

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The question of securing a suitable site for the Savings Bank has exercised the minds of the Government, but it has not been possible to find a site better than that proposed by the Bill. I am glad to acknowledge that Sir William Lathlain has taken a practical interest in the State Savings Bank. Some time ago he made in this Chamber suggestions that were noted by me, and have been adopted by the management of the bank with gratifying results. On the second reading I had intended to give figures showing briefly the progress of the bank during the last seven years, but could not lay my hands on them. I have the figures now, and with your permission, Mr. Chairman, will read them—

—			No. of Accounts.	No. of transac- tions.	Deposits during year.
1920	...	...	164,053	1,008,216	£ 6,070,618
1927	...	...	225,490	1,418,116	7,095,271
Increase	...	...	61,427	409,900	1,014,655
Average year	Increase per ...	...	8,775	58,557	144,929

During recent months the deposits have been increasing to an extent which may almost be described as disproportionate, the reason being that the management have been conducting an advertising campaign as suggested by Sir William Lathlain last year.

The CHAIRMAN: Strictly speaking, the whole of the discussion on this clause has been out of order. It should have taken place on Clause 2.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 6.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 15th September, 1927.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, leave of absence for a fortnight granted to Mr. Lamond (Pillbara) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 18, dealing with the claims for enrolment or transfer of enrolment, is under discussion.

Mr. SAMPSON: Subclause 2 makes provision for the residence of an elector for one month in a district or subdivision before being entitled to have his name transferred to the roll for the district or subdivision, but there is no reference to residence within the Commonwealth. Is that provided for elsewhere?

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not wish to go over the whole of the ground we have already traversed, but I again protest against the inclusion of Subclause 7, which sets out that the validity of any enrolment shall not be questioned on the ground that the person enrolled has not in fact lived in the district or subdivision for a period of one month. This means that if a man's name appears on the roll rightly or

wrongly, he will be entitled to vote. Even if we know that the name is wrongly enrolled, the right of that individual to vote cannot be questioned. Even a person passing through a district can become enrolled and no exception can be taken to it.

The Premier: It does not mean that a person passing through can be enrolled.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This will provide the opportunity for the enrolment.

The Premier: No, the necessity for one month's residence stands.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then there is no justification for the subclause.

The Premier: It does not provide what you suggest.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It provides the possibility for that abuse.

The Premier: It has nothing to do with the enrolment. It deals with objections to names already enrolled.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is the point.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the subclause will be struck out.

The Premier: You are misstating the position.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am not.

The Premier: Absolutely.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The subclause says that a man can be enrolled although he may not have been resident in a district for a month, and we will not be entitled to take exception. Already attention has been drawn to incidents of this description.

The Minister for Justice: And I have asked you to give particulars.

The Premier: You make that statement over and over again, but you do not supply any evidence.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What evidence do you want?

The Premier: Evidence in support of your contention.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I can give particulars of a case in which a man was enrolled before he reached a district.

The Premier: I do not believe it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Premier has no right to say that.

The Premier: Well, you made the statement.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will submit the name of the man and if the Minister does not like to take notice—

The Premier: Why did you not submit that case to the Electoral Department?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But I did, and the department insisted upon the name remaining on the roll.

The Premier: Then the department was right, I suppose.

The Minister for Justice: Were you satisfied when the Electoral Department gave you a ruling like that?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They retained the name on the roll.

The Minister for Justice: And you were satisfied to let them do as they liked, without consulting the Minister!

The CHAIRMAN: I think it would be better if the hon. member were allowed to make his speech to which the Minister can reply. We will get on better under those conditions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister knows the name of the man I refer to.

The Minister for Justice: I know nothing of the kind.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The man's name was Daddow. His name appears in "Hansard" and I gave the particulars.

The Minister for Justice: You put all sorts of wild things in "Hansard."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Minister talks like that, I will say something he will not like. He is not justified in making such a statement.

The Premier: The hon. member is not justified in making a statement time after time, without producing evidence.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did give the particulars to the department; I could do no more.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, you could. After the department adopted the attitude you suggest, you could have brought the matter under my notice.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I did I brought the matter under the notice of the House. Of course, if the Minister will not do his duty, that is another question.

The Premier: Why did you not write to the Minister if you had a complaint to make. That would have been the proper course to follow.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But we have the Minister here.

The Premier: We are not supposed to take action regarding everything we hear in this House.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think you are.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think we should get on with the clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The name of the man I mentioned is illegally on the rolls. If we give information of that sort in this House, the Minister should take some notice of it and he should reply to the statement. He did not do so but sat tight.

The Minister for Justice: When was that?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: During the debate on the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply. If the Minister desires it, I will move a special motion dealing with the question.

The Minister for Justice: There is no necessity for that sort of thing.

Hon. G. Taylor: We deserve some consideration. These things were talked about all over the place. I do not know whether they were true or untrue.

The Premier: What things were talked about?

Hon. G. Taylor: Roll stuffing.

The Premier: You know that was a lie. Roll stuffing, indeed! Political agents will say anything at election times.

Hon. W. J. George: It is true that a man named Thomas Gould, who was enrolled in West Perth, put in a claim card and was enrolled for the Murray-Wellington electorate, although he was not qualified for enrolment.

The Premier: You squeal because a man was there making roads in your district.

Hon. W. J. George: I am not squealing because he was in the district.

The Premier: This is absurd.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question before the Committee is the adoption of Clause 18.

The Premier: This is purely political propaganda.

Hon. W. J. George: Roll stuffing is not political propaganda, is it?

The Premier: If you say that we stuffed the rolls, you are a liar.

Hon. W. J. George: I did not say that, and you must not talk to me in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. W. J. George: Well, make the Premier behave himself!

The Premier: You talk about stuffing rolls!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am dealing with Subclause 7 and endeavouring to point out the possibilities under it. I do not think many of the people who signed these claim cards know the law.

The Minister for Justice: They have to attach their signature to the claims and take the responsibility.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think they read the particulars on the claim cards at all. They are asked to sign them, and they do so. At election times we see tables in the street and every convenience and help is available to assist people to get on the rolls, even though some of them may get on illegally. This clause means that the names so enrolled will have to remain there, because the validity of such enrolments cannot be questioned. I do not think that is what the Minister wants.

The Minister for Justice: I am not very particular about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Practically the only objection that can be taken to enrolment is that a person has not lived in the district for the requisite period. If there is to be no residential qualification, then let us make that the law. The subclause will nullify the whole effect of the residence qualification. I move an amendment—

That Subclause 7 be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is about time the Leader of the Opposition refrained from making such an insinuation or took some definite action. He has repeated the statement over and over again until he almost believes it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do not make an ass of yourself. I am simply stating a fact.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But the hon. member almost believes it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: On a point of order I object to that statement.

The Premier: That is not a point of order.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the hon. member has any legitimate grievance regarding anything done by the Electoral Department he has a remedy. Last night the hon. member, in speaking on this clause, expressed the opinion that the Minister should not interfere with the department any more than was absolutely necessary. I gave him an assurance that I did not interfere. Now he states that because he made a complaint to the department it is my business to go there and see what action the department have taken. I have said time and again that if people sign false declarations or untrue statements they will be prosecuted. The hon. member cannot cite an instance of my having refused to order a prosecution if the Electoral Department did not take action.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why do you sit on those benches? We make statements and you take no notice of them.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The hon. member knows that notice is not taken of every trivial thing said about the administration of a department.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is it a trivial thing?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The importance of the hon. member's complaint is shown by the fact that the department have taken no notice of it and that he has not referred it to the Minister, but he still insists that it must be true. When the department took no action the hon. member apparently was satisfied to let it go. Presumably it was too trivial a thing with which to bother the Minister. If people infringed the law I would not regard it as a trivial matter and I assure the hon. member I would order prosecution.

The Premier: It would be better to inform the Minister than to keep on harping on this subject every night.

Hon. G. Taylor: Give us the reason for including Subclause 7.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I gave the reason last night. Throughout the discussion of this Bill the Leader of the Opposition has been making innuendoes against the administration of the department.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Quite openly, too.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, but the hon. member has no right, authority, or necessity to do it. Let me tell him this undoubted fact, that Cabinet decided an amalgamation of the rolls was desirable. The department were given instructions to prepare a Bill, as simple and short as possible, to give effect to the policy of the Government. The Government had nothing to do with the drafting of the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you are responsible for it.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We desire to make our legislation as far as possible uniform with the Federal law. This clause was taken from the Federal Act. If it had not been in the Federal Act, it would not have found a place in this Bill. In order to obtain uniformity the provisions of the Federal Act were taken *holus bolus* and put into this measure. Perhaps the hon. member will not believe me and I had better read the subsection in the Federal

Act. I do not appreciate the manner in which the hon. member has dealt with the matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not expect you to, but I expect to be treated with courtesy.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I think you receive more courtesy from me than I do from you.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: When matters are mentioned you do not give them attention.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Leader of the Opposition is a poor judge. The subsection in the Commonwealth Act reads—

The validity of any enrolment shall not in any case be questioned on the ground that the person enrolled has not in fact lived in the subdivision for a period of one month.

I do not attach much importance to the subclause and I did not ask for it to be inserted in the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But you brought it to the House.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, in order to secure as uniform a system as possible so that joint rolls would be successful. If we had different qualifications and different disqualifications and 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. of the people were entitled to be on one roll and not on another, the whole thing would be a farce. Because the Government believe in having joint rolls we have to make the provisions as uniform as possible. The subsection has been in the Federal Act for years and I have not heard of any gross scandal arising from it.

Hon. G. Taylor: The subsection in the Federal Act does not contain the words "district or."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: "District" in our Act is equivalent to "subdivision" in the Federal Act.

Hon. W. J. George: A different thing altogether.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: What difference does it make to the principle?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you mean the subdivision of a district?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The hon. member is only quibbling now.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am not. Stop those insinuations!

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am getting a bit tired of the hon. member. The

subsection has been in the Federal Act for years and, if it permitted of roll stuffing and all sorts of reprehensible things, they would have occurred. Yet we have never had a single complaint.

Hon. W. J. George: We cannot do anything with regard to the Federal roll.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But if Federal members had had cause for complaint, they would soon have repealed the subsection. I discussed this matter with the Commonwealth Electoral Officer this morning, and I understand from him that there has been no suggestion of anything wrong having occurred. The subclause is included only because this measure cannot over-ride the Commonwealth Franchise Act. I am not at all concerned about the subclause. I am prepared to agree to its deletion, but I wish the Committee to understand that there has been no attempt, as has been suggested several times, to interfere with the Electoral Department to secure advantage or give unscrupulous persons the right to become enrolled. The Bill has been introduced in pursuance of the policy of the Government to adopt joint rolls. There has been no tinkering with or altering of principles. I gave the draftsman no instructions to insert this subclause. It has been in the Commonwealth Act for years and has proved successful. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that if some people are sufficiently unscrupulous and irresponsible to sign a claim card certifying they have lived in a certain district for a month, whereas they have just passed through the district, they should be prosecuted, and prosecuted they shall be.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The witness should be prosecuted.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The witness takes the responsibility of witnessing the signature; the man who signs the card takes the responsibility for the accuracy of the statements it contains. If he declares that he has resided in the district for a month and has not done so, he is liable to prosecution. If the hon. member knows that people break the law and he cannot get the Electoral Officer to institute prosecutions, I shall be glad to have the information. Let me repeat that the Government have brought down this measure simply to secure uniformity and without any ulterior motive whatever.

Mr. Angelo: Why have the words "or district?" been inserted?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The hon. member is hopeless.

The Premier: Those words do not affect the principle.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the hon. member, for the sake of uniformity, prefers to have those words struck out and retain the subclause exactly as it appears in the Federal Act, I am prepared to agree, but I do not consider it of sufficient importance to insist upon it. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that the subclause might leave an opening for abuse. Though I have the assurance of the Commonwealth Electoral Officer that it has not been abused, I shall not insist on the retention of the subclause.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is a danger in it and I am entitled to say so. A man can be in a subdivision and still in a district.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Does the hon. member want it left like that?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I want it knocked out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the hon. member is not prepared to pass the clause in this form, I am not going to insist upon the subclause remaining in.

Mr. Marshall: Pull the Bill out and let it go altogether.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I would have no particular objection to the amendment.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I do not know the cause of this heat. I am not attacking Ministers. Certain individuals in the Murray-Wellington district had their claim cards filled in before they had resided there a month, and many of them were also registered in other parts of the State. A man named Thomas Gould, registered as a labourer and living at Coolup, had his claim card filled in, whereas he actually lived in West Perth near the subway. He made his postal vote during the middle of March, on a Sunday, but he did not vote in the Murray-Wellington district. That shows how necessary it is we should strike out the subclause. I did not mention the case before because the election was over and I was successful.

The Premier: Has there ever been an election without some irregularity?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is whether these words shall be struck out or not.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I shall be satisfied if the subclause is deleted.

The Minister for Justice: I will throw out the whole Bill if the Committee desires.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I do not care whether the Minister does that or not.

The Premier: There is an insinuation that we have some motive behind the Bill. We do not want it any more than do members opposite want it.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I think a Bill of this kind is needed. Many people, who have signed one form only, think they are on both the Commonwealth and State rolls. They should know where they are. A Bill of this sort is necessary, but we are entitled to discuss it without heat.

The Premier: And without insinuations that there is a particular object in bringing down the Bill.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I am making no insinuations. When I do I make a direct charge. The Premier misunderstood what was going on, and that is why I did not take him up in another way.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does "district" mean an electorate for this Assembly?

The Minister for Justice: Yes; the Commonwealth authorities call them either divisions or subdivisions.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That makes the subsection all the more objectionable. A person may have his name on a district roll and it need not be questioned. I do not accuse the Minister of having anything more to do with the drafting of the Bill than I had, although he must take the responsibility for it. I expect the draftsman put this in because it is in the Federal Act.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I take it the subclause refers chiefly to absentees, to persons who have been struck off the roll because they have been away for two or three months.

Mr. ANGELO: I should have no objection to the subclause if it followed the Commonwealth Act word for word.

The Minister for Justice: Then move to amend it.

Mr. ANGELO: The insertion of the words "district or" makes all the difference. In Federal politics a man may be enrolled for the Gascoyne subdivision, but may be away in the Ashburton subdivision, but all the time he is in the Kalgoorlie division. It is only fair that the validity of his enrolment should not be questioned. If the Minister will

strike out the words "district or," I shall be satisfied.

The Minister for Justice: The Committee can do what it likes.

Mr. ANGELO: If the Minister is so anxious to copy the Commonwealth Act, why does he not strike out these words?

The Premier: You do not understand the ABC of the Bill.

Mr. ANGELO: If the desire of the Minister is that the Commonwealth Act should have the same effect as this Bill, the words division or subdivision should have appeared. If then an elector went from one subdivision to another subdivision, provided he remained in the same division the validity of his enrolment could not be questioned.

The Premier: Of course not, so far as Federal elections go.

Mr. ANGELO: But under this subclause he is to be allowed to leave the district for a month.

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

Clause 19—Compulsory enrolment:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is Subclause 4 taken from the Federal Act?

The Minister for Justice: No, this is one thing that has been put in.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We had a considerable discussion as to whether certain sections of the people should be allowed to remain on the roll when changing their address. It seems to me that station book-keepers and station hands should not be included in this list. Their postal address would be the station homestead.

The Minister for Lands: Some stations are in two separate electorates.

Hon. Sir James MITCHELL: The homestead itself would be in only one electorate.

The Minister for Lands: But he camps in the other part.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then this clause does not help him. It would be much better if we provided for a married man to remain on the electoral roll for the district in which he has his home, even if he moves away from it temporarily.

The Premier: We made provision for that, and you censured us for giving him the necessary protection.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No. If a man changes from one farm to another, he should register that change of address.

The Minister for Justice: But some of these men are changing all the time. Where would they get on the roll?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The permanent farm hand is in a different position from the farm hand who moves about. We should provide that a man remain on the roll for the district in which his home is situated. In a small electorate it would not matter a jot; but take an electorate like Avon, which is about 100 miles long, or Yilgarn, which covers hundreds of square miles. If a man changes from Ravensthorpe to Southern Cross, he should notify his change of address.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, if he is going to stop at Southern Cross; but if he goes there only for a month or six weeks, he will be struck off the roll in the absence of this provision.

The Premier: A miner working at Ravensthorpe and going to Southern Cross for the harvest could be struck off but for this provision. The member for Gascoyne knows how easily men can be got off the roll.

Mr. Angelo: Not if they remain in the district.

The Premier: We know how you got them off the roll.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Farm hands, station bookkeepers, and station hands are not on the move all the time.

The Premier: Not all of them, of course; but some are.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is no need to have the boundary rider included here, seeing that he is permanent, riding the boundaries of certain paddocks or areas.

The Minister for Justice: He might be well-sinking on another station two or three months later.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We should secure all the information we can for the rolls. Farm hands can easily give addresses. They do not change often, but are highly permanent workers.

The Minister for Justice: What about harvest hands or bag-sewers?

Hon. G. Taylor: They are not described as farm hands.

The Premier: What could they be called other than farm hands?

Opposition Members: Labourers.

The Premier: Is a man working on a farm, harvesting, not a farm hand?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

The Premier: The time the man is on a job does not determine the definition. The definition is determined by the nature of the job.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understand a farm hand to be one who follows continuously the work on a farm. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 4 the words "farm hand," in lines 3 and 4, be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The proposed disability should not be imposed on people who work in the agricultural industry. These are the men who do the intermittent work of the industry. A man permanently employed on a farm is in a different category altogether. The agricultural industry is specially marked by intermittent employment. A casual farm employee is employed to plough, for instance.

Hon. G. Taylor: Such men are not called farm hands.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: What would the hon. member call them?

Hon. G. Taylor: Labourers.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: A man ploughs 200 or 300 acres on one farm, and this occupies him for two or three months. He passes on, and at his next farm he does 200 or 300 acres following. When he finishes there, he may do a little clearing somewhere else. When Christmas comes he takes a harvesting job. That is the lot of many agricultural workers in this State—of many farm hands, as they are called.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Such cases are not frequent.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, they are. The position of the agricultural industry would be precarious but for these men.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you consider—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Geraldton must be permitted to make his speech. There have been altogether too many interjections.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I know dozens who carry on work in that way. Farmers employ many experienced hands without employing them all the year round. While those men are wandering about in a subdivision there is no need to interfere with their entries on the roll. If anybody is entitled to retain his qualifica-

tions as a voter, it is the man in the agricultural industry.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We may be doing the farm hand an injustice. He may be enrolled as being in one district, and on his removing to another district his name on the roll for the first district may be objected to. But he will know nothing about it, for the electoral officer will not know where to find him. Therefore this provision is likely to do more harm than good.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: This will work a hardship on farm labourers, because so many little towns and places are close to the boundaries of our electorates. A farm labourer working near the boundary of an electorate may cross over that boundary, thinking that he is all right. Instead of that, he may be struck off the roll without knowing anything about it. It would be better if, when changing his address, he knew that it would be wise to notify the department of that change. Apart from that, the main principle of the measure is to secure uniformity with the Federal roll. The Federal Act has not this provision, notwithstanding that the Federal electorates are very much larger than ours. There is no necessity for the provision, and it may result in many farm labourers being disfranchised. I will support the amendment.

Mr. KENNEALLY: The particular desire of members to protect the farm labourer is made manifest by the Leader of the Opposition, who whilst agreeing that a commercial traveller should be provided for in the clause—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not say he should be.

Mr. KENNEALLY: Well, you did not object to his inclusion. Just let us consider the commercial traveller and the farm labourer. The commercial traveller goes all over the State. He is provided for in this clause, in that it is laid down that when he moves from one part of the subdivision to another he is all right, and that only when he leaves the subdivision does he have to notify the department. Why, then, should not the farm labourer have the same rights? I fancy the opposition to the inclusion of farm hands in this clause is deeper than appears. The farm labourer is just as much entitled to a vote as is the commercial traveller, and while he is going round a district looking for employment his vote

should be protected. I hope the amendment will not be agreed to.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The members for Menzies and for Mount Leonora know, as I do, that a man can move for hundreds of miles in, say, the Mount Margaret electorate without having his name erased from the roll.

The Minister for Justice: That is the procedure under this clause.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Yes, on the gold-fields we have been working under this clause for many years past.

The Minister for Justice: But without authority.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Certainly without any hardship. So long as this will not allow a man to have his name on two rolls, I think it is quite all right.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move an amendment—

That after "hunter," in line 4, "drover" be inserted.

Some members seem to think the drover is a station hand. It is not so. Consequently a drover would be disqualified under this provision, unless he is expressly included.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 "station book-keeper" be struck out.

If this man moves about, objection may be made to his name being on the roll, and the electoral officer will not be able to notify him. Surely a station book-keeper would find no difficulty in notifying the department of a change of address. To leave the station book-keeper in this list may deprive him of his vote.

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

Clause 20—agreed to.

Clause 21—Reference of claims to divisional returning officer:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At the risk of being misunderstood by the Minister, I ask him whether he has yet found out if the registrar is a State or a Federal officer. He promised last night to secure this information.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He is a Federal officer paid by the Federal

Government, but it is provided in the agreement that he shall be appointed by the State to carry out his duties under this Act. His position will be much the same as that of the Commissioner of Taxation; for while he is to be a Federal officer, he will be a State officer also for the carrying out of the provisions of the State Electoral Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then for the purposes of our Act he is our officer?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is what I said last night.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 22, 23—agreed to.

Clause 24—Alteration of Rolls:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Paragraph (h) provides for the removal of a name from the roll by the direction of the Divisional Returning Officer on the certificate of the Chief Electoral Officer, and there is a proviso which sets out that the Chief Electoral Officer shall not issue such a certificate unless he is satisfied that the elector has ceased to be qualified for enrolment on that roll, and has secured enrolment on another roll. There is surely a mistake there.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I think a typographical error has crept in. The closing paragraph of the proviso should read "or has secured enrolment on another roll." I move an amendment—

That in line 7 of paragraph (h) "and" be struck out, and "or" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Subclause 2 provides that where the name of an elector has been incorrectly placed on the roll, the Divisional Returning Officer may direct the Registrar to place the name on the correct roll. Does that mean that the Returning Officer can correct an incorrect registration in the office or that he can correct an incorrect claim card?

The Minister for Justice: Yes, he can correct a wrong registration.

The Minister for Works: It is done frequently.

Clause as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 25 to 27—agreed to.

Clause 28—Lists of convictions to be forwarded:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is this provided for in the Federal Act?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: This clause coincides with the provisions in our existing Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Can these people vote?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: People who are sentenced for an offence punishable by 12 months' imprisonment are not entitled to vote.

Mr. Sleeman: From the wording of the Bill anyone serving a sentence of under 12 months is not debarred from voting.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes he is.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 29—agreed to.

Clause 30—Names on roll may be objected to:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The proviso sets out that 5s. shall be deposited in respect of each objection lodged. I move an amendment—

That "5s." be struck out and "2s. 6d." inserted in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The amount of 5s. is provided in the Federal Act. The object is to prevent frivolous objections being lodged. In the Central Province last year one man lodged a big number of objections many of which proved futile. In cases where the objections are upheld, the amount deposited is refunded. I do not know that anyone should have the right to lodge numerous objections and put people to the expense of having to appear before the court. The amount of 2s. 6d. has appeared in our Act for years, but the Commonwealth Act provides for a deposit of 5s. The desire is to bring about uniformity as well as to deter people from lodging frivolous objections and perhaps compelling others to travel 20 or 30 miles to defend themselves.

Mr. CHESSON: I favour the amount of 5s. In the Central Province last year an individual objected to many names that were on the roll. Notices were sent out to the people whose names were objected to, and those people were asked to travel to the Revision Court at Geraldton. Many of them, however, did not receive the notices in time. If we leave it open to an individual to make objections, he should be prepared to pay 5s.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The member for Cue seems to think that objections are lodged only against people rightly en-

rolled. Anyone who endeavoured to strike off the name of a person entitled to be enrolled, would deserve to be fined £50, for such a man would be a scoundrel. Every possible encouragement should be given to people to see that the rolls are clean.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The trouble is that some friend may tell another that a man named Taylor, for instance, should be off the roll and that person, accepting his friend's statement, lodges an objection to the enrolment on payment of the amount. That is what happens. The objector does not make inquiries about it at first.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If that sort of thing is done, then the person lodging the objection should be made to sign a declaration setting out that it was within his own knowledge that the elector was not entitled to be enrolled.

Mr. Chesson: But these men have organisations behind them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If unscrupulous people are going about endeavouring to get people off the roll whose names should be retained, then they deserve severe punishment.

Hon. G. Taylor: They ought to be sent to gaol.

The Premier: A man may tell a friend that somebody who was 40 miles away was not entitled to be enrolled. The man accepts his friend's statement in good faith and lodges an objection. He cannot make inquiries in the circumstances.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: My attitude is that the clause should apply only to the removal of names that should properly be eliminated from the roll, and therefore instead of making it difficult, we should make it easy.

The Minister for Justice: But the clause indicates that frivolous objections are received, and then the deposit must be forfeited.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It seems to me that we should take steps to protect the rights of people to have their names retained on the rolls.

The Minister for Justice: There were unscrupulous people and this sort of thing was done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister should provide some adequate penalty for such persons. It should be everyone's job to get a clean roll.

The Minister for Justice: If a legitimate objection is lodged, the amount of the de-

posit does not matter because the money is refunded.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Any person who would adopt the method indicated by the member for Cue, knowing that the person to whose enrolment he intended to object would not receive the form of notification in time to allow him to prevent his name being struck off the roll, should be severely punished. The mere forfeiting of 5s. would be no punishment. Would anyone with a spark of manhood in him play the game so low down as that, irrespective of party feeling or any other consideration? A man of that sort would be a criminal.

The Minister for Works: It is done at every election.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I hope I will never be associated with anyone who has ever done that sort of thing.

The Minister for Works: I have had to encounter it in every election during the last 25 years.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	..	19

Majority against .. 4

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. North
Mr. Brown	Mr. Sampson
Mr. George	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Mann	Mr. Richardson
Sir James Mitchell	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munroe
Mr. Collier	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Steeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennally	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Millington	(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Maley	Mr. Corboy
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. Kennedy
Mr. Teesdale	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Latham	Mr. Clydesdale

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 31, 32—agreed to.

Clause 33—Notice of objection:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Sub-clause 4 means that if a person has been away for five years and then returns and has been one day in his electorate, no objection can be taken to his name being retained on the roll.

The Minister for Justice: Do you suggest that a man could be away for that length of time and his name still remain on the roll?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It could happen. A man might have a nomad form, even if he were in Timbuctoo.

The Minister for Justice: But the sub-clause distinctly contemplates residence within the district or subdivision for at least one month.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It would be well if the Minister would go into the clause with the draftsman to see if it could be improved. It seems to me that if a man has been out of the electorate for a day he could be objected to, but the Minister thinks he must first have been out of the electorate for a full month.

The Minister for Justice: Unless he has been away a full month, no objection can be lodged.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, the provision can be read either way. Will the Minister go into it with the draftsman?

The Minister for Justice: Yes, all right.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 34—agreed to.

Clause 35—Determination of objection:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is here provided that no name shall be removed after the issue of the writ for an election and before the closing of the poll at the election. It is further provided that if any objection lodged is held by the divisional returning officer to be frivolous, the person objected to shall be entitled to an allowance not exceeding £5, to be awarded as the divisional returning officer thinks fit. This is an extraordinary provision to place in a Bill. There ought to be no occasion to pile up costs, for surely it would be a good answer if the person objected to sent down a statement signed by, say, a police constable.

The Minister for Justice: Of course, the award would not be as high as £5. No

sensible officer would allow £5 costs in those circumstances.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At all events, it ought to be a sufficient answer to the objector. The trouble is that if these costs are to be allowed, the persons objected to will pile up unnecessary costs by bringing along witnesses.

Hon. G. Taylor: This should stop people from objecting.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think it will. What will happen is that, long before the closing of the rolls, they will say to the divisional returning officer, "Such and such a man has left the district; will you have inquiries made?" In any case, this applies only to frivolous objections.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 36—Appeal to court of summary jurisdiction:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Here we are getting back to police and resident magistrates. Surely any two justices ought to be capable of hearing these appeals.

The Minister for Justice: They must be authorised by the Governor to hear electoral appeals.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If we appoint justices to try other offenders and take away their liberty, we ought to be able to trust them in cases of this class.

The Minister for Justice: It is a court of appeal against the decision of the divisional returning officer, and so it requires to be a fairly capable court. The ordinary court presided over by justices would not be a court of appeal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But this is where the appeal first comes before a court of justice. If justices are not capable of hearing such cases, they should not sit on the bench at all.

The Minister for Justice: The divisional returning officer has a full knowledge of the Act, and we do not want to leave it to an ordinary justice to say he is wrong.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But it is a question of fact, not of law. The whole question is as to whether the person objected to is entitled to be enrolled.

The Minister for Justice: It means an interpretation of the electoral law. It should not be left to an ordinary justice.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The ordinary justice is interpreting the law all the time, and should be able to interpret the

electoral law. Of course, we might occasionally get one who would emulate our friend from Pingelly and sentence a man to a month's imprisonment.

The Premier: Such a justice ought not to sit on a court of this kind!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think any two justices ought to be capable of taking these cases. Occasionally one does hear of extraordinary decisions by justices. I remember that a perfectly harmless old chap was given three months for being tight.

The Premier: At Southern Cross?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, much nearer to Perth.

The Premier: Well, I remember that at Southern Cross the justices gave a man three months for being tight. That was worse even than the judgment of the member for Pingelly.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: However, I suggest that two justices ought to be capable of doing this work. It is very cumbersome to require a court of summary jurisdiction to be constituted by a police or resident magistrate.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 37—agreed to.

Clause 38—Consequential amendments of principal Act:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Act provides that a person must live for six months continuously in Western Australia. We are now going to alter that to read six months in Australia.

The Minister for Justice: That is the effect of it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It will mean that residence of one month in an electorate is all that is necessary.

The Minister for Justice: Provided the claimant has lived for six months in Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. Will that bring our law into line with the Federal Act?

The Minister for Justice: Yes; an Australian is an Australian regardless of the State in which he lives.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We are amending paragraph (c) of Section 17. Does the Federal Act specify a period of one month or of 28 days?

The Minister for Justice: One month.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then we must adhere to that term. I would prefer to

see the number of days specified as the term "month" is apt to cause confusion.

The Premier: If the number of days were specified it would be clearer.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If the Minister, after consideration, thinks it advisable to specify the period in days, he will be able to get the clause recommitted.

Mr. LINDSAY: I move an amendment—

That the following be inserted to stand as Subclause 4:—"Paragraph (d) of Section 18 of the principal Act is amended by adding the following proviso:—"Provided that this section shall not apply to persons of the Jewish or the Lebanonian race.""

The disqualifications included in Section 18 apply to a person who is an aboriginal native of Australia, Asia, Africa or the islands of the Pacific, or a person of the half-blood. The Commonwealth Act allows Asiatics to vote. That is not advisable, but persons of the Jewish or Lebanonian race should be entitled to vote.

Mr. MANN: The amendment does not meet all requirements. There are in Perth a number of natives of Palestine and Mt. Lebanon who are naturalised British subjects. Under the Federal Act they have a vote, but under the State Act they are not entitled to vote.

Hon. G. Taylor: Asiatics are debarred under our Act.

Mr. MANN: Yes, even though they have been naturalised.

The Premier: Suppose you had a real Asiatic Jew from China or Japan?

Hon. G. Taylor: Under the amendment he would have a vote.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. G. Taylor: A dangerous departure.

Mr. MANN: Natives of Palestine and of Mt. Lebanon are naturalised only in exceptional circumstances.

Mr. Chesson: Monetary?

Mr. MANN: I have in mind a registered chemist, the chief dispenser at Trouchet's. He is a white man, born of white parents, but his birthplace was Mt. Lebanon. Although he is naturalised, he is not allowed to vote because he was born in Asia.

The Minister for Justice: He would not be an aboriginal native of Asia.

Mr. MANN: He has been notified by the electoral authorities that he is not entitled to vote. Here is the provision of the Federal Act.

Mr. Lindsay: We do not want that.

Mr. Heron: No.

Mr. MANN: It says —

(c) He is a person to whom a certificate of naturalisation has been issued under a law of the Commonwealth or of a State and that certificate is still in force, or is a person who obtained British nationality by virtue of the issue of any such certificate.

The man in question can vote under the Federal Act because he is naturalised.

Mr. Heron: An Indian can vote under the Federal Act.

Mr. MANN: He cannot.

Mr. Heron: He can, because he is a British subject.

Mr. MANN: There are a number of Indians in the metropolitan area who are not on the roll.

Mr. Heron: They may not really be Indians.

Mr. MANN: They are on the Federal roll. We are trying to bring our law into line with that of the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. Taylor: We do not want that sort of uniformity.

The Minister for Justice: This House would not agree to a half-caste having the right to vote. I did not dare to bring down that proposal again on this occasion.

Mr. MANN: The man I have in mind is a white man, born of white parents.

The Minister for Justice: A half-caste is a white man's son who may own land and pay taxes.

Mr. MANN: I am speaking of a white man who can vote under the Federal Act but not under the State Act.

The Minister for Justice: If he was born of British parents he would not be an aboriginal native of Asia.

Hon. G. Taylor: There must be some other reason for his disqualification.

The Minister for Justice: An English child born in China is not a Chinaman.

Hon. G. Taylor: If he were, a child born in a stable would be a horse.

The Premier: That man's parents must have been aboriginal natives of Asia.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have a new paragraph to move to stand as paragraph 5.

The CHAIRMAN: That is beyond the scope of the Bill. We are not dealing with that particular section of the Act. In any case, the hon. member is too late.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—NORTHAM MUNICIPAL ICE WORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—HOSPITALS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 30th August.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.3] : When the Bill was introduced reference was made to the anomalies that existed in respect to Government and committee hospitals. I should like to read a few remarks uttered by a former Colonial Secretary, Mr. F. T. Broun, when introducing the Hospitals Bill in 1921. He said—

We have many hospitals managed by the Government, and in consequence the cost to the State is proportionately high. The existing method of subsidising our hospitals is unfair. We may have a Government hospital in one town and alongside of it a committee hospital, the Government hospital being supported by the Government but the committee hospital being merely subsidised, with the result that the local residents have to contribute a considerable proportion of the cost of administration of that institution. And this anomaly obtains; those who make sacrifices in contributing directly to the maintenance of the committee hospital have also to subscribe by way of taxation to the maintenance of the Government hospital.

Later on the late Mr. Boyland, then member for Kalgoorlie, interjected "Do you tax only the ratepayers?" The Colonial Secretary replied—

Yes. I should like very much to be able to give everybody a vote, and to be able to tax everybody for the maintenance of hospitals, but that is almost impossible. It would entail an enormous amount of machinery.

The member for Cue, Mr. Chesson, then interjected: "You will never make a success of it until you do that." I feel sure that members will commend the member for Cue for that very pertinent interjection. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) then interjected "It will never apply up our way." I take it that this interjection of the member for Murchison implied support of the remark that had fallen from the lips of the member for Cue. When I addressed the House for a short period on this Bill a few nights ago I referred to the difficulties confronting road boards in respect of the damage caused to their roads by motor transport. I had been dealing with

the matter of the added burden this Bill may cast upon them in respect of the subsidy relating to the provision of hospitals. I was proceeding to say that there was a possibility of the subsidy provided by the Government, which had already been reduced from a maximum of £300 a year to £140 a year, being still further reduced. That has not actually been stated, but the reply of the Premier to a question asked earlier in the session indicated that consideration was being given to a further reduction. No words of mine are therefore required to show that the difficulties road boards face are likely to be increased through a further reduction in the funds that they have available for expenditure upon road-making. Early in his speech the Minister for Health, in introducing this Bill said "So far as possible I want everything connected with hospitals to be optional." At a later stage he said: "There is no provision for taxing anyone." The main portion of the Bill actually proposes to throw the cost of hospital services upon the ratepayers of those districts which decide to erect hospitals. Because of the service, it will be necessary for the local authority to add to its rates to secure greater funds in order to carry out the work. I draw attention to this because if two-thirds of the local authorities in any locality desire that funds shall be provided for the construction of hospital buildings, or for hospital services, the remaining third shall, without any agreement on its part, be brought into the scheme.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: And may prefer to start another hospital altogether.

Mr. SAMPSON: Quite possibly. The Minister has said that he desires everything connected with hospitals to be optional, and that there was no provision for taxing anyone.

The Minister for Health: Which is quite true.

Mr. SAMPSON: Later on the Minister said—

The Bill makes provision for the local authorities to contribute their share of the capital cost of the erection of a hospital. That is purely optional, and the local authorities may ask for the right to do this. We cannot force the hand of any local authority in this matter, and I am not asking for power to do so.

The Minister further said he could see no logical objection that could be raised to the proposal. He said also, referring to the

position when two-thirds of the local authorities approve—

All the arbitrary power I am asking for in this Bill is that where such a thing happens—

That is where two-thirds agree.

—the Minister may compel other local authorities to pay their quota towards the interest and sinking fund of the capital cost of the institution.

The Minister for Health: Bear half of the capital cost.

Mr. SAMPSON: When two-thirds agree, that would leave one-third.

The Minister for Health: To pay interest and sinking fund on one-half of the capital cost.

Mr. SAMPSON: These are the words of the Minister, "to pay their quota."

The Minister for Health: That is so, their quota.

Mr. SAMPSON: Towards the interest and sinking fund of the capital cost of the institution. I claim there is nothing optional about that. Should it happen that all the authorities in the locality agree, it may be said that everything is in order, and that no exception can be taken to the position. There is, however, another viewpoint to be considered. Let me say before proceeding that if two-thirds agree, the third party may be compelled to come in, and power is thereby taken by the Minister in charge of hospitals to bring this about. The position is entirely an inequitable one. The rights of local authorities are being infringed. They would, in the case to which I have referred, be required, without any power to object, to come into a scheme, the effect of which might be to prevent them from carrying out the functions for which they have been established, namely, the construction, maintenance, and care of roads.

Mr. North: Things are bad enough now for them.

The Minister for Health: All local authorities should maintain their hospitals. It should not be a Government function to do so.

Mr. SAMPSON: The Minister says that all local authorities should maintain their hospitals.

The Minister for Health: It is their duty to do so.

Mr. SAMPSON: Local authorities already have their hands full in an endeavour to provide roads for the settlers in order to get their produce to market. The work

they have in hand is increasing in volume year by year, and the income they have in order to carry out that work is not in comparison with its great importance, and is decreasing as time goes on. I maintain that the work that road boards have to carry out to-day is three times greater than it was 20 years ago. The Minister says it is the duty of local authorities to maintain their hospitals. Let us consider a case where Government works are established. Take Midland Junction, for instance. There should be a hospital there, and there would be one if the town were further from Perth. In that case the ratepayers would be required to provide a fund to maintain the institution, but those carrying on the Midland Junction workshops would not be called upon even to pay rates. The Bill also gives power to road boards to borrow money for the construction of, and other works in connection with, hospitals. All the power given under the Road Districts Act, 1919, it is proposed to confer upon hospital boards in order to provide these services. The borrowing power in the Road Districts Act was given mainly for the construction of roads, but the Minister feels that that power should be used partly for hospital service. It is a limited power, and already many road boards have taken advantage of its full extent. The power asked for is—

The Minister for Health: I know of only one road board in the whole of Western Australia, and I believe there is only one, that has not asked for this provision; and up to date only one road board has objected to it.

Mr. SAMPSON: I think the Minister will find that many will object in view of the two-thirds majority being sufficient to bring in the whole; that is to say, two-thirds in any district. The Bill proposes to empower local authorities to expend up to 10 per cent. of their income on hospital service. Under the Roads Districts Act there is already power to subsidise hospitals—

A board may, subject to this Act, subsidise any district nursing system or hospital, public or private, for the reception of the sick established within or without its district or any duly qualified medical practitioner, and may join with any local authority in the exercise of any such power.

Surely that is sufficient so far as local authorities are concerned.

The Minister for Health: It is not sufficient, because under the Municipalities Act

municipal councils have no such power. This Bill merely legalises the doing, by municipalities, of what road boards already have power to do.

Mr. SAMPSON: The personnel of a road board varies from year to year, and it is easily conceivable that at some particular stage that personnel might agree to come into a hospital scheme, thereby providing for an indefinite period, in fact permanently, an amount of up to 10 per cent. of its revenue for hospital service, and the successors of that personnel would be committed to the expenditure of that proportion. I submit it would be wrong to give that power, particularly as hospital service is not a function for which road boards were especially created.

The Minister for Health: It should be, though.

Mr. SAMPSON: I admit that hospital service is of great importance, but there is a better mode whereby that service can be provided. Under the Bill, I note, the cost of relief provided in connection with inmates of a home or a hospital constitutes a debt, and it would be possible for legal recourse to be had in order to secure payment. In some cases that might be a proper proceeding, but a good deal of care would need to be taken in the exercise of the power, as otherwise it might easily become a burden.

The Minister for Health: There is already such a power as regards asylums.

Mr. SAMPSON: I know that at present the power does not exist regarding most hospitals. However, that is a matter as to which there are certainly two viewpoints. Now I wish to deal with the reference in the same clause to the hospital treatment of aborigines. The clause aims at making it obligatory on the aboriginal's employer to become responsible for any debt incurred in respect of hospital service. That is an entirely new principle.

The Minister for Health: It is not; it operates to-day.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not know where.

The Minister for Health: No employer of an aboriginal can get a permit without undertaking, in the permit, to do what the clause provides; so the hon. member need not worry about that.

Mr. SAMPSON: It appears inequitable that because an aboriginal is employed, no matter for how short a period, the employer

shall become liable for the payment of hospital service received by the aboriginal.

The Minister for Health: If the aboriginal is good enough to be employed, he certainly should be good enough to be looked after if he becomes sick.

Mr. SAMPSON: Certainly, but why should the employer be the responsible party? Anyone who is sick should receive hospital service. When a white employee becomes sick, does his employer assume responsibility for the payment of hospital fees?

Mr. Marshall: In many cases that would be so.

Mr. Davy: Under the Workers' Compensation Act the employer becomes responsible; then why put it in this measure?

Mr. SAMPSON: The service referred to is not limited to treatment for accident, as in the case of the Workers' Compensation Act, but refers to all medical service. The Bill says that if an aboriginal is employed, the payment for any hospital service given to him becomes an obligation on the employer, and not for a limited period but for all time.

The Minister for Health: While the aboriginal is employed.

Mr. SAMPSON: His employment may have extended over a few days, or even over a few years, and he may go into hospital and become permanently incapacitated. Then there is a permanent responsibility on the employer for payment of the account.

Mr. Marshall: Do you suggest that the State should supply cheap or free black labour to those who desire it?

Mr. SAMPSON: I have not said one word about free labour or black labour, but have been endeavouring to criticise the introduction of a new principle, the drawing of a colour line, as it were, in respect of payment for hospital service.

Mr. Chesson: The drawing of a humane line.

Mr. SAMPSON: Humanity demands that the people, and that is the Government, should provide hospital service for the sick. I know the Minister for Health would be one of the first to see that hospital service was provided for a sick person. But in the case of an aboriginal the Minister seeks to cast upon the employer, the last employer, of the aboriginal the duty of paying his hospital expenses.

The Minister for Health: Awful!

Mr. SAMPSON: Not awful, but inequitable.

Mr. Marshall: Well, he can stand the responsibility!

Mr. SAMPSON: The responsibility in connection with the aboriginal is the same as the responsibility in connection with the white man. A former Colonial Secretary, Mr. F. T. Broun, frequently spoke of the marked anomalies existing between a committee hospital and a Government hospital. Committee hospitals have to face difficulties that do not confront Government hospitals.

The Minister for Health: What difficulties?

Mr. SAMPSON: I have previously given the Minister that information.

The Minister for Health: Your statements have been indefinite. Give us definite information.

Mr. SAMPSON: Shall I read out the information again?

Mr. Marshall: No. That would be tedious repetition.

Mr. SAMPSON: Mr. Broun said in 1921—

We may have a Government hospital in one town and alongside of it a committee hospital, the Government hospital being supported by the Government, but the committee hospital being merely subsidised, with the result that the local residents have to contribute a considerable proportion of the cost of administration of that institution.

There is an anomaly. Why should a hospital in the electorate of the member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths), say at Kellerberrin, be required to secure so much assistance from the people of the district—even though they supply it willingly and gladly—whilst at Narrogin the Government provide the necessary funds and there is not the same responsibility on the local people.

The Minister for Lands: That applies at Northam, Geraldton and elsewhere.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes. Between the committee hospital and the Government hospital there is a great difference, which I need not stress further, as I am sure the Minister for Health knows the position thoroughly.

The Minister for Lands: You knew it, too.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes, but I never agreed with it; it always seemed to me most inequitable. The system is difficult to alter, but I looked forward to the bringing down of a measure which might make it possible

to give equal consideration to all these people. Take the Leonora hospital: the Leonora people are hard put to it to keep the hospital open; and that applies also to the hospitals at Mount Morgans, Laverton, Cue and many other places. Everyone who knows anything of the circumstances gives credit to those responsible for providing funds, but I say again that the position is unfair. On the one side the Government provide the funds, and on the other the committee provide the funds, and the people of the towns in which there are committee hospitals are taxed equally with those in the towns in which Government hospitals are established. To come back to the Bill, payment for hospital treatment of parents may be enforced against any adult child. One sees how easily a difficult position might be created there. A young married man with a growing family is to be called upon to support his aged parents. I feel certain that if he were able to support them, he would in nine cases out of ten do so; but if the proposed power is given and he is to be levied upon, harassed, quite possibly a position of difficulty may arise. The power might be used; I hope it would not be, but in my opinion to insert such a power in an Act would be unwise. I cannot conceive of any adult child in a position to assist his aged parents who would not do it if his means permitted. If he is to be compelled to find funds for the care of his parents when those funds are required for his wife and children, no benefit will result.

The Minister for Health: Do you think any Minister would attempt to do such a thing?

Mr. SAMPSON: Another clause provides that where an amount is owing for hospital service, legal recourse shall be had to collect it. That is sufficient to upset people who are already worried.

The Minister for Health: Do you want the Bill to go through with all outstanding hospital dues wiped off? The Bill merely legalises debts that are owing to hospitals at present. Surely you will give us a chance to collect them.

Mr. SAMPSON: The power to compel an adult child to pay for the care of his parents in some hospital or institution is an extremely dangerous power to give.

The Minister for Health: If the adult child, having the means, refuses to do it, he should be made to do it.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is all very well. The person who can do it requires no legislative compulsion.

The Minister for Health: I know differently from that. As Minister I have written to one man demanding payment, and received a reply that my correspondent was receiving only £4 5s. per week, and that he hoped I would therefore grant his mother 9s. per week assistance. That man has no responsibilities, no family of his own.

Mr. SAMPSON: Such a case would be exceptional. My experience of that class of man prompts me to say that no matter what power was enacted, he would still refuse to pay. On the other hand, those more humane and more considerate would worry themselves in the desire to find money towards the payment of their parents' hospital fees, whereas their incomes were really insufficient to provide for the needs of their own wives and children.

Mr. Marshall: The clause can be abused; that is the great trouble.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am not a recent convert to the idea that the State has a duty to those who are sick. It is equally important that hospital services shall be provided for those who are sick, as it is that educational facilities shall be provided for the public generally. If limitation of funds necessitated considerations of economy, surely the funds available for education, much as we value it, should be reduced rather than those available for the assistance of the sick. In 1922 a Royal Commission was appointed to investigate matters in connection with our hospitals. In a summary attached to their report the Commission who, by the way, brought in a unanimous recommendation in favour of a tax of a penny in the pound on all income, to be collected at the source, had this to say—

It will be obvious that legislation is necessary to provide some common policy and basis for the hospital and medical services of the State, and also to provide some scheme whereby the financing of these services may be upon a reasonably adequate basis. It is not right that the sick portion of the community should be in any way jeopardised or should suffer for lack of reasonable funds, nor is it right that those responsible for the maintenance of these humanitarian institutions should be continually harassed by the knowledge that the financial position is very insecure. We are in-

formed that on more than one occasion the boards of management of certain of the larger hospitals have seriously contemplated the necessity of closing down certain wards, if necessary funds could not be forthcoming.

We have heard that on many occasions. Every Minister has felt sincere regret that the exigencies of the public purse required that people should be continually appealed to in efforts to secure sufficient funds. All manner of stunts and appeals are resorted to in efforts to drag in money to keep the hospitals working properly.

The Minister for Health: Do you think if we had a tax of a penny in the pound on all incomes that would return sufficient to maintain all the hospitals in the State, without anything else?

Mr. SAMPSON: I would not like to answer that question offhand, but I certainly think that in addition to what is already provided, that money would be sufficient not only for all hospital and medical services but for research work as well. I contend that that research work can properly be carried out by those associated with our public hospitals. When a hospital Bill was introduced by the then Colonial Secretary, Mr. F. T. Broun, it was read a second time and referred to a Royal Commission. Before that decision was arrived at, the then deputy Leader of the Opposition, Hon. W. C. Angwin, passed a scathing comment upon the measure. I could wish that the present Minister for Health would recall the remarks of Mr. Angwin for whom we all had the greatest respect. That Bill was on somewhat similar lines to that introduced by the present Minister for Health, but it was not nearly so drastic, coercive or inequitable in its provisions. Yet Mr. Angwin, in referring to Mr. Broun's Bill, said—"It is the most disgraceful Bill ever introduced into this House." I am younger than Mr. Angwin, so my language must be more moderate. Nevertheless I feel I would be wanting in my duty as a member of this Chamber if I failed to draw attention to some of the undesirable and improper features of the Bill. I hope the House will not approve of it and that the Bill will be defeated on the second reading. I trust that subsequently the Minister, realising the importance of hospital services, will decide on a hospital tax.

The Minister for Health: But I will have to introduce a Bill to secure control, just as I have to now.

Mr. SAMPSON: We do not want the Minister to increase the responsibilities road boards have now to shoulder, by adding others they should not be called upon to bear. There are other features of the Bill that could very well be eliminated. I believe that if a hospital tax were introduced, every member would feel a glow of satisfaction in supporting it, believing that they were doing something in the interests of their fellow-citizens. In the 1922 Bill, provision was made for free hospital services for anyone in receipt of not more than £4 a week. That seemed a very proper and considerate provision. If we are to progress and the fathers and mothers of families in Western Australia are to enjoy the freedom from anxiety that should be their lot, then they should know that hospital service was available for them. They should realise that no matter what services had to be restricted, those required for hospitals and nursing would be available to everyone. If the Minister will introduce a Bill having for its object the provision of funds for hospital services, it will probably receive the unanimous support of the House.

The Minister for Health: How many clauses in the Bill before us now were not contained in the Bill you introduced?

Mr. SAMPSON: The only similar clauses are those relating to placing hospital legislation on a proper basis, and they occur in the early part of the measure. Those clauses are comparatively innocuous, but in the subsequent parts of the Bill, the Minister has cut deeply into established principles of equity. He has sought to throw the burden of an aged parent upon an adult child who possibly may already have greater financial burdens than he is able to carry. The Minister desires that I should indicate where the Bills vary. The present Bill is as dissimilar as possible. It does not seek to do what my Bill attempted.

The Minister for Health: Your Bill attempted to raise £130,000 and—

Mr. SAMPSON: I acknowledge that bad point about the Bill, but the Minister could bring down a Bill eliminating that feature and it would be supported heartily by the

House. I oppose the second reading of the Bill.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narogin) [8.41]: All members of the House appreciate the desire of the Government to place our hospitals on a good footing. Personally I appreciate the work carried out, and the interest displayed, by the present Minister for Health in connection with our hospitals. One of his first actions was to build a hospital in my electorate.

Mr. Marshall: You always seem to be lucky when the Labour Party come into power.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There always seemed to be delay in regard to that matter until the present Minister came into office. Because of his interest in hospital work, I had expected a better Bill from the Minister. He has referred to it as a machinery measure and to the extent that it is such, I agree with him. I am with him in his desire to put the hospitals on a proper basis, and to legalise their work. Unfortunately it appears to me that the Minister's Bill also introduces a policy of Government control over hospital boards. That is a new feature in this State.

The Minister for Health: There is no such control indicated.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Throughout the State we have our hospital committees, and wherever they are at work they have been appointed by the local subscribers. They are very good committees and work splendidly. The Minister has got on very well with them and as they are at present constituted—

The Minister for Health: So they will remain under the Bill, except that their powers will be legalised.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But they are at present appointed by the subscribers.

The Minister for Health: And so they will be.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, the Minister will appoint them. I have read the Bill, and it sets out clearly that the Minister will appoint hospital committees.

The Minister for Health: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am not allowed to deal with the clauses of the Bill at this stage, but it is clearly stated that the Minister has to appoint the hospital committees.

The subscribers who contribute the money should have that right.

Mr. Chesson: And those people will insist upon appointing the board.

The Minister for Health: And no one will interfere with them.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I am surprised at the attempt of the Government to take away that power from the local people and to give it to officials in Perth.

The Minister for Health: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I do not know what is in the Minister's mind, but merely what is set out in the Bill. It is provided that hospital boards shall have a proper legal status, with power to sue. I quite agree with that. I was amazed to hear the Minister state that hospital boards have not possessed that power. They should have it, and that principle will certainly be supported by members on the Opposition cross-benches. As to the local authorities having legal power to contribute towards the erection of hospitals, it was explained that road boards already had that power. At Wyalcatchem, for instance, the local road board floated a special loan in order to contribute the board's share towards the erection of a hospital. I think it is proper that municipalities should have the same power that road boards possess in that respect. A provision of the Bill to which I particularly object is that in regard to the Minister's power to select a certain number of local governing authorities as suitable for the support of a hospital and the power to take a referendum amongst them on the question, the minority to be bound by the wishes of the majority regarding the contributing of support to a particular hospital. The Minister or his officials may make a mistake in including a particular local authority in the list of those it is thought should contribute to that particular hospital. He may take six local authorities, four of which are associated with that particular hospital geographically or by reason of commercial interests, and would gladly support it. But the other two road boards might prefer a hospital of their own, or alternatively, to contribute to another hospital altogether. Then we have the position that four road boards whose ratepayers would naturally gravitate to that centre and whose sick people would use a particular hospital, all agreeing to support it; and two other road boards, closer to another district or

another hospital, would be compelled, as the result of the majority vote, to contribute to a hospital that they would not use and did not require, while in any event they would prefer to devote their money to another hospital altogether. In my own electorate to-day there is one road board that some people think should contribute to an adjacent hospital. That board lies between two hospital areas. Many of the ratepayers are much closer to another hospital. The ratepayers and the whole of the members of that board would gladly contribute either to a hospital of their own or else to one of two other hospitals. Yet the Minister might take a referendum of three local authorities and two of them say "Yes."

The Minister for Health: They, not I, have to act.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But you put in a board that does not want anything to do with it.

The Minister for Health: Not unless I get a requisition.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But you make a board that does not want to do so support a particular hospital; and you say that if two out of three local authorities in an area want to support a particular hospital, the third body also must support that hospital. That is most clearly set out in the Bill, and it is quite unjustifiable. Take the Kulin district. The people of that district want a hospital of their own. If they cannot get that, they are divided in opinion as to whether they prefer to support the Wickiepin hospital or the Narrogin hospital. They should have the right to exercise that choice.

The Minister for Health: So they have.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Yet under the Bill they might be told that they have to go to an existing hospital on the northern side of them.

The Minister for Health: They would not be told anything of the kind.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Well why should the Bill so clearly set out that if a referendum be taken and two or three local authorities wish to support a particular hospital the third one will have to send its money in that direction?

The Minister for Health: The principal example of that is in your own electorate. You know the circumstances very well. There are four road boards that desire a hospital, but the Narrogin Road Board object.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That is a different case altogether. That is not the one I have referred to.

The Minister for Health: Narrogin cannot get a hospital unless they agree.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If the Kulin people prefer to contribute to the Wickiepin hospital or to the Narrogin hospital or to a hospital of their own, surely they should be permitted to do so.

The Minister for Health: Certainly.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Yet I have heard it said repeatedly that the desire of the department is to make them contribute to an existing hospital at Kondinin, which they do not wish to do. At any rate, if the Minister says the board must contribute to a hospital, that is sufficient. We should then let the board say which existing hospital they prefer to support. Let them send their money in that direction if they wish, but do not compel them to contribute to a hospital they are out of sympathy with and do not wish to support.

The Minister for Health: That is certainly not going to happen.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It seems to me we abrogate the principle of local government altogether if we do not let the local authorities say which hospital they will support. If the Minister were to say, "You have to support a hospital," I could understand it; but I cannot understand his saying that because three out of four local authorities wish to support a particular hospital, the fourth one also must support it.

The Minister for Health: Would you say that—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair. No member is entitled to say "You cannot do this or that." It is the rule of the House that hon. members when speaking shall address other members as "the hon. member."

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At any rate, the position the Minister referred to at Narrogin is entirely different. I am sure if the Minister gave the local authorities near Narrogin the option of contributing to a public hospital they would choose the Narrogin Public Hospital in those circumstances. The Minister could permit his Bill to be altered so as to give the local authority the right to contribute to which hospital they thought fit, without in any way affecting the position at Narrogin. But it

would be possible—I am not suggesting that the Minister would do it—that a referendum be taken of three or four local authorities, and one of them would be compelled to contribute to the support of a hospital that they did not wish to use. It would be much better if the Minister so altered the Bill that even if he made a board contribute to a hospital, the board could say to which hospital their contributions should go or could devote their funds to a hospital of their own.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [8.53]: The Minister said the Bill was mostly a machinery measure. With that I agree. One thing remarkable to me is that it is proposed to alter the name from “committee hospitals” to “hospitals controlled by a board.” Yet we have a clause that deals with quite a number of committee hospitals. The principal innovation in the Bill gives the road boards certain powers in respect of certain hospitals. I agree that the road boards in some cases have asked for it, but I hope the Minister is not going to carry out the suggestion that local authorities should be asked to tax themselves to maintain the hospitals in any given district. I do not think they should be asked to do such a thing, for then only a section of the people would contribute. Some of the boards are doing that at present. Where committee hospitals exist—in my electorate there are no Government hospitals—we have to find practically the whole of the money to maintain the hospitals. It is a very great drain on the people in small districts.

The Minister for Health: There is not in your district any hospital that does not get a subsidy.

Mr. LINDSAY: I will deal with subsidies later. It is a great drain on people in a small centre to maintain a hospital in a large district. We have asked for these powers, and to a certain extent are using them under the existing Road Districts Act. The Minister has enlarged those powers to allow us to use up to 10 per cent. of our rates, but I hope that a more even distribution of Government funds will be made between committee hospitals and Government hospitals in the future. I have here certain figures to quote. The Minister is not responsible for them. They are all I have been able to get, and they deal with the year 1923. It is remarkable that we have Government hospitals scattered all over the State,

and the people in the districts where those hospitals are pay no money for their maintenance. Yet in an adjacent district people have to find money to maintain committee hospitals. Why the York hospital should be a Government hospital, and the Beverley hospital a committee hospital, I do not know. The Minister is most enthusiastic on the subject of hospitals. I heard him make an interesting speech at the opening of the nurses' quarters at Wyalkatchem. He said he wanted to see a hospital spirit in the district. I agree with that. At every committee hospital certain members of the committee make it their business, not only to visit the hospital and chat with the patients, but also to create a hospital spirit amongst other people of the district. Hospitals, of course, are absolutely necessary. I have been connected with one for 18 years. When we start a hospital, the more we pay for the building of it, the more we have to pay to enlarge it. So it is a continual drain upon the people of the district. The Bill proposes to give road boards certain powers. I am afraid there is going to be serious trouble there, for each little centre wants its own hospital. There is no road board in the wheat belt that would voluntarily pay money to erect or maintain a hospital in some other area. The Wyalkatchem hospital serves an area of country extending up to 80 miles or more. We bring in patients from all over that district; but when it comes to making up a deficiency in the finances of that hospital it has to be contributed by a few people within eight or ten miles of the spot. In my district during the last two years we have spent something like £2,300 in doubling the capacity of the hospital; and since the work was finished we have had to find another £1,500 to again increase its capacity. The Minister asked the member for Swan in what way did committee hospitals have more responsibility than Government hospitals. I will answer the question. A committee hospital in a certain town has a great deal more responsibility than any other Government hospital in that town. We do get a certain subsidy from the Government, but it is very small. I do not know if the Minister has any definite scale. I have made inquiries, but so far I have not had any information on the subject. I have here a pamphlet issued in 1923. It is evidently a Government

pamphlet, for it was issued by the Government Printer. I have not yet found out how it came to be issued. It contains the heading "Medical Funds in Relation to the Proposed Scheme," so I assume that it was printed in connection with some previous medical scheme. According to this pamphlet we have 21 Government hospitals in country districts—that is, apart from the Perth, the Fremantle and the Children's hospitals—and 28 committee hospitals, together with several cottage hospitals. The pamphlet contains a column that deals with subscriptions, donations and special efforts. Of the 20 Government hospitals in the State not one penny is shown as having been collected under that heading. Taking the committee hospitals, on the other hand, every committee has collected a certain amount. That is what I had in mind when I said that committee-run hospitals have greater responsibilities than have Government hospitals. The committees find that they have to raise funds to make up the deficiency. At the Wyalkatchem hospital the average number of beds is seven and the amount of the subsidy is £150.

Mr. Mann: Is the Kununoppin hospital a cottage hospital?

Mr. LINDSAY: It is not shown in this pamphlet, but it is really a cottage hospital. The expenditure on the Kalgoorlie hospital was £11,824, the patients' fees amounted to £3,314 and the Government found £8,510. That is a large sum of money for the Government to have to find. In other words, about one-third of the cost of running the hospital came from patients' fees and the remainder came from the Government. The cost of running the York hospital was £1,680; nothing was collected by way of subscriptions, donations, etc., £594 was received from patients' fees, and £1,086 was received by way of subsidy from the Government. The average number of beds in that hospital was five. Does not that seem remarkable? Is there not something wrong with the scheme of financing hospitals when that can occur? At Beverley, situated only a few miles from York, the cost of running the hospital was £1,894: the amount collected by way of subscriptions was £432, patients' fees amounted to £655, and the Government subsidy was £200, the average number of beds occupied being three. Although the average number of beds occupied in the Beverley hospital was only three, as com-

pared with five at York, the patients' fees at Beverley amounted to £655 and the patients' fees at York to only £594.

The Minister for Health: Do you know that out of the £655 paid by patients at Beverley, more than two-thirds came from the maternity section and there was no maternity section at York hospital?

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not know that. The Bruce Rock hospital received a subsidy of £150, the number of beds was four, patients' fees amounted to £349, and the amount collected by way of subscriptions was £552. As to committee hospitals, there is nothing definite regarding the amounts they are to receive. I gathered from the Minister's speech that each committee hospital received a subsidy according to the number of beds occupied. That may be so to-day, but according to the pamphlet it was not so in 1923. The cost of running the Cue-Day Dawn hospital was £1,019, the amount collected by way of subscriptions was £199, patients' fees totalled £108, and the Government subsidy was £700, while the number of beds was three. So Cue-Day Dawn received considerably more by way of Government subsidy than did Beverley. Is that any incentive to the people in the Beverley district to collect money and keep their hospital up to date? There are many other anomalies to which I could direct attention, but my object is to show that no definite system has been adopted by any Government to place the people of the State on an equal footing as regards hospital facilities. So far as possible they should be placed on an equal footing. It is no encouragement to the hospital committee at Kellerberrin, who receive £150 a year for an average of seven patients, to find out that another hospital is getting £700 for an average of only three beds.

Mr. Chesson: That is not true.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Mr. Speaker, may I ask if an hon. member can say the member for Toodyay has made an untrue statement? It may be an inaccurate statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not understand the member for Cue to accuse the member for Toodyay of making an untrue statement. I thought he questioned the statement that the hon. member quoted.

Mr. Chesson: That is correct. I simply said the statement was untrue.

Mr. LINDSAY: This pamphlet is headed, "Hospital Revenue and Expenditure, 1923."

I have mentioned the year 1923 about 10 times. It is not my statement; I am quoting from a Government pamphlet. The pamphlet says that the expenditure on the Cue-Day Dawn hospital in 1923 was £1,019, subscriptions, donations and special efforts produced £199, patients' fees £108, while funds from the State amounted to £700. Of other revenue there was £12. The average number of beds occupied was three. If the member for Cue wishes to say that the statement is not correct, I reply that it is a statement issued in a public document, and I am prepared to say it is true.

The Minister for Health: It was true at the time.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have no doubt about that. I have endeavoured to get up-to-date information on the same lines. I should like the Minister to tell us if a similar publication is issued every year. So far as I have been able to ascertain, the officials of the House have not an up-to-date copy of that information, and I believe that similar information has not been issued since. It is most interesting information to the people connected with the hospitals, and members of the House should be entitled to the latest figures. It shows the anomalies that existed in 1923, and, so far as I am aware, those anomalies exist to-day. If they do not exist to-day, the Minister should give us the information. I repeat it is not fair to ask certain sections of the community to tax themselves for the maintenance of their hospitals and devote much time to arranging entertainments, etc., in order that medical facilities may be provided, while the people in other districts are doing nothing. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, though it contains some anomalies. I do not like the suggestion of the Minister that the local authorities should be responsible for the upkeep of hospitals. I hope that does not mean that the Minister intends to reduce the subsidies. I hope it is not intended that the local governing bodies are to be given additional power to expend their revenue on the upkeep of hospitals. I should have liked a measure framed on different lines, one that would tax the whole of the people of the State for the upkeep of hospitals. There is one clause to which I wish to direct attention. I have mentioned that our hospitals are called committee hospitals. Under the Bill, however, the whole of the hospitals are evidently to be run by boards.

The Minister for Health: A committee will be constituted a board.

Mr. LINDSAY: The Minister said that a hospital board would not be appointed by the Government but would be elected by the subscribers. There is nothing in the measure to show that that will be so. The Bill states that the Minister may appoint a board and may ask a board to go out of office, but there is nothing to show that the people or the subscribers will have the right to elect a board.

Mr. Griffiths: Is not the appointment by the Minister to be only temporary?

Mr. LINDSAY: After the first appointment has been made there should be machinery to provide for the appointment of a board by the subscribers.

The Minister for Health: The committees are appointed in that way now.

Mr. SPEAKER: I may point out to the hon. member that that matter can be dealt with in Committee.

Mr. LINDSAY: I should like to know whether hospital committees under this measure will have the power to sue for money owing. I have read the Bill carefully and I doubt whether the existing hospital committees will have the power to sue that is enjoyed by Government hospitals. If it is not clearly provided for in the measure, I shall move an amendment to the effect that that power shall be exercised by hospitals mentioned in the schedule. If the Minister intends to appoint more than one road board to deal with the work of a hospital, let me warn him that he is tackling a question that the people in the country have to handle very gently. It is fine to have one district showing spirit and fighting its own battle and being rather jealous of another district, but if the people of a district 25 miles away are asked to tax themselves to support a hospital in another centre, it will not be successful. I should not like a minority to be forced to tax themselves if they are opposed to the idea of providing a hospital in some other district.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [9.13]: We can consider this Bill, as we do most Bills, in Committee, but there is something to be said before the Bill reaches the Committee stage. Something that I shall have to say I am afraid will not be very pleasing to the Minister.

The Minister for Health: It will not be offensive, anyhow.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is very enthusiastic in this work; in fact I think he has allowed his enthusiasm to run away with him a little. The Minister has a profound belief in his own judgment, and under this measure he proposes to do things that he should not do, but should leave to other people. He is going to transfer from the Government to the local authorities the responsibility for providing certain funds towards the cost of erecting hospitals. The local authorities will provide from their ordinary revenue money with which to run hospitals. I suppose they will be subsidised. It is impossible that the contributions of the local authorities will be sufficient to meet all the charges for the work of a hospital. There is no provision in the measure for the expenditure of funds other than the funds contributed. I understand that the Minister under his entertainment tax gets about £50,000 a year.

The Minister for Health: I wish I did.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understand that from the remarks of my friend.

The Minister for Health: Your friend made that statement?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose that would be available for country hospitals. In the metropolitan area the Government have always spent large sums of money on hospitals, a far greater proportion than has been spent on the outer districts. Many cases, of course, come in from the outer districts to this hospital. Not only are the hospitals used by people in the metropolitan area, but to a large extent by persons all over the State. We seem always to have relieved the people of the metropolitan area from any need to contribute to these hospitals. The metropolitan local authorities will escape under this Bill. I do not know whether the Minister realises that road boards are expected to do far more in the way of road upkeep than they ever did in the past notwithstanding the enormous sums of Federal and State money that are being spent on roads. There must be a great number of motor cars in the State. We spend about a million pounds a year in petrol, and each gallon takes a motor car 20 miles along the road. One can well understand how it is our roads are knocked about, and how impossible it is for the local authorities with their limited funds to keep them in anything like order. Now the Government are going to ask the local authori-

ties to assist in the erection of buildings and in the running of hospitals. No doubt the Minister intends that the ratepayers or someone shall suggest suitable people for appointment to the hospital boards, but he does not provide for any election by the local authorities from those who subscribe the money. He can consult them. He takes power to appoint, remove and to control absolutely, these hospital boards. He gives them power to make by-laws and to regulate the conduct of the hospitals, but in the final clause of the Bill he says, "I will make model by-laws for you." He may say to any hospital board, "It does not matter about your own regulations; these are mine, and you will jolly well have to adopt them."

The Minister for Health: The Bill says we may make uniform regulations for the lot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Whether they like them or not. The Minister will say, "Here you are; take them." This Bill is like another we have had before us. In effect it says, "This shall be the law unless the Minister otherwise determines."

The Minister for Health: I do not think the people have much to fear so far as hospitals are concerned. They are very satisfied for the most part.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I dare say they are well satisfied with the Minister. I do not know why they should not be. Of course they do not know him very well.

The Minister for Health: They know me better than they have known any other Minister. I have more often been round the hospitals than any other Minister, and have given them a little more money, too.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No doubt he has devoted a good deal of his time and thought to hospitals. He has done a great deal of work, as every Minister must do if he wishes to succeed in his administration. This Bill, however, does not do him credit. He could do better if he tried, and we should let him make another attempt. The local authorities are to provide the money, and through the board, the Minister is to provide for its expenditure. No one is to have any say in the control except those who are appointed by the Minister. Machinery is provided under which it will be very easy for him to act. He can appoint, dismiss, remove persons or do anything he pleases in connection with the running of hospitals. He takes a power which I think the Premier will be interested in. He is an autocrat in

the running of hospitals. He says the Government may set aside any land that is vested in the Crown as a hospital endowment. This means that the Minister may do so.

The Minister for Health: Is there anything wrong in that as a means of raising revenue?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is decidedly wrong.

The Minister for Health: I do not think so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think this power will be found in any other Act. It should not find a place in this Bill. If endowment lands are to be set aside for hospital purposes, this House ought to determine the question from time to time. It does not often happen that lands set aside in this way for endowment purposes are an advantage to the community. Although the university endowment lands may some day be very valuable, up to now they produce very little revenue for the university.

The Minister for Health: That institution has never tried to get any revenue out of them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They have been unable to do so, and it will be a long time before they do. They have been given blocks of land scattered here and there, which cannot be readily leased. The university authorities are very troubled about them. I could understand an endowment being valuable if it constituted a block of land, say, in the city of Perth, or in some business centre in the country. Endowment lands are not of very great use in this State where people do not want leasehold land. If land is to be set aside for hospital endowments, this House ought to be consulted. Does the Premier realise that if this Bill passes, the site we propose to sell to the State Savings Bank may be taken from the Government and utilised as an endowment for the Kalgoorlie or Northam hospitals?

The Premier: Is that so? We shall have to knock that out.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Bill says, "Land vested in the Crown." It does not exclude any land.

The Premier: We cannot have that, of course.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That would cover the King's Park reserve. The Minister would become the king of King's Park. He would be able to say to his political

friends "Go in" and to his political enemies, "Stay out." He may take a reserve at Northam for the purpose of endowing a hospital at Busselton. Under the Bill he can do as he pleases.

The Premier: That is too much power altogether.

The Minister for Health: I can only do that with Crown lands, and not with privately owned lands.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: These are Crown lands. We shall have to call up the police force and bring back Constable Green to protect us here from this Minister.

The Minister for Health: I am not too sure the land would not be put to better use if it were utilised for a hospital.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Probably the Minister would offer us the lease of it after he had taken it. He is even usurping the functions of the Minister for Lands. He is nearly as bad as the Minister for Works. I take it that ordinarily, if land is to be set aside for any purpose, this will be done by the Minister for Lands, but under this Bill he need not be consulted.

The Premier: He may take some of the land we want for forest reserves.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He can take the whole of our forest reserves, our 3,000,000 acres of jarrah.

Hon. G. Taylor: We shall have to watch this Minister.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: These are the powers he seeks under this Bill.

The Premier: I have not noticed them.

Hon. G. Taylor: If he gets at your forests you will notice it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No such clauses should be allowed to appear in the Bill. We should be exceedingly foolish if we allowed them to pass. There is nothing the Minister will be unable to do if this Bill becomes law. Apparently he can order the Minister for Works to build a hospital.

The Minister for Health: No, he cannot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: After he has done that he can submit the plans to the local authorities, and they will have the pleasure of refusing or approving them. If they do not approve, probably the Minister will be able to collect the funds all the same. If we read the clause dealing with the erection of hospitals we find that he can order the Minister for Works to do the work, and he can go through the form of asking the local authority to approve.

Mr. Griffiths: Where does the Treasurer come in?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He is out of it. He will have to find the money, the Minister for Works will have to erect the building and the Minister for Lands will have no say in the block on which it stands. I do not know what the Minister for Drainage and Water Supply may have to do in the matter. This Bill should not reach the Committee stage in its present form. From the point of view of the Minister, no doubt it is all right.

The Minister for Health: It is not bad.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister will not always be there.

The Minister for Health: He will be there for a long time yet.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have a feeling he will be there only for another three months. After that we may have a Minister who is not quite so keenly interested in hospital work, and does not devote so much time to it. We have, therefore, to be careful. We ought to be careful in the passing of all laws.

The Minister for Health: We are quite careful enough.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: All Bills should be reasonably well drafted. This one would be bad law anyhow. There is another provision that ought not to find a place in the Bill. It is our duty to look after aborigines. We have pledged ourselves to do so. Under the constitution we have set aside £10,000 a year to expend on our natives, apart from other sums we provide for running cattle stations, etc. Under the Bill the Minister says the employer must be responsible for all hospital charges in connection with the sickness of aborigines.

The Minister for Health: If he gets a permit to employ them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He may not employ them without a permit, except occasionally. I think the clause would apply to anyone employing labour. If a man has a permit and employs a native who falls sick, it does not matter how sick he is or for how long he is sick, he must pay his hospital expenses. I should imagine this would mean that the employer would not engage natives, which would be very undesirable. We have taken from the aborigines their country and their hunting grounds, and have made it necessary for them to work in order to live. We should see that they get work, and do

what we can to see that they get such work as they can do. In the North there are plenty of aborigines and they generally do something, though perhaps not as much as they should do. We want them to be employed. Because some of them are not employed we have our cattle stations and look after them ourselves. Under the Bill the employer is to be responsible for the total hospital cost. Why does this not apply to other people?

The Minister for Health: Because the other people employed by the station owner are paid wages, and therefore are responsible for themselves. The niggers get nothing; and it is up to the employer, when a nigger becomes sick, to pay something towards his hospital fees.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In many cases aborigines are paid.

The Minister for Health: They are paid very little.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Many of them are not worth much beyond food for themselves and their many wives. I was on a North-West station where there were at least a hundred aborigines, and the great majority of them did not do a tap of work. Under the Bill, I suppose, the station owner would be responsible for all those natives.

Mr. Marshall: He does not get permits to work them all. He would be responsible only for those in respect of whom he had permits.

Mr. Kenneally: If the aborigines do not work, why are the station owners so anxious to get them?

Hon. G. Taylor: The natives are on the stations.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The native has as much right to be in this country as has the hon. member interjecting.

Mr. Kenneally: I am not questioning that. I am asking why station owners are so anxious to get aborigines if they do no work.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The natives are not worth much, and the station has to keep the whole tribe. I suppose there are times of the year when a great number of the natives do some work. However, under the Constitution we are obliged to protect the natives of this country, and must set aside at least £10,000 annually for that purpose. I do not see the necessity for this clause.

The Minister for Health: Do you think the £10,000 covers the annual expenditure?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know whether it does or not. At least, I do, of course, know.

The Minister for Health: Many subsidised medical officers get their subsidy only for treatment of aborigines.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They get that subsidy because a medical officer must be provided in a settled district. Subsidies are not paid because of natives. In the South-West there are still natives, and some of them are paid wages. The other day I met one who said he had good work and good wages. That native, if he felt sick, should not be the responsibility of his employer. No employer would keep him if that was to be the position.

The Minister for Health: The employers do it to-day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Voluntarily.

The Minister for Health: The application notice compels them to do so; make no mistake about that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Suppose a native developed leprosy, as natives do in the North, would the employer be responsible for all time?

The Minister for Health: Not to the extent of one penny.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under this Bill he would be.

The Minister for Health: He would not.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes.

The Minister for Health: The native would not go into a hospital.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: What would happen to him?

The Minister for Health: He would go into a lazarette.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is the North-West excluded from the Bill?

The Minister for Health: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This Bill and the Minister's intentions—good intentions I have no doubt—will be the law of the land. I hope the House will reject the measure and that the Minister will then bring down something more reasonable, a measure that will give him a little less power and give a little more power to the people who pay the piper. I hope the next Bill brought down will not include the clause referring to land vested in the Crown.

Hon. G. Taylor: I am afraid that clause will not go through.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under that clause the Minister will wander through the country stealing stations. To the hospital committee at, say, Meekatharra, he will declare, "Gentlemen, your endowment is 10,000,000 acres in the North-West." Then the hospital board will be able to exchange that land for any other land. Power for that is provided in the Bill, and the land can be sold without reference to Parliament or anybody else. I shall vote against the second reading; and while the Minister for Health is preparing another measure the Minister for Lands will, I hope, take some interest in the clause I have mentioned.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.38]: I shall be brief, because the points I intended to touch upon have been ably treated by the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay). I wish to express my appreciation of what the Minister for Health has done in regard to hospitals generally and also in regard to care of the sick and needy. I agree with other members that there is general appreciation of the Minister's enthusiasm and of his desire to do what is right. The thoughtful speech made by the member for Toodyay calls for the attention of the House, and especially that part of the speech referring to the different classes of hospitals. It is true that the member for Toodyay was quoting from a Government pamphlet issued in, I believe, 1923.

The Minister for Health: It was not a Government pamphlet.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A pamphlet issued from the Government Printing Office. The member for Toodyay referred to various hospitals, and I wish to emphasise the hon. member's remarks on the Kellerberrin hospital referred to by the member for Swan (Mr. Sampson). Whilst the Kellerberrin people received £150 from State funds in one year, they themselves contributed something over £1,230 in that year. The Kellerberrin hospital committee have taken control of the local picture show, and derive considerable revenue from it. Moreover, the Kellerberrin people have the hospital committee sense which was referred to by the member for Toodyay, and have been most liberal in their contributions of poultry, meat, eggs, butter and other things. The various social functions in aid of the Kellerberrin hospital have been well patronised. I believe the amount of

monetary contributions which I mentioned has since been exceeded. As pointed out by the member for Toodyay, with regard to many Government hospitals the people concerned have not the same sense of responsibility, and do not make the special efforts that are necessary, and therefore cannot carry the burden of the hospital. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) said he thought the tax should be on everybody throughout the State. I agree that that is the proper way to distribute the burden of upkeep of hospitals. Another matter to which I desire to refer is the granting to city hospitals of the right to sue. In that connection the member for Toodyay, I understand, intends to move an amendment. In my opinion, all that is needed is the insertion of the scheduled hospitals, the case of which does not seem to be covered. They should have the same right to sue as the Government hospitals have. As to road boards, these bodies are now having enough trouble to meet upkeep of roads and other charges, and I shall listen with interest to what the Minister has to say on that aspect. When an hon. member to-night referred to an entertainment tax, I interjected that the proceeds of that tax had been £50,000. In fact, £50,151 has been collected from the entertainment tax; and the only question is, over how long a period. Probably the period is more than 12 months.

The Minister for Health: A year and eight months.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: If I had thought, I would probably have realised that the £50,000 did not represent a mere 12 months' collection.

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [9.42]: As the Bill is likely to pass the second reading to-night, I wish to state my views at this juncture. The measure is long overdue, and something should certainly be done for hospitals in country districts. According to the schedule there are 77 hospitals scattered throughout Western Australia. In my electorate there is only one—the Kondinin hospital. The Kondinin district is situated in the far east of the State, and considerable difficulties are being experienced in its upkeep. For a while it was without a doctor. The resident medical officer had left the district, I really believe merely on account of not receiving sufficient salary.

Hon. G. Taylor: Not sufficient private practice, too.

Mr. BROWN: The trouble with the Kondinin hospital is that the patients who enter it do not really belong to Kondinin. Patients come to that hospital from 50 miles round. The Pingelly electorate is only 25 or 30 miles wide, and if one is 12 miles outside Kondinin one is outside the Pingelly district. The Bill is supposed to be a machinery measure, but it contains a clause mentioning revenue. That clause empowers road boards to make a special grant, up to 10 per cent. of their revenue, towards hospital service. I do not know whether that refers to the whole of a board's revenue or not. Suppose a board has a revenue of £2,000 annually, presumably the board will be able to devote £200 to country hospitals; but it is optional with the board to grant or withhold that amount. There is no provision for compulsory contribution. Accordingly, it is possible that road boards will not contribute anything at all. That does not seem entirely right. The Bill should contain machinery compelling the contribution of a certain proportion of revenue by the local district. There is nothing in the Bill to compel the board to provide anything at all. There is no hospital at Kulin or at Naremben, yet patients are sent from both centres to the Kondinin hospital. The other boards in which Kulin and Naremben are situated do not contribute anything towards the upkeep of the Kondinin hospital. That is wrong. I am disappointed that the Minister did not introduce a Bill to provide for the contribution of funds by local authorities. We are endeavouring to establish a hospital at Pingelly.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: In the meantime would you make the road boards you refer to contribute towards the upkeep of the Narrogin hospital?

Mr. BROWN: They could contribute. I know some of the patients from our district go to the Beverley hospital.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: There are hundreds who go to the Narrogin hospital.

Mr. BROWN: It must be remembered that hospital fees are collected, and I know that the majority who go to the Beverley hospital pay those fees.

The Minister for Health: The Beverley hospital collects hospital fees to a greater extent than does any similar institution in Australia.

Mr. BROWN: I know that the people pay when they go there, and I believe the

same applies to the Narrogin hospital. At the same time there are many people who are not in a position to pay and hospital committees have considerable difficulty in collecting their money. Regarding the proposed hospital at Pingelly, we have sent our money to the department in Perth and we are awaiting the departmental cheque to enable a building to be purchased. There is a difference of opinion in the district because some people do not see the necessity for an institution there. It is quite on the cards that the Pingelly Road Board will not contribute anything towards the hospital, and that will be unfair. I would rather see a Bill introduced to impose a straight-out hospital tax. Then we could compel local authorities to contribute towards the hospitals. Something must be done in that direction for there is always a certain amount of sickness in the country districts and it is handy to have a hospital and a doctor to provide the necessary attention. If there is a hospital in the town it is a great factor in keeping a doctor there. When it comes to a question of raising sufficient revenue to keep a hospital going and to maintain a doctor, it is a difficult proposition. I fail to see that the Bill will help in that direction. Certainly machinery is provided for collecting fees and the Government propose to give the hospitals certain legal status.

The Minister for Health: This is not a Bill dealing with the collection of money for the upkeep of hospitals.

Mr. BROWN: I do not know whether the Minister intends to introduce a Bill to provide for a hospital tax, but I hope he does. As we have so many committee hospitals now depending entirely upon local contributions in small districts, the position is very difficult. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) pointed out the difficulty arising from many patients coming from outside road board areas and contributing nothing towards the upkeep of hospitals. That is most unfair. I see nothing wrong regarding the Bill and I will support the second reading. I do not know that much good will be done by moving amendments.

Mr. Lindsay: We can try.

Mr. BROWN: But I do not know that the Bill will be made much better. Of course if the road boards were compelled to contribute 10 per cent. of their funds towards the upkeep of local hospitals, it would be beneficial. At Pingelly the road board could

contribute £200 and that would be a big help. I do not think the ratepayers would miss it. I know such a proposal would not be acceptable to a good many road boards. Each town has its little troubles and when it comes to a question of maintaining a hospital where there may be only three or four patients at a time, hon. members can imagine what the cost of upkeep will be. I think the Bill will, if anything, do some good, but I am disappointed it does not go further.

On motion by Hon. G. Taylor, debate adjourned.

BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 30th August.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [9.51]: The Bill is exactly similar to that which was introduced last year. I then expressed my views very clearly and indicated the course of action I intended to pursue. I desire to indicate on this occasion that I will adopt the same attitude.

The Minister for Lands: What threat is this?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There is no threat. The Bill goes a small way towards what is desired by the police who will have a board that will be available to any member of the force who may have been found guilty of a breach of discipline and fined or disgraced. I am of opinion that that does not go far enough; the Bill should provide for an appeal in respect of promotion. That is a sore point with police officers. There are men who consider they have been overlooked when the opportunity for promotion has arisen.

The Minister for Justice: I do not think that is the position now.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: They have told me that there is no redress for them, or any stage at which they can make themselves heard. They cannot initiate any proceedings to enable them to gain a hearing regarding promotion.

The Minister for Justice: No civil servant in the State has that right either.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The police in New South Wales have it and the provision has worked well. In fact it has worked so well that our present Commissioner of Police,

after attending a conference in the East in 1924, recommended that a Bill should be introduced to give the police force the right to appeal regarding promotion.

The Minister for Justice: He has altered his mind since then. He has had some experience.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: What experience has he had? He had the knowledge of the experience of the police force in New South Wales and the discussion at the Sydney conference to guide him. On his return he reported to his Minister in effect, "Having returned fresh from the conference in Sydney I am bound to furnish this report and in order to have a happy and contented police force I recommend that the police be given the right to appeal concerning promotions." When I was speaking last year the Minister told me that a temporary board had been appointed. Perhaps the result of that temporary board may have influenced the Commissioner who, the Minister says, has changed his mind.

The Minister for Justice: There is no "perhaps" about it. It absolutely changed his mind.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then the position must have been favourable to the individual members of the force.

The Minister for Justice: The result of that board was against the efficiency of the force.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Well, I will do nothing that will have that effect, if I know it. I am not aware that the efficiency of the force of New South Wales has been impaired because of the right of appeal respecting promotions.

The Minister for Justice: Our experience here was that one man who was promoted would not accept his advanced grade at all.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If I were a member of the police force, I would infinitely prefer to have an appeal board to deal with promotions than I would in respect to punishments. If I were punished I would know whether the punishment was right or wrong, and if I were wrongly punished I would know that I had the opportunity available to every citizen to secure redress. On the other hand if I believed that I was due for promotion and was being kept back for some reason difficult for me to find out—

Mr. Marshall: You would never find it out.

Mr. Sleeman: You would be punished in that way too.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I will indicate what I hope to have included in the Bill, and I hope the Minister will agree to it. Clause 4 of the Bill deals with the provision of an Appeal Board, and sets out the grounds upon which non-commissioned officers and constables may appeal. I propose to ask the Government to accept an amendment to allow an appeal to be made regarding promotions by the insertion in Clause 6 of the words "or if a non-commissioned officer or constable is dissatisfied with any decision of the Commissioner in regard to the granting or refusal of promotion." Surely there can be no reasonable objection to that.

The Minister for Justice: Who can arrive at a decision on such a point if there is an appeal. It would be to someone who knows nothing about the position.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: If I had my way I would allow a person qualified by his training and experience to sift evidence to go through the file of the constable, and I would suggest the appointment of a Supreme Court judge to act single handed.

The Minister for Justice: You could not get a judge to do that sort of work.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I would get the constable to put his case before a judge and then the Commissioner could answer it by raising his objections. Then the judge with his qualifications would be able to say whether or not the constable had received justice, and whether there was anything behind the departmental action to prevent the constable from receiving promotion. I should prefer a judge to a police magistrate, but I would be satisfied with the magistrate. I certainly think it should be one perfectly capable of dealing with the appeal without bias, one versed in sifting evidence.

The Minister for Justice: There would be no evidence.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: There would be the evidence of the constable, and the evidence on his file.

The Minister for Justice: There might be nothing on the file.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: There would be evidence, because many of the men have passed examinations for promotion.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Of course, if he had not fulfilled all conditions, he would not be foolish enough to appeal to a board for

promotion. If he had passed his examinations and had a clean sheet, and the necessary qualifications and ability, he would appeal to the board, and the board would have access to his personal file and would be able to put questions to the appellant. The Commissioner, if he had objections, would put up his case and let the board decide. That is the only point I wish to emphasise, and I hope the House will help me in my amendment. I only want to give the men a fair deal. When a man is held back from promotion year after year, and when he knows that promotion has been given by favour, he has a grievance, and so he appeals to the board, knowing that there will be no victimisation. At present he cannot ask the Commissioner why he has not been promoted.

The Minister for Justice: He can, and he can ask the Minister also if he likes.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: But the men of the force do not take those risks. They are too sensible. We have a fine force here, and it is our duty to do what we can for them. They have been a fine force ever since I first came to the State.

Mr. Marshall: They are the most efficient force in the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Minister will only be doing what is right if he allows me to carry my proposed amendment to Clause 6. I am going to press it, for I believe it is a proper thing and will make for efficiency in the working of the force. I do not think the Minister is justified in his attitude, having regard to the New South Wales force, where this has been in operation since about 1903. Since that force is three or four times as large as ours, it cannot be that this provision serves to injure the efficiency of the force. It must be for their betterment, and I hope the Minister will accept my proposed amendment. In the meantime I will support the second reading.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [10.5]: I, too, will support the measure. I am glad the Government have decided to bring in this Bill to give the police force an appeal board. They should have had it years ago. The Government are acting properly in giving the force this right of appeal, which has already been extended to practically every branch of Government employees. I agree with the member for Mt. Margaret (Hon. G. Taylor)

that the Bill does not go far enough. Every member knows there is evidence available for an appeal on the question of promotion. To-day the public servants can appeal to a board in regard to their classification, and they really do get considerable promotion and increased salary as the result of their appeals being successful.

The Minister for Justice: Not promotion.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It amounts to the same thing. If the classification of a man's position is entirely altered, and his salary increased as the result of his appeal, he has been given promotion.

The Minister for Justice: No, the positions are graded.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At any rate, reverting to the police force, there is undoubtedly evidence available on which any independent tribunal could decide that men who have been refused promotion are entitled to it. I know one constable who 10 or 12 years ago passed an examination that qualified him for promotion as a non-commissioned officer. That man was capable of holding any position in the force. He has been many years in the force without one charge of dereliction of duty, or anything of the sort, ever being upheld against him. Charges have been made, but he has defeated them all and come out of a special inquiry with honour. But although 10 or 12 years ago he qualified by examination for promotion as a sergeant, his juniors have been promoted time after time, and he has had no appeal at all and has never received the promotion so long due to him. That case alone justifies the giving to the police force of the right to appeal to a tribunal, particularly when we know that that man and others have passed examinations entitling them to promotion, yet have been refused. The refusal in that case was given unjustly and unfairly.

Mr. Sleeman: It is not the only one.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: That may be. When we have men doing important police work and qualified by public examination for promotion, yet who year after year are refused promotion, I say we should give the right of appeal to those men who can get no information as to why promotion is refused them.

On motion by Mr. Sleeman, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.9 p.m.