

encounter some trouble. However, this is the area selected for settlement, and in view of the fact that the conditions require that the land shall be used for the purposes set forth, it is a matter for the lessee's own responsibility in regard to the area.

Mr. MALE: I must thank the Minister for making available the plan showing the locality. I have no objection whatever to the Bill as introduced. It does not of course altogether appeal to me as being the most suitable place in which to start tropical agriculture, for it is, I suppose, as far isolated from a port as it can possibly be. There are no ports in the vicinity but there are the makings of fine ports, and it will be necessary for any company to provide itself with shipping facilities. Unless they take a fair number of white men with them it seems to me that they will be courting great danger. In view of past happenings in that part of the State it would be advisable for any company to see that it was properly protected and in a position to look after itself. I have pleasure in supporting the measure.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [9.3]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Thursday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.4 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 2nd September, 1914.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. J. J. Holmes and the Civil Service.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.33]: Mr. President, last evening the leader of the House thought fit to make an attack on me, and say things in connection with myself that, if they were true, would practically forbid me to be entitled to remain a member of this House. The worst feature of the whole thing is that the hon. gentleman knows perfectly well that what he says is not true. He said that I made use of language of the ale house and the racecourse spieler. He said, further, that I had pushed one officer out of the service whilst I was Minister for Railways, that this officer was replaced by a man who had been dismissed from the railway service for manipulating cash, and who had been guilty of disgraceful conduct; and further, that I, knowing it to be so, appointed this man as confidential secretary, and that the man was no better than a low pimp and a cash manipulator, and that the new confidential secretary to the Minister was kicked out of the service. The hon. gentleman knows all the facts in connection with the matter, for he was in the House at the time. Further, he was one of a number of gentlemen who complimented me upon the stand I took on that occasion. True, I did appoint, and the hon. gentleman knows it, a man to a position in the service, and he was practically one of the smartest railway men in the State. I ap-

pointed him with the consent of Cabinet. Sir Walter James was then Honorary Minister, and we went carefully into the matter. We perused every file that was to be found in the department, and learned that there was nothing against this man as to why he had been put out of the service. Cabinet, in fact, considered that he was a man entitled to the position, and we appointed him accordingly. The present Commissioner (Mr. Short), was on long service leave out of the State at this juncture. After he had returned to the State he produced the file, which had been locked up in his private desk, which went to show why this man had been dismissed. Instead of there being created a reign of terror, as the hon. the Minister pointed out yesterday, but for my action, Mr. Short would not have been in the service to-day because we considered that matter very seriously, namely, that a departmental file should be secretly held by an officer of the department. It was, however, the custom at the time, and we allowed it to go. As soon as this file was presented by the department, I appointed a board to inquire into the whole of the facts surrounding this man. It was not a board of public servants as commissioners, but an independent board comprised of Mr. Roe, the present police magistrate, Mr. Charles Hudson, the then president of the Chamber of Commerce, and Mr. C. H. Hammond. This commission inquired into all the facts surrounding this man's dismissal, and as a result recommended his dismissal. It was I who put this man into the service, and it was I who was prepared to admit that he was not a fit and proper man to be in the service after the file I have mentioned was discovered, and yet the Colonial Secretary had the audacity to stand up and say that I appointed this man into the service, and insinuated that I knew all the facts of the case. He knew that what he said was not the case. This secret file was a departmental file and should have been available when called for. I need go no further into that particular matter except to say that the hon. member knew all the facts and was mis-

leading the House when he gave utterance to the words he did last night. He said also in reference to the Commission appointed in connection with the State Steamship Service that I had maligned those gentlemen, that I had attacked them from inside the House, and that I had assailed the officers of the public service from the fortified castle of the House and had not the courage to repeat my statement outside. The hon. gentleman knows that I did not say one word against the members of that commission. What I did say was in connection with the State Steamship Service.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): You said that one of the members had prostituted himself.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I said nothing of the sort.

The PRESIDENT: I will read the Standing Order under which the hon. member is allowed to make this explanation. The Standing Order is number 384, and is as follows:—

By the indulgence of the Council a member may explain matters of a personal nature, although there be no Question before the Council; but such matters may not be debated.

I ask hon. members to listen to the personal explanation in silence and without interjection.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: What I said in connection with the civil service was this—

There is another matter which illustrates my point regarding the effect this sort of thing is likely to have upon those who discharge their duties. Some time ago four gentlemen were appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into certain charges regarding the management of the State Steamships. Three of the four were civil servants, a position in which no civil servant should be placed. They were put in the position of having to report upon Ministerial acts of the present Ministry. They were commanded by the Government to make inquiry and to report to His Excellency, but they were prevented from so doing. They are honourable and straightforward men

and would have furnished a report on the evidence produced, but when the Government saw that the evidence was against them, they cut the ground from under these officers' feet, and they were prevented from furnishing their report and prevented from obeying His Excellency's commands. Was this fair from the point of view of plaintiff or defendant, or these civil servants? I claim it was not. These gentlemen were prepared to do their duty, and would have done so but for the reign of terror which has been established throughout the service, which prevented them from discharging their duties. It would be interesting to know the success with which these three gentlemen met in the public service. They are very worthy gentlemen, well qualified to fill the positions they occupy. Whether they ask for promotion or not, the policy of the present Government is, "If you act as we want you to in defiance of the welfare of the State you will be pushed forward in the service."

The charge that I made was against the Ministry, and all along I was complimenting the officers themselves. I went on to say—

Already one of the Commissioners has been pushed forward. I do not doubt his qualifications, but he has stepped over other gentlemen in the service into the position of Under Treasurer, formerly held by Mr. Elliott. This is an example for other civil servants.

In other words, if you do your duty you will be pushed out, but "Do what we want, and you will be pushed forward in the service."

Instead of reporting to the Governor, he with his colleagues reported to the Ministers.

The Colonial Secretary said last night that I had made an attack upon the civil service. That is not so. Knowing these men personally, I told them before the inquiry that it was a position that they should not allow themselves to be placed in. It was, however, their funeral, as events have proved. I was also charged with an attack upon the Auditor General,

and with having insinuated that he was under the malign influences of the Ministry. This is what I actually said—

I know he is a very capable officer. I do not know that we ever had a better officer, but if he is faced with the fact that other officers are victimised for doing their duty, and what effect will it have upon him? We have an Audit Act, which is supposed to remove the Auditor General from political influence, in order that he may do his duty to the State, but if he finds other officers are victimised for doing their duty, what effect will it have upon him? The return prepared by that officer and laid upon the Table of the House in connection with State steamships is an insult to the intelligence of the House.

So it is.

Parliament intended that the Auditor General should supply full information in connection with all accounts that he was called upon to audit. The Auditor General should be, as we thought he was, in a position to do so. If his salary is to come before the Colonial Treasurer for ratification or recommendation, the sooner that office is taken away from the Colonial Treasurer the better it will be for the State.

That is what I said, and yet the hon. gentleman said that I had made an attack in the House upon the civil service of the State. Every word I uttered was in fact a compliment to the civil service, and every word was a charge, which charge has not been, and cannot be denied against the Ministry of the day. There was not an attempt on the part of the Minister yesterday to reply to one of my charges. He set out to assert that I had done likewise. Assuming that I did push men out of the service under the conditions stated by him—and he knows that the conditions were not so—assuming that I did, it does not make his position any better.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think the hon. member should debate the matter. He should simply make a personal explanation, and personal explanations are usually of a brief nature.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: All I want to show is that even if I did set up a reign of terror, my reign of terror arose because my officers—and the hon. Minister knows this—were not doing their duty at the time. The trouble to-day is that when officers do their duty they are pushed out of the service. That is the difference. I asked the Minister to declare, in replying to my previous remarks, whether in his opinion either of the three gentlemen named in this motion was mentally or physically unfit to occupy his position. He did not reply to that question, and it is quite plain why he did not. However, I have no desire to press this matter further except to say that, on the evidence before me and on the evidence before the House, I should certainly be justified, if the rules permitted it, in stating that the hon. Minister was a lying, canting, deceiving humbug.

MOTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK ADVANCES.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.47] :
I move—

That in the opinion of this House the action of the Government in withholding 50 per cent. of the advances to the farmers is against the best interests of the country.

In submitting the motion, I maintain that this most drastic step which the Government have taken is really equivalent to sacrificing the revenue producers of this State. At the very outset of trouble, at the very beginning of the war, we find the Government stopping or curtailing advances made to farmers per medium of the Agricultural Bank—curtailing those advances to the extent of 50 per cent. That is a most alarming step to take, and it is hard to say what will be the ultimate result of such a proceeding. One of the reasons given by the Premier for adopting that course is that there has been almost a panic rush on the Agricultural Bank to draw amounts lying there. However, on searching the records, I fail to see how the Premier can substantiate that statement. In point of fact, my examina-

tion of the records goes to show that the amounts drawn from the Agricultural Bank recently have not even reached the normal level. During the first week since the outbreak of war, only £7,000 was lifted from the Agricultural Bank on certificates. That fact shows that the bank did not experience anything in the nature of a panic rush. Replying to an interjection in this House, the Colonial Secretary stated that the Government were only husbanding their resources. If such be the case, all I have to say on the subject is, "What case can the Government put before the farmers at election time?" The Government can only tell the farmers that they have been sacrificing the farming industry for the purpose purely and simply of husbanding their resources. In all good faith the borrowers from the Agricultural Bank have gone on letting contracts, doing work themselves, and so forth, expecting at the finish to draw the amounts of money which the bank had undertaken to advance to them. At the finish, however, they find that the Government withhold 50 per cent. of the certificates when presented. In husbanding the resources of the State in that fashion, the Government are sacrificing the positions of hundreds of men on the land, men who, I maintain, should be looked after. The very first thing the Government should see to is that those who are producing revenue for the State shall not be sacrificed. In this case, however, I maintain that the Government have sacrificed those men. Now, whilst the Colonial Secretary asserts that the Government are merely husbanding their resources, a promise comes along from the Federal Government that they will finance the Government of this State. Such being the case, and our Government knowing that money is coming forward from the Federal authorities, why do not Ministers now definitely state the date on which they will honour the certificates of the Agricultural Bank? If the Government have simply been husbanding their resources, if they are not in a financial tangle, what is their reason for withholding money due to peo-

ple who, in the absence of it, cannot pay their way, cannot pay their grocers, or contractors, or anyone else? It seems a very curious position. The Premier states publicly that he is going to hurry up the Federal Treasurer to send the money along, so that the obligations of the Agricultural Bank may be met. This is a point that wants explaining. Further, we find that the Government propose a new authorisation of half a million on behalf of the Agricultural Bank, increasing the capital of that institution by half a million. No one in this House objected to that proposal; in fact, I think it was supported by every hon. member present. In the light of my little knowledge of the operations of the Agricultural Bank, it seemed curious to me that the Government should ask for this new authorisation. I want to know for what purpose they want that new authorisation, seeing that under the old authorisation an amount of £600,000 odd has not yet been provided for, and that in addition there is a balance of £250,000 under the last authorisation not yet paid. That is getting well on towards a million sterling. Then, why do the Government want a new authorisation for half a million when they cannot finance even the old authorisations? To me the position seems most curious. Independently of this last half million there is approximately £900,000 authorised, for which the Government have made no provision. Next, as regards the amount our State Government is borrowing from the Federal Government. Undoubtedly our Ministers will need to borrow something in order to carry on; but, at the same time, it is a serious thing for this State. We find the Premier giving assurances that a minute has been issued instructing the heads of all departments that no employees are to be put off, no matter how slack the work may be. Now, what is going to be the result of this keeping on of a lot of hands whether there is work for them or not? In this connection I maintain that there are at present hundreds of hands in the Government departments beyond what are required.

I will go even further, and state that the same amount of work as at present could be got through with hundreds of hands less. The keeping on of all these State employees—and the Government admit that there is not enough work to keep them all going—inevitably means additional taxation. Surely, in the name of all that is reasonable, we have enough taxation to bear already. If the Government want to keep the civil servants employed, then let the Government put them on work that is reproductive instead of retaining them in idleness. The State is keeping a good many men in idleness to-day, or we should not be so crippled with taxation.

Hon. J. Cornell: Will you say that on the hustings?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes; I will say it on the hustings. As regards the money being received from the Federal Government, that is increasing our indebtedness and heaping up the interest bill we have to meet annually. Apparently, we are to continue increasing our indebtedness and heaping up our interest bill. But are we to go on like this for all time, living in a fool's paradise of borrowed money? It almost seems like it. There appears to be no attempt on the part of any Government to increase the revenue or to economise. We have the same old thing all the time, borrowing money to keep things going. What will be our position after the war? Worse than it is to-day, if we continue on this borrowing principle. There is no getting away from the fact that bad times are ahead of us, and we are certainly not preparing to meet those bad times by keeping a lot of employees for whom we have no work. Keep the people employed by all means, but find them such employment as will yield a return for the expenditure. It is suicidal to keep them in idleness, as the Premier proposes to do. I maintain that in Western Australia there is anything but a disposition towards thrift. Take our own little city of Perth, and what do we find? A city of luxury, a city of extravagance from one end to the other. I challenge any hon. member to prove the contrary. In the metropolitan area there are no less

than 14 houses of amusement kept going; and it is safe to say that 12 out of the 14 are open continuously. Just let hon. members think for a moment of the amount of money spent on amusement.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: Would you be in favour of putting a tax on amusements?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER. I would be prepared—

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will address the Chair; instead of individual members.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The majority of people in this State are spending money as fast as they earn it. Men just put out of employment have not a penny to their names, although they have been in receipt of tip top wages. Now they want work. It is necessary to warn others to look after their cash and be thrifty, more especially with bad times ahead. If the Government say to their employees, "We will keep you on and pay you whether there is work for you or not," will that tend to create a disposition towards thrift? I have no hesitation in saying that it will not. Then, as regards the position of the men on the land, and the curtailing of Agricultural Bank advances, what has been the attitude of the Government towards the settler in the past? Before the present Government took office, there was a surplus on the railways, if I remember rightly, of about £140,000 annually. A few days after the present Ministry took office they granted an increase of 1s. per day to the porters and unskilled labour on the railways. I for one do not mind good wages being paid if that can be done without injuring the State. But what was the result of this increase? The result was to impose on the working costs of the railways an extra burden of something like £120,000 per annum. And what did we find a little later? That the Government increased railway freights on superphosphates and other requirements of the farming community. If this is not class legislation, what is? If this is not sacrificing the farmer, what is? What has the State got to look to for its very existence, except the revenue producers? Let hon. members think of the number

of people who to-day are living on borrowed money. The end of that must come, and we must produce sufficient revenue to keep us going. I maintain that in such cases as I have quoted, Ministers are not aiming in the right direction. If that amount of £120,000 per annum had been handed over to the men on the land—not as charity; we do not ask for charity; no farmer looks for charity; with him it is a pure business arrangement—those men would have been assisted to tide over the lean seasons. It is true we have had a few lean years, but they are not going to last for all time. The present Government talk so much about what they have done for the farmer. But if the Government are not going to assist those who will produce revenue from the land, then I ask who is going to do it? The Colonial Secretary told us that the Government had advanced the farmers a total of £90,000. If they had advanced the farmers £300,000 it would have been to their credit, because it means building up the State and enabling revenue to be produced. I know of one firm in this State which has advanced the farmers to the tune of £80,000, and that without getting the security which the Government get. For it must be remembered that the Government have the security of the land until such time as the debt to them is paid off. There is another firm which has granted advances to farmers to the tune of £45,000. I repeat, we must look to the Government to assist the men on the land in order that revenue may be produced. What would be the position of the State if the Government did not assist the farmer? The Colonial Secretary uttered a kind of threat, a few nights back, that the Government would not be able to do much for the farmers. I care not what Ministers occupy the Treasury bench—they would have to assist the farmer; not for the sake of the farmers, but—

Hon. J. Cornell: Is that a threat?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is not a threat, but it is common sense, of which the hon. member does not seem to possess a great deal. If the Government

did not assist the farmers and keep them on the land, what would be the result? The result which I am afraid is coming, namely, we will lose hundreds of good men who will get away from the State. We require to be careful and do our utmost for the men on the land, using every endeavour to keep them there. All that land has been alienated by those persons and they are content to keep on working, as in the past, without any luxuries, without even decent food and clothing. They are content to do that, provided business arrangements are made to assist them in carrying on. Some of their houses are constructed of superphosphate bags. I know of a district which is rightly crying out for a railway; along the whole of the route there is not a building valued at more than £15. As regards the wage-earners themselves, I am sure none of them would object to making a sacrifice for the assistance of their brothers on the land. All the wage-earners are loyal. Look at the hundreds among them who have volunteered for the front. By sacrificing themselves a little they will not be doing any act of charity towards the farmers, who want nothing but a business-like arrangement and who are content to drag on somehow until we get into good seasons again. The seasons we have experienced of late are quite abnormal. In 21 years' experience of the State I have never known the seasons to be like the last two. However this will not last. The good seasons will come again, and two or three of them will put us on our feet and indeed, place us in the forefront of Australian producers. I would strongly recommend the Government to put aside a certain amount from the funds of the Agricultural Bank for the purpose, not of development work, but of promoting fallowing. I do not suggest that the Government should stop development work—because if they stop that they stop the supply of food to hundreds—but if they were to advance five shillings an acre on fallowing it would mean an incalculable benefit to the State. Many

of the settlers are compelled to make a gamble of their farming, a gamble which seldom comes out on the right side. If the Government would advance five shillings an acre on fallowing probably 300,000 acres would be fallowed, at a cost of £75,000. It may seem a large sum of money, but it means a benefit of much more than that to the State. The Government have advanced 20s. an acre for clearing the land. If the land is worth 20s. an acre to clear it is worth the other 5s. to fallow, because that is where the revenue will be produced. Under existing conditions if no assistance is given by the Government it is safe to assume that out of that 300,000 acres, 75,000 acres only will be put under fallow next season. Let us put that down at an average of 12 bushels—which is low valuing for an ordinary season—and it means a return of 900,000 bushels. In addition to that we will have another 75,000 acres badly farmed, returning 450,000 bushels, while the remaining 150,000 acres will not be farmed at all. Hundreds of men on the land clear their properties simply to pick up the amounts they get from the Agricultural Bank, in order to buy food and clothes for themselves. If 5s. an acre were advanced on fallowing it would mean that the 300,000 acres would be fallowed and would return 12 bushels an acre, or 3,600,000 bushels, an increase of 2,250,000 bushels. These figures are all cut very fine. The approximate value of the increase would be half a million in cash. That would be in return for an investment of £75,000, and it will be noticed that I have only based this calculation on a 12-bushel average, which is cutting it very fine indeed. I do not agree with Mr. Holmes when he states that in certain parts of the country people on the land cannot possibly make a success of it in the areas in which they are placed. I know the extreme portions of the wheat country, and from my 21 years' experience of this State—during 11 years of which I have been in close touch with farming—I say there is none of our land settled on by the wheat farmers which will not prove a success in normal

seasons. The present season, like the two past seasons, is an extraordinary one.

Hon. J. Cornell: Is the hon. member not capable of regulating the seasons?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: There is our marvel from the goldfields again with another rush of blood to the brain. The present position calls for statesmen. Let the Government step into the breach and assist the farmers to pull out of the hole they are in. By doing this the Government will earn the sympathy of every farmer in Western Australia. In a young State like this we require to assist the farmers by a business-like arrangement to produce the revenue lying dormant in our soil. Let us look to the future. We can confidently expect a recurrence of good seasons. I hope the Government will come to the assistance of the farmers, and make a definite statement that these moneys being withheld will be paid right away, and that they will also do something to assist the farmers to fallow the land.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5S]: I rise to oppose the motion. Mr. Baxter's argument can be summed up as being 1 per cent. logic, 3 per cent. reason, and 96 per cent. flap-doodle. All Mr. Baxter's remarks could have been made on the Address-in-reply.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No. The situation had not arisen then.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member moved a motion but did not speak to it, wandering all around the subject instead. The hon. member claims to be a farmers' representative. If it is any news to the hon. member I would like to inform him that I was farming before ever he had seen a farm, and that I have as much knowledge of farming and farmers as he has.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The difference is that I have made a success of it, and you did not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was starved out of it, and I may say that if the hon. member sticks to politics he will probably be starved out. The hon. member represents the farmers, but we all know that if you gave the farmers the earth they would

want the moon. The hon. member asks what can the Government expect when they go before the farmers at election time? I have pointed out repeatedly what the Government can expect—nothing. They have never got anything from the farmers, and never will. The farmers will take everything offering, and cry for more. I would like Mr. Baxter to draw a comparison between what the present and past Governments have done for the farmers and what they have done for the workers in the mining industry. He would probably find that respective Governments had done a great deal for the farmers and little or nothing for the men in the mining industry; yet these workers in the mining industry do not complain. Ever since 1905 they have endeavoured to get some protection for life and limb by means of a better Mines Regulation Bill. They have not got it, notwithstanding which they are still loyal to the Government. The action of the Government in cutting down the Agricultural Bank's advances was a perfectly wise one and absolutely justifiable under the circumstances. Judging from the remarks of Mr. Baxter he is desirous that the farmers should not bear any proportion of the sacrifices that have to be borne by all sections of the community as a result of the present European crisis.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: What other section of the community is bearing anything now?

Hon. J. CORNELL: There are some of them who do not know where the next meal is coming from. Mr. Baxter cannot say that of the farmers.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Hundreds of farmers have been in that position for two or three years past.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Then they ought never to have gone on the land. Who is going to benefit by this war? There are three primary industries of the world which must of necessity, if history is true, derive some benefit; the gold mining industry—in a small degree; because gold is of standard value—and the pastoral and agricultural industries must of necessity benefit by this unfortunate position in which we are placed.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Provided we have good seasons.

Hon. J. CORNELL: By way of interjection I asked Mr. Baxter if he could not regulate the seasons. Since he has failed to do so I refer Sir Edward Wittenoom to some higher authority. Mr. Baxter has accused the Government of doing something wrong in increasing the wages of railway men by £120,000, and he expressed the opinion that this amount should have gone to the farmers.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I am of the opinion that you should not sacrifice one class to suit another.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Whenever individuals or a firm or the Government employ men, the first consideration should be to see that their employees receive fair and reasonable remuneration, and if Mr. Baxter is of the opinion that 9s. a day is more than a fair remuneration for a railway worker I look upon him in the nature of a curiosity. I do not think any other member here is so tory and hide-bound as to take up that view. Mr. Baxter says that a promise has been given by the Federal Government that they will finance the Government of this State. We know that the Premier when he made overtures to the Prime Minister for the purpose of negotiating so that public works might be carried on, he pointed out that he had as nearly as possible brought down the amount which would be required to the irreducible minimum. What did the Prime Minister say? He said he thought that further caution would have to be exercised because it was high enough. There is one phase of this question I take exception to, and it is that political capital is being made out of the negotiations which have passed between the State and Federal Governments for the carrying on of the functions of the Government of Western Australia. I have been informed that Sir John Forrest telegraphed to the mayor of Albany that he was providing money for the carrying on of public works for the extension of Albany harbour, and he was desirous of soliciting the support and good will of the electors of Albany for what he had done. That is

reducing party politics down, to, I will not say how low. I venture to say that Mr. Baxter has only one object in view in bringing forward this motion, and it is to further the interests of the unholy alliance which is being created for polling day next Saturday.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is characteristic of you to talk such nonsense.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member has hurled many imputations against the Scaddan Government and their administration, and I think therefore that I am in order and justified in giving him a dose of his own medicine. If the medicine is bitter I cannot help it. I can only regret that Mr. Baxter does not take the medicine as he gives it.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It is not bitter; you are amusing.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Probably as he goes along he will lose a good deal of that cock-sureness which has characterised him since his advent into this Chamber, and he will probably reform. I do not think he will reform in the direction my politics lead.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I hope not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It would be good for him if he did. There was a time when the hon. member thought as I do.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Never.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I intend to oppose the motion, and I repeat that now is not the time to submit such a motion. I have sufficient confidence in the Government to know that if the finances of the State will permit it, in the near future, the remainder of the Agricultural Bank advances will be paid.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The Colonial Secretary said that the Government were husbanding their resources.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am in closer touch with the Government than Mr. Baxter, and I admit at once that I am not in the position to know what will be the future requirements of the Government, and furthermore, I am not desirous of knowing. I am prepared to repose my trust in the Government to carry on so far as the finances are concerned, and to keep all men working.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You are not doing that when you keep back 50 per cent. of what is due to the farmers.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member desires that the farmers should not bear any portion of the burden of the State.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They are bearing it all now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The hon. member would like others to be forced into the street without having any say at all and without having any means of redress. I know many farmers in Mr. Baxter's constituency and I venture to say that none of them will countenance the views he holds. I hope that the House will not agree to the motion.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [5.22]: I desire to support the motion moved by Mr. Baxter and also to enter my protest against the action of the Government in paying only 50 per cent. of the approved loans to farmers. Nothing has happened which will tend more to discredit the bank than the action of the Government in this regard. I think the Premier made a grave mistake in issuing such instructions to the Agricultural Bank. I know of many farmers who have been placed in a serious position on account of their failure to obtain full payments from the bank, and not only has the action affected farmers but also the employees for whom Mr. Cornell is always so solicitous. Many men who have been contracting on farms have been unable to receive the money due to them from the farmers because of the action of the Agricultural Bank. Surely the exchequer must be in a bad way when the Government has to issue instructions that the Agricultural Bank are to pay only 10s. in the pound. Nothing could damage the credit of the bank more than such an action. I know of instances where proceedings are likely to be taken against farmers in regard to the contracts which they have left on account of their inability to pay the contractors. I have received several letters in regard to the matter, and I know that the position is serious. I hope that the motion will be carried, and that the Government will see that the approved amounts are

paid in full, so that the liabilities incurred by the farmers may be met.

On motion by Hon. H. P. Colebatch debate adjourned.

BILL — BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time, and returned to the Assembly, with amendments.

BILL—KINGIA GRASS TREE CONCESSION CONFIRMATION.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £1,450,000.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.30] in moving the second reading said: The passage of this Bill will enable the Government to be provided with supplies up to the 31st December. The decision to make the Supply Bill cover the period up to the end of December was arrived at after a conference with the leader of the Opposition, who agreed that such a course was necessary. The general elections, as is well known, will take place on the 21st October, and a new Parliament will be elected. It is possible that there may be a new Government, and in that case they will require time in order to prepare Estimates. The amount asked for under General Loan Fund is very small, but the reason is that the amount granted under the previous Supply Bill has not yet been exhausted, and there is a fair amount in the shape of a balance remaining. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [5.31]: Of course I do not intend to offer any opposition to the passage of the Bill in this Chamber. I must say, however, that I confess I am most grievously disappointed that the leader of the House did not take the opportunity of giving the House some idea of the finan-

cial position, and of how the Government intend to carry on in the interim for which this supply is asked. I think this would have been a most fitting opportunity for him to make some such declaration; not only an opportunity, for I think this House is almost entitled to the information to which I have alluded. We know, of course, without in any way wishing to contribute to a feeling of panic, that we must, to a certain extent, curtail operations, and it would have been extremely good of the Colonial Secretary if he had let us know how the Government intend to do this, and what steps they intend to take. Some time ago the hon. the Premier invited suggestions from all parties in the State, and from any person who had any suggestion to make. I shall take this opportunity of making, at all events, one suggestion, and that is this: during the past three years the Government have, contrary to the opinion of at all events one branch of the Legislature, embarked upon a series of experiments—and they are only experiments—which have so far proved to have fallen very much short of success. I allude to the State trading concerns. If any curtailment of the operations of the Government has to be made, I claim that the most questionable avenues of expenditure should be the first to go. I, therefore, beg to make a suggestion to the leader of the House, and through him to the head of the Government, that some curtailment should be made in regard to State trading concerns. This provides an opportunity when the Government could, without any loss of dignity, very well withdraw what some members of the Government, I think, must realise now is an untenable asset. I intend, on this question, to deal only with State steamships and with nothing else. Speaking from memory, I understand that these have entailed a loss during the last period that was reported on of £22,000. I understand that about £15,000 of that loss is directly attributable to one vessel, namely, the "Western Australia." As a matter of fact it would pay the Government very well indeed if they took the "Western Australia" out into the deep

water, a little beyond Rottneest, and quietly scuttled her.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: And took the insurance.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: If they simply avoided the cost of running her, the cost of running her on trips about which there is apparently very little to justify her existence, they would be doing quite sufficient. One might almost, in such circumstances, suggest a series of funeral ceremonies to grace the occasion. I have, however, a better suggestion to make and I make it in all seriousness. Just now the Commonwealth and the Imperial Governments are arranging for the transport of Australian troops to the Motherland, and it would be a most admirable opportunity for the Government to show their loyalty, and at the same time to study the pocket of the State, if they were to offer to them this steamer, which, I presume, must have some uses, although she was laid up during two years at a time when the world was being searched for vessels to go on charter. She could not be put to better use. The Government could offer her free to the Imperial Government for use as a troop ship. I think that would show the way out of the difficulty, and would effect a considerable saving to the State, without the loss of any dignity to the Government, and would afford a line of retreat which, I am sure, if they studied the interests of the State, they must have been long looking for.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Why not give her to the beef buccancers to send their meat home in?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I do not catch the hon. gentleman's meaning.

Hon. J. CORNELL: You do not want to.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The hon. member's meaning, although obscure, is generally good. I beg to throw out that suggestion to the Government. I am not joking. I think this is an admirable opportunity whereby they could very well and gracefully withdraw from their attitude in regard to, at all events, this branch of the State trading concerns,

which few members in this House believe in, and which has become the laughing stock of the country. I regret that the leader of the House has not thought fit to take this House into his confidence in regard to the intentions of the Government when introducing this Supply Bill. I have, however, much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.37]: I can assure hon. members that I have given them the whole of the information which has been placed at my disposal. The hon. gentleman has criticised the trading concerns of the Government, but he has only given one instance.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: You are very lucky.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: In passing opinions of that nature the hon. member should endeavour to be more specific. There is no doubt that the State Steamship Service is not paying at the present time. That is well known. The hon. member, however, should have pointed out other trading concerns that are not paying.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They are all in that category.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: They are not all in that category. I would like the hon. gentleman to show what other trading concerns run by the Government are not paying.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: He cannot get the data.

Hon. W. Kingsmill. I would like you to consider my suggestion.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister—South) [5.40]: in moving the sec-

ond reading said: The short Bill we now have before us is one which was rendered necessary in the first instance by the present trouble. Quite a number of reservists who have had to go to the front have been those who have workers' homes and who have been unable to meet their payments. But the Bill does not only deal with these. It is a Bill which is designed to deal with all cases of hardship. It will have effect for all time and not only during the period of this war. It simply provides that in cases of hardship, where the holders of workers' homes, whether it be on the leasehold or the freehold system, may be relieved of their payments for the time being, subject to the approval of the Minister. The Bill is one which, I think the House will agree, is a very necessary one. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [5.42]: I do not intend to offer any opposition to the second reading of this Bill, but I should like to know if the Honorary Minister could inform us what amount was due to the board up to the 1st August last, and what amount is owing to the contractors for work which has been carried out in connection with the homes.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister—South—in reply) [5.43]: I am not in a position to say what the amounts are. I do not know that that has anything to do with the Bill. It is simply a Bill providing for deferred payments on the part of holders of workers' homes. I do not see that the amount owing, and the money which has been advanced, or is owing to contractors, has anything to do with the Bill. At all events, I am not provided with the information.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Power to extend time:

Hon. E. M. CLARKE : The Honorary Minister was not very explicit on this matter. The first thing which strikes one is how much of this money is being owed, and for what period. It does not say very much for the workers' homes scheme, if there is a great deal of money owing at the present time. The Government could not have anticipated the war a few months ago. I think the Minister should take us into his confidence and give us the information that I have indicated is desirable we should have. It is generally reported that the homes are costing more than was anticipated, and we want to know how the scheme is working out.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM : I would like to ask the Honorary Minister for how long it is proposed to extend the repayments of these moneys. There does not seem to be any term specified, and everything seems to be left entirely in the hands of the Minister and upon such terms and conditions as the board, with the approval of the Minister, may think fit. It is just as well that, while we are being generous, we should also be just, and we ought to know for how long they can extend this time.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER : Without wishing in any way to seem ungenerous towards the workers, I would like to point out that if, as the Honorary Minister said, this was intended to be inaugurated for all time, we are establishing a perpetual moratorium for workers under this Act. The result of that would be that the general taxpayer would, I presume, have to put his hand in his pocket to make up the money. If the measure is to meet an emergency, such as is created by the war—and I think we all thought it was going to be confined to that period—one would have no objection to it. I understand the Honorary Minister, however, to say that the provisions of the Bill are for all time.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : I do not think the Committee should be too critical about this Bill. Any private owner in the same relation to a debtor as this board will be in relatively to the tenants of the workers' homes would be

expected to exercise a reasonable discretion, and to show a reasonable leniency at all times; not only in times of war trouble. I understand the Workers' Homes Act does not allow the board any discretionary power whatever. Under that Act, the board would have to take proceedings against any tenant not fulfilling the letter of the law. A private owner, however, can exercise leniency, and the Government, as landlords, have power to exercise leniency; but the board, in its capacity as trustee, has no such power. The object of this Bill really is nothing but to give the board similar power; and the board can be trusted to do its best in the interests of all parties.

Hon. J. CORNELL : I hope the Committee will agree to this clause. I am the possessor of a worker's dwelling, and the form of indenture into which I have entered lies on the Table of the House. That indenture provides that I shall pay a certain amount per fortnight in rent, and that if I fail to pay that amount the building shall be immediately forfeited. Renting from a private landlord, if I were a fortnight behind he could give me a chance to pay, but the Workers' Homes Board has no power, legally, to do that. Legally, the board cannot compromise or grant extension of time.

Hon. D. G. Gawler : Do you not think that, in order to be consistent, we would have to introduce the same principle into every Government department; say, as regards leasehold rents?

Hon. J. CORNELL : The workers' homes enterprise is the most solvent and most advantageous enterprise on which the Government have embarked. In the case of nearly all workers' homes the tenants have improved the security. If this Bill does not pass, the board must take that circumstance as a direction to foreclose on tenants who cannot meet their obligations even for a single fortnight; and probably the board would, in the result, get a worse tenant than the one turned out. This Bill would apply to freehold as well as to leasehold properties.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : I am quite in accord with the Bill providing it is necessary, but from a cursory examination of the Workers' Homes Act as it stands I doubt the necessity of this special legislation. Section 33 of the Act provides that if default is made by the borrower in payment of any instalment, and such default continues for three months, the board can take proceedings. And Section 39 seems to cover all that this Bill intends, providing, as the section does, that in cases of hardship the board may extend the time for making any payment required by the Act, provided that the deferred payment shall bear interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum. If the intention of this amending Bill is merely to vary the rate of interest which the person unable to meet his instalment on due date is to pay, then to my mind the Bill is not worth passing. Five per cent. seems to be a reasonable thing, and I do not think the board is likely to take advantage of the present crisis to tell a man in arrears that he must pay 6 per cent. or 7 per cent. On the other hand, I do not think the board would be justified in making the rate of interest lower than 5 per cent. Without some explanation from the Minister, I fail to see the necessity for this amending Bill.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : There is an understanding, I believe, that any legislation brought down now shall be of a temporary nature and relative to matters of urgency. After a very long experience of mortgagees and lessees I find it is not wise to hold out to them inducements to refrain from paying interest or rent. As a rule, they take full advantage of any disposition towards leniency on the part of the mortgagee or owner. I did not know that the Workers' Homes Act contained the provisions to which Mr. Colebatch has just drawn attention. In view of that hon. member's remarks, I cannot recognise any necessity whatever for this Bill. If, however, the Bill is to pass, I would suggest to the Government that a clause be inserted in it similar to that inserted

in the Friendly Societies Act. We shall have a new Parliament soon; and if it is found necessary to enact a provision of a more permanent nature, the measure can be amended again. The clause I would suggest is that suspension of payments shall be granted only for the length of time a debtor is unemployed owing to the war, or for such time as he may be on active service in the naval or military forces of the Crown. That is the most we should do; we should not make a permanent addition of this nature to the Workers' Homes Act on practically the last day of the session. If the Minister will limit the Bill to the period of the war, it will be more satisfactory.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES : I have always favoured the workers' homes scheme, provided no loss is entailed. The State makes nothing out of the transactions, the rent being calculated on an interest and sinking fund basis, but it seems now that if we accept the Bill, there will be a loss on the transactions. Again, such a Bill as this should be limited to the period of the war and should not be of a permanent nature.

Hon. F. Connor : Can the Minister give us an idea of the approximate annual amount which will be affected by the Bill?

Hon. J. E. DODD : In reference to the question asked by Mr. Clarke as to how much has been deferred owing to the necessities of the present time, I do not know that there has been anything yet. In reply to Mr. Colebatch, I may say that our instructions from the Crown Law Department are that the board has now no power to defer payments.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch : Then what does the section in the Act mean?

Hon. J. E. DODD : I do not know. I am going on instructions from the Crown Law Department, and I do not think the department is so foolish as to make a mistake when they say that the Act gives no power to the board to meet such cases as are now likely to arise. Surely we are doing nothing very wrong in proposing to extend relief to necessitous cases at such a time as this. As for limiting the duration of the Bill, it will be seen that

hardships might possibly arise in the best of times; and surely we can trust the workers' homes board with this power. An hour or so ago we heard a good deal about what the Government should do for the farmers. Now, when we propose to give relief to another section of the community, it is at once opposed. Something like £150,000 in deferred rents is owing by the farmers, while £67,000 is owing in interest to the Agricultural Bank. If the Committee throw out a Bill of this nature, it will undoubtedly lay itself open to the charge of class legislation. The tone of the debate implies that we should not extend any relief to the holders of workers' homes, or at most that relief should be strictly confined to the period of the war, notwithstanding that if it is good to give such relief at the present time, it is better to make provision for extending that relief at any time. We are only seeking to give the workers' homes board the power to do what private individuals are doing every day, namely meeting their customers in times of hardship.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Nobody wishes to deprive the Government of the right to extend all possible consideration to these people, but we are entitled to know the meaning of what we are passing. The Minister says there is no provision in the Act under which the board can grant this consideration. I have quoted Section 39 of the Act, which says in as plain terms as those of the Bill, that in cases of hardship the board may extend the time for payment. All we want is an understanding of what we are passing. If Section 39 has no meaning, what meaning has the clause in the Bill which we are asked to pass? The Minister should consent to an adjournment and bring Section 39 under the notice of the Crown Law officers.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: We are expected to pass a measure like this without knowing anything at all about it. It is pointed out that already the power asked for exists in the principal Act. My sympathies are with the worker, but it cannot be said that up to the present the worker has experienced any abnormal

conditions. On the other hand, the farmer has had a succession of very poor seasons. I do not propose to oppose the Bill.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: the principal Act gives the board power to extend payments at a certain rate of interest. The Bill apparently is to eliminate the 5 per cent. interest specified in Section 39 of the Act, and to allow the Government to extend the date of payment without charging any interest.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: If that is the object, it should be explained to us.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The principal Act ment is intended to give the board a free hand to suspend payment without necessarily charging interest. I agree with Mr. Colebatch that an adjournment should be made and that the Minister should give the Committee some assurance of the effect the passing of the Bill will have upon the principal Act. If we are to understand that payments may be suspended without interest, then we accept the full responsibility of giving the workers' homes board the opportunity of doing something, but we do it with our eyes open.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I urge the Minister to agree to an adjournment. I am entirely in accord with the proposal conditionally on there being no loss to the State. We have been told the Crown Law Department holds that it is not possible to make this extension, but the Act provides otherwise. If the matter is referred back to the Crown Law authorities, I think they will find that the board have no power to allow an extension of time unless under payment of five per cent. interest. If this power is taken away the whole system will be upset, and if the scheme becomes an unpayable proposition we may defeat its success. Scores of people are seeking to pick holes in this scheme. The Minister should produce figures to show its position. When Bills for Agricultural Bank advances are under consideration, the Minister is able to quote the figures, but, in connection with this Bill, he does not appear to have any.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: No figures are required.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Then there are no arrears.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: This is merely a measure to deal with cases of hardship.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Minister quoted cases of hardship. If there are no arrears, there can be no hardship. We are entitled to know the position.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I cannot understand the attitude of Mr. Colebatch. He said the Act is identical with the Bill. The two are as different as chalk from cheese. The hon. member ignored the proviso, and the whole section is dependent upon the proviso.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: On a point of order, I object to the hon. member making a deliberate mis-statement of that kind. I read the whole of the section including the proviso. To say that I ignored the proviso is something which is not correct.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The hon. member made two speeches and conveyed a wrong impression. In the first he casually mentioned the proviso as though it were a matter hardly worthy of attention. The proviso contains the point which the Government seek to amend. Section 39 of the Act, which was referred to by the hon. member, was quoted on the first occasion, with the proviso, and on the second without the proviso. I will read it again—

In cases of hardship, the board may extend the time for making any payment required by this Act: Provided that the deferred payments shall bear interest at the rate of five per centum per annum.

The hon. member, in effect, said this was exactly the same as permitting payments to be deferred on such terms and conditions as the board, with the approval of the Minister, may think fit. Surely anyone who can read the English language can see that the Bill is totally different from the Act. There is a very important difference between the payment of five per cent. interest and the granting of such terms and conditions as the board, with the approval of the Minister, may

think fit. The board may think it right to reduce, or increase, or forego the interest. Surely such extended discretionary power is an important alteration to the existing Act. Yet the hon. member contended that the powers asked for are identical.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I never contended anything of the kind.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Whenever the hon. member gets into a corner, he invariably says, "I did not say that." He should be known as the hon. member for "I did not say that."

The CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member kindly discuss the clause?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I am discussing the contention of Mr. Colebatch, and every member in the House—

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I again rise to a point of order, and I think I am entitled to do so when the hon. member persists in deliberately misrepresenting a statement I made. I read the whole of the section, and I asked the Minister whether the intention of the amendment was to do away with the interest, or to vary the interest. I put the whole position clearly, and never made any such statement or contention as Mr. Kirwan now suggests.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The hon. member gave the impression that what the Government desired under this Bill was already provided for in the Act. The Bill is totally different from the Act. Now we are asked to postpone the Bill. Why? Mr. Holmes wants to know exactly how much this will cost. Could any Government estimate the number of necessitous cases which may arise? Do the Government know how long the war will last, or what the after effects will be? There may be bad seasons; necessitous cases are continually arising, and how can the Government give any estimate or figures? Is it not absurd to suggest that the Bill should be adjourned for this reason? Mr. Colebatch thought it should be referred to the Solicitor General. Surely the measure is plain enough. When the Government propose to provide better terms for the workers, members should say they do not agree with grant-

ing further concessions to the workers, act straightforwardly, and throw the Bill out on the second reading. I could admire them for their straightforward attitude and pluck. However, they attempt to kill the Bill in Committee, or get it delayed until the last day of the session, with the probability that it will not be passed. As a result of continually doing this sort of thing, the public have an idea that the House lacks courage, and that instead of killing a Bill straight out, members try to kill it by underhand methods. I hope the Minister will not agree to an adjournment but will divide the House, and those who vote for an adjournment can be regarded as desiring to deliberately kill the Bill, and as opposed to giving relief to the workers.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: There is one feature I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister. I do not intend to refer to the remarks of the hon. member who has just spoken. I appeal to the Minister's sense of reason. If this Bill was intended to do what has been suggested, it would have been framed in the form of an amendment to the section of the existing Act. It is a most unusual procedure to seek by a Bill of this kind to amend a section in an existing Act without making any reference to the Act.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: I thought the Minister did not know that there was such a section in the existing Act.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Quite so. If we pass this Bill, we shall have two Acts of Parliament on the statute-book, one stating one thing and the other another thing, without amending the provisions of the principal Act. I desire to help the Government and do not intend to divide the House on this point. In the interests of good legislation it is desirable that the Minister should consult the Crown Law authorities. If they desire to amend the existing Act, to give power to grant extensions of time without charging interest, the Bill should be drafted in the shape of an amendment of Section 39 of the Act. If they desire only power to make these concessions, it is evident that the Crown Law authorities overlooked the existing section.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think there has been a misunderstanding. I am totally in accord with Mr. Colebatch that if we pass this Bill, we will have one Act permitting extensions on such terms and conditions as the board, with the approval of the Minister, may think fit, and another permitting an extension of time provided interest at the rate of five per cent. is paid. The indenture contains provisions from other portions of the Act, one of which states that the lessee may repay the money in instalments of £10. The point that I desire to make clear is that there are two provisos in the indenture. One is that if any instalment is not duly paid within 14 days after its due date the lessor may demand or recover from the lessee a fine of 1d. per pound or portion of a pound for every month or portion of a month during the period the amount remains unpaid. Evidently it was contemplated that there would be a cessation in the payment of rents. The other proviso is that if default be made by the lessee of any instalment with interest thereon for 14 days after, the same shall become payable and the payments made may be forfeited and the lessor may re-enter the premises and determine the lease.

Hon. C. Sommers: It says "may" right through.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, but it is often construed in these measures into "shall." We should find out whether or not it was intended that interest should be deferred because the weekly payment on a house of £550 is 13s. 9d., and if the interest thereon is worked out it will be found that the tenant has to pay 6s. 6d. or 7s. in principal and the balance in interest.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I think the length of the debate on this matter is due to the fact that the Honorary Minister did not make the position clear in his introductory speech. The Minister did not say that the board had power to suspend the interest or increase it, or do away with it. Mr. Kirwan has made the matter clear, and therefore one can make up one's mind what to do. The Honorary Minister spoke a good deal

about the feeling displayed with regard to the worker as against the farmer. I would like to emphasise the point just touched upon that in these strenuous times the worker gets a regular wage of anything from 9s. to 16s. a day, whereas the farmer gets nothing at all, and, in fact, runs into debt. The two cases cannot be compared. Since we are to take the clause as interpreted by Mr. Kirwan, I am of opinion that it should be limited during the time of the war, and I would be prepared to vote for the Bill provided that limitation were included.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I was under the impression when I moved the second^d reading of the Bill that there would not be any occasion for a debate, and consequently I did not look up the principal Act. I was not aware that there was a Section 39 which provided for the extension of time for repayment, but I do not think it alters the position in any way whatever. To my mind hon. members only see one side. Mr. Baxter has continually drawn attention to-day to the class legislation of the Government, but when we refer to the class legislation indulged in in the past it is a horse of a different colour. Throughout to-night we have had nothing but class legislation. Now we are asking that something should be done for the worker, and hon. members see the thing in an entirely different light. Mr. Colebatch quoted Section 33 of the principal Act in which provision is made for three months' exemption from payment, but Mr. Colebatch did not read the section right through. If he had done so he would have found that when the worker ceased to make payment for three months the whole of the loan became repayable to the board.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: And he may be sued for it.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Yes, and sold up.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Surely Section 39 covers that.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Let us consider Section 39, which says that in cases of hardship the board may extend the time for making any payment required by

the Act. It does not say that the board may extend the time of making all payments. We are now dealing with all payments, and that is what the Bill will do. A man may be away for 12 months and his payments may accumulate, and when he returns he may be able to repay those accumulations. If a man is not able to make his payments within a certain date, the rate of interest increases. According to the Bill the board may fix any terms and conditions they may think fit. Why on earth figures are required in connection with a small measure of this kind I do not know. If figures are needed as to what the arrears are now I think I would be safe in saying that they are a mere bagatelle, because the board insist on payments being made. Personally I can see nothing to be gained by deferring consideration of the clause.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I support the Bill as it stands with a parting kick that these thrice accursed Government socialistic performances are likely to land the country in a most serious difficulty. Mr. Colebatch has pointed out, and with force, that this clause is practically on the same lines as the section in the Act. I think it might be argued that there is a slight difference, and such as it is it might be given to the Government. What has made me decide to vote for the clause is the comment by Mr. Cullen, who pointed out that this gives to the Government practically the same power that every private mortgagee has. The mortgagee will look at the conditions of the case, and he will charge his five or six per cent. and possibly more, or he will let the thing go on. In order to meet the borrower's requirements, he has a way of finding out under the system we have been working on here for the past 20 years. The Government are bound hard and fast. Mr. Colebatch has expressed his willingness to let this go through, and he has contented himself by simply pointing out the folly of inserting a clause similar to a section already in existence. The only thing that appeals to me is the question of expense. It is probably cheaper to put this clause through than it is to de-

lay the business of the country in order to enable the Minister to consult the Crown law authorities.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: At the close of a session we should not be asked to amend a measure except in a temporary manner. There seems to be a doubt as to whether there is a necessity for this Bill, and to make the matter clear, and in order to give the Government the assistance they need in a temporary way, I intend at a later stage to move a new clause the effect of which will be that the Act shall have operation only during such period as the Governor may from time to time proclaim, and during the existence of the war. That will get the Government out of the difficulty, and assist to provide relief during these troublesome times. It must be borne in mind that the country can make no profit out of the workers' homes. At the very best the Government can only get back the money they have advanced. I very much doubt even if the whole interest and principal are paid whether sufficient provision has been made that the whole cost will be paid. There are plenty of these buildings which have been faultily constructed no matter how close the supervision may have been. With a building having a life of 30 years there is bound to be a loss. The country is going to lose in any case. The homes go up and the district goes down, and they become almost worthless. Further, they get into the hands of people who do not take very much care of them, and as a result they often go back in value very considerably. I think the Honorary Minister will be wise if he accepted the proposal I have indicated.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Whilst I do not intend to oppose the clause I do think that the Minister in charge of the Bill should have enlightened the House as to the amount which is covered by the operation of the proposed Act. Is it a million or is it half a million pounds? How much are we dealing with? It is not a question of what is in arrears; that is not material. What is the amount of the liability that the workers' homes owe to the Government? It is a question which

requires very deep consideration, and before we give our sanction to the Bill we should know approximately what the amount is we are dealing with.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I trust that the new clause foreshadowed by the hon. Mr. Sommers will not be carried. With regard to the statement by the hon. Mr. Connor as to how much money is concerned, if he will glance at the report of the chairman of the workers' homes board for the year ending 30th June, 1913, he will surely find sufficient figures to enlighten him.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: That is 15 months ago.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: That being so, there should be no necessity for the Honorary Minister to go further into the matter. I hope that this amendment will not be carried for the reason that under the Act, it is compulsory for the board to charge 5 per cent. interest. If the Bill be carried without this provision regarding the war it will be in the discretion of the board to charge any interest. After the war there may be fluctuations in interest rates. It may be necessary to charge a higher or lower rate of interest, as the case may be. At this particular time, when we are face to face with a crisis, I think it is essential that the board should have full discretionary power in the matter of interest. It is not right to arbitrarily fix the rate of interest now, and it is very much better to give the board, in which I think the entire House has full confidence, discretionary power to act as it thinks best in the interests of the workers' homes scheme.

Hon. E. McLARTY: I agree with the remarks which have fallen from the hon. Mr. Sommers. There should be some limit to the powers which are given to the board. My opinion has always been that the country will gain nothing by the workers' homes scheme, and that they stand to lose a great deal. It is a very doubtful question whether we should put into the hands of the board power to regulate interest. All sorts of appeals will be made to them. I do not see that it will interfere with the Bill

in any way if it is restricted to the time of war. If it is necessary when that time expires to amend the Act there is no reason why that should not be done. With regard to the remarks of the hon. Mr. Kirwan, I see that no mention is made that the interest should be suspended altogether or should be increased. I do not agree that such a question should be left in the hands of the board --not, however, that I have not confidence in it. I cannot see that it would affect the Bill if the suggestion of the hon. Mr. Sommers were carried out.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON : I hope the clause will be carried as printed. I may point out that the wording of the Act is entirely different from that of this Bill. I think we can rest assured that those concerned have gone into the question and come to the conclusion that the measure is necessary. Most hon. members are inclined to let the Bill go through if the Government think it is necessary, and evidently they do think so. The clause referring to the matter in the Act states distinctly that in cases of hardship the board may extend the time for making any payments required by the Act, providing that the deferred payment shall bear interest at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum. That means that it can only be done provisionally, and that they are bound by the conditions under which they give the required concession. Under the clause we are considering, however, they are allowed to give time for deferred payment, and it states the terms and conditions under which this can be done, that a special matter has to go before the Minister for consideration, and that it can only be done with the approval of the Minister. I maintain that the Act and the Bill are not identical, and I am confident that those responsible for introducing this new clause have put it forward after due consideration, believing it to be absolutely necessary in order to safeguard the Government and those who are the lessees or the owners of workers' homes. We require special consideration to be given at a special time, and the clause has been carefully draft-

ed with that object. It is idle to say that it is the same as the old clause and will have the same effect. I hope the Committee will pass the clause without further delay.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER : This is infringing one of the first principles of draftsmanship. If the clause of the original Act meant to carry out what is contained in the present Bill it seems to me that there are two clauses running side by side, one in each Act, which practically mean the same thing. Let me point out to the Honorary Minister what a simple thing it would have been, if the clause is to be amended, if the amendment had been made. Instead of the Bill setting out Clause 2 as it does, it would have been necessary only to have said that, notwithstanding the proviso contained in Section 39 of the principal Act, the board may at any time either remit altogether payment of interest, or defer payment until such time, or upon any terms and conditions as they think fit. That would dispose of the whole matter. I cannot help thinking that the Crown Law authorities cannot have had the clause before them when they framed it. I do not think that, as a matter of solicitude in draftsmanship for which this Committee ought to have regard, we should let a clause like this go through without protest. It would not take long to consult the Crown Solicitor to-morrow; and if that officer says the clause is necessary, we could let it go through.

Clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. C. SOMMERS: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 3:—"This Act shall have operation only during such period as the Governor may from time to time by proclamation declare, when a state of war exists between the United Kingdom and some other power."

The Government have got all they desire in this Bill, to give relief to the holders of workers' homes going to the front. It is to the credit of those men that they are going to the front, and we are bound to protect them. A new Parliament will

be sitting in the new year; and if the war continues and the Government consider they need this measure for a longer period, they can get it extended. I again mention that the understanding is that we shall not tinker with Acts of Parliament at the present stage, except to meet necessities occasioned by the war.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Apart from the inadvisableness of tying the board's hands in regard to the rate of interest, as proposed by this new clause, there is another point which Mr. Sommers has overlooked—that this measure ceases to have any operation immediately a proclamation is issued that a state of war no longer exists. The effects of the war, however, may persist for many months after the conclusion of the war. A widow, for example, should not be deprived of the benefits of this measure immediately on peace being concluded. If the new clause is to be carried, then I would suggest a further provision in the direction I have indicated.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Whilst I have no intention of dividing the Committee on the new clause proposed by Mr. Sommers, I fail to see any reason why it should be carried. If the Committee should see fit to carry the new clause, then of course it will remain for another place to say whether or not the provision is to be accepted there. A case of hardship might be dealt with by the board whether such case occurred in time of war or in ordinary times.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: The board has that power under the original Act.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I do not think so. There can be nothing wrong in allowing the members of the board, who are practical men, to decide these questions.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I would ask Mr. Sommers to withdraw the new clause. We had better let the Bill stand as it is, and so leave the whole responsibility on the board.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: I am not very particular about the new clause. It appears to me, however, that there has been a slight breach of faith, inasmuch as this

measure is not urgent in that respect. In any case, the Government have got everything they asked. If a further amendment is required, we might provide that the operation of this measure should continue during the war and for six months beyond its conclusion. I ask leave to withdraw the new clause.

Leave to withdraw proposed new clause refused.

New clause put, and a division taken with the following results:—

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	15

Majority against .. 6

AYES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. P. Colbatch
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. G. M. Sewell
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Cornhill
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).

New clause thus negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) [8.23]: In moving the third reading of this Bill, I may just point out for the information of hon. members that Section 39 of the principal Act has been entirely repealed.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: By what is it replaced?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I will read the repealed section contained in the Workers' Homes Act Amendment Act, 1912:—

Section thirty-nine of the principal Act is repealed, and a section is inserted in place thereof, as follows:—

39. If any payment required by this Act to be made by a lessee or borrower is not paid within fourteen days

after its due date, the lessee or borrower shall be liable to a fine of one penny per pound or portion of a pound thereof for every month or portion of a month during which the payment required to be made remains unpaid after the expiration of such 14 days.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—LEEDERVILLE RATES VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.25] in moving the second reading said: Some days ago I asked the House to pass a Bill validating rates illegally struck by the Cottesloe Municipality. I propose to-night to submit a measure of a similar character. This is a Bill validating certain rates struck by the Leederville municipality, which rates, owing to an informality, have been illegally struck. The mayor of the municipality omitted to initial the rate-book, and, in addition, failed to fulfil completely another duty required of him, namely, to publish in a newspaper, in accordance with the Act, a copy of the memorandum appearing in the rate book. It appears that the mayor published the memorandum, but did not publish it in full. These omissions were discovered by some enterprising gentleman, who circulated the information, with the result that many ratepayers declined to pay their rates. Then the municipality brought the matter under the notice of the Minister for Works, who sent one of his officers to make an investigation. This officer discovered that, although the books were in perfect order, there were other blunders extending over several years, blunders in addition to the omissions to initial the rate book and to publish the memorandum in proper form. They were mere blunders, nothing more than errors, but still calculated to invalidate the rates

struck. The present Bill is introduced for the purpose of relieving the position and validating the course taken by the municipality in connection with the striking of the rates affected. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.27]: Without suggesting that a drastic course should be adopted in connection with this Bill, I wish to mention that there is a section of the Municipalities Act which provides that certain penalties can be visited on those responsible for not sufficiently complying with the requirements of that Act. We have seen a lot of these Bills to validate rates, and while I do not wish to suggest an extreme course in this case, I think it would probably be well if the Government brought prominently before mayors and other local authorities the necessity for making themselves acquainted with the provisions of the Municipalities Act and kindred Acts, so that the time of Parliament shall not be wasted in passing these continual validating measures. There is only one point I particularly wish to mention. I have already brought it informally before the leader of the House. I wish to make sure that Clause 2 will not operate to bring about what would be a considerable unfairness, were it so, in regard to some of the ratepayers of Leederville. Hon. members are aware that there is a Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage Act in force, and that under it ratepayers connected with the sewerage system have to pay a rate to the Government. Section 102 of that Act reads as follows:—

When any land becomes ratable under section ninety-one and the owner or occupier shall have paid or shall be liable to pay to the local authority a sanitary rate in respect of the same land for the same period as that for which a sewerage rate has been made and levied under this Act, the local authority shall repay or allow a rebate of a proportionate part of such sanitary rates, such rebate to be calculated from the time when the connections to the land have been made.

It means that the ratepayer shall not be double banked by the sewerage rate and the local authorities' rate. A number of ratepayers there have been connected with the sewerage system, but have not, as yet, had any rebate from the local authority. I want to be sure that the clause validating the rates that have been made by the Leederville municipality, does not in any way conflict with the right of the ratepayers to get a rebate under the Act I have alluded to. I do not think it can be so, but I would like an assurance on the point. I hope the Minister will leave the third reading until to-morrow, so that, if necessary, we can consider the point on recommitment.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.32]: I would like to support the remarks of the hon. member, Leederville being in the Metropolitan area. I hope the Minister will agree to the suggestion made.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [8.32]: I agree with Mr. Gawler that it is about time the municipalities began to know their duties. I believe the Minister for Works intends to issue instructions to the municipalities in regard to what must be done to comply with the Act. If a prosecution is enforced the mayor has to stand the trial, and it is recognised that the mayor is an innocent person in the matter. The town clerk is practically responsible for the neglect, so it would be scarcely fair to prosecute the mayor for the town clerk's negligence. In regard to the point raised by Mr. Gawler, concerning the rights of the ratepayers, I do not think it is necessary to consult the Crown Law Department, because the Bill simply validates rates which the municipality was entitled to levy. It goes no farther than that.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: I do not think there is much necessity to make very exhaustive inquiries.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If I had reason to believe there was, I would agree to delaying the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister—South) [8.36] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is intended to remain in operation until March, 1915. It gives the Governor power by proclamation to restrict, and even prohibit the sale of intoxicating liquor in any part of any licensing district. The reason for it is that in Western Australia we have a large number of persons who are not naturalised subjects of the British Empire. In some localities they are in a majority, and it is quite possible that in some state of excitement among them, brought about by the fluctuations of the war, trouble may take place if they are allowed to have free and unrestricted indulgence in liquor. Apart from that, the prohibition, or limitation, of the sale of liquor has been imposed in several countries affected by the war. In Great Britain itself the sale of liquor has been limited to a very great degree. The Bill provides that it shall be an offence to sell liquor in any part of any licensing district which may be defined by proclamation. Moreover, the opening and closing times of public houses and places where liquor is sold may be prescribed, and the powers given to the police under the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act are also given to the police under the Bill. Those powers are somewhat extensive. In addition to that, further powers are given to the police in regard to searching for liquor wherever they think it may be, and power is given to seize that liquor and hold it in possession while the proclamation is in force. There is a somewhat important amendment which, if the second reading is carried, I propose to move, but I think it would be as well to hold it over until to-morrow, in order that the amendment may appear

on the Notice Paper for the information of hon. members.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The Minister had better read it now.

Hon. J. E. DODD: The amendment is to provide that the landlord shall abate some of the rent if the license is temporarily withdrawn. If it goes on the Notice Paper for to-morrow hon. members will be able to see exactly what it means. It prescribes that if the landlord and the lessee or sub-lessee of licensed premises cannot arrive at an agreement as to the rent to be paid in the extraordinary circumstances which I have suggested, the matter shall be referred to the chairman of the licensing court for the district in which the licensed premises are situated, and the arbitrator may, in his discretion, award that the rent to be paid shall be at such reduced rate as the arbitrator shall, in the circumstances, deem reasonable, and his award shall be binding on the parties, and final. The Bill is, undoubtedly, a drastic one, but it is thought that the necessities which may arise entitle the Government to ask that the measure be passed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [S.42]: As the Minister rightly pointed out, the Bill is a very drastic one. I am not going to oppose it entirely, but I contend that it requires a good deal of consideration. The Minister called attention to isolated cases in parts of the State where many foreigners are in residence. In such cases, no doubt, drastic legislation is very necessary, but when we have a Bill like this sent up to us we have to take into consideration that it is not to apply to isolated cases only, but to the whole of the State. Great powers are conferred under the Bill, and when we remember remarks made by Ministers quite recently, it gives us pause. When waited upon by a section of the community and asked for amendments, their reply was "You are only asking for half a loaf; if you asked for the whole loaf probably you would get it." When we bear in mind remarks like that

and find ourselves faced with a Bill like this, we naturally ask what is the effect of it? Although the Bill is of a very drastic nature, it is, at the same time, of a jelly-fish nature, in that it does not contain any backbone whatever. The Government have not sent us up a measure having for its object something definite. It may be right or it may not be right to confer such powers as are contained in Clause 2. If it is right, then the clause should have been more definite; if it is not right the clause should not appear there at all. Under Clause 3 full power is granted, if necessary, to close hotels altogether, or to close them for a limited time. I am prepared to go even further than Clause 3. This clause is in accordance with Section 97 of the Licensing Act, which provides that hotels shall be open for the sale of liquor between the hours of 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. This may be all very well under ordinary circumstances, but on this occasion we are asked to agree to drastic legislation owing to the unsettled times in which we are living. Therefore, if the Bill is to accomplish anything, this House should have a say as to what it should provide. We are prepared to shoulder our responsibilities to the community and fix a definite time during which licensed houses shall be open for the sale of liquor, at any rate those in the metropolitan area. There are parts of the State to which the measure would apply very aptly, but what would be applicable to remote parts would not apply to the capital or the metropolitan-suburban area. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage, I intend to move an amendment to Clause 3 to the effect that no liquor shall be sold between the hours of 9 p.m. and 9 a.m. In this way we will be taking a stand and showing that there is some necessity for legislation of an unusual character as applied to the drink traffic at this period. But when we are faced with a Bill couched in such terms as this one is, I cannot regard it as being of other than a jelly-fish nature; certainly there is no backbone in it. Powers are asked for to delegate to someone else.

It is our duty to provide something definite and stipulate that no liquor shall be sold after 9 p.m. at night. If circumstances which we cannot now foresee, but which I hope will not eventuate, render it necessary to close hotels altogether, the position can be met under Clause 2. I cannot for the life of me see the use of sending a Bill of this nature to this House for consideration, especially in view of the proposed amendment indicated by the Honorary Minister. Recollecting the remarks made by a Minister of the Crown to a deputation a few weeks ago, it behoves us to carefully consider this measure clause by clause. At the same time I wish it to be understood that I do not oppose the Bill in its entirety. I believe it right and proper that we should legislate for restricted hours of trading. But I will not be a party to delegating the whole of our powers and responsibilities to someone else.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East) [8.50]: The hon. member has misconceived the object of the Bill. It is not intended to amend the Licensing Act.

Hon. J. Duffell: No, it is to give power to someone else to do as he likes.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It is designed to give temporary power to the responsible Government of the day to step in in cases of emergency. Should there be risk of a riot in any part of the State, the Government can step in. All parties in another place have agreed to this Bill. The clauses giving this power to the Government are amply safeguarded now that the Minister has submitted an amendment providing against the only possible injustice that might arise. However, I desire the Minister to look carefully at Clause 5, which does not confer special powers on Ministers whose discretion he can trust, but confers enormous additional powers on policemen. "Any police officer may, without warrant, enter and search any unlicensed premises," for instance, our houses, "or detain and search any vehicle, boat, or vessel, in or upon which he may have reason to believe liquor to be, in any licensing district." and he can confiscate that liquor.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Without the order of his superior officer.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Yes. This was not the intention of the framers of the Bill. The intention of the framers of the measure was to deal with liquor for illicit purposes. It is unreasonable that the police should be able to enter, say, the house of the President or the Chairman of Committees to look for a bottle of wine and confiscate it. It was never contemplated that a policeman at his own sweet will, and perhaps when in an excited state of mind, should be allowed to enter any house and seize any drop of liquor he may find.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh: That is if it is for sale.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Even if it were for christening purposes; the clause does not stipulate if it is for sale. I think the clause is intended to apply to liquor for illicit purposes. I shall ask members in Committee to agree to an amendment which will make this clear. It would be intolerable if any policeman—

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: You are only giving the police power to enforce the measure. It is to be brought into operation by proclamation in certain districts.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Those districts may include thousands of innocent houses.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: You are only giving the police power to enforce the measure you are passing.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It will be giving the police power to enter any private house.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: How else can the evil be dealt with?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: There must be reason to believe that there is liquor on the premises for illicit purposes. There may be liquor in practically every house for innocent purposes.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It is only where the police have reason to believe so that they can enter.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It will be necessary to safeguard the clause. As to giving the ample powers under this Bill to the Government representing the whole

country, the House will do so, believing that no Government will exceed what is absolutely necessary in the exercise of such discretionary powers. We do not know how soon it may be necessary to exercise the powers conferred by this measure.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister—South—in reply) [8.54]: Once again I wish to point out that the measure is to remain in operation for only six months. In regard to the point raised by Mr. Cullen, I admit that the clause is fairly drastic, but, under the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act passed last session the police have not sufficient powers to effectually cope with sly-grog selling. In regard to the point raised by Mr. Duffell, the proclamation may apply only to any given licensing district or part of a licensing district. If a proclamation is made, it does not follow that it will apply to the whole State. If hon. members desire to move any amendments, I ask them to place them on the Notice Paper.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL.—SPECIAL LEASE ENABLING.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.56] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is to ratify an agreement made between the Minister for Agriculture and Mr. Hector William Cole as the representative of a Melbourne syndicate. The syndicate proposed to embark upon tropical agriculture in the North-West of this State. They feel convinced that tropical agriculture can be established on a commercial basis if the conditions of this agreement entered into between the Minister for Agriculture and Mr. Cole prove acceptable to Parliament. Mr. Cole was desirous of securing this holding under conditional purchase, but it was impossible for him to do so under the Land Act of 1898 and its amendments. It could not be done except through the medium of special legislation. The Bill provides for

a lease of 20,000 acres in the Kimberley division. It is situated eastward of the Presbyterian mission in the vicinity of Hanover Bay. I have placed on the Table of the House a map indicating the locality.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Is it East or West Kimberley?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: West Kimberley. For the first seven years the lessee will pay a peppercorn rental. He is obliged under the terms of the agreement to pay the survey fees. From the seventh to the twentieth year, the annual rental is to be £125, which is 2½ per cent. on the assessed capital unimproved value of the land. The capital unimproved value of the land is estimated to be £5,000. At no time under the agreement shall the capital unimproved value be assessed at more than £10,000. The term of the lease is 99 years, and a provision is made that any portion of the land included in the lease may be exchanged with the Presbyterian mission authorities. It is necessary that some arrangement should be made with the Presbyterian mission authorities by the lessee in order that he may find an outlet to the coast, and the Presbyterian church authorities are agreeable to transfer to him a portion of their land in substitution for some of his.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It is right on the coast.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is east of the Presbyterian mission.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: According to the plan it is on a navigable river.

Hon. W. Patrick: According to the plan it is right on the coast.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think it is 15 miles from the Presbyterian mission, and the mission land extends close to the coast. The lessee is required to clear 500 acres in the first two years, and cultivate 500 acres during the third year, and during and after the fourth year must cultivate the area with some kind of tropical product.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That is a bit vague.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: After that he must clear and cultivate not less

than an additional 50 acres per annum until a total of 1,000 acres is under cultivation.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: What does he want all that land for?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Surely to goodness hon. members would not expect a man to go there and start raising tropical products on 1,000 acres of land. I suppose he will require to stock a portion of it in order to assist his station. Hon. members will probably come to the conclusion that 20,000 acres is a large area, but in this part of the State there are millions of acres held under pastoral lease. In this locality there has been no pastoral lease taken up for many years. It was held under pastoral lease at one time, but owing to the savage and murderous character of the natives, the lease was abandoned, and until the missionary people started there it was impossible for anyone to settle in the locality.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Is it possible now?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes, they have tamed the natives, and paved the way towards settlement. When I heard that this application was about to be made I minuted the Minister for Agriculture not to take steps towards approving it until I had consulted with the mission authorities and discovered that it was a sufficient distance from the mission station, and that there would be no likelihood of a detrimental effect on the good work done by the mission. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central) [9.3]: I think this is a particularly unwise Bill. If the Government wish to encourage people to take up land for the purpose of raising tropical products they ought to introduce a special measure dealing with lands suitable for that purpose in the northern portions of the State so that everyone might have the same opportunity. One thing has struck me in looking through the agreement, that it was made on the 23rd June of this year, over two months ago, and the Bill is brought before us at a time when it is impossible

to give it any consideration. I do not think it would be wise for the House to agree to the alienation of 20,000 acres of land in one of the best portions of the State. This land is on the coast. It is proposed to give what is practically the freehold for 99 years.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: And well he deserves it if he makes a success of it.

Hon. W. PATRICK: I know something of tropical agriculture, having spent several years on a sugar plantation, and I know that 20,000 acres, if properly cultivated would maintain a population of 5,000 people at the least. We know that Australia, outside of Queensland, knows not what is meant by tropical agriculture. Take Barbadoes Island in the West Indies. It maintains a population of nearly 300,000 people, and the men there are something of the stamp of Jack Johnson, and the island exports are valued at a million sterling. That is what 160 square miles will do when properly cultivated. Here we propose to give away 20,000 acres on condition that during a long period of time 1,000 acres may be cultivated on ridiculously easy terms. It will be pure folly to ratify this agreement. The only way to properly encourage tropical agriculture is, as I have stated, to introduce a special measure dealing with the northern country so that anyone may have the opportunity of taking up land. At the present time they cannot do so. It is foolish to give a special concession of 20,000 acres of possibly the most valuable land in the northern portion of the State. For the first seven years the rental in this instance is to be merely peppercorn, and then at the rate of £125 per annum, and the only condition imposed is that 500 acres shall be cleared during the first two years, and 500 acres cultivated in the following year. I strongly oppose the Bill. It will be a very foolish thing on the part of the House to agree to alienate 20,000 acres of our northern country on such ridiculous terms as those embodied in the Bill.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [9.8]: I desire to express my admiration of the Government in accept-

ing this proposal and carrying it out. I think that anyone who undertakes an enterprise of this nature deserves the highest commendation and encouragement. Mr. Patrick has taken exception to the large area granted, but we must remember that whoever these people are, they cannot cultivate it all at once, and it may be part of their object to go in for cattle breeding to assist them in their work and offer some inducement for workers and labourers to assist them. We have also heard from Mr. Patrick of the extremely valuable nature of the land in this part of the State. May I ask in all sincerity why no one has ever conceived this idea before, why no one has ever rushed this valuable land?

Hon. W. Patrick: They have never had the opportunity.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: The Government have to actually offer it at a peppercorn rental, and when we do get someone to take it up we find that obstacles are thrown in the way. Although we may be prepared to regard the deal as a liberal, and even a prodigal one, if we can induce this particular individual to show to other people that he can make a success of the venture, much good will result. The question of labour in those regions will be exceedingly troublesome. I think in all sincerity we can let the poor fellow have it. He has my sympathy, and if he makes a success of it I shall congratulate him on everything he can get from it. I have much pleasure in heartily supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West) [9.13]: I intend to support the Bill. Mr. Patrick has arrived at the conclusion that this is a valuable portion of the State. How is it that no one has ever attempted to go there? No one can possibly go there until the track of civilisation has been paved. As to the liberality of the agreement I think the Government have made a good deal indeed. The rent they will get I think is enormous, and I am only surprised that any one could be found with the pluck to start on such a venture at such a rental. With regard to the peppercorn rental for the first

seven years, I think that if the period had been extended to 14 years the gift would not have been a great one. We want to test this country, and to find out whether it is capable of being cultivated. There are millions of acres there, but in that particular part of the State we cannot get people to take up the land, not even for pastoral purposes because of the treacherous natives. I can see nothing in the Bill but what will be of advantage to the State. I am pleased that such an agreement has been made, and I shall look forward with great interest to the results. If this gentleman proves successful no doubt a large industry will be opened up in that part of the State, and the land which we will dispose of will not be missed. I can easily understand why, in going to such an outlandish place, an applicant would require more than the few acres which he will have under cultivation. It will be necessary for him to keep up an establishment, and he will need to raise a few sheep and cattle to feed the people who will be employed to work the land. I think the agreement is an excellent one, and I hope success will follow the taking up of this land.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North) [9.13]: I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I am very glad to see that the Government are coming to their senses at last, and are realising the fact that the northern part of the State should be developed in some manner, whether by the Government or by private enterprise or by both. The Colonial Secretary will admit that I have not been remiss in drawing his attention to the neglect by the Government of the northern portion of the State, particularly the Kimberleys. Mr. Patrick says this is some of the best land we possess. I agree with him that it is. Therefore, all the more reason why it should not lie idle, and why generations should not be allowed to pass while the land remains neglected. I am pleased in looking over the schedule to find at the foot of it the signature of Mr. Bath as Minister for Agriculture. A little while ago that hon. gentleman did not want to give away land anyhow, but now he appears to have come to the con-

elusion that the party to which he belongs should allow such concessions to be taken up. It is a good sign to see that the Labour party have permitted him to attach his signature to the agreement which appears in the schedule of the Bill. I hold that no justice has been done to the North by this Government or by past Governments of which I was a supporter. The Liberal Governments were just as much to blame as any other Government and this Government, perhaps more so, because it was their province to look after that portion of the State particularly. I look upon it as a good omen that the agreement has been accepted by the Government, and as an omen that we are going to have some development in the far North of the State, and that some of the vast areas which are now lying waste will now be made use of for the good of the State. I cannot understand why a small area like 20,000 acres away up in the far North, where there is no population beyond the blacks, should be a matter of concern to my hon. friend, Mr. Patrick. It is only a little bit of foreshore, a little bit of frontage. If these people are going to carry out what they say, they cannot do it and make a success of it unless they are able to carry stock as well. I would point out that 20,000 acres is not much for carrying any large quantity of stock. I unhesitatingly say that good as the land is, they cannot make a success of agriculture purely and simply. They must work in connection with the growing of stock. Twenty thousand acres is not very much good to anybody who wants to grow a few bullocks and a few sheep. It is really a very great pleasure to me to give my heartiest support to it. The only trouble is—and both the Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom and myself are supporting it—that having received that support, the Bill may be withdrawn and there may be some hitch about it. It is in the best interests of the State that not only these people are going up there to try to develop the country, but that everybody else who comes along should have the same good terms accorded to them. If only that area could be developed, and

population could be induced to go up there, and capital could be brought into it, it would be a magnificent thing for the State. It is beautiful country and beautiful land. It is not a particularly nice country to live in because it is hot at some times of the year, and the wild blacks are dangerous up there. This is in fact one of the worst places there is along the whole of the coast. The reason is that it is the richest of all. There is an inland sea where these people have taken up this land, and there are tons of fish in it—and the natives can live on fish—and besides in the locality there is plenty of game. All this makes the proposition of these people who are taking on the land all the more difficult. If they win right out they will have a noble asset. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [9.20] : I do not feel so enthusiastic about the measure as the Hon. Mr. Connor. There is a certain amount of vagueness about it as there was about the last private Concession Bill we had before us. As I said, when speaking on the Kingia Grass Tree Bill, Bills of this nature, private Bills, should be referred to a select committee. I still think so. With regard to this Bill, and after looking through the agreement, I cannot see any time limit within which this agreement has to be ratified by Parliament. That was not so in connection with the other Bill, in which the agreement had to be ratified before the 31st December. I cannot see that any harm would be done if the measure were postponed until the next session of Parliament, when it could be reintroduced and properly inquired into. Some form of tropical agriculture is indicated. There is a great amount of vagueness about the whole thing. What do they mean by "some form of tropical agriculture?" Then the Minister says that this country is to be cleared. The Hon. Mr. Connor will doubtless corroborate me in this when I say that it is quite possible that that country may be perfectly cleared already. In fact, it is more than possible.

it is probable, that the clearing will amount to nothing.

Hon. V. Hainersley : There will be a clearing of the natives.

Hon. F. Connor : The trouble is that they have not enough timber.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : The hon. member is quite right. Very little information about the nature of the country has been given to us. I realise that what the Hon. Mr. Connor and the Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom have said is probably perfectly correct, that we ought to be glad to get people to go up there to open up the country. The question is, are we justified in less than 24 hours before the session closes, and after having had the Bill before us for ten minutes, and having very little information on the subject, in passing it? I do not blame the leader of the House because he is not in possession of the information.

The Colonial Secretary : I have all the information.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : Then the Minister is very conservative with it. He did not deign to give us any. Perhaps now he can inform us whether the country is cleared or whether it is densely timbered.

The Colonial Secretary : It is not cleared, it is timbered country.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : Timbered with what?

The Colonial Secretary : I do not know with what. The Presbyterian Mission are connected with the scheme.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : The hon. Mr. Patrick made a remark in connection with the Kingia Grass Tree Bill, about the gentleman who was applying for the concession happening to have the name of Benjamin. All I can say is that if the Presbyterian mission has all this country, it must be very good country. There is another piece of information which I require. In connection with the term "some form of tropical agriculture" may I ask what these gentlemen intend to grow.

Hon. E. M. Clarke : Maize.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom : Bananas.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : I should like to know.

Hon. W. Patrick : Bamboos might be classed as tropical agriculture.

Hon. F. Connor : It is their funeral what they grow.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL : It is not their funeral, it is the funeral of this House who grants the fee simple practically of 20,000 acres for what may be a trivial purpose. There is no necessity to rush into the matter. As I say, there is no time necessary in which this agreement shall be ratified. It may be just as well ratified this day three months as to-day. That being so, I do not see the urgent necessity for the Bill. We were told some time back that only Bills of an urgent nature and uncontroversial in quality would be brought before the House. This Bill does not fulfil these specifications. There is, however, one redeeming feature about it, and that is the signature to which the Hon. Mr. Connor referred, and which I see figuring in the Bill. I am glad indeed that the Hon. Mr. Bath has taken an interest in tropical agriculture, for one of his first acts on assuming office was to dismiss a man who has done more for it than anybody else, namely, Mr. Adrian Despeissis. This is a somewhat tardy repentance for the injury he did to the State by the dismissal of that officer. I am not going to support the second reading at this stage. If an opportunity is given to look into the matter more fully, no doubt, with the information at my disposal I shall be able to do so.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South-East) [9.26] : I always view these kinds of Bills with a certain amount of suspicion because they are totally different in all respects from any ordinary Act of Parliament. If this Bill becomes law this agreement will stand in effect for 99 years, and this Parliament will be powerless to alter it.

Hon. F. Connor : That is the same for leases for workers' homes.

Hon. J. CORNELL : They are in perpetuity. I do not take exception to the amount of country, because there is a vast difference between 20,000 acres and half a million acres. What I do

take exception to is Clause 2 of the schedule. The agreement proposes to give these gentlemen the right to this land for 99 years. For the first seven years they will pay no rent. For the next 13 years they will pay £125.

Member: You are against your own Government.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In this matter I am thinking of the future, and I am anxious that no Government shall tie the hands of the people for the future if possible. That is to say they will have twenty years' tenure and that means they will have the right to the land for £125. Then the agreement goes on to say that after the first 20 years and for the remainder of the period the annual rent shall be at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on the unimproved capital value of the land for the time being, to be assessed by the Minister for Lands, and that such value shall not exceed the sum of £10,000. If my reading is correct, in 99 years' time, you cannot assess the value of these 20,000 acres at more than £10,000. That is a value of 10s. an acre in 99 years' time. My reading also is that after the first 20 years there is to be no periodical assessment. Now, under the workers' homes scheme, to which the Hon. Mr. Connor referred, there is a reasonable provision that the land shall be reappraised every twenty years. This agreement starts off by dealing with the land for the first twenty years, but there is nothing from which to infer that thereafter periodical assessments will take place every 20 years. In the Carruthers Land Act in New South Wales, on the leasehold system the land is reappraised every 20 years. I certainly think that if the land was granted these men for 99 years, it should be reappraised every 20 years. If this Bill were to insist on the reappraisal of the land every 20 years, and fix no value of the full capital amount that the land can be reappraised at, we should be doing no harm. Otherwise I say we will do an injury and will depart from the well defined principle, which has not only been adopted in this State, but in other States on the question of the lease-

hold land, that leasehold land shall be reappraised every 20 years. If that were provided in this agreement I would have no objection whatever to it, because the unearned increment that would accrue to this concession could be got back through a reappraisal, in taxation, and given to the people who are to come after. I am of opinion that if this is not insisted on, we shall be doing an injustice to those who have to follow us. The only difference between this grant and the leasehold portion of the workers' homes scheme is that the latter is in perpetuity. This is for 99 years. Mark you, the Carruthers Land Act of New South Wales, the leasehold portion of it, provides for 99 years with the right of renewal by your heirs and successors. I certainly think, and hope, that the Minister will agree to the fair and reasonable proposal of a reappraisal of capital value every 20 years.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [9.30]: I hope that this Bill will be agreed to, and I trust that the Government will go on with it, notwithstanding the support which has been extended to the measure by Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. Cornell. I regard the Bill as embodying a proposal on the part of some person to establish what may be regarded as a sort of agricultural tropical experimental farm in the Kimberley district. During and after the fourth year of his term, the proposed lessee, Mr. Cole, must plant and cultivate an area of 500 acres, to the Minister's approval, with some form of tropical agriculture or horticulture. The position is that the land at present is lying idle. I take it there is no hon. member of this House who would accept the land upon the terms proposed. Mr. Cole may, or may not, be successful. If he be not successful, if he be not able to carry out the terms of the lease, his right can be terminated, and no harm will have been done. If, on the other hand, he be successful, it will be an encouragement for other people to go and do likewise in that area; it will tend to help towards the peopling of one of the vast empty spaces of our Commonwealth.

For my part, I would like to see the Government extend the system of granting concessions such as this to people who are desirous of spending their money in that locality with a view to opening up industries there. The State can in no way suffer. All I can say regarding Mr. Cole is that if, as the result of this proposal, he makes a great deal of money—I do not think he will—I shall be very glad. Every member of this House would like to see him become a millionaire as the result of this enterprise. The proposal cannot possibly result in harm to anybody, but, if successful, must do a tremendous amount of good to the whole of our State and particularly to its North. I see no possible harm whatsoever, but only good, can result from the passage of this Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [9.33]: I am rather surprised at the opposition offered to this measure by Mr. Patrick, who is a farmer himself, and who thoroughly well understands, and has experienced, the beneficial effects that have followed the development of the agricultural industry in the southern portion of this State. Now, here is a first effort, on the part of someone, to begin the development of tropical agriculture in the northern portion of Western Australia. The lease that has been framed is on severer conditions, comparatively speaking, than are imposed on the agriculturists of the South-West. What is the position? The proposed lessee is obliged not only to pay a rental of £125 per annum after the expiration of seven years of his term, but he has also to carry out improvement conditions. It has been insinuated by Mr. Kingsmill that the lessee does not propose to carry out those conditions in a bona fide manner: because Mr. Kingsmill asked the question, "What form of tropical agriculture does he intend to embark upon?" We are not concerned with that. We are not concerned in the slightest degree as to what form of tropical agriculture he intends to embark upon. We rely upon the improvements which he has to effect, to secure the results which

we anticipate. If this gentleman has to clear and cultivate 1,000 acres, and if he has to pay a rental of £125 a year for 13 years after the first seven years, and thereafter a rental of £250 for 79 years, we can only come to the conclusion that he intends to put the land to some profitable use. The Government are leasing land to-day as pastoral land, and under the conditions of a pastoral lease this gentleman would be required to pay a rental of only £10 a year. The land at present is vacant—this fruitful, rich land that we are giving away, according to Mr. Patrick. The land that, as Mr. Patrick says, the Government are giving away, would be leased at £10 per annum if taken up under a pastoral lease. Mr. Patrick has asked why we do not give every one the same opportunity. The hon. member can have the same opportunity to-morrow, if he wishes to avail himself of it.

Hon. W. Patrick: It should be open to everyone.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will address the Chair, instead of conversing.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope the hon. member will be in a position to take up double the acreage, or even treble, under proportionate conditions; and I will engage to do my best to induce the Minister for Lands to accept the hon. member's application. Therefore, anyone can have the opportunity. The difficulty is that we have no legislation to deal with an application of this kind. There should be such legislation dealing with the North-West, and if the Government remain in power there is no doubt they will consider that question. Mr. Cornell opposed the Bill because it is not strictly in accord with the Labour platform. To a certain extent the leasehold principle is provided for, but there is no provision for re-appraisalment. Seeing, however, that the lessee is about to initiate an industry, that he has to take all the risk, and that if he is successful he will be followed by scores, or possibly hundreds, of settlers, and so bring about the development of the North-West, the Govern-

ment consider that he is entitled to every encouragement which he will receive under this Bill.

Hon. F. Connor : He is pioneering.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill. Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Schedule :

Hon. J. CORNELL : I move as an amendment—

That all the words in paragraph 2 after "Five thousand pounds," be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu: "And thereafter shall be reappraised every twenty years. Such appraisal and reappraisal shall be based upon the capital value less the value of any improvements."

I do not think that the effect of my amendment will be to destroy the Bill.

The Colonial Secretary: It certainly will.

Hon. J. CORNELL : If we grant the fee simple of land, there is only one way of getting any of its increment value back, and that is by taxation. When land is leased, however, the terms under which it is leased are clearly set out. Mr. Colebatch has informed me that the words now inserted provide for a periodical reappraisal. Still, in the case of workers' dwellings, the principle is clearly defined. The effect of my amendment would be that for the first seven years the lessee gets the land free, and that for 20 years thereafter he gets it for a yearly rental of £125, and that at the end of those 20 years the land is reappraised. Perhaps a further amendment may be moved fixing the maximum percentage of rent that shall be charged on the capital value. There is no limit to the capital value at which the land can be reappraised; but, under the agreement as it stands, the land in 99 years from now cannot be valued at more than £10,000, no matter how many assessments the Minister may make.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom : The lessee will not work the land on your terms, that is all.

Hon. J. CORNELL : I think he would be glad to do so. I think that for this Committee to affirm by Statute that 20,000 acres of land in the Kimberley district eighty years hence is not going to exceed £10,000 in capital value, simply amounts to legislation by imagination. Dozens of other people may go to the Kimberley district in the train of this lessee, and with the influx of people the value of his land must, of necessity, be enhanced. Then we may see the position that people settling there five years after this lessee will have their land valued at twice the valuation of his. There is no hardship involved in my amendment. The man will have this land for 20 years at a rental of £125; and if he cannot establish the utility of the land in that period, I take it he will drop the proposition. But if he does prove that the land is good he has passed up to him by a dead Parliament a condition which nobody else can get. I am looking to the future, and my only object is to safeguard the future of the people of the State.

Hon. F. CONNOR : I am opposed to the amendment. By what right does the gentleman who has just spoken seek to dictate the policy of the State in the far North? When we have somebody coming into the country with a view to developing an area, it is altogether too bad to attempt to impose hampering restrictions. As one with some knowledge of the North I ask what is the use of having that huge territory undeveloped? If we do not develop it, some other nation will. How much better that we should get men of our own choosing to go there and open up the country. What, after all, is 20,000 acres? It is a mere spot on the map.

The CHAIRMAN : The amendment is to strike out words dealing with the lease.

Hon. F. CONNOR : I am opposed to the amendment, and I wish to give my reasons. The great neglect from which

the northern part of the State has suffered should be pointed out. The amendment, if agreed to, would probably stop those people from carrying out the proposition which they have entered into with the Government.

Hon. J. CORNELL : The principle involved is the only thing which concerns me.

Hon. F. CONNOR : The principle involved is the rent. The Government would be well advised to sell the area outright at 10s. an acre if they could get an offer. I am with the Government in their proposition. All the encouragement possible should be given to the far North. The trouble is that the mover of the amendment does not understand the position.

Amendment put and negatived.

Schedule put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time, and *passed*.

BILL—RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation :

Hon. J. CORNELL : I would like to ask the Minister if the definition of "beds" is the same as that in the Bill of last session?

The Colonial Secretary : I believe it is exactly the same.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Natural waters vest in the Crown :

Hon. J. CORNELL : I would like to ask the Minister if this clause is the same as Clause 4 in the Bill of last session?

The Colonial Secretary : Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 38—agreed to.

Clause 39—Irrigation rates:

Hon. J. F. CULLEN : I have an amendment to this clause on the Notice Paper. I understand that the Minister on behalf of the Government is willing to facilitate the amendments in the name of Mr. Colebatch, and as I desire to see this Bill passed, and as the amendments of which I have given notice may cause some discussion and possibly delay, I am willing to forego moving them after having made them public as my opinion of what is necessary to perfect the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 40 to 57—agreed to.

Clause 58—Board may make by-laws :

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : I have given notice of an amendment to strike out Subclause 10. I was under the impression that this had been left in in compliance with the original intention of the Act that the board or Government might control the flow of artesian bores. On looking into the point I find that this will apply only to bores controlled by the Government or the board. Therefore, there can be no objection to it. If it would apply to private bores I would have moved the amendment.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 59 to 78—agreed to.

Clause 79—Regulations and by-laws:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH : I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause (3) "both Houses" be struck out with a view of inserting "either House" in lieu.

This matter has been discussed so frequently that I do not propose to say anything at this stage.

Hon. J. CORNELL : We have passed 31 pages of this Bill in less than 31 minutes.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom : We have been three years.

Hon. J. CORNELL : Yes, and we now have seven new members. Having come to the last clause without any objection having been raised, hon. members are about to put the sting in the place where it is found in all reptiles—in the tail.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Do not call this Bill a reptile.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It has been treated as a reptile and now the hon. member has taken up the rôle of snake charmer. The amendment will mean that this House will be in a position to dictate to the Administration as to how they shall put into operation the necessary machinery by regulation. The Council will adopt the same attitude towards the administration of this measure as they did in the matter of the health regulations. It is significant that Clause 25 giving the Governor-in-Council the right to frame regulations for the issue of licenses on the terms laid down in the Interpretation Act that both Houses must disagree to a regulation has been passed. However when it comes to the point whereby the Government will be able to give working value to the measure through the medium of regulations this House asks for a say. Another place has not asked for a say in this direction. Members are about to take unto themselves the position of being not only legislators, but dictators. Seeing that this was one of the four vital points, I hope the Minister will insist on retaining the clause. If it was worth sticking out for previously, it is worth fighting for now, especially in view of the changed view of members of this House. If I can get a supporter I will divide the House on this question.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I disapprove of the amendments tabled by Mr. Colebatch, but I approached hon. members and offered to meet them halfway. They agreed to do so, and I intend to keep that compact and will support the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I move a further amendment—

That the words "either House" be inserted in lieu of the words struck out.

Amendment put.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the "Ayes" have it.

Hon. J. Cornell: Divide.

The CHAIRMAN: I heard only one "No."

Hon. H. Millington: Two.

The CHAIRMAN: Divide.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	2
			—
Majority for	..		18
			—

AYES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. R. G. Arago	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. Briggs	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. G. M. Sewell
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Duffell
Hon. J. M. Drew	(Teller).
Hon. V. Hamersley	

NOES.

Hon. H. Millington	Hon. J. Cornell
	(Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

Clause as amended agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH moved—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 27:—"Provided that excepting in so far as it applies to artesian wells, and to rivers, streams, water-courses, lagoons, lakes, swamps, or marshes, the water from which is required for irrigation under Part IV. of this Act, Part III. of this Act shall apply only to irrigation districts constituted and defined under Section 27 of this Act."

I do not intend to say anything; the matter already has been fully discussed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I intend to oppose the amendment. This was one of the principles in regard to which the Government and the Minister stood to their guns. Now the proposal is to get away from it. It has been pointed out in debate that the provisions regarding natural waters vesting in the Crown were good enough for the other States and ought to be good enough for this State. Now Mr. Colebatch proposes to bring it down to certain restrictions being placed on the natural waters that may vest in the Crown for irrigation

purposes, and to vest these waters in irrigation districts. We should say that the Crown should have the sole right. I sympathise with the Minister because he has had a heavy burden to carry in trying to pilot this Bill through, though there is a certain amount of justification in the Minister having to give way to the solid front which has been arrayed against him for the last two years. If his amendment must be accepted, I shall enter my protest against it.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, the report adopted, and a Message forwarded to the Assembly with a request that the Council's amendments be made.

House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 3rd September, 1914.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Statement of comparative results and working of the Western Australian Government Railways for the past five years.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

The Colonial Secretary and State Steamships.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.2] : Last evening the hon. Mr. Kingsmill criticised the State steamship "Western Australia." I have no objection to his making the remarks, but this morning I received a letter from the manager of the State Steamship Service containing information which I think hon. members should be possessed of. The letter is from Mr. Stevens, the manager of the State Steamship Service, and is dated 3rd September, 1914. He writes—

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Perth. *Re s.s. "Western Australia."* I think you will be interested to know that the financial results of the running of the "Western Australia" on her last round voyage from Fremantle to Port Darwin and return have been very satisfactory—so much so as to eclipse any previous voyage the ship has made on the coast. The running cost of the voyage was £3,294 13s. 2d., to which has to be added an amount of £798 for proportion of insurance, depreciation, and interest, making a total gross cost of the trip of £4,092. The revenue from the voyage amounted to £4,502, leaving a net profit of £410. Details of the figures are on the attached statement. This result is an interesting and satisfactory one, and was not, so far as I am aware, due to any circumstances which can be regarded as unique, or even of a special nature. I believe, were it not for the disturbance of trade owing to the outbreak of war, results approaching this would attend our efforts in the future. As to the ship herself, the vessel is now in exceedingly good condition in every respect and is, owing to improved conditions on board, becoming very popular with the trading community on the coast. I do not wish you to conclude from this that I have to any extent retired from the opinion previously expressed to you, that the ship is fundamentally and altogether an unsuitable one for