerning the amount provided for water supplies in the wheat belt and also for drainage. He criticised the Government regarding the provisions made in the Loan Estimates. Yet, by voting with Mr. Lovekin, he practically forced the hands of the Government to agree to the reduction.

Hon. G. Potter: Was it not Mr. Lovekin's desire to make water cheaper for industry?

Hon. A. BURVILL: On that occasion I added—

Mr. Stewart showed that the successive debits on the metropolitan water supply were £1,600, £6,600, £3,700, £6,700 and £8,200. He also said:—"People in the metropolitan area contend that they pay for these services themselves and the country folk have been led to believe that there is some truth in the statement. The statistics, however, show that the metropolitan people do not pay for their water supplies."

The department has been badly managed, but I do not think it should be excused for past mistakes. The country has to pay for the mistakes. At Harvey a reproductive work is held up because the department do not think the people will be able to pay for the extra water.

*[The Deputy President took the Chair.]*

HON. G. POTTER (West) [9.58]: The more one hears the question of the metropolitan water supply discussed, the more he must be convinced that a most valuable suggestion arising out of the debate is for the immediate placing of such services in the hands of independent boards. Every member's speech has really tended to illustrate the enormous cost of works over and above the original estimate. Unfortunately, we find that such works have been largely used to absorb the unemployed during the unfortunate periods of depression. Therefore, the men, through being inexperienced in

manual labour, have been unable to give the full value for the wages received, not through any fault of their own but through their inexperience. The reason why the works have been excessive in cost can be attributed to the fact that they have been used as relief works for unemployed. Under a system of control by a board that would not apply. The control would then be free from political influence. Mr. Seddon did not leave members in doubt as to his object. He said much of the deficit could be accounted for by the losses owing to the amount of water that was consumed without passing through a meter. He indicated it was physically impossible to recover that loss. I think the hon. member has in mind that now the loss has been definitely pointed to, the effect will be to draw the attention of those in charge of the Water Supply Department to what is going on, and possibly prevent a repetition of it. If the hon. member presses his motion I am afraid it may lead to the work in progress being stopped. We have for so long been crying out for a hills water scheme that we would deplore any delays that might occur in going on with the work. If the Bill passes the second reading I will have something further to say upon it in Committee. Mr. Seddon has pointed out how money could be saved. I could refer to another direction in which a saving could be effected. It is not often that communities ask the Government to sell them something at cost price to the Government. If the Government will hand the Fremantle section of the storm water system to the local municipality, it will be possible to effect a considerable saving. If the charges set out in this Bill go through, and the Government hand the scheme over to Fremantle at cost, it will mean a saving of at least 2d. in the pound to the people of Fremantle, and also a saving to the Government because they will not be debiting the scheme with an annual loss. I am sorry I cannot support Mr. Seddon's amendment.

On motion by Hon. J. M. Macfarlane, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.3 p.m.*