

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You mean their successors, not their predecessors.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Well, their successors too. I had hoped the Bill would not be renewed this year. Last year I expressed the hope that it would not find a place on the statute book any longer. If it should be again continued, I will most impressively ask the Government not to re-introduce it any more, and not seek to impose a higher duty than actually exists. The position is simply this: The stamp duty on conveyances, fixed by the original Act, was 10s. per cent. During the emergency stage of the war period the Government doubled that duty. But when that measure was introduced it was clearly stated that it would be only temporary. Instead of that, the measure to-day is now a very permanent one. It comes down year in and year out with a most surprising consistency. It will be conceded that the duty of 10s. per cent. is a fair charge on those transactions. It is a good thing that we as a State should set an example to other States. The other States imposed similar measures, and I suppose that once they received the additional revenue from this source they have found it difficult to give up that method of raising revenue. I do not know whether the House desires to continue this impost for another year, but I really do not think it should be introduced again.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [8.10]: I carefully noted Mr. Nicholson's remarks last year and forwarded them to the Treasury. About a month ago, anticipating that this hardy annual was about to come up here again, I saw Mr. Berkeley, the Assistant Under Treasurer. One of the big points made by Mr. Nicholson last year was what he called the excessive duty on the transfer of shares. I myself have had some experience of that, and I am able to confirm everything Mr. Nicholson has said. I referred it to Mr. Berkeley, who said it had been noted and that there were in the Act other anomalies requiring correction. At that time he was doubtful whether the Bill would be re-introduced this year. He recognised the necessity for an amendment, especially in respect of the duty on the transfer of shares. So the hon. member will see that I have given attention to the matter. I sent along

the "Hansard" report of his speech last year to the Treasury, where his remarks have been carefully noted. However, it has been considered necessary to bring down the Bill again this year.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

House adjourned at 8.14 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 4th December, 1928.

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

QUESTION—ELECTORAL, WEST PROVINCE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Is he aware that at the last West Province election a number of persons recorded postal votes who were neither sick nor outside the distance allowed under the Act from a polling booth? 2, If so, will the Electoral Department take proceedings against those persons? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, Early in June last the Chief Electoral Officer personally made inquiries in regard to certain West Province electors, but the results were too inconclusive to warrant further action.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY, NORPA.

Mr. FERGUSON (for Mr. Griffiths) asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: 1, In view of the wholesale settlement on locations around Norpa, will he go into the question of relieving the water famine there? 2, Will he ascertain whether any of the following schemes is advisable and practicable:—(a) making available bores for individual boring and the services of and expert to direct where it should be done; (b) utilisation of the unreserved rock catchment on Locations 211 and 218; (c) extensions west from the 16-mile gate, No. 1 rabbit-proof fence, of the South Burracoppin extension?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, I am not aware that there is a water famine in the Norpa area. In April, 1927, a request was received from a number of settlers for an extension to be made from a branch off the G.W.S. main. The department submitted a proposal, and invited the settlers to reply. This invitation has not been accepted. If it had been, it is possible that the extension would have been made. 2 and 3, The matter of water supplies for agricultural areas is under consideration.

BILL—TEXAS COMPANY (AUSTRALASIA) LIMITED (PRIVATE).

Message.

Message received from His Excellency notifying that in accordance with joint Standing Order No. 51 he consented on behalf of His Majesty and of the Government to the Assembly doing as they thought fit in respect of the Bill.

Report of Select Committee.

Mr. Rowe brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Bill.

Report read and ordered to be printed.

BILL—STATE TRADING CONCERNS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

BILL—TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—HOSPITAL FUND.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Health, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 2, 9, and 14.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Health in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The other night an amendment was moved to this clause. I have to admit I made a mistake, and I think several other members were of the same opinion as I, namely that we did not delete the words "and other investments exempt from taxation under the first mentioned Act." I thought the amendment was to delete only the words "and income derived from Government securities." I have since found that that was not the case. After consulting the Crown Law Department I now wish to reinsert the words that were deleted.

Mr. Davy: All of them?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Yes, all of them. I see no logical reason for exempting Government securities. The tax under this Bill will not be an income tax. We are giving benefits for the tax that will be collected, and it could not in any sense of the word be claimed to be an income tax. The Solicitor General puts it very plainly. His note to me is as follows:—

As regards the last two lines of the interpretation of "income," when Government securities are issued free of income tax no Bill could properly enact that nevertheless the interest should be subject to income tax. But although the contributions to the hospital fund in respect of income are collected by the Commissioner of Taxation, the contributions to the fund cannot be properly regarded as income tax. Income tax is in aid of Consolidated Revenue. To tax the interest would be to reduce the rate of interest payable by the Gov-

ernment. The Bill provides for a general contribution in aid of public and private hospitals, in return for free treatment afforded. This, it seems to me, is quite a different matter from the levying of income tax.

In regard to the first portion of the amendment, I cannot see any reason why Government securities should be exempt. In regard to the second portion "and other investments exempt from taxation under the first mentioned Act," if a man living in Western Australia has invested his money in Victoria, the proceeds would be exempt from paying anything if those words were not reinstated. Yet, living in Western Australia he will receive hospital treatment if he requires it. I can see no reason why he should not pay for that treatment.

Mr. Sampson: He took up that investment under a definite promise.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: He did not take it up under any promise at all. No promise has been given by this or any other Government for securities other than Government securities. The money to be paid under the Bill I regard, not as income tax, but as a contribution to a fund from which the taxpayers are to get a benefit.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Every tax is supposed to return a benefit.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: If the investors are resident in Western Australia I see no reason why they should not contribute. I move an amendment—

That the following words deleted by a previous amendment be added to the definition of "income":—"and income derived from Government securities and other investments exempt from taxation under the first mentioned Act."

Mr. SAMPSON: I am surprised at the Minister attempting to have these words reinstated. There is no justification for it. Their reinstatement would mean the acknowledgment of something which is ultra vires, and would constitute something which is a breach of faith with those who have invested in this class of security. In many instances it is advertised that the amount produced from Government securities should be free from income taxation. The amount produced under the Bill will be produced from the income of the taxpayer.

Mr. Sleeman: And you do not want everybody to pay according to income.

Mr. SAMPSON: If we are to amend those measures relating to the investment of money in Government securities, let us

do so; but to alter this at the present stage and make it retrospective would constitute an immoral act.

The Minister for Health: It is not made retrospective.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister has shown no reason for going back on the definite arrangement that was made.

The Minister for Health: I cannot see that we should wipe out the lot.

Mr. SAMPSON: He agreed to strike out this portion of the clause.

Mr. Sleeman: You caught him on the hop.

Mr. SAMPSON: I refuse to reflect upon the Minister. He agreed to the amendment after careful thought.

Mr. Sleeman: He is putting back the words after careful thought.

Mr. SAMPSON: It was a wise decision on his part when he agreed to the amendment. He said he would honour the agreement that had been made in the past. I hope he will adhere to that view.

Mr. DAVY: The Minister says it is not an income tax, but an effort on the part of the Government to enforce contributions from the public for benefits received. The Bill will compel people who receive no benefit to pay their contributions, and some of these may not be living in the State. It is even proposed to make companies pay. It is therefore an income tax Act. Under the Bill the Government will not be able to tax incomes that are derived out of Western Australia. The only kind of income, that is income within the meaning of the Act, is that which is derived within Western Australia. It would be a breach of faith for Parliament to inflict a tax upon investments that have been declared free of tax. It is wrong to issue Government loans that are exempt from taxation, but as the bargain has been made it must be adhered to.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We shall not be able to tax loans in future, because they will all be issued by the Commonwealth Government. This Bill is a direct tax on incomes, and is being imposed for general revenue purposes. It means taxing bonds that have been issued free of tax. The money will be spent in rendering a service to the people. I hope the Minister will not break faith with the investors.

The Minister for Health: I am not breaking faith with them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This will be a tax on incomes derived from Government securities, which have been issued in the past. We should never have issued loans free of taxation.

The Minister for Health: The Commonwealth Government collect a tax upon them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: All our loans have been issued free of tax. If we had imposed taxation we should have had to add to the interest we have to pay.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Many other Government securities besides bonds and war loans will be affected. Some local people have invested their money in Victoria and New South Wales, and receive a very fair income as a result. If we left out those words, we could not tax any income derived from such investments.

Mr. Davy: Do you say, if the words are left in, you can tax them?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: On the advice of the Crown Law Department I say we can. I believed the other night that the amendment stopped at the words "Government security." "Hansard" gives my interpretation of the position, and the interjection of the Leader of the Country Party supporting my view. Other members opposite were of opinion that I was right in my assumption. I was in fact caught on the hop. I did not know that the amendment had gone so far. If I make a mistake I am always prepared to admit it. I made a mistake that night; otherwise I would have divided the Committee, when probably the words would have remained. Certainly it would not be right for a Minister to introduce a Bill that proposed something ultra vires. I am assured that what I am now attempting to do is perfectly legal and within our rights. The Bill goes to the lowest possible level of income for the purpose of maintaining hospitals, and I believe the people are prepared to submit to such taxation. Therefore I should not be asked to forego taxation on large incomes. If the advice of the Crown Law Department were to the contrary effect, I would not dream of seeking to re-introduce the words.

Mr. DAVY: I shall not pit my own opinion against that of the Solicitor-General, who is a much more experienced and learned lawyer than I am. At the same time I am surprised to find that the clause, as it stood originally, would make subject to this tax incomes people here derive from other States. If that is properly understood by

the Minister, it certainly shakes the opinion I have formed. I am not discussing whether incomes derived outside Western Australia should be taxable under the Bill; I am rather inclined to agree with the Minister on that point. However, the Minister will get people who live outside the State and cannot derive any benefit from the Bill, and also people who live in the State and derive income from outside Western Australia. It cannot be said that the Bill will tax only those who are to derive benefit from it. I fail to see any line differentiating this measure from an ordinary income tax Bill. If the words are re-inserted, there will be a definite breach of faith. I do not know whether it will be ultra vires or not, but I am convinced that it will be immoral. Apparently the Minister thinks that so long as he is inside the law, it is proper to do anything.

Mr. SAMPSON: I understand that the Minister acknowledges the tax should not be levied when the investment states that the income is tax free.

The Minister for Health: I do not acknowledge anything of the sort. I thought that was all that was being taken out the other night.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If a taxpayer makes £500 on a loan investment in the Old Land, does the Minister propose to tax that? He cannot do it. If a firm operating in Perth and Melbourne makes profits in Melbourne, does the Minister propose to tax them?

The Minister for Health: I cannot do it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the Minister said he would do it.

The Minister for Health: No. I was speaking of individuals.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Income already taxed by the Federal Government and by, say, the Victorian Government, will be taxable here under the Bill.

The Minister for Health: No. I have not said anything of the kind.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I thought the Minister said so ten times in reply to the member for West Perth.

The Minister for Health: No. That hon. member was talking of one thing, and I was talking of another.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In any case, the Minister cannot tax as he proposed.

The Minister for Health: Then what is wrong with letting the amendment go through and seeing whether it is ultra vires?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In the case of a man coming to this country with £50,000 to invest and leaving £50,000 behind him in another country, it would be pretty hard luck if, supposing he lost on his investment here for the first year or two, he had to pay taxation here on income derived elsewhere. However, I know that the Minister will not be able to tax such income. It would be monstrous if he could.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I fail to understand what the Opposition are making such a row about. They did a clever bit of work on Thursday in getting the amendment through without the Minister's knowledge. I am pleased that the Minister, immediately upon discovering actually what happened, brought down this amendment. While the Opposition are so concerned about these poor investors, there is not a word from them about the boys and girls to be taxed under the Bill. The principle of the measure is that everyone shall be taxed according to his or her income.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I would agree to exempt all those small incomes.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Let us get hold of the big incomes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I object to a breach of faith. Let us keep our word.

Mr. Sleeman: We are keeping our word.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the people of Western Australia will note the way in which the member for Fremantle keeps his word. We have said that certain investments shall be free of income tax. If the member for Fremantle has his way, we shall not get much money if we go on the money market. We should stand to our promises, some of which are in writing.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is all very well for the Leader of the Opposition to say that we should keep our word. The Minister for Health has stated distinctly that the Solicitor General says that this is quite in order.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then he is wrong.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Leader of the Opposition may be a better lawyer than the Solicitor General, but I am prepared to take the word of the Solicitor General.

Mr. Davy: This is not a mere legal question.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Fremantle has misunderstood the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition, who pointed out that it was a breach of faith to

tax money that we had declared would be tax free. If we tax that which we have said shall be free, we merely reduce the value of investments made on that understanding. It is not a mere legal question, but a moral one.

Amendment put and passed with the following result:—

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 19 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 17 |
| | | | | — |
| Majority for | .. | .. | .. | 2 |

| AYES. | | |
|----------------|--|-------------------|
| Mr. Chesson | | Mr. Millington |
| Mr. Clydesdale | | Mr. Munslie |
| Mr. Corboy | | Mr. Pantou |
| Mr. Coverley | | Mr. Rowe |
| Mr. Cowan | | Mr. Sleeman |
| Mr. Cunningham | | Mr. A. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Kenneally | | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Lamond | | Mr. Withers |
| Mr. Marshall | | Mr. Wilson |
| Mr. McCallum | | |

(Teller.)

| NOES. | | |
|---------------|--|--------------------|
| Mr. Angelo | | Sir James Mitchell |
| Mr. Brown | | Mr. Richardson |
| Mr. Davy | | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Doney | | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. Ferguson | | Mr. Taylor |
| Mr. Griffiths | | Mr. Teesdale |
| Mr. Latham | | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Lindsay | | Mr. North |
| Mr. Maley | | |

(Teller.)

| AYES. | | PAIRS. | | NOES. | |
|---------------|--|--------|--|----------------------|--|
| Miss Holman | | | | Mr. J. M. Smith | |
| Mr. Keuneally | | | | Mr. J. H. Smith | |
| Mr. Troy | | | | Mr. C. P. Wansbrough | |
| Mr. Johnson | | | | Mr. Mann | |

Amendment thus passed.

Clause 9—Contributions to fund:

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move an amendment—

That after "employee" in line 2 of subparagraph (2) of the second proviso the words "in receipt of wages not less than one pound a week" be inserted.

When the clause was previously discussed, some hon. members were of the opinion that a person would be taxed if he was in receipt of less than £1. It was suggested that if a nurse girl received 10s. a week and keep, she would be taxed on £1. I said that I did not think that anyone who was receiving less than £1 a week in cash would be taxed. I consulted the Crown Solicitor and he confirmed my opinion, but said that

the amendment I have proposed would make the position perfectly definite. With the amendment it will be certain that board and lodging will not count unless a person is in receipt of not less than £1 a week as wages.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am glad that the Minister has agreed to amend the clause because it would undoubtedly have meant taxation for those in receipt of board and lodging and a small wage such as he indicated.

The Minister for Health: The Crown Solicitor denied that, but the amendment has made it quite definite.

Mr. LATHAM: I am sorry that the Minister did not increase the exemption so as to make the tax apply to those in receipt of not less than £2 a week. If a boy is earning 21s. a week and is living at home, he will not be exempt from the tax, whereas if another individual is receiving 19s. 6d. a week and has board and lodging as well, he will be exempt. It would be fairer had the limit been made £2, of which £1 was to be taken as for board and lodging.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 14—Contributions in respect of salary and wages:

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: This clause created a good deal of discussion. It was said that if a settler obtained an advance of £100 from the Industries Assistance Board and £90 was spent for superphosphate or seed wheat, he would have to pay tax on the £100. The same argument was used about a miner receiving assistance from the Government. I said no such thing was contemplated, and I am still positive the Bill does not provide for it. The Solicitor General and the Commissioner of Taxation assure me that if a farmer got an advance of £100 and any portion of it was spent for seed wheat, superphosphate or machinery, he would not have to pay tax on it. To make sure, however, I move an amendment—

That after "advances" in paragraph (c) the following words be inserted:—"(such work being their own personal labour)".

A man who gets an advance and does the work himself will have to pay if he earns over £1 a week.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If he borrowed from an ordinary bank he would not have to pay.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: An ordinary bank would not advance 9s. per day for sustenance. I believe that 95 per cent. of the farmers do not object to the tax if they do the work themselves. If they let the work by contract, the contractors will have to pay.

Mr. Thomson: There is no objection to that.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Then I cannot see why there should be any objection on the part of a man getting a living from an advance through his own personal effort. At least £200,000 a year has been paid in sustenance under group settlement to men who are no longer on blocks. Why should not we collect when some of those men have been earning up to £30 a month on contract clearing?

Mr. Thomson: On their own blocks?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Their own and other people's blocks.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They could hardly earn £30 a month.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Some of them did. At present they are permitted to earn up to £20 a month, and why should they not pay? The other night I said I believed that 90 per cent. of the group settlers were contributing to a hospital fund. The percentage is over 90 and those people are not objecting. In fact they asked to contribute. If the Bill is passed they will not contribute any more.

Mr. Thomson: That is a voluntary scheme.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: — It would not be possible to provide medical attention in some districts unless the settlers volunteered to contribute. They are paying 1s. 6d. a week. None of them is making an income that will necessitate the payment of 1s. 6d. a week under this measure. Many men making only a small income desire a scheme that will ensure medical attention in return for a small weekly contribution. Unless they contribute to a fund there is no hope of getting a medical man to settle in some districts. We have doctors in agricultural areas who would not go there unless they were assured of a small income from such a fund. In some instances doctors have formed funds and 80 per cent. of the people within a radius of 10 miles have contributed up to £4 per year per household for medical attention.

This tax will not amount to anything like that sum.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Group settlers pay also to the workers' compensation fund, which appears to average £7 per man per year. That is a pretty stiff tax.

The Minister for Health: I think you introduced that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I introduced the system, but the amount has been increased. The present Act was not in operation when I was in office and the premium was very much lower than it is today. The point is, should a man pay hospital tax on money he borrows? If he borrows from a private bank, the Minister cannot collect; if he uses his own money, the Minister cannot collect, but if he borrows from the Industrial Assistance Board, the Minister proposes to impose the tax. That is not right. An advance is in no sense wages; it is a loan which has to be repaid and on which the borrower has to pay interest. I do not think the Solicitor General could have understood the position.

Mr. THOMSON: It is not fair or equitable that a man who receives a Government advance on which he has to pay 7 per cent. interest should be charged hospital tax on the amount. The Government will levy the tax on men who from dire necessity have to approach the Industries Assistance Board. The money is advanced only to enable the settler to continue his work and further protect the security. I cannot understand how it can be said that a man who receives an advance from the Industries Assistance Board is working for wages. Here is the position: If I borrow money from a private bank and I employ men to work for me, those men are charged 1½d. in the pound. I have not to pay to the hospital fund on the money that I have borrowed from the private bank. Therefore I cannot follow the Minister's reasoning that a man who receives assistance from the Industries Assistance Board should be placed in a different position from the man who borrows from a private bank?

The Minister for Health: Suppose he receives 9s. a day for 18 months and then leaves?

Mr. THOMSON: The Government have the security, and if the inspectors have been doing their work the money advanced to the man has increased the security of the Agricultural Bank and the Industries As-

sistance Board. If the man has been receiving 9s. a day and has not created an asset, then I am sorry for the equity of the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board.

The Minister for Health: Is not the amendment an improvement?

Mr. THOMSON: I wanted to reject the clause itself because it was not fair. Now the insertion of the words proposed will make the position worse for those who are unfortunate enough to have to obtain their money from the Industries Assistance Board.

The Minister for Health: I am not too anxious about the amendment, because the clause is quite plain as it is. It was to satisfy you and others that the Solicitor-General altered it.

Mr. THOMSON: Well, I don't like the clause and I don't like the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: If a farmer spends his capital, that capital will be subject to the measure. This is really capital because the farmer is mortgaging his future in respect of the amount involved, and the amount advanced by the Industries Assistance Board must be returned to the board, that is, if he remains solvent. I see no reason why a tradesman endeavouring to establish a business should not be called upon to pay the same as a farmer who borrows money from the Industries Assistance Board and later on has to repay it.

Mr. DAVY: The amendment makes the paragraph a little less offensive than before by limiting the scope of what appears to me to be a ridiculous position. I would like to move for the deletion of paragraph (c).

The CHAIRMAN: That is not possible because it has been agreed to down to the word "advances."

Mr. DAVY: If the amendment is carried, will it be possible then to move for the deletion of any part of the clause subsequent to the words about to be inserted?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may do that.

Amendment put and passed.

Mr. DAVY: I move an amendment—

That the words at the end of paragraph (e) "be deemed to be wages" be struck out. It may be that in many cases people who fail to succeed as farmers or miners never in practice pay back advances made to them. If it is contemplated by the Minister that people receiving advances under the Indus-

tries Assistance Board for work done by them, or even under the Mining Development Act, do not pay back advances, it is a serious indictment of the whole system built up under those two Acts. Everything advanced is secured by mortgage and there is a personal covenant by the mortgagor to repay on demand the money, with interest. Under the proposal contained in the Bill the money actually lent to these people is to pay tax, and the taxpayer enters into a legal obligation to repay a larger amount than he actually gets, and interest not only on what he gets but on something that he never sees which is taken from him by tax. That cannot be justified. The Minister spoke as if nobody ever paid back the money that was advanced.

The Minister for Health: I said, unfortunately that was our experience.

Mr. DAVY: Of course some people do not pay their ordinary debts; some go bankrupt and evade paying their debts and there are some who, after having become bankrupt, live in luxury ever afterwards. There are hundreds of settlers who have been on the Industries Assistance Board and who have paid off every penny. There are still scores on the board who will repay every penny with interest. I hope the Committee will prevent such an illogical provision as that proposed being put on the statute-book.

Mr. LATHAM: Advances of 9s. a day are made to farmers throughout the year and after the proceeds from the harvest have been obtained repayments are made to the Industries Assistance Board. The farmer pays income tax on his profits and now if we are going to insist upon what is proposed by the Bill, he will be paying twice in the one year. It is unfair to charge the farmer when the advance is made and charge him again when he makes the repayment. The clause will damage the Bill, and we should put it in order while we have it in this House. Though the hon. member's amendment will not get over the difficulty, I will support it.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 18 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 19 |

Majority against .. 1

ATTS.

Mr. Angelo
Mr. Brown
Mr. Davy
Mr. Doney
Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Griffiths
Mr. Latham
Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Maley

Mr. Mann
Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Sampson
Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Thomson
Mr. North

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Chesson
Mr. Clydesdale
Mr. Corboy
Mr. Coverley
Mr. Cowan
Mr. Cunningham
Mr. Kennedy
Mr. Lambert
Mr. Lamond
Mr. McCallum

Mr. Millington
Mr. Munster
Mr. Panton
Mr. Rowe
Mr. Sleeman
Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Willcock
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Withers

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

ATTS.

Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. C. P. Wansbrough

NOES.

Miss Holman
Mr. Keeneally
Mr. Johnson

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Bill reported with further amendments.

BILL—QUARRY RAILWAY EXTENSION.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LAKE GRACE-KARLGARIN RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th November.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [6.5]: This Bill, I think, was before the House just prior to the last elections. It was withdrawn in favour of the suggestion made by the Engineer-in-Chief that there should be practically a straight line of railway running through from Fremantle to Salmon Gums, which would serve all the country to be served by this proposed Lake Grace-Karlgarin railway.

Mr. Corboy: It would have served portion of the country.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It would have gone right along this route, and so

would have served all the people adjacent to the line. It would have served the people east of Kondinin. But that bigger project, apparently, has been dropped and this one substituted for it. The Minister has not told us why the Engineer-in-Chief's proposal is not to be gone on with. The use of 60-lb. rails will mean a cost of £4,000 per mile. So that line would cost over a quarter of a million of money, which is a great deal to have to be paid for. I must draw attention to this map accompanying the Bill. It is a very old map, and it does not show the subdivisions up to date. So I am afraid it will give many members an entirely wrong impression of the country to be served. I suggest to the Minister that in future all the alienated land should be plotted on the map accompanying a railway Bill brought down to the House. This, being a very old map, does not show the true position.

The Minister for Works: The difficulty is to get an up-to-date map.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the blocks sold could be plotted on this one for you. I think we ought to know why the other scheme has been abandoned.

The Minister for Works: It has not been abandoned.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, why are we going back to the original proposal? We abandoned this proposal in favour of the bigger scheme, and this Bill was withdrawn before the last elections.

Mr. Corboy: It was one of the slaughtered innocents.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No fear! The Minister withdrew it and explained why. It was to give place to Mr. Stileman's scheme.

Mr. Withers: Well, let us have this one to go on with.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Certainly I will let you have it, but I want to know why the member for Yilgarn is so satisfied with this, as against Mr. Stileman's scheme.

Mr. Corboy: I am not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Instead of attacking the Government about it and demanding to know why the line has not been built before now, the hon. member sits silent, has nothing whatever to say about it.

Mr. Corboy: I am content to get a railway.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I want a railway and an explanation too. I think the House is entitled to an explanation. The member for Fremantle also will want to know something about it. The laying down of our railways is entirely different to-day from what it was in the old days when material was low priced. Then we were prepared to deviate a railway in order to pick up the rich patches of land. Now, however, I think we can afford to put our railways more or less straight ahead. Many do not agree with me, but it seems to me that in the years to come we shall be able to use a great deal of country that to-day is regarded as of indifferent value. If wheat sold at 4s. our yield could be 50 million bushels. But in the years to come, if we get 5s. we shall be able to grow twice as much, and in addition the price firms we shall be able to use up a lot of land that at present would not repay us. Let us consider Russia.

The Minister for Health: Yes, Russia has been trotted out pretty freely of late years.

Mr. Corboy: The member for Northam trots it out at election times.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not mean red Russia, I mean golden-grained Russia.

The Minister for Railways: It will take five years to put right the wheat position in Russia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Officially the position in Russia is that it has under wheat one-twelfth of the total wheat area of the world. Yet Russia cannot feed with wheat one-fourth of the world's population. Russia's wheat yield per acre is low. I notice it is proposed to transfer some of her people from the poorer districts to richer parts. Siberia has some rich wheat lands.

Hon. G. Taylor: And plenty of political troubles.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There are other troubles besides political troubles confronting the agriculturist there. I am not at all afraid of what Russia will be able to do. I say we should have some regard to the whole of the land to be served by this railway. I do not know whether this line is to be built from the migration money. If the Minister for Works were in his own seat, instead of that of another Minister, I would ask him whether migration money is to be used in the construction

of this line. All those older settlers, east of Kondinin, ought not to be left any longer without a railway.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This line runs north, and then turns east about 10 miles. It seems to be a ridiculous proposal. The Minister explained that the line runs in this direction because it serves a greater area of good land than would be the case if it continued in a northerly direction. I hope he will provide the House with a map showing the position of the Newdegate-Lake Grace railway, and also that of the proposed railway from Kondinin east. That is the proposal put forward before the last elections by Mr. Stileman. The Minister also should satisfy the House that we ought to go to the expense of running the railway seven miles east in this direction. That bit of railway would cost about £30,000. I am going to support the proposal recommended by the Advisory Board. It does open up territory which ought to be served by a railway. We ought to have a plan showing the territory south of Southern Cross and east of the present settlement from Burracoppin to Lake Grace. There is a considerable area of country in that part of the State. The good land is very scattered. It is good around Lake King, Forrestania and other belts of country, and we should endeavour to serve these by building a few miles of railway. We started off with a system of spur lines in the Great Southern. When we got out to Bruce Rock we linked up with a loop line. We then found we ought to go further east, so we built a loop which runs through Kondinin. Now we have got land still further east, and I understand the Minister contemplates recommending the House to approve of another loop. If we had continued our spurs as we should have done in the light of experience, from the Great Southern as far east as we had land to settle, we might have linked them up in a manner suitable in the Railway Department.

The Minister for Railways: We should link up at the end of all of them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Railway Department would decide upon the best way to link up. It is too late to deal with the land west of the Kondinin railway, but not to deal with that land now unserved. It costs over £4,000 a mile to build railways now as against the earlier cost of £2,000.

We cannot therefore afford to build unnecessary miles of line. I do not see why so much of our wheat should go to Fremantle. There is no reason why we should not use Bunbury and Albany. Bunbury is already used to a great extent. We should use our railway system which serves the eastern country so as to send a great deal of the wheat to Bunbury, Albany and Esperance.

The Minister for Railways: A lot ought to go there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In our zone system we get very little for the haulage of wheat after the first 150 miles.

The Minister for Railways: It gradually tapers down.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Until we get practically nothing. It costs probably 4d. a bushel from Kellerberrin to the sea, and when we get another 100 miles out we pay another penny. The railways ought to haul the wheat to the nearest port at the cheapest rates. We cannot afford to haul it away from any port that can be used for its shipment. Why should wheat grown at Morawa not go to Geraldton?

The Minister for Railways: It does.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: More of it should go there. So it is with Bunbury and Albany. The latter port gets practically no wheat. We should arrange our system without building more miles of railway than are needed, so as to serve these ports. It will have to be done in the case of Esperance, for we cannot haul wheat from there to Fremantle.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Or from 100 miles west of Salmon Gums to Fremantle. Before the Bill passes through Committee I want some information about the bend in this line. The Minister will see that it covers a distance of about 10 miles. We are proposing to build 12 or 13 miles of very expensive line. Has all the land been settled and sold?

The Minister for Railways: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister said most of it had been sold.

Mr. Corboy: It was all taken up years ago.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister gave some figures of land still available.

Mr. Corboy: I would not care to take up too much of what is left.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is there any further good land in the district? If the price of wheat is maintained at 5s., we

can cultivate land that could not be cultivated a few years ago. Everything depends on the price as to whether we can use much of this second-class land or not. We have built a railway from Salmon Gums to Norseman. We believed then we could settle about 30 miles of country north of Salmon Gums. I understand that has not yet all been thrown open.

The Minister for Railways: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Government ought to throw it open without a moment's delay. There may be some doubt whether it will prove satisfactory farming land or not. We were told it would be suitable for wheat growing, and I believe it is.

The Minister for Railways: It is pretty heavy country.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is a considerable area of it, and it should be thrown open immediately. We cannot expect the general taxpayer to pay interest on the cost of railway construction, except for a short time until the land adjacent has been opened up and is producing. I hope the Minister will see that this land is made available to many would-be selectors, and that he will give the House the other information I have asked for.

Mr. Corboy: It could be obtained in answer to a question without the Bill being held up.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no need to worry about the building of this railway. It will not come out of the one per cent. money. We have already authorised the Yarramony railway, the Dale River, the Cranbrook-Boyup Brook and the Bridgetown-Mount Barker railways. These have not yet been started, and must come before the Karlgarin line.

Mr. Corboy: If that were true it would be a great shame.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: A little delay will not make the slightest difference to the position. We have heard of this line twice already. The next time we hear of it will be after the next elections, when I shall have the pleasure of building it.

Mr. Corboy: You are an optimist.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [7.40]: I am disappointed at the route it is proposed that this railway shall follow. My electorate has for many years been fighting for this railway to go straight through to Fremantle, which is the natural port for the Karlgarin district.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: No.

Mr. BROWN: I have figures to prove it.

Mr. Corboy: You mean it would be if the railway went straight through.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Not even then.

Mr. BROWN: If there are any settlers deserving of a railway they are found in the Karlgarin district. I have no desire to hinder the construction of this line, but I feel justified in voicing my views. Many of us have been urging the Government to construct a line as early as possible from Karlgarin to Fremantle. This, of course, cannot be done at once. The principle we have been fighting for is that the railway must come into Kondinin. If it does not, the through line will be held up for many years. It should be regarded as a national line. From then onwards it will only be a line for the shortening of the route. Is it of no consequence that goods and produce have to be hauled unnecessarily for 50 or 100 miles? I can prove that if the line is built through to Fremantle it will save 150 miles of haulage. This would mean a great deal to the Government, and to the settlers, because of the shortening of the routes. For the information of the House I will give certain distances. From Karlgarin to Fremantle, via Kondinin and Brookton from about 30 miles due east of Kondinin, is 206 miles.

Mr. Corboy: But none of that line has been constructed.

Mr. BROWN: Not a great deal of it has to be constructed. From Karlgarin to Perth, via Lake Grace and Wagin—the Karlgarin people will want to come to Perth and send goods to Perth—is 344 miles as against the 206.

Mr. Corboy: As against 206 miles if the line were built—a very different proposition. What is the difference on the present railways?

Mr. BROWN: From Karlgarin to Bunbury via Lake Grace and Wagin is 256 miles, as against 206 miles by the other route. Which is the natural port of the Karlgarin district?

Mr. Withers: How much would have to be constructed to make that route practicable?

Mr. BROWN: Fifty-four miles to Lake Grace will have to be constructed. Then there is the line to Wagin. From Lake Grace to Wagin the railway is very light and very slow, the average pace being about 10 miles per hour. In fact, that is

the average pace on spur lines, allowing for stoppages.

Mr. Corboy: You only watch the train when it is going uphill.

Mr. BROWN: To confirm these figures it is only necessary to examine the timetable. From York to Bruce Rock, a distance of 98 miles, takes 10 hours. The 56 miles from Brookton to Corrigin takes over five hours. The proposed line, if built with 45-lb. rails, will require considerably more time for transport than the route I have suggested. From Karlgarin to Kondinin by the route I have suggested, 30 miles east of Kondinin, means 30 miles to Corrigin, then 60 miles from Brookton to Armadale, or a total of 120 miles. That is as against 54 miles.

Mr. Corboy: What would be the cost?

Mr. BROWN: A distance of 26½ miles is already authorised and will have to be built. Since Parliament has authorised the construction, it must be carried out. What is the use of passing railway Acts and holding them in abeyance for years? Altogether it means a difference of only 39 miles in building. From Corrigin to Brookton is an impossible line, because out of the 50 miles there are 12 miles of heavy grades. Even those 12 miles, which are near Brookton, it is impossible to take a load. The rails are only 45 lbs., and there are sharp curves and heavy grades, and only light engines can be used. From about 12 to 20 miles east of Brookton all the heavy traffic runs eastward to Corrigin, and from Corrigin it runs to Narrogin, and from Narrogin to Spencer's Brook, and from Spencer's Brook to Fremantle. Is there any sense in a route like that?

Mr. Corboy: Do you suggest that less than 40 miles will have to be constructed to link up Kondinin?

Mr. BROWN: It is only 65 miles altogether with the 26½ miles already authorised but not yet constructed. On those grounds I am justified in advocating Fremantle as the port for Karlgarin. I will now give the House some figures compiled not for my benefit in particular but for the benefit of members generally. The distance from Brookton to Fremantle via Spencer's Brook is 130 miles. From Brookton to Fremantle via Armadale is a distance of 80 miles. From Armadale to Fremantle the railway is already built. Moreover there are all the towns in between, from Narrogin to Mt. Kokeby. The whole of

those centres will benefit if this line is built to Fremantle. I refer to Cuballing, Popeninning and Pingelly. All the goods from those towns will go over the line I suggest, and passenger traffic will follow. The distance from Corrigin to Armadale is 133 miles. Via Spencer's Brook it is 222 miles. From Kondinin to Fremantle via Armadale is 101 miles. I leave any member to refute my figures. In view of them I must uphold what I have fought for ever since I have been in the House, namely, Fremantle as the natural port of this great district. While in Kondinin recently I was told that from the other side of Hyden Rock, Esperance is the natural port. I believe that is so. What is going to be the nature of the freight the line I suggest will carry? Nearly all our agricultural machinery is either assembled or made in Perth, though not a great deal may be made here. To get to Karlgarin by the Government's route the machinery will have to travel 344 miles. What freight does that represent? Just imagine a farmer wanting a machine and having to pay 344 miles freight on it! Again, a great deal of timber comes to Karlgarin from the Perth yards. Is that timber to travel 344 miles? The same remarks apply to galvanised iron, general merchandise, superphosphate and bags—all to travel 344 miles as against 206 miles over a direct line! We know that Kondinin and Karlgarin will eventually be great stock districts. There are now large flocks of sheep around Kondinin. Sheep can be fattened there as well as in any other part of the State. What will be done with the surplus of fat sheep? How are they to be got to market? Where is the market for them? Half our population being in the metropolitan area, it stands to reason that the fat stock must be sent to Midland Junction. Under the Government's proposal a Karlgarin farmer with fat sheep or fat lambs will have to send them round 344 miles to Perth. What condition will they be in on arrival at Midland Junction? They will be greatly wasted. Some members may say that the stock will go to Bunbury. Admittedly, Bunbury will be a little nearer, but can Bunbury absorb all the fat stock? It is only a little village compared with Perth. I am at a loss to know why the Government do not realise that distance saved in haulage represents a saving to the Railway De-

partment. If the department can pay as worked at present in some respects, this must be a wonderful country. The Railway Department have to carry the stock at a loss, because they have to work on the distance to the nearest port. The stock is to be sent to Narrogin and charged for only 12 miles as from Brookton, after being sent 80 miles further out. Is that a reasonable proceeding? The route I advocate is undoubtedly in the best interests of the State. Again, surplus chaff and oats will not be absorbed by Bunbury or by Albany, but will have to come to the metropolitan area, where the demand is.

Mr. Corboy: Evidently you are an advocate of centralisation.

Mr. BROWN: My argument is still that Bunbury is not the natural port. There is no getting away from that. Farmers will realise that they cannot afford to send oats and chaff a distance of 344 miles to Perth. In introducing the Bill the Minister said that the proposed line would not in any way interfere with the through line from Fremantle to Esperance. I maintain that it will so interfere, and will hold back a national project for the next 30 or 40 years. On the Fremantle harbour the State will have to spend two or three millions sterling. The trade demands and warrants it. Again, a considerable amount of money will have to be spent on the new railway bridge and on the Robb's Bay jetty line. Then quicker despatch will be obtainable at Fremantle than at any other port.

Mr. Corboy: Is that an argument for neglecting other ports?

Mr. BROWN: No. Now let me take the passenger traffic. A person living at Hyden Rock, under the Government's proposal, will have to catch that slow miserable train to Lake Grace, and travel thence to Perth. He will be two or three days on the road. The result will be to force Karlgarin people to use motor cars, and the railways will lose a considerable amount of passenger traffic. It would be impossible for those people to spend so much time in travelling on a slow, roundabout railway. I may be asked what alternative I can put up. It is to build a line straight out from Kondinin to Hyden Rock. Construction might stop there for a time, and then could be continued in the form of a spur line out from Lake Grace

within 25 miles of Kondinin, so saving 125 miles of transport. Under those conditions the cost to the Government would be considerably less. I have fought for the route I propose during a great many years, and have attended many deputations on the subject, and have obtained—I will not say promises but much encouragement. At the last moment I find that it is proposed to build the line from Lake Grace. The Bill was supposed to be introduced last year, but for some unaccountable reason it has been held over until now. We know that a majority of the advisory board reported in favour of this route, but it was not a unanimous decision.

Mr. Corboy: It was originally.

Mr. BROWN: I do not know about that.

Mr. Corboy: One of the three twisted afterwards.

Mr. BROWN: One of the three considered that this route was in the best interests of the State. It is for that reason that I am fighting for the route I advocate.

Mr. Corboy: Do you say that the majority said that the line should go into Kondinin?

Mr. BROWN: No, the other way about. Because it was not a unanimous decision, I am justified in my argument, which I advance in the best interests of Western Australia. If it had been a unanimous decision on the part of the Railway Advisory Board, my attitude would be a wrong one.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: The opinion now is unanimous.

Mr. BROWN: I am not aware of that. I think that decision still stands, and there was only a majority of two out of three.

Mr. Corboy: No.

Mr. BROWN: That opinion was in favour of the line being built from Kondinin.

Mr. Corboy: There are but three members on the Railway Advisory Board, and the opinion was two to one in favour of the proposed route.

Mr. BROWN: The surprising thing to me is the attitude of the people of Kulin who hold that the line should go from this centre. I am at a loss to understand that.

Mr. Corboy: You go there, and you will appreciate their attitude.

Mr. BROWN: I cannot understand it.

Mr. Corboy: The Kulin people are not selfish like the Kondinin people.

Mr. BROWN: It seems to me a little bit of jealousy on the part of Kulin, because

Kondinin is the newer and larger town. I am not fighting for Kondinin; I think nothing of Kondinin. I am merely fighting in the interests of my electorate, and there is not one of the people who has not asked me to see that the line goes from Kondinin. What would I be if I sat down and allowed the line to go through without saying a word? What sort of a man would I be? Would I be fit to represent the people of my electorate? In my opinion this will be a calamity, because I regard it as a national project, and a work that I have been fighting for will be held up for many years if the Bill goes through. Look at the congestion that exists in Perth! I would like to ask members if they would be prepared to support a line from Brookton to Armadale, unless it was connected up with the eastern portions of the State. Certainly they would not agree to any such proposition! It would not be possible to make that line pay unless it were connected up with the eastern parts of the State. The Minister admitted that, and said that, in the end the line would have to be taken right through. The line I have been suggesting would serve a greater number of people and would be much shorter. There is also the line between Kondinin and Corrigin and on to Brookton, and that line will have to be duplicated or re-graded in the near future. Would the Minister say it was a fair thing to ask settlers to cart an additional 80 miles simply because the line ought to be re-graded? A line constructed out from Corrigin would present no engineering difficulties and it would bring the people there 150 miles nearer to the metropolis than if they had to go all the way round via Lake Grace. The greatest fear I have is in regard to passenger traffic. Would any man use the railway for the purpose of sending his womenfolk and children down to Perth, particularly in the hot summer months, seeing that he would be within a few hours journey of the metropolis by motor. I believe that the Fremantle members, who are not prejudiced in any way, will give me their support in this proposition because they must realise that Fremantle is the natural port for this district. I have no objection to a railway going to Albany or to Bunbury, but let us give each district that which is its just due. Let us pass railways that will be in the best interests of the State. I still maintain that this line is a national one, and

it will be one of the greatest calamities in our history if we do not build a line through from Esperance to Fremantle. I have a map that has been drawn to scale and any hon. member who wishes to inspect it can see the distances from the different centres, and he will be able to appreciate what I have been urging. In the Karlgarin district the settlers are in the habit of coming to Perth not more than once a year. It is certain that they will not go down by rail, nor would we expect them to do so in view of what I have pointed out. Then again, Kondinin has a recognised water supply which was provided because it was expected that it would become an important railway junction. It is possible that that advantage will be lost to the town. I do not know that I need say any more beyond to enter a most vigorous protest against the proposition, because I do not think it is in the best interests of Western Australia that the line should go from Lake Grace.

MR. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [8.8]: At first I was at a loss to understand the attitude of the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) but towards the conclusion of his remarks I learnt that he was prepared to damn the State so long as Kondinin prospered.

Mr. Brown: I did not say that.

Mr. CORBOY: I do not suggest that the hon. member used those exact words.

Mr. Latham: He would not use them.

Mr. CORBOY: I was going to say that the hon. member was much too lady-like, but that would be wrong. He is too modest to use such language. On the other hand it is true that the member for Pingelly has allowed his regard for Kondinin to blind his judgment so far as the interests of the settlers to the east of Kondinin and Kulin, etc., are concerned. As a matter of fact, the hon. member found in the attitude of the people of Kulin something to marvel at. He could not understand the attitude of the Kulin people, but was prepared to advocate the ideas of the Kondinin residents. The Kulin people and those residing at other such centres are prepared to support the Bill, and he could not understand their attitude because the line would not run into their towns, nor would it assist in building up their trade. He asked why the Kulin people supported the railway. It is obvious that the people at that centre, at Dudinin and elsewhere are sup-

porting the line because the residents of Jilakin, North-West Newdegate and at other centres can be properly served only by the route proposed.

Mr. Brown: I gave an alternative.

Mr. CORBOY: I pointed out that this was the only proper route to serve their interests. Although the line is not coming directly to their centres, they are prepared to say to the settlers to the east. "Yes, you will have your railway although it goes from Lake Grace." The residents there are not so short-sighted as are the people of Kondinin. They do not see in it merely what affects their local trade.

Mr. Thomson: That is not fair.

Mr. CORBOY: I think so.

Mr. Brown: That is narrow-mindedness.

Mr. CORBOY: The hon. member's speech was narrow-minded and parochial from start to finish.

Mr. Lindsay: That is merely your interpretation.

Mr. CORBOY: The hon. member is entitled to place his own interpretation on the speech, but that is my impression. Of course, everyone realises that when the State is financially able to face it, some day in the far distant and probable future, a railway will possibly be built from Kondinin and the country eastward direct to Fremantle!

Mr. Brown: Then you admit it is justified?

Mr. CORBOY: At the moment I do not say anything of the sort. On the other hand, I claim that, in view of the financial position of the State, it is not justified, because it will be merely duplicating a service that already exists. I find it almost impossible to realise that the hon. member sits with other members of his party on the opposite side of the House, who, as a party, say that they stand for decentralisation and the development of the outer ports. They continue to impress upon the people from time to time their alleged desire to take away from the concentration of trade at Fremantle. They want to get it away from that artificially constructed harbour, in favour of the use of some of the more natural harbours. When an opportunity is taken, as under the provisions of the Bill, to divert trade from that artificially constructed octopus at Fremantle in favour of one of the other ports that should form a natural outlet for the trade from this part of the State, the hon. member could do no more than appeal to members representing the Fremantle area by suggesting that they were unprejudiced.

Mr. Sleeman: Do you suggest that the trade should be diverted to the natural harbour at Ravensthorpe?

Mr. CORBOY: No, the hon. member is entirely unjustified in his interjection, because I have at no time advocated harbour works at Ravensthorpe.

Mr. Sleeman: You had a lot to say about an artificial harbour at Fremantle.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. CORBOY: Everyone knows that I have not at any time advocated the expenditure of a single penny upon the construction of a harbour at Ravensthorpe or at Hopton. On the other hand, I claim that such harbours as those at Esperance, Bunbury and Albany should receive the proper volume of trade from the districts they serve, although those ports are not within a hundred miles of my electorate. It is absolute rubbish for the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman) to say that I would be so stupid as to advocate the construction of another artificial harbour at Hopton, similar to the one the hon. member has at Fremantle! I am grateful to the Government for at this long last, introducing a Bill to provide the Karlgarin settlers with railway facilities. The people have been there for over five years, while the settlers at Jilakin and Dudinin have been in their districts for 12 or 13 years. They have been carting their produce over great distances to the railhead. The time when railway facilities should have been provided for them has long passed and I am glad that the Government have at last seen fit to authorise the necessary railway. I am glad, also, that the Government have seen fit to accept the advice of the Railway Advisory Board. I am not concerned where the Karlgarin railway goes from, so long as it is constructed, and therefore I am glad that the advice of the Railway Advisory Board has been accepted by the Government. I think the board would have been put in an untenable position had the Government adopted any scheme other than the one recommended by the board. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) spoke in an airy way about the very few miles—as a matter of fact it would mean a great number of miles—of line required to link up Karlgarin directly with Fremantle. I hope the hon. member is not deluded into thinking that that railway could be built at the same cost per mile as that for which we throw down a light line in the country districts.

Mr. Brown: You do not want a light line, do you?

Mr. CORBOY: Quite so, but does the hon. member realise the cost of such a railway? I am informed on the best authority that it would cost £45,000 to £50,000 per mile to put a railway through the ranges.

Mr. Brown: Rot!

Mr. CORBOY: I am informed from reliable sources that men competent to estimate the cost put it at that figure. For every mile of railway through the ranges, we could build more than 10 miles of railway in the country districts, or 16 to 18 miles if 45-lb. rails were used. I hope the House will not only pass the Bill, but will expedite its passage. The settlers in the area to be served have carried on for many years. Last year I understand they sent away a quarter of a million bags of wheat and had to cart it an average of 36 miles to rail. Anyone who knows anything about wheatgrowing realises the impossibility of that position. The settlers cannot continue to cart such long distances, and I think it is the duty of the House to provide them with railway facilities as early as possible. Consequently I appeal to all members to expedite the passage of the Bill. With the member for Pingelly we may regret the fact that Kondinin has been left out, but because Kondinin has been left out is no adequate reason for saying to the Karlgarin settlers that they must wait even another 12 months before they can get a railway. It is the duty of the House to authorise railway facilities for them as soon as possible. The Premier gave the Karlgarin people an assurance two years ago that he would put the railway through. The Leader of the Opposition said the promise was made just before an election and that it would be heard of again just before the next election. It was most ungenerous and most unlike the Leader of the Opposition to say such a thing. He knew quite well that the Bill was prepared two or three years ago and was even brought to the House.

Mr. Lindsay: It was mentioned in the Governor's Speech.

Mr. CORBOY: Yes, and was dropped only because of the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief. I think it most unworthy of the Leader of the Opposition to suggest that this line would be heard of only at election time. At any rate, if this House

gives the authority for its construction, I believe it will not be necessary for the Leader of the Opposition, even if he occupies the Treasury bench after the next election, to build it. It will have been built already.

Mr. Thomson: Then you are an optimist.

Mr. CORBOY: I am as optimistic as is the Leader of the Opposition. I hope the House will not place any obstacle whatever in the way of the early completion of the line and the provision of railway facilities for the settlers east of Kulin, Jilakin and Kondinin.

MR. DONEY (Williams-Narrogin) [8.19]: My sympathies are with the hon. member for Pingelly, my neighbour, but my support will go wholly to the Bill as it stands. I think it is quite the right and fair thing to regard this matter from the point of view of the people most concerned, namely, the settlers. No other decision could well have been come to, in view of the promises made by the Premier to the people of Jilakin and Karlgarin and the completeness of the case afforded by circumstances in the Jilakin and Karlgarin areas. It is generally conceded that there is no question whatever as to the super-excellence of the land in the areas to be traversed by the new railway. That land, I know from personal observation, is of proven high productivity. There is no question as to the isolation of the people or the economic benefits to be conferred upon the State when this particular piece of territory is tapped, as it is one of the richest opened up by the State in the last 10 years. I have been frequently struck by the patience of the people out there, by their industry and their enterprise. The decision of the Premier to bring down this Bill means for the people in the areas I have mentioned just about the happiest Christmas and most promising New Year they have had since they have been on the land. This is no political railway; it is what I call a commonsense railway, one for the benefit of the State and not for the benefit of any one electorate or of one or two politicians. The chosen route, as we well know, is not the result of any logrolling schemes, but has been determined by the Advisory Board, consisting of men selected for their economic wisdom, their practical farming knowledge, their practical survey know-

ledge and their practical railway knowledge. I cannot see why we should seek to upset their finding, particularly when the job of recommending a route was handed over to them. They were quite uninfluenced, so I imagine, by any political considerations. On the Advisory Board and on the committee appointed to inquire into the merits of the Stileman scheme, there was practically a unanimity of opinion as to the route. I understand there was just one dissentient. Anyhow, if those gentlemen did nothing else, they succeeded in taking this question of the route right away from the arena of party local politics. Judging from the points of view of Pingelly and Williams-Narrogin, it can be readily understood that the route has several faults, but judging from the point of view of the State, which is the correct one, it just about passes any test to which it may be subjected. The route advocated by my friend the member for Pingelly, would open up some 500,000 acres; the route from Kulin, which at one time was advocated by the former member for Williams-Narrogin, would open up some 600,000 acres, but the route which has been named by the Advisory Board would open up some 750,000 acres of entirely new land and bring it within the scope of what I may call a safe railway limit. I am sure that from the point of view of the Commissioner of Railways, it will be a very profitable railway to the State. I hope that the Bill as it stands will meet with the unanimous acceptance of the House, so that the Premier may have no doubt whatever about the wisdom of financing its construction without delay. If the question arises, as I suppose it will, whether 45lb. or 60lb. rails are the better, I consider that the heavier rails should be used. If we have any confidence at all in the future of our State, we should build as solidly and as permanently as possible. If that ideal is kept in mind, there is no doubt that the heavier material will be used.

MR. LATHAM (York) [8.25]: I am very glad that the Government have at last brought down this Bill to assist the settlers of Karlgarin. They have been out there so long that they are on the verge of despair about railway facilities.

Mr. J. H. Smith: How long have they been there?

Mr. LATHAM: Close on eight years.

Mr. J. H. Smith: They have not been there 80 years.

Mr. LATHAM: I presume the hon. member does not quite understand what an impossible task it is to try to grow wheat profitably at a distance of 35 to 40 miles from a railway. Some of the settlers are even 50 miles from a railway.

Mr. J. H. Smith: The country will not live on wheat.

Mr. LATHAM: The country does not actually live on wheat, but a tremendous amount of the revenue from the wheat industry helps to develop other parts of the State. While I have no objection to the member for Nelson getting railways for his district, I should like to see other people in greater need of railways get theirs first.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Is not all this a farce?

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know that it is. I agree that many other railways already authorised have not been constructed, but I appeal to the Government to construct this line early for the benefit of the Karlgarin settlers. With another year such as they have experienced during the last three or four years, it will be impossible for them to remain on their holdings. They are loading up their properties with debt, and the Government eventually will either have to write it down or the settlers will have to walk off their holdings with nothing. I am anxious to know what the Minister proposes regarding the country lying north of the proposed line. I sincerely hope that, when the survey goes through to the end of the route shown on the plan, it will be continued so that the people will have some idea where the terminus will be and will know whether it is to junction at Southern Cross, or whether it is to link up with the system at Salmon Gums. Judging from the plan, it seems that the new line will eventually run into Salmon Gums.

The Minister for Railways: No, it will go on. The exact route has not yet been determined.

Mr. J. H. Smith: You must be very bold if you take it on to Southern Cross after this year's experience.

The Minister for Railways: What about last year?

Mr. LATHAM: We should maintain the distance between railways as nearly as possible at 25 miles, all things being equal, and

I hope the Government will see fit to authorise the survey of the line to the terminal point. I am glad that the Karlgarin settlers are about to get their railway, and I hope that during the winter months some of the construction work will be put in hand. It is a big problem for people who have been out there eight or nine years to cart long distances to a railway. I am not greatly concerned about the route of the railway. I sympathise with the member for Pingelly, but at the same time we have to bear in mind that the country lying between Karlgarin and the Lake Grace area has also to be served by railway. There are settlers 35 miles east of Kulin, and unless we run out spur lines it will be impossible to serve them. I believe the cheapest way to serve that area will be to run out the railway as suggested.

Mr. Griffiths: You said you hope it will be started during the coming winter.

Mr. LATHAM: I do.

Mr. Griffiths: I hope some of the £5,000 will be spent on the Yarramony railway.

Mr. LATHAM: The Yarramony people are not so unfortunately situated.

Mr. Griffiths: They have waited a long time.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and there has been a breach of faith as regards those settlers. Parliament has already authorised the construction of a railway to serve the Yarramony district.

Mr. Davy: Do you consider that this line should be built first?

Mr. LATHAM: No, but the farthest settler there is 16 miles from a railway.

Mr. Griffiths: No, 22 miles.

Hon. G. Taylor: Twenty-two or 24 miles.

Mr. LATHAM: I say 16 miles from a railway; it may be more from a siding.

Mr. Davy: Ought not the railways to be constructed in the order in which they are authorised?

Mr. LATHAM: I am not going to say that. If we adopted that policy—I sincerely hope it will not be adopted—a lot of the money being invested in opening up new areas to-day may as well be thrown into the Swan River, because it will return us nothing at all. It is a breach of faith in the case of the Yarramony people. I want to see that the money available is spent in giving the greatest relief to the greatest number.

Mr. Angelo: Will not their line be of the 4ft. 8½in. gauge?

Mr. LATHAM: Perhaps the hon. member may out of his resourcefulness be able to persuade the Commonwealth Government to build a trans-Australian line down there. I am not sure that the State Government would raise any objection if they did. I am particularly concerned about these people because they have been waiting eight years for a railway, and have been asked to carry on an industry which must be unprofitable to them in their present position.

MR. A. WANSBROUGH (Albany) [8.30]: I support the Bill for the construction of this line, which is long overdue. The settlers have been waiting for it for 10 years, and have been carting their produce for 30 or 40 miles. I wish to review some of the statements made by the member for Pingelly. The Government are doing all that is possible in the way of railway construction. I regret, however, that no provision is made for the continuation of the line south of Lake Grace, through the Majenta, Needilup and Salt River districts to the natural port of Albany. The member for Pingelly said that the natural port was Fremantle, but there he is wrong.

Mr. Davy: What about splitting the difference and making it Bunbury?

Mr. A. WANSBROUGH: I will give figures showing the distance as the crow flies and the mileage by the present railway system. The distance from Lake Grace to Albany as the crow flies is 140 miles, whilst Fremantle is 225 miles, Bunbury 198 miles, and Esperance 227 miles. As the crow flies, therefore, Albany is the natural port. According to the statistician's returns for the year 1927-28 the average yield in the district, 16.9 bushels, ranks fourth in the State's yield. In this area under c.p. conditions 1,408,413 acres have been acquired; cleared and under cultivation the area is 598,602 acres, under crop there are 203,225 acres; the wheat produced amounts to 1,730,003 bushels; the oats produced 209,793 bushels; the hay produced 19,009 tons; butter 283,054 lbs.; wool 1,681,867 lbs.; horses 5,815, cattle 4,208, sheep 223,818, and pigs 2,077 were carried during that period. And yet the hon. member wants all these things to go to Fremantle. I venture to say that 50 per cent. of the produce is grown outside a 20-mile radius of the port.

sent railway, and much of it has to be carted from 30 to 40 miles. Within the area there is a large amount of land awaiting alienation, and capable of producing much wealth. The climate is good and the average rainfall is 16 inches. I appeal to the Minister to give the earliest possible consideration to the settlers south of Lake Grace. I am opposed to the diversion of trade other than to its natural port. The construction of another 110 miles of line will link Albany up with this district. Not only would this benefit Albany, but would be of distinct benefit to the settlers by reason of the greater ease with which they could obtain their superphosphates and general farming material. I support the Bill.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [8.35]: A small portion of this railway will traverse my electorate. It will be within the recollection of members that many years ago, after the survey of certain lines authorised to be constructed, and after the pegs had been put in and the work commenced, the Government of the day, through political influence, altered the routes of the railways. Parliament, in order to stop that, created the Railway Advisory Board. Since then I do not recall one recommendation of that board that has been altered by the Government. I hope the day is far distant when we shall have a repetition of that which happened 20 years ago. I remember a deputation waiting on the Premier about this particular line. The Premier said he would much rather the deputation had waited upon the Railway Advisory Board, as the Government preferred to receive recommendations from the responsible officers appointed by Parliament. The deputation waited upon the board in the office of the chairman, Mr. Camm. There were at least a dozen speakers, who came from the area lying east of Kondinin, Kulin and Jilakin. Each assured the board that the route which would serve the best was one going through Lake Grace. The chairman of the board said they had already decided upon that route, but that the Government had appointed a committee to consider a scheme put forward by Mr. Stileman to run a line from Albany through the hills and on to Esperance. The chairman of the board said that part of this land would not produce an extra bag of wheat, but would cost a large sum of money. He also said that the majority of the committee appointed

by the Government to consider that scheme maintained that the line should go from Lake Grace to Karlgarin. That is sufficient evidence to prove the justification for the Bill now before us. Families have been waiting for many years for this railway in the hope that justice would be done to them, and many Governments have promised that it would be given to them. No arguments have been put forward justifying any member in voting against the measure.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [8.40]: It is right that I should reply to certain remarks that have been made by the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown). It is all right to say that a certain area is justified in sending its produce to a certain port, provided we are in the position to construct new railways to that port. From the map issued by the Commissioner of Railways it would seem that all lines lead to Bunbury, and that they are all practically following a direct route to that port. To construct 60 miles of railway from Brookton to Armadale would mean a heavy burden of capitalisation upon the railways, over and above that which they are now carrying on the present system.

Mr. Brown: There are 26½ miles that must be constructed.

Mr. WITHERS: I do not know that its construction will be justified because of the country it will pass through.

Mr. Brown: Then why authorise it?

Hon. G. Taylor: Before an election many things are done.

Mr. WITHERS: The Boyup-Cranbrook line and others were passed some time ago. I do not know whether they will be built, or whether we should be justified in constructing them before the line now under review. I am not jealous of Albany, but I do not like to hear Country Party members advocating centralisation, and the congestion of the central port to the detriment of the natural trade of the outer ports. It has been stated that the timber comes from the metropolitan area to supply these people. Most of the timber is grown in the South-West, from which centre it would be nearer to these settlers than Perth is. It was also stated that Bunbury is only a little town. If we are to be dependent upon some people for the development of our ports, they will always be small towns. Galvanised iron has been referred to and

it has been stated that Fremantle enjoys a monopoly for the distribution of that commodity. If we had direct imports to Bunbury it could be distributed in many parts of the State cheaper than it can come from Fremantle. These things are not taken into consideration. I am afraid members display a little parochialism. There may be a little on my part.

Mr. Thomson: There is a slight suspicion of it.

Mr. WITHERS: If we are not a little parochial and try to look after the interests of our own electorates, no one else may be inclined to do so. Then there is the question of superphosphate works at Bunbury, whence that commodity could be railed to the southern parts of the State. I hope this will be a guiding factor in influencing the company concerned to construct works at that port.

Mr. Thomson: I do not think the member for Albany will be in accord with you.

Mr. WITHERS: The company have made certain arrangements. Mr. Stileman, however, put forward a proposal for a district route from Esperance through Salmon Gums to Fremantle, and this caused the company to reconsider the idea of constructing works at Bunbury. They are still holding back their decision on that account. I do not favour schemes of, I will not say jerry-mandering, but tiddley-winking; and a considerable number of railways have been authorised just to suit the occasion. No definite proposal as to railway construction was brought down in the early stages of Western Australia's development. However, there are excuses for that. The State has been making haste slowly, feeling its way, and building railways according to immediate necessity. As the lines went out, the settlers went out too. There is not much to complain of on that score. I hope that not too much notice will be taken of what the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown) said about the Bill. His view is that the line should be taken from Kondinin through Narrogin and Wagin. In that case Bunbury would still be the nearest port. Therefore the hon. member has no argument for the alteration of the Bill except on the score of expense, and that is an argument which I do not consider sound. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [8.47] : It is not nice to utter a discordant note on railway construction, but I must oppose the second reading of the Bill. The Government's duty is to build railways where they are absolutely needed. From what has appeared in the Press recently, it seems rather serious for the Government to contemplate the construction of railways further and further afield in the wheat belt. Having reached Lake Grace, they go on to Salmon Gums; and now we have the spectacle of the Agricultural Bank trustees announcing to the people and the Government that they refuse to grant advances out beyond Salmon Gums. They say it is not a business proposition. They have to carry the baby. The Leader of the Opposition glosses over that announcement, and says that in six or eight years' time that country may perhaps be a grazing proposition. The Premier turns round and says, "We are not taking too much heed of the advice of the Agricultural Bank trustees. We do not propose to go as far afield as they suppose. The people already settled there who are not meeting their obligations will be carried over for a few years." This infernal wheat! Wheat seems to be an obsession with members on the cross benches. They cannot think of anything but wheat. What is going to happen at Southern Cross and in Yilgarn? There is talk of what will occur with regard to grazing propositions. Do the Government realise that whilst those districts can feed one head of stock, the South-West can feed ten? The South-West is in a safe rainfall area. There is no need for the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies to scratch his head and wonder where he is to get water for the South-West. We have a rainfall of 30 inches right through the South-West. We have proved that the South-West can carry four head of sheep to the acre all the year round. Yet not one member of the Country Party stands up to claim equal development for all sections of the country and to demand the construction of railways in the South-West.

Mr. Latham: We have always approved of them.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: All that those hon. members can see is the port of Fremantle, though there is an abbreviated remark from the member for Albany (Mr. A. Wansbrough), "It may bring a little more freight

to Albany." The Premier has been through our district, and no one knows it better than the hon. gentleman. The South-West can feed 95 per cent. of the people in Western Australia. We do not live on wheat alone. If Western Australia were isolated to-morrow, its people would have to turn to the South-West. All we need from outside is tea. As we know, tea is the national beverage. We do not require sugar from abroad, because the South-West can grow sugar beet; and if one may turn for a moment to a vice, it can also grow tobacco. Should salt be needed, it can be got from the salt lakes in the wheat belt, and so we shall be able to put it on our mutton and beef.

Mr. Latham: The wheat belt is of some use, then.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, for the cheapest commodity in the market. Wheat will not get us anywhere. There is much talk about the wonderful export trade in wheat, but I want the Government to realise their obligations. Before they put another railway Act on the statute-book, let them fulfil their promises. Here is the deputy Leader of the Country Party, who was at one time deputy Leader of our party, saying that these people have been waiting for railway communication for eight years.

Mr. Latham: You were once in the Labour Party.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was not in the Labour Party when I entered Parliament. In a weak moment perhaps I may have joined—

Mr. Panton: In a weaker moment the Labour Party put you out.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am a member of the great United Party of Western Australia.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The member for York (Mr. Latham) says that some of these people have been waiting eight years for a railway. Does not the hon. member realise that we of the South-West are now in the fourth and fifth generation of waiting for railway communication, that we have been waiting 80 years for a railway? That is ten times eight years. Why is not the House sincere? Why do not hon. members acknowledge that the wealth of this country is coming from the South-West?

Mr. Ferguson: Is it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Of course it is. It is not coming from the vineyards in the Swan. Why do not members realise the importance of the dairying industry in the South-West, while Western Australia is sending out millions of pounds annually for dairy products? Group settlement has been under mal-administration for the past five years, and has become an absolute tragedy. Not one additional group has been established during that period.

Mr. Wilson: Thank God.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The hon. member interjects that because he believes that under the redistribution of seats he will be wiped out by the group settlers. Eventually the House will thank God that the group settlements have been established. It means the opening up and development of the South-West, and will be the saving of Western Australia. Why are not the Government sincere? There have been deputations on the subject of railway construction in the South-West waiting on the Premier, who was astonished by the strides we had made. Where a few years ago we were carrying a sheep to the acre, or a sheep to two acres, to-day we carry four, five and six.

Mr. Clydesdale: Where?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Right from Pinjarra southward. The hon. member has not travelled outside Canning and Goodwood. Why does he not travel through the South-West?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not deal with the duties of other members. He must deal with the railway.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I oppose this line on the ground that it is the bounden duty of the Government to fulfil their promises and to build railways authorised by this Chamber, especially before proposing other lines which are not in a safe zone. It would be suicidal to commit Western Australia to the building of more railways in the wheat belt. The Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway, which has been approved by the Railways Advisory Board and the Migration Commission, is there to be built, and the money is available for it. We have been told that the unalienated lands to be served by that line will carry 2,500 settlers, and yet the railway is not built. Insincerely, the Government bring forward another railway proposal as a vote-catching move, or perhaps to save the face of the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy).

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Perhaps it is for that purpose they have introduced this Bill for a railway to Karlgarin. There is no sincerity about the proposal. Why do not the Government fulfil their promises and build railways in safe zones? I refer especially to a railway for which the settlers have waited for 80 years, through three or four generations.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.57]: To some extent I sympathise with the previous speaker in his advocacy of the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway. I understand that earlier in the session the hon. member was good enough to say that I had suddenly shown an interest in the South-West, for what reason he was not sure. I wish to inform him that the railway in question passes through part of my district.

Mr. J. H. Smith: About half a mile of it.

Mr. THOMSON: That is like some other statements made by the hon. member, not very generous.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: It is pretty wide of the mark.

Mr. THOMSON: One can sympathise with the member for Nelson in his disappointment at not securing a railway in which he and others of us are keenly interested. But when he goes out of his way to attack members on the cross benches, saying that we are not fully alive to our responsibilities, he is not quite playing the game.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I say it advisedly and truthfully.

Mr. THOMSON: You say it advisedly, but not truthfully.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not know of any railway submitted to this Chamber on the recommendation of the Railways Advisory Board that has not had the approval of members, and I sincerely hope that that will always be the case. From remarks made by various speakers to-night, it appears that some are interested in one port and some in another. One can imagine the position the House would be faced with if there were not an independent board to suggest routes. I have much sympathy for the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown). That hon. member was accused by the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) of being parochial and small-minded. If it were possible, I would like the member for Yilgarn to be

placed in exactly the same position as the member for Pingelly is in at present. This railway was submitted to the House for approval, and the Bill was withdrawn because a comprehensive railway scheme was to be submitted by Mr. Stileman for the consideration of Parliament. That comprehensive scheme meant the laying-down of a definite policy for trunk lines. One can quite understand the feelings of the member for Pingelly as to the position he is placed in with regard to his constituents. But those constituents at Kondinin or in the area between there and Karlgarin and even farther on are justified, in view of the fact that their railway had been withdrawn, in looking forward to the construction of a line in the direction suggested by the member for Pingelly (Mr. Brown). I do not support the attitude of that hon. member but shall support the Bill; still I think other hon. members should appreciate the attitude adopted by him. I hope it will never become the practice of this House to oppose a recommendation made by the Railway Advisory Board. I hope the Government will proceed with the construction of the railway referred to in the Bill, and also with that of other railways already authorised. I trust the construction will be undertaken as speedily as possible. It is deplorable that at this time of the year the House should be besieged by the unemployed. The Government should face the position by endeavouring to provide work on railways to be constructed in various parts of the country. In my opinion, if some of the men who are looking for work were to go into the country districts, they would find employment on the farms. The settlers are busy with harvesting operations, and there is an opportunity to provide work. In the past many of us have gone through the experience and have travelled through the country areas rather than be content to remain in the city waiting for something to turn up. I hope the Government will be able to give this matter their careful consideration and to proceed with the railways already authorised, so as to make work available to those who are seeking it. I hope that the railways will be constructed, as far as possible, in the order of their authorisation. The method suggested by the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) should not be adopted by this Chamber. We should not

place the wheat-belt against the South-West, or the South-West against the wheat belt. We have a duty to the State as a whole to see that the districts are opened up and developed so that the best use may be made of the land. In those new areas, it is essential to provide railway facilities so that the development may proceed apace. That can be done only by providing the settlers with reasonable transport facilities. That applies to the South-West as well. I want to assure the member for Nelson that my vote will always be cast in the interests of railway construction because my electors are equally desirous with him that the line he has advocated shall be constructed as early as possible. I support the second reading of the Bill.

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

| | | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 32 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | .. | 4 |

Majority for .. 28

AYES.

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Angelo | Mr. Marshall |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Millington |
| Mr. Clydesdale | Sir James Mitchell |
| Mr. Corboy | Mr. Munsie |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. North |
| Mr. Cowan | Mr. Pantou |
| Mr. Cunningham | Mr. Rowe |
| Mr. Doney | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Ferguson | Mr. Sleeman |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. J. M. Smith |
| Mr. Kennedy | Mr. Stubbs |
| Mr. Lambert | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Lamond | Mr. A. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Latham | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Lindsay | Mr. Withers |
| Mr. Lutey | Mr. Wilson |

(Teller.)

NOES.

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Teesdale |
| Mr. Taylor | Mr. J. H. Smith |

(Teller.)

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.

Resignation of Member.

THE SPEAKER [9.10]: I have received the following letter from the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson), who is the Leader of the Country Party—

On the 14th of October I submitted for the consideration of the Premier a letter, a copy

of which is attached. Probably I made a mistake in submitting my resignation to him, and now take the opportunity of submitting it to you. As the Country Party representative on the House Committee, I tender my resignation in view of the fact that I have so much to do. I felt that I was unable to carry out my duties with satisfaction to myself upon the Committee. I would be pleased if you would accept the resignation as contained in the copy of the letter sent to the Premier, and trust that the House will see fit to appoint Mr. S. Stubbs in my place.

I want to point out as much for the benefit of the House as for that of the hon. member who has sent his letter to me, that the course adopted is irregular and impossible. Once a member is appointed by a vote of the House to any Committee, whether it be a select committee or a committee of the House, it is impossible for him to resign. A duty is cast upon him from which he can be relieved only by being discharged from the performance of it by the House itself.

Mr. Wilson: We will sack him.

The SPEAKER: To make the position even more clear, I have turned up May's "Parliamentary Practice" and I find the following on page 178 of the 10th Edition—

Attendance upon the service of Parliament includes the obligation to fulfil the duties imposed upon members by the orders and regulations of the House. And unless leave of absence has been obtained, a member cannot excuse himself from attending on a committee, when his attendance, as in the case of a private Bill committee, is made compulsory by standing or other orders. In 1846, Mr. Smith O'Brien declined serving as a selected member of a railway committee, and the committee of selection, not being satisfied with his excuses, nominated him to a committee, in the usual manner. He did not attend the committee; his absence was reported to the House, and he was ordered to attend the committee on the following day. Being again absent, his absence was reported to the House; he attended in his place, and stated that he refused to attend the committee; upon which he was declared guilty of a contempt, and committed to the custody of the sergeant-at-arms.

That may appear to some to be rather unusual, but it is a serious thing to be guilty of any form of contempt to this Chamber. The proper course is for the hon. member or for some member to request the House—not to request me, or the Government or the House Committee—to release him from the obligation placed upon him.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I move—

That the member for Katanning be discharged from further service on the House Committee.

Question put and passed.

Mr. THOMSON: Shall I be in order in moving that Mr. Stubbs be added to the committee?

The SPEAKER: Generally that is left to the Leader of the House to do.

BILL—LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [9.16]: In this community of Western Australia there are two methods by which a person may be deprived of his liberty: one is that he may be put in gaol, and the other is that he may be confined in what we know as the Hospital for the Insane. From the individual's point of view the result in point of personal liberty is very much the same, but where his pocket or the pockets of his relatives are concerned, we find the position is entirely different. The person who has his liberty taken away from him by being put in gaol suffers that because he has committed some crime, has refused to abide by the laws laid down for the protection of the majority of the community; whereas the man put into the Hospital for Insane goes, through no fault of his own, but because he has been afflicted by the Almighty by a sickness of the mind rather than a sickness of the body. One would expect in a civilised community to find that a person put in gaol for his own wickedness would be treated rather more harshly in respect of his property than a person who goes into the Hospital for the Insane because of the affliction that has descended upon him. But if we turn to a perusal of the statutes of Western Australia, we find that the reverse actually obtains. The man who goes to gaol has his property absolutely untouched. It is there when he comes out. The person who goes to the Hospital for the Insane has his property taken over and confided to the tender mercies of a Government department and diverted, so long as he is in that hospital, in order to support him at a rate fixed arbi-

trarily by the Inspector-General of Insane. And if he has not any property the person put into the Hospital for the Insane, in addition to suffering the loss of his own liberty and the misery of going there, has to regard the spectacle of his relatives being mulct in a sufficient sum to more than keep him in that place. This measure that we are asked to pass is a measure entirely devoted to elaborating and perfecting the machinery whereby the Inspector-General for Insane may get hold of the property of an insane person and spend it in keeping him; and if there is no resort to that, he may compel the relatives of that person to put their hands in their pockets to maintain him. That is the broad principle in this Bill. It is purely a departmental Bill and I do not, for a moment, suppose that the Government have given it very careful consideration. It has been put up by the head of the department in order to perfect the existing machinery. I cannot believe that members, if they really understood what has gone on in the past, and what it is proposed shall go on under the Bill, would give their sanction to the measure. First of all it proposes that in addition to its being possible to make an order against the relatives of an insane person or against the property of an insane person for actual current maintenance, it shall be possible to make an order for those people or for the property to pay the actual expenses of arrest, of medical examination, and of transport to the place of incarceration. Furthermore, the Bill proposes that an order made against a relative for maintenance may have reference to past matters, to maintenance that has accumulated over an indefinite period of time and which they, the relatives, may have to pay. Furthermore, under the existing Act, the actual cost of maintenance is the amount that can be recovered. The Bill proposes that if the department say the actual cost of maintenance is so much, then that is *prima facie* the real amount, and the onus is thrown on the person sought to be charged to disprove it. In the past orders have been obtained on the basis of the actual cost being £2 2s. per week.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Some pay as high as £4 4s. per week.

Mr. DAVY: That makes my case even stronger. The Act says the actual cost of

maintenance may be recovered. I believe the standard cost, which is always put forward as the amount to be paid, is £2 2s. per week. It may be that in some cases more has been charged. If so, it strengthens my case.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The relatives of patients make voluntary payments up to £4 4s. per week.

Mr. DAVY: I am talking, not of voluntary payments, but of payments extracted from the relatives or debited up against the patient himself.

Mr. Withers: If they can pay it.

Mr. Lindsay: The department will chase you till you do.

Mr. DAVY: If there are no relatives and the property of the insane person is all that there is to be got at, there is no difficulty about getting it, because the property is in the hands of the official trustee; and although he shows himself desirous of protecting that property, it is an easy matter to get an order from a judge making that property liable. If we turn to the report of the Inspector-General of the Insane for the last year for which there is a report before us, we find the net weekly cost per head is only £1 6s. 3d.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: What do you call weekly cost? What does that cover?

Mr. DAVY: What does the Minister call the weekly cost? This is the report of the department, and the heading is "The following table shows the gross and net cost of maintenance for patients during the year." And £1 6s. 3d. is called in this report the net cost of weekly maintenance.

The Minister for Railways: Then there is the cost of supervision and attendance and everything of that sort.

Mr. DAVY: Surely the Minister is not suggesting that in the Hospital for the Insane it costs £1 6s. 3d. per head for food alone! Surely that is not the suggestion. I understand that the net cost of patients in the Perth Hospital works out at 15s. per head per week, covering everything. One must assume that this £1 6s. 3d. covers considerably more than merely food. At any rate, the Act says it is the cost of maintenance that can be recovered. I think the Minister will agree with that. Therefore, the amount that can be recovered, put at its highest, should be this amount of £1 6s. 3d. per week. But in the Bill before us the Minister in seeking an amendment that will enable the

mere say-so of the Inspector General for Insane to prevail to recover more than the Act says can be recovered. For £1 6s. 3d. is the net cost of maintenance, and it is the net cost of maintenance which, under the Act, is allowed to be recovered. I do not know how the Minister can justify treating people sent into the Hospital for Insane more harshly than those sent into gaol. What conceivable excuse is there for it? In the vast majority of instances the people sent into the Hospital for the Insane are put there through no fault of their own for the good of the general community. There may be instances of people being sent there who would be quite harmless to the community. Therefore, they are sent there for the protection of themselves. But still, they are afflicted with this terrible misfortune, and why should they be treated more harshly than people put into gaol for criminal offences? Take the person who has been put into the Hospital for the Insane, who has been earning a small living and who has acquired a house worth £400, £500 or £700. The income from that house will not be sufficient to cover this charge of £2 2s. per week. The house falls into the hands of the official trustee, and the official trustee finds himself called upon to pay this £2 2s. per week. Necessarily, in order to do so, he will have to turn the property into money sooner or later. Then proceeds the process of dissipation. Perhaps the house realises £400. Thus turned into money it will produce, say, 6 per cent. or £24 per year, or 10s. per week. So every week that property diminishes by something like 30s. If the patient stays in the hospital for a few years and then through the grace of God recovers his sanity, when he comes out his property has vanished. Surely that being the state of the law at present, we do not need to add to the powers the department already have. We do not want the department to be able to say, in addition to the £2 2s. per week, which is more than the cost of maintenance, "We want also the cost of arrest, the cost of having him medically examined—against his own will, to certify that he shall go into the Hospital for the Insane—and the cost of transporting him to that hospital." I submit the Bill is one which is not necessary. The department already have at least as much power as is good for them, and cannot be justified in asking us to give them more power in order to get every penny

they possibly can to meet the upkeep of those poor people. It would not be so bad if each person there had to pay the actual cost of keeping him there. But the fact is that those people with a little property are called upon to make up the deficit caused by those that have none. That is the real reason for charging £2 2s. per week, and the real reason why the cost of maintenance should be *prime facie* what the department say it is. How could the wretched person disprove it?

Mr. Thomson: Certainly if he is insane he could not do so.

Mr. DAVY: Of course not! There is another aspect to this question. I have already referred to it, but I wish to elaborate upon it. The department have the right to call upon the relatives of a person in the Hospital for the Insane to support that person. I agree that if the relatives are able to do so they should bear the cost of their brother or sister or mother who is in the hospital.

Mr. Lambert: Why so? Do you not think an affliction like that is a fair charge on the community?

Mr. DAVY: I entirely agree with that, but I agree also that if a person well-to-do and in comfortable circumstances finds his child afflicted in that way, it might be only reasonable to ask him to bear some share of the cost of maintaining that child in the Hospital for the Insane.

Mr. Lambert: It is a most barbarous proposal.

Mr. DAVY: I have come into contact with people who have been earning little more than the basic wage of £4 or £5 a week and who have had orders made against them for the payment of £1 a week towards the support of a relative in the Hospital for Insane.

Mr. Lindsay: I know of a case in which £2 was charged.

Mr. DAVY: I can quote a case of which I am personally cognisant. There were five brothers whose mother went into that institution. Of the five only one lived in the metropolitan area. He had a little house, was married and had a child or two and was battling along in a more or less comfortable position in a small way. His income was perhaps between £4 10s. and £5 10s. a week and he was in regular work. An order was obtained against him for £1 a week, although his brothers were working

in Western Australia and most of them were unmarried and earning good wages. But he was the easy man to get at and he was the man the department got at. They took an order for £1 a week, which was a very serious and definite hardship to the man and his family. So far from the Government bringing down a Bill to tighten up this machinery, we should have the original Act before us to diminish the hardship being inflicted at the present time.

Mr. Lambert: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAVY: The whole law should be reviewed.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Would you apply that principle to the Perth Hospital or to Government-run hospitals throughout the State?

Mr. Lambert: Yes.

Mr. DAVY: There is a substantial difference between the two things.

The Minister for Health: There is no difference whatever.

Mr. DAVY: I shall endeavour to show the difference. In the vast majority of cases, luckily, people go into hospital for a very short time.

Mr. Lindsay: Until they recover or die.

Mr. Sleeman: And a lot of them cannot afford to pay.

Mr. DAVY: That is so. For that reason the Minister for Health has brought down a measure to enable the hospitals to be run without patients having to pay anything beyond a small contribution. When people go into the Hospital for the Insane, they, as a rule, go there for years, often without any chance of ever coming out. Sometimes they do come out, and just when they need a little bit of a helping hand, they find what has happened to their property. It has gone in the two guineas a week charge and in the cost of the doctor to put them in the institution and the cost of the taxi cab to drive them down there.

Mr. Thomson: And they are put into the institution for the protection of the public as much as for their own protection.

Mr. DAVY: Just as much so as when a person is put into gaol.

Mr. Lambert: More so.

Mr. DAVY: I am not accusing the Minister who has introduced the Bill of any lack of feeling about these things, but I suggest it is purely a departmental Bill.

Mr. Lindsay: Hear, hear!

Mr. DAVY: It is very easy for a Minister to have a purely departmental Bill put

up to him dealing with matters with which he has probably not come into contact, so that the Bill, on the face of it, appears to be a proper Bill. From a departmental point of view this Bill is a good measure. It does make more drastic what to my mind is the iniquitous system that exists under the original Lunacy Act. I have no doubt the official who put up this Bill to the Minister made out a very good case from his point of view, but I am endeavouring to give the point of view of the people against whom the Bill is directed, and I ask the Minister to consider that point of view and to consider seriously the question of withdrawing the Bill. I also ask him between this and next session to consider the question of going backwards on this path rather than forwards.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [9.35]: I agree with the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) that not only is this measure not necessary, but that some revision should be made of the existing Act. I have had to deal with some cases. This measure has a provision similar to that contained in measures with which I have recently been dealing as a member of select committees, a provision that places the onus on a person to prove his innocence. I object to any law that seeks to declare an individual guilty before he even goes into court. I wish to tell the House some experience I have had of the existing Lunacy Act. One case concerns the sale of a property. During the war a neighbour of mine went away for a fortnight's holiday and did not return. He was away for four years. He certainly was not mentally strong when he went away, but for four years no one in the district knew where the man was. The bank held a mortgage over his property and sold the property by order of the court, which it was necessary to obtain during the war. From the sale there was a surplus. One day I was in the hotel having tea when the man walked in the door and passed me. Two or three days afterwards I found out where he had been. He had been in the Claremont asylum. While that man was in the institution, he must have had some lucid moments when he could tell the officials where he had come from and where his property was situated, but no attempt was made during all those years to protect his property. When he came out of the institution the officials

claimed the whole of the money that remained to his credit in the bank, and got it.

Mr. Thomson: Scandalous!

The Minister for Railways: Nothing scandalous about that.

Mr. Thomson: Surely there is!

Mr. LINDSAY: The officials claimed the whole of the money and the man got practically nothing out of the sale of his property.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: He got the treatment.

Mr. LINDSAY: Of course he did, but he did not ask for it. When he was missed his brother came to Perth and did his best to ascertain what had happened, but was unable to find any trace of him. Nobody in the district knew where he was until he came out of the institution and returned to Wyalkatchem. Meanwhile the brother had left the district and gone to Melbourne. Another case even more serious has come under my notice. A certain farmer in my district, one of the Yorkrakin settlers, has brought up 13 children. Unfortunately, one of them was not mentally sound and had to go to Claremont. That man, like many others living 20 miles from a railway, was an Industries Assistance Board settler for many years, and he was still on the board and getting his 9s. per day when he was persecuted—I emphasise persecuted—by the Lunacy Department. They charged him two guineas a week for that child and he was threatened by letters from the Crown Law Department. The man himself was almost driven to Claremont. He came to me in his trouble and I tried to get him some redress. He made an agreement with the department to pay £1 a week. Since the agreement he has paid the £1 a week, but the department raised a lot of bills against him on the basis of two guineas for past treatment, notwithstanding that he had paid the equivalent of £1 a week from the day the boy went into the hospital. It is not a month since I waited on the Minister, Mr. Drew, in connection with this case. The man himself was almost mental. Had he gone on much longer he, too, would have been in Claremont. I asked the Minister for protection for the man—protection against the department who were persecuting him to get the arrears. I say such action by the department is neither fair nor just. I agreed that if one is in good circumstances and can pay,

he should pay. But there is a citizen who had reared 13 children so persecuted by the department that Mr. Drew can vouch that when he went into his office he was almost mad. The department worried him to pay accounts galore. Mr. Drew gave him fair and reasonable treatment and agreed that he should not be harassed until there was time to consider the case. The Minister actually agreed to stop the department from harassing the man until the case could be considered. In neither of those cases did the department act fairly. They evidently have considerable powers under the existing Act. That man had struggled all his life to make a home for himself and his children. When the cost is only £1 6s. 2d. a week, why should the department demand two guineas a week for the support of a child? I am not prepared to give any further power to the department in view of the experience I have had while I have been a member of Parliament.

MR. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.41]: I think the Minister will be well advised to withdraw the Bill. I stated by way of interjection that I thought it barbarous that the department should seek to get revenue in respect of unfortunates who must be put under restraint. If there is anything that should be a charge on the general community, it is surely the cost of maintaining the mentally weak. I only wish that you, Mr. Speaker, were in a position to deal with this matter on the floor of the House, because you could deal with it as probably no one else in this State could do. Knowing the record of the Minister and his generally sympathetic attitude, I am surprised that he should allow departmental officers to put forward a Bill of this description. I know of a man who for years was working on the goldfields and who had handed to his wife every penny he earned. A good deal of the money was put into a little property. The wife became mentally deranged and got an obsession that he and all the family were against her. Eventually she had to be sent to the Claremont institution. What happened with regard to the Lunacy Department I need not retail here, but the manner in which they behaved I consider was an outrage on our boasted civilisation. Some members hold that if people have sufficient means to pay for the maintenance

of mental deficiencies, they should pay. I totally dissociate myself from that view. If there is anything that should be a charge on a community that boasts any standard of decency or honour, surely it is the cost of caring for mental deficient. I am pleased that the member for West Perth brought the matter forward and in such a forcible manner, and that others have spoken in a similar strain. If the Minister perseveres with this Bill, I only hope we shall be given an opportunity to review the harsh machinery in the existing Act and see whether we cannot get relief for those people who have relatives near and dear to them in the institution for whom they cannot afford to pay. If the civilised community owes a duty to those who are sick, halt and mentally deficient, surely it is to those who are in this institution. Their relatives should not be chased by the department to pay accounts that they are not in the position to settle.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.45]: I intend to oppose the Bill. The main reason for bringing it down is to give the Government more power to collect fees from the relative of unfortunates who are incarcerated in the Claremont asylum. The authorities have too much power in that direction already. As previous speakers have said, people are being harassed all over the country. During the time I have been in the House numerous complaints have been made to me concerning the manner in which the department have done their work. Some of the complaints have come from persons who could afford to pay nothing for their relatives in the Claremont asylum. Most of them have been on the basic wage. In 99 cases out of 100 once people get into the asylum, they are there for the rest of their lives. Is it to be expected that their relatives should all their lives have to contribute towards the maintenance of these afflicted persons? People who are earning only the basic wage cannot afford to do such a thing. The Government should make this expenditure a charge against Consolidated Revenue. I do not say that people in good positions should not be compelled to pay, though if they desired to do so they could contribute something towards the cost. Anyone who is unfortunate enough to have a relative in the asylum has a big enough

load to carry without being chased by the department from one end of the country to another. Too much power is vested in the department in the collection of sums that are said to be due, as well as in the administration of estates. I have called for papers to be laid upon the Table of the House. From these members will have seen the disgraceful way in which the estates of patients have been administered. In one case the Government inspector said the estate was worth £1,500, but it was ultimately sold for £800. Forty pigs were sold out of that estate for no more than £11. That is no way in which to deal with a person's affairs. It seems that none of the officials can be bothered with this class of business. If the owner is in Claremont there seems to be no incentive to trouble about his affairs. I asked some of the warders in the mental hospital what they thought of one old patient there. They said he was quite sane, but had no desire to get out as his estate had gone, and it was no use his starting life afresh.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: This Bill has nothing to do with that case.

Mr. SLEEMAN: It has something to do with the fees. The State can well afford to keep these people, whose relatives should not be harassed in the way that has been done.

MR. WITHERS (Bunbury) [9.50]: I hope the Minister will not press the Bill. I have had experiences similar to those of other members. One painful case came before me. It was the case of a woman who became mentally afflicted and had to be taken to the Asylum. When the husband returned from the war he found that his wife was installed in the asylum, and there was no one to look after his two little children. He was harassed by the department to such an extent that he had to be prevented from committing suicide. In fact, he very nearly went into the asylum himself. What will the position be if the department are liable to persecute all parents to the extent that they are driven into the asylum themselves?

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: The State does not persecute them. In every case that has been brought under the notice of the Minister justice has been meted out.

Mr. Corboy: It should not be necessary to go to him.

Mr. WITHERS: What the Minister says is right, but why should people have to go to him? Why should they have to come to members of Parliament to secure the redress of their wrongs?

Mr. Angelo: We shall soon need a Minister for Lunacy?

Mr. WITHERS: Yes. I have another hard case in mind of a lady in my district. She is at present under observation. Her father died recently at the age of 81, and her mother is now very old. The rest of the family are married. Must we go to the Minister first and apply for this woman to be placed in Claremont free of charge, or are her brothers and sisters to be harassed until they have to approach a member of Parliament, who in turn will go to the Minister? The department already have sufficient authority and should not be given any greater powers. I hope next session the whole of the legislation governing the department will be brought up for review in the direction suggested by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy).

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.54]: I hope the Minister will agree to the deletion of most of the clauses of this Bill.

Mr. Davy: Let the whole thing be defeated.

Mr. SAMPSON: There is one clause that I would like to see put through, namely that relating to the Board of Visitors.

Mr. Latham: That has been put in to get the rest through.

Mr. Davy: It is in such bad company that I suspect it.

Mr. SAMPSON: That clause is put forward by a good man in the person of Dr. McWhae, the chairman of the Board of Visitors. He wrote to the Minister stating that the board had given consideration to the wording of paragraph (g) of Section 95 of the Lunacy Act dealing with the duties of the board, and it was resolved to recommend that the words, "Give instructions to the Inspector General" should be amended to read, "Shall make recommendations to the Minister as to the management of the institution otherwise than in regard to the medical treatment of patients." That suggestion has frequently been made. After noting the comments of members I feel there is no question about the fate of the

Bill. Whether this particular clause can be saved or not is for the Minister to determine. I know the board would much appreciate the proposed amendment, for the provision whereby they may give instructions to the Inspector General is out of order.

Mr. DAVY: We cannot pass a Bill for the sake of one clause.

Mr. SAMPSON: Mental incapacity itself is a burden on the community, but the Bill would possibly impose a burden upon the children of the person concerned. Many relatives cannot afford to pay, and payment can therefore only be made at the cost perhaps of the wife and children, or of the children only of the person afflicted.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: You have a definition of relatives.

Mr. SAMPSON: The position is a dangerous one for the relative. It will be extremely difficult for a relative to avoid being brought into the drag-net constituting this particular part of the Bill. If the measure goes into Committee I shall vote against all but the clause dealing with the Board of Visitors.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.59]: I endorse all that has been said in opposition to the Bill. There is a danger of parents hiding their mental defects from the public as well as the police. I read recently of a horrible case that came to light in Melbourne. I do not want that sort of thing to happen here. A sub-normal child had been born, and had been kept in a certain place. It was unable even to walk. Many parents are anxious to meet their obligations to the State either in the case of sickness or other difficulties. We should not make things more difficult for people. If the Bill is forced through, it is possible that mental defects will be hidden from the authorities. Medical assistance and advice are available that can be obtained nowhere else but at the Claremont Asylum. The officials there are experts. We ought to induce people to use all the science that is available rather than to hinder medical men in their work. We should not insist upon the payment of two guineas a week.

The Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: Only if people can afford it.

Mr. LATHAM: I know what Government officials are. I have had experience of them. I am not prepared to say that it

is possible to get relief by going to the Minister. That is not his job. We should put legislation on the statute book to protect these unfortunates. Only when legislation is not being properly administered should we have to go to the Minister.

Mr. DAVY: Usually an order is made by a magistrate.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes. I hope the Bill will be defeated. The Minister must see that the House does not want it. I am surprised that it survived another place. I hope the Minister will allow the Bill to lapse.

Mr. ANGELO: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

| | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 20 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 16 |
| | | | | — |
| Majority for | .. | .. | .. | 4 |
| | | | | — |

AYES.

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Mr. Angelo | Mr. Marshall |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Millington |
| Mr. Clydesdale | Mr. Munzie |
| Mr. Gorboz | Mr. Pantou |
| Mr. Coverley | Mr. Rowe |
| Mr. Cowan | Mr. A. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Cunningham | Mr. Willcock |
| Mr. Kennedy | Mr. Withers |
| Mr. Lambert | Mr. Wilson |
| Mr. Lamond | (Teller.) |
| Mr. Luley | |

NOES.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Sampson |
| Mr. Davy | Mr. Sleeman |
| Mr. Doney | Mr. Taylor |
| Mr. Ferguson | Mr. Teesdale |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Latham | Mr. C. P. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Lindsay | Mr. North |
| Sir James Mitchell | (Teller.) |
| Mr. Richardson | |

Motion thus passed.

BILL—POOR PERSONS LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

MR. DAVY (West Perth) [10.2]: I am glad to find myself able to support the Bill, and to state that I have no serious objection even to its details. There is

scarcely anyone who will not agree with the principle that a citizen shall not be deprived of his legal rights owing to poverty. It is a principle that has been well recognised in English-speaking communities for upwards of, I suppose, 200 years. At the present time we have some machinery to provide free legal representation of people who cannot pay for such representation themselves; but it is undoubted that that legal machinery has become somewhat obsolete. Therefore I welcome the measure as an attempt to bring the machinery up to date. The Bill is not at all revolutionary, except as regards two aspects. One is the appointment of a permanent legal practitioner to act in the capacity of what I may describe as poor persons' lawyer. The other is in so far as the Bill proposes to extend the right of free legal defence in criminal cases to persons other than those charged with capital offences. With regard to the first of those two innovations I shall ask the Minister to assure us, before we pass the Bill, that if the profession to which I have the honour to belong puts up a concrete scheme whereby the appointment of a permanent officer can be rendered unnecessary, he will give that scheme serious consideration. I do not think any of us want to see the public purse depleted by the appointment of even one more official than is absolutely necessary. It will be quite impossible to get a suitable man for the position at less than £600 or £700 or £800 a year, and I think it very likely that in order to secure a man of much experience a little more may have to be paid. It is not light-heartedly that we ought to appoint such an official. I can suggest several different ways in which £600 or £700 or £800 a year can be spent much more profitably than merely by the appointment of another official.

Mr. Corboy: Is the profession prepared to submit such a scheme?

Mr. DAVY: The profession will be proud and glad to do it. I can give the Minister my assurance as to that, though I do not think he needs it. The hon. gentleman mentioned the Bill. I understand, at a social gathering which he attended some few days ago. I think he there gathered from interjections that the profession is prepared to help to carry out the functions which would be carried out by the official if appointed. The Minister can rest assured that the pro-

fession will consult with him and will put up a scheme whereby a committee will be appointed to deal with cases for representation of poor persons and go into them to see whether they are fit and proper cases to be assisted by the State, and to select one of their number to do the work which the poor persons' lawyer will do. However, all I am asking the Minister to do is to undertake to consider such a scheme, and to confer with us in regard to getting over the necessity of appointing a permanent official.

Mr. Corboy: The Minister would be very foolish if he did not.

Mr. DAVY: I feel sure he would.

The Minister for Justice: He is not foolish.

Mr. DAVY: As to the second innovation, I agree that since time immemorial almost, where a person has been charged with a capital offence he was not permitted to plead guilty, but had to plead not guilty and counsel were assigned to him. The tradition of British law has been that the foremost members of the profession were appointed to the duty of defending persons charged with capital offences. One has only to take down a volume of the State Trials in our Parliamentary library to find that the very leaders of the bar of England and Scotland defend poor persons accused of capital offences. In the case of Burke and Hare, the body-snatchers of Edinburgh, the leaders of the Scottish bar are found appearing for Burke and his wife, to see that every word that could be said for the accused was said before Burke was finally condemned to death and hanged—the woman being acquitted. That is a fine tradition, and I think it has persisted at Home down to this very day. In Western Australia, unfortunately, it has rather fallen into desuetude, the reason being that a register was made here of legal practitioners to be assigned in their different turns. The practitioners so assigned were drawn from that register. As practitioners have got older, or taken silk, or died, or left the State, no one has thought of putting additional names on the register in recent years. I believe at present there are about four names on it. The matter was brought before the Law Association some time ago, and I am sure that almost every member of it was amazed to find that the reason why the practitioners asked to represent persons charged with capital offences were of recent years so few

in number was that the choice was so very restricted.

Mr. Corboy: They themselves did not know they were not on the register.

Mr. DAVY: That is so. I would like to see the old-fashioned style restored. When a man is charged with a capital offence and is unable to furnish proper representation of himself, I would like it to be regarded as a high honour and a duty to be assigned by the Crown to defend the man. I believe that my feelings in that respect are shared by the whole profession. If the Crown does not see fit to pay a full fee, I would rather see it pay no fees; either one thing or the other. To ask counsel to defend an accused on a capital offence for a paltry fee which under ordinary circumstances, would scarcely be sufficient to engage representation in a police court, is not the way to get the best men to volunteer their services. It is better to do it as a duty to be undertaken for nothing, or else those undertaking it should be fully paid. The Bill proposes to extend beyond capital offences, the right of a man to have proper representation in respect of other offences of an indictable description. I see no logical reason to be advanced against that proposal. Although we may not all have agreed with the arguments advanced by the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) when he introduced a Bill to amend the Criminal Code to abolish the death penalty, we agree that the taking away of the liberty of a man and thrusting him into prison is a terrible duty to be undertaken. While it may not be regarded as so serious as the death penalty, still it is quite serious enough to warrant an effort being made to see that the interests of a man placed in that position shall be safeguarded by affording him adequate legal representation. I cannot object to the extension of that principle to indictable offences. Should a man plead guilty to an indictable offence, I do not know that that plea should not be accepted. If it should be shown subsequently that the man pleaded guilty to shelter someone else, the position could be rectified, whereas that is not possible in a capital offence. I think the legal profession will agree with that. This matter has not escaped the notice of the profession and we have discussed it during the past year. One thing that was decided amongst ourselves was that the right to be defended should be extended

beyond capital offences to offences involving heavy penalties. I have pleasure in supporting the measure and at the same time I ask the Minister to consider the offer of the legal profession to help the Government in every way, to make it unnecessary for another public official to be appointed. In fact, the profession will endeavour to work out a scheme that will assure more efficient representation of an accused person than will be possible if that task is assigned to one public official.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

(Hon. J. C. Willecocks—Geraldton—in reply) [10.5]: I thank the House for the favourable consideration extended to the Bill.

Mr. Thomson: We are all in favour of it.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not wish to waste the time of the House; but to give the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) the assurance that the Government will be prepared to co-operate with the Law Society in any scheme they may ask the Government to adopt. We are strongly in favour of the principle embodied in the Bill, and we were prepared to go to the extent of undertaking the expenditure necessary to give effect to that principle. We felt that if we were to call upon the legal profession for help, it might be suggested that as we had introduced legislation of this sort, we should be prepared to meet any claims made upon us in that respect. It will be noticed that the appointment of a legal man is entirely optional. I had heard something to the effect that the Law Society would be prepared to co-operate with the Government, and when moving the second reading, I asked for that co-operation. If it is extended, the Government will be only too glad to accept it. If, on the other hand, no move is made to co-operate with the Government, we are prepared to go on with the principle embodied in the Bill, at the same time accepting any assistance that may be offered in due course.

Mr. Thomson: It is gratifying to find the legal profession prepared to do what the medical profession has done in connection with our hospitals.

Mr. Davy: We have all along been prepared to extend that assistance.

Mr. Corboy: It is a fine spirit.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The members of the legal profession have shown

a desire to assist those who seek to be educated in connection with the legal profession, and have assisted them to get on.

Mr. Thomson: At any rate, this is evidence that they are prepared to do their part.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so. Although we have no direct negotiations with the Law Society, I attended a function on Friday last at which law students and members of the society were present. This matter had been given some publicity in the House during the week, and I mentioned it casually at the gathering. From the interjections that were made, and from the speeches I listened to subsequently, there was no doubt in my mind that the legal profession were not only willing to co-operate with the Government, but were anxious to do so.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 22nd November.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.20]: The Bill before the House is essentially one for the Committee stage, and I suppose some of the clauses will survive. The Bill provides for the appointment of health boards and I think in that respect it will be a great improvement. It is very desirable that members shall be elected by the vote of those concerned, and it is interesting to note that, possibly after consultation with members, the Minister has agreed to adopt the method of voting that applies to-day under the Road Districts Act. Therefore, plural voting is not being objected to. There is a clause in the Bill that will give the health authorities too much power. I refer to the right to demolish buildings. I propose to move an amendment that will enable persons concerned to have the right of appeal. I believe that the interpretation of "family" is not sufficiently comprehensive. It limits the members of a family

to the wife or husband or a child, parent, brother, or sister of the occupier. I think we might include grandparents, nieces, nephews, uncles and aunts. It is easily conceivable that in many cases those near relatives would be living in the same home.

The Minister for Health: It has never happened once.

Mr. SAMPSON: It has never happened in a shifting population. I suggest that if ever the Minister gets on to that point it will be very carefully considered. If the limitation of interpretation of "families" were expressed in the measure, it is quite possible that limitation would be acted upon, even in regard to British residents. There is a provision whereby food-stuffs stated to be unfit for human consumption may be ordered to be destroyed. Already in the parent Act there is a right of appeal in certain instances, and I suggest a similar right might be given under this clause. There would not be an appeal lodged, I think, unless the circumstances were such as to make success possible. Perhaps the clause to which the greatest objection will be raised is that which prevents or limits, except by permission of the Commissioner, advice in respect to the feeding of infants.

The Minister for Health: I will agree to an amendment there. I have supplied an amendment for the member for West Perth.

Mr. SAMPSON: Very well. Possibly the objection I was about to voice will be met. By the clause even doctors, chemists and nurses in charge of baby clinics would be prevented from giving advice about the feeding of children. The Bill provides that any person who advises or endeavours to persuade or induce a mother, or any person in charge of a child under six months of age, to purchase or use any artificial food for the purpose of feeding such child shall be guilty of an offence against the Act, unless he proves that he acted with the permission of the Commissioner. There is no exemption for a doctor, for a chemist or for a nurse. The Government are interested in various baby clinics, and at those clinics certificated nurses are engaged. Surely they are qualified to advise without having to communicate with the Commissioner of Health and ask for his permission. I submit that the clause needs amendment.

The Minister for Health: We have re-drafted that.

Mr. SAMPSON: That being so, I will say no more about it. But, as it was, it amounted to an affront upon the medical fraternity and others. The feeding of artificial foods to children was referred to at length by the Minister. That is a subject to which a great deal of attention is being given. There was a case in Victoria Park. The foster child was not progressing satisfactorily, whereupon a visiting inspectress ordered Lactogen. The result was to the advantage of the child. Again, foster mothers frequently ask that Lactogen shall be provided, and I believe the inspectresses frequently recommend to the department an allowance sufficient to meet the added expense to be paid to the foster mother, thereby giving to the infant the advantage that this well-known food would provide. It is stated by an authority that breast feeding is the ideal method of nourishing infants. Nobody will dispute that. However successful artificial foods may be, mother Nature is the most successful. Breast feeding is Nature's way, and cannot be improved upon. But unfortunately there are many things that may prevent the mother from feeding her baby in the natural manner. In those instances the use of Lactogen does provide what is required. The Minister, in moving the second reading, referred to the case of certain salewomen, dressed as nurses, impertuning mothers to adopt a certain food for their babies. I learn that in no case does anyone representing the particular food referred to—Lactogen—assume the guise of a nurse unless she is a certified nurse.

The Minister for Health: I did not mention Lactogen.

Mr. SAMPSON: No, but that is the only food represented by qualified nurses in this State.

The Minister for Health: It is not.

Mr. Teesdale: Well, it is the principal one.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am advised that it is so.

The Minister for Health: You are wrongly advised.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have not heard of any other.

The Minister for Health: I know of others.

Mr. SAMPSON: Anyhow, it does not affect the principle. If they are qualified nurses and they are guilty of exceeding their duty, their conduct should be considered by the Nurses' Association. The Bill proposes to give local authorities power to provide such amounts from their funds as appear fit for the establishment of baby clinics. In the Road Districts Act there is provision authorising up to ten per cent. of the income of a road board to be utilised for hospital service. It would be well if those matters were put on an equal basis. Hospitals and baby clinics are of equal importance and should be treated similarly. I shall support the second reading, but in Committee I hope to assist in securing certain amendments.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [10.32]: There are several very good points in the Bill, but I hope the Minister will be satisfied with getting it through the second reading to-night so that we shall have an opportunity to consider it in greater detail. So far I have not been able to give it as much consideration as I should like to do. I am pleased that provision is made for the appointment of boards. A very important amendment provides for the appointment of a health inspector for a group of health districts. To provide a health inspector within the meaning of the Act has proved a distinct hardship to smaller municipalities and road boards. A health inspector has had to be appointed at fairly substantial pay when there was not sufficient work for him to do. It is an excellent principle that certain districts may combine and have one health inspector who will be independent of the local authorities. That will prove beneficial to the country districts. When I was associated with a local authority we found it was difficult at times to get the secretary, who was also the health inspector, to give effect to the desires of a majority of members of the board. We used to welcome a visit from one of the central board inspectors whose report would give the local inspector a lead and so we were able to get the work done. The proposal to have an inspector for a group of districts is a decided improvement on the existing practice. I hope the same principle may be applied to engineers.

The Minister for Health: That has nothing to do with this measure.

Mr. THOMSON: Quite so. The Minister is making a necessary alteration to Clause 31 that I think will be more favourably received than the present drafting. I am in accord with the principle to ensure that bad advice is not given with regard to the rearing of children. The Minister will probably be able to satisfy members that his proposals will be beneficial in the interests of mothers and young children. I support the second reading, but I hope we shall be able to deal with several points in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 28th November.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [10.36]: I desire to say a few words in opposition to the Bill. I do so because I consider there is no necessity for it. The Bill seeks to give power to appoint workmen's inspectors and do away with checkweighing inspectors in the coal mines.

The Minister for Mines: Not checkweighing inspectors.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There were check inspectors for weighing coal.

The Minister for Mines: We do not intend to do away with them at all. We are doing away with check inspectors for whom we are appointing workmen's inspectors.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I thought the Minister said that check weighing inspectors would not be needed. They are paid by the miners.

The Minister for Mines: This Bill will not affect them at all.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Workmen's inspectors will be a charge on the State. According to the Government reports of inspections made, there can be no justification for appointing workmen's inspectors. The salary of workmen's inspectors on the goldfields is £7 13s. 10d. per week. The Minister said they were full time men and he had made it abundantly clear to the coal miners that the most he could promise them was a half-time inspector. I do not think there is justification even for a half-time inspector, and I shall try to prove it. On the

goldfields we have one workmen's inspector at Leonora, one at Meekatharra and two at Kalgoorlie. I believe the workmen's inspector at Leonora concentrates on the Sons of Gwalia mine. There is no other mine of note working, unless it be one at Comet Vale. Of course there may be prospecting shows, but there are no other mines working. I daresay there is ample work for a man at Meekatharra. I do not know much about that district now, but there was a lot of work in years gone by.

The Minister for Mines: Meekatharra takes in Wiluna as well.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes. I know that the man at Gwalia has been doing good work. If there was need for two inspectors at Kalgoorlie some years ago, there cannot be any necessity for two now, because there are not so many mines working as there were formerly. The Coal Mines Regulation Act was amended in 1926. During the last three years 26 inspections have been made on the Collie coalfields. Each of these occupied five hours. This worked out at about 130 hours, which equal 18 days 4 hours, on the basis of seven hours a day. These are the authentic figures as to the number of inspections. How can we be justified in increasing the inspections there? There is a mining inspector engaged at the ordinary salary. He is a very capable man.

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Not only does he see that the mines are kept in working order and in a safe condition, but he is of great assistance in the event of any disturbance or dispute that may arise as to the working conditions of the men. I have heard him highly spoken of. I think his name is McVee. In the circumstances there can be no need for a workmen's inspector. It would be difficult to get one to fill the position. During the last 10½ years 91 inspections have been made. The House, therefore, is not justified in passing a Bill to increase the expenditure of the Mines Department. The Minister himself said that the most he would do would be to appoint a half-time inspector. It is impossible to work a half-time man. There are six mines working at Collie. If a half-time inspector were appointed, he would be working half-time in one mine, and would be able only to inspect the other five. The mine he worked in would not be inspected at all. It would not be expected of an employee of a company that he

should have the rights and powers conferred upon him by this Bill. The mine he would be working in, therefore, would not be inspected by him, although it would require to be inspected just as much as the other five. There is no necessity for the Bill when we take into consideration the number of inspections that have been made. In three years the inspections work out at only 18 days 4 hours, at 7 hours a day, and in 10½ years at only 91 inspections, approximately 9 days at 7 hours a day. Great care must be exercised in the appointment of workmen's inspectors. At one time the president of the A.W.U., which controls the miners, was a workmen's inspector.

The Minister for Mines: I think not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: A man cannot serve two masters.

The Minister for Mines: Where did that happen.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: In Kalgoorlie.

The Minister for Mines: Never.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I could tell the Minister the name of the man.

The Minister for Mines: The inspectors were d'Arcy and Jones.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Was it not d'Arcy?

The Minister for Mines: He was never president of the union.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am not sure he was not one of the officers, but apparently the Minister contradicts that statement.

The Minister for Mines: He was a member of the executive.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am sure he was an official. Officials should not be workmen's inspectors, having to go underground to inspect mines.

Mr. Panton: He is elected by the union.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is not right.

Mr. Panton: Only the members of the union can vote on the question. The Act provides for that.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member will make any statement to pull himself out. How does the Minister propose to work an inspector at Collie half time? There is no justification for the expense involved. He would have to work in one mine, and would have to work half time.

The Minister for Mines: He might not work in any mine.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: He must be a qualified miner who has served in the industry for five years.

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: He would naturally be engaged in the calling, or he would not be in Collie. He might be in business there, but I do not suppose the Minister has a business man in mind.

The Minister for Mines: The union will elect him, not I.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: How is the Minister going to work out the position?

The Minister for Mines: That is my business.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: How will he work it out with any degree of success?

The Minister for Mines: With success too.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Or get value for the money when we have had only 18 inspections in three years.

Mr. Wilson: You said 26 not long ago.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is equal to 18 days 4 hours.

Mr. Treddale called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Under the conditions I have described, can there be any justification for passing a Bill empowering the Government to appoint these inspectors? There is already power to appoint special inspectors.

The Minister for Mines: Not in connection with coal mining.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Very well; the Minister desires power for that purpose. In our gold mines there have been special inspectors for many years; I do not know how many: probably 20 years.

The Minister for Mines: Since 1906.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is over 20 years. During that period on one occasion, and on one occasion only, has a special inspector been appointed.

The Minister for Mines: If there had not been the power, he could not have been appointed.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: In all those years, in all those mines, where the great bulk of this country's mining has been carried on, only one appointment of a special inspector:

has been made. That being so, there cannot be much necessity for the appointment of special inspectors. The two types of special inspectors would be appointed only for the moment, to inspect a special incident. When that special incident had been dealt with, their appointment would cease. I would give the Minister power to appoint special inspectors. It is well that the power should exist.

The Minister for Mines: That is all I ask.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: In view of what has actually occurred, there is not much justification for the appointments proposed under the Bill, seeing that with the possibilities of accident on the goldfields during 22 years only one appointment has been found necessary. There are Government mining inspectors, capable men, on the goldfields; and surely those inspectors, who are above suspicion, are qualified to inspect the underground workings of the Collie coal mines satisfactorily. People are careful and jealous of their positions, and exercise a great deal of judgment, and give a great deal of attention to their work. Surely the inspectors I refer to are capable of doing the inspection at Collie, thus avoiding the placing of additional expense on the mining industry. We know that the coal mines of the English-speaking world are suffering almost to the point of extinction because of the high cost of production. Britain's great coal mines are practically at a standstill. In New South Wales the Newcastle and South Coast coal mines are suffering from over-capitalisation and over-organisation.

Mr. Panton: That is because France is getting the bulk of the coal from Germany.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is because England would not produce it.

Mr. Panton: France is getting coal from Germany, instead of cash.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: We know that formerly South Australia imported coal from England cheaper than she could get it from New South Wales, 7s. per ton cheaper. We should try to make it possible to put our coal on the market as cheaply as possible, so as to create work for our people and create industries. Coal has been the great factor in producing British manufactures. For the reasons I have indicated, I am not prepared to support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. WILSON (Collie) [10.55]: I support the Bill, which is long overdue. Further, I support the measure because the Collie miners have taken a leaf out of the good legislation which the goldfields obtained many years ago, and which the timber workers also have secured during the past three or four years. The difference between the gold mines and the coal mines is that the former have not deleterious gases as the coal mines have. Although there is no inflammable gas in Collie, it has gases which, to the persons working in the mines, are worse than inflammable gas. Let me bring to the recollection of hon. members the fact that twenty years ago some Collie miners were in a manner poisoned by bad ventilation and bad gases.

Hon. G. Taylor: But Collie may not have had as good inspection then as it has now.

Mr. WILSON: Collie has always had a good inspector.

Hon. G. Taylor: I said, inspection.

Mr. WILSON: Good inspection too. In the Old Country the coal miners were the first to recognise the need for inspection. That was in 1872. The only thing done then was that the coal miners were given the right to appoint two workmen to go round the mines and see that everything was right; but they had to bear the cost of those two men. That has continued until the present day. The Collie miners have also the right to send check inspectors down the mines. As regards the figures quoted by the last speaker I challenge their correctness. There has been more inspection in one year than the hon. member says there was in three years. Collie has six mines, and nearly every week check inspectors go out to see that the mines are properly inspected. They have this much to their credit, that the Collie miners have always found the district inspectors good fellows. However, occasionally an accident takes place. The Minister forgot to mention that two months ago the Collie miners decided to give, and did give, the Government 14 days' notice that they would cease producing coal unless an independent inspector was appointed.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the sort of thing that causes trade in coal to be lost.

Mr. Lindsay: Apparently the Collie miners were running the country.

Mr. WILSON: Perhaps they were running the country when the war was on and coal could not be got.

Mr. Lindsay: It is rather strong to say the Collic miners gave the Government 14 days' notice.

Mr. WILSON: I have said they did that. I told them they could not fight the Government. I was not afraid to tell them that. They adopted my view, and the Minister decided to grant a round-table conference, at which the matter was amicably settled.

Mr. Teesdale: Naturally!

Hon. G. Taylor: He promised it.

Mr. WILSON: There can be nothing very detrimental in promising a thing that is justified. Where the hon. member got his information from I do not know.

Mr. Thomson: Give your reasons justifying the Bill.

Mr. WILSON: Sometimes there is a clash, and then the workmen's inspector goes through the mine. The member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) knows that cases have occurred, though not in Collic, of companies manipulating trap doors when check inspectors were about. That has happened in New South Wales. Certain companies sent deputies to manipulate the trap doors and so alter the ventilation when the check inspectors were on the mine. That could be done here. I do not think it will be done here. The question involved in the Bill is not so much the payment as the permanency of the position.

Hon. G. Taylor: How would you get it to work?

Mr. WILSON: Just the same as at present. An inspector will be appointed, and he will make inspections just when he thinks they are justified. He will not give any notice to the company as to when he will make an inspection. He may find out that some timber is required to safeguard dangerous places, or that the atmosphere is not pure.

Hon. G. Taylor: That does not say much for your Government inspector.

Mr. WILSON: The hon. member has adversely commented upon the inspectors; I have not done so.

Hon. G. Taylor: The inspector there has six mines to inspect.

Mr. WILSON: But he has a lot of work to do in the mines. There are not hard roofs to the mines, such as there are on the goldfields. At any rate, I challenge the hon. member's figures for they are absolutely in-

correct. I do not know where the hon. member got the figures from.

Hon. G. Taylor: You cannot successfully challenge them.

Mr. WILSON: I can. I challenge the hon. member to prove the accuracy of his figures. I will resign my seat, if the hon. member will do the same, and if he can prove that I am wrong, I will never contest the Collic seat again.

Hon. G. Taylor: I think I will wait until the Redistribution of Seats Bill comes along.

Mr. WILSON: That will be all right so far as the hon. member is concerned. I do not know whether the hon. member was intentionally misleading, but his figures were absolutely wrong.

Hon. G. Taylor: We will see about that if the Bill gets to the Committee stage.

Mr. WILSON: I did not interrupt the hon. member once when he was speaking. I gave him a fair go!

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member will address the Chair.

Mr. WILSON: The Bill is overdue, and it is the wish of miners of the Collic district that it shall become law so that they shall be put on the same footing and have equal justice accorded them, as is accorded in other industries throughout the State.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [11.2]: When the member for Collic (Mr. Wilson) was speaking, I asked him for a reason for members being urged to pass the Bill. I find that the Bill repeals Sections 36 and 37 of the principal Act. Section 37 gives an inspector absolute power, the same as is contained in the Bill. I cannot understand the necessity for the alteration. Section 36 empowers the Governor-in-Council to appoint any fit person to be an inspector of mines.

The Minister for Mines: That is a Government inspector.

Mr. THOMSON: That section is to be deleted and practically the same class of inspector will be appointed and he is to come under the provisions of the Public Service Act. He will receive the protection of that measure and his privileges are to be preserved. The member for Collic (Mr. Wilson) challenged the figures submitted by the member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor), and I do not know who is right. It seems to me the statement

made by the member for Collie should give the House some cause for anxiety. He said the Collie miners had given the Government 14 days' notice that unless they could get an inspector, they were going to hold up the business of the country.

Mr. Wilson: I did not say any such thing. I said they gave 14 days' notice of some trouble.

Mr. THOMSON: I could only assume from the statement made by the hon. member that the Minister, after a round-table conference with the miners, agreed to introduce the Bill.

Mr. Panton: The member for Collie did not say anything of the sort. He said that the men gave 14 days' notice.

Mr. THOMSON: What for? The Minister went down. Apparently the Minister promised to introduce the Bill, and that settled the dispute. It will be noticed that the Bill, according to a note at the top of the first page, was introduced by the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson), but it has been fathered by the Minister, who moved the second reading. Obviously he had to do so because such a Bill as the one before us requires a message from His Excellency the Governor, and a private member has not that privilege. Therefore the Minister has fathered the Bill, which was prepared by the member for Collie.

Mr. Panton: There is nothing wrong with that.

The Minister for Mines: It was not prepared by the member for Collie at all.

Mr. THOMSON: Perhaps not, but it was introduced by him. Neither the Minister nor the member for Collie has produced any reasons why we should pass the Bill. I endorse every remark made by the member for Mount Margaret. I drew the attention of the House to the position in which the coal mining industry of Australia find itself. I drew attention to the fact that away in Colombo, where at one time Australia supplied more than half the requirements of that port, no Australian coal is being used now, because it is altogether too costly. Then we have the humiliating position that to-day it is possible to bring coal all the way from the Old Country and sell it in South Australia for 7s. per ton less than it can be brought from New South Wales. The Premier of New South Wales, in conjunction with the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth, has been endeavouring

to see whether some means can be found for regaining the trade we have lost, and the Commonwealth has agreed to supply a certain amount by way of subsidy. New South Wales agreed to do the same, provided the miners would agree to forego a proportion of their wages. I regret to say the Coal Miners' Association of New South Wales did not rise to the occasion in their own interests.

Mr. Wilson: Reduce their own wages!

Mr. THOMSON: If New South Wales and the Commonwealth are prepared to assist by the provision of a bounty, will not those miners be very much better off than they are to-day, even though their wages be reduced by 1s. per ton? The position is that the coal mining industry has been so loaded up with costs that I do not think it wise to levy a further impost on the industry at Collie, by placing it under the burden of having to pay increased charges under the Bill.

The Minister for Mines: This will not increase their costs by one farthing.

Mr. THOMSON: It is proposed that a workmen's inspector shall be appointed. Although the union will have the selection of the inspector, the Minister will pay him and will have power to remove him from his position. Neither the Minister nor the member for Collie has given any reasons why we should pass the Bill. They have not given a single illustration showing that the existing inspector has failed to do his duty.

The Minister for Mines: I do not say that he has.

Mr. THOMSON: Then why appoint a workmen's inspector if it be not necessary?

The Minister for Mines: Why did we do it in the gold mining industry?

Mr. THOMSON: Even there, if the figures given by the member for Mount Margaret be correct—

Mr. Wilson: They are not.

Mr. THOMSON: Section 37 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act lays down the duty of an inspector.

The Minister for Mines: In this instance the provision is the same. Not one word has been altered.

Mr. THOMSON: Then why the necessity for the Bill?

The Minister for Mines: I explained it fully in moving the second reading. You were not here.

Mr. Davy: Are not workmen's inspectors provided for in the Act?

Mr. THOMSON: Neither the Minister nor the member for Collie has produced evidence that the inspector appointed under Section 36 and 37 of the Coal Mines Regulation Act has been in any way negligent. Nor have they shown any necessity for any alteration whatever and so, reluctantly, I must oppose the second reading.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans—in reply) [11.12]: Really the only thing that calls for any reply is the statement made by the member for Katanning, in reading the clause as it stands in the Bill regarding the payment of departmental inspectors. In moving the second reading I explained that I had adopted a new method which, in my opinion, was preferable to the practice usually adopted in amending Bills of simply saying "strike out this word here and insert other words there," which probably would have meant a Bill with 28 or 29 such amendments; instead of doing that I proposed, and the Crown Law Department agreed, that it was better in respect of the Coal Mines Regulation Act to cancel altogether Sections 36 and 37 and embody them in the Bill with the additional provision for workmen's inspectors and special inspectors. I did it for convenience sake and to make it plain. In regard first of all to the hostility that seems to have been raised to the matter mentioned by the member for Collie, the coal miners did not carry a resolution at an aggregate meeting, which means a meeting of the whole of the six mines together. They carried a resolution giving to the Government 14 days' notice that unless something was done about the appointment of a workmen's inspector, they would cease work on a certain day. They sent that resolution on to me, and as Minister for Mines I replied to it.

Mr. Davy: Politely?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, I think so. The reply occupied about 2½ sheets of foolscap paper. It was fairly polite and fairly definite. I think the member for Collie was present at the next aggregate meeting of the union when that reply was read, and I think he backed up almost every word of it. That had nothing whatever to do with the introduction of the Bill. I want it to be clearly understood that

the mere carrying of that resolution and sending it on to me produced nothing more than a definite reply. Then there was further trouble at Collie a little later. Prior to that I went to Kalgoorlie and met the Chamber of Mines with representatives of the Government inspectors and the workmen's inspectors and of all employees at a round table conference. We discussed three matters, and I believe that from that discussion some good will eventuate. I then sent a notification to the coal owners as well as to the employees' organisations, that I desired to meet the coal owners and the coal miners under similar conditions with their inspector present. I went down and met them. We discussed many phases of the working of the Collie coal mines. It seemed to me as if the management had not put up satisfactory replies to some of the cases cited by the men, and in other instances some of the complaints made by the men, in my opinion, were not justified and were fully replied to by the mine owners. It is only at such a conference that one can get at the basis of any trouble. I am positive that from the very day that workmen's inspectors were appointed in the metalliferous mines we have had smoother and better working between the employers and the employees. And I am just as positive that the appointment of a workmen's inspector in the coal mines will have exactly the same result. I want the members for Katanning and for Mount Margaret to realise that under the existing Coal Mines Regulation Act there is provision for the appointment of check inspectors—which means that the union can appoint any two men whom they desire to make an inspection, and those people have certain powers under the Act, in that they record the result of their inspection in the record book. But the employees themselves have to bear the cost. For every day they lose when making an inspection, the union has to pay. I want to know why, if the gold mines are entitled to a workmen's inspector appointed by the men in the mine and paid by the Government, why should not the Collie coal miners also be entitled to elect a man to be paid by the Government?

Mr. Wilson: The same thing obtains in the building trade.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, in the building trade, under the Scaffolding Act, and in the timber industry workmen's inspectors are appointed. Can it be said

there is any more necessity for the appointment of workmen's inspectors in addition to government inspectors in the timber industry than there is in the coal mining industry?

Mr. Davy: That is not much of an argument in favour of the thing.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The principle argument is, first of all, that the men have the right under the existing Act to make any independent inspection, provided they appoint somebody and pay him for doing it.

Hon. G. Taylor: They are not likely to do that very often.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Everybody knows that a man appointed under those conditions is not as satisfactory or independent as a man appointed under the other conditions. The member for Mount Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor) raised a question regarding the appointment of special inspectors. I have never been asked by the gold miners or the coal miners for the right to appoint special inspectors, but when this Act was being amended to give the right to appoint workmen's inspectors, I did think it necessary in the interests of the Collie coalfields to take the right to appoint a special inspector if the necessity arose. In the law for the regulation of gold mining that right has existed since 1906, and on only one or two occasions has it been necessary to appoint a special inspector.

Hon. G. Taylor: On only one occasion, I think.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The time is probably not far distant when it may be necessary to appoint a special inspector in the coal mines. If there is need for the provision in the Act governing gold mining, there is ten times the need for it in the Coal Mines Regulation Act. I hope that so long as I have the honour to be Minister for Mines, no occasion will arise necessitating the appointment of a special inspector, but if the necessity should arise, I want the power to make the appointment. Black damp has not been known in the Collie mines so far, but we cannot tell when it may appear.

Mr. Thomson: I hope it will not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Quite so, but if it did occur and an accident resulted, I want the right to appoint a special inspector.

Hon. G. Taylor: There would be nothing to prevent your appointing the special inspector in case of emergency.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He would be appointed only in an emergency.

Hon. G. Taylor: You could appoint him without special legislation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The State Mining Engineer informs me that, unless power is given under the Act, I could not make such an appointment legally.

Hon. G. Taylor: You would do it anyhow.

Mr. Thomson: Yes, and everyone would applaud your action.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Power should be given to make such an appointment in the event of the necessity arising. I do not know where the member for Mt. Margaret obtained his figures dealing with the number of inspections. I gave the total number of inspections over a period of three years, but I cannot say from memory what the figures were.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do you think my figures are wrong?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I think they are considerably on the lean side.

Mr. Teesdale: Be careful; the Committee stage is coming and he has something up his sleeve!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not care what he has up his sleeve. The member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) asked whether some of the provisions of the Act were not being repeated in this Bill. Several are repeated. One or two of the principal clauses referring to departmental inspectors have been altered to make them applicable to coal mines as against gold mines, but the principle is the same. That is why it was decided to repeal Sections 36 and 37 and re-embody the whole proposals in this Bill. I hope the measure will pass the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

As to Committee Stage.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [11.25]: I move—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the whole to consider the Bill.

Hon. G. Taylor: Not at this hour of the night, surely! It is 11.25 p.m. now.

The Minister for Mines: I cannot help that; we have only another fortnight till the end of the session, and we must get through the business.

Question put and passed.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1-2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Appointment of inspectors of mines:

Hon. G. TAYLOR: This clause gives power to appoint inspectors of mines. Does that mean workmen's inspectors or the ordinary mining inspectors?

The Minister for Mines: Both.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There is already a Government inspector and I presume his services will be retained.

The Minister for Mines: Certainly.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: It is proposed to repeal the sections under which he was appointed and re-enact them by this clause.

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: And the clause will give power to appoint workmen's inspectors as well. I see no necessity for workmen's inspectors. The Minister has been unfair. When my figures were challenged, I was not in a position to verify them but thought to do so in Committee. The Minister, however, has taken the Bill straight into Committee within a few minutes of 11.30 p.m. and consequently I have had no opportunity to verify my figures. I assert that the figures I gave the House are true. In three years 26 inspections were made and each inspection covered five hours, working out at 130 hours in all or, at the rate of 7 hours per day, equal to 18 days 4 hours. Those figures have been challenged, and I thought the Minister and the member for Collie would be fair enough to give me a chance to verify them.

Mr. Wilson: I have not moved in the matter at all.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member said he would resign his seat if I was right conditionally upon my resigning my seat if I was wrong. It would be a matter of great satisfaction to me and it might be of great advantage to the Collie miners if the

hon. member did resign. Still, the resignation of both of us would not justify my figures. I say the figures are correct.

Mr. Wilson: They are not.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then report progress and give me an opportunity to verify them! Be honest with me!

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Of course the Minister has the numbers behind him and can outvote me, but I maintain it is unfair to challenge my figures and not give me an opportunity to verify them. I say it is cowardly—

Mr. Teesdale: The brutal majority again!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: —and I cannot refrain from resenting the Minister's attitude, but unfortunately I can resent it only with words and not with force, because the Minister has got the numbers. All I can do is to challenge the two gentlemen responsible for the Bill. If they say my statements are untrue, they should give me a chance, by reporting progress, to verify them.

Mr. Teesdale: That's the stuff to give them.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then if I am unable to verify them to-morrow, I shall be prepared to make that apology becoming an hon. member without any resigning of seats being necessary. The figures are in the Minister's department. He had them here when he introduced the Bill, because he told us so. The figures were so telling against the measure that they missed the Minister's notice when he moved the second reading. I do not make statements knowing them to be false. I make them believing them to be true.

Mr. Wilson: You are not the only one.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I have not been given a fair chance. I have told the Minister what few inspections there have been over a period of years. He now wants another man to perform that duty, when he already has one who stands high in the esteem of the people of Collie. He has not 11 miles of territory to cover. It is now desired to appoint a workmen's inspector to supervise his work. The Minister should report progress and give me an opportunity to make good the statements I have made.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not intend to report progress. It is no use the hon. member indulging in heroics. I

am not challenging his statement. I had the figures for my own information but have not got them now. Whether the hon. member is correct or not I do not know. If there have been only 26 inspections it does not matter. The chief complaint of the men in the mines is that it is not giving them a fair deal that they should have to pay overtime when they appoint a man to make and check inspections. In many cases the inspections are necessary, but are not carried out for that reason.

Mr. Davy: Is it not a matter of the Government trimming up their inspector?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I have every confidence in him.

Mr. Wilson: So have I.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Fully 99 per cent. of the miners also have confidence in Mr. McVee. That is not to say they are not justified in asking for the right to appoint their own inspector. No man is infallible. Suppose they believe the air to be not all it should be! If they want to make a test they have to borrow the instrument from the Government inspector.

Hon. G. Taylor: Have they found him at fault?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They have stated that the air currents have been tested by the instrument, but they have no means of checking the instrument itself, and they believe it to be wrong.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is like the man with a compass that was lost.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The mine managers have made tests which have differed from those of the inspector. There is nothing serious about that. I would not care if only six inspections had been made. That has nothing to do with the principle of the Bill. The men will not get more than a half-time inspector.

Hon. G. Taylor: They will bring pressure to bear.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Not upon me.

Hon. G. Taylor: They will give you another 14 days' notice.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The number of inspections that have been made has nothing to do with the principle.

Mr. CHESSON: I support the clause. The appointment of inspectors has worked no hardship against the companies on the goldfields. In our district the companies welcome them. They have always given a

fair deal to both sides. In coal mines in which I have worked every working face was visited each night. If the mine was gaseous or required more timbering a notification to that effect was posted. In a coal mine it is necessary to keep the timbering close up to the face. One careless workman in a gaseous mine may lead to the death of all. Rigid inspection is more necessary in that class of mine than in any other.

Mr. WILSON: I am sorry the member for Mt. Margaret has been so bitter. I know, as an old check inspector, that his figures are wrong. I also wish the Minister had reported progress so that I might prove him wrong. It would be impossible for any chief inspector to go down all the mines and satisfactorily inspect them all. Every man who has worked in a coal mine knows what I say to be correct. The Collie inspector is an excellent inspector, and I will not sit here and allow his reputation to be taken away. When I was a check inspector, the miners thought I had sufficient time to do the work and save paying an inspector. Once I was told I could not go down the mine. I asked the reason, and was informed, "You are not a working miner." I said I was a practical miner, whereupon the retort was, "You are too practical for us, and you will not be allowed to go down the mine." That was under the old Act, which is still on the statute-book.

Mr. Thomson: There are no inspectors in the building trade.

Mr. WILSON: No, and in the building trade you can do as you like. Workmen's inspectors are paid by the day. Two men go down, and it is a big expense to the union. In a coal mine a good deal can happen in the course of five weeks.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4, 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Conditions of appointment:

Mr. THOMSON: Why does the second paragraph of the clause provide that no inspector shall hold an interest in any coal mine in the State without the permission in writing of the Minister?

The Minister for Mines: That refers to the Government inspector.

Mr. THOMSON: The man might have a number of shares in a mine.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 14, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 11.47 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 5th December, 1928.

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

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH SUPER-ANNUATION FUND.

In Committee—Progress Arrested.

Resumed from the 29th November. Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; Hon. J. T. Franklin in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Extension of power to make by-laws:

[Hon. A. Lovekin had moved an amendment, "That Clause 2 be struck out with a view to inserting other words.]

Hon. J. T. FRANKLIN: After considering the alteration proposed by the select committee and after consulting the actuary, I have come to the conclusion that if the amendment be passed the Bill will not be of any advantage to the Perth City Council. I therefore move—

That the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

Motion put and passed.

The Chairman accordingly left the Chair and the Bill lapsed.

BILL—ELECTORAL DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of Section 4 and substitution of new section:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The agricultural areas are not receiving the consideration to which they are entitled. In other parts of the world greater recognition is given to the country. Some cities have no Parliamentary representation at all. My amendment will increase the number of metropolitan members by two and the number of agricultural members by three. The amendment has been carefully framed so that the Commission will experience no difficulty in arriving at the necessary quotas. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (a) "three" be struck out and the word "two" inserted in lieu.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. Under existing legislation passed in 1911 the metropolitan area has 12 members. When that measure was passed, the number of electors for the metropolitan area was 50,506. At present the number of electors is 108,866, so that the population of the metropolitan area has more than doubled. Now members can see the effect of the amendment. I communicated with the Chief Electoral Registrar and asked him to show the results of the application of the amendment. The results are—Metropolitan area, actual enrolment on the 24th October, 1928, 108,866 electors; reduction under the amendment, 54,433; quota arrived at by dividing by 46, 4,137. The total number of metropolitan districts under the amendment would be 13.2, so that the metropolitan area would have 13 members, an increase of one, although the population has more than doubled since 1911. In the agricultural areas the actual enrolment of 86,749 would be increased to 104,218, so that there would be 25.2 districts, or in other words, 25 mem-