

London to-day. I trust that when the debate on items referring to the Agent General's office comes along—I know the opinion of the Committee is strong on this point—that they will be dwelt upon. I trust, further, that when the voice of the Committee has been heard affirming that economy should be exercised in this connection, and also in some others, Ministers will listen and will accept the judgment of hon. members and take the responsibility, or let the whole Committee take the responsibility, of doing what is best for Western Australia. I believe that economy is practicable. I even believe it is possible that we might do with a few less motor cars than we have in Western Australia. In my opinion, we have not yet reached the stage of realising that we must rely on ourselves a great deal more than we are doing to-day. A tendency to lean on the Government has grown up in the people of Australia, and especially in the people of Western Australia, until we have reached this stage, that no matter what section of the community is concerned, it seems a question of who can howl the loudest for the most aid from the Government. And so it goes on until the country gets beyond its means. I think the time has arrived when we may justly and legitimately profit by the evidence which is abroad to-day, and realise that the old spirit of extravagance in the individual and in the State must come to an end. Times are not the same as they were, and they are not likely to be in the future what they have been in the past. If we can only profit by the lesson that is offered to us, by the dreadful times through which we are now passing, it will be a great benefit to us in the future. The sufferings of to-day will be amply repaid in the times to come, and when prosperity returns to this grand young country it will be on a more solid and permanent basis, and we shall be able to build more securely than in the past.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.18 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 29th September, 1915.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

Electric Power House, East Perth.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central): I desire to lay on the Table of the House, in accordance with the resolution carried on the 23rd inst., 123 files in connection with the electric light and power station. In submitting these papers, I would like to read to hon. members a letter which I received from the Commissioner of Railways—

Further to my letter of the 9th inst. addressed to the Hon. Mr. Scaddan, in accordance with the motion which was carried last week in the Legislative Council, I am to-day forwarding all contracts, agreements, correspondence, and papers relating to the East Perth power house contract, and the supply of electric current therefrom. As previously pointed out, the most serious inconvenience will be occasioned if these papers are away from the Department for any length of time, as they are in daily use, and I would specially request that those dealing with the supply of current to suburban districts be held for a few days at most, as negotiations are in hand, and agreements in course of preparation, and the work will be absolutely at a standstill so long as the files are out of my possession.

I move—

That the Papers do lie on the Table of the House.

Question passed.

QUESTION—FERRY SERVICE, SOUTH PERTH.

Hon. C. SOMMERS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1. Is it proposed to decrease the ferry services between Perth and South Perth, and to increase the fares? 2. If so, why?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1. Yes. It is proposed to reduce the number of trips to South Perth by five on Mondays to Fridays, one on Saturdays, and three on Sundays. The trips cut out are those least patronised; thus making a thirty-minute service at the slack times instead of a fifteen-minute service. The ordinary fares have not been changed, but the season tickets have been increased as follows:—Monthly: Gentlemen, from 8s. to 9s.; ladies, 5s. to 5s. 6d.; children, 4s. to 4s. 6d. Quarterly: Gentlemen, from 21s. to 23s.; ladies, 12s. 6d. to 14s.; children, 10s. to 11s. 6d. 2. The reason for the alteration in price of season tickets is increased working expenses (higher wages, additional labour, increased cost of benzine, oil, and other material) and decrease of revenue, which amounted to £316 13s. 10d. for the year ended June last. The charge for the monthly tickets when the service was taken over from Mr. Copley was gentlemen 10s., ladies 6s., children 5s. 3d. The following concessions have been granted by the Government:—School children are granted monthly tickets at 2s. 6d., and apprentices and others earning less than £90 per annum are allowed to travel at half rates.

SELECT COMMITTEE, RETIRE- MENT OF C. F. GALE.

*Attendance of member of Assembly,
further Message.*

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.40]:
I move—

*That the following Message be sent
to the Legislative Assembly:—“The
Legislative Council acquaints the Legis-
lative Assembly that the Legislative
Council has not yet received any reply
to its Message No. 7, dated the 7th*

*September, in which Message the Leg-
islative Council asked the Legislative
Assembly to authorise the Honourable
R. H. Underwood to attend to give evi-
dence before the Select Committee on
the retirement of Mr. C. F. Gale. Since
the receipt of that Message it would
appear from the Journals of the House
that the Legislative Assembly has held
eight sittings and failed to take the
Message into consideration. The Legis-
lative Council ventures to point out
that the practice in these cases, as laid
down in “May” is that, if at the time and
when a Message of this tenor is received
by either House, and the Member whose
attendance is required is in his place
and he consents to give evidence, leave
is immediately given for him to be ex-
amined if he thinks fit, and if he is not
present a Message is returned on a fu-
ture day when the Member has in his
place consented to go. Under these cir-
cumstances it appears to the Legislative
Council that the default of the Legis-
lative Assembly in delaying to give a
definite reply to the Message, if not
due to an oversight on the part of the
Legislative Assembly, indicates a lack
of that courtesy with which the requests
made by one House to the other should
be met.”*

It is not my intention to discuss the motion at any length. If hon. members will read it they will see that it speaks for itself. The House is aware that a select committee was appointed to inquire into the retirement of Mr. Gale from the Aborigines Department. The committee has been sifting and has examined all the witnesses with the exception of Mr. Underwood. Notice was sent by this House to the Legislative Assembly on the 7th inst. requesting the attendance of Mr. Underwood before the committee, but so far no reply has been received to the Message. Consequently I move the motion which stands in my name.

Question passed.

BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.
Report of Committee adopted.

MOTION — AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENT AND IMMIGRATION.

Debate resumed from 22nd September on motion of Hon. J. F. Cullen, "That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should appoint an Honorary Commission of three experienced settlers to prepare for submission to Parliament a scheme for attracting and settling on suitable areas in this State a large number of immigrants from Europe after the close of the war; that the foregoing resolution be communicated to His Excellency the Governor."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.41]: It is usual for a petitioner who is anxious to catch the ear of the person addressed to couch his prayer in diplomatic phraseology. He generally shows some respect for the laws of courtesy. Not so with Mr. Cullen. The hon. gentleman furnishes the exception which proves the rule. He has an appeal to make to the Government, but the tone of that appeal is tinged with offensive, if not opprobrious terms. He wants the Government to recommence a vigorous immigration campaign; he hopes to be able to convince them that it is the one thing necessary; and he starts out by abusing them in very caustic language. The opening sentence of the hon. member's speech charges the Government with "stagnating the affairs of the State." It is the form of general accusation to which we have grown accustomed, and it can be charitably ignored. But the logic of the hon. gentleman is what concerns me most. That logic is of a very peculiar mould. He says we "came into office with loud claims as immigrationists," and that the union bosses have converted us from our views and compelled us to obey their behest. The same thing was said, by the hon. member of the Arbitration Court, but that is by the way. I mention it to show that we have some illustrious companions in misfortune. To come back to the point, and it is here that I find some difficulty in following Mr. Cullen. If these union bosses exist now they must have existed before the general election of four years ago. It will scarcely be

contended, even by the most refractory critic, that they were a spontaneous creation following on the advent of a Labour Government. They must have occupied their thrones prior to 7th October, 1911, and if the Labour Government came into office with "loud claims as immigrationists"—claims proclaimed from the house-tops—everyone must have known of them, the union bosses included. The only possible way to reconcile Mr. Cullen's conflicting statements is to assume that the union bosses supported immigration before the election and subsequently repented of their sin—and repented to such a degree as to shatter the very idol they had set up. This would indicate very great indecision of character on the part of the union bosses pictured by the vivid imagination of the Hon. Mr. Cullen. But Mr. Cullen's reasoning leads one into further perplexities. He urges the Government to adopt certain means for "attracting and settling on suitable areas in this State a large number of immigrants." If his own words are to be respected, it was a pitiable waste of time for him to have framed his motion and delivered his speech. If the Government are mere puppets worked at will by someone outside, if they dare not comply with his request on peril of political annihilation, surely it is futile of him to make that request, and his energies could be more usefully directed.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: He should have altered the second part of his motion, making it read to communicate with the A.L.F.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: On Mr. Cullen's own showing, it is not the Government he should approach, but the union bosses—if it is possible for him to locate them. These remarks are made with the object of showing how difficult it will be for His Excellency—if he places before Cabinet a copy of *Hansard* containing Mr. Cullen's remarks—to indicate to Cabinet how this request can possibly be complied with except by the loss of his Ministers. But, let me say the Government did not come into office with loud claims as immigrationists. They came into office with the same claims in

this respect as they hold to-day. The policy of the Government was, and is, to introduce into this State as much population as can be absorbed and utilised in the development of our resources. Any other policy would be fraught with most disastrous consequences. That population, under any circumstances, means wealth is a fallacy which should need no exposing. This must be obvious to anyone who gives the question even a moment's thought. It is an employed and producing population which brings prosperity to a country. Any other class of population instead of being a help to, would be a burden on, the State.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Population of a suitable kind.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Such is the view taken by the Government, and it would be interesting if Mr. Cullen could show that there is in it any element of unsoundness. That policy the Government pursued up to the commencement of the war, and it is the policy which we shall pursue after the war is ended, if we happen to be in office. Since we have been in office we can claim to have introduced 5,938 assisted immigrants, and have accepted nominations for 11,641 persons. Considerably more came to the State during our administration; but I am not taking into account those who were secured under the previous Government. During the last seven years 32,000 immigrants have been brought to this State, and of these, in the last three and a half years, we have been directly responsible for the introduction of no fewer than 17,579 persons. The statement of Mr. Cullen that we closed down on immigration soon after accepting office is not borne out by facts. Of course, we are doing little by way of introducing immigrants now. The reason should be obvious to any person who studies public events. Our Empire is at war and we do not want to bring from Great Britain men who might be required to fight in the defence of the Empire, and who, if brought here, we might be called upon to send back again. Any effort put forward in the

direction of enticing people from Great Britain at the present moment would be strongly resented by the Imperial authorities. It is necessary to refer to this aspect, not because of the wording of the motion, but because of the imputation that, as we are doing little or nothing now in the way of introducing immigrants, we intend to do little or nothing when the war is over. When the war is over it will be a different matter, and our Immigration Department, which is still in existence, will continue to do the work started some years ago. There is no necessity for the appointment of a commission. The Immigration and Lands departments are quite prepared to suggest a most comprehensive scheme for the introduction and settlement of immigrants in this State when the proper time comes. This is a world of surprises; the last gentleman whom I would expect to recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission would be the hon. Mr. Cullen. Mr. Cullen is a master of scathing phrases. He has always excelled himself when Royal Commissions have been his theme. The hon. member might say that no trouble is likely to occur in connection with the proposed commission on immigration. He said, "I will nominate a commission, I have four sets to choose from." Quite so, and they might please the hon. member, but they might not please other hon. members in this Chamber. We have no guarantee whatever that the commission which would be nominated would receive general endorsement. It might even receive endorsement here, but understanding the game of politics as I do, I feel very much afraid that Mr. Cullen's pets would receive very severe handling by some politicians who perhaps would not view them through the same spectacles as the hon. gentleman.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Even if good men.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They might be good men from the hon. member's point of view. The present Government have appointed men whom they considered good and have drawn upon themselves the most caustic criticism, especially from Mr. Cullen. I have

a suggestion to make and I think I am entitled to make it on behalf of the Government. I would suggest that the hon. member interview these four sets of practical farmers, get their scheme and lay it on the Table of the House. If it is a good scheme, the majority of men will approve of it and the Government will be prepared to take action, but the Government, on the mere suggestion that a Royal Commission should be appointed—especially in view of the fact that Royal Commissions have been so roundly condemned in this Chamber—would not be justified in accepting the advice of the hon. gentlemen. I oppose the motion.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [4.55]: The question that presents itself to my mind at the present time is, What is Western Australia faced with? My contention is that what we want is production and production over and over again. We have to send to the other States for an enormous quantity of stuff which could be produced here. Take, for instance, butter, potatoes, bacon, and cheese, nine-tenths of these articles required for our own consumption are imported from the Eastern States. While I realise that wheat-growing is progressing satisfactorily and will progress provided we have good seasons, we must admit that everyone cannot engage in wheat-growing, and the time has come when the Government should take into consideration means to induce people to go on the land and produce those commodities which are now being imported from the other States. We should aim at producing not only enough of these things for our own use but sufficient over and above our own requirements to export. This problem has been staring us in the face for years. I do not wish to criticise the Government further than to remind them that one of the planks of their policy is the non-alienation of Crown lands. Without any warmth or nastiness, I would emphasise that that policy is bad and has retarded settlement on our land. In the South-West, there are two large estates and if they were thrown into the market so that settlers could be assured of having the land as

their very own, and for those who follow them, it would be taken up and some of the commodities I have indicated would be produced there. I do not wish to abuse the Government but I differ absolutely from them on the question of the non-alienation of Crown lands. I want to see the Britisher who, having selected a piece of land, shall be able to say that later on when he has been successful enough to pay for it, it belongs to him and to him alone. I do not say this in any critical spirit, but the Government must realise that their policy is bad for a young State such as this. With some portions of the motion I agree. It is of no use taking any wild cat scheme which might be introduced by men who know nothing about the production of these articles of which we stand in need. I want practical men to consider a question of this kind, men representative of the various districts where wheat-growing is carried on and of the South-West where those other commodities can be raised. We want practical men to make suggestions to the Government and I was pleased to hear the Minister say that the Government would approve of the suggestions if they were good, but that principle of the non-alienation of Crown lands is the stumbling block and I am afraid that this plank in the Labour platform is going to retard the production of those commodities which might well be grown here. I, as a Western Australian, cannot allow Mr. Cullen to move in a matter like this without backing him up, because the production of the articles I have mentioned, together with wool growing and sheep and cattle raising, are industries well adapted to this State, and the Government should be judicious enough to see that these industries are fostered, because these are some of the necessities for which there will be a certain market, even among ourselves for a good many years to come. I would not dictate to the Government, but I ask them seriously to consider what Western Australia is going to do in this direction. We have thousands of acres of land fit for cultivation and capable of producing the commodities we require. I am not talking non-

sense; I am speaking of facts with which I am acquainted. I can point to an estate of 60,000 acres held by one individual who did not make enough from it to pay the interest on the purchase money. On that place there are now about 100 settlers, and nine-tenths of them, notwithstanding the bad times, are doing very well. What I suggest to the Government is that the lands which they have lying idle in the South-West—a matter of £30,000 worth of land, on which we are paying interest—should be thrown open to the public. Whether it is to men from the other States or from England I do not care one atom, so long as the land produces commodities of which we are so much in need. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion. The Government should take into consideration the appointment, not of men who know nothing about the subject, but of men who understand it. I have certainly a great deal of sympathy with the motion, because as a Western Australian I realise that until the time comes when we produce far more than we require for ourselves, until the time comes when we have a lot to sell, we are not going to do much in this direction.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [5.2]: Whilst I intend to support the motion of Mr. Cullen, who I consider is entitled to the thanks of the House for thinking the question out, I cannot help believing that we are anticipating too far ahead. At the present moment, as the Colonial Secretary has pointed out, it would be wrong—indeed, it would be criminal—to attempt to obtain suitable immigrants from Great Britain. We are looking a long way ahead for the close of the war; and, in any case, I am prepared to assert, after careful reflection, that it will be many years after the war when we shall be able to get immigrants from that part of the Empire. So many of the best men, so many of the fit men, of the Empire will have been killed in this dreadful conflict, that I am quite certain the factories and the agricultural industry of the United Kingdom will require all the manhood there for many years to come. Again, I think

it very doubtful whether there will be any chance of our getting suitable immigrants from other countries. We may possibly get them from Europe. I observe that the motion mentions Europe, and therefore the Government are given a wide range to select from. If, however, there is any idea of getting immigrants from the United Kingdom, then I think the Government are wise in not wasting their time in considering the matter at the present moment. The object of the mover, I take it, is that experienced settlers should take the matter in hand and prepare a scheme. If the suggested Royal Commission were appointed now, I question very much whether they would be able to do any useful work, for the simple reason that we do not yet know to what extent the manhood of the United Kingdom will be decimated. It is impossible to forecast that, or to forecast what the conditions will be after the close of the war. From what I can gather from the newspapers, it does not look to me as if the termination of the struggle is near to hand. It therefore requires a large stretch of imagination to picture to oneself what will be the position of affairs on the declaration of peace. I think it is to Mr. Cullen's credit that he has looked so far ahead, and I am sure his action is an evidence of the interest he takes in the development of our country. The motion is in itself a very wise one. But I question whether any good could result from giving it practical effect at the present juncture.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North) [5.6]: I intend to support the motion, and I wish to compliment Mr. Clarke on the manner in which he spoke on the subject of our land laws, and on the holding up of areas which would undoubtedly be utilised if they were available to the people willing to take them up at present. The Colonial Secretary said it would be criminal to try to bring men from Great Britain before the war closes, and the hon. gentleman added that if we did bring them it would be our duty to endeavour to induce them to go back. While the Colonial Secretary was speaking, an idea struck me which will perhaps bear a little

discussion, in the interests of this country. Why should not some of the labour at present available at Rottneest be employed for the harvesting of our crops? It may be a small point, but it touches the same subject as was introduced by the Colonial Secretary. I think the Government might take action in that direction, as has been done in European countries. I believe there are some thousands of able-bodied, well nurtured young men at present doing nothing at Rottneest. Let their services be made available for the purpose of harvesting our crops. We know there will be difficulty in getting in the harvest by reason of the fact that such a large number of our manhood have gone to the front. That being so, surely there is reason for making use of the force of labour available at Rottenest. Assuredly those men are of not much use where they are now. I did not intend to speak on the motion, but this idea struck me while the Colonial Secretary was addressing the House. I commend the suggestion to the Government, and I think the public would be at their back if they adopted it.

The Colonial Secretary: What about the danger?

Hon. F. CONNOR: A few police would be needed to look after the men while at work, but I do not think there would be much danger. I hope my suggestion will be made use of for the benefit of the State as a whole, and especially for the benefit of the farmers who have to harvest their crops.

On motion by Hon. C. Sommers debate adjourned.

BILL—ROADS ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUATION.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READINGS.

1. Vermin Boards Act Amendment.
2. Postponement of Debts Continuance.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—CONTROL OF TRADE IN WAR TIME CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS (Metropolitan) [5.12] I intend to support this Bill, and it is on the question of principle I am relying. Some discussion has arisen with regard to the personnel of the Commission. In my opinion the personnel of the Commission has nothing whatever to do with the principle involved, and it seems to me a pity that certain remarks should have been made derogatory to some members of the Commission. The gentleman more particularly singled out for attack has been, to my knowledge, for many years a prominent business man of Perth, one who, in conjunction with another gentleman, successfully managed one of the largest undertakings—if not the largest—in Perth. He retired from that business when a comparatively young man with, I understand, sufficient to enable him to spend the rest of his life at ease. Surely that is the sort of man we want on a Commission of this kind. He may have made mistakes. I will defy anyone sitting on that Commission, under the condition of affairs prevailing at the time, not to have made mistakes. It is rather hard, I think, that these mistakes should be used against this gentleman. We are quite sure that his one and only purpose has been to do the best he could in the state of circumstances existing. We were at war when the principal Act was passed, and we are still at war. The position now seems to me very little better than it was when the war opened. If there was necessity for the original Act—

Member: There was not much.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Not a single member of the House spoke against the passing of the principal Act. We are still at war, and exactly the same conditions persist. To my mind the termination of the war, unfortunately, seems as far off as ever.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: We thought that the measure would be necessary.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Yes. Occasion may arise at any minute when the necessity for action by the Commission will be extremely urgent. If this Bill is not passed, there will be no power for them to act. What have we found in England? Had any such Commissions been sitting there I am sure that a great many of the disputes between workmen and employers would not have arisen.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It would not have had the slightest effect.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I think it would have. I feel convinced that, if there had been a selling price and an earning price for coal, there would not have been any strike.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: And no coal.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Why? If the wages had been fixed and the selling price fixed, undoubtedly there would have been coal. There is one matter to which I should like to call the attention of the Minister. Some statements have been placed in my hands. I do not know who is responsible for this alleged state of affairs, but if the Minister can give me the information in the course of his reply, I would like him to do so. I understand the selling price of flour was fixed in this State at £18 10s. per ton, and that the retail price of bread was fixed accordingly. I understand further that this State is exporting flour to Queensland, and, I believe, to another State, at £15 10s. f.o.b. Fremantle. If that is so, it means that the Government are losing £5 per ton on every ton of flour so exported. Again, I am informed that the price of offal was fixed at £10 a ton, and I understand that a great quantity is being sold for export at £5 per ton. If this is so, once more a very serious loss is being made by the Government, which the taxpayers will have to pay.

Hon. W. Patrick: It is an argument against the Commission.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: No. I desire to know who is responsible for this state of affairs. The Commission may be, but I do not think they are.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It is smashing your own argument.

Mr. PRESIDENT: The debate must not be carried out by way of dialogue. Hon. members must refrain from interjecting or I shall have to apply the Standing Orders.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I am told that it is smashing my argument. It does not smash my argument at all. I do not know that the Commission are responsible. I ask, who is responsible? I believe it must be that more stuff was bought than was required for the consumption of the State, and I would like the Minister in his reply to let me know whether that state of affairs exists and, if so, who is responsible for it. But, apart from all that, mistakes have been made and will be made. However, the good that will result from having a Commission that can prevent prices being forced up on the consumer by any ring of people in Western Australia, in my opinion far outweighs any mistakes that may be made by the Commission. I am going to support the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew, Central—in reply) [5.20]: We have heard of the biblical proverb which prescribes that the sins of the fathers shall be visited on the children. In the discussion of the Bill an attempt has been made to saddle the Commission with the sins of their forty-second cousins. Most of the criticism levelled at the Control of Trade in War Time Commission should have been directed against one or another of the other boards. Mr. Colebatch told us that the Commission were responsible for the necessity of importing wheat by having fixed the price at 6s. 3d.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I said 4s. 6d.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have noted 6s. 3d. And we were further told that farmers saw they were going to be robbed and that, in consequence, they held back their wheat. In the first place, in the early stages, the Commission fixed the price at 4s. 6d. Later on that proclamation was cancelled, and I am informed the price of wheat was not subsequently fixed by proclamation at all. But the Grain and Foodstuffs

Board, who were purchasers of wheat, decided to offer 7s. 4d., and they showed why they considered that price a reasonable one. If any wrong was done, it was done not by the Control of Trade in War Time Commission, but by the Grain and Foodstuffs Board. However it is generally agreed that, but for the war, old wheat would have been selling at 3s. 9d. I understand that, before fixing the price at 7s. 4d. the Grain and Foodstuffs Board had a conference with the Commission, and that the Commission agreed it was a fair price to offer. However the Grain and Foodstuffs Board made an offer of 7s. 4d. So how can the hon. member charge the Control of Trade Commission with having fixed that price? The Grain and Foodstuffs Board was a non-political body appointed by the Government, by the Leader of the Opposition and by the Leader of the Country Party, so if they made any blunder, it must at least be admitted that the greatest possible precautions were taken in regard to the method of their appointment, because three bodies representative of the people in Parliament were consulted before any appointment took place. Mr. Holmes said that the loss on the importation of bran, pollard and maize represented a high figure. Even if it does, no blame can be placed on the Commission, for they were not responsible for the importation. It was the Industries Assistance Board who were responsible.

Hon. F. Connor: Who was responsible for the Board?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No one was really responsible for the consequence.

Hon. J. F. Cullen interjected.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is very difficult to proceed with my remarks in the face of these constant interjections.

Mr. PRESIDENT: I beg hon. members to cease before I have to apply the Standing Orders in the last instance. Three members who have already made their speeches were interrupting the previous speaker, and now there is an ap-

peal from the Leader of the House. I must ask hon. members to observe the Standing Orders upholding freedom of speech, and leave the Minister to pursue his speech without interruption.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No one was really responsible for the consequence. It could not be foreseen that we were going to have an early season, that the season, instead of commencing in June, would commence in March. The Industries Assistance Board adopted a wise precaution in making provision for the importation of bran, pollard and maize. No doubt losses followed. But suppose they had not taken action, had not made provision for the importation of this fodder, and suppose there had been a late season; in what position would the farmers have found themselves? They could not be supplied with the fodder necessary to enable their land to be cultivated, and the Government would have been charged, and rightly so, with not having taken proper steps with a view to the provision of the necessary food for the animals which were to be engaged in the cultivation of the land. Mr. Holmes spoke of the Commission entering into competition with business people by importing. They were forced to import. The State was faced with a shortage of wheat and flour. The Western Australian Millers' Association approached the Premier and asked that the Government should arrange a letter of credit for them. The Premier, while not definitely committing the Government, was not averse to the proposal. But the millers wanted a price fixed so that they would know at what it could be sold. They were informed that the price would be so fixed that they could sell at the landed cost at mill, plus milling costs, plus a fair milling profit, less allowance for the current price of offal. Mr. Padbury, the President of the Flour Millers' Association, said that the reply was unsatisfactory, and that the millers would not import unless something more than ordinary milling cost and profit was allowed in the selling price. The Government then decided to

import for themselves. It was clear that what the millers wanted was not sufficient protection to enable them to avoid loss, but enough to enable them to make big profits out of the people. Mr. Holmes confessed a suspicion that the Government wanted to make the farmers carry a loss on the importation of bran, pollard, maize, etc. In any case, this has nothing to do with the Commission. But Mr. Holmes should be reminded that the Minister for Lands, in replying to a question in another place, said definitely that the loss would be charged to general revenue. It is a very great pity that Mr. Holmes' statement should have been made, especially when it has no bearing whatever on the Bill. Nearly the whole of Mr. Holmes' criticisms were directed against other boards, although the impression was conveyed that this particular Commission was the culprit. There was nothing definite about his charges. He supplied neither names nor dates, and manifestly it is unjust to condemn men without being prepared to supply proof of his statements. Mr. Cullen said that the Commission did not fix the price of chaff until there was a sufficiency of grass. The price of chaff on the 8th June was £16 2s. 6d. a ton on trucked loads. There was no justification whatever for that figure being asked, and it was having a very serious effect on traders who had no grass, who were unable to turn out their horses. The Commission, therefore, realising that this was an unjust price, decided to go into the matter. They did go into the matter and came to the conclusion that £14 was a fair price. When the object had been achieved and there was no necessity to interfere with prices the proclamation was revoked. I did expect opposition to this measure from hon. members. Notwithstanding that the contrary has been stated, the Bill met with opposition when it was first introduced into this House, although I may say that no vote was cast against it. It met with still more determined opposition when the Act was brought up for amendment a few months ago. I never expected however, that there would be such an

array of forces against this Bill as presented itself yesterday. Both Mr. Colebatch and Mr. Cullen have been opponents of the Bill from the early stages. They believe, and do not disguise the fact, in traders getting as high a price for their goods as they can under any and all circumstances. They believe in the law of supply and demand; that is the economic creed of the hon. gentlemen, and one can admire the courage of their advocacy of it openly and boldly. Mr. Colebatch goes further, and argues that if the Bill was necessary last year, it is not necessary now. He gives his reason for this. He says that the seas are not closed against commerce and the circumstances anticipated when the Bill was first submitted have not arisen. The seas, I submit, were not closed against commerce when this Bill was first introduced to the House; but the need for the Bill was forced upon Parliament for other reasons. Within a fortnight of the declaration of war goods throughout Western Australia had risen to famine prices: they had gone up in every part of the State. One item alone—and I could quote many—kerosene went up to 14s. a case, although there were large stocks in Western Australia at the time and large consignments about to arrive by sea. The reason why the price was increased was that the traders recognised that there was a good opportunity to make large profits. They availed themselves of this opportunity and many of them would do so again. In this case I would point out that history is repeating itself. Whenever a war occurs there is a certain class of business men who are prepared to plunder the people. We had experience of that in the Crimean war, and we had a similar experience during the Boer War, when rotten boots were sold to the British Government by the contractors, and when the food supplied was unfit for human consumption. In considering a measure like this we must not merely consider the honest section of the community. We must also take into consideration the dishonest section of the community. Mr. Holmes shows what the shipping ring has done. If his words are

to be relied upon—and I assume they are—this ring has been utterly regardless of the interests of the producers of Australia. I may add also that it has been regardless of the interests of the Empire. The marketing of food at the lowest possible price is a matter of great consequence to the Empire. That is a proposition which no one can deny. In spite of this fact, what is the position, if what Mr. Holmes states is correct? The shipping ring, composed of those who dominate shipping throughout the British Empire, have combined to force up the freights on wheat from £3 to £4 10s. per ton. That, I submit, is a splendid argument in favour of this Bill. If men occupying high positions in life, men of great standing, who are connected with these shipping companies, organise in order to raise upon the agricultural community of Australia freights to the extent of 30s. a ton in advance of what is fair and reasonable, and of what was the case previous to action being taken in order to secure space, if these gentlemen take up such an attitude, what are we to expect from others in the community who occupy positions of lesser responsibility and who are freer to plunder the people? From the speeches of hon. members one would think that the war was over. I do not, for a moment, imagine that this is the genuine opinion of any member of this House. It seems to me that the argument has been used by some simply to suit the occasion. Would Mr. Lloyd George say that the war is over? Would Lord Kitchener say that it is over. He has not done so, but, as a matter of fact, has said something quite different. He said that the fate of the Empire was at stake. Then, again, it is submitted as an argument against this Bill that our sea routes are open. They are open now, but as pointed out by Dr. Saw, they may not for long be open. Of course we hope they will be kept open, and we believe they will be, and we may think that this will be the case. There is a possibility, however, that the German fleet may get out from the Kiel Canal, in which case our sea routes will be again threatened. It is not assumed that the

war is going to terminate within the next three months. If the best military authorities are to be relied upon it will not terminate, it cannot possibly terminate, speaking from the human standpoint, before Parliament assembles again. What is going to happen in the meantime? Do we propose to give traders in Western Australia the full opportunity of charging what they like for the goods they sell? The Council will take upon its shoulders a very big responsibility indeed if it rejects this Bill. The administration of this Commission has undoubtedly done a vast amount of good. Its members are not in a position to come out and defend themselves. Most of their transactions are confidential, and are so by reason of the legislation passed by Parliament. Consequently, they cannot represent to the people of Western Australia the amount of good they have done. The chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, a gentleman who should be eminently qualified to express an opinion in the matter, has passed a high eulogium of the work done by this Commission. He said that the Commission had justified its existence and that the moral effect of the Commission was enormous. These words, coming from such a source, are entitled to every respect. If we wipe this measure from the statute-book the results will soon be manifested. They will be experienced in every part of Western Australia, and they will certainly do very much to injure the Council in the estimation of the public. The work of man is often not appreciated until after death, and I say that the value of this Commission will not be appreciated until the traders are found to have a full opportunity of charging those who are doing business with them exactly what they think proper for the goods they have to sell. The Government have done their part. I, too, have done my part. I have pointed out the danger of removing the restriction on the sale price of food stuffs, and I can do no more. The fate of the Bill rests with the Council. No blame can be attached to the Government. We have done our best to put the Bill through, and it will be for the Council to take the full

responsibility of any developments which may occur as the result of its refusal to pass this Bill.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 14 |

| | | |
|------------------|----|---|
| Majority against | .. | 3 |
|------------------|----|---|

AYES.

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Hon. R. G. Ardagh | Hon. R. D. McKenzie |
| Hon. J. Corneli | Hon. A. Sanderson |
| Hon. J. M. Drew | Hon. A. J. H. Saw |
| Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett | Hon. C. Sommers |
| Hon. A. G. Jenkins | Hon. H. Millington |
| Hon. C. McKenzie | (Teller). |

NOES.

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Hon. J. F. Allen | Hon. W. Kinzsmill |
| Hon. C. F. Baxter | Hon. E. McLarty |
| Hon. H. Carson | Hon. W. Patrick |
| Hon. E. M. Clarke | Hon. G. M. Sewell |
| Hon. H. P. Colebatch | Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom |
| Hon. F. Connor | Hon. J. Duffell |
| Hon. J. F. Cullen | (Teller) |
| Hon. J. J. Holmes | |

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 22nd September.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central) [5.45]: I confess I approach the discussion of the matters dealt with in this Bill with a considerable amount of fear and trembling. If it had depended on my own personal liking or disliking I certainly would have been perfectly silent, but as the measure has been brought so prominently before the public I feel, as a matter of duty, I am compelled to deal with the questions submitted in the measure. Like the hon. Mr. Sanderson I confess I do not see exactly why the measure should have been introduced by the Government so late in the session when there is no time to discuss the matter properly. If the Government had any interest in the measure, on which there is so much difference of opinion, they ought to have introduced it at the beginning of the session so that the public would have had full time to look at it

in all its bearings. One of the main reasons given in another place in support of the measure was that this dreadful disease was increasing throughout the world, and it was inferred also that it was increasing in Western Australia, and that on account of the war that the Empire was engaged in there would necessarily be a large increase of this dreadful disease, in fact I believe that the Minister when introducing the measure stated that there would be shiploads of diseased soldiers arriving in Australia returning to their homes. I think that a statement such as that was a grave calumny on the heroes who went to the front in defence of the Empire. More than that; while I deplore the existence of such a disease in the community I deny there has been any increase throughout the world, and I suppose Western Australia is in an advanced position in the civilised globe as any other place. But the available information given in official documents entirely disprove the statement that this disease is increasing. In Dr. Hope's report for last year, the latest that has been placed before us, he gave the general death rate of Western Australia as 18.4 in 1896 as against 9.39 in 1914; that is, that from 1896 to 1914 the death rate had fallen to about one-half, and that infant mortality had fallen from 177 per thousand in 1895 to 68.22 in 1914. That is equal to 6.82 per 1,000. Of 507 out of 682 who died the cause of death was—syphilis 5, whooping cough 17, meningitis 17, convulsions 26, disease of respiratory organs 62, diarrhoea and enteritis 148, diseases of early infancy 232, that is to say, that 5 in 507 died from syphilis or less than one per cent.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: On the records.

Hon. W. PATRICK: If we are not to go by the records what are we to go by? It is perfectly true that the Minister in introducing the measure in another place gave statistics from the reports of Dr. Montgomery and Dr. Allen of Melbourne, but these statistics did not deal with the population of Australia but a certain portion of the community. Dr. Montgomery dealt with the insane, and when you talk about a certain portion of the insane dy-

ing you must remember there is only one insane person in Western Australia out of every 300. But assuming there were twenty-five per cent. or four persons in every 100, that only means that one-twelfth per cent. in the population of Western Australia died of this disease in the asylum for the insane, which is not sufficient for any Government to introduce a Bill to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act. In the *Commonwealth Year Book*, No. 7, on page 1203, it appears that in 1912 there were 52,177 deaths in the whole of Australia, and in the same year there were 184 deaths from syphilis. That is not a very alarming number. If one were to treat seriously the figures given one would be inclined to draw the conclusion that a large proportion of the community were suffering from this terrible disease. If that were so it would not be safe for anybody to go about the community. But I have travelled as much as anybody, I suppose, during the last 20 years, and have lived in hotels and slept in bedrooms and I have been able to keep myself perfectly clean, and anybody else can do the same. The report of Dr. Hope is a very interesting one. There is a great deal of information in it and pertinent to the question now before the House. On page 15 of the report of 1914 Dr. Hope says—

If the question of intemperance could be solved syphilis would largely disappear, tuberculosis would diminish, for alcohol, sexual vice, and tuberculosis generally go together.

But, unfortunately for that statement, it is not at all correct. If it were such a simple matter as the abolition of the drinking habit it would be an easy question for the present Government of Western Australia to close all the public houses in the State, as they have full power to do at the present moment, and the whole thing would be finished in one act. But it is not such a simple matter. The most licentious countries, the countries where prostitution is very prevalent, are the abstemious countries, and when I make that statement I refer to the Western countries. It was also said in another place that by altered social conditions we could change all this, and it

was stated that on account of the high standard of living in Western Australia there was no poverty. I was glad to hear that statement because if it is true there would be very little syphilis in Australia. But, unfortunately, this statement was in total conflict with another statement made by the same gentleman, who said that the disease was as prevalent among the well-to-do in New York and in London as among the very poor. One hon. gentleman in this Chamber—Sir Edward Wittenoom, and I am sorry he is not present—proposed a more drastic treatment or hinted at a more drastic cure for this disease than that proposed in the Bill. I will quote his words; the hon. gentleman said—

He hoped there would be no maudlin sympathy but that the whole question would be dealt with without consideration for individuals. Scab in sheep was a most contagious disease, and for years and years attempts had been made to eradicate it until at last the Government came in and destroyed all sheep which were not cured in six months; the result had been that the disease was eventually exterminated.

I do not suppose even the Government would resort to such a drastic treatment.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: That was only a parable.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I am glad the hon. gentleman is now present. I know it is a parable but it would be a real solution of the question if we could segregate these dreadful people who are such a danger, and no doubt they are a danger to the clean portion of the community. It would simplify the matter at once if we segregated the whole lot, but, unfortunately, we are dealing not with sheep, but with human beings. I think I have shown enough from the statistics I have given to prove that there is no special necessity at this time to introduce the measure with such great haste in the dying days of the session. Assuming that the time was opportune for the introduction of the Bill, the Bill is certainly not one that would be likely to cure this blot. We have heard the opinion of Dr. Saw, and his opinion is confirmed by a report

which was sent by Dr. Seed, the Health Officer of Perth, to the City Council, and the effect of which was that the passing of this measure would mean practically the abolition of the liberty of the people and the destruction of the Habeas Corpus Act. I was pleased that Dr. Saw drew attention to the condition of things which existed in the time of the old republican days of Venice, at the time of the greatest autocracy which ever existed, and there is no doubt whatever that, if the power suggested by the compulsory clauses in the Bill becomes law in Western Australia, we shall go back to the condition of things which existed in that period. Restrictive legislation has been tried all over the world almost from time immemorial. When talking on this subject, there is no need to call the measure the Health Bill. It is a Contagious Diseases Bill. It is altogether different from other Acts introduced in other parts of the Empire, and the hypocritical addition is made that it is applicable to men, but it can never be applicable to men in the same sense that it must be applicable to women under our present social conditions. I was very pleased indeed to read about ten days ago the wise words uttered by the Archbishop of Perth, words which, I think, are well worthy of being read in this Chamber—

Under the Bill as it stands at present no woman will be safe from persecution and from blackmail. The police will have in their hands a power which no one should dream of giving them. I ask any parents how they would like it if one of their daughters, a modest, quiet, sensitive girl, were reported, and had to submit to examination. The indignity of it would be dreadful. She would have no redress. The police as a whole are a fine body of men, but, as in all other bodies, there are bad men. To put the power into their hands, which will be in their hands by the Bill, no matter what the members of Parliament may say to the contrary, is to my mind a terrible evil.

That is exactly the opinion I hold in regard to the compulsory clauses of this

measure, and when I say compulsory clauses I desire to point out that these clauses constitute the Bill. Without them the Bill would not be worth considering. There are certainly some clauses which might be very valuable, notably the clauses to restrict the publication of quack advertisements, which, of course, everyone will agree with, but, if the Government wish to restrain those who make a business of living on the fears and ignorance of the community, let them introduce a measure for that purpose and every man in this Chamber will vote for it, but at the present time the Government have great power in that regard under the present Health Act. There is no doubt that this measure is a woman's question. That statement, I think, was made by the Honorary Minister in another place, and he also stated that, while woman had a soul, man had only a body. It was a most extraordinary statement to make, and I confess that, if a man had no soul, we could account for the many foolish and unwise things he does; but we all know that is all nonsense, and I do not know why the statement was ever made. Undoubtedly, however, this is a woman's question, and, if the measure is passed, it will be the women who will suffer, for in very few cases will men suffer. In this regard, I would like to read an extract from a letter which puts the whole position very clearly. The letter appeared in the *West Australian* a few days ago signed by Jessie A. Gover. I do not know the lady, but the sentiments in the letter are very creditable to her, and I am sure they express the opinion of almost every woman in Western Australia—

A specious reason advanced is the prevailing military conditions, and what may happen in the future return of our boys. If this be the latest horror-thought that must be added to mothers' hearts, now holding anguish nigh to the breaking point, many will fervently pray that their sons may rather yield their lives in their country's cause than return to their homeland unclean lepers evermore. Let it be understood that the women who are

protesting against what is bad in the Bill realise the horrid iniquity of this foulness quite as deeply as the supporters of its measures. Those who have worked amid the lower social strata know its ravages. We also know that the procedures introduced into this Bill have failed, absolutely failed, to effect the cure desired. In the face of what has proved futile in numberless instances, it seems to women a monstrous folly to re-enact the experience here.

There is no doubt whatever about that. A great public meeting chiefly composed of women was held in the Town Hall last Thursday evening, and at that meeting, with the exception of six dissentients, one of whom was the Honorary Minister, the strongest hostility was manifested against the Bill, and resolutions were passed urging this House practically to reject the measure. So far as I am concerned, I intend to vote against the second reading of it. As I said before, the report of Dr. Hope was interesting and well worth everyone's time to peruse, because it was not only a report on health, but there was a certain amount of very good advice given in it, and some fine opinions were expressed. For instance, on page 14, he says "It cannot be too widely known that this is a disease which is vital to the whole nature of man, physically, morally and intellectually." If men and women were like a flock of sheep, if they were like a herd of swine or a herd of cattle, then, of course, the whole duty of a doctor would be to simply see that they had sound and healthy bodies, but unfortunately, the people who advocate this sort of thing are human beings. It would not be worth while existing on earth if we were made up simply of so much flesh and blood, and so Dr. Hope tells us that this disease ruins us mentally, morally, and physically. It is a social and moral question. So long as women are treated as spies, while men are permitted to live unclean lives, and are received with open arms in society, so long will it be useless to pass legislation applicable to both men and women. It will be perfectly futile. A woman's reputation can be tarnished by

a whisper. It is entirely different with man so far as the present condition of society is concerned. And so it is the bounden duty of all honourable men to see that no legislation is passed which will put women in such a position that their lives may be ruined simply because they may come under a measure such as this. It seems to me a monstrous proposition, and I really cannot understand how a Minister of the Crown ever had the audacity or the temerity—I think Sir Edward Wittenoom said that in his 30 years' experience, no one had ever had the temerity to introduce such a Bill—to submit a measure like this to Parliament.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. PATRICK: During the course of his speech in another place the Honorary Minister, in referring to prostitution, said that neither by legislation nor by preaching would any good be accomplished. The only way to bring about a satisfactory condition of affairs was to improve social conditions. Yet here we have a proposal of the most drastic nature to deal with this problem. It seems strange that the laws at present on the statute-book are not enforced. We have a great many laws that no one seems to have the courage to enforce. We have laws against gambling and against people of ill-fame which are practically dead letters. Before introducing further legislation, especially legislation of such a drastic nature as is proposed in the Bill, the present laws should be enforced in order to see what good would result if they were properly administered. I have referred to the admirable report by Dr. Hope, and I wish to quote a further extract from it as follows:—

The country is the richest which nourishes the greatest number of happy human beings. The wealth of the people is not merely material wealth; there is a more precious treasure and that is the character of the people. I would like to ask whether such legislation as is proposed under this Bill,

which will bring humiliation and shame to many members of the community, is likely to produce this precious treasure or improve the character of the people in Western Australia. I say assuredly it will do nothing of the kind. If the Bill is passed, it will do irreparable harm, and we shall still be in the same position. In the Old country, similar laws were in force until 1883, when through public agitation and a revolt of the social instincts of the people, these abominable laws were repealed, and since then there has been a vast improvement as regards the prevalence of this terrible malady. I do not altogether agree with the statement made by the Honorary Minister that neither by legislation nor by preaching can we improve the character of the people. It depends entirely upon the legislation and the preaching. I believe that if we men and women all aspired to better conditions of life and endeavoured to attain the splendid aim of the boy scouts, it would be far better than any legislation we could put on our statute-book. Their aim is that we, though frail human beings, should, as far as possible, be pure in thought, in word and deed.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [7.35]: It is my intention to support the second reading of the Bill, and I congratulate the Honorary Minister who introduced it in another place. The thanks of the community are due to him for having tackled this very difficult and very serious problem. I am not prepared to go to the lengths provided in the Bill, but I am satisfied that if this House treats the Bill as it should be treated and amends it in order to make it an equitable measure, it will prove a credit to our statute-book. I am in favour of compulsory notification and compulsory treatment of these diseases. The whole Bill hinges on these two points. If these clauses are deleted, the measure will not be worth the paper it is printed on. The Bill provides that anyone can notify the Commissioner of Health regarding the possibility of disease being prevalent in any locality. Thus somebody might, by a penny-in-the-slot notice, as it were, inform the Com-

missioner, and he would be bound to take action. That would be carrying legislation too far. Dr. Saw has suggested that the person giving the notification should be bound to make a statutory declaration, but this would be carrying the proposal to the other extreme, as the notification, coupled with the statutory declaration, would be made available to the person accused. If the responsibility for notification is placed on any person and in all cases the supposed afflicted person is to have the right to know whence the information emanated, no one would assist in the administration of the Act. But if we modify that provision so that a person examined and found not to be affected shall be entitled to know who made the notification, the clause might prove acceptable, because, if the aggrieved person could prove that he or she had been the victim of blackmail or vindictiveness, it would be open to him or her to take action.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Is the informant protected under the Bill?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No, but if Dr. Saw's proposal were adopted no one would notify a case, because the source of the notification would have to be declared. There might be a case in which a person desires that a friend should be treated, and in order to secure treatment for him, he makes a notification, and immediately the declaration would reveal to the friend who had made the notification. Under my proposal the man who made the declaration would not be known unless the notification was proved to be wrong. If the individual were found to be afflicted, why should we penalise the person who is doing a public duty by notifying the case? On the other hand, if the person were found to be not affected, the informant who made a false declaration should be punished. I am sorry I cannot agree with a good many people on this subject. The ladies, to their credit, have taken a very keen interest in the measure. I do not dispute their right to do so; I rather commend them for having put their views forward. Members of

churches have also adopted a similar attitude, and I regret that I cannot see eye to eye with them on the subject. On the evidence of no less an authority than Dr. Saw, who is not given to exaggeration, I am bound to regard this disease as a plague, and if I am bound to regard it as a plague, I am bound to treat it as a plague. The evidence before us from all sources shows that the disease is likely to increase and multiply. There are men returning to the Commonwealth in hundreds—I believe no fewer than 700 have already arrived—who are afflicted with this disease, and if these men are to be allowed to roam at large in the community, the results are likely to be serious.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: You do not mean that they are all affected?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No. some thousands in all have returned, but I understand that 700 of them are affected with the disease. We have been informed that no fewer than 200 men who returned to Melbourne by one transport were suffering from the disease, and that the total to date is 700. Our wounded and sick soldiers are only just beginning to return. When there are 700 such cases to date, the chances are that there will be 7,000 within the next year or two; hence the necessity for some drastic action. Dr. Seed, the medical officer for health for the city of Perth, recently wrote to the Chairman of the Perth Local Board of Health in regard to this Bill, and, while condemning the measure—he has been quoted as an authority in condemnation of it—he is of opinion that two of the clauses prove that the Honorary Minister is on the right track. Dr. Seed said—

The Bill consists of a series of laws which must be obeyed under heavy penalties. If venereal diseases are to be effectually dealt with, only a Bill of this character can be successful.

In conclusion Dr. Seed says—

If efficiently administered, this Act will diminish venereal disease and in the course of a few generations might abolish this great plague altogether. In old times leprosy was common in Great Britain, and a complete segregation

of lepers was instituted. This must have been most unpleasant for the lepers and their friends, but it abolished leprosy.

That is what Dr. Seed says. What we want to do is to abolish this plague, and Dr. Seed says that the only way we can abolish it is by legislation of this nature. It has been suggested that this Bill would legalise prostitution. I looked through the Bill, and I cannot find in it anything of that nature. We have the public statement of the Honorary Minister that there is no such intention involved in the Bill, and after a perusal of the measure I am perfectly satisfied that that is the correct view of the clauses referred to. There is a distinct attempt to protect the innocent; and I am certain that the only means of protecting the innocent, when the disease is known to exist, is compulsory notification and compulsory treatment. The Bill deals with both sexes on the same lines. If there was in the Bill any suggestion that men should be treated differently from women, then the measure would have no support whatever from me. A number of ladies have communicated with me on this subject, and they can rest assured that when legislation comes before this Chamber, or any other Chamber of which I happen to be a member, for the purpose of dealing on one line with the menfolk and on another line with the women-folk, that legislation will receive no consideration at my hands. Unfortunately, legislation in the past has been enacted with the object of granting to men concessions not available to women. That state of affairs, however, has been gradually rectified; and every Bill with a similar object coming before this House while I am a member of it will have my support. I shall always be in favour of placing the women on the same footing as the men. Why men have been put on one pedestal, and women, so to speak, on a lower one, I could never understand. Either it is that the men have placed themselves on the higher pedestal, or else the women have put them on it. Anyhow, the men have been, so to speak, on the upper rung of the ladder, and the

women on the lower rung. That state of matters, however, has been gradually rectified. It has existed for a great many years, but it is never too late to mend. Where the authority or the right came from to put men on one plane and women on another, I do not know. In the days of Noah, it will be found, Noah was instructed to build the Ark, and then his instructions were: "Take down thy wife and enter therein." There was no first class for Mr. Noah and a second class for Mrs. Noah, but the same class for both. That should be the position now. One evidence of the necessity for this Bill is to be found in the death-rate of the children's hospital. On responsible authority the statement has been made that 25 per cent. of the deaths in the children's hospital are due to this disease. That statement has been made by the Honorary Minister (Hon. R. H. Underwood), and it has not been disputed. The existence of that condition of affairs is in itself sufficient justification for a measure of this kind. We know that the difficulty of Australia is want of population. We know that our best men are being killed off to-day, fighting in defence of the Empire; and we do not know where we shall get men to replace them. If 25 per cent. of deaths of children to replace these men are due to this disease, as stated to be the case at the children's hospital, it is the clear duty of this Parliament to step in and do something to remedy the evil. In ordinary circumstances men are too valuable to lose. In the extraordinary circumstances which have arisen, men have become more valuable than ever before. And the same remarks apply to our women. The next generation must be conserved, and we must have clean, healthy children. To my mind such a measure as this is necessary to accomplish that end. Further, when we find one of the principal judges of New South Wales, who has had to deal with men suffering from this disease, saying that he would keep such men behind a barb wire fence with a live wire through it, so that if the men attempted to get out among the community they would be electrocuted, it is time for us to

be up and doing. Men suffering from this disease are coming back, and they are not being placed behind barb wire fences. So far as we know, those men are turned loose upon the community. We are told that the military authorities have power to deal with them. As to that, I do not know. Presumably if the military authorities had the power, they would use it. In my opinion, however, this matter is so serious that we cannot leave it to supposition. It is due to us to take the necessary steps to prevent the disease from spreading in our midst. It is said that if the disease is cleared out there will be increased immorality. The suggestion is that it is the fact of the existence of the disease which makes men moral. Have we really reached that stage? If we have, then we have reached a very low standard of morality. Is the fear of infection the only thing that keeps men moral? I myself refuse to believe that. I shall not detain the House longer. These, briefly, are my views on the subject. I support the second reading, and I sincerely hope that this House will introduce such amendments in the measure as will be a credit to the House and will be acceptable to the Government, and that the result will be to place on the statute-book a measure on which we may all look with pride.

Hon C. F. BAXTER (East) [7.53]: I have been patiently listening for some good arguments to be put forward in favour of the compulsory clauses of this Bill, but I have not heard them up to the present. I have not yet learned that every facility has been granted to combat the disease, short of adopting such drastic measures. Mr. Patrick referred to the interest taken in this matter by the public. I say it is to the credit of the public that such interest should be taken. For what purpose do the public interest themselves in the Bill? Simply in order to better human existence, in order to eradicate the disease. We find, further, that those who have interested themselves in the matter are people who have considered and studied the question for years, almost to the

exclusion of everything else. Mr. Holmes repeatedly made strong references to the danger to the community from returned soldiers. My opinion of the matter is that even if we pass this measure we shall not be able to control the soldiers. They are in the hands of the Federal Government, and not in our hands at all. This measure is useless in that respect. Further, I personally do not believe in unwarranted interference with the liberty of the people. Interference with liberty should not be tolerated, and surely we should show respect to individual rights. It appears to me that many of the measures being brought before Parliament will simply result in doing away with our individuality. The trend of legislation seems to be in that one direction, and it is a pity that this should be so. Now, if we adopt an extreme course of action such as is suggested by this Bill, the result will be to do serious harm, more particularly to sensitive persons. Let hon. members just think of the power to be given to the Commissioner of Public Health. It cannot be gainsaid that in that official's hands is to be placed the power of ordering, on certain information, any female to undergo a medical examination. Surely that is going too far. Surely we are living in civilised times, when such a method is not necessary until all other methods have failed. I, for one, would support the placing of this Bill on the statute-book, if all other methods had failed, but only on that condition. Until every other method has been given a trial, I say we are not justified in enacting such drastic legislation as here proposed. To say the least of it, this Bill is an outrage on common sense and on public decency. The Honorary Minister takes credit to himself for having fathered this Bill. He says that Dr. Hope has had practically nothing to do with the measure. I do not think the fact is to the Honorary Minister's credit. To my mind this Bill is something that might be expected from a gentleman who makes such erratic utterances, and who is so impulsive and holds

such foolhardy ideas as regards legislation. From him a Bill of this class must be accepted.

Member: Do not be personal.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I heard a voice urge me not to be personal. I am now merely retaliating for certain utterances of the Honorary Minister. It is a pity the Honorary Minister is not in this Chamber to receive his medicine. If compulsory measures had not been tried and found wanting in other countries, there might be some excuse for the Government, in their ignorance, introducing a measure such as this. But there is no such excuse for them. What do we find on looking closely into the matter? That in other countries such as England, Holland, Norway, France, Switzerland, and Italy similar methods have been tried without success. In fact, these methods have been tried for the last century and found wanting. But, of course, our beneficent Government here intend to put this measure through and make a success of methods which have failed in all other countries where they have been tried. The very suggestion is ridiculous. England, Holland, and Norway have abandoned the regulation system, and in Sweden a royal commission reported dead against that system. France had the system in vogue, and condemned it; and Italy swept away the whole of the legislation giving supervision to the police. And what did Italy do then? Substitute gratuitous treatment. And that will do more towards the eradication of the disease than all the compulsory clauses that the present Government or any other Government on the face of the globe can bring in.

The Colonial Secretary: What report is the hon. member quoting from?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: A report which the Honorary Minister misquoted. A good deal has been said about the compulsory legislation in Switzerland. But what is really the case there? That this compulsory business exists only in one town of Switzerland, namely Geneva. In no other part of Switzerland is an at-

tempt made to put such legislation into operation. Denmark has been held up to us as a country which has compulsory legislation. I am quite ready to admit that Denmark has the legislation; but Denmark does not enforce it. Why? A leading Danish specialist states that if the regulations were enforced it would lead to a worse state of things than that existing to-day, that it would frighten patients away from treatment. It is only natural that that should be the effect in any part of the globe. Does anyone mean to tell me that a person who is a victim to this particular disease will make it any more public than he is absolutely forced to do? Is he not going to hide the disease? Of course he is. There is no getting away from that fact. As regards the main clauses of the Bill, what will they do? They will press very hardly on the unfortunate class. That may be eventually a blessing to them, but nevertheless the clauses will be very harsh on them. And, worse than that, those clauses will hit the poorer class very hard. The poorer class will suffer absolutely. Just imagine for one moment the average doctor notifying that a rich client of his is suffering from this dread disease. It would be folly to expect it. If you do expect it, it will never be carried out. Again, are all our doctors such angels that we can trust them? I will admit that the average doctor is a really sound man whom we can trust.

Member: You have got to trust them.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We have not got to trust them, and we are not going to, what is more. There are unscrupulous doctors just as there are unscrupulous men in other walks of life. Are we going to allow our families to be harassed by such people, and are we ourselves to be harassed by them? Certainly not. If these compulsory clauses be passed and a man gets into the hands of an unscrupulous doctor, he will stay there until he has squeezed the last penny out of him. He has got him, and he can keep him for three years.

Member: You would throw him into the arms of the quack.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I might tell the hon. member the so-called quacks are doing a good deal towards the cure of this disease. What is needed is not regulation. You will never do any good in that direction, but by education and enlightenment.

Member: They have had that for thirty years.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They have not had it for thirty years; they have not had one week of it. Where in any part of this State has the public been educated or enlightened on this subject on any occasion? I defy any hon. member to show me where education has been given regarding it.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: I must call upon hon. members to cease interrupting. When we had a small disorderly section of strangers in the gallery, I spoke to them once, and as soon as they were informed they obeyed. I am very much disappointed at having to call the attention of some few hon. members so many times to our Standing Orders. If they are not to be obeyed, let us change them.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We want education and enlightenment in regard to the seriousness of the disease, to let people know what to expect, to put them in the position of knowing how serious this disease is. They are in a state of blindness to-day as regards this question. Then again, we want free treatment on proper lines, not the tinpot affair attempted in our public hospitals. That is not worth a snap of the fingers as an eradication of the disease. We want to establish night clinics, in the same way as has been done successfully in other places, instead of rushing blindly into something which is so drastic that if it is passed, some hon. members may have cause to regret all their lives. On top of that, if we want to eradicate the disease, we must keep every avenue of cure open for the public. It is all very well to say that none but qualified persons should handle this.

I will say, that to my knowledge, and I have gone into the question a lot, the most successful persons in the treatment of cases of gonorrhoea, etc., are the chemists, and they do it for a few paltry shillings. A lot of persons suffering are not in a position to put their hands in their pockets and pull out sovereigns. Many sufferers are not wealthy, and they should not be forced into the hands of those who will run up big accounts against them, if they can go to a chemist and get a remedy which we know will cure them of the disease. What more do we want? Why say to those people you must go to a doctor and pay up?

Member: It is proposed to provide free treatment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: You have not established free treatment yet. Why is it necessary that only a doctor shall afford this treatment? Any chemist is as capable of doing it. On top of this there are dozens of proprietary medicines which are known to be effective in bringing about success in ninety per cent. of the cases. And the formulae of those proprietary medicines I have spoken of have been deposited under the Act. Surely there can be no objection to that. Why then should we restrict the treatment and cause extra expense to the sufferers, more especially in view of the fact that we want to eradicate the disease? Is that the way to eradicate it? I think you will agree, Mr. President, that it is not. If we put those compulsory clauses on the statute book, we are going to increase the disease, are going to bring it about in the worst form and put the matter in a worse position than it is to-day. In fact it will become a menace greater than it is to-day, and it is bad enough now. Take those persons suffering. There is the fear of their names being put on a register. They are going to try all ways of secrecy to cure themselves. What does that mean? It means that the disease will become deep-rooted; there is no gainsaying that. Some hon. members compare those suffering from this disease with sufferers from other contagious diseases, such as diphtheria, etc. It is a vastly different thing. This disease is looked upon as a disgrace.

If a person has it, some people look upon it with the same feeling as that towards a criminal; and certainly the majority of those who are suffering feel that it is disgraceful. I do not mind saying here that a large proportion of those suffering from this disease will not go to the family doctor; they will not let him know, he knows too much about the family. They will go to an outside doctor, and possibly give an assumed name. No right thinking person would class this disease with the other contagious diseases I have mentioned. In addition, it is so easy to conceal this disease. A man might be suffering from it and not be visibly ill or confined to his home. How are you going to get at those persons who want to conceal it—and it is only human nature that they should want to conceal it? There is no chance of success in that direction. Before concluding, I would like to refer to the ladies who have taken such an interest in this matter. The reason why I speak in this connection is because some of them have worried themselves right out in the work. Their sole aim has been justice in the first place, to uplift all those who have erred and the general good of mankind. They should not be belittled in any shape or form.

Member: They have not been belittled.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: They have been belittled on many occasions. Hon. members know as well as I do that those ladies are nobly doing their duty for the nation; they are Empire builders. They are entrusted with the bringing up of children. Their object is to bring about a better state of affairs. Some of them have studied this question, some have visited Japan and England and studied the question there. They have put years of study into the question; and they have come to a right conclusion, to turn down the compulsory clauses in favour of voluntary treatment. Are we going to degrade them by passing the compulsory clauses? I say no. I cannot see any portion of the compulsory clauses that I would support.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East) [8.10]: This Bill deals with a most diffi-

cult and at the same time important question. To my mind it represents an honest attempt on the part of the Government to deal with the difficulties presented by the prevalence of venereal disease, and the House should not reject the Bill merely because it has been introduced at this stage. It is not to be supposed that any legislation in this direction would reach perfection at the framers' hands. What is the Legislature for but to take up an idea and perfect it, if it is capable of being perfected? It should not be thrown out by the Legislature but we should endeavour to make the Bill as perfect a measure as we can. It is all very well to say that men are restricted under it, but our quarantine laws have exactly the same effect. I recognise that the Government have gone a long way in dissociating this proposal from the worst features of C.O. legislation. Their proposal is that it shall be dealt with as far as possible as a health measure. That means that the administration will be under the health authorities, and not under the police, a criminal authority. Before I deal with the question of compulsion I want to point out another weak point of the Bill. The promoters of the Bill have told us that the range of the disease is enormous, and yet it is proposed that every medical officer in receipt of a small salary, and every hospital getting any subsidy—I am not speaking of the metropolitan hospitals—shall receive all these cases and treat them without any reward. It is difficult to conceive the simpleness of mind which could have made such a proposal. I am putting it in the kindest way. If this enormous range of disease is to be handled by the doctors and hospitals at their own cost, the measure must break down. Surely it is only a fair thing for the State to provide that what patients cannot pay for, the State shall pay for. Doctors and hospitals must treat the patients gratuitously where the patients are unable to pay, but in all such cases the State should see that doctors and hospitals do not have to bear the cost. That can easily be provided for in the Bill. Another proposal that I think all hon. mem-

bers must approve is that of effective methods to prevent, as far as possible, the ghoulish charlatans who live on victims of these diseases. Absolute prohibition of any publication from these ghouls should be provided. Perhaps hon. members are not aware that a newspaper cannot legally refuse any proper advertisement for which payment is tendered. The proprietor cannot pick and choose his advertisements, but many newspapers admit these ghoulish advertisements which they are under no compulsion to admit, and they should be compelled to refuse to allow their papers to be soiled by such advertisements. Sometimes they slip in in spite of the most watchful care on the part of the publisher. I know of one case where a large firm had contracted for an advertisement through a most respectable advertising agency, and the contract was nearly through when a change of copy came sneaking in with matter in connection with these diseases. Happily the proprietor of the paper saw it and struck it out and sent word to the advertising agency that no such thing could be tolerated, and that advertiser cancelled the contract and refused payment. The tenderer of the advertisement could have been compelled to pay, but the proprietor was only too glad to escape from having to admit such stuff to his paper. But take three papers out of four and we find such advertisements, more or less wrapped up, but still plain enough to be understood as the announcements of these charlatans. The Bill provides, as far as legal measures can, to end the publication of the quackery of these ghouls. There is another proposal made by critics, and I am glad to recognise that the public criticism of this Bill has not been wholly destructive. There has been an earnest desire where anything has been attacked to suggest something better; therefore that criticism deserves the fullest consideration. Amongst the suggestions is that of educational measures and here is a very vexed question. I have often come across announcements of meetings for men only and meetings for women only. I have kept clear of the

meetings for men only, and of course I have not gone to the meetings for women. I would never advise my son to attend a meeting for men only because so much depends on the teacher or lecturer, as the case may be. If he is not the right man, he will do far more harm than good. Hon. members have perhaps heard the story of a lecturer who was addressing a company of boys on kindness to animals. He dealt not only with the positive side but told them of some very naughty things which they must avoid, how boys sometimes chivvied bull frogs and then, when they were distended, threw stones at them and ended the play. But he went on to say that he must admit he himself had not always been a good boy, because he had sometimes inserted crackers in the frogs and exploded them. One boy was noticed to nudge his companions and subsequently the lecturer remarked to a member of the committee that he would like to know what that boy had said to his companions. The committeeman undertook to find out and when the boy was questioned he replied—"Oh, this is a new dodge; I will steal father's flask of powder and we shall try it after school next Sunday." There is a great deal of the so-called instruction in virtue which accomplishes just that. It suggests evil to minds otherwise pure. For instruction in such a matter as this, I do not know that it would be possible to find one teacher in 10,000 fit to impart it. Sometimes superficial people to-day say the old school hid its head and left the children at the mercy of the first deceiver who came along. There are two sides to that question. There is a certain bloom of innocence which might be ruthlessly destroyed by a coarse-minded would-be teacher. Coming to the remedial crux of this question, is the compulsion proposed in the Bill practical and if practical is it a sound remedy? I have already said that we submit to a good deal of compulsion and we submit to it for the good of the community, but I am not ready to submit to compulsion on this question as a first recourse. I think that, in the constructive criticism we have heard recently, there is a far bet-

ter proposal which should be tried first. I think wonders might be worked by providing confidential, efficient, and free treatment where free treatment is necessary. Hon. members already know that in Sydney this plan has met with remarkable success, and I think it stands to reason that if equal confidence and secrecy can be secured by going to a skilled and capable doctor, sufferers will not go to quacks. The first course should be to enact all the safeguards against charlatan treatment and provide capable and confidential, and, where necessary, free treatment for all sufferers. By so doing wonders would be worked and in all probability there would be no need to resort to compulsion. As far as the Bill proposes compulsion I do not think that it could be effectually carried out. Assume that there is a recalcitrant subject who has been notified by authority that she must present herself for examination. I say "she." It is all very well to say this Bill makes no distinction between the sexes. It does not in so many words, but the working out of the Bill will mean a vast distinction between the sexes. The man will have the advantage every time, and hon. members have only to reflect for a moment to realise that this is so. Supposing this recalcitrant person has been ordered to present herself for examination and she says—"No, I will not go." She has no money and no property, and the alternative penalty provided cannot be inflicted upon her. What is going to be done? Is she, by brute force, to be compelled to submit to this examination? Would this sort of thing be tolerated if it once occurred? Never; the public conscience would be outraged; the whole measure would break down. One or two standing out and fighting in this way would smash the measure. The course I shall take is this. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill in recognition that it is a genuine attempt to deal with the question, and I venture to say very few legislators, at a first drafting of the measure, could have improved upon it. Let us pass the second reading of the Bill and in Com-

mittee take out the compulsory clauses. I have heard it said that the compulsory clauses are the Bill. At first sight that appears to be so but surely there is intelligence enough and a sufficient sense of the danger to the community, to warrant hon. members in saying—"Here is an honest attempt, we shall try to make the best of it. We shall leave compulsion as something that might some day have to be fallen back on, but we hope not. At all events it would not be right to use it as a first recourse and we shall provide under the Bill the best medical skill possible, confidential, and where necessary absolutely free for sufferers from the disease." I think there is one step further that the Government might seriously consider. There is no shutting our eyes to the fact that many men who have gone out on the highest of missions, to fight for their country, will come back loaded with this disease, and a grave danger to the community. Nor can one disguise from oneself the fact that from outside States similar cases may come. Now, cannot something be done under the quarantine laws with regard to such cases?

Hon. A. Sanderson: That is a Federal matter.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Why quarantine the soldier and not the civilian?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I have included the civilian. I have already said that similar cases may come from other places to this State, and I meant cases of this disease. Surely if the Legislature is justified in legislating for the cure of the disease here, it is justified in trying to stop the disease as it is coming in.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: That is compulsion, is it not?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Under the quarantine law the State has exercised compulsion all the time, but I have not yet said that I proposed compulsion in these cases.

Hon. A. Sanderson: That is under the Federal Government.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: The hon. member seems obsessed with the Federal Government.

Hon. A. Sanderson: I am.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: As a matter of fact, quarantine is a kind of semi-Federal and semi-State institution. Partly it is administered locally. Cannot something be done at Perth, without compulsion, in intercepting the diseased persons who are coming into the State? Of course I shall be answered that most of them are our own people. Even so, however, if they came back with small-pox we should deal with them. It is worth the Government's consideration whether moral pressure and medical advice cannot meet these cases on their landing and thereby, to a great extent, minimise the danger to the community. In addition to that, there is something else that can be done. How are these diseases spread in a secondary way? Mr. Patrick spoke of his travels and his contact with all sorts of risks, and of his immunity. The hon. member is to be congratulated. Nevertheless, there are grave dangers in travelling. There is danger in railway sleeping cars. A clean man may follow a dirty man. But I shall be answered that the linen is washed. On that point I may say that one finds the linen so damp as to make one inclined to think that it has been in the water, but whether it has been sterilised by boiling one does not know. Then there is danger from lavatories, from towels, from barbers' shops. Has the State done all it can towards insisting on cleanliness and on the sterilising of things that carry secondary infection? I am not saying nothing can be done in a Bill of this sort, but they are things that the Government should watch over. I intend to vote for the second reading of the Bill, and I have every confidence that whatever improvement can be suggested here will be welcomed by the Government.

On motion by Hon. F. Connor debate adjourned.

BILL — MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

Hon. R. D. McKENZIE (North-East) [S.35]: On the last two or three occasions I think when we have had before us a measure dealing with an amendment of the Mines Regulation Act of 1906, we had the advantage of the presence of the Honorary Minister, Mr. Dodd, who has a very mature experience of all phases of goldfields life, and whose advice and assistance on a measure such as this was of very great importance to the House. I am sure we are all extremely sorry at the occasion which necessitated Mr. Dodd's taking a journey to the old world in search of renewed health. We are, however, delighted to know that the sea voyage and the treatment which Mr. Dodd has been able to receive in London have ensured that at no distant date he will return to us in a far better state of health than when he left here. We hope to see him here, if not before the close of this session, at all events during next session. The Bill which we are considering to-day affects one of our chief primary industries—an industry which has produced wealth to the extent of 120 millions sterling during a few years comparatively, which has paid something like 25 millions sterling in dividends to the fortunate shareholders in various mining companies, which employs directly something like 13,000 men, and distributes in wages annually something over three millions, and which, in addition, expends approximately three millions annually in stores and firewood. Such an industry may well be termed one of our chief primary industries. Certainly it is an industry which members of this House will consider well worth fostering. It has done a great deal for Western Australia, and I am sure that for many years to come it will continue to assist towards the prosperity of this great State. On the other side of the picture in connection with mining, we have the very hazardous nature of the calling. We know that too frequently there are accidents in mines, and that these accidents too often have a fatal termination. They leave in their track the widow and the orphan. We know also that there are serious accidents whereby men working in the industry

are maimed for life. These accidents perhaps are few, as compared with the number of accidents that take place in the ordinary life of the goldfields, but nevertheless they go to show that the industry is of a hazardous nature, far more hazardous than any other industry of which we know in Western Australia. In view of the very great danger to those who work in the mining industry, it is necessary that there should be stringent regulations for the conduct not only of the men working underground, but also of managers and all who exercise authority in the conduct of mining. The passing of the present Mines Regulation Act in 1906 was the subject of highly eulogistic remarks in various parts of the world. That Act was considered at the time to be a very well balanced Act indeed, and the Minister for Mines of that day, I think, felt very proud of the measure. Still, no matter how good the Act may have been in those days, we cannot get away from the fact that as we progress so does the mining industry progress. Very different methods are now used in mining, and consequently it is necessary that from time to time even a well balanced Act like that of 1906 should be amended. If hon. members have perused the report of the Mines Department for the year 1914, they will have been pleased to note from that portion of the diagrams which shows the number of accidents in five different classes, that fatal accidents have been somewhat on the decrease. Fatal accidents reached their highest point in 1899, 1900, and 1901. During those years fatal accidents numbered something like 45 per annum. During 1913 and 1914, fatal accidents dropped, I am very thankful to say, to about 25 or 26. The number for 1914 was slightly lower than that for 1913. All this goes to prove that the Act and the regulations under which the industry has been working have, to a great extent, minimised the number of accidents. Only a few days ago the Minister for Mines, speaking on the goldfields, said—

He did not think the accidents were very much above those occurring elsewhere in proportion to the men em-

ployed. The number of serious accidents had increased, but the fatal accidents had, fortunately, decreased. For the nine months of the present year the fatal accidents numbered 21, which was about the average of last year.

To show that the inspection of mines under the present Act has been of a very close nature and has been productive of very much good, I would like to read an extract from a report by Mr. Greenard, inspector of mines on the East Coolgardie goldfield. Mr. Greenard is a man who has been employed by the Government as an inspector of mines for a great number of years, and he has the respect of both the mine managers and the workers in the mines. He is looked upon as one of our best mining inspectors. In the course of a report dated 7th April, 1915, Mr. Greenard writes—

A systematic inspection of the mines in the [East Coolgardie] goldfield has been continuously carried on. The ventilation of all the mines has received constant attention. The temperatures of all working places are regularly taken, and where any temperatures are found above those allowed by the Act, work is immediately stopped until connections are made or other means taken to reduce the temperature to that approved by law. Dust.—Water stations have been fixed on all levels, and the levels are now equipped with water trucks for spraying purposes; so all levels are regularly sprayed, and all ore broken is damped, both in stope and development work. This means complete suppression of dust from those heads. The suppression of dust from back holes is not so satisfactory, but with the bag dust-collectors and sprays in use, we are in hopes of reducing the dust completely. Anyhow, a great effort is being made to catch the manager and miner making dust, when a recommendation will be made immediately for prosecution. I am very pleased to inform you that our efforts to suppress dust have been successful; 95 per cent. of the dust has been suppressed. It only remains to continue the pressure for the complete suppression of dust. Safety cages,

hooks, and gates are in use in the mines, and are regularly tested and passed. Explosives are stored in the mines according to the Mines Regulation Act, but we are endeavouring to reduce the quantities stored to a minimum. We are also carefully seeing that the mines are equipped with necessary canisters and requirements to carry explosives to and fro for firing purposes. Stopes.—The filling of stopes and the securing of the backs has had continuous supervision. This is an extremely difficult matter to deal with, as a certain amount must be left to the individual miner as to what is safe, and even then it is possible for the most experienced miner to mistake the condition of the back, but the department can rest assured that we are keeping a constant pressure on the underground managers, shift bosses, and miners to keep the backs as safe as possible. We are insisting on well-filled stopes."

I think that all goes to prove that the inspection part of the mining industry is being faithfully and well carried out. Coming to the Bill, the Minister said that the one object would be to ensure the provision of workmen-inspectors and special inspectors. There seems to be a feeling amongst those working in the mines that the inspection carried on by what are known as district inspectors is not sufficient. There is an agitation on the part of workers in the mines to have what they call workmen-inspectors. They believe that if workmen inspectors are appointed the number of fatal accidents will decrease, and also that there will be an improvement in the inspection of mines. I think that every member in this Chamber will agree that if it is possible to save even only one man's life in a year by the appointment of workmen-inspectors that such appointment would be justified. For that reason, on the assumption that the appointment of workmen-inspectors is going to have that effect, I am willing to vote for the second reading of this measure, with certain reservations. In Committee it is my intention to move certain amendments.

Clause 6 of the Bill provides for special inspectors, who shall be appointed to make special inspections and shall be required to have a knowledge of mining. Members will agree that is quite right, that there is nothing to cavil at in any shape or form. Then there is the district inspector whom we already know. The district inspector is appointed under the Public Service Act, and must pass an examination; he has to be recommended for employment by a board consisting of the State Mining Engineer, a member appointed by the Chamber of Mines, and a member appointed by the trades unions on the goldfields. Before he can be appointed as district inspector he must pass the necessary examination, after which they will recommend him to the Public Service Commissioner for appointment. Now, the workmen-inspector is to be elected by the duly registered unions of mine workers on the goldfields. He is to have identical powers with the district inspector. He has power to make examinations and inquiry to ascertain whether the provisions of this Act affecting any mine are complied with, to enter, inspect and examine any mine and every part thereof at all times by day and night with such assistance as he may deem necessary, but so as not unnecessarily to impede or obstruct the working of the mine; to examine into and make inquiry respecting the state and condition of any mine or any part thereof, and all matters or things connected with or related to the safety or well-being of the persons or animals employed therein or in any mine contiguous thereto; and for the purpose of such examination or inquiry the inspector may require the attendance of any mine official or employee, and such official or employee shall attend accordingly. He can initiate and conduct prosecutions against persons offending against the provisions of this Act; obtain written statements from witnesses, appear at inquiries held respecting mining accidents and inquests, call and examine or cross-examine witnesses; and generally exercise any other powers as

are in his discretion necessary for carrying the Act into effect. Although he has those powers identical with the powers of the district inspector, yet he does not come under the disqualification attaching to the position of district inspector—

No person shall be qualified to be a district inspector who at the same time actually practices, either alone or in partnership with any person, as a land agent, mining engineer, mining manager, viewer, agent, or valuer of mines, or acts as an arbitrator in any differences or disputes arising between owners, agents, or managers of mines, or is otherwise employed in or is the owner or part owner of or interested as a shareholder in any mine within the State.

Therefore we have the position that although a district inspector has to pass a special examination and to be appointed under the Public Service Act, the workmen-inspector is elected directly by the workmen on the mines. He has identical powers with the district inspector, and yet he does not come under that clause which provides the disqualification of a district inspector. By anyone reading the Bill it will be seen that an inspector of mines has great powers. I agree that those powers have been exercised efficiently and in a proper manner in the past. Nevertheless an inspector of mines has an opportunity to harass the mine manager, and he can do so to such an extent as will have a serious effect on the mining industry. In these days of high prices, scarcity of material and stores, and when the grade of the ore is lower than it used to be—very often on a mine it is a question whether the month will result in a profit or a loss—any obstruction thrown in the way of working that mine by an inspector might have a serious effect on it. My contention is that the workmen-inspectors should not have the same power as district inspectors. The Minister no doubt will tell us that under Clause 9 the workmen-inspector is under the authority and control of the district inspector. But if you go on and read

Clause 10, you will find that it makes Clause 9 inoperative because it gives the workmen-inspectors equal power with the district inspector. In Committee I propose to move certain amendments. On Clause 6, Subsection (c), I propose to move at the end of the clause to add the words "Up to within 12 months of his appointment." The Bill as it reads now provides that no one elected by the registered mine workers shall be eligible for appointment as a workmen-inspector unless he has been engaged in general practical underground mining work as a working miner for at least five years. He may have been working as a miner for five years 20 years ago, but the conditions of mining alter so much in ten years that he might not be of very great service. If the amendment I have outlined be agreed to and we put in the words, "within 12 months of his appointment," any man, before appointment, must have been employed in mines for at least five years up to within twelve months of his appointment. I think that is a reasonable amendment to ask for, and I am certain the leader of the House will agree to it. The next amendment I have to move will be in connection with Clause 10. In that regard I intend to ask the House, first of all, to strike out the whole of the clause. Clause 10 starts by saying that an inspector shall have power to do all or any of the following things, which I have just outlined. I want to differentiate between the district inspector and the workmen inspector; and to that end, if the clause is struck out, I shall move to insert in lieu thereof the following:—

A special inspector or a workmen's inspector shall have power to do all or any of the following things, namely:—To enter, inspect, and examine any mine and every part thereof at all times by day and night with such assistance as he may deem necessary, but so as not to unnecessarily impede or obstruct the working of the mine. To examine into and make inquiry respecting the state and condition of any mine or any part thereof and of all matters or things connected with or re-

lating to the safety or well-being of the persons or animals employed therein or in any mine contiguous thereto, and for the purpose of such examination or inquiry the special or workmen's inspector may require the attendance of any mine official or employee who shall attend accordingly. When the district inspector is not available, but not otherwise, to obtain written statements from witnesses and to appear at inquiries held respecting mining accidents and at inquests, and to call and examine witnesses and to cross-examine witnesses. A district inspector, in addition to the power conferred on special and workmen's inspectors, shall have the power to make an examination and inquiry to ascertain whether the provisions of this Act affecting any mine are complied with; to initiate and conduct prosecutions against persons offending against the provisions of this Act, and to exercise generally such other powers as are in his discretion necessary for carrying this Act into effect.

If this proposed clause be inserted in lieu of the present one, the powers of district inspectors and the powers of workmen-inspectors will be defined. A workmen-inspector will not have identical powers with a district inspector; he will have certain laid-down powers and those powers will be all that will be required by a workmen-inspector. I think every member of the Chamber has been circularised by the Chamber of Mines and also by the Federated Miners' Association. The Federated Miners' Association particularly make a point of the fact that they desire to have workmen-inspectors. They also make a point that it is desirable workmen's inspectors should not be dependent on mine owners but should have a free hand to make their inspections, in order to ensure the safety of miners working underground. Under the amendments which I shall propose, I think the workmen's inspectors will have all that power. The only thing I am asking is that they should not have powers identical with those of the district inspectors. The district inspector is a

highly qualified man who has passed an examination and he administers his department on the various goldfields, and he is, beyond question, the man who should have the power to initiate any necessary prosecutions. If the workmen's inspector, in the ordinary course of his business, finds that the regulations are not being carried out, he will report to the district inspector who will report to the State Mining Engineer, and instructions will be given whether prosecutions are to take place or not. I trust the measure will pass its second reading. I am sure we all wish in the present crisis through which we are passing that we shall have not only industrial peace but that the industry which is producing such an essential commodity for the carrying on of the war will prosper and that we shall be able to put on the statute-book a measure which will be acceptable to the workers, and which will ensure that the industry will continue to flourish. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [9.2]: To a certain extent the hon. Mr. McKenzie has taken some of the wind out of my sails. I anticipated some opposition to the Bill but, judging by his remarks, he is prepared to compromise to a certain extent. The Bill, if agreed to, would not to a great extent remove the chief causes which affect the health of the miners. The abolition of contracting and of the night shift underground would, I believe, do much in this direction. However, those two points do not come under consideration in connection with this Bill, but as one who has had long connection with the industry I give that as my opinion. The measure will no doubt, to some extent, tend to minimise the number of accidents which now occur in mines. Mr. McKenzie dealt very lightly with the accidents which have occurred, but it might be well, at the risk of wearying hon. members, to make out a case for the Bill, as it might be lost. According to page 56 of the report of the Department of Mines for 1914, in 1910 there were 17,711 men employed in the industry. There were 29 fatal accidents which worked out

at 1.64 per thousand of the men employed. In the following year there were 16,596 men employed, 37 fatal accidents, or a proportion of 2.23 per thousand. In 1912, 14,961 men were employed and there were 35 fatal accidents, equal to 2.34 per thousand. In 1913, there were 14,782 men employed and there was a decrease in the number of fatal accidents to 26, equal to 1.76 per thousand; and in the last year of which we have any record there were 13,174 men employed in the industry but still there were 26 fatal accidents, which worked out at 1.97 per thousand of the men employed. Therefore, the percentage of fatal accidents in the industry during the last year of which we have record was greater than in the preceding year. The reason why there have been fewer fatal accidents in the industry during the last two years quoted is attributable to the energetic administration in the way of inspection insisted upon by the present Minister for Mines. Out of 26 fatal accidents 20 were members of the Federated Miners' Association and I presume that the balance were members of the Murchison Miners' Association. That is to say every man who was killed in 1914 was a member of a miners' union.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Were all those killed underground?

Hon. J. CORNELL: They were killed in mines and the greater percentage through accidents underground. I have gone to considerable trouble to condense the figures, and if hon. members will turn up page 56 of the Mines report for 1914, they will find the particulars tabulated. It may be interesting to quote the figures supplied by the Westralian Goldfields Federated Miners' Association. These show an average membership of approximately 3,700 and from the 1st May, 1914, to the 30th April, 1915, they lost by death 75 members, the average age being 44 years. During that period 19 of the deaths were recorded as fatal accidents whilst engaged in mining. This period, of course, does not correspond with the period dealt with in the Mines report. Of this total, the Kulgoorlie and Boulder union, with an approximate membership of 2,000,

contributed 51 victims, 11 being fatal accidents; and the remaining 14 branches consisting of 1,700 members contributed 14 victims, eight of them being fatal accidents. The greater proportion of deaths through natural causes were attributable to diseases peculiar to the mining industry. I have a tabulated list of the 75 deaths and I think Dr. Saw would agree that the majority were due to disease peculiar to the industry. Death is sad at all times and more fatal accidents occur in the mining industry, which has been the backbone of this State, than in any other industry, and it should therefore be our aim to endeavour to minimise these accidents. In the same report serious accidents are dealt with. When the leader of the House was moving the second reading of the Bill some hon. members interjected "What is a serious accident?" Those who interjected were old members of this House and should have known that the definition of a serious accident has been embodied in an Act of Parliament. In Subsection 3 of Section 26 of the Mines Regulation Act serious accident is defined as follows:—

For the purposes of this section serious accident shall be such as results in the injured person being disabled from following his ordinary occupation and earning his usual rate of remuneration for a period of two weeks or more.

That definition was passed by Parliament as long ago as nine years, so hon. members should not quibble about what constitutes a serious accident. The serious accidents in 1913 and 1914 are also set out. The total number of men employed in the industry in 1913 was 14,782, and in 1914, 13,174. Therefore, there were 1,608 fewer men employed in 1914. The number of serious accidents in 1913 was 741, and in 1914, 220 on the surface and 611 underground, a total of 831. The figures thus show that with 1,603 fewer men employed in 1914 than in 1913 there were 90 more serious accidents. Serious injuries were recorded at 13 different centres, namely at East Coolgardie, Mt. Margaret, Murchison,

East Murchison, Coolgardie, Yilgarn, North Coolgardie, N.E. Coolgardie, Dundas, Pilbara, Phillips River, Collie, and at the quarries at Parkerville. Out of the total number of cases of serious injury the East Coolgardie field, which comprises practically only the Boulder mines, recorded no less than 527 as against 304 from all other centres. I submit that the proportion of serious accidents stands in no way in its proper ratio to the number of men employed in the mining industry, and the proportion of serious accidents is greater on the Golden Mile than in any other portion of the State. It is on the Golden Mile that the benefit of these inspectors will be realised most, and that they will work full time. Now, hon. members have received a circular from the Chamber of Mines. I wish to preface my remarks on that circular by saying that from my long experience of the mine managers of the Golden Mile and of members of the Chamber of Mines I am not inclined to think that the opinions expressed in this circular are the honest opinions of many of the members of the Chamber of Mines. I have always found them a fair body of employers to deal with, as fair a body as is to be found in Australia. I do not think the terms of this circular truly express their opinions. Certain remarks in the circular cast a slur upon myself and also other members. The circular states—

The necessity for addressing by letter every member of Parliament with regard to this Bill arises from the fact that the mine owners of the State, and it may be said the mining industry, have no direct representative in either the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council.

From the utterances which I have heard, and with which I do not altogether agree, I consider that an injustice is done to the Hon. R. D. McKenzie. It has been said by those who support me that Mr. R. D. McKenzie represents the Chamber of Mines. I do not say that the hon. member represents that body altogether, but I do say that he represents that in-

terest. The Chamber of Mines, in my opinion, have been rather hard on the hon. member, and, to use the phrase often quoted by Mr. Colebatch, I fear poetic justice has been done to Mr. R. D. McKenzie. I will quote another passage from the circular—

The goldfields members do not represent the industry as a whole, but only the employees, and, in fact, not even all the employees, but only those belonging to Labour unions.

That remark, I consider, could have been omitted from the circular, and the omission would have been much more to the credit of the Chamber of Mines than the inclusion is. I take the stand that I am returned to this House to represent men and women first, and property afterwards. To the best of my lights I have endeavoured at all times to do justice not only to those who have elected me, but also to those who have voted against me; and I hope to continue that policy. The same remarks, I think, fairly represent the attitude of my colleagues who wear the same colours at election time. The circular of the Chamber of Mines was issued with the object, I take it, of prejudicing members to a certain extent against the proposal for check inspectors. On that subject the circular states—

At Broken Hill, where the conditions of mining are more nearly analogous to those obtaining in Western Australia than on any other field, workmen's inspectors have for years past been appointed under the following clause, and have carried out their duties to the satisfaction of all concerned.

In view of the attitude adopted by the Hon. R. D. McKenzie I do not wish to weary hon. members by quoting the section of the New South Wales Act. Moreover, the section is already before hon. members in the Chamber of Mines circular. If hon. members will take the trouble to read that section, or if they have already perused it, I will ask them further to read it in conjunction with Section 16 of the Mines Regulation Act of this State. When they read the two together they will find that the differ-

ences between the two sections is that which exists between tweedledum and tweedledee. Our Act contains the same powers, but expressed in different language from that adopted by the New South Wales measure. The Chamber of Mines states that the section has given satisfaction in Broken Hill. I claim that is not so. Both the sections I have referred to deal with one mine only, and both provide that if any mine workers employed in a mine choose two or more of their members and so forth. That is the part of the law which is disregarded at Broken Hill. What has actually happened is that the workers in the unions as a whole have voted as a whole for the appointment of two check inspectors. That is a direct contravention of the statute, but it has been winked at by the Broken Hill mining authorities. Therefore it would be useless to insert a similar provision in our Act. In fact, we have the provision there already; but it has never been utilised because the miners recognised that it would be useless. Now we want to find out whether the system of inspection at Broken Hill is as satisfactory as our Chamber of Mines would have us believe. We also want to find out how the accident rates at Broken Hill compare with those on our mines. It is only by drawing such comparisons that we can arrive at just conclusions. I have taken the trouble to obtain the report of the New South Wales Royal Commission on the mining industry at Broken Hill, which report the New South Wales Parliament ordered to be printed last November. I am prepared to lend the report, which is very interesting as well as very voluminous, to any member of this House either during the debate or after it. The report includes a return comparing accidents in Broken Hill mines with those in Western Australian mines, alluvial mines being excluded, from 1908 to 1912 inclusive. In the year 1908, 3,426 men were employed on the surface of the Broken Hill mines, and there were four fatal accidents on the surface, which

works out at 1.17 per thousand. In the same year 3,461 men were employed underground at Broken Hill, and there were 13 fatal accidents underground, working out at 3.179 per thousand. In 1908 there were 6,727 men employed on the surface of Western Australian mines, and the number of fatal accidents was 11, equivalent to 1.63 per thousand. The men employed underground in this State during that year numbered 8,403, and the number of fatal accidents was 29, or 3.45 per thousand. In 1909 3,884 men were employed on the surface in Broken Hill, and the number of fatal accidents was 7, equal to 1.17 per thousand. The number employed underground at Broken Hill was 2,663, and the number of fatal accidents was 3, equal to 1.13 per thousand. During the same year 6,973 men were employed on the surface of Western Australian mines and there were 4 accidents on the surface, equal to .57 per thousand. In the same year 9,034 men were employed underground in this State, and the number of fatal accidents was 29, equal to 3.21 per thousand. The number working underground at Broken Hill for the same year was 3,207 on the surface at Broken Hill, and there were 4 fatal accidents, or 1.09 per thousand. The number working underground at Broken Hill for the year was 3,207 with 12 fatal accidents, equal to 3.74 per thousand. In Western Australian mines during 1910 6,736 men were employed on the surface with 7 fatal accidents, equal to 1.04 per thousand; while 8,753 men were employed underground and there were among them 20 fatal accidents, equal to 2.29 per thousand. In 1911, 4,184 men were employed on the surface at Broken Hill and there were 4 fatal accidents on the surface, equal to .96 per thousand; while 3,620 men were employed underground with 16 fatal accidents, equal to 4.42 per thousand. In Western Australian mines for 1911 there were 6,532 surface workers and the number of fatal accidents was 7, equal to 1.07 per thousand; while 8,262 were employed underground with 29 fatal accidents, equal to 3.51 per thousand. In

1912, 4,010 men were employed on the surface at Broken Hill and there were 3 fatal accidents, equal to .77 per thousand; while 4,161 men were employed underground with 14 fatal accidents, equal to 3.36 per thousand. For the same year, 1912, on Western Australian mines 5,840 men were employed on the surface and there were 2 fatal accidents, equal to .34 per thousand; while 7,364 men were working underground and there were 32 fatal accidents, equal to 4.35 per thousand. The average for the above five years works out in the case of Broken Hill at 1.14 per thousand for the surface and at 3.45 per thousand for underground. The average for the same period of five years in Western Australia works out at .94 per thousand for the surface and at 3.33 per thousand for underground. In spite of these figures it is claimed that the present system at Broken Hill is working satisfactorily to all concerned. The percentage of accidents at Broken Hill, both on the surface and underground, is higher than in Western Australian mines. The inference from the circular of the Chamber of Mines, however, is that the Broken Hill miners are quite content with the present system of inspection. I will take the last year of the return I have quoted. At Broken Hill 9,171 men were employed, and two Government inspectors and two check inspectors were engaged in safeguarding these men. It averages 2,292 men for each inspector. The same report shows that during 1912, 13,204 men were employed in Western Australian mines. Eight Government inspectors had these men under their care, which gives an average of 1,650 men for each inspector. Therefore, when we take into consideration the number of men the Broken Hill inspectors had to cope with as against the number of men after whom an inspector had to look in Western Australia, it is clear that the inspection is bad in Broken Hill and that the men there cannot be satisfied with the present system. The mine-workers here also are not satisfied with the present system in Western Australia. The mine-workers of Broken Hill and of Western Australia

are at one, and are after the same thing, namely, the appointment of check inspectors. The question which the House has to ask itself, in view of the comparison I have submitted, is whether the Broken Hill miners are satisfied with the present system. The Chamber of Mines circular says they are. I say they are not. A further question for the House to answer is whether the miners of Western Australia are satisfied with the present system here. If they were, this Bill would not have been introduced. On the question now confronting hon. members the House is in a position which it never occupied before, namely, that of having available the report of the Royal Commission that dealt with the appointment of check inspectors. That Royal Commission consisted of the now Agent General for New South Wales (Mr. R. B. Wise) as chairman, and Mr. Weir and Mr. Kerr, representatives of the miners and mine-owners. The Commission delivered a report to the New South Wales Parliament. The recommendation made by the two Commissioners, Mr. Wise and Mr. Kerr, was this: that four workmen's inspectors be appointed by the Amalgamated Miners' Association and paid by the Government.

Hon. R. D. McKenzie: Was it given effect to?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It may be of interest to quote one or two extracts from the chairman's speech. He opened by saying—

Your Commissioner, the chairman, does not think that additional inspectors are required merely to watch over the safety of the mine workings. In his opinion, the safety of the men is guarded already very carefully by the management of the mines, both as a matter of humanity and of business; and it is plain from Mr. Deed's reports that he has found nothing of any importance to be lacking in the precautions which are taken against accident. It does not follow, however, that these inspectors are of no use. Miners, who risk their lives in working underground, are entitled to feel assured that every possi-

ble precaution is being taken for their safety; and it is to no purpose to tell them that they ought to be satisfied with the precautions taken by the management. The answer is, that they are not satisfied.

He goes on further—

The real difficulty is not as to the number of inspectors, but as to their duties. The mine managers contend that these should be limited to the duties prescribed by the statute; and that the inspectors should report only on matters which affect the safety of the works. The union, on the other hand, contend that workmen's inspectors should have a wider range of duties, and, in Mr. Barnett's words, "be appointed to look after the welfare of the men."

With that I agree. I say that report correctly sets out my opinion and the opinions held by the miners. No one would infer for a moment that Mr. Wise viewed the question in a partisan light. There is no need for me to weary hon. members with an opinion given by one of our own ex-inspectors, Mr. James Hudson, who is now head of the Mines Department in Tasmania, and a capable man and a good fellow into the bargain. In giving evidence before the Royal Commission on the Ventilation and Sanitation of Mines in 1905 he said in effect that the inspectors should be appointed by the workers themselves, that they should be paid by the Government, that information is now hard to obtain from the miner, that check inspectors would get much more useful information than could Government inspectors, and that their appointment would tend to improve the working conditions of the mining industry. That is the essence of Mr. Hudson's observations before the Royal Commission. One aspect of the Bill must appeal to all hon. members, namely, that it is not going to cost the mining industry one penny. It will not cost those whom I might call the buccaners of the industry anything at all. The taxpayer is going to pay it. Nothing is to come out of the pockets of the mining investors or of the shareholders, or at least

as much will be paid by the miners as will be paid by the owners. The only added cost which may be brought about by the work of these inspectors will be by way of taking better precautions against mining accidents. That, I think, is a highly laudable object and will be applauded by all. It may be interesting to state that in the mining industry last year the costs were lower than in the previous year, or at any time in the history of the industry. As usual, no credit is given to the workers in the industry. When economy is effected in an industry so gigantic as our gold mining industry, there is no question as to who is the greatest participator in it. In the *West Australian* of the 2nd July, 1915, hon. members will find these remarks dealing with the annual report of the Great Boulder by the chairman Mr. Doolette—

The cost per ton of treatment, including development, in 1913 was 27s. 4d. and in 1914 26s. 5d. It is satisfactory to note that the betterment arises principally from the decrease in mine expenditure, which the manager was able to accomplish, no doubt, under great difficulties, to the extent of £9,400.

I have read the report right through in the hope of finding something in favour of the men employed, but there is nothing. In the *West Australian* of a day later appears an abbreviated report of the annual meeting of the Golden Horse-shoe, the mine which treats the greatest amount of ore and which, despite a slight setback, will eventually, I think, develop into the richest mine in Western Australia. The report stated—

The tonnage treated during 1914 gave an average of 23,708 tons per month of an average grade of 27s. 4d. So far the tonnage this year averaged 20,472 per month, and the grade was improved to 35s. 6d. per ton. The decrease in tonnage was principally due to an accident to the tailing wheel, owing to which the new 20-head stamp battery was shut down. Costs during last year were the lowest on record, having been reduced by 10d. per ton in treatment.

There are two statements which, to my mind, conclusively prove that in regard to bringing about economy in the mining industry, the miner has played his part. The miner always plays his part, doing his work in the mines of Western Australia, and he has no equal in any other mining camp in the world. Let us get back to the Chamber of Mines circular, and incidentally to some objections raised by Mr. McKenzie. Apparently Mr. McKenzie's assumption, in moving his amendment, is that these inspectors would abuse their powers. The Chamber of Mines' circular says—

Workmen's inspectors appointed by the unions, and having all the powers of district inspectors, are in a position to use a weapon of great strength against the mine owners.

What weapon can they use? Their duties are prescribed, as the duties of any inspector of mines are prescribed, by statute, and like any other civil servant, if they abuse those duties they will be dealt with by the Minister and dismissed. Although the workers will elect these men, immediately they are elected they come under the Minister and their duties are prescribed.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What would happen to the Minister if he dismissed them?

Hon. J. CORNELL: No one will say that the Minister for Mines is a man of putty or of plasticene. He is a strong man and is not led by the nose by his own followers. At all events it is logical to assume that these inspectors would be allowed to do things outside the Act, which a Government inspector would not be allowed to do? Mr. McKenzie by his proposed amendments desires to circumscribe the duties of these inspectors. I say, if they are to be appointed and if they are to be of any utility, they must have certain powers to take action. If they see a breach of the mining laws, they should not be expected to run to another fellow and tell him. They should be able to initiate a prosecution. Without this they must be mere barnacles on the Government inspectors. The report of the Commission to the New South

Wales Government on this very question in defining the duties of inspectors included—

Those referring to Section 67 of the Arbitration Act of 1912.

They said check inspectors should be thus empowered. This Bill does not go that far, although I hold it should. Again—

Enforcement of the observance of the rules of the mines.

That is explicit and I say nothing less will suffice. It continues—

and generally to look after the welfare of the miners.

How can they look after the welfare of the miners if they have no power to take up the cudgel on behalf of the miners in the tribunals of law? I hope the House will not water down the proposal. If it becomes law it will be found to be in all respects beneficial, and hon. members will wonder why they did not agree to it long ago. I ask hon. members not to water that down. The question is essentially one for the Committee stage. One other remark, and I have done with the Chamber of Mines' circular. I wish to point out that, as usual when people set out to draft things of this nature, the sting has been put where one finds it in venomous insects, namely in the tail. The circular says—

It is well known that most workers' unions are governed, not by the majority of sober-minded, level-headed workmen, but by the aggressive minorities.

As a unionist, as one who has met the Chamber of Mines on numerous occasions, as one who has always taken the part of the Chamber of Mines when questions of victimising, either politically or in matters of employment, have come up, I regret the inclusion of that passage in the circular. I have always done justice to the Chamber of Mines. If the members of that body had been given to victimisation, it is certain that I would never have worked for years in the Boulder mine and during that time frequently debated Labour questions with Mr. Hamilton. The passage I have quoted, however, is incorrect, and it should not have emanated from the

Chamber of Mines. More than 85 per cent. of the miners employed in the Western Australian mining industry belong to miners' unions. No union member is debarred from attending union meetings. Any member can come to a meeting and take his part in the proceedings and decide on the policy of the union. If he does not come along and the men who do come mould and frame the policy of the organisation, there is no ground for complaint by the man who fails to attend. It must be some such assumption as that on which the Chamber of Mines base the statement to which I have taken exception. I say the statement is not in accordance with the facts. I ask, do the conditions which have prevailed without interruption on the Golden Mile and generally in the mining industry of this State show the miners to be ruled by hotheaded and aggressive minorities? There is not a mining camp in the world inaugurated under such conditions as the Golden Mile and old Coolgardie that compares favourably with them. For a period of 22 or 23 years the mining industry of Western Australia has gone the even tenor of its way without interruption. Many people have marvelled how such a large body of workers as is to be found on the Golden Mile could continue for 23 years without a strike and without any interruption of the industry. It has been pointed out by my respected colleague, Mr. Dodd—and his statement was accepted by hon. members of this House—that such a satisfactory condition of affairs could only be arrived at by reasonable men on both sides of the fence. We can only judge of things as they are and as they have been, and I contend that if the appointment of check inspectors with the full powers asked for is agreed to, it can only result in the continuance of the amicable relations existing hitherto. Just a word or two in conclusion. Nothing in the way of legislation for the preservation of the health, life, and limb of the miner has been introduced for nine years. I proclaim with pride that the miners of Western Australia are to be credited with the inauguration and the continuance of the trium-

phal progress of the party with which I am associated. That party had its genesis in the mining industry, and always had its backbone there. While elsewhere the hands of those that fed were bitten by those who were fed, the mine workers have remained invariably loyal to their political faith. I ask hon. members to consider whether in the course of nine years there must not have arisen need for improvement in our mining laws. It is a scandal that those laws should not have been amended long ago. This is the only piece of legislation by which the House can directly assist the miner, by improving the conditions under which he works. The object of the Bill is laudable, and I appeal to the House to do for the miner what he has been prepared to do in this hour of stress and need. No member of this House will say for a moment, "Cornell believes this is all the miner wants; Cornell believes that this will suffice for the miner's needs." I said in my opening remarks that I did not believe anything of the kind. As a representative of the mine workers, however, as a representative of those who constitute the backbone of the present Government, I say that the mine workers have been prepared to sink all controversial proposals during this time of stress, when we do not know what is before us. The miner says that he wants certain conditions and that his lot will not be satisfactory until he gets them. He is prepared to waive the majority of those conditions until better times. All he asks now is the right to appoint inspectors to look after the welfare of the miner. If such inspector finds that the welfare of the miners is not being safeguarded as it should be, then he must have the power to take action before the proper tribunal, a court of justice.

On motion by Hon. F. Connor debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th September, 1915.

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Acting Premier: By-laws of Broad Arrow roads board.

QUESTION—LIME DEPOSITS, LAKE CLIFTON.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Is he aware that a majority of the settlers in the South-West find it impossible to profitably farm their holdings without a supply of lime? 2, Seeing that a tramway could be cheaply constructed with second-class material, do the Government intend to develop the Lake Clifton lime deposits, and thereby carry out the promise made by Mr. Bath at the Harvey show?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The use of lime is essential to produce the maximum results. 2, Owing to the financial position the Government were unable to undertake the work as desired, but they have received a further offer to exploit the deposit from a private company. The Government are investigating the matter from the point of view of the relative merits of the Lake Clifton and the Dongarra deposits.

QUESTION—TIMBER INDUSTRY, SEA FREIGHTS.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Will he make representa-