

the State. The Bill is rather technical and I have endeavoured, as briefly as possible to explain its provisions. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin, debate adjourned.

## BILL—SLAUGHTER OF CALVES RESTRICTION.

### Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. F. F. S. Willmott—Nelson) [10.13] in moving the second reading said: All hon. members who have given this matter of the indiscriminate slaughter of female calves any attention at all must agree with me that it is now a national necessity that the slaughter of female calves should be restricted. The slaughter of heifer calves in the metropolitan area has been engaging the attention of the Agricultural Department for some years but no definite arrangements have ever been arrived at. Various propositions were discussed from time to time with the view of establishing a company for the purchase of all calves in the metropolitan area and placing them on various farms. However, nothing eventuated in that direction. The Government therefore have decided to step in and prevent this slaughter of female stock, with a view to increasing, instead of decreasing, the dairy herds of the State. The need for dairy cows was never so urgent as at the present time, and the proposed action is fully justified. When the calves reach the prescribed age the dairymen will be able to sell them at a fair figure. It may be necessary for the Government to step in and purchase some of those calves. But I might point out that the cows in the metropolitan area, generally speaking, are the best milking cows in the State; because the metropolitan dairyman cares not what price he pays so long as the animal he buys is a thoroughly good dairy cow. Hon. members may be surprised at learning that there are 5,000 cows in the metropolitan area. The indiscriminate slaughter of calves, irrespective of sex, that has been going on for years represents a great loss to the State. It is time action was taken. Dairy cows will be needed not only for those returned soldiers who intend to go in for dairying, but also for civil settlers prepared to embark in the industry. In a period of 26 weeks 850 calves were slaughtered in the metropolitan area. It is fair to assume that 50 per cent. of those were heifers. So that, in 26 weeks, 425 heifer calves were slaughtered in the metropolitan area alone. The quality of veal killed for the trade can safely be left to the health inspectors, who are the best judges of what is fit for human consumption. To my mind there is something repugnant in eating veal only a few days old. As there is no restriction at pre-

sent, calves are killed almost as soon as born. Again, there is the economic loss to the State in killing a calf that weighs less than 50lbs. when that animal, if allowed to grow to a reasonable size, would weigh ten times as much, and the State would participate in the benefit. Somewhat similar action has been taken in America, where the tremendous slaughter of calves has been found to seriously affect the meat supply of that country. The Bill will probably save the slaughtering of over 2,000 heifer calves in the metropolitan area in one year. When it is remembered what we pay to-day for imported butter, it will be agreed that anything that can be done to assist the dairying industry in this State should be done. This small Bill will materially help that industry. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [10.20]: I have no objection to the Bill, but I think it should go farther and provide against spaying. A spayed calf would be more valuable at the end of six months than before.

The Honorary Minister: We can deal with that in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*House adjourned at 10.21 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Tuesday, 7th October, 1919.*

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The House met at 4.30 p.m.

## ILLNESS OF PRESIDENT—ELECTION OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

The Clerk: I have to announce that the President is unable to be present, owing to ill-health.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East). [4.31]: I am sure all hon. members will join with me in regret-

ting that our President is prevented from taking his customary place in this Chamber, and in hoping that his illness will not prove of a serious nature. All of us trust that the President will in the very near future again enjoy his usual good health and resume his position here. In the circumstances I move—

That the Hon. J. F. Allen take the Chair as Deputy President.

Question put and passed.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT then took the Chair, and read prayers.

#### POINT OF ORDER—PAPERS ORDERED.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [4.34]: I have here certain papers of a confidential nature which were ordered by the House to be laid on the Table, at the instance of the Hon. H. Stewart. I am prepared to lay these papers before you, Mr. Deputy President; but in view of their highly confidential nature they cannot be placed amongst the papers laid on the Table. They relate to the Mines Department explosives file referred to in Mr. Stewart's remarks at the last sitting of the House.

#### URGENCY MOTION—ROYAL SHOW, STOCK TRANSPORT.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT [4.35]: I have received from the Hon. V. Hamersley the following communication:—

I wish, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 58, to move the adjournment of the House in order to draw attention to a matter of urgency, which is as follows: Exhibitors of stock at the Royal Show have been put to much inconvenience owing to the action of the Railway Department, and unless immediate steps are taken to remedy their action considerable loss will be incurred in exhibitors' getting their stock returned after the show.

It will be necessary for four members to rise in their places in support of the motion.

Four members having risen in their places,

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East [4.36]: I trust hon. members will believe that I have not lightly undertaken the moving of this urgency motion. At all events, I am sure that I shall be able to advance quite sufficient reasons to induce hon. members to support me in my action. I regard the subject of this motion as one of the utmost urgency. In previous years exhibitors of stock at the Royal Agricultural Show have experienced vexatious difficulties. There have always been complaints from exhibitors residing at outside centres on the score of slow transit on the railways of their valuable stock consigned to the show grounds. The Royal Agricultural Society have from time to time approached the Railway Department on the subject, and in previous years the depart-

ment have undoubtedly made every effort to give quick transit. On various occasions they have carried out their undertakings in a fairly satisfactory manner. I visited the show grounds to-day, and had discussions with some exhibitors of valuable stock; and I found those exhibitors to be smarting under a grievance. It appears that the Royal Agricultural Society this year again approached the Railway Department and obtained a promise of quick transit, and even of special trains, for stock exhibits. In this connection I wish to give details of one of those special trains—a train timed to leave Beverley at 6.40 a.m. yesterday, Monday. Along the Great Southern Railway there are of course many sidings, and several branch lines join it. I personally was at one of those branches namely, Toodyay, on Sunday afternoon, and there saw various owners trucking stock. Those owners were working pretty hard on Sunday afternoon to get their stock loaded on the train, and that stock would have to remain in the trucks the whole of Sunday night. The action was taken so that there might be no delay to the train as far as the owners were concerned. I believe the train left Beverley at the appointed time, 6.40 a.m. yesterday; but it took about five hours to reach Spencer's Brook, a distance of 40 miles. On that train were animals for which the owners have paid large sums of money. The delay was certainly not due to any action on the part of the owners; nor was it due to the picking up of other trucks of stock. The delay was due to that special train, which was intended to give quick transit of valuable stock, stopping to pick up trucks of chaff and trucks of wheat and probably other goods. I believe that at one station some machinery, a reaper and binder, had to be put off; and I understand that had it not been for the fact that some of the exhibitors were on board and helped to pull the machinery off the trucks and get it out of the way, there would have been even greater delay. The gravest complaint in connection with this method of transporting stock to the show is that all the unnecessary trucking and shunting to which I have referred entails a great deal of knocking about of the animals on the train. That is most annoying to the owners of, say, horses that may have cost £200 or £300 each, and stud sheep that have been carefully nurtured throughout the year. Personally I can see no excuse for the Railway Department in this matter. I presume the Railway Department, like the State Government, wish to encourage the exhibition of high class stock at the Royal Agricultural Show; and the department should wake up to a realisation that conduct on their part such as I have described would cause the exhibitors of stock to go out of business as regards show purposes. The breeders of valuable stock do not exhibit their animals just for what they are going to make in the way of prizes. The healthy rivalry encouraged by the showing of high class animals leads to considerable traffic from the

country districts into the city, thus largely benefiting the revenue of the Railway Department. I believe there is not an hotel in the city but is overcrowded with show visitors. Unless the Railway Department realise that they must give quick and direct transit to stock intended for the show, many exhibitors, who are to-day much worried over this matter, will do what a number have already done, and decide to refrain from sending stock to future shows. I have brought this matter forward as one of urgency because the Railway Department have given an undertaking to the committee of the Royal Agricultural Society that they would see these trains were run to suit stock owners and because one or two particular exhibitors who have written letters to the Minister in control hold a reply to the effect that everything was in order. Seeing the railways have failed to carry out their undertaking to bring the stock down to the show ground in a satisfactory manner, they wish to know straight away what chance they will have on Thursday next to get their stock returned to the various destinations under better conditions. The stock may leave the show grounds at 4.30 p.m. on Thursday next and owners wish to be relieved from the anxiety that last year's experience may be repeated. Last year, when they went to remove their stock from the grounds, they found that neither trucks nor engine had been provided at the Claremont railway station. When the stock left the show ground, the different owners were tumbling over one another. They waited for a considerable time for the trucks to arrive, and then there was a scramble and loss of time in getting the stock away. There were also great delays before the stock arrived at the respective destinations. They hope that some move will be made to force the department to have the trucks in readiness at 4.30 p.m. on Thursday. In connection with the stock train from Beverley, it was arranged that a passenger carriage should be attached, and some passengers travelled by it. The train left Beverley at 6.40 a.m. and was due to arrive at 3.30 p.m., but did not arrive until 5 p.m., and the passengers had the trying experience of being unable to obtain refreshments along the route. In some instances, people had not carried lunch and, when they arrived at Claremont several ladies were in almost a fainting condition through lack of sustenance due to the long weary hours during which they had been jolted about at the different sidings. Stock owners have invested large sums of money, and it is the duty of the House to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that the very greatest consideration should be given to their requirements. I saw stock being loaded on Sunday afternoon last and the particular trucks being used had been recently cleaned, but I understand from one or two exhibitors that this does not apply to the trucks supplied at other centres, and that some of the long-woolled sheep have

arrived in a very unpleasant state through the dirtiness of the trucks. The Agricultural Society stipulate that the stock shall not be covered; the Railway Department have an instruction that straw shall not be used in trucks in which stock is carried. The reason for the latter instruction, I believe, is that on one occasion a truck in which straw had been used to bed some animals was ignited by sparks from the engine. The truck was burned and the stock perished. There may be a good reason for prohibiting bedding in the trucks but it is necessary that the Agricultural Society should alter its method and allow some form of covering, to sheep in particular, or insist that the Railway Department provide thoroughly clean trucks in every instance. The train system, too, should be so arranged that the stock need not be loaded on Sunday evening. Where stock has to travel only about 100 miles and is not required at Claremont until 3.30 or 4 p.m. on Monday afternoon, it should be sufficient if the train started from a place such as Beverley at a later hour. However, stock owners do not complain of having to load on Sunday afternoon or evening, but they do complain that, after having loaded, the railways took such an inordinate length of time to land their stock at Claremont. The trouble has arisen because the stock did not arrive until 6 o'clock in the evening. This meant that stock owners and their representatives were working till all hours of the night to get the stock into the various sections on the show ground. One large exhibitor failed to get his stock before the judges, probably because the people appointed to receive it would not work overtime. I saw his stock put on the trucks, and I can only assume that the delays occasioned on the journey resulted in the undertaking to get the stock penned on the show ground not being carried out. I think I have said sufficient to induce the House to support my motion that the Government urge upon the Railway Department the necessity for backing up the producers and exhibitors at the Royal Agricultural Society's show better than they have done.

**THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** The hon. member has not mentioned in his motion the date to which the House should adjourn.

**Hon. V. HAMERSLEY:** I would add that the House adjourn "till Friday at 4.30 p.m."

**THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [4.56]:** The hon. member has made out a very good case. I am not in a position to criticise his statements, but I feel it is a matter which requires immediate action on the part of the Government. I certainly sympathise with stock owners in having been put to so much inconvenience as the hon. member has pointed out and I recognise that special provision should be made in the case of show stock. That does not appear to have been done.

I am prepared to take up this matter with my colleagues and see if definite and better arrangements can be made for the return of the stock on Thursday next. There may be some defence on the part of the department, but the most important matter now is to see that stock owners are protected and that the stock is despatched in good time to the various destinations.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And a promise for the future.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I will also mention the fact urged by the hon. member that special provision should be made to meet such cases in future. Stock should have special and quick transit and, when it is to be carried for a long distance, a special stock train should be provided. I will take the matter up this evening and see if arrangements cannot be made on the lines suggested.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [4.53]: After what has fallen from the leader of the House, it seems almost superfluous to say anything further. I would like to emphasise and particularise the statements made by Mr. Hamersley because it is of the greatest importance to this State that special encouragement should be given to people who patronise the Royal Show at Claremont. It is a matter of education, not a matter of L s. d. Even if it does not pay the railways, the society should be encouraged and every facility should be given to those who patronise the show. Let us take a case which happened recently. An enterprising man at Wagin spent £700 on the purchase of two rams at a time when the transit from Sydney was most difficult and expensive. If he intended to exhibit those sheep in Perth, we could hardly ask him to put them into dirty trucks and to submit to such long delays on the railway journey. Those are the sheep we want to see for educational purposes. There are two ways of sending sheep to the show; either in crates or open trucks. If we send them in crates, we know that that is a very expensive method. Weights and measurements are costly, and if we send them in open trucks we have to put up with whatever treatment they may get by being jerked about during the process of shunting. That should not occur when valuable animals are being moved about by the Railway Department. I happen to know from a reliable source, in accordance with a statement made the other day, when the question of the shortage of trucks was brought up, that the trucks which were available for stock were so few that there was no time to clean them. The Department, I understand, told the people who wished to have stock conveyed to the market, that they must either take a dirty truck or go without. This is what I have been informed. It emphasises the statement that I have made, that if the Government are going to conduct the railways in a satisfactory way, they must provide a sufficient number of trucks

to permit of the business being carried on properly, and not do as is being done now. In this particular case I have much pleasure in supporting Mr. Hamersley's remarks. Every facility should be given to bring valuable stock to the Royal Show for exhibition and educational purposes. We are fully aware that the Railway Department do not make very much from the conveyance of this kind of stock, because we know they take the stock back free; that a charge is only made for one way. We recognise that, but even so, every care should be taken and encouragement given to induce those who own valuable stock to exhibit them, so that they may be seen by everyone. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [5.4]: I support Mr. Hamersley's motion, because we cannot too strongly impress upon the Government the advantages of the Royal Show to Western Australia. A few years ago, just before the war broke out, I found from statistics that one out of every seven people in Western Australia attended the Royal Show. That goes to prove the value of that institution from an educational point of view. If we have stock in good condition, we have something to be proud of. Not only do the people from Western Australia attend that show, but we have amongst the visitors, leading stock men from all over Australia, comparing the stock bred in this country with the stock bred in other parts of the Commonwealth, and if our stock is exhibited here with stains on the wool as a result of the sheep being bumped about in shunting, and if the wool is discoloured, that can only stand as a disgrace to the railway system. I was rather surprised to think that the Department had taken as much as five hours to cover a distance of 40 miles. After having had a consultation with one of the heads of the Railway Department a few weeks ago, I was under the impression that the Department were fully alive to the requirements of the Royal Agricultural Society and also the requirements of many agricultural societies throughout the State. I was told that every facility would be given for the transport of stock. I believe that at all times the railways should be run as economically as possible, but when the Department take into consideration the amount they are making out of the conveyance of people from the country to the city, I think they can well afford to lose a little over the transit of stock. It is a penny wise and pound foolish policy to put on a mixed train for the conveyance of stock. The stock for exhibition purposes at the Show should be carried by the Railway Department in a special stock train. I support the motion.

Hon. E. ROSE (South-West) [5.8]: In supporting the motion of the hon. member, I regret very much the necessity has arisen

for moving it. There is no doubt we have much cause for complaint about the slow manner in which the Railway Department run the trains. I was told last night that the stock train from Bunbury to Claremont was delayed for five hours in the yards at Perth, for what reason I do not know, and the stock which should have arrived at Claremont early in the afternoon did not get there until 5.30. There was one remark made by Mr. Hamersley to which I must take exception, and it is in connection with the efforts of the Railway Department in previous years. Last year and the year before at the half-yearly meeting of the Royal Agricultural Society, a resolution was carried on each occasion to the effect that a letter of appreciation be forwarded to the Railway Department for the manner in which they had carried on the service of conveying stock to and from the show. We had no complaint whatever last year or the year before. Whenever there is cause for complaint, I consider it should be made to the Council of the Royal Society, and it should be for that body to take steps to bring about an alteration. As the motion has been moved, however, I think it would be a good thing to stir up the Department so that they may have the necessary trucks ready on Thursday. The stock owners were all pleased last year with the efforts of the Department and I think whenever we have satisfaction given to us we should show our appreciation.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East—in reply) [5.9]: I have no desire to carry the motion to a division. I am glad to have the assurance of the Honorary Minister that the Government will take steps to see that everything to which I have referred is looked into. With regard to what Mr. Rose has said, that a question of this kind should be reported to the Council of the Agricultural Society, I would point out that it is the department's failure to carry out the undertaking to that council which has prompted me to bring this matter forward as an urgent one, as the department have failed to convey the stock to the show grounds in good time. As there is little time left before Thursday afternoon, I consider it most necessary that we should go beyond the Council of the Agricultural Society. That is my reason for bringing it before the House and stressing the importance of getting quicker transit from the show grounds after the stock have been there for exhibition. With the permission of the House I will withdraw the motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

#### BILL—KALGOORLIE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES INVESTMENT VALIDATION.

In Committee.

Clause 2—Validation of investments of society:

Hon. J. F. Allen in the Chair; Hon. H. Millington in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment has been moved by the Hon. A. J. H. Saw, that in line two after the word "company" the words "to the extent of 300 contributing shares and 500 fully paid shares" be added.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I regret I cannot support the amendment moved by Dr. Saw. We were led to believe that there was no objection on the part of competing traders in Kalgoorlie to the passing of this Bill, but I hold in my hand a telegram which I have received from the combined chemists of Kalgoorlie which reads—

Kelly Ltd. Friendly Societies are still trading with the general public in spite of the many protests made by goldfields chemists. It was stated in the House no objection ever been made. This is absolutely untrue.

The telegram is signed by John Boilean and three others. We were told when the Bill was introduced that the same thing was being done in Boulder and in Perth and Fremantle. In those places, however, the friendly societies have their own chemists and they provide medicines for their own members. I suggest that that is not doing in Perth and Boulder what Kelly & Co. are doing in Kalgoorlie.

The CHAIRMAN: We are discussing only the amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Money has been subscribed by the friendly societies in Kalgoorlie for a specific purpose under the Act. This money is utilised not only to provide medicine for the friendly societies, but to carry on a chemist's business in Kalgoorlie dealing with the general public. It is contrary to the Act. To validate this would be to establish a dangerous precedent. I am opposed to the Bill altogether.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I did not say that no objection had been raised by the Kalgoorlie chemists. Just the same, I have not seen any objection from those chemists; and even if they had objected, I have more consideration for the interests of thousands of friendly society members than for the interests of the three competing chemists in Kalgoorlie. It has been said that if this is permitted to continue it will be an encouragement to other friendly societies to branch out into other forms of business. Of course that is idle, for the Act merely gives them permission to supply medicine to their members. They have taken what seems to be technically improper means of doing this, but that is not to say they would go outside the Act and supply their members or anybody else with other goods. I did not say definitely that the friendly societies' dispensary of Perth traded with the public; in fact I said I was not clear on the point. I find that, as a matter of fact, the Perth friendly societies' dispensary is not on all fours with that in Kalgoorlie, for the institution in Perth is subsidised by the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: We cannot discuss the clause generally, but only the amendment.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I am sorry; I have been led away by what has been said by the hon. member. The business in Kalgoorlie is in fair competition with the other chemists, having no advantage over them, but those other chemists are not prepared to accept legitimate competition. At the last sitting I agreed to report progress to allow of further evidence in support of the amendment being secured. No such evidence is forthcoming. I do not see any very serious objection to the amendment, but I should prefer the clause as printed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: On the second reading debate I said that, although I was very well known in Boulder and Kalgoorlie, I had not received a single protest from the Kalgoorlie chemists. I spent Saturday and yesterday up there, yet I can still say I have not received any protests from the Kalgoorlie chemists.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Since Mr. Millington has no serious objection to the amendment, perhaps we had better adopt it. It is of considerable importance. Both the amendment and the Bill are slovenly pieces of work.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member cannot discuss the Bill.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The question is, do the Kalgoorlie company sell to the public? Mr. Millington cannot say for certain.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They do sell to the public.

The CHAIRMAN: We cannot discuss that phase of the question on this amendment. The amendment is for the purpose of limiting the number of shares to be held.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If the friendly societies held all the shares in the company—which they do not—and traded only with their own members, they could proceed. If we agree to the amendment providing that they are to hold only certain shares, they will be trading illegally. If I were in charge of the Bill I would not accept the amendment. It may have a very important effect.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I should like to see stated definitely in the Bill the number of shares the company are to hold. According to the statement by the secretary of the Kalgoorlie friendly societies, the whole of the shares held give only a minor interest of about one-third in the company. Under those circumstances the business cannot be said to be the dispensary of the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies' Association; it is, rather, a public company. But if the number of shares held were more than one-half it would give the association a controlling interest in the company, and for all practical purposes the chemist's shop would be the dispensary of the association. In view of the statements of the secretary of the Kalgoorlie friendly societies, we are validating an action which gives the societies the control on something like one-third of the shares in the company.

Hon. J. E. DODD: There are certain matters which become matters of custom,

and this is especially so in Kalgoorlie. There is one matter in connection with the friendly societies in Kalgoorlie which has become a custom ever since the mines were in existence, and that is that the men are compelled by custom to contribute towards a fund to provide for their dispensary needs. This has become customary in the case of the Boulder friendly societies, and I cannot see why the Kalgoorlie friendly societies should not have the same privilege extended to them. Dr. Saw seeks to control the interests that the Kalgoorlie friendly societies may hold in this company. They have not enough money to secure the whole of the business but, if they can find the money later on, will they have to come to Parliament and ask for a validation of their action? I should be sorry if the Committee limited the activities of the amalgamated friendly societies of Kalgoorlie in the way suggested. I have at all events received no protests from Kalgoorlie in the matter, or heard of any.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am more convinced than ever that the amendment should be put in. Dr. Saw proposes to limit the holding of these friendly societies. The true importance of the amendment cannot be explained until we come to the phase dealt with in the amendment I have to move later. It is very extraordinary that Mr. Dodd should not have heard of the protest which has been made. I can at all events confirm what has been said about a protest.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: If those who are holding the balance of power in this dispensary concern should come to a disagreement with the executive of the friendly societies, the business would stop, and the friendly societies providing the medicines would be compelled to go to those chemists who have fought and defeated them in their effort to establish their own dispensary. The friendly societies would not have the control of this business. In the Eastern States this system has been in vogue for many years, and friendly societies have had their own dispensaries and given the best of medicines to their members.

Hon. A. Sanderson: May they trade with the general public?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I have no objection to that. The proceeds of the business they have done has enabled them to acquire the large number of shares that we are now asked to validate the purchase of. I do not see why they should not sell proprietary medicines, and be satisfied with a smaller profit than that usually asked for by the ordinary chemist. It is not the business of the Pharmaceutical Society of Western Australia to say whether the friendly societies shall do this or not. I shall support the Bill as printed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I see no objection to the amendment. The association have invested a certain amount of money in this venture. They invested it in the belief that they were doing it legally, but it has now been found to have been an illegal act. In

view of all the circumstances I think we should validate their action. The societies have a sum of £800 invested in this company. All that we ought to do is to see that these societies do not have power to invest money beyond that which has already been invested. We should limit their activities to this particular investment. This will prevent any mistake occurring in the future. The amendment will do no harm, because the profits earned will enhance the capital value of the shares and the money will come back to the societies. I propose to support the amendment.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I urge upon Mr. Millington to accept the amendment. I do not think it is of any consequence, nor will it alter the position. Yesterday I had a conversation with representatives of the friendly societies in Kalgoorlie, and they said it was immaterial whether the amendment was inserted or not.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The Bill is to validate a certain investment. So far as the 500 fully paid shares are concerned everything is clear, but there are 300 contributing shares upon which an amount of 8s. or 9s. I believe has been paid.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is 4s.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: What will be the position of the Kalgoorlie friendly societies in the event of their desiring to call up more capital on these contributing shares? I want to be quite clear that the societies would not be breaking the law if they made a further investment of actual cash with a view to still further increasing the capital value of these contributing shares. The point is a legal one. That is the only objection I have.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The amendment refers, not to £300, but to 300 contributing shares, and to 500 fully paid shares.

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

New clause:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I shall not move the amendment which I have placed on the Notice Paper, but, instead, I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 3:—"The said society may and shall hold and dispose of such shares as lawful owners thereof within 12 months from the passing of this Act."

I am in no way hostile to the Bill, but I am hostile to letting a piece of work which will satisfy nobody pass this Chamber. My amendment will validate what the society have done, and will automatically wind up the affair and get the society out of an untenable position.

Hon. H. Millington: The society may get no purchaser for the shares.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That is a very important interjection. Assuming for the moment that the society could not carry out the new clause by selling the shares, what would that mean? That the investment was bad. The investment is illegal,

but still it might be a very good investment. The Registrar of Friendly Societies objects to the investment, not because it is good or because it is bad, but because it is illegal. This amendment will restore the society to its proper and legal position with regard to the other friendly societies in Western Australia. My amendment is not drafted lightly. I have submitted it to two parties whose opinions would carry weight here. I regret exceedingly that I was not able to place it on the Notice Paper. However, the information we get about this Bill, step by step, is so exasperating to anyone who tries to follow it, that if anyone is to blame it is the member who introduced the Bill. Having validated an illegal act, let us not make an exception of this particular friendly society, but let us put the society back in rank with the other friendly societies, or, if it is wished, bring all the other friendly societies up to rank with the Kalgoorlie society. Suppose this new clause passes, what will happen? This Kalgoorlie society will sell the shares held in the limited liability company, and then the society will be exactly where they were before committing the illegal act; and all other friendly societies will be in the same position. If the new clause is not passed, it means that we specially single out the Kalgoorlie society and permit them to do an illegal act which the other societies are not permitted to do.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Have not the other societies already got their dispensaries?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is perfectly true that any friendly society may have a chemist's shop for members only. Last week I asked Mr. Millington whether the dispensary here in question also sold to the public, and, according to the newspaper report, Mr. Millington replied that he could not say for certain whether they did or not. At this very moment the Committee do not know whether that chemist's shop sells to the public or not.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Assume that it does not.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Then there is a very curious state of affairs—a limited liability company with one-third of its shares held by the friendly society not selling to the public. It is very difficult to believe that. I am not questioning the bona fides of any member of the Committee or of the friendly society. The acceptance of the new clause will put the matter on a satisfactory footing.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I agree with Mr. Sanderson. If we allow the Bill to go through, the Kalgoorlie friendly societies will be able to do what no other society can do, simply because they have committed an illegal act. The Kalgoorlie societies accepted money from shareholders for a specific purpose and illegally invested it in this business, and now we are asked to legalise their action. We have done so, but we should compel them to go out of the business upon which they should never have entered. If the friendly societies were satis-

fied to supply their own members, there would be no more to be said.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: Then give them the right to buy up the rest of the shares.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But they are trading with the general public to the detriment of others. We are told the same thing happens in Perth, Fremantle, and elsewhere. It does not apply elsewhere. In other places, members only are supplied.

Hon. J. Duffell: It is done all over Australia.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is not a specific case in Australia where it is done.

Hon. J. Duffell: Yes, Bendigo.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If we do not accept the new clause, we shall be putting the Kalgoorlie societies in a position which no other society is in.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I have been associated with friendly societies for over 40 years and belong to more than one such society in this State. If I could propose Mr. Holmes and Mr. Sanderson for membership, they would be in a position to talk on a matter of which they are at present totally ignorant. Mr. Sanderson's objection is to the trade name of the friendly societies—M. Kelly, Ltd.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: It was necessary for the Kalgoorlie friendly societies to be able to dispense the medicines required by their members. When they launched into the business, it was not possible to obtain the requisite articles except at an extortionate price, but an opportunity occurred to buy an established business. As a result of thrift and good fortune, they were able to acquire a certain number of shares in the business. Now Mr. Sanderson would compel them to sell out. Is it reasonable to compel them to do so? Owing to an oversight, they have committed a breach of the Act and are seeking to have it rectified. The new clause would have a detrimental effect on friendly societies, whose object is to relieve suffering and distress and provide means for people to set aside portion of their meagre wages for times of need.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: The Kalgoorlie societies have committed an illegal act. I am willing to validate it, but are we to sanction a perpetuation of the illegality?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Would you compel them to sell the shares at a big loss?

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: We should legalise their act, but I am not prepared to say what should be done in future.

Hon. J. Duffell: Then you must vote against the new clause.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: It would be better not to discuss the future. Let us legalise their act, and allow the matter to stand at that.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: While there is a good deal to be said in support of the new clause, there is another aspect to be considered. The combined societies, who have invested their money in this way, would be compelled to sell out within the time stipu-

lated. When anyone is under compulsion to sell, he cannot realise the amount he would get if there were no compulsion. It is not our wish to force the societies to sell at a sacrificial price. Having regard to the unfair position in which the Kalgoorlie friendly societies would be placed, it would not be right to support the proposed new clause.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: While Mr. Holmes was speaking, Mr. Ardagh interjected that we should give the societies the right to buy up the rest of the shares. In reply, I say, let them buy up the whole of the shares. We are at variance with regard to the facts. Mr. Duffell says this sort of thing is permitted in other parts of Australia. In South Australia, the Attorney General prosecuted a Mt. Gambier society for doing precisely what the Kalgoorlie societies have done. The case was taken to the State Supreme Court and to the Federal High Court and the decision was against the friendly society.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: The Mt. Gambier society did not get a validating measure passed by Parliament, but that does not alter the fact that friendly societies at Bendigo and in other parts of Australia have done the same thing. If the Mt. Gambier society had asked for a validating Act, no doubt they would have been successful.

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

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I would like to reply to the objection raised by Mr. Nicholson which seems a reasonable one. In view of all the circumstances, and if the sale did not take place, and if the company made representations to the registrar and the Government, there is no doubt the Government would take the necessary steps to protect the society. That would be my answer—not a very satisfactory answer I admit, but the most satisfactory that can be given to a most unsatisfactory Bill. No one can be satisfied with the Bill as it is at present. Very few here can give a statement of the facts of the case and unless we put in the amendment I suggest, which will be some protection, we are validating in Western Australia what in South Australia they prosecute the societies for doing. There I propose to leave it.

New clause put and negatived.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

## BILL—DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from 2nd October. Hon. J. F. Allen in the Chair; Hon. J. Nicholson in charge of the Bill.

Clause 7—Amendment of Section 23 of principal Act:

The CHAIRMAN: Hon. J. W. Kirwan had moved an amendment to add at the end



of paragraph (d) the following proviso:—  
 "Provided that the insanity of a wife, when such insanity is the result of pregnancy, childbirth, or lactation, shall be no ground for a petition for dissolution of marriage on the part of the husband."

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

Ayes	..	..	..	8
Noes	..	..	..	10

Majority against .. 2

#### AYES.

Hon. H. Carson	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. W. Hickey	Hon. R. G. Ardagh
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	(Teller.)
Hon. J. Mills	

#### NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)
Hon. H. Millington	

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Section 23 of the principal Act sets out the grounds on which divorce may be granted, and amongst these is desertion for a period of five years and upwards. I propose to move in the direction of reducing the period from five to three years, which I think is long enough if it can be shown that the parties have been separated for that time and that there is no reasonable hope of their being brought together again. I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the clause "and is further amended by striking out the word 'five' in the last line of the section and inserting the word 'three.'"

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: In most countries where divorce can be obtained on the ground of desertion, three years is the prevailing period. In this State it must continue for five years. Three years is a fair period to allow. I will not oppose the amendment.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The Committee is entitled to know what is the law in the other States. Three years seems a very short period.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is three years in Victoria.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is not so in South Australia. I should like to know what the period is in each of the other States.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In New South Wales the period is three years, and so too in Victoria. In South Australia it is the same as in England. In the province of Natal it is 18 months.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If these are the circumstances, what induced the sponsor of the Bill to insert five years?

Hon. J. Nicholson: I did not insert it. It is in the existing Act.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Apparently we are reviewing the question of divorce entirely on its merits. That is justification for the statement sent to me by the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, who says, "Each succeeding Divorce Bill goes just a little further in that direction, and the result on national morality is appalling." I question very much whether any of us is as capable of speaking on this question as is the Moderator. Little by little we are trending towards the standard of some of the States of America.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is interesting for me, as a member of the Presbyterian Church, to listen to the remarks of the Moderator, notwithstanding which my convictions will lead me to do as I think right. In reply to the Moderator, I should like to call attention to some evidence given before a Royal Commission at Home by a still more distinguished leader of the Church, the Moderator General of the Church of Scotland, who is also Professor of Divinity in the University of Edinburgh. He considered the extension of the scope of divorce beyond the specific case of adultery was justified on the ground that while the ideal which Christ set up was binding on the members of His kingdom, it ought not to be imposed by force upon a mixed society, including many who were non-Christians or only nominally Christians, and that the duty of the State in relation to dissolution of marriage was not to make the Christian ideal compulsory, but to make provision for the relief of those who suffer injustice in marriage in so far as this is compatible with the general interests of society.

The CHAIRMAN: This is scarcely relevant to the amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The majority report of the Royal Commission before which that evidence was given recommended divorce after desertion for three years, and that recommendation is widely supported by the women's organisations, whose views I quoted the other day.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result—

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	11

Majority against .. 4

#### AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. R. G. Ardagh
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. H. Carson	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. W. Hickey	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. G. W. Miles	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have some fresh evidence to put before the Committee in a final appeal to secure the rejection of this clause. In Friday's newspaper there was a telegram from Melbourne dealing with the second reading of the Divorce Bill, and especially with regard to the question of insanity. We are dealing with a Bill of the same kind, introduced by a private member, whereas it has been introduced in Victoria by the Chief Secretary. The Victorian measure provides that divorce, or judicial separation, may be obtained from a person of unsound mind who has been an inmate of an asylum in Victoria for not less than five years, and who is unlikely to recover.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is our law as it is.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The Chief Secretary said that the Bill was a departure from the principles of the present divorce law, and that if there were any contributory cause of insanity arising from an act of the petitioner, it would not be possible for the divorce to be obtained. He also stated that there were many safeguards in the Bill. It is difficult to believe that the Victorian measure goes as far as this Bill does. It is unfortunate we have not before us the full report of the second reading speech before the Victorian Parliament. My one anxiety is to make every effort to bring our law into accord with the law of the other States. If the Committee will wait for the Victorian debate on this question, I am of opinion that it might materially assist us in coming to a sound conclusion.

Hon. H. STEWART: I am opposed to the clause. I was astonished that the hon. member should bring in a clause which will remove all the safeguards which have been deemed necessary in our existing legislation, and which are provided for in the Lunacy Act. If he wanted to modify the position so that people who have not been domiciled in the State, and for whom there was no room in an asylum in this State, have had to be sent to another State to be kept there in an institution under Government control, he should have done it in some other way by striking out the words "in accordance with the Lunacy Act, 1903." I do not think he can be serious in wishing to carry such a clause.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Mr. Stewart is under a misapprehension in regard to the purport and proposed effect of this clause. The object is to strike out the words "in accordance with the Lunacy Act, 1903." Two things have to be complied with under the Divorce Act Amendment Act, 1911. There must be confinement in an asylum or other institution which must be in accordance with the Lunacy Act, 1903, the patient must be there for five years, and the court must be satisfied that the case is incurable. The effect of inserting the words "in accordance with the Lunacy Act, 1903," has been found by the courts to be this: If a person so afflicted happens to have been fortunate enough to be taken to one of the

other States, owing to the inadequacy of the accommodation in our local institution, no application can be made for divorce in this State until the afflicted person is brought back and confined in an institution here, in accordance with the Lunacy Act, 1903. That Act refers only to institutions over which we have jurisdiction and within the boundaries of the State. The effect of bringing a patient back to this State is to cast an indignity upon that patient. There is no need to bring a patient back here, or for the insertion of the words I have referred to. A person who is afflicted must be confined in an asylum, and if this person is so confined it does not matter whether it is in this State or in one of the other States. It is better for the patient to be confined in an institution in one of the other States than to be brought here to be sent to Claremont. I do not think Mr. Stewart has fully grasped the position. The words which the clause proposes to strike out have no particular effect or authority.

Hon. H. STEWART: Instead of providing for the striking out of those words, the clause should rather provide for the insertion of words permitting relief in the case of a person whose wife or husband is confined in an institution in another State. The clause as it stands may affect the cases of persons now in this State. Moreover, we have not sufficient definition of "asylum" or "institution."

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: In this State a person can be confined in an asylum only under the provisions of the Lunacy Act, 1903.

Hon. H. STEWART: That is the safeguard.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: No. The safeguard is that it must be proved to the satisfaction of the judge that the person has been confined in an asylum or a similar institution for a period of not less than five years, and that the case is incurable. The deletion which the clause proposes will merely obviate unfortunate patients being brought from a more comfortable institution in another State to our institution at Claremont.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The Committee are indebted to Mr. Stewart for bringing this matter forward. The clause undoubtedly does remove a safeguard existing at present. As Mr. Sanderson pointed out, if the words proposed to be struck out are removed, it will seriously affect the section of the principal Act, as regards not only lunatics outside the State but also lunatics within the State. The Lunacy Act contains provisions by which persons of unsound mind may be removed to and from another State. Section 25 of the Lunacy Act has a particular bearing on that matter.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is a totally different thing.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I claim that Section 25 of the Lunacy Act has at any rate some bearing on the matter we are now discussing. I agree with Mr. Stewart that in order to achieve the purpose which Mr. Nicholson has in view, this clause ought to be differ-

ently worded, instead of merely striking out "in accordance with the provisions of the Lunacy Act, 1903." Those words undoubtedly constitute a great safeguard, especially as the words "or other institution" are embodied in the principal Act. The passing of this clause would widen the principal Act much more than even Mr. Nicholson, I think, desires. The hon. member should consider the re-framing of the clause. There is a good deal of danger in it as it stands, and on a division I shall certainly vote with Mr. Stewart.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The provisions of the Lunacy Act to which Mr. Kirwan referred are provisions relating to the transference of patients from one State to another, which are given effect to by the order of the Minister. They do not affect the position as stated here. I may mention that this clause has the approval of the Crown Law Department. The object is simply to remove the position created by the insertion of the words which the clause proposes to strike out, and so to save the necessity which now exists for bringing patients back to this State. But if hon. members think there is some special power in the retention of those words, I have not the slightest objection to their retention, providing that some other words, as suggested by Mr. Stewart and Mr. Kirwan, are added to cover cases outside the State. The objection of those hon. members might be met by the insertion of such words as "has been confined as such in any asylum or other institution in accordance with the provisions of the Lunacy Act, 1903, in this State, or has been confined in any asylum or institution of another State in accordance with the laws in force relating to lunatics or insane persons in such other State."

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Would Mr. Nicholson agree that, before a divorce is granted in these circumstances, the provisions of Section 25 of the Lunacy Act should apply, so that the patient may be removed to the asylum in this State? If a patient is in an asylum in another State, is there any guarantee that the husband will carry out his obligations? If the woman were brought here, there would be a guarantee that the intention of the Legislature would be carried out.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Assuming that the patient is confined in one of the other States, it is very much better that she should be there if the husband neglected to comply with the court's order. If he left the country and the patient became a charge on the State, she would, if brought here, become a charge on this State.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: I was not considering the individual States.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The principal Act contains full power for the court to require the husband to provide necessary support. There need be no anxiety on that point.

Hon. H. STEWART: When I said that all safeguards had been removed, I meant all

safeguards with respect to the Lunacy Act of 1903. I suggest that consideration of the clause be postponed so that Mr. Nicholson may draft an amendment on the lines indicated.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It was stated during the course of a debate, I think on repatriation, that some soldiers had become demented owing to the horrors of the war. The Committee were most anxious to avoid the stigma of insanity being placed on those men and, rather than have the ordinary mental order for commitment to the asylum, special steps were to be taken for the protection of those soldiers. What would their position be under this clause? It is certainly a novel argument in favour of the proposal that we should get rid of the unfortunate person.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I did not put it forward as an argument.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I regret that it was mentioned. One can readily see the importance of having both parties in this State and under the control of the court. Until we have a divorce law applying to Australia generally, and while we are arrogating to ourselves the deliberate intention of legislating on what the late Sir Winthrop Hackett described as the most important matter that could come before Parliament, anyone can realise the vital importance of having both parties in the State and under the control of the court.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If it is the wish of members to further consider the clause, I am agreeable to progress being reported.

[The Deputy President resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

## BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

### Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [8.40] in moving the second reading said: The proposed Bill is to provide further powers, largely of a machinery nature, to enable local authorities to collect the licenses imposed on dogs by the Act of 1903, and to carry out the principles contained therein. The various road board conferences and the boards themselves have directed attention to the necessity for providing these extra powers, which in themselves are small, but which will be of great assistance to the local authorities and the police in carrying out the provisions of the existing Act. One of the principal faults of the present law is that before a person can be summonsed for the non-registration of a dog, it must be proved that the dog has been kept at that place for a period of 21 days. The officials of local authorities have reported that they have gone to houses with a view to providing the necessary evidence of the keeping of dogs for 21 days but, on the occasion of the second visit, have found

that the dogs have been exchanged or kept out of sight. This makes it very difficult indeed for the authorities to obtain a conviction, although they are well aware that the dogs have been kept without being registered. Another trouble is experienced in connection with the licensing of sheep and cattle dogs. Under the existing Act, there is power to license, at a reduced fee, sheep and cattle dogs kept bona fide for tending sheep and cattle. Experience has shown that it has been impossible to prove what bona fide means. Therefore, many dogs are kept as sheep and cattle dogs and are licensed at the reduced fee, although the owners possess neither sheep nor cattle. Under the present Act, there is no way to compel those people to pay the full rate. When the Act was framed, it was intended that this provision should apply only to sheep owners, cattle owners, and drovers, but it has been carried much further, and we now propose to amend it to overcome this difficulty by providing that those dogs kept for tending a limited number of cattle or sheep shall be licensed at half the fee charged for other dogs. There is another difficulty in the present Act, that a stray dog when seized must be kept for three days before it is destroyed. The provision is almost impossible of operation in the country districts, and in addition it is hardly worth while for local officers to attempt to catch a stray dog. The police may find it impracticable to catch a stray dog, owing to it being vicious, or it might evade the police.

Hon. J. Duffell: Or the police may have a grudge against the dog.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the dog is registered the police cannot give effect to any grudge against it. Under this Bill power is sought to give authority to destroy such animals. Another difficulty has been the want of a penal clause for the breach of any regulations made under the Act. This omission has had a very retarding effect on the operations of the Act because when regulations have been promulgated for carrying out the Act, there has been no penalty to enforce such by-laws, thus rendering them inoperative. The existing Act provides that each aboriginal may keep a dog unlicensed, but the difficulty is to find out which dog is owned by the aboriginal and which is a stray dog which has become attached to the camp; consequently aboriginal camps have often droves of dogs unlicensed to the annoyance of all concerned, more particularly in the dingo infested districts. It is proposed to overcome this difficulty by allowing each adult male aboriginal to still continue to have one dog, but that he must register it free of cost, thereby enabling the police and authorities to know which dog is owned and registered and destroy all those which are not. The present Act provides that dogs shall be registered when they are three months old, but this is a hardship and it is proposed to extend the time of registration up to the age of six months, similar to the custom obtaining in other countries. The

six months can safely be taken as covering the weaning period and selling age. The Bill is only a short one. Clause 2 deals with the age at which the registration of the dog shall become necessary. Clause 4 corrects a misprint. Clause 5 provides for the registration of dogs used in droving not less than five head of cattle or twenty head of sheep at half the prescribed rates. By Clause 6 the word "further" is inserted in Section 13 of the principal Act, so that the intention of the section may be more clearly expressed. By Clause 7 the local authority is required to supply the police with lists of registered dogs. Under Clause 8 the owner of a dog is required to see that the registration disc is attached to a collar on the dog. Clause 9 adds a proviso to Section 19 to enable the police to shoot stray dogs when it is impracticable to capture them. Clause 10 amends Section 29 of the principal Act, which relates to dogs kept by aboriginal natives. Clause 12 enables the scheduled forms to be varied. There may appear to be an increase in the license fees but such is not the case. There appears to be an increase in the license for sheep dogs from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 9d. We must take into consideration, however, that a declaration has to be made and that declaration costs 1s. After all, the increase amounts to only 3d. and it is proposed to wipe out the declaration altogether. That will really mean that the increase will be 3d. The measure is only a small one but will confer a great boon the local authorities by providing them with the necessary machinery to carry on the existing Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, debate adjourned.

## BILL—DROVING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. J. F. Allen in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I suggest that progress be reported. Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. Holmes are interested in this measure and they have several important matters to bring forward. The leader of the House should therefore see the inadvisability of proceeding with the measure in the absence of those hon. members. So far as Sir Edward Wittenoom is concerned, I know he is unavoidably absent through having to be present at an important meeting. I know he would regret exceedingly if the Bill was proceeded with in his absence.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have no desire to force the Bill through Committee and in deference to the hon. member's wishes I will agree to progress being reported.

[The Deputy President resumed the Chair]

Progress reported.

## ADJOURNMENT--ROYAL SHOW.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [8.55]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to Thursday, the 9th inst.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 7th October, 1919.

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

## QUESTION—RAILWAYS, FIREWOOD HAULAGE.

Mr. MUNSIE asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the total amount received in freight for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1919, by the Railway Department for the haulage of firewood—(a) between Kurrawang and Golden Gate, and (b) between Lakeside and Kamballie? 2, What charges, if any, are being made to the Lakeside Firewood Company for the right to haul firewood over the Lakeside-Kamballie section of the Government railway?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: I, (a) 159,099 tons, freight £10,418. (b) Lakeside and Kamballie, 157,816 tons, freight £15,533. 2, Fourpence per ton. In addition to this a charge of threepence per ton is made for the use of our wagons on the company's line.

## QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Blocks mortgaged to banks and poison-infested.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that the associated banks are endeavouring to get soldiers to take up blocks which are mortgaged to them, with a view to the soldiers subsequently obtaining an advance under the Soldier Settlement Scheme? 2, Is he also aware that some of the blocks referred to have poison on them? 3, If so, will he advise soldiers taking up land under the foregoing circumstances to obtain a guarantee that there is no poison on the land, or that if poison is present they will be advised accordingly?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, The Controller, Soldier Settlement Scheme, will take all precautions possible. This is now done in every case where an advance is asked on the security of land.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY, GERALDTON-CUE, WASHAWAY.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that there is a serious washaway at the 193-miles or thereabouts on the Geraldton-Cue railway? 2, Is he aware that there have been several serious washaways at the spot since the line was constructed? 3, Will he endeavour, during the period of repairs, to have some provision made for the storm waters to pass under the line and save the serious dislocation of traffic and expense of repairs which have been necessary in the past owing to washaways in this locality?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Considerable washaways took place on the Cue line between 179 miles and 195 miles on the night of the 30th ult., and were made safe for the passage of trains early on the morning of the 3rd inst. 2, Washaways have occurred about this mileage on several previous occasions. 3, Additional openings have been placed under the line, and the line has been lowered to allow of the flood waters passing over the rails, similar to the original construction of the line between Cue and Nannine. The Chief Engineer will visit the localities during the week.

## QUESTION—WHEAT, GUARANTEED PRICE.

Mr. WILLCOCK asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What is the guarantee given to the farmers for this season's crop of wheat per bushel? 2, Does this guarantee include freight to the port or depot? 3, In the event of the guaranteed price not being realised, who will make up the difference between the guaranteed price and the price actually realised?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, The guarantee price to the farmer for the