

building and no doubt make the best possible use of it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—SHIPPING AND PILOTAGE CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [11.50] in moving the second reading said: This is a short measure but a necessary one. It is intended to amend the Act to alter and extend the provisions of the Shipping and Pilotage Consolidation Ordinance, 1885. The necessity for this Bill arises from the fact that under that Act the maximum amount chargeable for the pilotage of a vessel is £12. The need for it arises particularly in the case of the port of Wyndham. Wyndham is situated on a dangerous coast, and pilotage is sometimes necessary over distances of from 20 to 30 miles. The cost of such services is in excess of the maximum amount that can be charged under the Act as it stands, and without this amending Bill it would be necessary for the services to be carried on at a loss, which is undesirable. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and passed.

House adjourned at 11.54 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 3rd December, 1919.

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

QUESTION—AGENT GENERAL, SECRETARY.

Mr. SMITH asked the Premier: Will the Government comply with the requirements of Section 44, Subsection (3), of the Public Service Act, and furnish Parliament with the reasons for not approving the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner, and for requiring a further recommendation in the matter of the appointment of the Secretary to the Agent General and Immigration Officer?

The PREMIER replied: The requirements of Section 44, Subsection (3) have already been complied with, the file containing the reasons for not approving of the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner having been laid upon the Table of the House on the 14th October, 1919.

QUESTION—TEREDO ATTACKS, TESTS OF SPECIFIC.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: Will he lay on the Table of the House, before the close of the session, the engineer's report on the tests made of Mr. W. H. Haddy's specific for the preservation of timber from the attack of teredo?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes, I have the report here and will lay it on the Table now.

QUESTIONS (2)—WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS.

Disposal of Tallow.

Mr. JONES asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What is the quantity of tallow from the Wyndham Meat Works this season? 2, What are the arrangements made for its disposal? 3, Is it intended to export the whole of it? 4, Is he aware of the high price of soap in the State, largely the result of the present shortage of tallow? 5, Has any of the tallow been made available for purchase by local soap makers? 6, If not, is he prepared to arrange for the release of some of it for local consumption?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, 428 tons. 2, Brown & Dureau are selling brokers for this product. 3, The bulk of the tallow is now being loaded at Wyndham for shipment overseas. 4, I am informed that soap manufacturers had an opportunity of acquiring all the tallow required at London parity prices. 5, Answered by No. 3. 6, I am informed that tallow from other works is being exported from Fremantle, owing to inability here to obtain for it prices equal to London parity. Under these circumstances it would be inadvisable to bring tallow from Wyndham to Fremantle at largely increased expense. Moreover, the quality of the Wyndham tallow is such that the bulk of it is suitable for conversion into higher products than soap.

Disposal of Hides.

Mr. JONES asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What is being done with the hides sent down from the Wyndham Meat Works? 2, Is it a fact that the faulty treatment causing them to sweat, and the fact of their being shipped together in one parcel depreciated their value? 3, Have all these hides been sold for shipment overseas? 4, If so, where to? 5, Was any offer received for their purchase by a local firm? 6, Is he aware that there is a shortage of leather imminent, as a result of the bad season in New South Wales? 7, Will he present to the House all papers dealing with the disposal of these hides?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, They have been sold. 2, There is no evidence of this. 3, No, the whole of the hides were offered to local buyers, and a considerable portion purchased by them. 4 and 5, Answered by No. 3. 6, No. 7, No, but the hon. member may see the papers.

QUESTIONS (2)—WHEAT.

Bulk Handling.

Mr. HARRISON (for Mr. Johnston) asked the Premier: 1, In view of the excessive price of jute goods, is it the intention of the Government to introduce the system of handling

wheat in bulk in time for next harvest, as recommended by the Royal Commission on the subject? 2, If not, why not? 3, Is the Government aware that the saving in cornsacks would pay for this alteration in less than four years?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, The matter will be considered in recess. 3, No.

Storage Silos.

Mr. HARRISON (for Mr. Johnston) asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to again bring forward proposals for the erection of silos for the storage of wheat in bulk, as was desired in the agreement with Metcalfe & Co.? 2, If not, why not?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Because the question of bulk handling will include storage.

QUESTION—GERALDINE TOWNSITE.

Mr. MALEY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, In view of the prospect of railway extension to the Geraldine mining area, will any steps be taken to proclaim a townsite there? 2, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, if on inquiry, which will be made at once, it is thought advisable to do so. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—RAILWAY PROJECT, YORKRAKINE-NORTH BAANDEE.

Mr. HARRISON (without notice) asked the Premier: Seeing that on the Loan Estimates, in the vote for Surveys of Railways, no amount is included for the Yorkrakine-North Baandee railway, and that the Government do not intend to select sites for wheat dumps in the area mentioned, what is the policy of the Government in regard to retaining the present holders of land in that district and giving an incentive to further effort?

The PREMIER replied: The land in the district is of good quality and the price of wheat this year is fairly high, so enabling the farmers to cart. At present cost of material the building of the railway cannot be considered. However, it will not be lost sight of.

SELECT COMMITTEE—STATE CHILDREN DEPARTMENT.

Extension of Time.

Mr. SMITH (North Perth) [4.37]: I move—

That the time for bringing up the report of the committee be extended by one week.

It has been found impossible to finish our work. There is still a great deal for us to do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the session, we are told, is to close this week.

The Premier: That is so. We will make this committee a Royal Commission without pay.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We ought to have some information upon this. Does the committee intend to complete its work?

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.38]: It is certainly intended that the session should close this week. Personally I hope it will close about 12 o'clock to-night. The work of the select committee must be finished, and the better way to arrange for it will be to convert the committee into a Royal Commission without pay.

Question put and passed.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

Close of Session.

On motion by the Premier ordered: That for the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be further suspended so far as to allow of the introduction of Bills or motions without notice.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

On motion by Premier, Bill ordered to be printed.

BILL—AJANA-GERALDINE RAILWAY.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [4.47] in moving the second reading said: I do not intend to proceed further with this Bill this session, and will content myself with merely explaining its provisions. I propose to be as brief as possible in doing so, and as far as I can to confine my remarks to the provisions of the Bill which amend the existing laws. It is a consolidating measure, and repeals the existing Factories Act, and also the Early Closing Act, and embraces most of the provisions of the Acts and makes what we consider necessary amendments. The object of not proceeding further is to enable those who will be both directly and indirectly affected to have an opportunity of thoroughly considering these provisions, because we realise that the Bill is of very great importance to the trading community. Naturally we are not desirous of imposing any unnecessary restrictions on our trading community, or to neglect an opportunity of doing what we consider is essential for the protection of those who are employed in the industries

concerned. We have made some slight amendment in the definitions. This has been done largely for the purpose of bringing our legislation into line with that existing in the other States and New Zealand. We provide for the legalisation of the officers appointed under existing laws, acts of authority, as well as of proclamations originating under these Acts; so that there shall be no break in the administration of the new law. One of the principal alterations in the definitions is regarding boys. A boy is now defined as a male under the age of 14. We propose in this Bill to provide that a boy shall be a male under 16, and that his hours of employment shall be the same as are provided for women. At present a boy under 14 years of age cannot be employed in a factory unless he is exempted from school attendance, but the unfortunate part is that such boys are not subject to any limitation. The limitation will now of course apply to a boy under 16, as well as the same conditions as exist at present. The principal alteration in the definition of "factory" is that which reduces the number of persons who shall constitute a factory under the Act from six to two. At present it is not necessary to register a factory, using no motive power, unless six persons are employed in it, such as an employer in any factory and five other persons. It is now intended to apply to two persons only, the owner and one other. This is to conform with the conditions applying in the other States and New Zealand. Where five or more men are employed at present they must register as a factory, and they obtain the protection and benefit of the law. If a less number is employed they are exempt from the provisions of the Act. The owner of a factory may work his employees for any number of hours without restriction. They are not required to grant a half day per week holiday, or to pay for overtime worked. This, of course, brings about unfair competition. This proposal, if agreed to, will bring all the employers and employees on an equal footing. I pass by Part II. of the Bill by saying that they are machinery clauses, and that they are already largely provided for in the Acts I have mentioned as being repealed. There is one alteration we are making which is a change, although its effect may be somewhat important. Under the existing Factories Act and Early Closing Act the law applies only to those districts which have from time to time been proclaimed by the Governor in Council, and the law has no effect in this matter except in such districts as have been proclaimed. We propose to reverse that position and make the Act apply to the whole State unless any portion of it is exempted by Order in Council. Instead of applying it, as at present when special circumstances require a proclamation to be issued, to a particular district, it is proposed to provide that only special circumstances will enable persons to avoid the application of the law, which is preferable to the other

method because it will tend to bring about more uniformity of control throughout the State.

Mr. Foley: Will this affect the small shops?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will explain that later. The Early Closing Act applies to 40 different districts, such as electoral, municipal, and road board districts, townsite areas, etc., but it is not general in its application. Anyone in the State may be exempted under the proposed amendment to the Act. In order to show how absurd the existing law is, I may explain that while it applies to Northam it does not apply to York, and while it applies to Wickiepin and Pingelly it does not apply to Narrogin. Owing to this lack of uniformity many complaints have been made, and it is evident that in a matter of this kind uniformity is desirable, which should be arrived at under this Bill. Another thing is that we propose to bring about uniformity by providing for the registration of shops as well as factories. Shops are not required to register at present, and factories are only registered once. Once a factory is registered there is no further necessity to again register it with the exception of Asiatic owned factories, which are required to register annually. We now propose that they should all register annually, so that the Act will apply to factories and shops and ensure their annual registration. This is the usual provision made in all parts of the British community, and applies in the Eastern States and New Zealand. All registrations under the Employment Brokers Act and the Health Act, including offensive trades, dairies, etc., are annual registrations. A provision is contained in the Bill to limit the ordinary working hours of male workers in factories over 16 years of age to 48 hours per week, and to limit the number of ordinary working hours in any one day to 8¼ hours. The reason why we are providing for 8¼ hours is to ensure that there will be one short day once a week, and to prevent the number of hours in the aggregate for any week exceeding 48. There is no limitation at present, and this is quite a new provision in our Factories and Shops law. We also provide for a 44 hours week to apply to women and boys. The maximum will be 44 hours, with 8¼ hours as the maximum in any one day, except that we permit a limited amount of overtime. This overtime shall not exceed more than three hours in any one day, or for more than one day in any week, or for more than ten days in any year. We also prohibit overtime on any holiday or half-holiday. We have also made provision to permit overtime to be worked in special circumstances. We are guarding against that which happens in many instances, in the case of boys as regards overtime, by providing that they shall first of all get permission to work overtime. At present the Act provides that they must properly record any time worked in excess of the regular hours, but the difficulty is to discover when a breach takes place. When an inspector finds them working overtime the employer says that this is the only day on

which it has occurred, and that he is therefore recording it. In order to guard against that we are providing that they must first of all get permission to work overtime, so that if an inspector visits a factory and finds overtime going on without permission it will be evident that there is a breach of the law and a penalty will apply. We provide that the Minister may permit an extension of employment to ten hours for adult male workers and nine hours for women and boys. That is to meet special circumstances, and will only be granted after application to and consideration by the Minister. The Bill also provides for sufficient time being given to enable the employees to take meals at stated intervals, this being found under Clause 36. Under the existing Factories Act Asiatics may be employed between eight and five o'clock in the day. The Bill provides that the same limited hours shall apply to Asiatics as to Europeans, but we still prohibit overtime to all Asiatics. We are making provision for the extension of overtime for employees during certain periods of the year in jam factories. It may appear rather strange that such a provision should be made as applied to jam factories. Hon. members will realise that there is a short period in the year when great quantities of fruit must be handled, and it is deemed desirable that permission should be given by the Minister in regard to extending the overtime provisions in such a case. This is the case wherever jam factories exist. Women and boys employed in factories must receive six paid holidays during the year. I am only mentioning those points wherein the Bill differs from the existing law. At present there is no provision at all for such holidays. The employees get their holidays when they ask for them, because it does not cost the employer anything to give them. We have heard it said that the Government should, as employers, set an example to others. We have been setting an example for a long time, and the time has arrived when the employer engaged in operating a factory or a shop should fall into line with what the Government are doing, and give annual holidays to his employees, instead of their being compelled to remain at home when they get a holiday because they have not the wherewithal to take one. Hon. members will observe that we make some special provisions regarding newspapers working during specified times and on holidays. Such provisions, I believe, apply everywhere. They are necessary owing to the peculiar circumstances of the trade, which must be permitted to issue newspapers at certain times on holidays. We fix the minimum wage at 5s. per week, with yearly increases of 5s. until 25s. has been reached. The 5s. is only the minimum, and I hope it will not be made the maximum commencing salary in all trades. In some cases girls have been employed for periods of six and eight months at 2s. 6d. per week; indeed, there have been instances where they have been employed for months without any pay whatever. The continuance of such a state of

things we consider undesirable. The Bill also prohibits the payment of premiums for employment in factories. That practice is not general in Australasia, but we consider it entirely undesirable that young persons should pay premiums in order to obtain employment. The Bill provides penalties which it is considered will meet the case in the event of a breach of that particular provision. We have also what is known as a certificate of employment, which must be given by the employer to the young person after he or she has served the employer for any period and then proposes to seek employment elsewhere. The object is to meet the position I have already explained with regard to the commencing salary and the yearly increase therein. Sections 49 to 51 deal with sweating in factories. Our statute-book already contains a good many provisions dealing with sweating, but this Bill enlarges them somewhat. The measure requires the keeping of records of all out work in the textile and shoddy trades, a record of the quantity and description of the work given out, and also a record of the remuneration paid therefor. Further, the Bill prohibits the subletting of piece work. The existing provisions are not sufficiently comprehensive, and do not operate against drapers and others who are not occupants of factories but who give out work to women to do in their own homes. We also continue to restrict the employment of young persons at certain trades and processes which are known to be dangerous or injurious to health. Sections 52 to 57 deal with that matter. Then we have another certificate to be issued by the inspectors of the department, a certificate of fitness for a boy or girl under 16 years of age. We think it very undesirable to permit boys or girls under that age to be engaged in trades for which they may be either mentally or physically unfit. Unfortunately such cases frequently occur. The provision is taken from New Zealand legislation, and is in operation in Victoria. So far, while a penalty has been imposed upon the employer for employing a boy under 14 or a girl under 15, there has been no penalty upon the parent or guardian. I think the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Roche) will agree that the parent or guardian is a greater offender than the employer in such circumstances. The Bill provides a penalty against the parent or guardian as well as against the employer.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about the widowed mother?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member will agree that in making exemptions we have to consider the position as regards the general good of the community. In the circumstances to which he refers, the State would have to make provision for the upkeep of the child until it reaches the minimum age. If we start breaking in on legislative provisions because of hardship in any particular case, we render such a measure as this futile.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is it your intention to provide that in such circumstances the

widowed mother shall receive State assistance?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: She gets State assistance now.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the assistance ceases when a child reaches the age of 14.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A boy can go to work on reaching the age of 14, and a girl at the age of 15. I fully admit that no Government can impose restrictions of this sort without recognising the responsibility of providing for the maintenance of the child until it reaches the minimum age. But I strongly object to exemptions which are harmful to the child and which prevent the proper observance of the State's obligations towards the child. The child is not responsible for its unfortunate circumstances, and neither is the widowed mother; and therefore the general community should render what assistance is necessary. With regard to sanitary conditions in factories and shops, the existing provisions will remain, and this Bill proposes to make provision for sufficient natural light in workrooms. Although the Government now have power to regulate regarding air space, they have no power to regulate as regards light. Undoubtedly the working of long hours under gaslight or electric light has an injurious effect on the eyesight; and therefore this Bill takes note of the matter. We also ask for power to the inspectors to insist upon the provision of lunch rooms where these are considered necessary, and power to prohibit the taking of meals in workrooms where a manufacturing process is being carried on, and to prohibit the use of workrooms as sleeping places. One would imagine that such a provision was unnecessary, but unfortunately experience shows it to be necessary. The department know of instances where employees have been compelled to take their meals alongside a manufacturing process in operation, and also of cases where employees have actually slept in the place where they worked. The Bill also asks for power to the Government to order the provision of changing and dressing rooms for women workers, where necessary. This provision will not be enforced unless the inspector is of opinion that it is essential in the interests of the workers. Further, the Bill provides a slight amendment of the existing provisions regarding the prevention of accidents from fire. The existing provisions do not apply except to factories and shops where 25 persons are employed. The Bill reduces that minimum to 15. The measure also contains a provision prohibiting employment during structural alterations or additions. This is considered necessary in view of what might have been a calamity here in Perth only last winter, when structural alterations were in progress in connection with a building in which about 60 girls were employed. A wall about 40ft. long and about 15ft. high collapsed, and came through the roof into the workroom where those 60 girls were employed. Fortunately this happened on a Sunday, and no one was hurt, although the

plant was damaged. But hon. members will recognise that there might have been a calamity. The chances were six to one that the accident would happen on another day than Sunday. At present we have no power to prevent employees working during structural alterations; therefore the Bill makes provision accordingly. In Sections 84 to 90 hon. members will observe new provisions affecting factories, although similar provisions now apply to the use of machinery. If an accident takes place in a factory from any cause whatever, it must, under this Bill, be reported to the department; and the inspector will then have power to inquire into the cause of the accident. Further, the Minister will have power to direct an inquiry before a magistrate. The Bill also provides that the inspector may appear at all inquiries or inquests—I trust there will be no inquests—and examine witnesses with a view to arriving at the cause of the accident and placing the responsibility on the proper shoulders. The Bill requires that dangerous receptacles shall be fenced, and that a clear space shall be kept near dangerous machinery. The provision depends on the size of the factory and on the nature of the appliances used on the premises. That law does not obtain here at present, but it is in force in other States of the Commonwealth. Another provision of this Bill deals with the stamping of furniture. An existing provision of our law requires that furniture manufactured by Asiatic labour must be so stamped. We are enlarging that provision by requiring that all furniture shall be stamped with the name of the manufacturer and sufficient particulars, according to the directions of the department, to enable the purchaser to know whether the furniture has been made by European or by other labour. If this provision passes, the intending purchaser will be enabled to look for a stamp, which must be there, and thus he will be able to satisfy himself at once whether the furniture has been made by white or by other labour.

Mr. Willcock: What about imported furniture?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Clause 94, Subclause 8, provides for stamping imported furniture.

Mr. Lutey: The Federal Act makes provision in the same direction.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We still propose to exempt laundries in which the only persons employed are inmates of a prison, reformatory, or industrial school, or inmates of an institution conducted in good faith for religious or charitable purposes. My own view is that any laundry which is carried on in competition with other laundries should be subject to the same conditions. The Act will apply to Government factories as well as to other factories. While we are imposing upon the general community these restrictions and methods of working in factories, our own factories will be worked on similar lines.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am glad you have said that. I shall mention that later when dealing with the Sand Drift Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am not concerned with that measure. The early closing provisions and the provision for the late shopping night remain as at present. There may be a difference of opinion regarding the necessity for retaining the late shopping night; I have my own opinion. When we have such long and beautiful days, surely shopping can be done during the day time.

Mr. Lutey: Does that include hair-dressers?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Hair-dressers' hours are specified in the Bill. There has been a good deal of disagreement regarding the registration of small shops. We provide that in future the registration of small shops shall be restricted to widows or persons old and physically disabled, and any other special cases of hardship. At present a person may get a small shopkeeper's license and, so long as he employs a relative, he can do as he likes, although he is in competition with people who employ labour. The registration of small shops will be absolutely at the discretion of the Minister. He may inquire into and satisfy himself as to every application, and refuse it at his discretion. We have received many complaints about the small shops and the time has arrived when the Act should be amended. Fruit and confectionery shops at present may remain open till 11 o'clock. The Bill provides for 10 o'clock closing.

Mr. Jones: You ought to extend that to hotels.

The Premier: Hotels close at 9 o'clock.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not speak from experience, but I imagined it is desirable that, after drinking till 9 p.m., a person should have an opportunity to eat something to pass off the effects of the drink. This will save him looking for cold water early in the next morning. There are many shops where business of a mixed nature is carried on. The law at present provides for different hours of closing if each branch of such business is run separately. Shops carrying on a mixed business are now permitted to keep open to the latest hour applied to any one section of the business carried on. That is unfair to those who restrict their business to one particular class and thus have to close earlier. We propose that the earliest hour for closing in any one particular line of business carried on as a mixed business shall be the hour when the shop shall close, unless the Minister exempts any particular portion after having satisfied himself that the other part of the business can be so closed off that no trading can be carried on during the extended hours. This will make competition fairer than it is at present. Another clause which will cause discussion is that affecting the application of the common rule in arbitration awards or agreements. If an arbitration

award or agreement is made affecting any particular district, it will be made a common rule to apply to all factories and shops within the district, although the decision arrived at by the court or under the agreement may compel closing at an earlier hour than that provided for in the Act. In one particular instance, a good deal of feeling was aroused because a section of employers agreed with a section of employees and made an agreement which was registered under the Arbitration Act. A difference occurred among the employers, as a result of which their association was practically broken up, owing to a section of employers in the suburbs deliberately shortening hours to reduce the trade of employers in the city area. Such a method is unfair. This will provide that, if such an agreement is made, or if an arbitration award fixes the hours or conditions different from those provided in the Act, such conditions must be complied with. We provide for a slight alteration which may or may not be to the advantage of the shop assistants. I do not think it will be to their advantage. We have found it necessary to permit overtime to be worked on the half holiday for the purpose of stock-taking, but it cannot be done without notification and permission. The employees themselves have admitted that they preferred to work overtime for stocktaking on the recognised half holiday rather than work two late nights. The Minister may grant permission to work overtime on the half holiday. We also provide for payment for overtime at the rate of time and a half and, in certain cases where assistants live a distance from their employment and are kept for a number of hours specified, they shall be provided with tea money which will enable them to get proper food. The working hours for adult male shop assistants are fixed at 52, and for women and boys at 48. Under the measure, an inspector may order proper seating accommodation to be provided for assistants. This is a very desirable clause. We also provide that employees in shops and factories shall be paid at least fortnightly. At present this is not compulsory, and it is frequently evaded. These are the most important alterations to the existing law and the main features having been mentioned members will have an opportunity to consider them before Parliament meets next session. We have endeavoured to frame a measure consolidating the existing law and introducing new provisions which from experience are considered necessary. Although the Bill may appear to go further than some people desire, in some respects it will be found perhaps that we have not gone so far as others consider necessary. Members will now have an opportunity to consider the Bill and study it from the point of view of the general community. When we consider the Bill in detail, I believe we shall be able to provide a measure which will be to the credit of the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DURATION.

First Reading.

Received from the Legislative Council.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. F. Draper—West Perth) [5.24]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a first time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [5.25]: I intend to oppose the first reading.

Mr. SPEAKER: Under the Standing Orders, the first reading must be put without debate.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a first time.

Second Reading.

On motion by the Attorney General, ordered that the second reading be taken into consideration after the consideration of Order of the Day No. 6.

BILL—SAND DRIFT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 27th November.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.30]: I am not going to raise much objection to the Bill, but there is a fault in it which I hope the Minister will remedy when it reaches the Committee stage. This Bill is intended to compel private owners of land on which there is sand drift to prevent the drift. In many places, marram grass has been planted to prevent the sand from drifting on to adjoining property. This is no doubt a very good idea. At North Fremantle this has been done, but unfortunately the Government own land there, and the land owned by the Government is not planted in a similar way, and the sand from the Government blocks drifts over the blocks owned by private people. I do not intend to offer any opposition to the Bill but I ask the Minister to assist me when we come to Clause 4 in Committee to put the Government in a similar position to the private owner. The Minister for Mines when introducing the Shops and Factories Bill just now stated it was only right and fair that when the Government ran factories those factories should be placed in a position similar to that of factories privately owned. The same thing must apply in connection with other matters. If the Government compel owners of private property to plant marram grass to prevent sand drifting then they should take the same action themselves and plant their own property as well.

Mr. DUFF (Claremont) [5.33]: I am pleased indeed that there is no opposition to the Bill. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle when he states that Government land should be treated in the same way as privately owned land. There is no question about the efficacy of marram grass. That is seen at Cottesloe Beach. The late Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy and the member for Canning visited Cottesloe some little time back and they were shown the beneficial results which followed the planting of marram grass, and they realised the advantages which would follow from the more general use of this grass. There is only one other alternative at Cottesloe and that is to build a wall. That, however, is out of the question in the present state of the finances. The planting of marram grass is the best thing that can be done, and, if this is done generally, building operations at Cottesloe will be given an impetus. Moreover the value of land in the vicinity of the beach will be considerably improved. I know of several people who would build very close to the sea but for the drift.

The Minister for Mines: I wish you would not mention drift so much. Cannot you refer to the movement of the sand.

Mr. DUFF: I am not referring to the financial drift, I am speaking merely of the sand drift. I trust the Bill will go through.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [5.36]: One of the most serious sand drifts on the coast is that which is taking place South of Fremantle. It is so serious that it is costing the Fremantle Road Board nearly £50 per annum to keep the roadway clear. This drift demands almost constant attention, and it comes from land which is leased, I understand, by one of the Government departments. The Fremantle Road Board served a notice upon the owners and they referred the board to the Agricultural Department, who had a lease of the property. Both the department and the owner of the property refused to accept any responsibility, and the result is as I have stated it. If it were not for the constant care of the Fremantle Road Board, Spearwood, Jandakot, and Rockingham would be cut off from Fremantle. The sand drift has to be tackled at its source. I have noticed that people who deal with sand drifts commence operations on the lee side of the drift, and before the provisions which are made to cope with it can take effect the sand comes in from the windward side and it is blown over the area which has already been attended to.

The Minister for Works: Are you referring to the sand drifts near the Newmarket Hotel?

Mr. ROCKE: Yes.

The Minister for Works: I understand that a fence has been put up there.

Mr. ROCKE: Yes, but two fences have already been put up there, and both have been buried by the sand, which has almost

buried three houses as well. It seems to me that the one remedy for sand drift is the planting of marram grass, but unless that is done from the windward side, so far as South Fremantle is concerned, no good will result. The planting of marram grass has proved a great success at North Fremantle and in other parts of the world, and, like the member for North-East Fremantle, I feel that unless provision is made to compel the Government to attend to land which is within their jurisdiction it will be useless to ask the owners of private property to comply with the requirements of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—in reply) [5.40]: In reply to the hon. member I may say that I made inquiries to-day and learned that Copley & Paterson, who have a lease of the property referred to by the hon. member have submitted a scheme to deal with the sand drift. In the meantime, they are keeping the road clean. The local authorities are fairly well satisfied that the action being taken will cope with the drift there. One block of ground recently in the hands of the Government has been leased to Copley & Paterson, and the responsibility will now fall on them. So far as Government lands are concerned, the Premier has authorised me to state that the Government will recognise their responsibility and will do their share.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Abatement of sand drifts:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move an amendment—

That the words in lines 2 and 3 "not being unrateable land which has not been alienated from the Crown" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I hope the hon. member will not press his amendment. An assurance has already been given that the Government recognise their responsibility in the matter, and they will not ask an individual to undertake a liability which they will shrink from themselves.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I realise the difficulty the Minister for Works finds himself in, but I do not think the Act would be applied to all these places where there is settlement. With regard to South Fremantle I remember when three houses were almost buried on account of the sand drift and the people who occupied them were forced to leave. There were several houses built for the convenience of the men in charge of the powder magazine. Eventually those places had to be moved, and that was done even before the magazine was shifted. I will accept the Minister's assurance, but I would also draw his attention to the fact that at

North Fremantle, on the North side of the railway, the sand is drifting into people's back yards, and is encroaching on to the houses. In places in this locality private owners have planted marram grass, but the Government have failed to do so, and the mischief which is being done is the result of the unplanted areas held by the Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not see how I can make the intention of the Government any clearer. The Government are not seeking to impose on private individuals a liability which they themselves shrink from. The Government will carry out their own liability. I hope the hon. member will not press the amendment.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I will not press it.

Mr. MONEY: Under the clause it becomes the duty of a private owner to plant marram grass, and although this will serve to protect the land of others I see no provision for his recovering any part of the cost of the planting from those who will benefit thereby. I should like the Minister to give some information in that regard. Also although the private owner served with a notice may not, for lack of funds, be able to do the work, yet he is liable to a penalty if he does not do it, notwithstanding that the work will benefit others. If it is right for the local authority to recover the money they themselves expend, it is equally right that the private owner should recover his money when the work benefits others.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am surprised at the remarks of the hon. member, who for many years has been a member of a health authority. How often has he, in that capacity taken steps to compel a person to abate a nuisance? In this case certain persons buy cheap land and allow it to be a nuisance to others, who for their part take steps to prevent their own land becoming a nuisance.

Mr. Money: But this is an act of God.

The Honorary Minister: It is an act of the devil.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Other owners stop the drifting sand, but the owners under consideration take no steps whatever to abate the nuisance. They should be compelled to plant marram grass.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for North-East Fremantle, I think, has fully replied to the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money). I cannot teach the hon. member law. He himself knows the obligations of a private landowner to his neighbours. The hon. member might as reasonably argue that because a man bought his land before the imposition of a land tax, he should be exempt from that land tax.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 10—agreed to.

Title agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [5.58] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to authorise the committee controlling the gardens to raise £7,000, or £1,000 more than the authorisation under which they have raised £6,000. They have an overdraft from the Commonwealth Bank. As hon. members know, the committee have erected baths at the gardens, but those baths are quite insufficient in number to meet the demand. The desire is to erect more baths. Obviously the Committee must be given an opportunity for increasing their revenue. They have to keep a caretaker at the existing baths, and he could just as easily look after 30 baths as the six in his care. The property is worth £20,000. I do not know the origin of the idea to allow the committee to raise £6,000 against the security of the property. A few years ago the subsidy was £3,100, and this has been reduced to £2,975. That is a serious loss to the committee and will have to be made up by some other means. The other clause in the Bill provides for an exchange of land. At present the committee have, for the purpose of caretaker's quarters and stores, a block of land adjacent to Labouchere-road, No. 399. The proposal is to exchange this block for a frontage on Labouchere-road. The frontage is one of four chains and the depth is two chains. If this exchange is granted the remainder of block 399 will become part of the reserve and will be added to the general reserve which really now surrounds it, except where it fronts Labouchere-road. This frontage is very valuable. It can be converted into building sites. The committee seek power to obtain the freehold of the land, and with the consent of the Governor in Council to sell or lease it for building purposes. I understand it is worth about £3 per foot. If this land is sold the money realised will, of course, be spent on improving the gardens. The reserve will be increased by a considerable area more than is being taken from it in order that the frontage to Labouchere-road may go to the Zoo. If this land is sold the State will probably be relieved of some of its subsidy of £2,975. There is provision that the remaining portion of this reserve shall be added to reserve No. 10250. At present this is vested in the municipal council. Under this vesting order they have given a lease to the golf club of 21 years from 1912. It is intended to hand to the municipal council by a vesting order the remaining portion of this Class A reserve. It is also proposed to lease a portion comprising $8\frac{1}{2}$ acres to the golf club to enable them to complete their course. It is quite true that the golf club have improved their land tremendously and that they have spent a considerable sum of money on it.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Hon. P. Collier: They did, and fenced the people off.

The PREMIER: They have access to the land.

Mr. Jones: Like the bowling club on the Esplanade.

The PREMIER: No, like the bowling club attached to Parliament House. Before the golf links were established there this reserve was a wilderness, but it is not so today. I do not think that members should object to the golf links, because people ought to have means of recreation.

Mr. Lutey: It is the unsightly buildings surrounding them.

The PREMIER: It is rather the reverse. This ground is not now used and is of no benefit to the people. There seems to be no reason why, if the golf club will spend the necessary money in improving the land, they should not be allowed to do so. It will not be leased by the Government, but it may be leased by the municipal council. I understand that a meeting of ratepayers was called by the council, and that it was agreed to grant this lease of 8½ acres.

Hon. P. Collier: It was a hole and corner meeting.

The PREMIER: I understand it was a properly constituted meeting, and that those present were in favour of extending the area leased to the golf club so that they might complete their links, and that is the object of this portion of the Bill. The lease to the golf club will be for 16 years from 1912. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [6.5]: I have no objection to that portion of the Bill which seeks to give power to the trustees of the Zoological gardens to borrow additional funds. The proposal to extend the bathing accommodation at the gardens is an excellent one. In the summer months, and no doubt throughout the whole year, the accommodation is insufficient for the number of people who desire to take advantage of the mineral water springs in these gardens. In Committee I shall strenuously oppose Clause 3. I am opposed to surrendering any of the reserves or park lands which are kept for public use.

The Premier: This is an exchange.

Hon. P. COLLIER: After all these years it is rather late to bring forward a proposal to surrender a portion of the land at present included in the Zoological gardens reserve, for the purpose of selling it for building sites. There are many other building sites in South Perth, and if these are not sufficient there are thousands of others in North Perth and in other parts of the metropolitan area, without its being necessary to encroach upon this land which is set apart for public recreation. In years to come, when this State has four or five times its present population, we shall find, notwithstanding the magnificent area contained in King's Park, that the land which is set aside for public recreation purposes is totally insufficient for the needs of

the situation. It is a false policy to surrender reserves of this kind. I do not care how many there are to-day, or how vast they are; I say they will not be sufficient for the years to come. Instead of surrendering our public play grounds for the purpose of erecting buildings upon them, we should endeavour, while land is cheaper than it will be in the future, to repurchase areas in suitable localities and reserve them as public play grounds. I am totally opposed to the idea of taking a part of this magnificent reserve that is included in the gardens for the purpose of accommodating members of the South Perth golf club.

The Premier: That is not the purpose.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is the object of this part of the Bill. A public meeting was called in a more or less surreptitious manner a little time ago, and if the report of the newspaper in which the member for North Perth is interested is correct, the meeting was packed in order that a decision might be arrived at which did not generally represent the feelings of the local ratepayers. The golf club may improve the land and may allow people to go on it, but if they fence it around they will have power to exclude them from the land.

The Premier: Oh no, they will not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. The public may never encroach upon the golf links except at the will of the club which holds the lease. At Cottesloe a substantial fence was placed around the local golf links and gates were put in it. The gates are now open, but it would be within the power of the Cottesloe club to close the gates and exclude the public.

The Premier: It would not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have a lease of the land and for that reason must have some protection. It will not be open to the public to take possession at any time. The lands we have reserved to-day should not be given away even if the State is called upon to provide a subsidy to the Zoological gardens every year. It would be better to go on with their subsidy than to dispose of the freehold of the land, so that buildings may be erected upon it, and the Treasury relieved for the time being of its contribution, or the trustees enabled to effect repairs. I support the second reading of the Bill merely for the purpose of giving the powers contained in Clause 2, but I am going to oppose Clause 3.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [6.12]: The leasing of this reserve to the golf club is not the most serious aspect of this proposal. The discovery of mineral waters in South Perth of a high medicinal value is proof that a greater quantity of land will be needed there than we have available at present. When waters of medicinal value were first discovered in New Zealand it was not thought that they would have such world-wide fame. The New Zealand Government, however, interested themselves in the discovery, with the result that a bathing house with equipment has been erected in

the vicinity of these waters to the value of about £80,000. The garden contained in the area concerned is about 80 acres. Now that mineral waters have been discovered at South Perth it is possible that we may be able to convert that suburb into a tourist resort. People at present go from Western Australia to New Zealand and spend from £100 to £200 in search of health. If they were made aware of the fact that we have these valuable waters in South Perth, and that they will do them as much good as if they went to New Zealand, they might be prepared to remain here and avail themselves of the opportunity. The Government, therefore, should be very careful about disposing of any of the reserves in South Perth, as I feel sure they will all be needed for public purposes in the near future.

Mr. LUTEY (Brownhill-Ivanhoe) [6.13]: I support the second reading of the Bill, but intend to oppose Clause 3. The Premier says the council will not be able to do as they like with the land, but the Bill says that it may be leased or sold or transferred in fee simple.

The Premier: That is only a small bit.

Mr. LUTEY: There is too little land reserved already. I am opposed to the fee simple of any of these park lands being given away, either for cricket clubs, trotting clubs, or any other purpose of that kind.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

In Committee.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Adjustment of certain reserves:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I hope the Premier will not persist with this clause; and, if he does, I trust the Committee will vote against it. I have no wish again to cover the ground which I traversed on the second reading, but I do most strongly object to the Zoological Gardens Committee parting with any portion of the reserve now known as the Zoological Gardens. In my view there can be no justification for giving up that magnificent site which is the heritage of future generations. We should religiously guard all parks and reserves which are now the property of the people.

The PREMIER: I can quite understand the objections raised when there is a proposal to deal with a reserve; but I doubt whether the cutting off of the area here involved will make much difference to this particular reserve. I have introduced the Bill at the request of the Zoological Gardens Committee. If the measure passes, a considerable sum of money will be spent in improving and beautifying the reserve, which otherwise might not be done for

years. Therefore, there should be no objection to the dealing here proposed. I have no desire to discuss the incidental question of the golf club at any length; it can come up again as a separate question.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The area to be excised is going to be built on.

The PREMIER: Yes; but it will be kept as a reserve.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This Bill does not in any way affect the ground which is at present occupied by the golf club. Portion of the land referred to in this Bill belongs to the Zoological Gardens, and that land abuts on to the reserve and makes it almost useless for recreation purposes. Under the Bill the Zoological Gardens will get a greater frontage with a lesser depth, and the land in the reserve will be in a much better shape for the purpose of recreation. When I was a member of the Zoological Gardens Committee some years ago, they wanted to get this exchange made. I understand, further, that the Zoological Gardens Committee want power to sell the little piece of land on the road, being very hard up for money to maintain the gardens. As regards the other reserve, after settling with the Zoological Gardens Committee, we still have a reserve for the purpose of a botanical garden. If that reserve is vested in the South Perth council for the purposes of recreation, then the question whether or not the council can grant a lease of any portion of that reserve would depend upon the issue of a vesting order authorising them to lease for a certain period. The purpose of the reserve would be changed from a botanical garden to a recreation ground. Possibly it is not desirable for the South Perth council to grant a lease; possibly the people of South Perth would object. But that is really a matter entirely for the consideration of the South Perth council, and to a certain extent it is controlled by the Government, because the council could not grant a lease of portion of the reserve without obtaining an order from the Government, as was done when a lease was granted of the land now held by the golf club. I believe, though I do not positively know, that the South Perth council intend to make a football ground on portion of the reserve, and that they would be willing to lease the remaining portion to the golf club. I should be glad if hon. members would investigate the matter for themselves. Being a member of the golf club, I feel some diffidence in making a statement.

Mr. JOHNSTON: We are indebted to the Attorney General for endeavouring to illustrate on his portfolio the proposals contained in this clause, but it would have been better if a plan had been provided, especially as it is proposed to alienate one of the people's playgrounds in the metropolitan area. There is nothing to show whether the area is one acre or 50 acres.

The Premier: It is four chains by two chains.

Mr. JOHNSTON: A map would have been of great convenience. The Government should not alienate the recreation grounds. Civic authorities are entering upon town planning schemes to beautify their towns, and we should not be asked to consent to the alienation of any reserve without having the fullest information.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This is a Class A reserve. Such areas were permanently reserved to be kept for all time for the use of the people.

Hon. P. Collier: If we change the purpose it will be gone.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Years ago when it was desired to build the sanatorium for tubercular patients, medical men recommended a portion of the National Park as the best site available but, when the proposal came before Parliament, it was turned down on the score that it was a Class A reserve. Another site which was not so good had to be obtained. This land should be retained as a permanent reserve.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This matter should be allowed to stand over until next session. Although the imaginary diagram of the Attorney General helped us to some extent, we cannot grasp the situation thoroughly without a map of the locality. The only safeguard the people have in respect of Class A reserves is that the purpose cannot be changed except by Act of Parliament. This is a Class A reserve. It is proposed to grant it to the trustees of the Zoological Gardens, who propose to sell a portion of it, while the other portion will be vested in the municipality of South Perth. Once it is vested in that body, it may be leased for golf or any other purpose. We shall be recreant to ourselves and those who come afterwards if we do not reserve every foot of park lands possible in what will be one of the most populous suburbs in a year or two, one which will be frequented by thousands of pleasure seekers. We cannot have a foot of land too much for public parks in South Perth. If a good case can be put up for this proposal let it be brought forward next session.

Clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

All Stages.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

In accordance with resolutions adopted in Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, leave obtained to introduce the Appropriation Bill, which was read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [7.56]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3, and Schedules A to I inclusive—agreed to.

Schedule J:

The PREMIER: I wish to direct the attention of members to the schedule which contains the scheme of expenditure for the improvement and reforestation of State forests. Under the Forests Act it was necessary to submit a scheme for this purpose and the scheme was laid on the Table of the House some time ago. These are the means adopted to authorise the expenditure, and endorse the scheme.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I hoped that the Minister controlling the Forestry Department would have given us some information regarding this matter.

The Minister for Mines: It has been before the House for some considerable time.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I believe in the scheme and am supporting it, but I should like to ask what is proposed regarding the starting of operations?

The Minister for Mines: We are ready to start in a small way, but we have to wait for the officer.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I understand there is a difficulty in getting a suitable officer to take charge of the working plans, and so far as I can gather that officer has not been appointed. Is there a prospect of getting a suitable applicant? Applications were called for all through Australia and, I believe, abroad as well. If we have to search the world and we cannot get a suitable officer, it is a most peculiar position.

Mr. Hudson: I know where there is one now.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Well, the hon. member had better recommend him to put in an application. I notice in the schedule that it is proposed to fence in the areas plotted out on the working plans as soon as wire is available. I hope we shall have some information in this matter, because I do not think that excessive expense is justified. In his report the Conservator of Forests draws attention in two or three places to the difficulty regarding straying stock on forest lands, and the tendency to make grazing take a primary position to forestry. So far as I know the South-West there are very few stock roaming round the country, and I do not know what harm could be done. The few stock which are roaming through the South-West forest lands are usually fairly rickety, because there is little food to eat,

and, if the Conservator of Forests proposes to spend money in buying wire to fence in these areas, it will not be justified. If he only proposes to fence in the areas planted as a nursery, there will be no objection. They should be fenced, of course, as soon as the plants are in, but, as regards the areas to be proclaimed, it would be unnecessary expense to fence in all these areas. Money has to be saved, and this fetish about stock doing so much damage on the timber lands is all moonshine. I have perused the plans laid on the table preparatory to the request for this expenditure being made to the Committee. I recognise that it is a big drain on the expenditure to earmark this money for the Forestry Department, but I am pleased that this money is going back to that Department to make some attempt at reforestation, and I hope that the Conservator will by his arrangement take steps to secure that support from the people which, at the present time, they are somewhat inclined not to give. He has adopted a somewhat dictatorial attitude in the past, and he should depart from it. We cannot break down established customs right away, and he should proceed more along the lines adopted in the Eastern States. Naturally we must have an officer to take charge of the working plans, and it is a peculiar thing that we have to go round the world for a man with the necessary expert knowledge to carry out this work. It argues a paucity in the intellect of the men required for forestry work.

The Minister for Works: Or the high standard set here.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Or that the Conservator has set up a very high standard.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I should like some information regarding the forests products laboratory, mention of which is made in the schedule. Is there a possibility of this laboratory being brought into operation in the reasonably near future? In New South Wales they have a very fine institution there, of which Mr. T. Baker is the economic chemist, and in to-day's paper I saw a report regarding the hardwoods of Australia, in which it is pointed out that this work is a very fine advertisement for Australia. To my mind the information conveyed there regarding the hardwoods of Western Australia is very meagre. However, they are doing very good work in the laboratory in treating eucalypts and other products, and I think it is time that we were doing something in this direction ourselves. Is this item merely a pious wish, or has it come into the range of practical politics?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I did not intend to introduce a discussion on these matters, but, as hon. members have raised one or two points, it is desirable that I should make some reference to them. The member for Forrest mentioned the matter of fencing. There is no intention of fencing in the whole of the forests area, but it is desirable to fence in the tuart forest. We have not much of this class of forest, and by fencing we

will be able to control the stock in these areas, and permit them to graze there when they cannot do any injury to the forest, at the same time keeping them off when it is necessary that such should be done. That is what the Conservator wishes to do regarding fencing. It is not, of course, intended to provide for the tuart forest just now when wire is at such a high price, but we may make arrangements for getting the posts in, so as to be ready to run in the fencing wire when it is procurable at a reasonable rate.

Mr. Griffiths: Have you had any word as to wire becoming cheaper yet?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not been officially advised on that point yet, but I expect that the hon. member for York will be as ready for information on that point as I am. Regarding the Forests Products Laboratory, I do not know that we are certain to have it established in the near future, but the indications are all in that direction. The Federal Government made what we regarded as a fairly generous offer, and we accepted it. That was, that they should establish the laboratory here, and for the purpose of obtaining information regarding the basis upon which it should be established we agreed, in conjunction with the Federal Government, to send Mr. Boas to America, from which country he proceeded to England and India. It is anticipated that Mr. Boas will return about the end of this month. The Federal Government intended to put through a Bill permitting them to undertake their responsibilities in this matter. I understand that the Bill passed through the Senate, but did not reach the House of Representatives, with the result, of course, that it was not passed by Parliament as a whole. It can be accepted, however, that the Federal authorities will stand to their bargain, and that the laboratory will be established in Western Australia, where it will be of very material advantage to us. It will also be of great interest to the rest of Australia. So far as the timber is concerned, although we have huge forests here, much has to be done before these forests can be worked in a practical fashion. We have changed our policy, and there will be a certain amount of heart burning involved in the change of policy to take place, but we cannot go on with our forests as in the past. We must make provision for the future. We are in difficulties regarding the supplies for local requirements of certain kinds, and simply because we have forests, we cannot put mills in and cut them without regard to the economic state of our forest country generally. There is a tremendous waste going on in connection with the timber industry, and the forest products laboratory will show in what way we can best remedy the position. Regarding working plans, it is true that we have been experiencing considerable difficulty in getting an officer.

Mr. O'Loghlen: What salary was offered?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We are offering a salary commensurate with the

work, but it is difficult to get a man suitable to undertake it. We are still looking for a man, and even if it means a certain amount of further delay, it is preferable that this delay should take place so that we may be certain we are getting the man we want. We have had our experience in our attempts to get a man to deal with the working plans of the forests, and we cannot go on indefinitely looking for men in other parts of the world, but should take care that men are trained for the work here. In the circumstances, we are going into this policy to retain our forests for all time, and we have to train our men, and not look elsewhere for them. We have a right to train them here, and I am hopeful that we shall do it in future.

Schedule—put and passed.

Bill reported and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [8.15]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [8.16]: I notice that there is an amount of £400,000, advance to Treasurer. I hope the Treasurer will observe greater care in the expenditure of money out of a vote like this than has been done in the past, particularly during the last 12 months. I maintain that the Treasurer has no right to hand over a lump sum to any firm of solicitors to distribute amongst people. That has actually taken place in recent months, and no one can tell whether the people for whom the money was intended actually received it or not. The amount involved is something like £2,275. This was handed over to a firm of city solicitors to be distributed amongst the members of the National Union of Workers. I regret that the Auditor General's report did not arrive here until yesterday, because hon. members, not only in connection with matters of this description, but in connection with other matters as well, should have the opportunity of reading the comments of the Auditor General before the Estimates go through. There is no doubt in my mind that the Auditor General's report has been kept back for the express purpose of preventing criticism. I have no desire to see money spent in this way, and I am sure it is not the desire of the House that it should be distributed in such a loose manner, even to those who are entitled to receive it. I am not saying that the solicitors who were charged with the distribution of money made anything out of it, but I say that they could have handed it over to whoever they liked. The Auditor General's report on this subject says—

To special payments made on behalf of the National Workers' Association. In support of the voucher receipts from various individuals were submitted totalling £2,275 or £2 more than the amounts handed by the State to the firm mentioned.

That firm by the way is Robinson, Cox, Jackson and Wheatley.

The receipts showed that the persons signing had received from the Fremantle National Union of Workers three and a half weeks wages from 12th April, 1919, to 7th May, 1919. The payments work out at the rate of £3 5s. per week for each person. The file when called for was stated to be on the Table of the House and could not be produced. Under the circumstances it is not known whether the Government agreed to pay the sum stated to each individual for the period mentioned, or whether the persons who received the money were those whom it was intended to pay.

The Premier: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is a doubt so far as the Auditor General is concerned and the Auditor General has not been able to find out. He does not know whether the people whom the Government intended should receive this money actually received it or not. This is a very loose way of dealing with the funds of the State. I am not going to raise the question as to whether these persons should have had the money or not, but if they were entitled to it the Government should be aware whether those who should have received it actually received it.

Mr. Nairn: Were not the signatures of these people obtained?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Auditor General was not in a position to say. He got the vouchers for certain payments, but the sum of £2,275 odd was handed over to the solicitors to pay to whom they thought were members of the National Union.

The PREMIER: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: According to the Auditor General it is so. I hope that the present Treasurer will look more closely into the question of the distribution of the State's funds. If the State's funds are to be given to private individuals to disburse to whom they please, it is about time the House took action in the direction of preventing the Treasurer from allowing such a large sum of money to be distributed in this way. It is true that the total sum is only £2,000 odd out of a total of £400,000, but it is the principle that I am speaking against. It is bad and should not be adopted in the future. I hope that the Treasurer will look more carefully into these matters and see that whenever distribution of this kind has to be made the money is paid to people whom the Government think are those who should receive it.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [8.20]: I would like to assure the hon. member that those people who were entitled to the money did receive it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then why did they look for more when they were given £3 5s. a week?

The PREMIER: People will always look for more. The money was paid to them through a firm of solicitors.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have read to you the Auditor General's comments on that.

The PREMIER: I know. The fact remains the money was properly distributed by that firm of solicitors. The names were ascertained carefully from the employers. It is quite true we did not ask Parliament for a vote. The money had to be paid from some vote and it was obtained from the Treasurer's advance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—[8.23] in moving the second reading said: The first provisions of this measure deal with the payments for conditional purchase lands. It will be remembered that when I introduced the Estimates I intimated that Parliament would be asked to agree that the balances due in connection with the payments for conditional purchase lands might be made at any time during the currency of the lease subject to a discount. Clause 2 of the Bill provides means whereby the State may secure revenue by allowing a lessee to pay up the balance of his purchase money at any time after five years, and after he has complied with the other conditions of the lease he may then obtain the Crown grant. As I have stated, the lessee will then receive a rebate of five per cent. on the balance of the purchase money outstanding at the date of payment. I doubt whether this is likely to result in very much money being received as the discount is very small. It was proposed to make the discount five per cent. per annum. Take for instance 1,000 acres at 10s. per acre, the purchase money of which would be £500 payable over 20 years at the rate of £12 10s. half yearly. If a settler were to pay the full amount, he would merely receive £25 rebate under the present wording, but if it were five per cent. per annum he would pay £313 and thus receive a rebate of £186. I think there are a good many people who would take advantage of such a clause. I know that some years ago such a provision would have been largely availed of. I hope the House will agree to the provision because it will confer a considerable benefit. The next amendment which is contained in the clause deals with the matter of survey fees. First it provides that the Minister may in his discretion refuse to effect the survey of any land. This is necessary as we have had instances where under the present Act a man could take up a large area of country only suitable for pastoral purposes. That is to say, with his wife he could take up 7,500 acres. The survey fees would run

into about £60 and he would only pay £3 per year interest on the cost of survey during the first five years. As the rental for a pastoral lease is £1 per thousand, he would therefore pay less than 50 per cent. during the first five years and put the Government to a lot of expense without any guarantee that he would not forfeit it subsequently. The department should not be compelled to survey land unless it is certain that it will get the survey fees back. It is proposed to amend Section 25 of the Land Act, 1917, to enable the Government to make regulations for the payment of survey fees on selections prior to survey. It is also proposed to repeal the provision for the payment of interest only on the cost of survey during the first five years. The survey fee should undoubtedly be paid, probably at the rate of one fourth with the application, and the balance in equal instalments over twelve months. I may mention that only the other day a block of land was taken up somewhere outside Gingin and surveyed at considerable cost. The applicant subsequently said that he had no intention of going on with his application and the department of course had to pay for the survey. That money was therefore lost. The Bill will give the Minister power to refuse to make a survey. Another clause of the Bill deals with closed roads. Clause 4 makes provision to include a closed road in a conditional purchase through which it runs and without any cost to the lessee. This is merely a machinery clause and has no effect apart from the man from whom the land was taken for the road or through whose land it runs. Next we come to the most important part of the Bill, that part which deals with pastoral leases. It will be remembered that about three years ago the Land Act which was then passed, provided that a pastoral lessee could hold a million acres in each division of the State. There are six divisions in the State. It was never thought when the Act was passed that a coach and four could be driven through it. A man who holds a million acres of land in one division can get over his difficulty by forming a company, and that has been done. I have no objection to the pastoralist who has borne the heat and burden of the day and spent his time in the back country for many years past holding all he has so long as he makes use of the area. There are men like Mr. Bush, who hold considerable areas of land in the Gascoyne district which was taken up 40 years ago, when no one else wanted it. There are men in the Kimberleys who went there and lived strenuous lives for over 30 years. I think they should be allowed to enjoy their land while they live. I have no objection to those men continuing to hold the land; what I object to is the increase of holdings by men of another class, men who have done no pioneering work. To-day it is possible for a man who has never seen the country to use the company system to acquire a vast area of land in this State. The Attorney General will tell us that the shareholder has no direct interest in the land. I wish to stop that. What I seek to do is to prevent any

man or company acquiring large areas in the future, either by purchase from another lessee or by taking up a lease from the Crown. What we ask the House to agree to is that in future holdings shall not be more than 500,000 acres. It is provided that in the case of a sale by those who hold large areas the blocks sold must not be more than 500,000 acres. It is provided further that if a holder dies, his estate must be subdivided into blocks of not more than 500,000 acres. This seems to be a perfectly fair provision, for I think 500,000 acres are quite sufficient. Some, I know, think that the area should be still smaller, but I doubt the wisdom of that. I have heard of a man making a fair living on 70,000 acres in the Kimberleys, but that is in a picked locality. Others are making a living on 20,000 acres in the Murchison, but it would probably be found that it is in special circumstances. For the most part the exceedingly small area pastoral lease is not sufficient. It has been tried without success in various parts of Australia. It does not do to overstock any of this unimproved country to such an extent that the feed is destroyed. I am not arguing that every pastoral lease should be of 500,000 acres. In some parts of the country it can well be less. We have a board dealing with the classification of the pastoral lands in the East Kimberley. About 40 million acres are still in the hands of the Crown. That land is reserved and, when the board reports, it may be found that they recommend that even a smaller area than 500,000 acres be adopted. If they do so there is power given to enable me to say that blocks on the best of those areas shall be let in holdings of less than 500,000 acres. However, I think the House should not ask that the area be less than the 500,000 acres mentioned in the Bill. The whole question of pastoral leases will have to be brought up again before long, because, as I say, the classification is now being made, and when that is complete we shall know very much more about the question. The extension of these leases in 1917 was to the advantage of the State and of the pastoralists alike. I think those pastoralists should live up to the spirit as well as to the letter of the Act. It was never intended that companies should be formed to evade the provisions of the Act.

Mr. Lambert: It was the most outrageous thing that has ever passed this House.

Hon. P. Collier: And it was passed as the result of a conspiracy.

The PREMIER: I do not think so. A tremendous area of land is still in the hands of the Crown. It was never meant that the aggregation of pastoral leases should go on.

Hon. P. Collier: It was intended by the Minister responsible for engineering the Bill through.

The PREMIER: I cannot agree to that. But it was never intended that the vast holdings should continue, or that people should put together large areas in the future. I do not propose that that should go on. Hence the Bill. I want the House to realise that it

has some obligations to those who pioneered the North. What I want to do is gradually to bring these holdings into areas of reasonable size. I believe that in time these areas will be so reduced, because it is found on the Gascoyne, in the Pilbara and in other districts that smaller areas are proving very useful. I hope the House will agree to the Bill. I know that exception can be taken to a provision of this sort, but I want members to realise that if the clause is passed every man, no matter whether he be a shareholder in a company or whether he be a single selector, will exhaust his right to hold pastoral land when he by any means reaches an area of 500,000 acres. There are some very rough areas in the North-West, but for ordinary purposes 500,000 acres is quite sufficient. We are having the whole of the areas classified, after which hon. members will have an opportunity for dealing with the question in its entirety. I have no desire to interfere with any man's security. We require to be fair to all. Particularly do I recognise our obligations to those men who pioneered the North-West. The Bill refers to land acquired from this time forward, either by selection from the Crown or by transfer from another person already holding a lease. It refers only to land to be acquired.

Mr. Lambert: It is only giving the big monopolists a further monopoly.

The PREMIER: No. The man who has 500,000 acres cannot by any means acquire any further land. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [8.43]: I desire to protest against the House being asked to pass a Bill of this importance in the closing hours of the session. I have had no opportunity to do more than glance through the Bill. One can see that it may have very far-reaching effects. I have not formed an opinion as to its effects. The nature of the Bill is one about which there is naturally a great deal of controversy. I confess I am quite unable to understand the reason why a limit should be put to the acreage which may be held by an individual. I can understand the objection to any person being allowed to hold land without using it, and I can understand a person who holds pastoral land or land leased from the Crown being obliged to fulfil the conditions attached thereto. But it appears to me obvious that it is vastly better for the State if more land is held than if less land is held and used. We want to encourage people to take up as much land as possible, so long as they use it.

Mr. Lambert: Do you think they could effectually use a million acres?

Mr. PILKINGTON: If not, let it be taken away from them. The important thing is that the land held should be used under the conditions which compel such land to be used. If a man has 20,000 acres and only uses 10,000 acres, the other half should be forfeited. Let him be made to use the land

he has got. That is the matter of primary importance. If a man, or a company, or an association, or partnership of persons, are prepared to take up a huge area of land and use it and turn it to account, it seems to me the height of madness to say they must not do it. The Bill proceeds somewhat on the lines of the other Bill, the last amending Bill dealing with the subject, some of the defects of which were hardly foreseen. In Subclause 4 of Clause 5 the Bill contains a provision which illustrates the point I am making. I understand that Subclause 4 provides that two persons may each individually hold 500,000 acres, and each may individually work that 500,000 acres as a station. I understand further that the clause means that if these two persons whose holdings adjoin each other were to find that they could in association with each other work to greater advantage, they would not be allowed to do so.

Mr. Lambert: That would only be possible if there were a certain number of aborigines available.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I do not say what the conditions would be, but that is the effect of the clause. Is it sane that we should make a law to say that this cannot be done? It is a restriction on this great primary industry, and a most unwise restriction to impose upon it. The Act at present in force has a most unfair effect, although the Premier has said that it is satisfactory. If a person owning a 700,000 acre station were to die, and his executors wanted to sell the property, they would not be able to do so except in two lots. That might in certain instances be disastrous and greatly reduce the value of the property. A station like that would be worked as one station with one homestead, and if it had to be cut up it might greatly reduce its value. If 200,000 acres were taken away from it, it might be of very little use by itself, and yet be of considerable value to the station to which it has been attached as part of the whole concern. That is the result which this Bill would have, and it would not be a satisfactory result. Take the case of the pastoralist who wished to turn his business into a company. It is admittedly a good thing to do this, but he could not do it under this Bill and he could not sell his property in that way.

Hon. P. Collier: He may not hold more than 500,000 acres in a company.

Mr. PILKINGTON: He could not take the station as it stands and turn it into a company. If he could do so it would limit his liabilities and enable him to divide them properly among the members of his family, and also make it easier when the time came for dividing the property. The Bill is one which may have more far-reaching effects than I am prepared to recognise at present. We ought not to be asked to rush it through in this hurried fashion. It would be more satisfactory if we held it over until the next session of Parliament when we would have an opportunity of discussing it fully.

Sir H. B. LEFROY (Moore) [8.52]: I agree with what has been said by the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington), and I regret that we do not agree more often.

Mr. Pilkington: So do I.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: Hon. members should not be asked to pass this important Bill during the expiring hours of the session. They may say that the pastoral provisions mentioned during the discussion on this Bill were passed through this Chamber during the expiring hours of the session, but I would point out that that particular Bill was in the hands of hon. members for several weeks. This Bill has only come into our possession during the last hour or so. I would not feel justified in supporting it without giving some time to the thoughtful consideration of its provisions. The pastoral industry is the one on which the State was built up in the first instance, and we should be careful how we deal with anything affecting it. It is difficult in a few moments to grasp how this Bill will affect the present or the future position. The provisions contained in the early clauses of the Bill are wise and should work for good in the administration of the Lands Department, and for the benefit of those concerned in working our agricultural lands under special occupation license. The provisions dealing with pastoral leases, however, we are not justified in passing in this manner.

The Attorney General: Is not Clause 5 a Committee matter?

Sir H. B. LEFROY: The whole Bill is a Committee matter; it requires more consideration than we can give to it in those few hours, more particularly in view of the fact that we passed the last Bill in this House dealing with pastoral leases—

Mr. Lambert: The late Mr. Wilson, with his brutal majority, got it through in the closing hours of the session.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: No, it was done after consultation between representatives of both sides of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: There was sharp practice in getting it through.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: In the expiring hours of the session members of both sides consulted in the matter, and came to an understanding which was acceptable to both sides.

Hon. P. Collier: The Bill was passed on the last night of the session just as in the case of this Bill.

Mr. Pilkington: Do not make the same mistake again.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: We should not make the same mistake again. The difference between that Bill and this is that the former had been in the hands of hon. members for several weeks, whilst this has only just been placed before us. A compromise was arrived at on that occasion during the last hours of the session, but in this case we have not had time to consider the Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.57]: I am surprised that the member for Moore (Sir H. B. Lefroy) has raised an objection to the indecent haste with which this legislation is being forced through.

The Attorney General: It is not being forced through.

Mr. LAMBERT: The amendment to the Land Act affecting pastoral leases, dealt with at a time when the hon. member was Minister for Lands, was one of the most disgraceful pieces of legislation ever passed by this House.

Sir H. B. Lefroy: No.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is wrong to say that any compromise was arrived at. One or two members did take upon themselves—

Sir H. B. Lefroy: It was more than a compromise. The provisions of the Bill were agreed to after consultation.

Mr. LAMBERT: The leader of the Opposition knew nothing of any compromise being arrived at, and authorised no one to enter into negotiations with the Government in connection with the limitation.

Sir H. B. LEFROY: Mr. W. D. Johnson and Mr. Underwood were representatives in the consultation.

Mr. LAMBERT: I remember a significant remark made by the late Mr. Frank Wilson at the time he held the position of Premier. The member for Pilbara moved that the debate be adjourned, and Mr. Wilson said he could not agree to the adjournment until the following Thursday as he wanted to finish the business that week. That was virtually flinging away the whole of the pastoral leases of the country for another 21 years. The late Mr. Wilson said to me, "If I keep you here until Christmas, I will pass this legislation." Thus the people of this country were virtually robbed of the whole of the pastoral areas for a period of 21 years. And to-day we have the spectacle of the member for Moore (Sir H. B. Lefroy), who was Minister for Lands when that legislation was enacted which we are now trying to remedy—although we shall never be able to remedy—calling attention to the danger of hasty legislation! I wish the hon. gentleman had listened to similar protests a year or two ago. I do not know whether any good can result from this proposed legislation limiting the acreage of pastoral leaseholds. The thing needs to be tackled; but the whole of the Land Act and the regulations under it require thorough revision. It is an absolute scandal that men can hold up two or three million acres of land while utilising only one-tenth of the area. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) argues that two men with 500,000 acres each may want to work the two properties conjointly; but what necessity can there be for joint working of such areas? I pay full tribute to the fine, hardy pioneer who opened up the pastoral areas, and who was responsible very largely for the development of this State, which is so difficult to develop; but we must realise that

conditions have changed. We must recognise that men cannot be permitted any longer to retard the progress of Western Australia by holding up millions of acres of land. The progress of the State is being retarded by the enormous aggregations of pastoral country in the North-West, which only heavily capitalised companies can work. If this Bill can prevent only the creation of one more aggregation, I hope it will pass. The time has gone by, I fear, when legislation of this nature could do very much good. In view of the political faith held by the member for Perth regarding land matters, I wonder that he fails to realise the value of certain provisions of this Bill. On the death of any person the State should have the right to purchase, at a valuation, any land owned by him. That is necessary for the general good of the country. As regards the pastoral areas, the Government should realise their obligations to the 40,000 or 50,000 men who left their civil avocations in this State to go to the Front. Their care should be the first consideration of any Government in power. I hope the passage of this Bill will not be blocked.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.5]: This is a most important measure, and I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Council's Message.

Message from the Legislative Council notifying that it insisted on its amendment No. 8, and disagreed to the Assembly's modification of the Council's amendment No. 10, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

No. 8, Clause 40, paragraph (n), before the word "regulate" insert the words "prohibit or":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the Bill was introduced into this Chamber, the paragraph referring to processions contained the words "prohibit or," which the Council now desires to insert. Objection was taken here to those words, and a majority of members decided to exercise them. The matter is one on which the Committee may well form its own conclusion. However, the Governor in Council dealing with the matter is a very different thing from local bodies dealing with it. I think what hon. members had in their minds when deleting the words was the action of the Perth Municipal Council in regard to certain processions. Hon. members may rest assured that by the Governor-in-Council every care will be taken to avoid interference with the rights of the people in the matter of processions. Moreover, the Minister making regulations would know per-

fectly well that he could be called to account in this Chamber. To my mind the Council's amendment is justified, and I move—

That the amendment be no longer disagreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 10.—Clause 40, add a new paragraph, to stand as (xiv.), as follows:—Regulate the use and driving of camels, and for that purpose may (a) limit the number of camels to be driven by one driver; (b) require the annual registration of camels and the payment of an annual registration fee for pack camels:

Modification disagreed to: Substitute for sub-paragraph (b) of the proposed paragraph—(b) require the annual registration of all camels and the payment of an annual registration fee of five shillings per head for pack camels used for the carriage of goods: Provided that camels used for prospecting shall be exempt.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: After considerable debate in this Chamber the Committee agreed to an amendment requiring the registration of all camels and an annual license fee of 5s. on pack camels used for the carriage of goods, with exemption for prospectors' camels. The Council consider the fee of 5s. insufficient. The fees previously proposed were £1 per annum for bull camels three years of age, and as regards pack camels 15s. for bull camels under three years and 10s. for cows and geldings. This applied south of the 27th parallel. For the North-West the fees were 7s. 6d. on bull camels over three years of age and 5s. for bull camels under that age. In view of the arguments used by goldfields members, it was considered by this Chamber that a fee of 5s. would be fair. With regard to the North-West we are keeping the same fee, so I hardly think we can be expected to increase the fee from 5s. per head. If I did so, I should feel I was breaking faith with the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie).

Hon. P. Collier: You will lose the Bill unless you accept the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What does the hon. member suggest?

Hon. P. Collier: Accept the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We might have a conference.

The CHAIRMAN: It is the duty of the Minister in charge of the Bill to disagree with the amendment of the Legislative Council if he wishes at a later stage to ask for a conference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Cannot the Minister attain his object by regulation. The Minister under regulation will be able to make the fee whatever he likes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move—

That the amendment be no longer disagreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolution reported; the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DURATION.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. P. Draper—West Perth) [9.25] in moving the second reading said: It is hardly necessary to make any observations on this Bill, because the subject matter has been discussed on a previous occasion. Since 1905, parliamentary work has been seriously hampered by reason of the elections taking place at an inconvenient time, with the result that, instead of being able to do three full sessions work in each Parliament, we have really had only two full sessions out of three. If the amendment be adopted, Parliament will automatically be dissolved by effluxion of time on the dates mentioned in the Bill. It might be that the three years will be slightly increased or slightly reduced but, whenever Parliament does expire by effluxion of time, it will always be at a period so that the elections can take place about the month of March. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.27]: This small Bill contains a clause which was embodied in the Constitution Act Amendment Bill which passed this Chamber recently. The attitude I adopted towards this particular clause was that I did not favour it, but there was an absolute majority in favour of it and, that being so, it would be futile to attempt to interfere with the decision already recorded. In the circumstances, I do not propose to offer any further objection to the passage of the Bill.

Question put.

Mr. SPEAKER: I declare the question passed; there are no voices against it.

Question thus passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—WYALCATCHEM—MT. MARSHALL RAILWAY EXTENSION.

On motion by Minister for Works, Bill introduced and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [9.32] in moving the second reading said: Members have the Bill and the plan of a proposed extension of the Wyalcatchem-Mt. Marshall

railway before them. They will see from the plan that this extension of the line which has already been built is to serve an area of land which is considered to be very fertile. This extension has been rendered necessary because of the progress of settlement beyond the end of the present terminus. I do not know that it requires very much explanation, because by looking at the map, members will see from the number of holdings taken up that there is a real need for additional railway communication. People who go out to these far away blocks and set to work reclaiming the wilderness and breaking up the land and producing grain, require facilities to bring their produce to market. It is essential that means should be provided for that purpose to enable them to forward their produce at the least possible cost. This proposed extension comes at a most opportune time. Where the further extension will come to has not been decided and cannot be decided until the survey is made. The original sketch plan shows that it will ultimately junction with the main line at a point further along or perhaps at Merredin. Further investigation, however, might possibly lead to a decision that it would be better to junction nearer to Southern Cross, perhaps at Burracoppin. That, however, cannot be decided until the land is surveyed. Members will see that the Bill provides for authority to construct the line and contains the usual power of deviation for five miles on either side of the line shown on the plan. This will enable surveyors to deviate wherever they find the best grades or where a slight alteration in the route will enable the line to serve more people. The Bill also contains the necessary clauses to enable a resumption of land to be carried out where necessary. I commend the Bill to the House, for it is calculated to carry out our usual practice of helping those who help themselves. In the present democratic atmosphere in this House, no one will object to this assistance to those who have gone out into the back-blocks. No one who has had anything to do with the carriage of produce over long distances can object to assistance to settlers such as that proposed in this Bill. There is no more heart-breaking task ahead of a farmer than this burden of carriage over long distances. It would be foolish indeed to embark upon a plan of opening up the country, establishing people on the land and assisting them with money, if in the end we were simply to take from them a big portion of their reward by denying them facilities to get their produce to market cheaply. It would be a distinct loss to the country itself if such a practice were to continue. The time that farmers would be called upon to spend in carting their produce for a day or a day and a half to the railway line would be better spent in developing their holdings if provision could be made for the cartage to be done in half a day. Anything we can do to assist these men we should do, for that is a duty imposed upon us. I move—

That the Bill be read a second time.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [9.37]: There is a thought that passes through my mind, if in authorising the construction of a new railway we may be jeopardising the work that has been authorised in another part of the State.

The Premier: No, that is not so. I have given you my word that it will not do so.

Hon. T. WALKER: That word is invaluable. I trust the word of the Premier implicitly in a matter of this kind. I am not a dog in the manger and I rejoice to see that this line will be gone on with. I know the country and know the value of it. I know the value it will be to the wheat belt in general. It is a big country that is languishing now through need of access to markets and by the ultimate construction of the line, the whole country will be served. On the understanding that the construction of this line will not break the pledge of Parliament regarding another line, I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [9.38]: The hon. member need have no fear. This House has pledged itself to build the line the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) refers to and this extension will not interfere with that. This particular extension will open up a very large area of first class country which has been thoroughly tested both for feed and growth of crops. Rainfall records show that it is adequate. The area which will be served is required by the soldiers and is not only good for wheat growing but for stock. We must build the line as soon as possible, but naturally cannot build it at the present time owing to the high cost of materials. Other lines which are authorised will be built as soon as materials are cheaper. At the present time we have this vast area of land unoccupied and untouched. The House will be perfectly justified in passing this Bill. There is no speculation about this matter. The land is good and the railway is wanted. Many soldiers want to go on the land and I am asking the House to agree to this because I desire to let these men know that the House has agreed to the line going there in due course.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.40]: This district I think was included in the itinerary of the Parliamentary party which toured the eastern wheat belt a month or two ago. It is not clear from the plans but I should like to know from the Premier if the point where it is proposed to terminate this extension reaches to or beyond the reserve where we met the deputation, at Dandanning I think it was.

The Premier: Far beyond that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At that deputation we were told of a considerable area of first class land that lay some five miles further back. I think it was at Lake Brown. I am glad to have an opportunity of fulfilling the promise I made on that occasion to grant this

railway or at least to assist the Premier in his work in giving those people railway communication.

The Premier: You took a big share of the promise anyhow.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is undoubtedly a railway that is required, because at the present time the settlers there are right in the wilderness, as it were. I knew two or three of the members of the deputation who waited on us, and I was aware that two of them had given up fairly substantial businesses in order to take up land. They informed me that many settlers had left the place. They could not carry on. The Premier was assured that all would have to leave next year unless this railway was constructed. I understand from the Minister it is not yet decided where the line shall join up. I presume it will join up with the eastern railway, and of course that will complete the loop. It will also shorten the distance considerably to the seaboard.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.48]: I support the second reading of the Bill. I happened to be present on the occasion of the deputation and I remember what transpired. There is nothing like being emphatic when making a demand. The leader of the Opposition did not tell us all that took place at that deputation. They assured the leader of the Opposition that if the Government did not introduce this Bill during the present session they would vote for him and his party solidly next time. That threat apparently has had some effect.

The Premier: It was enough to move anyone.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, and the Premier has come forward with the Bill so as to prevent the leader of the Opposition from getting those promised votes. However, the Opposition do not look for votes on account of railway construction. The policy followed on this side of the House is to build railways and works wherever they are most needed.

The Premier: At Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, but I am very much afraid that the Government will wake up when a serious accident takes place at Fremantle. Anyhow, the Premier can go back to these electors and claim their support because he has kept his promise to them.

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [9.51]: I appreciate the action of the Government in introducing this Bill. It will give heart to those people who have been settled out in that area for such a long time. The Labour Government, and particularly the member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Angwin) were responsible for the building of the Mt. Marshall line. I believe at one time there was a doubt as to the justification for the extension. However, I am glad

hon. members realise that it was warranted, and the people are very grateful for the support which they have been given. There is a good deal of rich country lying to the north of the Lake Brown area. I saw only to-day a fine sheaf of wheat which came from between that area and Southern Cross. Even in a southeasterly direction there is any amount of good country. I am sure the men who have struggled out there for so long will appreciate the action of the Government in submitting this Bill.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.53]: I am glad the Government have brought in the Bill for the construction of this line, which will serve a large number of good settlers and a splendid wheat growing area.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Another thing, too; it will bring grist to the mill.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It is a sign of returning prosperity when the Government are again introducing measures for the construction of new railways in Western Australia, and I hope this will be the forerunner of many more. At the same time when we have passed measures for the construction of new railways I feel we are entitled to some information from the Government in regard to the order of precedence for their construction. We should know when the several railways which have already been authorised are likely to be built.

The Premier: You will have to give notice of that question.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am pleased that the construction of this railway has been authorised, and I hope it is the intention of the Government to give priority in connection with future constructions to authorised lines such as the Narrogin-Dwarda, which has been promised for over five years. The settlers who will be served by that railway are just as deserving as those in the district under review. A permanent survey was made of the Narrogin-Dwarda railway and it should now be built, and whilst congratulating the Government on the introduction of the measure before the House, I trust that when the question of priority is being considered, the fact that the settlers along the Narrogin-Dwarda route were promised a railway line by the Scaddan Government over five years ago, and on the construction of which line they are absolutely dependent for their prosperity, will not be forgotten.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.54]: I do not desire to sound a jarring note on this Bill, but I hope this is not the commencement of another orgy in railway building in this State. When we realise the fact that we have a mile of railway to every 70 people in Western Australia we should hesitate before constructing further lines unless we get an abso-

lute assurance that they are going to pay. Of course, in connection with this particular line, I recognise it is the fulfilment of a promise, and therefore I am prepared to support its construction. But I can easily see that we shall be landed in a serious difficulty if we resume the orgy of railway construction which we indulged in some years ago. We should put into use the lands that are uncultivated along the existing lines.

Hon. T. Walker: This particular line was promised.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Possibly, but I have no desire to echo the sentiments expressed by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) when he stated he hoped that this would be the forerunner of many others in the near future. We should not construct any further railways until we have an increase in our population. The duty of the Government is to impose a betterment tax, which will have the effect of compelling the lands along existing railway routes to be brought into use.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [9.57]: I support the second reading of the Bill, and I am glad that the Minister has kept his promise to the settlers in this district. The area there is capable of settling a large number of soldiers who, I am convinced, can make good in a short period. The soil is of good quality and the whole of that country is capable of carrying many settlers. The only thing I regret is that the Government have not the necessary material which will enable them to link up the line with the eastern goldfields railway, so as to complete the loop.

The Premier: We have not yet the information as to where it should be linked up.

Mr. HARRISON: There is a good area of really good country eastward of this particular place, and it is second to none in the State. That country can carry a large number of men who can make good, but they must have railway facilities. As the Minister stated, these men cannot possibly make good if they have to cart their produce 20 or 30 miles. We must give them railway facilities, because at the present time, the very period when they are required to give attention to their land, they are compelled to devote it to carting their produce. That naturally interferes with the success of their operations.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [9.59]: Apparently in this case the land is already settled and the railway has been promised to the people who are there, consequently there is justification for the construction of the line. I hope, however, that this will not be the forerunner of a policy of railway construction in new country. Rather than encourage railway construction to outlying districts we should spend £1 in developing country which is already served by railways than £10 in building new lines.

The Premier: We can do both.

Mr. MONEY: In this particular case I understand that the construction of the line means the fulfilment of a long-standing pro-

mise, but we must not go beyond this. We have too much railway mileage in proportion to the development that has taken place and in proportion to our population. It will be better for the people owning land adjoining existing railways to have that land developed, and if they will not develop it voluntarily, we should compel them to do so or make them part with it.

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.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PARLIAMENTARY ALLOWANCES ACT AMENDMENT.

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending the Bill.

All Stages.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [10.5] in moving the second reading said: There is no occasion to discuss this question at any length to-night, because it was thoroughly discussed on the motion of the member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) last night. That discussion showed clearly that, while a number of members had pledged themselves to vote against the increase, they, with two exceptions, believed the allowance ought to be increased. The others who spoke were in favour of the increase, but were pledged to vote against it. That was a perfectly honourable course to take. If the division had shown only a small majority in favour, or if we had not known that there is a general desire that the increase should be made, the Bill would not have been here to-night. I will not repeat my words of yesterday, except to say I am convinced that hon. members do not get anything like £300 a year. It will be said that a man drawing £300 per annum has sufficient to live upon. But that is not the position. Members have convinced me that the £300 is subjected to great deductions, which make it worth not more than £3 per week. Members who have to come to the city each week, and from whose salary have to be deducted other costs to which they are put in carrying out their duties, have very little left to live upon. I am convinced that it was always the intention that the payment should enable the poorest man in the community, if selected by a constituency, to come here and take his place amongst us, living at least as comfortably as an ordinary wages man. A member of Parliament has a duty beyond that which he discharges when sitting here. He ought to know the

country, ought to have a knowledge of it gained by personal inspection. In future I hope that this will obtain. A few weeks ago I induced a parliamentary party to go and see the eastern wheat belt for themselves. For years that district was misunderstood. That visit enabled members to understand the value of the country, and as a result, when to-night we asked for authorisation to build a railway, the proposal was accepted without waste of time, because hon. members knew what they were doing. They had been to the district and examined the country for themselves.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Not five members know anything about the North-West.

The PREMIER: And very few know anything about the South-West. If I have my way, they shall know more about it before very long. All our districts ought to be developed, but they can only be developed by the authority of the House, without which I can do nothing. It will be realised that we are adding £100 a year to the salaries of members other than Ministers, who will not participate in the increase, because they are already paid much more than are private members. Members will still have not more than £5 per week on which to maintain their homes and allow them to attend to their duties. We are on the verge of big things in this State. With the aid of Parliament we are going to do things. We know there is opportunity in this country, and that to realise that opportunity we must have the support and active co-operation of hon. members. Because of increased responsibilities and increased expenditure which members will be put to, I have no hesitation in asking the House to agree to this proposed increase in the Parliamentary allowance. The responsibilities of members have been multiplied since payment of members was first granted. It will be said outside that members of Parliament ought not to vote themselves an increase of salary. That was said last night, but the gentleman who made the remark gets three times as much as the average member of Parliament and, if he had any extra work to do as members have, he would want extra payment.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We could go to the Arbitration Court and get this increase.

The PREMIER: I want to see every man in the community paid in accordance with the value of his services.

Hon. T. Walker: Even the city council's servants.

The PREMIER: I say nothing upon that point, because I do not know anything about that dispute. If a man gives good service he should be adequately paid. The country will never be injured by the wages it pays, but it can be seriously injured by unrest and disturbance. What I desire is that all persons should be well paid and should give honest work for the payment. It is never a low-wage country that prospers.

Hon. T. Walker: Never.

The PREMIER: If the payment be good and the effort made in response be equally good, then the country can prosper. We have heard something about the future of this State. I have no doubts about it. We are on the verge of very much bigger and better things than we ever knew before. There are indications of that on every hand. No previous Parliament had the responsibilities thrust on it which have been thrust on this Parliament, and no other 300,000 people on this earth have anything like the opportunities which we have in this State. If all this is to be realised, then there is plenty of work in front of this Chamber. People outside will misunderstand this and I know just what they will say; but I know what my duty is, and I know that I am doing my duty to the country in asking the House to pass this measure. If not, I should not be moving the second reading to-night. My duty to members and to the country compels me to submit this measure to the House. This increased allowance will apply to the 44 members of the House other than Ministers, with the exception of yourself, Sir, and the Chairman of Committees, who come under a special Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [10.16]: Last night I made an explanation in this Chamber, but the Press evidently did not hear it. I stated that I was supporting this increase of allowance to members because I believed it was necessary. I also stated that, although I was supporting it against the constitution of the party to which I belong, when I signed a request for the increase I did so overlooking the fact that once I had signed it I could not go back on my word. That is the reason, therefore, why I am supporting this proposal. I was in my electorate on a month's trip recently. It cost me £25 to travel through a heavy corner of that electorate, and this works out at 10s. a week, which has to be deducted from my Parliamentary allowance. Various trips one takes into the country absorb from £2 to £4 each time, and one's electioneering expenses run into about £100. By the time contributions to charities and for patriotic purposes, to sporting clubs and so on are reckoned up, there is very little left beyond £4 a week out of one's Parliamentary allowance. Although I am acting contrary to the rest of the Country party in this Chamber, I hold that there is a big justification for my doing so, apart from the question of my being unable to depart from my pledged word. The sooner people outside realise that members of Parliament who do their work honestly and truly are worthy of a bigger salary than is given at present, the better it will be for all concerned. I hope that a garbled report of these remarks will not appear in the Press in the morning. I would point out that a far bigger salary is earned by a slaughterman in the North-West than is at present earned by a member of Parliament, and I have no hesitation in asking hon. members to join with me in supporting this Bill.

Mr. S. STUBBS (Wagin) [10.20]: I support the second reading of this Bill. Some 40 years ago in my younger days I was brought up in one of the country districts in Victoria. In those days members of Parliament were not paid, but did their work gratuitously. I am sorry to say the result was that many laws found their way on to the statute-book that were of no benefit to Victoria. Scores of the most magnificent properties were dummed by men in the pay of those members of Parliament. I hope the day is far distant when such a position will be created in this State. I am not speaking personally in this matter, because holding the position as Chairman of Committees, and drawing £500 a year from that source, I am not being brought within the scope of this measure. There is no member of my family who has benefited to any great extent from my earnings as a member of Parliament. We might well compare the value of a pound in 1911 with its present value. When the Act of Parliament was passed to increase the Parliamentary allowances from £200 to £300, it was thought that there was ample justification for this. If that could be justified in those days, it is far more justifiable to-day. A man with a family could live on £4 a week then far more easily than he can on £500 a year to-day, owing to the increased cost of living. I, too, am supporting this against the plank of the platform of the Country party. When that plank was embodied in the Constitution I do not think its most ardent supporter had any conception of what it would mean in 1919, or else, if he had been fair to members of Parliament, he would not have voted for such an imposition as that which limited members of Parliament to £4 a week. In Queensland members of Parliament are paid £500. If that salary is justifiable in that State, it is equally justifiable here.

Hon. T. Walker: It is the same in New South Wales.

Mr. STUBBS: I understand so. A motion was placed before the Victorian Parliament for an increase in the salaries some time ago, but I do not know if it was carried. Every hon. member must agree that the present salary of members is inadequate. By the time they have responded to charitable appeals, contributed to agricultural societies and clubs of all kinds, there is not much left at the end of the week upon which to live. I feel confident that when the public realise the little upon which members of Parliament have to live, and how small an amount they have left at the end of each month, they will raise no objection to this increase. They will not think that we are boodlers either. I hope the Bill will pass by a large majority. It is only bare justice to hon. members, especially to those who live in the country and have to keep up a home there as well as maintain themselves while they are in Perth. The claims made upon their purse are so great that they undoubtedly deserve an increase in their allowance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—WICKEPIN RACECOURSE.

All Stages.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Norham) [10.29] in moving the second reading said: A block of land some seven miles from Wickepin was set apart for a racecourse before Wickepin became a town. Every agricultural town in the State has its racecourse and Wickepin is no exception to the rule. I am asking the House to agree to the sale of that racecourse, which contains about 36 acres. I understand that the proceeds of the sale will be devoted to the purpose of acquiring another block of land close to the township. The block that it is proposed to purchase adjoins the town and contains 142 acres. I understand that £3 per acre will be paid for this land, whereas £1 is the value of the site of the present racecourse. As the racecourse is useless in its present position, and as the people of Wickepin are prepared to find the difference between the sale price of the existing course and the purchase price of the more suitable site, and as the land purchased will be vested in trustees just as the present course is, I think the House need have no hesitation in carrying the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [10.32]: I thank the Government for bringing in this Bill. The Premier has set out the position quite accurately. The club have already purchased 142 acres of land which, happily, adjoins the Wickepin townsite, and is separated only by a road from the recreation ground. The recreation ground contains only 10 acres, and I am sure every member of the House will realise the benefit it will be to all the people of the district to have 142 acres of racecourse practically added to the recreation ground. It is the desire of the people to improve the 142 acres so that, on a smaller scale, what obtains on the goldfields may obtain at Wickepin—that the racecourse shall be used as a park for picnics and other outings. As the Wickepin people ran all their race meetings during the war for patriotic purposes, I especially commend this measure to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. G. Taylor in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Trustees empowered to sell Wickepin lot 382:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Have any buildings been erected adjoining the site of the existing racecourse? We should not pass a Bill of this description if it is going to injure people who have put up buildings seven miles out of town.

The PREMIER: I am sure there are no picture theatres and no hotels near the site of the present racecourse. It is in the bush.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—PUBLIC EDUCATION ACTS AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Seaddan—Albany) [10.39] in moving the second reading said: This measure reaches us from the Legislative Council, where it was introduced by the Minister for Education. Although it is a small measure, it is somewhat important. There are three principles involved. The first is the provision of compulsory education for blind, deaf, and mute children. A similar measure to this passed the Legislative Council the session before last, but reached the lower House too late to be dealt with. Hon. members who know anything of the institution in which at present a number of these children are obtaining education in reading and music to brighten their lives, will agree as to the desirableness of other blind, deaf, and mute children obtaining similar opportunities. At present the education of such children is not compulsory. Having provided for their compulsory education, the State will have the duty of finding ways and means whereby the measure may be complied with. It is not always possible for the parents of such a child to have it taught at an institution at their cost. The Bill provides that where the parents can provide for the child's maintenance at the institution, they must do so. The matter may be arranged by agreement between the Minister and the parents, or, failing such agreement, by decision of a court, which may be moved by the Minister or any person acting as his agent. A number of clauses deal with the procedure to be adopted, firstly with the object of protect-

ing the interests of the State, and secondly with the object of providing that the parents shall not be called upon to pay for maintenance if unable to do so. In the latter case the State must carry out its duty by providing maintenance. The next provision of importance deals with the question of children attending schools in the more remote parts of the State. That is a difficult problem which has been discussed during every session since I have been a member of this Assembly. I suppose it will be discussed for many years to come. At present the regulations of the Education Department provide for the appointment of a teacher wherever a certain number of children can be gathered together. However, that regulation does not cover all the children scattered over this huge State; and the department now propose what may be termed an innovation, but it is an innovation well worthy of a trial. The Bill provides that where a child is not less than six or more than nine years of age, if there is a Government or other efficient school within six miles of such child's residence, and satisfactory means of conveyance to the school are provided by the Minister so that the distance to be travelled by the child from its home to such conveyance is not more than a mile, the child must attend the school.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is too much to ask of a child six years old.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A mile is no distance. A child will run a mile for sport, and not know that it has covered the ground. Many children in this State are covering more than a mile every day in going to school. In fact, the compulsory radius is two miles. However, the maximum distance which a child will be called upon to walk to the efficient conveyance to be provided by the department is, under this Bill, one mile. That applies to children between six and nine years of age.

Hon. T. Walker: But will the State really provide the conveyance?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: If the conveyance is not provided, it will not be compulsory for the child to attend school?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. If there is a school within six miles of a child's home and the Minister provides satisfactory means of conveyance so that the child has not to walk more than one mile, the child, if between the age of six and nine, come under the compulsory clause. In the case of a child between the age of nine and fourteen, the distance to the school is made eight miles and the child has not to walk more than two miles to a conveyance. This will bring a number of children to our schools and will enable us to more efficiently and economically work our country schools. It is not entirely satisfactory to have schools of six or eight children, some just beginning and some about to leave, when a larger school could be provided and divided into two or three classes. We hope not only to introduce economy but to provide more efficient teaching

in our country schools. We believe it can be done in some cases with considerable saving to the department.

Mr. Griffiths: That is to get the consolidated school idea.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. We have a number of schools not a great distance apart with a teacher at each dealing with six or eight children. If several of these schools can be amalgamated under this method, we shall be able to establish classes and get more efficient teaching.

Hon. P. Collier: And higher grades.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Probably so. The other provision deals with the employment of school children. The Act of 1899 prohibits the employment of children during school hours under a penalty of 40s.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is not the clause foreign to the measure?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, because the existing Act contains the same principle. The clause provides—

No person shall employ or engage any child, or cause, procure, suffer, or allow any child to be employed or engaged in work of any kind for the purpose of earning profit or reward for the child or any other person—(i) if the child is under twelve years of age; or (ii) in the case of any other child who is below the maximum age of compulsory school attendance—(a) before the close of school hours on any school day; or (b) before six o'clock in the morning of any other day; or (c) after eight o'clock in the evening of any day. Thus a child cannot be employed from the time it leaves its bed until after school. It is a disadvantage for a child to be engaged in what to the child would be laborious work, and then to have to go to school exhausted. This is bad from the point of view of the State and the child, and represents a waste. The child does not get a fair opportunity. This operates more in the country districts than anywhere else. In towns I presume most children merely get up in time to have breakfast and go to school. In the country, however, children of tender years are sometimes called upon to do certain work before they go to school, and we wish to prevent this so that they shall not arrive at school exhausted. Therefore we have provided that a child under twelve cannot be employed on any work until after school hours. Nor can a child do work before six o'clock in the morning on any other day, namely on Saturday or Sunday, when there is no school. This is not a very late hour and cannot be considered a hardship. Again, children cannot be employed after eight o'clock in the evening of any day. It is very desirable that these three points be enacted. The only point I am concerned about is whether there is some conflict with the provisions of the State Children Act passed earlier this session.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I think it is foreign to this Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not agree with that. We are interested in the

child getting a fair opportunity to receive the advantages of the education we provide. It is useless to go to the expense of providing school accommodation and specially trained teachers in remote parts of the State if our efforts are wasted because the children are not in a condition to undertake study, which is really hard work for a child. I think the provision in the State Children Act only relates to children employed for profit and gain, but the Minister has the right in special circumstances to grant an exemption. I was wondering whether we could insert a provision to the effect that nothing in this Act shall conflict with the State Children Act, 1919.

Hon. T. Walker: That would modify it altogether.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Only so far as it applies to the State Children Act.

Hon. T. Walker: You cannot have two Acts dealing with the same subject and in conflict.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is difficult. The only thing I can see is to omit for the time being Subclause (c), which prohibits the employment of school children after eight o'clock in the evening of any day. That is not really a school matter. To work a child before it goes to school is a matter which affects the education system, but the question of engaging a child for profit or gain after 8 p.m., though it has some bearing, has not the same bearing on the question. If we omit that subclause, we shall still guard the child. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Substitution of new section for Section 12 of the Public Education Act, 1899:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The first paragraph will have the effect of preventing a mother who has several small children, and who is engaged in conducting a small business, from keeping her eldest child employed in the shop while she is occupied attending to the younger ones, perhaps preparing them for school. There are in Western Australia many women who are endeavouring to earn a livelihood for themselves and their children by conducting small businesses and they depend on their eldest children for assistance. If the clause is passed a hardship will be inflicted. In any case, such a provision in this Bill is foreign to it. It should be contained in the State Children Act.

Hon. T. WALKER: The point taken by the member for North-East Fremantle is sound in principle. The Attorney General will know the difficulty there is in inter-

preting laws when we have to look up half a dozen Acts of Parliament which deal with practically the same subject. The question under review is dealt with in the State Children Act and I would suggest that the Minister in charge of the Bill withdraw the clause from the Bill and bring it forward as an amendment to the State Children Act at some other stage. The clause brings a child under the supervision and correction of a court. Therefore it should properly be included in the State Children Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am afraid we cannot do what is suggested by the hon. member in the direction of amending the State Children Act, because we have already to-day disposed of the measure dealing with an amendment to that statute.

Hon. T. Walker: It can stand over.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I admit it is one of those matters which, although it has a bearing on the educational system, should be dealt with in an amendment of the State Children Act. Under the circumstances I have no objection to the clause being deleted.

Clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—ANGLO-PERSIAN OIL COY., LTD. (PRIVATE).

Council's Amendment.

Returned from the Council with an amendment which was now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; Hon. W. C. Angwin in charge of the Bill.

Clause 4—Third proviso, after the word "or" in line 2, insert "construction of necessary work and":

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The effect of the amendment is that the specifications and plans of the works shall be submitted to the Minister for his approval, in just the same way as it is provided shall be done in connection with the pipes which are to be laid in the streets. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

House adjourned at 11.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 4th December, 1919.

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

QUESTION—LAND SETTLEMENT, MANJIMUP.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister for Education: 1, To which item or items does the sum of £1,744, furnished as an answer to Question 7 in return relating to land at Manjimup, refer? 2, If this sum does not include the cost of surveying and subdividing the land referred to in above return, will he give the cost in connection with such surveying and subdividing?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, To item No. 6. 2, About £2,230.

QUESTION—PUBLIC SERVANTS AND POLITICS.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it a fact that the attitude or public utterances of members of the Public Service on political or public questions are recorded on their personal files? 2, If so, does this apply to all members of the Public Service?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—MINING, YAMPI SOUND.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (without notice) asked the Minister for Education: Will the