

PAIRS.

AYES.

NOES.

Mr. Maley		Mr. McCallum
Mr. J. M. Smith		Mr. Munster

Question thus negatived.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1, Trust Funds Investment Act Amendment.

Passed.

2, Shipping Ordinance Amendment.

3, Legitimation Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—NAVIGATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. J. W. Hickey—Central) [4.39] in moving the second reading said: Although this Bill contains a number of clauses, there is not much of a contentious nature in it. The printed memorandum attached to the Bill sets out the necessity for this legislation. Section 30 of Part IV. of the Navigation Act, 1904, is obscure, and in fact does not stipulate the survey of local or intra-State vessels. The proposed new section in the Bill defines the classes of vessel that this section shall apply to and sets out the vessels excepted from survey under the statute, including those holding a seagoing certificate issued by the board of trade under the Merchant Shipping Act or by the Commonwealth Government under the Commonwealth Navigation Act. Provision is also made to survey vessels once a year instead of every six months, which brings our legislation into line with other Acts, including that of the Commonwealth Government. The Navigation Act, 1904, under which we are now working only gives power to survey steamships, whereas the Bill provides for the survey of all classes of vessels including motor or auxiliary motor schooners, etc., in addition to steam driven vessels, thus ensuring the better control of and the power to survey the small coasting craft which trade between ports on this coast and are not at present subject to survey or manning conditions. The Bill also give greater protection to the crews of such vessels and the owners of cargo. More particularly is this the case with craft lightering wool between ports and to vessels. Provision is also made for the survey of harbour and river craft, more particularly in regard to their engines and boilers. Provision for this control was included in the old Inspection of Machinery Act of 1904, but omitted from the amend-

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

QUESTION—RABBIT-PROOF FENCE.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What is the annual cost of upkeep of the No. 2 Rabbit-proof Fence, including interest on capital cost? 2, Are the Department of Agriculture aware that the gates on the fence can frequently be found standing wide open? 3, How many convictions have been recorded during the last three years against persons leaving the gates open? 4, What is the average amount of the fines imposed?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, £7,447. 2, Officers of the Department and also members of Vermin Boards have found gates open, and in each instance have endeavoured to catch the offenders, but without result. 3, Nil. 4, Answered by No. 3.

ing measure of 1922, since which date there has been no legislation dealing with engines and boilers of harbour and river craft, such as the "Zephyr" and "Perth." The Act of 1904 deleted this power from the Boat Licensing Act of 1878. With the increased power of engines in motor vessels, it is necessary to make provision for the examination of marine motor engine-drivers and to compel harbour and river vessels to employ certificated drivers. Clause 2 of the Bill inserts in Section 2 of the Navigation Act, 1904, three definitions that are essential. The definition of "limited coasting voyage" is important. Local craft make short daylight journeys outside the limits determined for ports, and whilst it is admitted that those craft are eminently suited to their proper work, it cannot be said that they are well suited to the making of longer journeys. This matter has been brought forward from time to time by interested people on the North-West coast, and I think it will be agreed that the definition is essential, in order that due regard might be had for safety. Clause 3 is to amend Section 30 of the Navigation Act of 1904, as the present application of Part IV. of that Act, relating to the survey of steamships, is obscure. It is very doubtful whether provision is made in Section 30 for the application of Part IV. to intra-State vessels. The clause, I think, makes this point clear, and also provides for the periodic survey of coastal sailing vessels and harbour and river steamers. Clause 4 provides for a survey once a year instead of every six months. This will not increase the present charges. The proposed amendment also gives the Chief Harbour Master power to appoint persons to survey harbour and river vessels in remote ports when no official surveyors are available. Clause 5 amends paragraph 5 of Section 33 of the Act of 1904. The Act provided that the Chief Harbour Master should transmit lists of steamships, in respect of which certificates had been issued, to the officers of Customs of all ports within the jurisdiction. As the Customs are now under Commonwealth control, it is better to provide that those lists shall be published in the prescribed manner. Clause 6 amends Section 36 of the Act by excising the words "six months" and substituting the words "one year," thus providing for surveys of vessels annually, as is the case in the Eastern States under the various navigation departments and the Commonwealth Government.

Clause 7 provides the fees to be prescribed. These will be on the basis set out in Section 37 of the Navigation Act, 1904, but in addition a fee will be provided for smaller vessels than those mentioned in that section. Clause 8 amends Section 39 of the Act and makes the whole section applicable to ships, not to steamships only. This will enable a survey to be made of the various motor-driven vessels and coastal steamers that convey cargo from port to port, or lighter wool to vessels, thus ensuring greater protection for the crew and for the owners of the cargo. It is an important amendment. In Clause 12 provision is made for the examination of marine motor engine drivers, and also for compelling the owners of vessels plying for hire to have only certificated men in charge of their boats. With the increased power of the engines now installed in various motor-driven pleasure vessels, it is necessary to see that the drivers of such engines are competent to be in charge when vessels are carrying large numbers of persons. This clause will appeal to most members, because it is of the utmost importance that those in charge of human life should be competent persons, certified by an expert board following on examination.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Are you providing for the issue of certificates to those already occupying such positions?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is not provided for. It is a point that might bear investigation. If the Bill become law, all persons occupying such positions to-day will be compelled to undergo examination. If it is sufficiently important that a man newly appointed to such a job should hold a certificate, it is equally important that the man already in the job also should hold one.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I see no provision for it in the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, but the point will be attended to. Of course, hardship might arise if a man who has satisfactorily occupied such a position for many years has to lose his job through being unable to pass a theoretic examination. I will have the point inquired into. The Bill aims not at doing injustice to anybody, but merely at tightening up the existing law and providing for the safety of the travelling public. Section 30 of the Act provides that Part IV. of the Act shall apply to all

steamships engaged in the trade of conveying passengers from any port within the jurisdiction to any port in any other part of His Majesty's dominions. The Crown Law Department advise that that word "other" debars Australia from the application of Part IV.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Will the Bill apply to privately-owned motor launches on the river, or only to those plying for hire?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Those plying for hire.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will it not be a big tax on an auxiliary schooner or lighter if it be necessary to have a special man to run the motor and do nothing else?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I should say it will only be necessary for a man qualified to control a schooner on the coast to pass a certain examination in respect of the engine.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will not the union come in and say, "Your job is merely to drive that engine, not to work the cargo or handle the boat"?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not think that position will arise. Incidentally, the Bill has been introduced largely at the request of people on the North-West coast. No objection should be taken to a man driving a motor and, when not so engaged, doing other work about the vessel.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But objection may be taken, as it has been taken in respect of, say, carpenters and plumbers.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is quite right where there is plenty of work for both. However, that does not apply to boats on the North-West coast, where the driving of the motor would not be sufficient to keep a man employed full time. The hon. member need not fear anything in that direction, for common sense will be observed, just as it is to-day. The Bill has been framed to meet all the objections raised from time to time from different sources and different parts of the State. I have gone through it very carefully, and have consulted the officers and discussed the various provisions with them. I raised my objections and met theirs, and in addition consulted the Crown Law authorities on various points. Last year a comprehensive measure was placed before me for my perusal, but I did not feel disposed to shoulder the responsibility of dealing with it then. The subjects contained in the Bill were not of

sufficient importance to engage the time of Parliament to the extent that would have been necessary. The Bill we are now considering is in a more concrete form, and it is only a small part of the Bill that was submitted to me last year. I had no hesitation in agreeing to its contents, and therefore it is with confidence that I submit it to the House. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles debate adjourned.

BILL—SOLDIER LAND SETTLEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.4]: When the Chief Secretary presented the Bill to the House, he stated that the Commonwealth Government had been very generous towards Western Australia in granting it such a liberal amount towards the repatriation of soldiers. It may be interesting to the House to know that with the sum of £796,000 the total Commonwealth contribution is now £1,492,000. My reason for speaking on the second reading of the Bill is that at the present time there is a considerable number of soldiers who have not yet been successful in obtaining land. I am informed that there are some 1,800 qualified applicants who desire to take up suitable land in either the wheat or wool districts, and of that number 300 are specially qualified to undertake the pursuit of agriculture. The Minister for Lands has stated he is not prepared to purchase estates for subdivision whilst there remain on the hands of the department a number of abandoned holdings. I am given to understand, however, that these holdings are on a small scale and more suitable, perhaps, for pig and poultry raising. It is felt by a number of the soldiers that considering the fact that land has increased so much in value since the war, it has become difficult for them to obtain selections. When Crown lands have been put up for competition there have been so many applicants for the blocks that the soldiers have been completely cut out.

Hon. G. A. Kempton: Do they not get preference?

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: Yes, but what chance has the soldier when there

are 200 applications for one block? We have the instance of the Mendel Estate, quoted by Mr. Kempton the other night, where there were 40 or 50 applicants for certain blocks. A suggestion that occurs to me is that perhaps the time is ripe when the Government might select a large area of Crown lands and make that specially available for soldier settlement, and in that way get the remainder of the soldiers properly equipped. It must also be remembered that from the first amount which was handed to the State by the Federal Government, there is still a large sum at credit. The point I specially wish to emphasise is this: that the Commonwealth in the grant of £796,000 made to the State, have given a sum far in excess of what the State expected to receive. There is therefore an obligation on the State to see that all soldiers desirous of taking up land are satisfied and that they, too, shall receive consideration similar to that extended to soldiers already settled. Information is also desired as to when the applicants in possession of qualification certificates may expect to obtain their blocks, and whether they will be given the same assistance as has been given to those now in possession of properties, namely, half rates for Crown lands, payment of part fees as allowed under the Discharged Soldier Settlement Act, and most important of all, whether the I.A.B. will extend to them assistance for cropping etc. It must be understood that the Commonwealth concession of £796,000 was offered on the understanding that there would be further inclusions within the soldier settlement scheme. This is evidenced by a letter which was written by the Prime Minister to the State Government, and published in the "West Australian" of 10th October last. I do not purpose reading the whole of the letter; I shall content myself with quoting one or two important points. It says—

Representatives of the Returned Soldiers' League have also stated that your Government is refusing applications for settlement from men who secured qualification certificates in the belief that the State would provide for their settlement on the land. It is anomalous that, at the very moment when the Commonwealth had offered your State financial relief much in excess of any that you had claimed, there should be a suggestion to discontinue the concessions to new settlers. The object of the increased Commonwealth grant of £796,000 is to place the State in a position to deal justly with settlers, and it is assumed that, as a result you will give additional help to settlers in special cases where relief is necessary to enable them to succeed, and that the additional help

will be extended not only to old settlers, but to others who will be settled in the future.

That is the point that the settlers are now worrying about. There are at least 300 who are desirous of taking up land, but owing to the increased value of the land which has been brought about in a great measure by the fact that 5,000 soldiers have taken up areas—I think the Chief Secretary told us the other night that there were 5,000 settlers on the land—the men now applying for blocks find themselves in a more difficult position than those who were fortunate enough to secure their selections earlier. Therefore I hope the Government will take the matter into consideration and see that those who are now desirous of establishing themselves on the land will get a fair deal similar to that granted to the men settled in the earlier days of repatriation. May I also say that the soldiers themselves are very grateful for what has been done. They have full confidence in the Soldier Settlement Board and they appreciate the courtesy, advice and assistance extended to them by Mr. McLarty. One outstanding feature I desire to stress is that those ex-soldiers who still desire to go on the land will be given a fair and reasonable opportunity to obtain land on conditions similar to those granted to the men who are already there. I intend to support the Bill.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Harris, debate adjourned.

BILL—GOVERNMENT SAVINGS BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 5 to 7—agreed to.

New Clause: Investment of trust moneys:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the following new clause be added to stand as Clause 8:—A section is inserted in the principal Act as follows:—18a. The State Savings Bank shall be deemed to be an incorporated bank within the meaning of Section 5 of the Trustee Act, 1900, and trustees may invest or deposit trust funds in the State Savings Bank at a prescribed rate of interest on fixed deposit or otherwise.

I have conferred with the Crown Law authorities in regard to the matter. The new clause makes provision whereby investments or deposits of moneys in the State Savings

Bank will be regarded as authorised trust investments within the meaning of the Trustee Act. Under the Trustee Act, 1900, a list is given of authorised investments that may be made by trustees, and amongst the number authorised we find deposits may be made in any incorporated or joint stock bank. Strange to say, there is no reference to deposits in the State Savings Bank, and with the object of overcoming any question that may arise as to trustees investing money in the State Savings Bank, the new clause is submitted.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Should not that be in the Trustee Act?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Not necessarily. Seeing that we are dealing with moneys deposited in the State Savings Bank, it can be incorporated in the Bill now before us.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will it cover the position?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, it will be quite sufficient.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not had an opportunity of consulting Cabinet regarding the new clause, but I have no hesitation in accepting it and I thank Mr. Nicholson for the action he has taken.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Are you certain that this is the right Bill in which to insert the new clause? The principle is all right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think this is the proper place, because there have been similar amendments agreed to in measures affecting other Acts. In addition to that, Mr. Nicholson has been in consultation with the Crown Law authorities.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—WYALCATCHEM RATES VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.19] in moving the second reading said: From time to time the Government are called upon to bring down a Bill to ratify some action of a local authority which, through an error of omission, has not been in conformity with the law. The Wyalcatchem Road Board is the latest local authority to find itself in such a position. Under the Road Districts Act, road boards cannot legally strike rates on the annual

value without first obtaining the consent of the Governor in Council. The Wyalcatchem Road Board struck such a rate during the year 1925 without this necessary authority. There was nothing wrong about the matter. It was simply an oversight on the part of the gentleman performing the duties of the secretary during the latter's absence owing to illness. The Bill will legalise the collection of the rates by the board for that year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading

Debate resumed from the previous day.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.25]: In reply to Mr. Harris I desire to explain that scalps are paid for by the various vermin boards throughout the State immediately on presentation of the scalps. There is no delay in payment to the owners of those scalps. The boards obtain the Government bonus as soon as they present the vouchers.

Hon. F. H. Harris: It will not be affected by the collection of the money by the Taxation Department.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As soon as the vouchers are produced to the Agricultural Department, the money will be forthcoming.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about boards in the back country where they may have to finance the bonus for 100 scalps? Is there any provision made to overcome that position?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot say what would happen in that case. No doubt provision will be made by the department to meet such a contingency.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The departmental officers talk about scalps being brought down here.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have brought that phase of the question under the notice of the Agricultural Department. The collections will be paid in to the Treas-

sure but the accounts will be handled by the Agricultural Department. Mr. Harris indicated that scalps were being brought in from outside the State and contended that the State was paying for the destruction of vermin from another State. It is admitted that there is a possibility of that being done.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But there is a heavy penalty provided for such an offence.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The boards naturally take all possible precautions to protect their funds and, as Mr. Miles has pointed out, there is a penalty of £250 or 12 months' imprisonment, for trafficking.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Those concerned are well aware of that too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: When the Act is fully in operation—it is not in operation at the present time—every precaution will be taken by the Agricultural Department to prevent unlawful trafficking in scalps. Mr. Stewart objected to the Treasury taking charge of the fund raised by taxation under the Vermin Act. All Government moneys are kept in the Treasury. Mr. Stewart is mistaken in saying that the funds will be collected by the Treasury. As a matter of fact, they will be collected by the Taxation Department, and the Agricultural Department will be able to draw upon the Treasury for all funds required for the administration of the Act.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will any surplus be used for purposes other than those outlined in the Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This fund can be expended only in accordance with the Act. The money cannot be diverted to any foreign purpose. It is immaterial, therefore, whether the funds are kept at the Agricultural Department or at the Treasury. Reference was made by some hon. members to the respective rating of pastoralists and agriculturists. That question was fully debated last year.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: But the position has altered since, and now the agriculturists' rates have been nearly doubled.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I trust the question will not be reopened this year while we are considering the Bill that seeks merely to alter a machinery section of the Act and to provide against one deficiency. There are other suggested amendments, but I prefer to wait and see them on the Notice Paper. An Advisory Board has been appointed under Section 10 of last year's

Vermin Act Amendment Act, but it is not functioning. There is a very good reason for that; there are no funds and the Minister is awaiting the passage of this legislation which will greatly facilitate collections. With regard to Mr. Glasheen's references to kangaroos, I would inform that hon. member that the grey kangaroo is protected throughout the south-western portions of the State. Brush, wallabies, red kangaroos (or euros) are not protected. The grey kangaroo may be taken for food purposes only; in other words it may not be hunted for the sale of its skin only in the South-Western reserve for kangaroos. This concession has proved of considerable value to settlers and others who are not fortunately situated in respect to food supplies. Over 1,000 licenses to take the grey kangaroo for food purposes are granted each year. At different seasons of the year and in different parts of the South-Western division, the grey kangaroo becomes more or less plentiful, and at times causes damage to crops and fences. In my own district the kangaroo at present is a greater pest than the rabbit. In such circumstances, however, authority to destroy for a stated period may be and is granted to settlers by the Minister under Section 21 of the Game Act. If any settler wishes to destroy kangaroos that are damaging his crop or injuring his garden, all he has to do is to submit a case to the department and the matter will receive favourable consideration.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You can exempt a district under the Act, and include euros as vermin.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That can be done.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

RETURN—LAND TAX ASSESSMENTS.

Debate resumed from the 7th September on the following motion by the Hon. H. Stewart—

That a tabulated statement, similar to Table "M" in the seventeenth annual report of the Commissioner of Taxation, giving analyses of the State land tax assessments for the years subsequent to the 30th June, 1922, be laid on the Table of the House.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [5.33]: I understand that the motion in the form in which it was amended by Mr. Stewart and placed before the House is accept-

able to the Minister, and therefore no further debate is necessary.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Mr. Stewart desires the motion to be adjourned till Tuesday.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.34]: There is no need for an adjournment because the motion, in its present form, is acceptable to the Government. The information can be supplied without great difficulty.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.35 p.m.

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

QUESTION—HELENA RIVER BRIDGE, GUILDFORD.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Works: In connection with questions answered on 25th August relating to the ironwork for the Helena River Bridge, 1, did the reply concerning the ironwork include bolts? 2, If not, were all the bolts used on the bridge manufactured in the State? 3, If not, where were they made?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** replied: 1, Order for ironwork, consisting of straps, stirrups, and bolts, was placed with local manufacturing firms and to the best of the department's knowledge at time of replying

to previous questions, was manufactured in the State; it has since been ascertained that a proportion of the bolts was obtained from the Eastern States by the firms in question. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—PETROL TAX.

Mr. THOMSON (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: Yesterday I asked what was the amount collected on petrol by the Commissioner of Taxation for the quarter ended 30th June last. The reply I received gave figures identically the same as those for the quarter ended 30th March last. Was the reply furnished yesterday correct?

The **MINISTER FOR WORKS** replied: The figures were supplied by the accountant and an error may have crept in. I will make inquiries and let the hon. member have a reply on Tuesday next.

BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 31st August.

MR. LATHAM (York) [4.33]: There are many features of the Bill that will commend themselves to the House, but at the same time there are some respecting which the Minister must expect some criticism. The measure refers principally to bus traffic in the metropolitan area and it is certain that there must be regulations to control that traffic. There are some restrictive and even prohibitive powers in the Bill with which the Opposition members are not likely to see eye to eye. The Bill is essentially a Committee measure and can be better dealt with than during the second reading stage, because it consists mainly of amendments to the principal Act. It is admitted that many alterations are necessary in order to control traffic effectively, particularly in view of the tremendous growth of road transportation in recent times. I propose to leave matters relating to the bus traffic principally to members representing the metropolitan area. To a great extent the Bill relieves the Minister of control, which has been handed over to the Commissioner of Police. I do not know that that is a very wise provision. Not very long ago there was an instance where a local governing body did certain things and it was necessary for an Act of Parliament to be passed to compel them to do what the people desired. It does not