

the financial proposals which I bring forward—I am always prepared to consider reasonable suggestions in Committee regarding my measures—and is not going to support me in my efforts to raise the necessary revenue to carry on the affairs of State during very trying circumstances, then the sooner someone else is obtained to lead the Government the better. But the House must take the responsibility. I say emphatically that if the racing community cannot stand an extra 2½ per cent. which I am putting on here—

Mr. Scaddan: Sixty thousand pounds.

The PREMIER: Let the people concerned close down, and there will be no harm done to the community at large. But these people could easily stand it. The very fact that the bookmakers have been to me and have offered as a body to surrender £15,000 as an increased taxation, and that they already pay £25,000 a year in license fees to the clubs, making a total of £40,000 a year, must prove conclusively that they are on an excellent wicket, and that they must reap enormous profits to stand such taxation. If that is so, then it is reasonable to suppose that not treble the amount, as the leader of the Opposition estimated in 1911—

Mr. Scaddan: I did not.

The PREMIER: Will come from the totalisator, but that the amount derived will be substantial, and I shall be able to reap every penny of increased revenue which the Bill provides for, and do no harm whatever to the legitimate section of the sport in Western Australia.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 20 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 18 |

Majority for .. 2

AYES.

Mr. Allen
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Connolly
Mr. Cunningham
Mr. George
Mr. Griffiths
Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Harrison
Mr. E. B. Johnston
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Nairn

Mr. Plesse
Mr. Robinson
Mr. Smith
Mr. S. Stubbs
Mr. Thomson
Mr. Veryard
Mr. Wansbrough
Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Male

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angwin
Mr. Carpenter
Mr. Chesson
Mr. Foley
Mr. Green
Mr. Heltmann
Mr. Holman
Mr. Hudson
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Mullany

Mr. Munzie
Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Underwood
Mr. Walker
Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Bolton
(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 11.32 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 15th November, 1916.

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| Betting Suppression, 2a. | ... | ... | ... | 879 |
| Special Lease (Lake Clifton), 2a. | ... | ... | ... | 904 |
| Wheat Marketing, 2a. | ... | ... | ... | 910 |

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

BILL—PROHIBITION OF TREATING.

Introduced by Hon. J. J. Holmes and read a first time.

BILL—BETTING SUPPRESSION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East) [4.35]: In speaking on this measure for the suppression of betting I think it is recognised that certain sections of the public require protection from other sections, and that legislation with this object in view is necessary. It has long been the practice to regulate gambling by law. It is interesting

to know the history of such legislation on account of the fact that it has been for some time either impossible or undesirable to totally suppress gambling, and all legislation in connection with it has been introduced with the object of regulating it. The present Bill purports to be one for the suppression of gambling. In my opinion the Title only holds good insofar as it refers to street and shop betting. It certainly has for its object the total suppression of street and shop betting, but so far as I can gather it does not propose to totally suppress betting, even on racecourses. I am in accord with the Title and I am absolutely in favour of the suppression of street and shop betting. In fact, so far as this phase of gambling is concerned, I take it there is no member in this Chamber who would oppose the Bill in that respect, and I wish to make it very clear that it is entirely for that reason that I am supporting the second reading and will not consider myself pledged to support any of the clauses in the Bill. The Colonial Secretary went to considerable trouble in quoting from the evidence of the select committee to show the evils of gambling, and also to show that the committee recommended suppression of street and shop betting. We all agree with the committee and with the Colonial Secretary's contention in that respect. The Colonial Secretary and other speakers have also referred in no uncertain manner to the evils of gambling. Here, again, I am prepared to agree with them, but the Government, in introducing this measure and in bringing it forward, have laid particular stress upon the evils of gambling, and here I wish to point out that in speaking to the measure I do not propose to give them credit for being moral reformers, although they are posing as such in connection with the Bill. If they were really in earnest and desired to suppress or regulate gambling they would not have adopted a measure such as this. Instead of it being moral reform, having in view the measure introduced in another place and also certain remarks of the Colonial Secretary, I am satisfied we are justified in harbouring a suspicion that it is financial reform that is aimed at. If the Government were really anxious to bring about moral reform, probably we would be willing to sup-

port it, but personally I am not willing to give them that support I would give under those circumstances, considering that this measure, to my mind, is a subterfuge. The Colonial Secretary presented a fearful indictment on the evils of gambling. At the same time the Government have intimated their intention of increasing the tax on the totalisator. It is not a question of the suppression of gambling; it is a question of turning it into one channel. I fail to see how they can claim that that is suppressing gambling when they are merely diverting its course into another channel. Here I wish to criticise the action of the Government who are desirous of posing as moral reformers. I fail to see that they gained their present position owing to any promise to introduce reforms of that character. As a matter of fact, I have a lively recollection that certain members of the present Government and the party behind them, gave the people of the State a considerable shock on account of the peculiar moral conception or their peculiar moral susceptibilities in connection, for instance, with the Redistribution of Seats Bill. A Government who would introduce and carry a measure of that description can scarcely, on this occasion, pose as leaders of moral reform. Personally, I am not going to take them very seriously in that respect. Therefore, on this occasion I wish to show that, provided they are prepared to take the responsibility of the taxation proposals, well and good, but they are not going to pose as those who are going to institute certain moral reforms and suppress a certain social evil. In connection with gambling itself, I do not think one needs to be a fanatical anti-gambler to realise that the practice is responsible for very deplorable results. The results of gambling undoubtedly amount to a great social evil. In considering gambling itself it is a proposal in regard to which it is as well to inquire into some of the conditions responsible for it. I think we can assume that the incentive to gambling is to be found, to a certain extent, in the conditions under which we live, the artificial conditions of our existence. Many who gamble are engaged in the present system of industrial drudgery, and are anxious, of course, to break the monotony. The in-

centive to gambling is due, to a certain extent, to the environment under which people live. Not only is this so in connection with the industrial classes, but also luxury and idleness have the same demoralising effect. It is the desire for exhilaration, excitement, and sensationalism which is, to a great extent, responsible for the gambling practices of the present day. The mental excitement and emotion of trying one's luck are almost irresistible. When we consider that there is a natural predisposition on the part of a great many people to gamble, and when we find that to the opportunity is added encouragement, there is no great wonder at the extent or proportion to which gambling in this country has risen. We look upon this merely as a machinery Bill, a sort of forerunner to the taxation proposal in connection with the amendment of the Totalisator Act, which will probably be here shortly; it having been introduced in another place. I do not know how the Colonial Secretary endeavours to make his attitude consistent. After the indictment which he has delivered against gambling he immediately turned round and informed us that it was proposed to further tax the totalisator receipts. If he is in earnest and is as logical as the hon. Mr. Cullen, who does not believe in gambling, and he treats all gambling on racecourses or anywhere else as an evil, I can understand him. But, although he is so opposed to gambling on principle, he is not opposed to it provided it is made to pay dividends. The evil immediately disappears when it brings revenue to the Treasurer. I do not know how it would be if we continued this line of argument. We might as well say that slavery, sweating, and corruption were evils, save and except when practised by the State. That is a matter for the Colonial Secretary.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: He said that bookmakers were an evil.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: No, he said that gambling was an evil. So far the bookmaker is concerned, in the truest sense of the word, he is not a gambler. We soon find that out when we start to do business with him. The opinionated punter soon finds out when he comes to do business with him that the methodical bookmaker is not taking part so much in a game of chance as

the punter thinks. The bookmaker who is carrying on business as a commission agent is not a gambler. He works on commission on a definite set of figures. Certainly bookmakers at times get away from their figures, but instead of being a bookmaker he then becomes a punter and takes chances, and probably saves horses in his bag or backs other horses.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Very often they own them.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Yes, but as a commission agent the bookmaker simply bets on figures and merely takes a percentage of the money he handles. It appears to me that the bookmakers, if they are suppressed as the Government have notified their intention of doing, cannot be accused so much of the crime of gambling because the State intends to recognise that, but it appears to me that their crime will be that they are diverting revenue from the State, instead of its going into a legally recognised and moral gambling machine. There is also another point in this connection in regard to the moral reform. No doubt the Government assume that they have the support of those engaged in social reform, those who are anxious to place the morals of the State on a higher plane. But even with these they are placing them in a very peculiar and compromising position. In the first place it will mean, if the whole of the gambling on the racecourses is diverted to the totalisator, that it will gain more revenue than at the present time, and, indeed, provide a considerable amount of money from the gambling evil. One particular section of the community will be taxed, and certainly it should not be those who are very anxious for this reform so far as gambling is concerned. At the same time they will be deriving a certain amount of benefit and I am not sure whether they are anxious to have their taxes, or a portion of them, paid by the sporting community of Western Australia. If they are engaged in preaching on the evils of gambling, it appears to be rather a peculiar position to place them in, and if they are devoting their time to preaching against it, that they should, at the same time, be willing to have a portion of their taxes paid and derive a certain amount of pecuniary benefit by the sin against which they are continually

preaching. This is a matter on which they have to satisfy themselves. If they can satisfy their consciences that they are justified in advocating such legislation as this, which, whilst it may be applied to moral reform and the suppression of gambling, is actually something which will bring in revenue from an evil source, it is something on which I am not particularly concerned except to point it out. I am disappointed in the measure which has been introduced by the Government, because the select committee which dealt with the real question, that of over-racing, made certain recommendations. As pointed out by the Colonial Secretary, a considerable amount of evidence was taken from those who were considered experts and those who had knowledge of the game. At the same time, if I remember rightly, the idea was that the committee was to inquire into the question of over-racing. Just as we are all agreed that street and shop betting should be suppressed, so do I believe that the great majority of the people of the State, even many of those connected with and interested in racing, also agree that there should be a limitation to horse-racing. Of late years there has been an increase of horse-racing to an alarming extent. Years ago, when the State of Western Australia was in a better position than it is in to-day, there was considerably less racing, and the fact remains that the registered clubs, the unregistered and the trotting meetings, have had practically a free hand so far as racing is concerned, and we find, too, that the totalisators have been considerably increased. The objection I take to the measure is that it has not for its object a limitation of racing, and yet I do not think the Colonial Secretary will say that even to-day the Government have no power to limit racing if they so desire. If they have not sufficient power I am satisfied that Parliament would be quite willing to give it to them, in order to bring the number of racing dates in the State within a reasonable limit. Here again we are faced with the position of excessive gambling which is carried on. If the opportunity is given to gamble and if the people are encouraged, it is not much use complaining because there is an excess of gambling. We have an opportunity, if we take it, to reduce gambling by reducing the number of race

meetings held in this State. Mr. Sommers pointed out that we have at least two race meetings per week in the metropolitan area, so that those who are inclined to gamble have an opportunity of attending horse-racing meetings during the week and also the trotting meetings on Saturday evening. Whilst these opportunities occur it is all very well to preach to the people, or to attempt to suppress the practice of gambling. If the matter were really taken up in earnest and an attempt made to limit the number of race meetings—and very few contend that it should not be done—then the Government would have the whole-hearted support of both Houses of Parliament. This attempt, which appears to us to be merely a subterfuge, does not meet with my approval, or with the approval of many who are at the same time anxious to see some reform brought about in this respect. Presumably the Colonial Secretary and the present Government consider that the bookmaker is the greater of the two evils. Several members have pointed out that the presence of the bookmaker upon the racecourses has a bad effect upon racing. They are anxious to purify racing, and stop the practice of gambling. If a man is going to gamble they contend it is better that he should do so through a machine than through the agency of a bookmaker, but, as Mr. Cullen has pointed out, viewing it from the moral aspect it does not help in the slightest. If it is a wrong thing, it is just as wrong to bet through the totalisator, which Mr. Cullen described as a dumb devil, as it is through the bookmaker. Whatever the bookmaker is or is not, those of us who have heard the roar of the ring cannot accuse him of being dumb. So far as the general public is concerned, the evil is just as great in the way of betting through the totalisator as it is in betting through the bookmaker. It is contended also that many of the practices which are carried on per medium of the bookmaker would not be possible if betting were confined to the totalisator. I admit that so far as some of the mal-practices are concerned, it is possible to work these in a more rampant manner with the bookmaker than it is per medium of the totalisator. But, at the same time, there are disadvantages so far as the total-

isator is concerned to which I shall refer later on. Although the totalisator cannot have a word with the jockey, the trainer, or the owner, the fact remains that the machine is there and an enormous amount of money is invested and there is nothing to prevent men who know the game—and there are many such in Western Australia—from putting their heads together and arranging for some outsider, not backed by the public on the totalisator to win. This is done even at the present time and the totalisator does not give the public any greater protection in this respect than does the bookmaker. I fail to see what great advantage will be obtained so far as they are concerned. In connection with the tote there are disadvantages, more especially from the aspect which concerns the Colonial Secretary, so far as the general public and the small man are concerned, those whom we are anxious to save. I believe the general public invests largely on the tote. It is the owner and the men generally referred to as “heads” who bet with the bookmaker. The general public, over whom so many tears are being shed just now, bet through the tote. One of the greatest evils of tote betting has occurred through the advancement of trotting in Perth. We find that men, and women too, and also those just growing into womanhood, who could not afford to bet with the bookmaker, have formed the habit of betting through the tote. In some instances, where they have not had even the necessary 5s., so many as five of them have clubbed together, putting in a shilling each, for the purpose of betting through the tote. The bookmaker does not encourage women to bet with him; but the tote being dumb does not object to taking anybody's money. When it comes to a question of the evils of betting and the encouragement of betting, I venture the opinion that the tote is responsible for more women betting than the bookmaker, and from that point of view there is as much necessity for the suppression of the tote as for the suppression of the bookmaker. This is another of those evils, which are not evils in the eyes of some people so long as they return revenue to the State. They do not worry about the trouble which very frequently is incurred by the habit of betting

on the tote. They are prepared to overlook that providing it produces some revenue. It would have been more straightforward on the part of the Government had they come forward with a proposition saying that those people in the State who made a practice of betting, make a practice of what Sir Edward Wittenoom terms a luxury, should be made to pay for it. That is really the attitude of the Government, but they affect to be very much concerned about the evil effects of gambling. As a matter of fact, the business acumen of the Government comes in here, and they are very much more concerned about collecting a little more revenue and to that end are prepared to overlook the evil so long as it has the desired effect. I am not aware of the intentions of the Government in reference to the limitations of racing, whether they consider that eliminating the bookmaker from the race-course will have a tendency to limit the number of race meetings. They probably think it will because the clubs will not be able to pay the amount of prize money hitherto paid, or else the Government believes that the clubs will themselves arrange for fewer meetings. But if the Government really intends carrying out the recommendations of the select committee which dealt with this question, I maintain they should do so in a straightforward manner and limit the number of race meetings. Until they do that, in my opinion, the evil will continue. Many of the public require to be protected, and they should be protected; but even if this Bill be passed, apparently they will have the same opportunity as previously of attending the same number of race meetings. If the Government had come down with a straightforward proposition to limit the number of race meetings I believe they would have received support all round. I hope the Government will yet deal with this question in a straightforward manner, showing that they recognise the evils of racing and make a genuine attempt to limit the number of race meetings. I contend the motive which influenced the Government in introducing a measure of this kind is the one I have mentioned. I wish to make my position clear in connection with the vote which will be taken on the second reading. I shall vote for the second reading for one reason,

and one only, and that is to assist towards the suppression of street and shop betting. Any member who voted against the Bill would be immediately accused of supporting street and shop betting, of supporting gambling. I decline to be placed in that position. At the same time, I reserve to myself the right of voting for any amendment which meets with my views when the Bill comes before the House in Committee. With these remarks I wish to state that I shall support the second reading for the reasons I have given.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS (Metropolitan) [5.8]: The Bill now before the House is of a character calculated to create a lot of argument on the whole question of the policy of the Government and on the question as to the rights or wrongs, the evils or otherwise, of gambling. Arguments on these points have been raised during the debate. I have no intention of following on the lines on which other speakers have made their speeches, and I shall endeavour to lay before the House my views on the whole of the aspects of the racing question. I was for many years closely connected with racing, so hon. members will know that in any remarks I have to offer to this House on the question the views given have been gained by experience, pleasurable in some respects no doubt, and expensive, I am sorry to say, in other ways; still, experience is always valuable. I regret I cannot congratulate the Government on its betting legislation at present before the two Houses. I had hoped the Government would have seized the nettle firmly and by dealing with the whole question would have got to the root of the evil, which is over-racing. That is the real evil; it is not the tote or the bookmaker—they are only side issues, the real evil at present is that there is far too much racing in this State. I am in entire accord with the principle of this Bill which is to stop street and shop betting. I have always from my place in the House, on the public platform and at various other times, so far as I could, strenuously urged that this evil should be suppressed. This State is the only place where it is tolerated at the present day; and I am sorry indeed that the previous Government did not act on the advice of the Select Committee and introduce a Bill. They said they

preferred to let the whole matter stand over to be dealt with in a comprehensive Bill for the control of racing. The present Government apparently have started in the right way in one respect, that is they have introduced this Bill in an endeavour to stop street and shop betting. I am sure every member of the House will be in accord with that. We have to realise that the evil of over racing has grown up under successive Governments without any attempt to restrain it. Every Government which has been in power is equally to blame, Liberal or Labour, because while this evil has been growing and growing not one of them had the courage to take in hand the matter of its suppression. I am sorry that the present Government, now that the whole question is being introduced, have not had the courage to lay the axe at the foot of the tree and bring in a proper Bill for the control of racing. Before I refer to the Bill itself I should like to remind the House that we have had dissertations from one or two members of this House on the ethics of gambling. We have been told that the vice of racing should be suppressed because it encourages people to gamble. Some hon. members who spoke in that strain—

Member: Who said that?

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I have read the speeches on this Bill delivered by hon. members with considerable interest and I heard one or two last night. My hon. colleague (Hon. W. Kingsmill) last night gave us a homily on the ethics of racing, and the burden of his theme was that the game was not fair. His words were that the evil of betting consisted in the fact that it meant the getting of something for nothing. I would recommend the hon. gentleman to go to the stock exchange to expound such views. I venture the opinion that more gambling is done in one week on the stock exchange than on the racecourse in a year; and I do not know that men who gamble on the stock exchange always profit from their experience. Some men may be fortunate, but in my opinion gambling on the stock exchange is somewhat like a game of pool or billiards. If you play long enough the table gets the lot. If the man who is gambling does not get the money, some other fortunate individual who knows more about the market than he, will have it. Shares which are worth pounds one

day are worth only shillings the next month and similarly shares which are only worth shillings to-day become worth pounds to-morrow. What is that but gambling? More or less, every man who buys a share buys because he thinks he has better information than the other man. If we are to suppress gambling entirely, by all means let us start with the stock exchange and with a few of the wheat contracts, with the man buying wheat forward and those selling wheat. The man selling wheat has not always got it to sell, and the gentleman who buys does not expect him to have it himself. Again, we might take the insurance broker. What are insurances but gambling? Do not let us lecture racing people on the evils of gambling, because on the whole the element of gambling enters into ordinary business transactions to a greater extent in one week than on the racecourse in a year. The racing people derive a great deal of pleasure and some experience from the sport. Those gentlemen who lecture racing people remind me of a certain class who are always praying for the souls of others, but neglect to say a prayer for their own. I remember, when quite a lad, on Melbourne Cup day every year, along the Saltwater river, on the opposite side, on the big hill, there used to be a meeting of evangelists who prayed for the souls of the unfortunate people who went to the Melbourne Cup. Of course there was method in their madness, because while they prayed for the souls of those wicked enough to go to the cup, they also from their vantage point were able to have an excellent view of the race. The same thing happens here on Perth Cup day. On the opposite side of the river we see a Sunday school picnic and one of those revivalist meetings, where they can get an excellent view of the racing. It is of no use lecturing, for men will gamble. We cannot stop them, and the only thing to do is to restrict the gambling and direct it into as safe an avenue as possible. I was sorry also to hear Mr. Kingsmill refer in terms of condemnation to those excellent institutions, the W.A.T.C., the Kalgoorlie Racing Club, and the Boulder Racing Club. They are magnificent institutions managed by men who have taken a keen interest in sport, who have nothing to gain, who have devoted

valuable time and their best energies to improving their several courses and seeing that good stakes are given, and incidentally, to improving the breed of horses as well. Those men have occupied the highest positions in the land; some are in the judiciary, some have obtained the highest Federal and State honours, and I think it was rather ill-advised for any hon. member to reflect on those gentlemen and say that we are dealing with institutions which practically touch tainted money. Personally, I may say that if there are to be two camps on this question I know which I shall be in. I am convinced that the proposed legislation, if carried into effect—I am dealing now with the declarations of the Government as to their attitude on racing—will absolutely ruin the clubs which have done so much for Western Australia. The Government propose to abolish bookmakers and take an additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and all fractions from the totalisator, treating all clubs alike. It has been pointed out that they say "Well, gamble and race as much as you like, but we must have all the plunder." I would like to refer hon. members to what has been done by some of the clubs. The W.A.T.C., which controls registered racing in the State, held 17 meetings in 1914-1915 and gave away £32,000 in stakes, or an average of £1,800 or £1,900 per day. In 1915-1916 the same club held 15 meetings, and gave away £24,500 in stakes, or an average of £1,600 per day. The Belmont Park Racing Club in 1913-1914 gave away £6,271 in stakes, or an average of £784 per day. In 1914-1915 the club gave away £5,400 in stakes, or an average of £604 per day; and in 1915-1916 they gave £5,100 in stakes, or an average of £501 per day. The Helena Vale Club in 1914-1915 held nine meetings and gave away £4,500 in stakes, or an average of £500 per day. In 1915-1916 the same club gave away £4,420 in stakes, or an average of £500 per day. The Canning Park Club in 1914-1915 held eight meetings and gave away £460 per day, and in 1915-1916 held 10 meetings and gave an average of £430 per day. Hon. members will see, therefore, what immense sums the registered clubs in the metropolitan area give in stakes alone. Then there are those fine institutions on the goldfields, the Kalgoorlie and the Boulder Racing Clubs,

who also give large sums of money. Those clubs are controlled to the extent that they have restricted the number of racing days and insisted that every club racing under their jurisdiction shall give so many hundreds of pounds per day, without which they cannot get the dates they require. Let us consider some of the other bodies. The W.A. Trotting Association, having nobody except themselves to control them, race anything from 50 to 60 times a year.

Hon. J. Cornell: In the metropolitan area alone.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Yes. They give on an average about £200 per meeting, except at Christmas time, when they give some £3,000 in stakes. The unregistered clubs, who also are a body unto themselves, race between 50 and 60 times a year and average only £210 per meeting, except at certain special meetings, including one or two decent stakes, when they give something like £500 each. That being so, will any member seriously say that in any racing legislation all these bodies should be treated alike? Will any member say that the club which gives away £1,900 per day should be treated the same as a club that gives £210 per day, and caters for an inferior class of sport? That is what the proposed legislation is going to do, namely, to treat all these clubs equally, irrespective of whether they are giving hundreds of pounds or tens of pounds per day. There can be only one end to legislation of this description, namely, that the big non-proprietary clubs will be forced to the wall. They cannot continue giving those stakes. I will show hon. members how it is quite impossible for those large stakes which are so frequently given during the year—including the magnificent annual festivals held by the big clubs—to be maintained if the Government are, shall I say, unfortunate enough to induce Parliament to agree to their proposals. In my opinion the legislation should be, not to abolish those clubs, but to preserve them, to preserve those clubs which are doing so much for racing and are really a national asset. When a visitor comes to Perth, where is he taken? Why, to see the W.A.T.C. course. When he goes to the goldfields, after viewing the mines, he is taken direct to the magnificent public racecourses of Kalgoorlie and Boulder.

Hon. J. Cornell: Among the wonders of the world.

Hon. A. J. JENKINS: After all, the wishes of those clubs should have some weight with the Government on a question of this sort. We may well consider what is the attitude of these clubs towards the proposed legislation. The W.A.T.C. and the Kalgoorlie and Boulder clubs all favour reduced racing, but they also favour the retention of the bookmaker on the racecourses and they are in favour of the totalisator and the bookmaker working together. Personally I do not see that the bookmaker will be any evil at all if confined to the racecourses. For years past the totalisator and the bookmaker have worked side by side with no ill results to the sport. There have been no complaints from the clubs or from owners. Owners want the bookmakers, and the clubs want them also. Who has asked for their abolition? I have not seen any demand for it. In fact, every deputation to Ministers has been in favour of the retention of both the totalisator and the bookmaker. I have not known of a single deputation which supported the Treasurer's attitude in the matter. The proper system would be to keep the totalisator and the bookmaker on the racecourse, and tax the bookmaker as in New South Wales. There the bookmakers are licensed to bet on the racecourses, and they pay a poll tax of so much, and also a tax on each betting ticket issued, whether it be cash or booked. Figures were submitted to the Treasurer which showed him that out of the bookmakers alone he could raise close on £16,000 by enforcing some tax similar to those in Victoria and New South Wales. He certainly will not raise anything like that additional amount out of the totalisator, even if he gets the additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. I am not speaking now of the fractions, which the Government propose to take in any event, but out of the additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. the Treasurer will not realise anything like the £15,000 which he could get from the bookmaker without any cost of collecting. Assume for a moment that the bookmaker be abolished. The Government propose to tax the totalisator $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and to take the fractions, worth perhaps another 2 per cent. What will be the result? The Government desire to force everybody into the totalisator.

A man can go to the totalisator at the beginning of the day with, say, £1, and put it on. If there be six races during the day, then at the end of the day he will not have his £1. for 14½ per cent. six times through the totalisator, and the Government will have the £1. I do not know how long racing will continue under those conditions. The man who goes to the racecourse wants a fair chance for his money—at any rate, the average man does; and I may say my experience of the racecourse is that one meets there just as many honourable men as anywhere else. Now, if, under Government compulsion, one puts one's pound into the totalisator a few times, at the end of the day one has absolutely nothing at all.

The Colonial Secretary: Does not the bookmaker take a bigger percentage than the totalisator?

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: If the bookmaker could take even 1 per cent. of his turnover, he would be quite satisfied. The bookmaker does not want anything like 14½ per cent. The bookmaker earns nothing like that. I undertake to affirm that there is not in this State a bookmaker who earns as much as 2½ per cent. on his turnover. Moreover, let it not be forgotten that when an ordinary man goes to the racecourse, he first of all pays about three times the ordinary railway fare for the same journey. The Federal Government are about to introduce an amusement tax. The State Government, of course, must introduce a similar tax, as they have to get money. With all these taxes heaped on top of each other, who is going to be able to afford to go racing, and how long will racing continue, and how is the State Treasurer going to get the money he expects to receive from this racing business or game of sport? The money simply is not in it. If the Treasurer got all the money there is in it, he would not get all he expects. Now I wish to draw hon. members' attention to a balance sheet issued by the Western Australian Turf Club. I wish to show the large sums with which the club deal, and the various channels through which the money is distributed. To begin with, let me point out that for the year ended the 30th April, 1916, the expenditure exceeded the receipts by £9,000. That is to say, the club gave in stakes and paid in wages £9,000

more than their receipts. If we take away from the club, as the Government desire, the large amount of revenue—as I will show directly—represented by bookmakers' fees, what is going to be the result? Shortly before the war broke out the club had a credit balance of £20,000. To-day that credit balance is practically non-existent. Let me mention, too, that the sum of £4,000, donated to war funds during the last 12 months by the club, is not included in the expenditure I have mentioned. Again, when unemployment was so rife, as hon. members will recollect, about two years ago, the club put in hand certain work which could very well have waited for another four or five years, and spent on that work a sum of £6,000. That kind of thing deserves some consideration from this House; and I think that hon. members, when legislating, should see that no injury is done to an institution that does so great an amount of good. Apart from that aspect, goldfields members, I am sure, can speak of the large amounts contributed to patriotic funds by both the Kalgoorlie and the Boulder race clubs. I think the donations of the Kalgoorlie institution amounted to something between £5,000 and £10,000, while the Boulder club's contributions also represented a very large amount. The racing clubs also provide large avenues of employment. In the case of the Western Australian Turf Club the totalisator receipts for the year ended 30th April, 1916, amounted to £14,355. The tax and license fees paid out of that amount to the Government totalled £2,800. The wages paid in order to earn that money amounted to £2,500. Cab and car fares for police cost £105. Tickets represented an expenditure of £661. These items left a balance of net receipts from the totalisator of £8,200. The net commission earned by the club from the totalisator is equal to only 3½ per cent., although they charge 10 per cent. The Government get 2½ per cent. out of that and it costs 4 per cent. to work the totalisator. Thus the club receive only 3½ per cent. for their share. Receipts from bookmakers for the same period totalled £4,800. The fractions, which are not included in the net receipts from the totalisator, equalled £2,400. Thus the total of these amounts is £7,230. Now, there was a loss of £80 on the 15 days'

racing; so that without the bookmakers' fees and the totalisator fractions the club would have incurred a loss of over £7,000. The cost of collecting £4,800 from the bookmakers is nil. The collection of those fees costs the club absolutely nothing. But if the same amount were to be collected from the totalisator the collection would cost the club a very large amount of money. After obtaining the 4 per cent. cost of collection, the club would still have to get the £8,000. This shows what a largely increased amount would have to pass through the totalisator before the club would be able to derive from the machine anything like the revenue they at present derive from the bookmaker. Wages paid by the club to temporary hands employed only on race days amount to £2,300. Wages paid to the regular racecourse employees, the permanent staff, are about £2,600. Totalisator wages absorb £2,500. Thus the total wages represent about £7,400 annually. During the past season the club raced on 15 days, paying away £25,000 in stakes. The annual meeting, only six weeks distant, means that the club are committed to the public for stakes totalling £9,000. A further sum of £9,000 is needed to pay stakes for the Easter meeting. The programmes for those two meetings have been issued and must be carried out, the club having invited owners to nominate. Towards those commitments they anticipate receiving about £3,000 in bookmakers' fees and totalisator fractions. To encourage breeding and the importation of the better class of horses, the club include special races for two-year-olds and three-year-olds, the stakes for which total nearly £8,000. The figures I have quoted will afford hon. members some idea of the magnitude of the operations of the W.A.T.C. Do hon. members consider that that club should be placed in the same category, and treated in the same way, as an unregistered club giving away £210 per day? That is going to happen if the Government proposals are enacted. It is useless for the Colonial Secretary to shake his head. It is going to happen. The club are to be denied the use of the bookmaker and thrown back entirely on the totalisator. It is impossible for the club to erect totalisator buildings to

cope with a certain increased patronage of the machine, except at heavy expense; and, as I have said, before the club can earn anything like the amount of the stakes to which they are committed, five or six times at least the amount previously put through the machine will have to go through it. How is that to be done? The money is not there to do it. The club can only earn $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. from the machine, because the additional totalisator accommodation and working will cost 4 per cent. Here are the clubs shut down practically at a month's notice, and told by the Government, "We are going to take away the money you have been receiving"—whether legally or illegally, I care not; the practice has been winked at for the past 14 years—"and we will give you practically no compensation." Again, the Kalgoolie and Boulder clubs are also very large customers of the Government. For water alone they pay the Government about £1,300 per annum. They cannot continue to do that if these proposals are given legislative effect, because they will not be able to get the necessary revenue. It will simply mean that those magnificent parks, which are placed by the goldfields clubs at the disposal of the goldfields public for picnics and charities, free of charge, will have to be shut down. Hon. members must not forget that on the goldfields there is not the same opportunity for enjoyment as on the coast, where there is the river, or the ocean, or one of the numerous public gardens to visit. The goldfields public are thrown back on the racecourses. Are hon. members going to pass legislation which will, practically, result in the shutting up of the goldfields racecourses? Surely one may appeal to the good sense of the House in this respect. Surely the House in legislating will be careful to do as little injury as possible to the clubs which are doing so much good, not for themselves, but for the public. The club committees have nothing to gain personally. They give their time without direct return. All their work is done for the pleasure of the community and for the advancement of the sport. To say that racing should be stopped is all very well. Some hon. members, we know, do not like racing under any conditions whatever. But racing

has not been stopped anywhere in the British Empire. Rather, in England encouragement has been given to continue racing during the war. In France, the first thing done when the Germans advanced on Paris was to remove from the Paris stables the magnificent blood stallions, purchased, I may mention, partly out of totalisator profits. In France, totalisator taxation does not go into the general revenue; most of it goes to charity, and some to provide blood horses, the use of which is permitted to owners who have valuable mares, so that the breed of horses may be sustained and improved.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: I think you are wrong as regards England.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: In England they have not the totalisator.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: They have not encouraged racing there.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: The great English races, the Derby and the St. Leger, have been continued since the war. Colonel Hall Walker, one of the great stud masters of England, gave his stud to the nation, and the Government most gratefully accepted the gift, in order that the standard of breeding should not be lowered.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: But the race train service was cut down in England.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: That was done because the coal was required for the Fleet and for the manufacture of munitions. Racing, however, has not been discouraged in England. On the contrary, it has been encouraged as much as possible. Even in enemy countries, Germany and Austria, we read of races still being carried on. This shows that throughout the whole world—

Hon. H. Carson: How many racing stallions are used at the stud in Western Australia?

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: I cannot give the hon. member the information; but most of the stations of Western Australia have from one up to four or five blood stallions, used for the breeding of horses to carry on the station work. In no part of the world has racing been discouraged altogether. It may have been curtailed, and that is what I ask the Government in this State to do. They say that if we abolish the bookmaker we shall curtail racing. That is not the way to

curtail racing. The proper way to do it is to bring in a Bill saying that the clubs shall not race more than on a certain number of days. Then the clubs can be allowed to carry on as they have been doing in the past, and they can fulfil their engagements. The Government should not shut down on them in this way, and say "You shall race as often as you like. We are going to abolish bookmaking and we are going to force you to give up the fractions, and you can get your revenue in the best way you can." Hon. members, in considering legislation of this kind, should not forget that we are at one end of the continent. We have not four or five States to draw upon for race-horses, as is the case in the eastern part of Australia, where horses can be moved from State to State either by railway or steamer in a comparatively short space of time. Very few horses from the Eastern States are sent to Western Australia, and we are entirely dependent on the few breeders who are here. That is why we want to keep up the stakes and encourage the breeding of horses. It is all very well for Mr. Kingsmill to say "Show me where the breeding studs are in this State."

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Things are worse than they were.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Of course, and because there are far more profitable avenues of employment for the man who used to engage in the breeding of horses. Now he breeds cattle and sheep, and he gets a far better return for his money.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: He always will.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Of course, and therefore we must encourage as far as possible the bringing of good stock to Western Australia, and we can only encourage that by giving the breeders good stakes to race for.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Breeders do not race.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: The hon. member is quite wrong there. Every breeder in Australia races. There is hardly a breeder who does not desire to retain one or two horses to carry his colours for him on the race-course. The hon. member knows nothing about it. I appeal to hon. members in considering this Bill, not to assist to pass legis-

lation which will have the effect of practically driving the big clubs to the wall, and allowing such bodies as those which control unregistered racing to continue. The Bill will have one effect, it will allow the club which provides £210 a day as stakes to continue its operations, but a body like the Western Australian Turf Club, which gives as much as £1,800 in a single day, will go to the wall. My remedy is to curtail racing dates and allow the clubs to continue as they have done in the past, that is, to manage their own affairs and allow them to use the totalisator and permit the bookmaker to bet on the course. Street and shop betting can be suppressed, and if that is done the evil is remedied at once. I desire to refer to one or two amendments which I have placed on the Notice Paper, so that hon. members may have an opportunity of looking into them. I propose to carry out the object I have endeavoured to explain by moving an amendment which will define "public place." At the present time we know that bookmakers have been allowed to ply their calling without remonstrance. It is my object to insert certain words in the clause, which, if carried, will enable clubs to register bookmakers to bet on racecourses and racecourses alone. Clause 9 of the Bill contains two dangerous words. These words do not appear in any other legislation in Australia, and I venture to say that it will not be possible to find them in legislation which exists in any English-speaking community. They are only two small words. The clause reads, "No person shall, whether for purposes of or in connection with a betting house or otherwise. . ." The effect of the last two words is very far-reaching. It makes it an offence for any person whomsoever, whether a bookmaker or a private citizen, to send a wire to any part of this or any other State to invest money on horse-racing. Suppose I want to wire a pound to Melbourne to put on the Cup. If I send such a telegram it will be an offence under this proposed section, and I would be liable to a penalty of £30 or imprisonment with hard labour for two months. There is no legislation anywhere in the British Empire which interferes with the liberty of the subject to that extent.

The PRESIDENT: I think it will be well for the hon. member to discuss amend-

ments when the Bill has reached the Committee stage. It is to the advantage of the House that amendments should be put on the Notice Paper as early as possible, and that has been the procedure for some time, but I think a full discussion on these amendments should be left for the Committee stage.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Surely I can explain my amendments to the House, otherwise it only means wasting time in Committee in repeating arguments which I can use now. If the House bears with me for two or three minutes more I shall conclude my remarks. Clause 11 also gives power which is not to be found in any existing legislation in this or any other State. It gives power to any member of the police force to search any person in the street if he believes that person has been guilty of betting.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: You have more power than that under the Police Offences Act in regard to gold.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: We should not give the police general power like that under this measure. The clause gives a police officer power to take papers from a person in the street and perhaps destroy them. I have gone to some trouble to find out where this clause comes from, but I have not succeeded. Certainly it is not to be found in any legislation in Australia or in the Dominion of New Zealand. I am not disposed to give any police constable power to search me simply because he may think I have been making a wager in the street or in Melbourne.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: He would only have a lot of trouble for nothing.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Would he suspect me of being guilty of making a wager? I trust, when the Bill is in Committee, and the amendments I have suggested are being considered, hon. members will remember the arguments I have advanced, and that if anyone is to go to the wall it will be those racing institutions which do practically no good to the State, and are merely money-making concerns.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.56]: I desire to offer very few remarks on this Bill. It has my support, although perhaps not in its entirety and when we get into Commit-

tee if some slight amendments are suggested—and they will have to be very slight indeed—I shall perhaps fall into line with the hon. members who may move them. I understand the object of the Bill is to wipe out betting on racecourses. The House seems to be agreed that we should abolish betting in the streets and in offices in town. Some members are inclined to think it is a fair thing that the bookmaker should be allowed to conduct his business on the course. I refuse to be driven to the course to make a bet. If I want to make a wager I think I should be allowed to make it in a shop and not be compelled to go to a racecourse and remain there all day, and then perhaps have to return home a ruined man. If we are going to wipe out bookmakers in the street and in shops and offices, we must wipe them out altogether. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat made some good points in favour of the principle of racing clubs. Personally I should like to see the Western Australian Turf Club or some such body control racing in the State. We have reached a dangerous position indeed, what with the Trots, the Burswood course, which is known as "Robbery Park," and the South Perth course, which is known as "Sharks' Bay." The Government must either empower some recognised authority to curtail all the racing that is taking place at the present time, or do so themselves. With regard to betting one hon. member said that those race people betting on the racecourses did not bet with women or only did so in a small way. I have not been on the smaller racecourses but I have a personal friend who has been and upon whose statement I can rely. According to him bookmakers on these smaller courses will make bets of a shilling with girls who come to them with bare feet. If we compel men to go on the courses to make their bets what hope have they got in view of the evidence given in the bankruptcy court? One case that I remember which was heard in that court is that of a man who said he owned, trained and rode his horses and that then they beat him. If a man who owns, trains and rides his horses is beaten what hope has the general public got? Yet the object of the hon. member who has just spoken is to force a man on the course in order to make his bets on those races about

which the owner himself says he has no hope.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: I do not want to force them on courses at all. I want the Government to keep them away and to keep the people away.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The question has been raised as to horsebreeding. The only justification for racing at all during war time is to encourage horsebreeding. What good do we as a community get out of these big functions at Christmas time, the splendid and brilliant entertainment that is given on that occasion?

Hon. W. Kingsmill: None.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The only good we are likely to get out of it is from the standpoint of breeding, but from that standpoint the whole thing is a myth. What good are these six-furlong sprinters to anybody, anywhere off the racecourse?

Hon. C. Sommers: They are not all six-furlong sprinters.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They are very little better. These six-furlong sprinters who can win if they are wanted to, or will not win if it suits the bookmaker, are of no use to the country from the horse-breeding standpoint, or to the community. The horses which were required years ago, that would stay under the difficult and trying conditions then existing, those which were used in the old coaching days from one end of the State to the other, there is now no need for. The motor car has replaced that class of horse, from the point of view of both speed and staying power.

Hon. J. Ewing: What about remounts?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If we leave these six furlong sprinters to provide us with remounts Heaven help the soldier who is mounted upon them. We might well leave that matter to the Commonwealth authorities. I noticed that there was a meeting in Melbourne the other day presided over by the Minister for Defence at which the military authorities proposed to take this on and not leave the matter to the racing people, especially in cases where the horses are no good for military purposes or for anything but short sprints.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: It was the racing people they called together.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They probably told them that if they did not breed a better class of horse the Commonwealth would step in and do it for them.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: The finest blood stock from England is found in Australia at the present time.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: A good deal has been said about racing generally and I have heard that the worst racing we have is that conducted at the trotting meetings which take place at night under electric light. The public have no chance of seeing what is going on.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: There must be dark patches.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: So far as the women folk are concerned, it appears, from my own experience of one meeting there, that they do not seem to recognise the horses in the race at all. There is a series of numbers put up and they seem to back the numbers and are not concerned about the horses at all. These people should be protected against themselves.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That is sport.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I think the Government in introducing this measure are taking the necessary step to protect these people against themselves, and I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH (North-East) [6.6]: I want to make my position very clear in regard to this Bill. Like other hon. members of my party I fail to find sufficient reform in this Bill to warrant me in supporting it. If the Bill provided for the abolition of the totalisator as well as the bookmaker I would be in favour of it because, following the remarks of the Hon. W. Kingsmill last evening when he said that he had taken a keen interest in sport for many years, I have taken a similar interest in sport. Although the class of sport which the hon. member may have followed has been free from the gambling element, I may say that a great deal of the sport I have been following has not been free from the gambling element. I think that the totalisator is a far more injurious thing to the public than the bookmaker, particularly the bookmaker who bets only on the racecourses. I know that there are very few, if any, recognised registered

bookmakers who bet in the streets or in shops, consequently I say that the bookmaker who bets on the racecourses is not half so injurious to the public as the totalisator. The bookmaker on the racecourses rarely, if ever, makes a bet of any kind with a woman. People know full well that the totalisator caters for the female punter both straight-out and for a place. On many courses they have special places where the females can put in their money and back the horse which they fancy. It appears to be the intention of the Government to endeavour to get more revenue from this class of sport than they have hitherto obtained. By abolishing the bookmaker and putting an extra tax on the totalisator they are going to penalise the public and the racehorse owner and the racing clubs, and as a consequence the Government will not only get less revenue than they are getting but they will do considerable harm. I am opposed to street betting. I was one of the members of the Select Committee which last session desired the House to bring in legislation to prevent street betting. Owing to want of time that was not put into operation. I am prepared to support that portion of the Bill, but I am not going to say I am in favour of the amendments which have been proposed by Mr. Jenkins. It would be far better if the Government were to introduce some legislation on the lines of that adopted in some of the Eastern States, Victoria and New South Wales, in regard to bookmakers who have to pay a stamp duty. They certainly have no totalisator to compete against them there, but at the same time if the same provisions were brought into existence here it would bring about a reform and abolish certain things which are now in existence with regard to racing people, and at the same time produce revenue for the Government. It would be well for the Government to take some step to legalise the bookmaker on the racecourse only, and to tax him both from the license point of view and for the number of tickets that he issues per annum. The bookmaker himself is prepared to pay this money to the revenue of the State. We know that in the Eastern States attempts have been made to legalise the totalisator, but evidently the people in Victoria and New South Wales prefer to bet with the

bookmaker, otherwise no doubt that would have been brought into existence long before. It appears to me that clause 9 of the Bill will be interfering with the rights of the Federal authorities through the Postal department. I am not quite sure that this will not bring us into conflict with the Federal Government if the clause is left as it stands. No doubt the leader of the House when he comes to it in Committee will be able to make the matter clear to us. We appear, however, to be running our heads against a brick wall in endeavouring to bring this matter into force in Western Australia. The totalisator gives special inducement and special privileges to women to bet. One has only to go to one of the big Christmas carnival here to find the females flocking to the tote, and recording their bets in preference to going to the bookmaker. As a matter of fact they cannot get bets on with the bookmaker and therefore they go to the tote. If the bookmaker is to be abolished, the owners of horses cannot afford to race for the benefit of the public.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: I wish to refer to the remarks made by the hon. Mr. Holmes on the question of betting on racecourses. As one who has been on many racecourses in my time I wish to say I have never yet heard of a bookmaker making a bet on any registered course for a sum as low as a shilling, nor have I ever seen a bookmaker take a shilling bet from a child. But I have seen on racecourses children club together to make up sufficient money to buy a ticket on the totalisator. That in itself to my mind is sufficient to justify me in describing the totalisator as a greater evil than the bookmaker. Mr. Holmes also said that he would support the Bill because it was going to do something towards the wiping out of gambling and said that if he had a desire to bet he would prefer to bet in the street or in a shop rather than on a racecourse. In my opinion the most undesirable part of betting is anti-post betting, that is betting in a street or in a shop. That is where the greatest evil of betting occurs. That is where the opportunity is given to mere youths in business places in the city of

being told of something which is likely to win in a few weeks or a few days; and in consequence of such information the youth goes out and attempts to get the longest odds available in the street before the day of the race arrives. That I hold to be one of the greatest evils connected with betting. Yet Mr. Holmes states that he has a preference for betting in the street or a shop rather than on the racecourse. I desire to say a word or two in connection with the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs. The hon. Mr. Jenkins has made some reference to what has been done by those clubs and I wish to endorse all he has said. The Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs spend thousands of pounds yearly in the upkeep of their courses, paying wages, purchasing water, and disbursing money among the nurserymen of the State for flowers. Both these courses are thrown open on every day of the week for picnic parties or to people desiring to use them as a park. They are thrown open free of charge, which is a great boon in places such as Kalgoorlie and Boulder so isolated and so far removed from rivers. It is true that the money is found by the people, but it has to be remembered that the clubs maintain their racecourses for the benefit of the people. Regarding the question of racing on the fields I would point out that until recently there were four racecourses there. Quite recently the number of race meetings in the year has been reduced by one half. We had races there every week, and sometimes twice a week, but the Kalgoorlie and Boulder clubs during the past few months made an arrangement under which they purchased the Lakeside and Somerville courses and they now have full control of racing on the fields. They race only once a fortnight as against once a week formerly when the other clubs were in existence. They have done a good deal on the fields towards reducing the number of race meetings. I would also further point out that the Kalgoorlie club has been most generous to charities. Under this Bill it is proposed that the fractions should be taken away from the Kalgoorlie club and the Government will get the benefit of them. The result will be that the charities hitherto as-

sisted by the club must suffer. Reference has been made in this House to the question of the breeding of horses. We have racing on our courses to-day English and Australian bred horses, and I venture the opinion that the farmer prefers the cross thoroughbred Clydesdale for farm work. I have been told that by a number of farmers, and I believe that they have a preference for that breed. I do not wish to say anything further than that I believe the abolition of the bookmakers will not minimise the gambling evil. In South Australia, where the bookmaker has been wiped out, he plies his calling on the racecourses without having his bag on at all; and if this Bill be passed we will have a similar set of conditions existing here, and nothing will be done towards minimising the evil of gambling or towards increasing the revenue of the State.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [7.39]: I do not desire to take up the time of the House at any great length on this question. I realise that the Government require revenue, and although this is not a revenue Bill it deals with the question of the abolition of the bookmaker and that question, as has been shown in the debate, has a relation to the question of revenue in a Bill which is now before another place. It has been somewhat difficult for me to follow all of the arguments which have been used and to realise what is meant exactly by this Bill, whether it is the intention of the Government to minimise racing or simply to eliminate the bookmaker. So far as I can see the majority of the Australian people are always prepared to take a chance. Personally I look upon horse-racing as a splendid sport. I love a horse; but my desire is to see the sport of racing carried out under the best possible conditions. The great mistake made by many people is that they are prepared only to moralise on this question. The Colonial Secretary has told us that the Government is of opinion that in these troublous times we should reserve our money and that those who have money to spend should be made to spend it in the proper directions. I agree that it is not only necessary that we should conserve our wealth but also that we should spend that wealth in the interests of the Empire. But in my

opinion the Government is not going very far in that direction. If they had brought down a Bill to the House expressing their intention to minimise racing I think I should have been inclined to support them; but I would rather that they had adopted the recommendation of the select committee that the Government should take charge of racing, that they should appoint a competent board and allow them to thoroughly thrash out all the questions connected with the racing problem and to determine whether a continuance of racing would be beneficial from the different points of view. We have in Western Australia the W.A. Turf Club, the Boulder, and other clubs affiliated, and also the proprietary clubs. Exception has been taken to the proprietary clubs, but I wish to point out that those who are connected with proprietary racing in Western Australia, the Belmont, Canning Park, and Helena Vale clubs, have been encouraged by the W.A. Turf Club to go in for racing. They have been given dates and certain fixed prizes. They have been encouraged for the past fifteen years to do this and it is not fair after men have been induced by this means to invest their money that we should come down on them and say we will stop them. The Government in my opinion would have done better to follow out the recommendations made by the select committee. They state that there is too much racing in this country. That is a well-known fact particularly so far as the metropolitan area is concerned. We have been told there have been as many as 260 race meetings in a year. That in my opinion is altogether too many, it is improper. But there is no question of reducing the number of racing days in this Bill, the only question it deals with is the abolition of the bookmaker. On the other hand the Government appears to be anxious to introduce additional taxation, so that some of the money which has been kept in the pockets of the people shall be put into the totalisator in order that more revenue shall be provided. To my mind it is just as wrong to bet through the totalisator as it is to bet with the bookmaker. The best thing to be done would be to leave the matter in the hands of the Government and let them appoint a tho-

roughly efficient board to take into consideration the whole of the question of racing in Western Australia. Unless a comprehensive Bill is brought in I cannot see that very much good will be done. This Bill if passed will effect only the suppression of what is known as street and shop betting. I am quite opposed to this, as is every right thinking man. I will support the second reading, but I will follow Mr. Jenkins in the amendments he has foreshadowed, because I believe that the clubs are going to be pauperised; if a measure before another Chamber is carried, and if the bookmakers are not permitted to follow their calling on the racecourse the loss of revenue will be so great that the clubs will be unable to carry on. If it is the desire of the Government to do away with racing altogether, let us know it. If they desire to minimise racing, let them appoint a board to carry it out. There is very little more to be said except in regard to the difference between the bookmaker and the totalisator. To my mind, if the one is immoral the other is also. I have gone to pretty well every race meeting conducted by the clubs, outside of the unregistered. At one time I was very fond of racing, but I found it too expensive and had to give it up. At the same time I can see very little difference, from the moral point of view, between the bookmaker and the totalisator, and I am inclined to agree with the last speaker, who stated that the totalisator is really the worse of the two. If one goes to the trotting association meetings and sees there women and young girls tearing one another's clothes to get to the 5s. totalisator, one realises what an immense amount of damage is done by the totalisator. I do not see how the bookmaker, under proper supervision, can do any more harm on the racecourse than does the totalisator. If the Government are going to encourage the totalisator I see no reason why the bookmaker also should not be allowed to ply his calling on the racecourses, alongside the totalisator. I will support the second reading, reserving to myself the right to vote for amendments in Committee.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [7.48]: I am largely in accord with the very excellent speech delivered by Mr. Jenkins. The ob-

ject of the Bill, as indicated in the title, is the suppression of betting and gambling. It is rather remarkable that almost every member who has spoken agrees that it is impossible to stop betting. It has been clearly pointed out that betting and gambling appear in various forms. It is not only on the racecourse that they are in evidence but, as has been said, on the stock exchange also. It is extremely difficult to define what may be speculation and what investment, as distinct from gambling. While members are agreed that all attempts to suppress betting are likely to be unsuccessful, I think we ought to be slow to make betting illegal, when it will merely tend to bring the law into contempt. All that we, as legislators, can hope to do is to control betting and stop, as far as we can, its most objectionable features. There is nothing wrong in betting in itself. If I go to a race meeting and speculate to the extent of a few shillings or pounds, in accordance with my means, will any hon. member say that I am doing wrong in that? It contributes to my amusement, and surely there is nothing wrong in betting itself. It is only when betting is carried to excess that it becomes wrong. It is in the abuse of betting that it is an evil, just as in almost everything else that we do. It is when a man bets to the extent that he risks more than he can afford to lose, that betting becomes an evil. It is an evil when it causes men to neglect their work and impair their efficiency, when it brings poverty into homes and when it tempts men to misappropriate money. So far as the Government are desirous of putting a stop to the evils of betting I am with them heart and soul, but I think that we, as a House, ought to be very slow in agreeing to legislation that cannot be enforced and which may tend to bring the law into contempt. With several hon. members, I regret that I cannot compliment the Government on the methods they have adopted to achieve the purposes they seem to have in view. The Bill is altogether too drastic. All reforms must be brought about gradually, and when legislators go to extremes in endeavouring to bring about reforms, they very often defeat their own purpose. Despite the law against bookmakers in other parts of Australia, I understand that betting is carried on the same as ever

and that bookmakers are in existence, with this difference. that they are not of so desirable a class as are to be found where betting is carried on openly. The truth of the matter is that no law can be made operative unless it is in sympathy with the desires of the people. The existing law against betting has never been enforced. I do not blame either the present or past Governments for not enforcing it, because it was impossible to enforce it against the spirit of the people. Those who are to blame for the non-enforcement of the law against betting, for having a law on the statute-book which has been treated with contempt by the people, are, not the various Governments who could not enforce the law, but the legislators who passed that law which cannot be made operative. I would urge that the House, in dealing with this matter, should seriously consider before they pass a law that is not in accordance with the spirit of the people, and which cannot be put into effect. The fact that the law regarding betting was treated with contempt brought a most objectionable system into operation, a system that created an extremely dangerous precedent which enabled individual Ministers to ignore the law. What better example of this has been afforded than that of last Monday, when in the course of a most extraordinary speech the Premier replied to an influential deputation regarding the totalisator duties and the abolition of the bookmakers. In the course of his reply, as reported in the *West Australian*, the Premier made the statement—

They should enforce the laws as they existed. They must either repeal them or enforce them. Whilst I am here I am going to enforce it.

That was the clear and distinct statement made by the Premier. But immediately afterwards, according to the *West Australian* report,—and I must take it as correct, for if it were not so, presumably the Premier would have corrected it—the Premier said—

In regard to the date on which the abolition of the bookmakers had to come into force and the question of deferring that date until after the Christmas meetings, he would place that aspect of the matter before Cabinet and see if they would agree to such postponement.

Here we have two contradictory statements. What will be thought of a Premier—I do not wish to blame him any more than previous occupants of the office; it is most deplorable that a law should be passed which cannot be enforced by reason of its being contrary to the will of the people—what can be thought of a Premier who, in one breath says that he intends to enforce the law, and in his next sentence says he will consult Cabinet as to whether the law breakers should be allowed to continue until after the Christmas meetings. For that, if I do not blame the Premier, I must blame the legislators who passed the law. This proposed law we are now considering is almost certain to be inoperative, and it will bring into activity a class of bookmakers more undesirable than the men who are now pursuing that calling among the community. On the whole question of the totalisator and the suppression of the bookmakers, why is it that the matter is dealt with in two Bills instead of one? In another place there is a Bill to increase the totalisator duty. The two Bills relate, virtually, to the same question. Each has a bearing on the other. It is difficult to discuss one without referring to the other. The two Bills should be in one comprehensive measure dealing with the whole question of betting and racing. If there be some reason why the question should be dealt with in separate Bills, why are they brought forward in different Houses? Surely they should be considered by the one House. Why should they be simultaneously dealt with in different Houses? The two Bills are considered together by the public, by the Press, and by deputations waiting on the Premier. The difficult position in which we are placed is this: The attitude that may be taken over this Bill may defeat the purpose of the Bill in another place. The two Bills have a distinct relation to one another. The Colonial Secretary thinks that the totalisator is a very legitimate subject for taxation, and the object of the Bill now before another place is to increase taxation. I have here evidence from men who are in a position to speak, men who know more about the effects of these Bills than gentlemen like the Premier, or the Colonial Secretary, or Mr. Kingsmill.

and others. I have evidence from the gentlemen I refer to that the Bill we are now considering in this Chamber will, if carried, defeat the purpose of the Bill now being considered elsewhere. That view was borne out in the course of the deputation to which I have already alluded—a deputation which was fully reported in yesterday's *West Australian*, so that there is no necessity to dwell upon it now. Mr. Sholl, in speaking on this subject said—

The Government's proposal to increase the tax in connection with the totalisator was so drastic that it will entirely defeat its own purpose, and end in the death of the goose that is laying the golden egg.

Captain Laurie—whom you, Mr. President, and all the older members of this Chamber will remember as a most valued member of this House, a man who was universally respected—was a member of that deputation, and he is reported as having said—

The deputation urged upon the Government the retention of the bookmaker on the course. This, together with the totalisator, was considered to be the best means of conducting betting on the racecourse.

My particular reason for speaking on this matter was that, prior to leaving the goldfields for Perth this week, I was met by some of the representatives of the goldfields racing clubs, who asked me if I would bring before this Chamber their particular views upon this Bill and also their views as to the probable effects of its passing. In this connection I wish to support the remarks of Mr. Jenkins concerning those gentlemen who are conducting the Western Australian Turf Club and the racing clubs at Kalgoorlie and Boulder. I was sorry to learn that any member of this Chamber—though I was not present to hear it—should have cast anything that could be construed into a reflection upon the men who have charge of those institutions. They are all men of high repute. They are men who devote a considerable amount of time to those institutions. They have no axe to grind. Their sole desire is to keep the sport of racing clean; and it is rather too bad that any member of this Chamber should refer to those gentlemen in a disparaging way.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: No one did.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: They are men of responsibility, who carefully weigh what they say, and they would not state anything that they did not believe to be strictly in accordance with what is likely to take place as the result of the passing of this measure. I contend that those gentlemen are better judges than the members of the Government as to the results which will ensue. A report of a conference of representatives of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs states—

A conference of delegates from the committees of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs met yesterday afternoon and decided that the new Totalisator Bill, if introduced in its entirety immediately, coupled with the suppression of the bookmaker from the racecourse, will have such a detrimental effect that in all probability the clubs will find it impossible to continue racing. The Premier's contention that the whole of the money now handled by bookmakers will revert to the totalisator is, of course, merely conjecture, and open to doubt. It appears almost certain that for a time the absence of the bookmaker from the racecourse will tend to keep a section of the racing public away from race meetings, and until such time as the owners of horses, and the public, get used to the new order of things it is probable that the totalisator receipts will show no material increases sufficient, at all events, to compensate the clubs for the loss of the fees usually received from the bookmakers.

The Colonial Secretary referred to the evidence taken on the goldfields by the joint select committee on the control of horse-racing. In this connection the report states—

Since the commission on racing visited the fields last year, racing has been reduced by almost 50 per cent., and the only meetings held are those promoted by the non-proprietary clubs at Kalgoorlie and Boulder every alternate Saturday.

I may state that by to-day's post I received a letter which shows how, so far as the goldfields are concerned, racing is being still further curtailed. The communication is a notice of an extraordinary general meeting

of the Coolgardie Racing Club, and notice is given of resolutions that the Coolgardie Racing Club, Limited, be wound up voluntarily, and, if that be carried, to appoint a liquidator and to fix his remuneration. Personally, I am extremely sorry that the Coolgardie Racing Club, which is an old and honoured institution of the goldfields, should have reached a pass of that sort. I know that at the race meetings held at Coolgardie the people attending are a well-behaved crowd and a well-dressed crowd, and that they have nice lawns to walk about on; and I refuse to believe that attending meetings of that kind can do any serious harm to the community. I think it would be a lamentable thing if meetings such as those were in any way prevented. However, the notice which I have mentioned is an evidence that in the ordinary course of events racing is declining upon the goldfields. The matter is one of supply and demand, and as the demand diminishes the supply also diminishes. That is what has happened in Coolgardie. The conference report further states—

It will be readily admitted that the people of the goldfields in particular are entitled to some consideration in the way of obtaining healthy and clean sport. With the proposed new Totalisator Bill enforced, it seems fairly certain that horse-racing on local courses will be denied to them. The maintenance of both the Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, and Boulder courses has cost approximately £3,500 per annum, of which nearly a third is spent on the gardens and grounds, which are open to the public at all times of the year, week days and Sundays, except race days, of which privilege every advantage is taken. In the hot months of summer, principally during the State school summer holidays, the children of the district spend most of their days on the lawns in the ample shade provided by the trees and other vegetation there. Permission to hold picnic parties is never refused, and most of the sports gatherings of the various trade organisations are conducted on one or other of the courses.

These racing clubs provide the only parks, practically, that the people of the goldfields have.

Adverting to the question of revenue paid by the goldfields to the Government, the Goldfields Water Supply Department receive annually about £1,300 for water supplied; the Railway Department, for railage of horses and attendants, about £1,200; and, in addition, the ordinary or excursion passenger fares of people travelling from or to the coast to the races; and finally the totalisator tax, which, since its inception in 1905, amounts in round figures to £35,000. For the financial periods ending 28th February and 30th June, 1916, both the Kalgoorlie and Boulder clubs made considerable losses; and there appears to be little likelihood of an alteration in this respect at the close of the current year.

It is not necessary for the conference to point out that the clubs on the fields have contributed handsomely to the various war funds. That is really a matter which will carry no weight with the Government, although it certainly should do so. The main points which the conference considered should be brought out are these: The clubs on the fields are absolutely non-proprietary. All the clubs are now non-proprietary on the fields. The race meetings are promoted for sport and the improvement of the breed of horses, and to afford a little amusement in places which, by reason of their situation, are entirely devoid of natural advantages in this direction. In so doing, the clubs have been able to provide and maintain parks for the use and pleasure of many hundreds of people, and, lastly, to contribute handsomely to the revenue of the State, all of which will cease directly racing be stopped. The Government have decided that the bookmaker must go. This alone is a drastic step and one of which at the moment it is impossible to determine the results. The Premier says that he has no desire to see racing put down altogether. Such being the case, the conference considered that the Government would be well advised, before introducing increased totalisator taxation, to wait until such time as it is proved by actual result that the racing clubs are making the increased profits due to the suppression of the bookmaker, which the Premier estimates they will make. Such are the opinions of the men on the goldfields. Mr. Jenkins has

expressed the opinion of the racing men of the metropolis. It appears that the opinion of the racing men of both places is that, if this Bill be passed, it will defeat the object of the Bill in another place, and will practically mean the shutting down of good class racing in this State, and, so far from producing any increased revenue, will really be destructive of revenue. It seems to me that the Colonial Secretary's sole object, judging from his speech, is to stop the evils of street and shop betting. There has been no objection raised by any member of this House to the stopping of these evils. But the Government, in endeavouring to stop the evils of betting, are going to the extreme, and trying to suppress betting altogether—admittedly an impossible task. One cannot enforce any law that has not behind it the sanction of the people. The majority of the people of this State do not regard the making of a bet in itself as a crime. It is harmful to pass laws attempting the impossible. Genuine good may be done by endeavours to minimise the evils of betting; but a Bill such as this, which goes too far, is almost certain to defeat its own purpose.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central) [8.14]: I rise to support the second reading of the Bill. In doing so I wish to make my position clear. I intend to vote in Committee for the amendment in Clause 3 of which notice has been given by Mr. Jenkins. I have decided to do so after careful review of the Bill as a whole, and particularly after a careful scrutiny of its title, which states that the measure is "an Act to make further provision for the suppression of betting and gambling and for other relative purposes." Of course, to know exactly what the other relative purposes are, is difficult; but it is at least evident that the intention is the further suppression of betting and gambling. While recognising the earnestness of those who framed the Bill, I for my part fail to see how the measure can attain its object. I am quite prepared to support the Bill to the extent of the suppression of street betting and shop betting, but I am prompted to vote for the second reading in order that I may have an opportunity of supporting one of the amendments, notice of which has been given, so as to give the

opportunity to the bookmaker to ply his calling at those racecourses where the Government allow the use of the totalisator. Unlike some of the supporters of the Bill in its original form, I have a little experience in sport of all kinds and also in some of those evils that fall in the train of sport where betting is indulged in and particularly is that the case with horse-racing. At the same time after a study of the sport, I fail to see how the cutting out of the bookmaker will minimise what is known as the gambling spirit in connection with the business. It is almost an impossibility to eliminate the spirit of betting from horse-racing. That has been proved all over the world pretty well, and particularly in Australia. In South Australia we have betting going on to-day. It is generally recognised that bookmaking is as rampant in South Australia to-day as it was before the Act which was supposed to suppress it was passed. If bookmaking is cut out from the racecourse we will find the bookmaker wending his way into the large cities and club betting will go on in the old way with impunity. While holding no brief for the bookmaker, I can say from my own personal observation, and I usually like to have a little knowledge of these matters, that I am quite satisfied the totalisator is a greater evil on the racecourse and encourages betting to a greater extent than does the bookmaker inasmuch as females and juniors can bet on the machine without any difficulty whatever. I am quite satisfied that there are some men engaged in bookmaking who are prepared to bet with anybody. These men are not particular and very often they are not too scrupulous. That, however, does not apply to the general section of the betting fraternity who I know well do not encourage betting of that description. On the other hand the totalisator is quite prepared to bet with all and sundry. The machine does not refuse anybody's money and a child, it might be, can bet on the machine to-day. Again, it is claimed by many who go to a racecourse that bookmakers are regarded by them as a nuisance inasmuch as they interfere with the enjoyment of the sport on the part of those people. Every section of the community is entitled to consideration, and a person who does not bet is

entitled to the same consideration as the person who does, and that person should not be interfered with by another section of the community. That being so there is no reason why the bookmaker should not be removed to some part of the racecourse where he would not interfere with the enjoyment of any section of the community. I do not say he should be ostracised. But if it is shown that he interferes with the enjoyment of a section of the public he could be removed to some portion of the racecourse to which betting could be restricted. That would remove the excuse that the bookmaker touted for business. The only other objection I have to the Bill is in connection with Clause 11, which is apart from the bookmaker and racecourses and everything else. This seems to place rather drastic powers in the hands of the police. If the clause is carried any member of the police force can arrest a man in St. George's-terrace where it is known bookmaking is carried on and proceed to search him. That would not be the case if a policeman were required to get authority from his superior officer first. I object very strongly to that clause. As has been remarked by way of interjection, there is a section in the Police Act of a somewhat similar nature, but two wrongs do not make a right, and it is far too much power to place in the hands of any member of the police force. I will support the second reading of the Bill, but when the measure is in Committee I will also support the amendment moved by Mr. Jenkins.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [8.22]: I feel very grateful to hon. members for the generally cordial reception they have given to this Bill. The Government did not expect to find members unanimous in their support of the proposal, in fact the Government recognised that in this case, as in all other cases, where vested interests are attacked, a great deal of opposition must be expected. I do not intend to speak at any length in reply because I take it for granted that the second reading will be carried, and I shall be prepared to deal with the different points that have been raised when we reach the Committee stage. I am very glad that it is not necessary for me to defend the general

principles of the Bill for the purpose of carrying the second reading; if such a task were imposed upon me I would not know exactly how to approach it because the opponents of this Bill have used arguments that are mutually distinctive. They have told us that it goes too far and they have also told us that it does not go far enough. They have told us that it will have no effect in minimising racing, and again they have told us that it will destroy racing altogether. It is rather difficult to argue on a set of contentions of that kind. One member speaking this evening, Mr. Ewing, actually combined these two arguments in two successive sentences. He told us in one breath that the proposals of the Government would have no effect in reducing the present surplus of racing, and in the next he told us that it would destroy racing altogether. I leave the hon. member to reconcile for himself these two opposing contentions. I do not propose to deal with either because I do not think for a moment that this Bill will fail to reduce the present superabundance of racing, and I am equally confident it will not destroy racing altogether. I am very anxious to preserve the non-party aspect of this question, and in speaking on the second reading I was careful to say that whatever blame might be attached to our immediate predecessors in office for not enforcing the existing law against the bookmaker, I attach the blame equally to previous Liberal administrations. I cannot help referring to one remark which fell from Mr. Ardagh. He said that our party was out for reform. I am glad he used the word "out," because his party was "in" for five years and never attempted anything in the direction of reform. The only thing the hon. member's party did in regard to racing was to greatly accentuate the evil by extending the privileges of the totalisator in an entirely improper, and, I venture to say, illegal direction. The Totalisator Act provides that no license shall be granted to any club unless the Colonial Treasurer is satisfied that no profits or gains of any such club are divisible amongst the individual members thereof or any of them. If the Colonial Secretary was satisfied that no proportion of the profits made by the unregistered clubs was divisible amongst

the members of the club, I venture to say he was the only person in the State who was so satisfied. Mr. Cornell in the course of his speech referred to the necessity for doing away with spurious racing clubs that the leader of his party had declared were bona fide, and to which he had given the privilege of the totalisator. Several hon. members have sought to connect this Bill with another measure at the present time before another place. I do not know why they have done that. One hon. member went so far as to suggest that the two measures might be dealt with as one. Could a more absurd contention be put forth? One is a permanent amendment of the Police Act, and the other is a temporary measure for taxation imposed because of the existing financial stringency in this State. I draw hon. members attention to the fact that there is at the present time on the statute-book a Totalisator Taxation Act, and that stands by itself. This is not even included in the Totalisator Act, or Totalisator Regulation Act, and I venture to submit it is a proper course that a taxation measure should stand entirely alone and not be mixed up with anything else. It was the opinion of the Select Committee that sat last year, that it would be advisable to provide in our Joint Standing Orders that a taxation Bill should deal with taxation matters only and only one subject of taxation. The suggestion that the Bill before this House, a permanent amendment of the Police Act, should be combined with a Bill to impose a temporary totalisator tax is to my mind the most absurd proposition I have listened to for a long time. Then we are asked why two Bills were introduced in different Houses. The reason is obvious. A taxation measure must be introduced in the Assembly. It is introduced by the Treasurer who will be called upon to administer it. This Bill is an amendment of the Police Act. I happen to be the Minister charged with the administration of the Police Act and, therefore, I take it I am the proper person to submit this legislation to Parliament. The two Bills have no relation whatever to each other and as far as the Government are concerned we do not intend to treat them as one.

The Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The Government treated them as one during a deputation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is not open to the Government to say how a deputation shall approach the matter. If a deputation will discuss the two Bills at the one time there is no objection to that course, but it is not of the Government's choosing. I can quite understand a deputation if they are interested in the two Bills discussing the two Bills at the one time, but these Bills are in no way associated with each other. One has not yet reached us; when it does I shall be prepared to discuss it with hon. members. The totalisator receipts are a legitimate subject for taxation; as a matter of fact they have been taxed ever since 1905. The totalisator has been legalised in this State ever since 1883. I am not going to discuss to-night the question of whether the proposed totalisator tax is justifiable or not. I think it would be improper for me to do so. Surely, to use a racing phrase, since we are talking about racing, we can take our fence when we come to it. If when the Bill is submitted to the House it can be shown that it needs amendment, it will be open to the House to suggest those amendments to another place. There seems to be a general admission in regard to two points. The first is that street and shop betting should be suppressed, and the second is that racing should be curtailed. It is by means of this Bill that the Government propose to do both of these things. I want to impress this fact upon hon. members: that the Government are not afraid to take the responsibility in this matter if Parliament, by means of this Bill, will give the Government the power that they desire. I am not entirely in accord, in fact I have very little sympathy, with the idea that the control of racing should be handed over to a board. The Government propose, if furnished with the necessary power by this Bill, to control racing, and I venture to think that the Government will control it in a way that will be satisfactory to the general public. I am not going to dwell upon the arguments which have been advanced in regard to the necessity for maintaining the bookmaker in order to improve the breeding of horses. So

far as I can learn, from reading over and over again the evidence tendered to the select committee by horse breeders and others, the present conduct of horse-racing in the State has had the effect of entirely discouraging the breeding of horses. The yearling sales have been abolished; colts are regarded as a drug in the market, and there is no breeder of horses in the State, so far as I am aware, who does not admit that the present system of racing is entirely detrimental to the best interests of horse breeding. The Commissioner of Police told me that 15 or 20 years ago they could buy police horses at a very reasonable price, but that now, even if they can get them, they are very dear and of very poor quality. I hope that we may be able, by putting down to a large extent the industry of betting, to encourage the industry of horse breeding. The Government have no desire to pose as moral reformers. Their simple object is to do something which they believe needs to be done.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Of material benefit.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They believe that the public is firmly impressed with the idea that a good deal too much money is being spent on horse-racing at the present time, that the public is with them in the idea that the bookmaker is too costly a luxury for this community to maintain. In the metropolitan area we frequently have three race meetings a week. I do not wish to stress this feature of the case, but it does seem to me hypocritical on our part to talk about giving every man and every shilling to the service of the Empire unless we are prepared to take some steps to prevent the waste which is going on in this direction at the present time. The hon. Mr. Jenkins has suggested that in England and France they still encourage racing. I venture to say that no community of the size of ours in either of those countries would dream of indulging in horse-racing to the extent that we are indulging in it here.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: I did not suggest it.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I intend to oppose the amendments given notice of by Mr. Jenkins. I would prefer, however, that the amendment was placed upon the statute book rather than that we should go on as at present. I abhor those laws which are not put into force. If Parliament

chooses deliberately to take the responsibility of legalising the bookmaker, I would prefer that it should be done that way rather than that it be left as an administrative act to the Government to allow the bookmaker to go on in defiance of the law. I earnestly hope that hon. members will not agree to the amendment, that they will support the Bill as it stands, with such minor amendments as may in the course of discussion in Committee prove to be desirable. I am sure I shall not for a moment resist any reasonable amendment which may be likely to improve the Bill. I do not think it is necessary for me to contrast to any extent the totalisator with the bookmaker. The difference between the two is fundamental. The totalisator is a round game, and the bookmaker is like one man standing in an advantageous position so far as others are concerned. When the police raid the Chinese gambling dens they do so not to stop them playing round games. The police never interfere with the Chinese, or gentlemen of the Weld club, or any other institution where they sit down and play round games, even if they play for money, but they do interfere with people when they play a game in which one party has an unfair advantage over the other participants in the game. The totalisator is a round game and fair for everyone, and from which no one player gets any profit over the others. The bookmaker is, however, in an entirely different position. He is collecting all the time. One hon. member said that the bookmaker was merely a commission agent.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: He pays out sometimes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That hon. member also said that he worked on a commission basis. That in itself would be bad enough, but we know that the bookmaker is frequently something more than that. We know that in addition to the percentage basis he has a good many other factors behind him when he makes up his book. We have only to refer to the evidence given by some of the leading horse owners to the select committee to know the unfair advantage that the bookmaker usually has on his side before a horse starts in a race.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: These are probably people who have been beaten at their own game.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have listened with pleasure to the remarks which have been made with regard to the racecourses, which may properly be regarded as the pleasure resorts of the people. It is not the intention of the Government to do anything to injure racing clubs which are properly conducted. The clubs in Kalgoorlie and Boulder, to which reference has been made, bona fide clubs which have spent a large sum of money on improving their properties and have done great work for charities and contributed generously to patriotic funds, found themselves only a few months ago threatened with ruin and destruction not through any action of this Government, but because of the hold that the other racing clubs which did nothing for the public but only raced for the bookmaker and for proprietary interests had obtained. My hon. friends know that the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs felt that unless something extraordinary was done they were going to lose all profits they had accumulated, and would find themselves in danger of failure altogether.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Their trouble has been disposed of.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They have now, I understand, purchased the interests of the other racing clubs, an expenditure which they ought never to have been obliged to make. These institutions should not have been allowed to grow up and compel decent racing clubs, like the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs, to buy them out. When the committee was taking evidence in Kalgoorlie some of the leading members of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder racing clubs advocated the abolition of private profit from the racing business. The president of the West Australian Turf Club specifically advocated the abolition of the bookmaker. We are told now that his committee is not with him. The evidence of Mr. Cox was published at the time and commented on in the House and in another place, and there has been no denial of it until now. Until this Bill was submitted it was not suggested that the president of the W.A.T.C. was not expressing the wishes of his committee when he attended before that committee in his official capacity, and said that he desired, and his

club desired, the suppression of the bookmaker.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Has it since been suggested?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Jenkins said that the W.A.T.C. was opposed to the abolition of the bookmaker.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: They went to the Premier on the matter.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Their president attended before the committee in his official capacity as president of the Turf Club, and said they desired the abolition of the bookmaker. From that date until this Bill was brought forward we had no denial from the Turf Club in regard to the matter. There has been nothing to suggest to us that the president did not on that occasion truthfully express the desires of his club and that of his committee.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Turf Club did not want to see the bookmaker abolished from their courses.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The president of the W.A.T.C. advocated their abolition. The passing of this Bill will place the whole of the matter of the control of racing in the hands of the Government and the Government will not be afraid to exercise their responsibility in the matter. Let me refer hon. members to the Totalisator Regulation Act of 1912. Section 4 provides that—

Every license shall expire on the 31st day of December in the calendar year in or for which it is granted.

Consequently every totalisator license will expire on the 31st December of this year. The granting of the licenses is dealt with in Section 6, which says that it shall not be deemed to be as of right but shall be in the uncontrolled discretion of the Colonial Treasurer. Section 7 says—

The license may be revoked at any time by the Colonial Treasurer in his uncontrolled discretion.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does not another place amend it and place it under the Commissioner of Taxation?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If this Bill is passed the bookmaker can no longer ply his calling on the racecourses. The totalisator will be the only form of betting.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: A worse form.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A race meeting can only be held for those dates for which a totalisator license is granted, and it is not the intention of the present Government to grant totalisator licenses without restriction as to the number of racing dates upon which they shall be employed.

Hon. A. G. Jenkins: You cannot speak for the next Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not care what legislation is on the statute book, it will always be a matter of administration. If any Government chooses to administer the law contrary to the desires of public opinion and contrary to the best interests of the State, it must take the responsibility of doing that. I see no other course for this Government to take than to say, "Give us the power and we will take the responsibility of doing what we believe to be right." If the Bill is passed it will mean that the control of racing will be placed entirely within the hands of the Government, because no race meeting can be conducted other than with a totalisator and no totalisator license will be issued except with restrictions that the Government consider are reasonable as to the number of dates on which each club shall race, and if they have an issue of such license and the conditions are not adhered to the Colonial Treasurer will exercise the power given under the Totalisator Act of 1912 and withdraw the license. I do not know that there is any other matter which it is necessary for me to deal with. The details can be discussed in Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell: That provision which you quoted does not apply to the W.A.T.C.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member must not answer interruptions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The provisions do apply to the W.A.T.C. The W.A. Turf Club has no right to the totalisator unless it is licensed. So far as the W.A. Turf Club is concerned I do not consider it has been an offender in the matter of over-racing. I do not think the Turf Club is responsible, though possibly it may be indirectly, but not in so far as their own race meetings are concerned. I am not speaking as a supporter of the W.A. Turf Club. The last time I was on their course

was on the day on which Snapshot won the Perth Cup, and many members here will know better than I just how long ago that is. But I do say that, so far as the W.A. Turf Club's meetings are concerned, if none of the other clubs raced to a greater extent than they we should not now have this trouble of over-racing. It will be competent for the Government to regulate the number of race meetings held by the W.A. Turf Club or any other club. I want hon. members to put out of their minds the idea that this Bill has anything to do with taxation. It may be that one Bill will be passed and the other lost; and the one which passes will be put into operation. Personally I do not care a straw how much or how little revenue we get out of the totalisator as a result of that Bill. In the present troublous times and until the war is over and better times are with us, when we might have more racing, I should be delighted to find that the number of race meetings had so decreased that we had got considerably less revenue through the totalisator. Therefore, I want hon. members to put out of their minds that this Bill has anything to do with the totalisator tax. I also want hon. members to put out of their minds the idea that this Bill will not reduce the number of race meetings, because it will give the Government all the power they need to reduce the race meetings to whatever extent they may think desirable.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—SPECIAL LEASE (LAKE CLIFTON).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [8.48]: I may say straight out I am delighted to find that the present Administration is taking measures to bring into public use certain of our latent resources. While supporting the Bill, I have a suggestion to make to the Government. It is that this line should be built as the commencement of a loop which shall extend south, because over the whole of the country for miles, to a point within eight miles of Bunbury,

there is not only limestone, but valuable tuart timber. I think it right to the House that I should say what that country is like. There is what is known as Lake Clifton, with a limestone formation on either side. That limestone formation commences right away north near Mandurah and continues down to within four or five miles of Bunbury. The limestone is near the coast, but between it and the coast there is another salt lake known as Lake Preston, which is something like 30 miles long, extending up to and overlapping Lake Clifton. I want the House to understand that Lake Clifton is not the only spot where this lime, which is considered now to be so valuable for fertilising purposes, can be obtained. I have it in my mind that this line should only be the commencement of a line that will continue south, tapping that lime country which is studded all over, as I have said, with valuable timber. That line should junction with the main line either at Picton Junction or at Brunswick, whichever is thought by the engineers to be the more suitable. That country for many miles is eminently suited to the growth of summer crops and potatoes. In this part of the State some of the finest butter I have ever seen is manufactured, butter which has wonderful keeping qualities—and I have had to do with this question for considerably over 40 years. I repeat that in this country there is land lying idle which could be put to profitable use for the growth of potatoes or for dairying; but hitherto it has not been put to that use, for the reason that between it and the existing railway, a distance of some 12 miles, there runs a chain of swamps and sand hills, and until thoroughly good roads are made this country cannot be utilised for dairying purposes or for the growth of potatoes. Producers, until those roads are made, would require to cart their produce 12, 14, or 15 miles. Consequently the land lies dormant, and has done so for many years past. In the early days of the colony, the road leading from Fremantle to Bunbury ran through this country, but owing to its being in such a sandy condition from Mandurah to Bunbury this track was abandoned, as it was almost impassable owing to the sand. Consequently that part of the country has gone back. Until comparatively recently

tuart timber was not considered to be valuable, and the thought of utilising the lime as fertiliser was quite out of the question. A considerable portion of the land in this vicinity is held by private individuals, but I am certain that those individuals would be quite willing to dispose of it to the Government under the Land Purchase Act if the Government sees fit to buy. There is there a belt of tuart about six miles wide. It is some of the finest tuart in the State. So far as I know there is very little tuart timber of any value north of Perth, and it stops just below Busselton. This timber has been there for ages, and every time the question of its development was mentioned to previous Governments, the reply was that the Government would require that timber themselves. It is idle to talk in that way, for the timber has been standing there for years, and as fast as it is cut down it grows again. Some people are under the impression that this timber requires hundreds of years to grow to maturity. I can bring positive proof of trees which were planted in the sixties and are now eighteen inches in girth, which goes to prove that a long period of growth is not required. If this timber country were developed it would give employment to a large number of men, and would provide another valuable asset for the State. My idea is that the Government should construct this line not in an easterly direction, but south-westerly so that it may tap that part of the country later on. I should have liked to see this portion of the country opened up years ago by private enterprise. But if it is good enough for private enterprise to-day, then I think it is good enough for the Government. My point is that if the line goes as proposed due west from Waroona to the lime deposits, then the route will be longer than if the connection were made at Coolup, which is the place I would suggest. If the line is built from Waroona it will be traversing two sides of the triangle shown on the map for a distance of about eight miles. At the same time, if the engineers consider that it is advantageous that the connection should be at Waroona, then I have nothing further to say on the point. I wish that this Bill could be put through quickly in order that this valuable timber may be opened up

successfully. I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill, and trust that it will be only the commencement of a loop line starting south from Pinjarrah and junctioning at either Brunswick or Picton. The advantage of junctioning at Picton would be that the Government must sooner or later duplicate the line between Picton and Bunbury. Under existing conditions, the Picton Junction station is somewhat of a nuisance, but apparently it has come to stay. I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. E. ROSE (South-West) [8.57]: I desire to support this Bill for a railway to junction either at Waroona or at Coolup. I understand that the people of the eastern districts require this line for fertilising purposes, even more than we do in the south-western districts. That being so, I am inclined to agree with the suggestion of Mr. Clarke that the connection should be made at Coolup as the shorter the line to be constructed the greater the advantage. I agree also with my honourable colleague that this line should be only the first section of a loop line between Pinjarra and Brunswick. Brunswick would be the best place for the junction. Such a line would open up some of the finest timber in any part of the South-West. We have heard a lot about the development of this portion of the State from different people, and from time to time Sir John Forrest has advocated that a line should be constructed right through it. There is one point to which I wish to take exception, and that is the time to be allowed for the construction of the line, two years. For the construction of a line 15 miles long two years seems to be a very long period. Many of our timber companies make use of jarrah rails in the laying down of lines for running their timber from the mills to the main line, and they give excellent results. What is wanted in this district is not a line for carrying fast travelling trains and heavy loads. It is not a matter of speed, and I maintain that if new rails are not obtainable at the present time there are sufficient old rails in Western Australia with which to have the line constructed sufficiently well to last for years to come. If this is so I should imagine that 12 months will be quite sufficient for the con-

struction of the line, and the delivery of lime for the use of settlers. This lime deposit and the railway have been spoken of for years past. It is four years or more since a deputation first waited on the then Minister for Lands, who said he could not promise to allow a private company to construct the line, because such a course was against the policy of his Government; but he went on to say that if unable for want of funds to construct the line themselves, the Government would consider the proposal of the deputation. Up to the present we have not got the line, and the Government have appeared to turn deaf ears to the advice given them both by settlers and experts alike. The earlier this line is constructed the better. It has been said that it would not do to use local fuel on the railway on account of the danger of fires. There is not much danger of fires in that district, because the country right along the coast is nearly always green, and in any case we could plough fire-breaks, as is done along the existing lines. The local fuel is good enough for use on the South-West line, and therefore there would be no especial danger in using it on this branch line. The coal would cost very little, even from the beginning, and when the line is looped up with Bunbury or Picton, as the case may be, the coal will then be right on the spot. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [9.2]: I cannot allow the Bill to pass without close scrutiny. Like our late esteemed colleague, Mr. Patrick, I am consistent in the making of inquiries into anything in the nature of a concession. Let me once more enter a protest against the mode put into operation in bringing these concessions into effect. In practice concessions of this nature are fixed up between the Minister and the individuals or companies to whom the concession is to be granted. To give effect to the concession, it must be embodied in a Bill and brought before Parliament. All that one can do is to protest, because one is powerless to alter the agreement entered into. The House itself cannot vary the agreement. This is one of the reasons why I protest against Bills of this nature. It has been pointed out by members of greater experience than myself that this procedure is seldom de-

parted from, and that if Parliament has to ratify an agreement, at least Parliament should have the power to amend the memorandum of agreement attached to the Bill. This concession is not a new one. For many years I have known the gentleman who is after it. He is always after concessions. During the last two sessions of Parliament he was a frequent visitor in the House. Although his agreement did not come up for consideration, another Bill came before us, dealing with the lime deposits of the South-West. That gentleman was at that time a frequent visitor to the House and was extremely anxious that the other Bill should not go through, because it would have militated again the probable success of his operations. I am not prepared to take this gentleman on trust. I know his business acumen, and he knows that there is something in this concern. Although it has been pointed out by members in another place that the primary object of the Bill is to put cheap lime on the market, I venture to say that the object of this gentleman is to make money out of the enterprise. Let us analyse the proposal. It is proposed to give him 4,000 acres of land and to give him what this House has jealously guarded, namely, portion of a class A reserve, at a rental of 1s. per acre per annum. One could have no better argument for opposing the Bill than the fulsome eulogy passed upon the lands of the South-West by the two hon. members who have preceded me. The rental prescribed in the Bill in no way coincides with the elaborate description of the land which we have had from those two gentlemen. There are more varied reasons for rejecting the Bill than were brought forward when another Bill of a similar character was rejected. The agreement provides that the principle laid down and agreed to by members of both Houses of Parliament, namely, that the Government of the day should monopolise railway construction, shall be broken. The agreement proposes to give the concessionaire the right to construct a private railway over both unalienated and alienated land. I am going to oppose the Bill for the reason that it is a departure from our present principle of railway construction. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Rose desire that the House

should go farther. They fall in with the agreement, but would like this addition to it: that the railway line should be taken farther on. In application this means that they agree that the concessionaire should have the right to construct a railway from Waroona to the point at which he intends to operate. Am I right in thinking that they desire the concessionaire to carry on to a farther point, or do they desire that the Government should tack on a piece to the concessionaire's line? We are frequently told that we can buy out private railways whenever we wish. But in every country where the system of private railways has been adopted, the purchase of those private railways has been found to be a costly business. The best safeguard in respect of railways is that they shall be constructed by the Government. If the Government have not sufficient money at the time, then the railways should be left until the money is available. If this present project is good enough for the concessionaire to construct a railway on, it is good enough for the Government themselves?

Hon. E. Rose: What about the timber lines?

Hon. J. CORNELL: There we have the spectacle of a most iniquitous system under which they built their railways. Another place passed a Bill having for its object the checking of the iniquitous overcharges made by the concessionaires in the timber districts, but this House refused to pass the Bill, and so declined to give the Government power to enforce by regulation decent conditions and reasonable charges. The House should not give to any individual the right to construct railways.

Hon. E. Rose: You do not believe in private enterprise.

Hon. J. CORNELL: This is my experience of private enterprise: Where a business proposition is good enough, private enterprise will see to it without any spoon-feeding whatever. I venture to say the concessionaire is a wary enough bird to know that without any assistance from the Government he has a splendid proposition down there. The House should not in any way assist him, nor break any of these safeguards under which the railways of the

country have been constructed for so many years. The rental is absurd if those lime deposits are what hon. members say they are; to provide people of the State, through the Consolidated Revenue Fund, 1s. per acre per annum is finance run mad. According to the hon. members who preceded me the value of the land is beyond purchase price.

Hon. E. Rose: It is nearly all water.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I venture to say it is worth more than 1s. an acre. If the concessionaire is prepared to take the risk, if any, and if this proves to be a paying proposition as time goes on, what guarantee does the Bill or the agreement provide that the Crown shall have the benefit of one of its great national resources? Even the iniquitous system of creating the coal mines of England on the freehold basis had the safeguard of a royalty clause. If we are to allow this gentleman to have the land at a shilling an acre then some portion of the value of the proposition should return to the Crown. I wish to make one or two remarks on the brilliant picture Mr. Clarke drew of the South-West. He referred to the butter produced there. He said it was the most beautiful butter he had ever eaten. I could say the same of the butter I ate in the arid parts of New South Wales. It was given to me in very small quantities, almost as something in the nature of a curiosity, to show that butter could be produced there. I venture to assert that the whole of the butter produced in the South-West in a year would not provide axle grease for a couple of motor cars running around Perth.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: There were over 10 tons of South-Western butter produced in one month recently.

Hon. J. CORNELL: One has only to look at the statistics to discover what kind of butter-producing district the South-West is. Despite the character of the land, which may from a visual point of view be the best one could possibly find, there are qualities in the soil of the South-West, no matter what the Agricultural Commissioner for the South-West, Mr. Connor, says on the subject, which are not conducive to the making of butter. I hope this State will not extend railway lines on the principle advocated

by Mr. Clarke, for the purpose of producing butter in the South-West. Mr. Clarke's remarks call to my mind certain observations made by Mr. Hamersley a few years ago. That hon. member struck the key note when he said that the foundation of the butter industry of the Eastern States had been their dire poverty and distress. Those unfortunate factors, the hon. member said, had been responsible for the establishment of the Eastern Australian butter industry. We do not wish to see that position obtain here. Another point made by the two last speakers referred to the construction of the railway. An examination of the average earnings of the South-Western railways shows that for the last 20 years, in fact, ever since their construction, they have been run at a dead loss. There is no comparison between the returns from railways in the gold mining districts and those from railways in the South-West—it is a case of Eclipse first and the rest nowhere.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What about the Goldfields Water Scheme?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Another proposal referred to by Mr. Clarke is that of settling 25,000 immigrants annually in the South-West after the war. I venture to say that if the settlement of the immigrants after the war is conducted on the same lines as in preceding years, the results will be almost nil. With regard to improved holdings, many of the South-Western holdings are in practically the same state as they were 15 years ago. Indeed, some of the settlers have not cleared their land in 30 years.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: You have not visited the South-West.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have visited the South-West, and I wish to remark that the hardy pioneers of this State did not rely on Government assistance in laying the foundations of their fortunes; nor did the men who pioneered the Eastern States rely on Government assistance. All these pioneers relied on their own individual resource, energy, and initiative. The influx of people which will come to this State in the years ahead of us will not require any spoon-feeding if they are settled in the South-West, provided the district is all that it is stated to be. If they do require spoon-

feeding, it will show that the South-West is not what certain hon. members try to make it out to be. As regards the objection of the two preceding speakers on the ground of the danger of fires being caused by the running of trains over the proposed route, my observation of the country leads me to think that whoever raised that objection must have been either dreaming, or suffering from delusion. I think the old axiom applies to the South-West—that it is too green to burn. I desire again to protest against the introduction of Bills for acceptance whether we like them or not.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan) [9.22]: Generally, I support the Bill. It appears that there is a valuable deposit of lime to be developed, and I think the Government are right in declaring that this is a matter for private enterprise and not for the Government. In the past the Government have embarked on projects of this nature with the result that the State has suffered serious loss. I am unable to follow Mr. Cornell, who suggested that the railways of the South-West have been run at a loss for years. Yet that is a reason advanced by the hon. member why the Government should construct this line. He says that if the project is good enough for a private individual it is good enough for the Government. I cannot agree with him. The past Government have not, for example, made a success of brickworks, though private enterprise can do so. The present Government are endeavouring to dispose of the brickworks. Turning now to the Bill, I wish to point out that the Schedule provides that the term of the lease shall commence 12 months from the declaration of peace. We do not know, of course, when peace will be declared; we hope it will be to-morrow, but it may not be for some years. The agreement provides that the lessee shall do certain things within two years from the commencement of the lease. If the war lasts another two years and the lease does not start until 12 months after the declaration of peace, then three years will elapse before the lessee has to commence the construction of the railway. That would mean five years before the work of construction need actually start. Thus, those agriculturists who want the lime may have to wait five or six years before

anything results from this measure. Those terms, I think, are altogether too generous. Surely, as Mr. Cornell has stated, it is possible to purchase 15 miles of old rails and use them for this railway, on which the traffic will not be heavy. Some explanation should be offered by the Government as to why such generous terms in point of time have been granted. The rent of 1s. per acre for 4,000 acres is very liberal. If the Government sold the freehold at about 1s. per acre, it would be about the value. Most of the 4,000 acres is under water, and will have to be dredged. I have no desire to oppose the passage of the Bill, but the leader of the House might offer some explanation of the extraordinary terms granted to the lessee. I notice that the next Bill for the granting of a cement concession gives no such liberal terms. Subject to these remarks, I welcome the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [9.25]: The other proposal to which Mr. Sommers referred is now on the Notice Paper, and will be submitted to hon. members in the course of a few days. As regards the question raised by Mr. Clarke, in connection with the route of the suggested railway, I do not think it would be reasonable to ask for any alteration of the proposal. That proposal follows the shortest possible track from the lakes to the clay deposit, and from the clay deposit to the existing railway; and, in my opinion, it would not be reasonable to ask the lessee to construct a line in any other direction but that which suits his business best. One point I desire to make clear to hon. members is that the primary object of the concession is not the supply of lime to the agricultural industry. That is purely a side line. As a matter of fact, if the lime were the chief business, it would be quite impossible to put the product on the market at the price proposed, and quite impossible to float a company for the purpose of building the railway and carrying on the manufacture. If hon. members will consider for a moment: the probable consumption of this lime was estimated by the Agricultural Commissioner for the Wheat Belt at 10,000 tons per annum. The concessionaire is under an obligation to supply 15,000 tons per annum if there is a demand for that

quantity. But it is not probable that there will be a demand for so much of it. Now, with a price of 12s. 6d. per ton delivered at Waroona, hon. members will see, the total receipts from the lime would be a comparatively small sum. The sum appears especially small in view of the intention to spend no less than £150,000 on the building of the proposed railway, the putting up of the plant, and the provision of working capital. The chief object is to establish a cement industry, as I mentioned in my second reading speech. It is because these people have the clay deposit from which they can manufacture Portland cement, that they have been able to suggest a proposition justifying such large expenditure. No one would for a moment dream of spending £150,000 merely to supply 10,000 or 12,000 tons of lime annually at 12s. 6d. a ton. The only other point which has been raised refers to the time which is to be allowed for the construction of the railway.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: There was also the question of royalty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know there is much in that. The royalty suggested by the hon. member interjecting was about the same as the rent which has to be collected. Again I say, if the lime were the sole project which was going to lead to the construction of the railway, there might be something in the argument. But the main consideration is the cement.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Why lock up that whole lake?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think we have before us another Bill dealing with another lime deposit; and an hon. member has said that the Dongarra lime deposit is better still. If anyone wants to develop the Dongarra deposit, the Government will be pleased to facilitate that development in every possible way. On the question of time, I wish to remind hon. members that these gentlemen have been after the concession for three years. It is three years since they endeavoured to get the concession. Had the previous Government fixed up the agreement with them then, as they have fixed it with them now—in moving the second reading I mentioned that the agreement was made by our predecessors in office and confirmed by the present Government—the

whole thing would have been an established proposition before the war started. In my opinion, these people are entitled to some consideration for the fact that they have been so long endeavouring to establish the cement industry. Mr. Ewing remarked that they had already secured the consent of the Federal authorities to the raising of the capital required.

Hon. J. Ewing: I understood that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is not so. Although no difficulty is expected in that direction, the consent has not yet been obtained. It is not the intention of the promoters to take two years to build this line. I have again to remind hon. members that the project involves an expenditure of £150,000, and that £70,000 will be the cost of the erection of the cement works. I think in the circumstances it would be unjust to bind them down to a shorter period than that set down in the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Hon. W. Kingsmill took the Chair.]

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th November.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [9.34]: The Bill under review proposes to confer certain powers on the Government of Western Australia in regard to the marketing of the wheat harvest of 1915-16, and the next season. It is well known that we have been working without legislation in this State, and that anomalies have existed, but I do not propose in any way to take any exception to what has passed. But as regards legislation to control the scheme in the future, it is well to point out that there are anomalies in the measure now before the House. I cannot let the occasion pass without speaking of the success of the scheme in spite of disadvantages, and the thanks of the farming community are due to the Federal Government, the State Government, and the Australian Wheat Marketing Committee, as well as our local advisory board—I say advisory board because that is

all it amounts to in Western Australia. I must not forget to mention the former Minister for Lands, Mr. W. D. Johnson. I cannot leave him out of it in view of the criticism which has been levelled against him. I consider that Mr. Johnson's work in connection with this matter is to that gentleman's credit. At the same time I wish to state to those who do not understand the position that it is to the interest of Mr. Johnson, who, like ourselves, is a producer, to see that the cost of production is decreased if possible, and that the Australian wheat scheme is brought to a successful issue. So far we have been successful, not that at any time I was ever sceptical. In November, 1915, when speaking on the Price of Goods Bill, I made the following statement:—

The farmers are not going to be so foolish as to throw their wheat away at a low price, more especially after the explanation of the export scheme. They can see under the scheme that they are sure to secure 4s. a bushel for their wheat. I have never failed to support the scheme, and in that connection I wish to bring about remedies to make the present Bill a sound and economical one. We have increased difficulties this year in comparison with last year, because we have a large amount of last year's surplus wheat still on hand, and the new season's wheat is now coming in on top of it. It is a most difficult position and it wants to be carefully handled. The fact that the Bill passed through another place in such a short space of time is no guarantee that the measure is sound or economical: as a matter of fact it is not. We must bear in mind that this Bill does not affect one section of the community only. It affects the whole of the community. There is nothing that affects finance in this State so much as our produce, and the main produce in Western Australia at the present time is wheat. Speaking of finance generally, this problem is the most difficult one we have to deal with in the measure under review. No doubt this was the stumbling block in the way of the Australian Wheat Board in coming to a decision in the matter of making an advance to the farmers on the coming season's harvest. In this State we have a million and a half acres under crop, which will

give us probably a ten-bushel harvest. That will mean 15 million bushels which we shall have to deal with. We shall have approximately 12 million bushels for disposal, and when we consider the cost per acre to the farmer of sowing the crop, it must be readily recognised that a small advance such as has been referred to in the daily Press—I do not know whether there is any authority behind it—of 2s., is absolutely useless to those who are producing the goods. I am speaking now in regard to the advance on the coming season's wheat. We have already got more than that on the past season's wheat, and but for that the whole of the community would be suffering at the present time. Roughly, the cost of producing an acre of wheat in this State is 40s., and with a ten-bushel average, a 2s. advance will give half the amount of the cost of putting the crop in. How are we going to put the producers in the position to sow next season's crop? In other words, do we require a crop sown next year? We know that the State cannot go on without it. Some provision will have to be made for a far larger advance than 2s. The farmers will not be able to meet the demands which are made on them, and we shall have to deal with the question within the next few months. The total cost of sowing next season's crop, suppose we only put in a million and a half acres, will amount to £3,000,000. Under the advance of 2s. a bushel we shall get £1,200,000. How are we going to finance the balance? I recognise the difficulty the Federal Government are placed in in going on the money market at the present time to raise the necessary two millions advance which is needed. The money will have to be found or there will be a shrinkage in the acreage under crop. Those who are crying out for cheaper flour and cheaper bread will probably have to pay more for it, because the wheat will have to be imported for gristing purposes unless something is done in the direction I have suggested. There is no doubt, too, that there will be a difficulty in trying to finance this scheme with the financial institutions. A board representing the whole of the wheat growers of Australia met in Melbourne a few weeks back and laid a scheme before the two Ministers in charge of the wheat marketing proposals. Amongst

the recommendations was one in which the financial difficulty was referred to, and it was suggested that the Governments should issue wheat bonds with a face value of 3s. 4d., bearing $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest. There is no need for me to dwell at great length on this suggestion. It will appeal to hon. members, as being likely to prove of benefit to the whole community. The wheat bonds would have a currency of, say, 12 months, by which time the Federal Government would have disposed of a great portion of the harvest. Then the bonds would be redeemed by the cash received from the sale of the wheat. With these bonds we could finance very easily, but we would not be able to do what is proposed by the Bill before the House because our wheat certificates are not negotiable. With the bonds we could go to a banking institution where those bonds would be as good as notes. We could arrange with our creditors on those bonds. Investors could find no better security than the bonds, and they would thus show their patriotism by taking them up. We must not lose sight of the fact that wheat growing is a national concern, and hon. members are beginning to recognise that, and more especially have they done so during the past two years. Two years ago we felt what the drought meant to the State. It meant a shrinkage in the revenue. Then we came along fairly well with a good season—a record in fact—and we find that the markets are closed against us. Of course that is no fault of ours. It is because practically the whole of the civilised world is engaged at war. Speaking on the advance being made, I want it understood that the cost of handling our crops is tremendous at the present time, and hon. members will realise that better when I state that the producer has to pay 1s. a bushel from the siding to the ship, that is including the cost of the bags.

Hon. J. Cornell: Bags cost 8d. now.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I said 1s. per bushel, not 1s. per bag. It is a tremendous cost, and if we get a small advance such as 2s. we have only 1s. left with which to operate. Hon. members will realise the difficulty we are placed in. With wheat bonds of the value of 3s. 4d. we would have

2s. 4d. left, and that would give us some encouragement to go on and put in a crop for the coming year. I have heard complaints from different public men about the excessive cost of bread, whilst we have millions of bags of wheat lying in Australia. Curiously enough those same people who are speaking so wildly in that direction, because they have not considered the question, are the people who are representing industrial concerns which have had protection and increased facilities in the way of prices before and since the war commenced. What increase have the wheat producers had? We talk about dear bread and expensive flour. What has been the cost of wheat here as compared with that in other countries? American wheat has been costing 8s. 4d. a bushel, and Indian wheat has been costing 7s. 10d. a bushel. When I mention American and Indian wheats, I want it understood that both these wheats are inferior to Australian wheats. As a matter of fact, I will go so far as to say that Australian wheat is the best flour-producing wheat on the world's market. We have in the United Kingdom wheat bringing 9s. 2d. a bushel, and the West Australian down to 4s. 6d. a bushel. Where then is the justification for the cry as to expensive bread? The consumers have received every consideration?

Hon. J. Cornell: What about the cockey?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not think many of them are flourishing at the present time. The complaints, if any, should be from the other side, from the side of the producer. But we are making no complaints in that direction. Taking the position as regards the wheat scheme and its operation during the past year, the farmers have been supplying the goods: we are the vendors. We have a scheme in operation but we know nothing of it beyond the little which is contained in this Bill, which does not touch on any one vital point. The Australian Wheat Board has been constituted with no representative upon it of the wheat-growing industry, whose products they have for disposal. Is that right? We are supplying the goods but we have not even one man on the board to consider our position. It may be asked who is at the head of the scheme?

The Ministers themselves say that they are the people who are running the whole scheme. The Australian Wheat Board take their directions from them. In addition they say to deputations which have approached them representing each of the wheat-growing States, "The whole of the information rests with us and is not going to leave our hands." Imagine what attitude my friends opposite would take up if any one class of the community they were representing was placed in the same position, and that they did not know anything about the goods they were producing or what return they were to get, whether they were to get 10s. a day or 2s. 6d. a day. If that were the case we would hear from them. I think they are fair-minded, and I appeal to them now to assist us in this matter. Take our local Advisory Committee. We have a representative on that committee, but it is only an advisory committee. We have a representative in Mr. Dean Hammond, and we have other capable gentlemen on it as well, men who could do far more work and take a stronger part if they were allowed to do so. These gentlemen know nothing of the financial position or of shipping. They only know just what they get in the way of figures sent over from the Australian Wheat Board, and they only advise the Minister here on different details. I am ready to admit that they have done good work in the past which has been of material assistance to the Minister. Why make such a secret of the whole scheme and restrict them in this manner? Some of the failures which have taken place are due to this secrecy, to my mind. Where we have a local advisory committee in each of the States, should not they be approached on particulars affecting the wheat marketing such as finance and shipping and selling? They know nothing, however, of this; they only know when the whole thing is finished with. Then they are told about it. The Australian Wheat Board itself appears to handle these matters very badly indeed. I am ready to admit that they have had a big concern thrust into their hands, but they had no right to restrict themselves as they have done. Take the disposal of the wheat. What have they done in that regard? They

put the disposal of the whole of the Australian wheat harvest into the hands of two agents in the United Kingdom. Why should they not have 22 or any particular number that is desired? When they restrict themselves to two agents they restrict themselves to the clientele of these agents representing possibly 40 or 50 millers. Evidently they confine the whole of their sales practically to 100 millers.

Hon. J. Cornell: They have none on hand in the Old Country.

Hon. C. F. BANTER: That is beside the question. There should be no restriction. That means that it would work against us. Take the attempt to control shipping on the part of the Melbourne office. Is it possible for a board sitting in Melbourne to arrange freights with firms, combines, etc., in the British Isles? They have representatives there but they bind these representatives down to certain freights, say at so much a ton. If they cannot get a charter at 85s. and they are quoted on a basis of 87s. 6d., the Home representatives have to cable back to Melbourne for authority to accept and in the meantime the freight in all probability has been lost. There is no doubt we have lost a lot of opportunities in this way. This sort of thing should not be allowed to exist. The control of shipping from Melbourne has been a drastic failure and must be a failure. The present method is impossible. We now come to another part of the Bill. It is, in fact, one of the main features of the wheat marketing scheme. I am referring now to the agency portion of the measure. The agency agreements have been a splendid thing for the agents but not for the pool. Just how it will finish it is hard for even my friends on the Treasury benches to say. I wish I could see daylight out of it myself, notwithstanding the knowledge we now have of the position. I cannot see now but that the agents are going to come out on top. They have had a good time during the past season. I understand that they now demand an increase of a halfpenny, which will mean $3\frac{1}{2}$ d., for handling. Of course they will say "Look at the risk." What risk have they been taking? I am afraid so far as risks are concerned the losses will come out

of the pool. The vendors in the pool will be the sufferers, but not the agents. Where the pool will lose is that it will have no advantage in regard to the natural increase in weight, which it would otherwise receive. It is true they say they have reports about the increase in mice being serious. The increase in mice may have done a little damage, but not any very extensive damage. As a producer and one who has travelled from one end of the wheat growing portion of this country to the other, I know that where the loss has occurred it has been through the bad bags supplied by these people. During the past four or five years, they have sold second class bags at first class, and really above first class, prices. There has also been the faulty stacking, the improper roofing of the stacks and the bad covering of the sides of the stacks. On top of that there has been insufficient attention given to the stacks after they have been built. Indeed, no attention has been given to them except during the past eight weeks when many of them were falling to pieces. We see bags bursting and wheat lying about everywhere. It will mean that any loss in wheat will be compensated for by the natural increase of the weight in the wheat. Where are the agents going to lose? That is one instance in which the pool itself will suffer. The agents can only claim for the weight of wheat that they have taken delivery of. It will be seen that if they took delivery of wheat without any loss, the full weight of the natural increase would be credited to the pool, and we as vendors would have the advantage. But we are not going to get any of this advantage, and the agents are going to get it for all their carelessness. They have been paid well to handle it and they have handled the wheat very badly.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Not in all cases.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: With very few exceptions they have not done their work well. During the last three months some of them have got their stacks into good order. Whilst we have to stand to a certain extent behind the Prime Minister's assurance, "that all avenues of trade will be preserved if the Federal Government step in and handle the whole of the wheat," I maintain where the agents have worked so badly and handled the scheme so badly—we have now a demand for another halfpenny per bushel—that we have every

right to step in. As a matter of fact, I think that the Governments should step in and handle the scheme. Why should they not do so? I see no difficulty in the way. We have a general staff to handle the wheat, a staff which is there every year, with scales and weighing appliances and everything ready. We could have the Commissioner of Railways and his men superintending the stacking on the railways. We have our wheat committee established, and it is in the hands of very capable gentlemen who has done excellent work. There is one gentleman, Mr. Hall, who can handle the clerical work and who has so far been a thorough success. He has had a nervous breakdown, but this cannot be wondered at. I intend to speak plainly in that direction as to what has caused this gentleman's breakdown in health. This has been caused through Mr. Hall's worry in dealing with those gentlemen who have been so unscrupulous as to take advantage of the position under the scheme, and it has yet to be seen whether they are legally right or wrong. I think they are wrong. What will this extra halfpenny mean? It will mean an increase for the pool of £25,000 in the handling of a 12 million bushel crop. It has to be remembered that threepence per bushel on the quantity of wheat shipped runs into a very large figure. It amounts to £12,500 per million bushels. Up to October 28th the wheat acquired in this State amounted to 14,948,046 bushels. Of this quantity there had already been shipped 4,666,998 bushels; passed out for local consumption 2,623,292 bushels, and a balance awaiting shipment of 7,793,803. Approximately half of the wheat secured for the pool was still awaiting shipment on that date. The amount distributed to agents for handling this wheat at the same date amounted to £124,128; and now they are demanding a further halfpenny per bushel. They receive payment on the following basis:—three halfpence per bushel on delivery, and a further three halfpence when the wheat is shipped, and 1¾d. when the wheat gets to London. I maintain that they are well paid at those rates. Apparently the agents' liability ended on the 30th September. I understand the proposal is that the agreement shall be continued until the 30th June,

1917, subject to certain modifications. The question to my mind is whether the agents will agree to those modifications. Some of them have said that they will not. What will be the position in the contingency of the agents refusing to accept an extension of liability, can the Government compel them in any way to accept responsibility? This is a question I should like answered. I want something more definite than is given in this Bill on the question of how we stand in this matter. We want to know whether those people who have been paid so well for their services can be compelled to accept their proper responsibilities. It has been said that the agents are better paid in the Eastern States. In South Australia there is no limit to the agents' responsibility. His responsibility ceases only when the last bag of wheat is shipped. What will be the position here if the Government and the agents cannot come to an understanding? I want to know, further, how they are going to arrive at the quantity and the quality of wheat we have in the stacks here. The greatest expert the world has known in regard to wheat could not tell whether there were 1,200, 1,500, or 1,800 bags in a given stack. But supposing that they can arrive at the number of bags in a stack, how are they to arrive at the quantity in each bag? That is to say, some may be 150lbs., others 180lbs., and others again 200lbs. Then again, how are they to arrive at the quality? Apparently it will mean the handling of every bag of wheat. The agents' responsibility ceased on 30th September, and we want to know with certainty whether they can be made to accept further responsibility from that date. Can the Government force the proposed modifications on the agents? I do not want this Bill to go through so that the farmers will be dealt with in the same manner as during the last 12 months. Referring again to the position of the agents, and to the quality of wheat, they have not in all cases accepted f.a.q. standard by any means. I can cite a case where a shareholder in a certain firm sent his wheat along to an agent of the firm who turned it down because he said he could not accept it as up to f.a.q. standard. He sent it to another agent, who accepted it as f.a.q. standard.

Here is the position: the f.a.q. standard was fixed at 62lbs. per bushel. Much Western Australian wheat goes above that standard, up to 66lbs., but under this Bill a grower could not get payment for anything above the f.a.q. standard. When the grower of good wheat comes into the pool, the pool benefits, but the man who grows that better wheat is not going to be paid accordingly. The chances are, however, that it will take an agent all his time to deliver f.a.q. standard, because so much of the wheat in the stacks will fall below that standard. There is also an anomaly in this Bill in regard to the question of farmers handling their own wheat. Many farmers in Western Australia last year handled their wheat themselves; they put it on the trucks and sent it forward. On this wheat so sent forward the agent received three halfpence per bushel. That wheat went forward to the nearest depot, and the farmers got a receipt for it on its arrival at the depot. I maintain there should be provision in the Bill whereby any farmer who handles his own wheat should receive the benefit of handling it. At least he should receive 1d. for handling it even though he has to allow the other halfpenny to go to the agent. When the pool was going properly many farmers who desired to have their produce handled urgently handled the wheat themselves and when they do so they should be paid for it. Why should the agents get the benefit of what those men have done? It has to be remembered that the extra penny paid on 60 bags means 15s. and if the farmer takes upon himself the responsibility of sending the wheat forward then he should receive the full value of 22s. 6d. That is a far better wage than a man is likely to make working on a farm. We wish to see that the farmer shall have the benefit of this payment. Referring to the matter of wheat secured by the farmers into which the select committee is now inquiring, I wish first to refer to those people coming up to the House and lobbying members. I look upon this as a most improper procedure. I would not care so much if it were a matter in which the people themselves were not directly interested, but I do object to people coming here who are interested to the tune of thousands of pounds, and attempting to buttonhole members in the lobby. In ad-

dition to that, there is the fact of their writing to the newspapers, notwithstanding that they have already given evidence before the select committee. I shall have little to say on the point at present, but when the recommendation of the select committee comes along I may have a little more to say. In regard to the position here, I think the true position was misrepresented. In the first place, the millers must recognise that they were invited to come into the scheme when there was no need for such invitation. The Government had it in their own hands to compel them to come into the scheme. In my opinion Mr. Johnson was too lenient with them. He thought he was dealing with straightforward men and not with men who would act as unscrupulously as they have done. They themselves agreed to the present line of action. As a matter of fact, the Government adopted the agreement put forward by the millers. What was the position? We find that the millers met, and it leaked out that some of them had been purchasing wheat. Mr. Johnson apparently did not want to be hard with them and on being informed that "the purchases are to cover flour contracts," he did not want to take drastic action, but asked them what quantity they had. The reply was that it was not above 150,000 bags. No objection was taken to that. I think Mr. Johnson was under the belief that the millers had not purchased 100,000 bags, and the probability is that that was correct at the time. Time went on and the millers had to send along a record of the flour commitments. Although the Minister urged them time after time to let him have a record of their commitments, it was only after he had used a threat that the Federal Government would step in and commandeer the mills that he was able to get a record of the flour contracts. That was in March. It took them from 29th November until March of the following year to supply their record. To my mind that was a bit of sharp practice. What was their position? A lovely one. They purchased wheat at 4s. a bushel—a lot of parcels were bought under that price. That wheat went into the pool. It was taken out of the pool by the millers on the basis of

5s. 3d. a bushel. They gristed flour on that basis. What does that mean? It means that they were making a profit of 1s. 3d. a bushel on every bushel of wheat that went into the pool, plus their usual profits on the flour and offal. Can we wonder that they came to Parliament House lobbying? It is little wonder they ran to the Press when they had such a nice thing in front of them, little wonder that Mr. Ockerby complains of Government interference. What would have been the position if the Government had not interfered by establishing the scheme? Nobody else could have done anything in the matter. They themselves insisted that the Government should handle this scheme. Perhaps each miller was jealous of the other knowing his business. The Government did handle the scheme, and the millers' own agreement was accepted by the Government. Without the scheme the millers could not have financed 450,000 bags. This position of 450,000 bags means a profit of £90,000 on the 1s. 3d., the amount paid to them above the 4s. the wheat had cost them. I am not including the whole of the millers in the State, because as far as I can gather the whole thing is confined to four millers, most of whom are in the metropolitan area. The country millers, with one exception, have been honest and straightforward with the Minister. The position they were placed in here under such favourable terms was manifestly unfair, because the whole of the millers of Australia were under this scheme. The favoured few who took advantage of the position, illegally I hope, were in the position that they could undersell the other millers in this State and the millers in the Eastern States, and make the Wheat Marketing Committee of Australia dishonour a scrap of paper with South Africa. The Wheat Marketing Committee sold a large parcel of wheat to South Africa and gave an undertaking that wheat would not be sold under a certain price in Australia, so that the Australian flour miller could not come in and upset the South African market. Our millers here did exactly that thing. It is one of the advantages they gained, but it is to our disadvantage in point both of honour and of finance. Mr. Ockerby, the loudest in denunciation of the Govern-

ment, has been in the unique position that he had a good milch cow in the Government of the State the year before last on the imported wheat question. He now comes along with exactly the same sort of thing here. He is a miller in the first place, secondly he is a shipper, and I have it on the best authority that he is also a produce merchant. How beautifully he can manipulate things. Take another view of the position of the wheat handling business: We know that if we get weevils in wheat they will reduce its value. As both agent and miller he is in a position to take advantage of this, and it is to his advantage to send weevily wheat into the stacks and so spread the weevils, and depreciate the value of the wheat to the price he desires. Again, take the position in regard to offal: The Federal Government fixed the price of offal at £4 10s. per ton. I would like to meet the person who has been able to purchase bran at £4 10s. per ton. For six months I tried without avail to purchase bran at that price. Others have purchased it at £4 10s. per ton by paying an extraordinarily high price for cats. Others have been told, "I will not sell you a ton of bran, but I will sell you £6 worth." They sent the cheque for £6 and received in return exactly one ton of bran. That is the position in which we are placed in regard to bran. We do not want anomalies of this sort. To my mind, this is a Bill to continue in operation for years to come. We have produced a co-operative scheme that we do not wish to lose. It has advantages which we want to retain for all time. Fancy importing shipments of bran with the huge stacks of wheat we have in the State! The position is ridiculous. There is only one thing for it, namely, that the Federal Government take over the mills of this State.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: That is socialistic.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Call it what you like. When we find people taking undue advantage of the position at this time we ought to make a stand. Investigation of the books of the millers will disclose very handsome profits indeed, and if the Federal Government paid them a really good high rate of interest on the capital invested and ran the mills themselves there would be a huge profit for the Government. Let the

Government take over the mills, run them full time, exploit the flour markets, and the Government will reap an immense profit.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: If the mills, why not the farms?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Well, they have the whole of our produce now. What more would you have? But they should take the mills also and run them. Let it all be on the Federal Government while the present crisis continue. Failing this, let the Federal Government pay the millers a fair price for gristing. But to say that we are going to leave it as it stands, that we are going to stack huge quantities of farmers' wheat at the mills and that the millers are to have no responsibility, and will not be called upon to pay anything until the wheat is gristed, is nothing short of ridiculous. As regards the different clauses of the Bill, the first one of interest is Clause 4, which provides that the committee shall hold office at the will of the Government. The exception I take to that is that we as vendors have a right to a representative on that board.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: There is only one representative for each State.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Well, is it not possible for him to be a direct representative of the growers, elected by the vendors. Personally I think no political appointment should be made at all. We want a direct representative on that board and we should have one. Why is that right denied us? I intend to move for a select committee later on, because the Bill is unworkable. A select committee appointed by another place is now sitting on the question of the quantity of wheat acquired by the millers. Let us turn to Clause 5, Subclause 2, which provides that all Acts and proceedings heretofore done and taken by the Government of Western Australia or the Premier or other responsible Minister in the premises are hereby ratified. What should be added to that is "With the right of the vendors to appoint an auditor." The need for an auditor in a business of this kind will appeal to hon. members. It is not merely a question of auditing the accounts. The sooner the producer knows how the business is being conducted the better. The audit would show

what degree of success has been obtained in the past by the Wheat Marketing Committee. It would show us the arrangement of the shipping, its cost and how it has been carried out. It would show us the selling charges and, most important of all, the overhead charges, which run away with a large amount of money. In fact, this is one of the main issues which mean the success or failure of the scheme. Clause 7 deals with the agency agreement. What has been done so far is to be ratified. It is no use, as it stands now, for the coming season's operations, and we do not want it re-enacted.

Hon. A. Sanderson: What clause are you speaking of?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Of Clause 7. I have already dealt with the position as it occurs under the Bill. We want a better agreement than we have had in the past.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: If you can get it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I take it that we are here to legislate and to see that we get it. We are the vendors of the wheat, and are represented here in this Chamber. What are we here for? If we cannot do these things we have no right to be here.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: You want to get the best terms available.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If we cannot make good terms with the agents then the Government should carry the wheat scheme on their own shoulders, and they can do so with success.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Is Clause 21 not comprehensive enough?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I will come to that later. Let us turn to Clause 9, which is about contracts not being assignable. It says—

The interest of a vendor under the acknowledgment and certificate issued by a Government agent shall not be transferred or assigned without the consent in writing of the Minister first obtained.

Whilst we in Western Australia agreed at the commencement of the pool that this is what we wanted, now that we have got a great part of the old wheat still on our hands and a new pool is coming the position is altogether different. I take it that when the certificates are issued to us they are our property. Why should we have to approach the Minister to ask if we can make use of

them? Why should we not be in the position of being able to make use of them? We may want them in order to finance ourselves, and that is what the position will be almost without exception. What can the Minister do? What could he do in the way of refusing to assign the interest of a vendor? The thing is not right.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: He could determine the agreement.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: What agreement would there be? If a vendor has a certificate for his wheat and wishes to get an advance upon it from the bank or any other financial institution why should he not be in a position to do so? It is his property. We should have an opportunity of dealing with these things. As a matter of fact, this is allowed in Victoria, and there is no legitimate reason for not allowing it here.

Hon. C. Sommers: You would have so much more red tape with the Minister.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: What is the use of red tape? The position will become intolerable. We must be able to finance with these certificates or we shall not be able to go on. Subclause 3 of Clause 10 says—

The Minister may, as prescribed, exempt (either generally or in any particular case) from the operation of this section—(a) sales or purchases of seed wheat by growers of wheat to or from growers of wheat for bona fide use by the purchasers in their farming operation.

I consider that this part of the Bill is all right, but we also have parts (b), (c), and (d), which will allow of some more trafficking being done, and we as the representatives of the farmers do not want that. My stand, at all events, is that we do not want it. We do not want any trafficking at all. It says here that these people who are handling seed wheat, Gardner Bros. and others, cannot handle it. Further on it says that the millers may juggle with it as they like. We have had enough of that. Parts (b), (c), and (d) are, I think, a menace to the proper working of the scheme, and will only provide a further loophole for other misdeeds. Clause 14 of the Bill reads—

The property in all wheat in the possession of agents, including wheat appropriated to the purposes of Clause 10 of agreements made in the form in the second

schedule and in the products of such wheat, shall continue in the Crown, until supplies are taken by the agent and paid for as in the said Clause 10 provided; and so long as the property in such wheat and the products thereof continues in the Crown, the agent shall not be deemed the reputed owner thereof.

Paragraph 10 of the second schedule reads—

The agent may acquire from the Minister for the agent's own legitimate milling purposes so much of the wheat received by him under this agency as the Minister may deem to be reasonably required for such purposes.

As a matter of fact, under this the miller may acquire such a quantity of wheat as will keep his mill going for 24 hours a day throughout the whole year, although he is only operating for about 12 hours in the day. The miller has got the wheat stacked there, our wheat, the wheat of the pool, and he can have two years' supply of wheat in hand for which he need not pay a farthing; but we have to take all the risk though he need only pay for it when he mills it. Probably he would dispose of it before he had paid a penny on it. In previous years he has had to buy months ahead and have the wheat stored for six or 10 months, and been obliged to finance it. Now, we have to stand the whole of the financing. This makes the Bill so difficult that I cannot see how we can arrive at a decision, and how we can knock it into shape at all. Clause 17 reads—

An agreement dated the 20th day of October, one thousand nine hundred and sixteen, and made between the Colonial Treasurer and the Commonwealth Bank, whereby certain advances by the said bank to an amount not exceeding two hundred and fifty thousand pounds were guaranteed on behalf of the State Government, is hereby ratified.

We have to work to an agreement of which we know nothing. We are the vendors of the goods and we should know what we are passing. We should demand that as a right. I think the House will agree that we should have a select committee to go into this question. We, the farmers, would like to have the thing cleaned up, as in any other industry which is working. We have half of the 1915-1916 wheat on hand, we have the 1916-

17 wheat coming in, and we to arrange for the sowing of the 1917-18 crop. In ordinary times our capital is invested for a matter of 21 months, but our position is even worse in these abnormal times. It represents a large outlay of capital for a poor return, and we are now in a position where, if interest accumulates, the ever-increasing burden will become too heavy. We would like to see some way out of the difficulty. If we are to continue farming at all, we must have some definite advance made, and must be shown some consideration. The stoppage of the farming industry of Australia will be a severe blow to the Commonwealth; and it is a blow which will fall, in this State at all events, unless a better measure than this is passed for the encouragement of the farmers, and unless a substantial advance can be financed. Some hon. members may reply that the farming industry is not of great value to Western Australia; but let them carry their minds back to the nineties, when wheat was 12s. per bushel, and the price of bread was extortionate. This community would be paying more than 12s. per bushel for wheat to-day, were it not for the enormous expansion of wheat growing here since that period. Let hon. members consider, moreover, the value of the farmer to this State if only from the point of view of revenue. Regarded as a whole, the wheat industry of Western Australia is not in a very satisfactory condition. The average crop for the Commonwealth is only 11.8 bushels per acre, and the average price works out at about 3s. 10¾d. per bushel. Those figures refer to Australia as a whole. It will readily be seen that the farmers will need an advance of at least 3s. or 3s. 4d. per bushel, simply to enable them to carry on. My own view is that, as things are now, the Government will be quite safe in arranging an advance at about those figures, on the wheat bond system, for instance. There is a good deal of other matter which I had intended to deal with, but the hour is late, and I will not detain hon. members. Though I support the measure in its present stage. I shall, before it goes into Committee, move that it be referred to a select committee, by adopting which course we shall, I hope and believe, be enabled to place on the statute

book a measure that will meet the requirements not merely of this year but of many years to come.

On motion by Hon. C. Sommers, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 15th November, 1916.

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

QUESTION—ROCKY BAY PROPOSED BRIDGE.

Mr. S. STUBBS (for Mr. Allen) asked the Minister for Works : 1, What has been the total amount of expenditure incurred from 1st January, 1910, to date, in connection with a proposed bridge across the Swan river, below Perth and above Rocky Bay ? 2, What was the object of the work ? 3, Have any plans been prepared—(a) of the proposed bridge ; (b) of any works having collateral relation thereto ? 4, Has a report on the proposal been prepared by the Engineer-in-Chief ? 5, If plans and a report have been prepared, will they be laid on the Table of the House ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied : 1, £8,012. 2, To ascertain the most suitable location for a bridge, having regard both

to the approaches thereto and the foundations to be obtained in the river. To this end several surveys and many soundings were made and numerous bores put down, and a cast-iron cylinder, eight feet in diameter, sunk in the worst position, filled with concrete and sand, and loaded with rails, to ascertain the bearing capacity of the underlying stratum. This test is at present in progress. 3, (a) Diagrams have been prepared. (b) Sections of the approaches to the bridge have been drawn. 4, No ; data being incomplete. 5, Answered by No. 4.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, State Salaries Commonwealth Taxation. (Introduced by the Premier.)

2, Nelson Rates Validation. (Introduced by the Minister for Works.)

3, Footwear Regulation. (Introduced by Hon. J. D. Connolly, Honorary Minister.)

MOTION—MINING PROFITS,

FEDERAL TAXATION.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora) [4.43] : I move—

That in the opinion of this House the tax on mining profits, as proposed by the Federal Government, is unfair in its incidence, and will prejudicially affect mining in this State.

I am not doing this with the intention of allowing any portion of the State or section of the people to escape payment of what I consider a fair meed of taxation when we compare it with the taxation paid by every other section of the community. Before I have finished I will endeavour to prove that the motion is justified. The first aspect of the question to be taken into consideration is the relative importance of our primary and secondary industries. Ready as we are to gratefully acknowledge what has been done for the State by other primary industries, all are forced to admit that gold mining was primarily, and in the first place solely, responsible for the advancement of the State. It provided opportunity for men, not only to make fortunes for themselves, but to lift the State out of a position of obscurity and advertise it throughout the world. After the gold-