

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you not insure all Government property, and then charge any rate you like?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is hardly the position. I would like to dissipate a certain common misconception that seems to be entertained regarding the sum held in reserve in the Fire Insurance Fund of the State office. Critics have been under the impression that all fire risks have been carried by the State. No such position obtains. Only a small portion of the risk is carried by the State office, the rest being spread over a wide field. The maximum liability carried by the State office on any one risk is £750. In the circumstances, the amount held in reserve is deemed sufficient to cover all eventualities.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What is the amount in reserve?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have given the figures.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You said it was £400,000. Goodness knows what it is invested in.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is a story of fact. The figures are audited by the Auditor General, and certified to by him.

Hon. J. Cornell: It reads like a romance.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is a romantic tale, and one of the great State successes. There can be no question of the benefits accruing to the people where the Government enter the field of insurance business. This right of the State to engage in insurance business has been established for years, not only in other States of Australia, and in conservative New Zealand, but in America as well. It cannot be charged that State competition is unfair. As it is, effective competition amongst the private companies in respect to premium rates is negligible, and the public have virtually no protection in their general insurance transactions. In commending the Bill to the consideration of members, may I reiterate that the measure merely seeks to provide the community with the opportunity to obtain insurance protection at reasonable rates and under reasonable conditions. The operations of the State Insurance Office present a just claim on behalf of that institution for recognition at the hands of members. It makes a claim upon them to vote for the Bill. Although I anticipate there will be some opposition to it, I challenge the opponents to present a counter statement that

will break down the financial position as I have set it out on behalf of the Government Insurance Office. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.4 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 13th October, 1936.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Reduction of Principal and Interest.

Hon. N. KEENAN asked the Treasurer: 1, Is he aware that some time prior to the 16th June, 1936, the Commissioners of the Agricultural Bank of Western Australia purported to reduce, pursuant to Section 65 of the Agricultural Bank Act, 1934, the indebtedness of certain group settlers, who were clients of the Bank, in respect of principal moneys and interest due by such group settlers to the Bank, and that the Commissioners gave notice of such reduction to such group settlers on or about the 16th June, 1936? 2, Did the Commissioners obtain the consent of the Treasury and ap-

proval of the Governor before the issue of such notices on or about the 16th June, 1936? 3, If not, have the Commissioners applied for such consent and approval at any time since the 16th June, 1936; if so, when? 4, Has such consent been given by the Treasurer and approval been given by the Governor; if so, when? 5, If not, is it the intention of the Treasurer to withhold his consent and have the Commissioners been so advised; if so, when?

The TREASURER replied: The Treasurer approved and the matter was to be put before the Executive Council. The basis of the writing down was that the debt was to be assessed as at the 1st January, 1936, and that interest was to start from that date. It was the intention of the Commissioners that the first instalment of interest should fall due and become payable on the 30th June, 1936. Some of the settlers contended that they should be freed under the adjustment from payment of interest until the 31st December, 1936. This was not the intention of the Commissioners, and owing to this dispute the approval of the Executive Council has been withheld.

QUESTION—ABORIGINES.

Chief Protector and Political Influence.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Will he inquire into a statement that appeared in the "West Australian" of Monday, the 5th October, 1936, in reference to an alleged conversation between the Chief Protector of Aborigines of Western Australia and Dr. Webster, Vice-President of the Aborigines Amelioration Association, in which the Chief Protector is accused of having stated that he was not a free agent, but was subjected to political influence where certain prosecutions should have been instituted against men living with lubras who were not their wives? 2, If this statement was made by the Chief Protector, was the statement made with the consent of the Minister or the Public Service Commissioner? 3, Will he state the specific cases referred to, and in what year, or years, did political influence deter the Chief Protector in his decision to prosecute?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes. Such inquiry is being made. 2, The Chief Protector denies making such a statement. 3, Answered by 2.

QUESTION—BULK HANDLING OF WHEAT.

Medical Officer's Report.

Mr. SLEEMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Health: Will he place on the Table the report by the medical officer on the bulk handling of wheat?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: I have no objection to placing the file on the Table.

BILL—PETROLEUM.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 37.

In Committee.

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

Clause 37—No person to hold more than three licenses:

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Committee amended Clause 32 to provide that five licenses to prospect might be granted instead of three, as originally proposed in the Bill. A consequential amendment should have been made in Clause 37, but the matter was overlooked at the time. I move an amendment—

That in line 2 "three" be struck out, and the word "five" inserted in lieu.

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

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—RECIPROCAL ENFORCEMENT OF MAINTENANCE ORDERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.37] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is a small measure that proposes to make some important amendments to the Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act. The principal amendments are those relating to the variation of several types of maintenance orders. Actually this legislation does not deal exactly with the making of maintenance orders, but rather

with their registration and confirmation, enforcement and variation. The orders with which the measure deals fall under four headings. We have what is known as the complete order, which is made by the court where both parties are in this State. So long as both are in the State, they will not come within the purview of this particular class of legislation: but it does happen that, after a complete order has been made, the affected party will possibly move to another jurisdiction, and we desire, under the Bill, to take power to vary our own complete order where such affected party has moved to another jurisdiction. Any variation we would make of that description with respect to a complete order would be in the nature of a provisional order that would have to be confirmed, of course, in the reciprocating jurisdiction. Another class is the complete order, which comes here from another jurisdiction and is registered in the State. That takes place under circumstances in which the complete order is made, say, in England or in one of the Eastern States, and the affected party ultimately moves to this State. In that event, the order is then sent here for registration, and it is despatched in the form of a complete order. Under the existing legislation, the present position with regard to this particular type of order is that we might have such an order made in England, and the affected party has subsequently moved to this State. The circumstances in which the original order was made, as concerns the affected party, may be entirely changed as a result of his moving from another State or from England to Western Australia, but under the present legislation we have no power whatever to alter such an order. It may be that the order was made against a man who was in affluent circumstances in England and he may subsequently have moved to this State. It may be that the order against him was for £3 or £4 a week in the circumstances in which he was found to be situated in the originating jurisdiction. Subsequently such order may impose very great hardship upon such a man owing to his altered circumstances in this State. Under existing conditions we have no power to vary such an order, and, consequently, we desire to take that right under the provisions of the Bill; otherwise, owing to the circumstances in which the affected person finds himself, he is not in a position to meet his commitments under the maintenance order, and he can frequently

be imprisoned although his circumstances are such that he cannot possibly meet his commitments, and he has no opportunity to effect a variation of that order. The Bill proposes to amend the existing legislation to remedy that defect. Another type of order dealt with under this reciprocal legislation is the provisional order that is made in another jurisdiction and is sent here on account of the affected party being a resident of this State, and which we, after duly investigating and hearing evidence in connection therewith, confirm here; or it may be in respect of such an order that, instead of confirming it immediately, it is thought desirable to send the provisional order back to the originating jurisdiction for further evidence before such confirmation is made. There is power under the existing legislation to vary these orders in this State after they have been confirmed here, but it is somewhat ineffectual and the provisions are improved under the Bill. There is the other type of provisional order that we make here and send for confirmation to another jurisdiction on account of the affected person in connection with the order we make here, residing in another jurisdiction or another State. Under the existing Act we have power to vary such an order. The cases which can be quoted in the State regarding this reciprocal legislation apply in the reverse order to reciprocating jurisdictions. In existing legislation the provisions dealing with the variation of orders are scattered, but this Bill will bring them together under one general heading. In addition to the power sought to vary the orders referred to, we require definite machinery to enable evidence to be taken. This also is provided for in the Bill. If this legislation meets with the approval of Parliament it will be possible for us to hear evidence connected with all the orders which we shall be empowered to vary. Just as the provisions relating to variation have been brought together, so are the provisions for the taking of evidence brought together instead of being scattered through the Act. In one other respect existing legislation will be amended, namely, in the matter of the recovery of arrears that accumulate in the period between the making of the order and the confirmation of the order in this State. Sometimes quite a considerable delay occurs between the making of the order in some reciprocating jurisdiction and the confirmation here. This is due to the time required

to send the order from one reciprocating jurisdiction to another, and it might also be due at times to the necessity for sending back to the originating jurisdiction for further evidence before the order is confirmed. We are taking power so that, where delays occur, the court may make an order covering the arrears that have accumulated meanwhile, and such order will be governed by the circumstances. Another amendment is proposed to provide for passing on confirmation orders. It sometimes happens that an order arrives from England and the party against whom it has been made has removed to another jurisdiction. Under existing legislation the order must be returned to the originating jurisdiction, and the whole process begun again. We want to alter this so that instead of having to send the order back to the originating jurisdiction, it may be forwarded to the jurisdiction in the particular State or country where the affected party is then residing. There are several minor amendments. For instance, it is proposed to bring within the scope of the Act all the mandated territories. Since the Act was passed, a number of territories have been placed under the mandates of Great Britain and the Dominions, and we desire to have reciprocity for the enforcement of orders affecting those territories. There are one or two alterations to the definitions. The term "reciprocating jurisdiction" will definitely refer to all jurisdictions reciprocating with this State, and the definition of "United Kingdom" has been altered because the United Kingdom now includes Great Britain and Northern Ireland only, and omits the Irish Free State. The reciprocity at present existing will not be disturbed in any way by this proposed legislation. The amendments, so to speak, will stand on their own. The Governor will be empowered to extend from time to time the provisions of this measure to any other jurisdiction that alters its law substantially to accord with the provisions of this Bill, if it becomes law. A fair measure of reciprocity exists at present between the States, the Dominions, the United Kingdom and Western Australia. Generally speaking, that reciprocity substantially conforms, though in some instances it does not. In 1933 the Parliament of Great Britain circularised all the States with a view to securing uniformity in this legislation. It is necessary for the States which are reciprocating to make some move in that direction, and the amendments in the Bill represent

our contribution to that reciprocity. I commend the measure to the favourable consideration of the House and move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Watts, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1936-37.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 8th October. Mr. Sleeman in the Chair.

Department of Minister for Justice (Hon. F. C. L. Smith, Minister).

Vote—Crown Law Offices, £71,968:

Mr. Marshall: Is the Minister going to introduce his Estimates?

THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE (Hon. F. C. L. Smith—Brownbill-Ivanhoe) [4.53]: I do not know whether it is usual to do so.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You have been here long enough to know that it is.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Revenue from all sources for the current year is estimated at £277,600, compared with £294,011 for the last financial year. Under the heading of probate duty, last year's collections totalled £112,657, and this year we estimate to receive £100,000. Receipts under this heading depend upon the number, and more particularly upon the nature, of the estates handled. Last year several large estates were handled, and probate from one of them produced £14,235.

Mr. Lambert: Which one was that?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I cannot tell the hon. member. It is not likely that any single estate will produce an equivalent amount this year, but a number of substantial estates are being dealt with, and it is felt that the estimate will at least be exceeded. Last year was the first complete year during which the Administration Act, as amended, had operated. It came into force on the 1st January, 1934, and there appears to be every indication that under the new legislation increased probate duty will be collected.

Mr. Lambert: Some large estates in Kalgoolie were involved recently.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Under the heading of Law Courts, last year's collections were £65,242, and this year we expect to receive £66,500. The estimated reve-

nue is distributed over three branches, Judicial fines £35,000, Local Court fees £8,000, and Supreme Court fees £23,500. These collections depend entirely on the activities of the respective courts and the estimates are more or less speculative, but the average amount has been collected to date and there is every possibility of the total estimate being realised. Under the heading of Crown Law, last year's collections totalled £13,005, and this year we expect to receive £10,100. The revenue under this heading represents departmental reimbursements and unclaimed trust moneys. The department from time to time hold quite a large amount of trust moneys belonging to intestate estates, and after the statutory period of six years has elapsed, the money so held is paid into revenue. Still, that does not prevent a claim being lodged subsequently by any person entitled to the money. Naturally, the amount under this heading fluctuates from year to year, and often affects the Estimates in no small degree. The reduction in the amount available is the main reason for reducing the Estimates by £2,905. As a result of increased activities in connection with land, there was some improvement in the collection from titles and fees for mortgages, caveats, etc. The amount collected last year was £26,094, and this year we estimate that the amount will be £27,000. There has been some increased activity in connection with these transactions. It is reasonable to assume that at least the amount collected last year will be received this year. The indications up to date show that to be so. Under the heading of liquor licenses we collected last year £75,469, and we estimate receiving this year £72,400. That shows a reduction. The liquor revenue is classified under three main headings. There are the minimum annual fees, that is, the statutory charge under Section 72 of the Licensing Act, the five and six per cent. additional fees provided under Sections 73 and 201 of the Licensing Act, and the premiums paid when the new licenses are granted under Section 47. The following table shows last year's collections, and the estimates for this year under these headings.

	1935-36.	1936-37.
	£	£
Minimum annual fees ..	31,159	31,400
Five and six per cent. additional fees ..	36,760	39,000
Premiums ..	7,550	2,000

It will be noticed that there is a considerable reduction in the estimates with regard to premiums received. Last year the sum of £5,000 was received on account of one premium alone, but that is not likely to be repeated this year. The premiums are received only in connection with the licenses that are granted for those particular districts where the hotels are in excess of the number of licensed premises that existed in those districts in 1922. At the same time, it is expected that there will be, or there should be, some improvement in the revenue from these particular sources (that is under the three headings to which I have referred) as a result of the improved trade conditions generally. Under the heading of "other licenses" last year we collected £1,544 and this year we anticipate receiving £1,600. The revenue under this heading is derived from the licensing of employment brokers and billiard saloons, and does not vary greatly from year to year. Last year's expenditure totalled £78,874, and this year we estimate that it will be £71,968. The reduction of £6,906 is chiefly attributed to the fact that no elections are contemplated this year. Should a by-election be necessary, we may have to get an excess to meet such expenditure. Offsetting the reduction in the contingency items, is an increase in the salaries vote, mainly due to the restoration of salaries under the Financial Emergency Act applying to the full year, and to increases resulting from classifications. The estimates, both as regards revenue and expenditure, under all headings, depend so much upon circumstances that it is difficult to arrive at the amounts concerned with any degree of accuracy. The only guide we have is our past experience, coupled with the knowledge that new legislation, such as the Administration Act, may bring in a little more than we have had in the past. The items in the main, except for the guide we have in our past experience, are mainly speculative.

Item, Licensing Magistrates, £2,250:

Mr. MARSHALL: I wish to enter a protest against the continuance of the Licensing Board. I would even feel inclined to vote for its abolition.

Hon. C. G. Latham: We can do that by cutting the item out of the Estimates.

Mr. MARSHALL: It is a waste of money to the extent of £3,200. It is customary

for the Minister to indicate the wonderful improvement this board has effected. Under the old Act it was not possible for the licensing magistrate to do what can be done under the new Act. It is grossly unfair to compare the old regime with the new. The old administration would be far more economical and better in every way. If the old administration, therefore, were to operate under the new law, the premises would be just as good and just as efficiently managed and the work of granting new licenses would be just as well done. Above all, this money would be saved. True, under the old regime all kinds of small premises were licensed, but in those days it was customary for the magistrate to have regard to the needs of the Treasury, and licenses were freely granted. Under the new Act that sort of thing does not apply. The license is now in the form of a tax on all liquor sold, and it is therefore not necessary to do more than grant a license here and there. The Government will receive just as much revenue whether there are two hotels in the district or if there is only one. All this eulogy of the board is merely fantastic. We cannot make comparisons until we try the more just method of putting the old administration to work under the new law. Without the new Act several beautiful and spacious hotels were erected. The board has outlived its usefulness.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Act itself has been very useful.

Mr. MARSHALL: I daresay. The work could be done more economically and just as thoroughly, without the board being a burden on the taxpayers. If the road board in my electorate could get hold of this £3,200 for schools, water supplies and roads, it certainly would not waste the money. Whilst I am a member of this Chamber I shall protest against this sort of thing being continued. I am inclined to make a reduction of the amount by £1.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Cut out the whole lot!

Mr. MARSHALL: That would not get us anywhere. However, before the board can be abolished, our licensing legislation must be amended.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Cut out the whole amount and bring down an amending Bill immediately afterwards!

Mr. MARSHALL: I would move a reduction of the amount by £1 by way of an

instruction to the Government to introduce immediately a Bill to abolish the board. Ever since the compensation fund was exhausted I have protested against the continuance of the board. That body now possesses no value whatever. It is a mere luxury, which the State can well dispense with, as the work now to be done can be performed just as efficiently under the old system of administration, and more economically. I again enter my emphatic protest against the Government's extravagance in retaining the board.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not in any way challenge the principle that induced Parliament to establish the board.

Mr. Patrick: But it was established as a board to reduce licenses.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes; and on account of the efficiency with which the members of the board have done their work, there is no further need for serious reduction in the number of licensed premises in Western Australia. To revert to the old order, as urged by the member for Murchison, will re-create an objectionable position that existed for many years before the constitution of the board. Take the position in Kalgoorlie, when licenses were granted by a court consisting of the resident magistrate and two justices of the peace. The member for Kalgoorlie could assist my memory, but I believe there were 60 or 70 licensed houses in the main street of Kalgoorlie. Again, in Coolgardie there were 20 or 30 licensed houses almost side by side.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Was that the fault of the magistrates, or of the Legislature?

Mr. LAMBERT: Definitely the fault of the magistrates, since they had discretionary power either to grant or refuse applications for licenses. Our amending legislation was fashioned upon the Licenses Reduction Act of Victoria. In fact, that measure was adopted almost without the crossing of another "t" or the dotting of another "i." The recommendations of the Royal Commission which inquired into the subject here were excellent. When the member for Murchison stresses the enormous amount of money involved in the payment of three magistrates, he is merely playing with words. The total spent annually on liquor in Western Australia runs into about £1,700,000.

Members: More!

Mr. LAMBERT: I have not refreshed my memory on the subject recently. A board to police such an enormous expenditure—

Mr. Thorn: It is not policed by the board at all.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, it is, and in a very definite manner. In the old days, when there was no control over many of the licensed premises in Western Australia, I saw filthy and intolerable conditions. Only recently an application was made at Cottesloe for a new license. The man named Molloy, who has a license there, kept dirty, filthy premises which were never repaired or renovated.

Mr. Thorn: What were the Licenses Reduction Board doing?

Mr. LAMBERT: The board had the right to order him to repair and renovate on adequate lines. The principle of the board is absolutely sound, and has been accepted in every Australian State. To-day the board may not be strictly a board to reduce licenses, and I even acknowledge that in that capacity they made various mistakes and that at times I sharply disagreed with their decisions. However, as a body to control the extremely vexed question of the retailing of liquor, the Licenses Reduction Board represent an absolutely sound institution: and a reversion to the old system of indiscriminate licensing would be a grave error. A good deal is to be said in favour of amending the Act so as to make it more effective and bring it more into consonance with public opinion and the public interest. The member for Nedlands and the member for Kalgoorlie know full well the abuses which existed under the old system. The board see that premises for which licenses are granted are fit and adequate for the accommodation of the public. From this aspect there have even been extravagances. I trust the Committee will not take seriously the suggestion that the board should be abolished. If it is said that the personnel of the board is wrong or that complete efficiency does not exist, I would hesitate to believe there is anything in either contention. Unquestionably, however, there should be some definite amendments in our liquor legislation, which, nevertheless, is some of the most useful legislation passed by Parliament during my 20 years of membership.

Mr. MARSHALL: I do not know that I should reply to the previous speaker, who seems obsessed with the wonderful work done by the board. The hon. member used the very arguments customarily adopted by Ministers when challenged upon this Vote. No one knows better than the hon. member that under the old Act, of which he has complained, the resident magistrate and the two justices of the peace had no option but to instruct an applicant for a license that he must erect a certain type of building, of two or of three storeys, put in so many bathrooms and lavatories, so many windows, and so forth. The bench had no option. Again, the members of the bench were inspired by the fact that there was more money for the Treasury. The hon. member presumed to know all about what had happened in the past, but he did not seem to know that the old Act had been responsible for the building of squibby little places close to each other. Did any member ever see the board make an examination of the hotels at Wiluna? Of course not. But let an application for a license come in, and the board quickly arrive on the spot. The administration of our hotels is carried out by the Police Department. It is the police who look after the administration of our licensing laws, and look after it very well. It is only when an application for a license has to be considered that the board come into the picture at all. It is unfair for any member to condemn the old system of administration, since it has not been given a trial under the new law. Under the new Act, the board can make a man spend £100,000 on new premises. Under the old Act, that could not be done. Indeed, the old board had no power to refuse a license, provided the applicant was of good repute. So it is ridiculous to say that the present board has lifted the standard of our hotels. It is the Act that has done that, and the administration of the Act is carried out by the Police Department.

Mr. Lambert: They oppose all applications for licenses.

Mr. MARSHALL: No, they certainly do not. On an application for a transfer or a renewal of license, the board depend on the report of the police. So it is the police who administer the Act, and it is the Act that makes the conditions to-day so much better than they were previously. Until the old administration is given a trial under the new law, I will accept no statement condemning

the old administration. I would rather have a magistrate, definitely fixed in his job, than have the board, appointed only from one period to another. I can see no justification for the board at all. As a licenses reduction board it was all right, but now that the compensation fund is exhausted, all reduction of licenses has finished, and so there is no reason for the continuance of the board.

Vote put and passed.

Department of the Chief Secretary. (Hon. W. H. Kitson, Minister; Hon. F. J. S. Wise in charge of the Votes.)

Vote—Chief Secretary, £15,313:

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE

(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne) [5.35]: I desire to explain some of the activities of the Chief Secretary's Department.

Mr. Marshall: You will please the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie by telling us something about the Observatory.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, I promise to tell the hon. member something about the Observatory. The Chief Secretary's Department covers the activities of several departments, such as that of the Registrar-General, Harbours and Lights, Prisons, the Aborigines Department, and others. A variety of matters come under the purview of the head office of the Chief Secretary. The first I should like to refer to is the correspondence and despatch branch. This subsidiary office was established 22 years ago to facilitate the despatch of files and official correspondence between departments, with the ultimate object of reducing expenditure. The services of this branch have grown until there are now many important towns, the departments in which now have their offices for the despatch of official correspondence. Considerable saving has been effected by the appointment of messengers to those offices in such towns as Fremantle and Bunbury. Not only will additional offices be opened during the current year, but further services will be afforded by the appointment of messengers at new centres. The importance of the savings instituted under this system can be gauged by the number of articles handled by the offices, running into hundreds of thousands per annum. The Registrar-General's Department deals with registration of births, marriages and deaths, while the statistical branch deals with the collection and tabulation of all vital statistics, and the informa-

tion collected per medium of the Police Department in connection with the general statistical records. Also information is collected by this branch as desired and required by the Arbitration Court and other bodies. The Friendly Societies and Government Actuary part of the Registrar-General's Department deals with the registration of friendly societies and co-operative and building societies, a report upon which is made annually to Parliament. In addition, actuarial calculations needed by many Government departments are supplied. Coming to the Prisons Department, I may say that the daily average number for the year of prisoners at Fremantle has been 200, and at Pardelup Prison Farm fifty. The system of classifying various kinds of criminals has been fully maintained, and every effort made to protect the youthful criminal from association with the habitual criminal. Efforts to reclaim prisoners have not been confined to first offenders, but encouragement has been given wherever it is seen that the offender desires to reach a higher standard. Many prisoners seek to enter the various trades, and every encouragement is given to them to do so. Steady development work has been carried on at the Pardelup Prison Farm. Cultivation has been increased, and pastures are being put down. Also the drainage of the swamp has progressed. The wool yield this season will be very satisfactory, and it is expected that further purchases will be made this year, while further savings have been made on the farm.

Hon. C. G. Latham: What does it cost to run the farm?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: When on Items, I will give the hon. member that information. The activities of the Harbour and Lights Department include control of the State navigation lights, beacons and buoys, and the whole of the operations of the jetties at Broome, Derby, Carnarvon, Onslow, Cossack and Hopetoun, the pilotage services at Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, Esperance and Wyndham, and the administration of the State Navigation Act and the Boat Licensing Act. The revenue and expenditure of the department is necessarily influenced by the fluctuations of production in the North-West. Unfortunately, this year there will be a great shrinkage in the revenue from North-West ports. Mental hospitals and institutions under the control of the Chief Secretary's Department include the Hospital for Insane,

Claremont, Greenplace mental hospital. Whithy, Lemnos and Point Heathcote. At the 31st December, 1935, there were 1,407 people in this State certified as being insane, and the proportion of insane to sane at the date was one to 310, or 3.22 per thousand. For the year ended the 31st December, 1935, the number of admissions to various hospitals for the insane was 214, of which 16 were re-admissions. The number of deaths was 75, and there were 53 discharges, of which 18 were discharged as recovered, and two were deported under the Commonwealth Migration Act. The increase in the number of patients necessitated the staffing of Male Ward 6 in June, and there are 38 patients housed in that block. The Heathcote Reception Home is intended for recoverable cases and to a large extent is filling its purpose, but unfortunately it is overcrowded. During the year ended the 31st December, 1935, the admissions were 281, including 54 re-admissions. Of the cases discharged 158 were recovered or relieved, and eight not improved. Seven patients died in the institution, and 106 were transferred to hospitals for the insane. The number of persons under care during the year was 364, and the number remaining in hospital at the 31st December, was 83. Coming to the Observatory, I should like to mention some of the operations there which are specially valuable to the general public. These include time service, comprising transmissions twice daily from Applecross of the international time signals. Then the daily time gun is of considerable value, and the master clock at the Central Railway Station is governed by the main time clock at the Observatory. The time is sent three times daily to all railway stations in the State.

Hon. C. G. Latham: It really would not matter if it were not sent, for the trains are never on time.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The seismographic records are of considerable interest. The records obtained at the Perth Observatory are sent monthly to 25 recording stations throughout the world. From the scientific point of view, the seismological records obtained in this State are very important. Tide gauging is carried out and members know it is very important to shipping to be aware of the range of the tides on a given date at a certain time at many of the North-West ports. The Edith

Cowan memorial clock is attended to. Transit observations are carried out and the Southern Star list has now been completed with the exception of the final computations. During the year celestial objects were viewed by 2,582 persons, a great increase over the number seeking admission to the Observatory last year. This is an indication of the educational value of the institution.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [5.47]: I want to draw attention to the disabilities suffered by men incarcerated in the Fremantle Gaol through the attacks of bugs. Wrongdoers are sufficiently punished, by being robbed of their freedom. I have had pointed out to me as many as 20 to 30 marks of blood on the walls of the cells, indicating how the poor devils are up half the night crushing vermin. The position is one of which the Minister should take notice. The Minister has mentioned the position of first offenders. It is a matter very dear to the hearts of most members to have first offenders segregated from hardened criminals. The Government should endeavour to start some farm away from Pardelup to which these young men could be sent, some reformatory where they might be fitted to take up their positions once more at a later date as respectable citizens. In New South Wales they have such a settlement at Emu Hills Plain, to which the whole of the first offenders are sent. Most of them are young men in their early twenties, or under. They are given separate huts and are not permitted in any way to mingle with hardened criminals. They are frequently visited by their relatives and statistics show that 90 per cent. of them are reformed. The Minister has touched on the congested condition of the Heathcote Home. Now and again—not very often, thank goodness—I have been forced to drive some of my electors across.

Hon. C. G. Latham interjected.

MR. RAPHAEL: I was asked to sign an order for the hon. member, but for the sake of his wife and family, I did not.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is not in order in reflecting on a member of the House.

MR. RAPHAEL: If he did not reflect on me, I would not reflect on him. I have had to take patients to Heathcote and the only chance they had of a bed was on the floor. The Minister is aware of the position and I hope the matter will be taken

in hand, and that sufficient beds will be provided for these poor creatures.

[*Mr. Withers took the Chair.*]

HON. C. G. LATHAM (York) [5.50]: From time to time sexual offenders are brought before the courts of the State. I do not mind admitting that my sympathy goes out to them, because I think that they suffer from a mental disability. If a person suffers a physical injury, we provide hospitals and treat him, but it is a very unfortunate thing that when a person suffers from a mental injury, and has a kink towards sexual instability, he is treated as a criminal. He is put in gaol but, upon release, frequently commits exactly the same offence.

Mr. Cross: It is entirely the wrong treatment for them.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: We should see whether it is possible to do something for these people. There was a case recently before the court. The man was sentenced to two or three years' imprisonment. He had committed a number of offences. I am sure that that man is insane—at any rate, he is not as normal as most other men. The offence with which he was charged justifies the assertion that he has had a mental breakdown. When that man comes out of prison the chances are that he will again commit a similar offence. Some remedial treatment should be devised for such individuals. As a layman, I do not know what could be done. Our Principal Medical Officer might direct his attention to seeing what it is possible to do. We have medical men in this State far enough advanced in science to provide some remedy. I mentioned once before in this House the case of a man in a country lock-up who sent for me. When I went to him he was crying. He said, "I have been three times in gaol for this offence" It does not matter what I do when I come out, I cannot control myself." It is almost a criminal offence to send men like that back to gaol. It is seldom that I agree with the member for Victoria Park, but on this occasion I am going to, because I believe we might do something to deal with youthful first offenders. I know young fellows in Fremantle Gaol who are 18 years of age. It does not matter how careful the authorities are, with the limited amount of accommodation these young men must be brought into

contact with hardened criminals. I mentioned some time ago that there was a farm in the Government's hands which might be used for first offenders. In other parts of the world they are treated differently. We might look to Canada as an example. I was speaking to the Commissioner in charge of a Canadian institution when I was there, and he informed me that they had a lot of these young fellows out on parole. They knew that if they were brought up again they would be charged and an additional sentence imposed. One, a young man of 22 years of age, got into trouble as the result of indulging in liquor and received a whipping. Some of them expect to be sent to prison, but that form of punishment is not inflicted, and eventually they turn out to be worthy citizens. We in this State should at least see that the youth are kept apart from the seasoned criminals. The association of youthful offenders with criminals leads to bad results and those results come under our notice from time to time. Generally speaking, I have nothing to say against the Estimates, and I hope the department will take notice of my few comments.

MR. STUBBS (Wagin) [6.2]: I should like to offer a few remarks on this vote, and will deal with two departments, the Hospital for the Insane and the department controlling aborigines. A few years ago I was a member of a committee appointed by the Labour Government to investigate the conditions at the Hospital for Insane at Claremont. Mr. Angwin was a member of that committee. A complete investigation was conducted and we learned that it was originally intended that the institution should accommodate 800 male and female patients. At that time, however, about 1,000 were housed there. To-day I understand the number is even greater. If it was hopelessly overcrowded when we conducted our inquiry, members can imagine what the position at the institution is like to-day. I am wondering whether the Government can provide some additional money to improve the state of affairs down there. There is also a wonderful institution connected with the Claremont hospital. This is situated at Point Heathcote and I understand that this building also is overcrowded. It is not possible to find a better conducted institution in any part of Australia than the Heathcote

Home and if any hon. member has not been there, I am confident that the medical officer in charge and the matron would be only too happy to escort him over the establishment. As is known it is situated on the banks of the Swan River and the surroundings really lend themselves to the recovery of patients suffering from nervous breakdown. I agree with what has been said with regard to first offenders. If it were possible to do so, it would certainly be advisable to segregate the prisoners at the Fremantle gaol and accommodate the youthful offenders away from the hardened criminals. That would certainly be a step in the right direction. With regard to the aborigines, I am glad to notice that the vote has been increased from £14,000 to £20,000. I should like to see an even larger sum voted so that better attention might be given to the aborigines and particularly the half-castes and quarter-castes. If any member were to walk along the streets in some of the Great Southern towns on a Friday, which is the shopping day there, they would be astounded at the number of male and female half and quarter-castes to be seen strolling about those streets. Recently in one town I counted 30 young men between the ages of 16 and 30, all well dressed and not one of them engaged in any form of occupation. They live in an extraordinary type of hut on the borders of the towns and there must be at least a couple of hundred housed under conditions that are certainly not in the best interests of the half-castes, male and female, and particularly those whose ages are between 14 and 16. In many instances we know that they marry and that the progeny increases rapidly. I have been told by a constable who is fairly conversant with the position that there are over 3,000 natives between Beverley and Albany and that each year the number is increasing at a rapid rate. The vote provided by the Government, namely, £20,000, is surely not adequate to deal with all the natives in the State. The Chief Protector is a capable officer and is doing excellent work, but he requires more money to deal with the serious question of the half and quarter-castes. The Government appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the position of the natives, and on the report that was submitted I understand a Bill to amend the Aborigines Act is before another place. I

do hope that the Government will deal with this matter comprehensively and pay particular attention to the rapid increase in the native population of the Great Southern. This is not comparable to the condition existing in the North, and in my opinion more money will be required to handle the question in that part of the State. In the Northern areas there are large spaces available for the natives, but that is not the case along the Great Southern. A few years ago a native settlement of 10,000 acres was established at Carrollup, between Katanning on the eastern side and the main Perth-Albany road on the western side. Eight or ten years ago that settlement was closed on the ground that it was costing too much and was not serving the purpose for which it was established. A good many of the natives were transferred to the Moore River settlement. Of course everyone knows that if a native is taken from a district like any of those along the Great Southern to country that is totally different, he will not remain there. At the same time, any attempt to place the natives, half or even quarter-caste, in a small area near a town, is a grave mistake. Notwithstanding the precautions that may be taken, we know that they will not keep away from the towns. We are also aware that natives will always keep dogs. As a matter of fact dogs are part of their household and sleep with the natives. The Government must in the near future find an area of country sufficiently large on which to place these people. We know that Carrollup failed because the land would not keep a sheep to the square mile. It is the poorest possible class of country. After the settlement was closed, a number of people took up blocks there, but they did not make a success of them. In fact, not one of the settlers has had a shilling out of his property. There is a suggestion by people who do not understand the conditions that prevail there, that the land should be resumed and again made a reserve for the natives. I consider that would be a serious mistake. I had the pleasure of taking Mr. Keenan when he was Minister in control of the Aborigines Department to that particular part of the State, and I hope shortly to have the opportunity of escorting the present Minister in charge of the department to the same locality, so that he may inspect it for himself before deciding to re-establish a settlement for the

natives there. The creek from which the natives obtained their water supply has become as salt as the ocean and there is no land where it will be possible for the people to grow even their own vegetables. Native can only be established in a large area where there is an abundant rainfall and hunting and fishing. While I am glad that the vote has been increased by £5,000, I am sorry it was not possible to make it £10,000. We owe a duty to the natives whose land we took, and therefore we should do everything possible for them, particularly the youthful half-castes who otherwise are likely to become loafers. There is no one who can say to them authoritatively, "You must get work." The longer they are allowed to idle away their time and live as they are doing the worse it will be for them. We should endeavour to teach them trades and so give them something to live for. I ask the Government to do their best in the direction of providing a reasonable standard of comfort for the natives and give them some incentive to learn a trade and so be able to earn their living instead of remaining as they are to-day, a burden on the taxpayer.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [7.30]: I desire to say a few words regarding the aborigines and our mental hospitals. To save time, I will simply state that I endorse the remarks of the member for Wagin who covered much of the ground I intended to traverse. As to the aborigines, the National Party recently held a conference, and this question was dealt with comprehensively. The need was strongly stressed for increased expenditure in connection with the aborigines, largely for the reasons mentioned by the member for Wagin. It was said at the conference that the women of Western Australia intended to take notice of how members of this House behaved when dealing with the Aborigines' Vote, and that the election of members might be jeopardised next time unless action was taken to provide the aborigines with better treatment.

Mr. Thorn: Did the women say that?

MR. NORTH: Yes, and during the discussion it was pointed out that on a proportional basis, the expenditure provided for in connection with the Aborigines Vote should be twice as much as it is to-day. Of

course, members have no power to move for an increase, but merely for the reduction of a Vote. I pass on that information to the Committee, leaving it to members to act as they think fit. With regard to mental hospitals, the Claremont institution is not in my electorate, and therefore in commenting on that matter I shall speak as a member of this House, and not as member for the district. I desire to draw attention to the fact that several strongly worded articles have appeared in the Press relative to the condition of the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. It has been pointed out that the building is in a state of disrepair, quite apart from the question whether it should be extended to provide better accommodation for the patients. I hope that the increase of £2,500 in the Vote for mental hospitals will be largely expended in the maintenance and repair of the existing building. Strong complaints appeared in an article in the "West Australian" about the ventilation of the Claremont institution, and it was pointed out that during the hot weather the patients suffered intolerable agonies. I bring these matters under the notice of the Minister, hoping that action will be taken during the year.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [7.35]: References made by the member for Victoria Park to the treatment of first offenders at the Fremantle Gaol are worthy of more than passing notice. I find myself in agreement with that hon. member, and, for once, in agreement with the Leader of the Opposition on the same subject. It has been suggested to me on several occasions that the treatment meted out to first offenders at the Fremantle Gaol is not what it should be. Statements have also appeared in the Press to the effect that first offenders are forced to mingle with hardened criminals. In fact that is not only alleged with regard to first offenders, but to youthful offenders in general. If that is the position, it behoves the Minister in charge to see that the practice is stopped. The treatment of offenders generally in our penal establishments is a matter of vital concern to society. If the reform of prisoners is sought from the uniform inwards and not from the heart outwards, at once our penal system falls below what is expected by society. If, in any section of our penal establishment, we insist simply upon punitive treatment, and not re-

formative treatment, again I say the system is wrong and will not achieve the results that are sought when we place people in those establishments because they have committed offences against society and against the laws of the land. This matter is worthy of more than passing notice by those in authority because it is not the first time it has been stated that first offenders and youthful offenders have been forced to mingle with hardened criminals in the exercise yards. We might go further and ascertain whether or not the system in the Fremantle Gaol conforms to modern conceptions of treatment. Looking at it from a purely reformatory point of view, we should see that not only first offenders but youthful offenders generally are kept away from those who have pursued a criminal career for some time, and have frequently strayed from the paths of rectitude. There should be a complete classification of individuals and offences. The psychological aspect has to be studied. The necessity to bring to bear a better knowledge of the psychology of the human being is recognised now more than in past years. If there is a tendency at Fremantle to compel young men to mingle with the hardened inmates at the institution, then we miss the object we have in view, and the expenditure involved goes for nought. I merely mention this phase to impress upon the Minister, if that be necessary, that there is more in this than meets the eye at first sight. I have been in the Fremantle Gaol on several occasions. I saw there some years ago a system whereby a number of cells were provided on a radial basis, and the inmates were allowed to spend a certain number of hours away from the hardened criminals. That was a step in the right direction, but I am anxious to know from the Minister whether we are keeping abreast of the times, and in our penal institutions are segregating first offenders from those who are older in crime. I would also like to know if the method has been adopted of classifying offenders and crimes. I want to know if the object is merely punishment, or reform. I hope the Minister will give some attention to this phase.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [7.42]: I was interested in the remarks of the Minister regarding the Correspondence Despatch Office. I know it saves the State a large sum of money, but I question whether its efficiency

is what it should be. Unfortunately, many letters and documents handled by the office do not reach their destinations within a reasonable time. In some instances a habit has grown up, in consequence, of requesting that letters be forwarded by ordinary post so as thereby to expedite delivery. It is quite possible that those in control of the despatch office are not entirely to blame. I understand the branch is tucked away in a space quite inadequate for its needs, and its growing requirements. I suggest this matter be looked into with the object of providing additional space, so that letters and other matter that have to be forwarded to different parts of the city or to country towns, shall be handled with greater facility than at present. In view of the tremendous saving effected by the despatch office, I hope it will be possible to do what I suggest. As to the Fremantle Gaol, I believe the treatment extended to prisoners is sympathetic and along reformatory lines. That applies particularly to first offenders. I believe prisoners in that category are segregated from older offenders, and, generally, that the gaol is conducted along sympathetic lines and in conformity with modern prison methods. I would like to know whether a prisoner who has been on the farm at Pardelup for a long time is permitted to take up land. If a prisoner has worked well and his behaviour has been satisfactory while at the prison farm, I think the authorities could go a little further and allow him to work out his redemption to the fullest extent. In other words, the Government might permit him to take up land under special conditions. If that were done, we could indeed say that the reformatory methods operating in other countries, such as New Zealand, also apply here. I am under no illusions respecting prisoners. I think I have a sound commonsense view of the subject. I believe that the Government are doing all they can, and that those in charge of the Fremantle Gaol are doing their best to encourage inmates to revert to a useful life. The number of inmates is steadily decreasing, which bears out the belief fairly wide-spread amongst those who have given consideration to the subject of prison reform that many of the people held in gaols in years past were really mental cases, and their right place was not in a prison but in a hospital for the mentally abnormal. More rooms are required at the Claremont Hospital. I believe there are cer-

tain wards with the beds placed so closely together that it is necessary for inmates to walk sideways when going to bed. If that is not right, I shall be pleased to have a correction from the Minister. Of course, the Minister cannot be blamed. The number of people who suffer from mental disease is steadily increasing, although, as I pointed out the other night, the average in Western Australia is very good, being surpassed only by that of Tasmania and of South Australia. I hope the Government will be able to provide additional wards, because it is positively certain that the existing position cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. The number of mental cases is steadily increasing. I do not know the reason; maybe we have the wrong party in power. Every year for several years past there has been an increase. I hope it will be possible for the Government to provide the extra wards, and that the buildings will be simple in design, and will involve no undue expense. The Government have a difficult task, and I would not ask for anything unreasonable, but more accommodation must be provided. The position in the wards is reminiscent of boarding houses in Perth in 1896. When I came here, I was shown to a room about 16ft. x 12ft. in which there was practically one big bed, although actually ten people slept in it.

The Minister for Agriculture: That was not a mental home, was it?

Mr. SAMPSON: Not so far as I am aware: it indicated the rapid increase in the population of the State at that time. If additional wards are not provided at Claremont, statements will be made about our mental homes exposing what will be in the nature of a scandal.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [7.48]: The gravity of the Minister when introducing the Estimates calls for a little comment. There is an item of £1,947 for salaries and allowances, including salaries of officers under the control of the Public Service Commissioner; salaries and wages generally, including temporary assistance, district allowances, allowances for leave due to officers on retirement, and to officers under Public Service regulations, and arrears of salaries under the Public Service Appeal Court decision. The Vote shows an increase of £341 for this year. These items refer to a public concern called the Perth

Observatory. Apparently the seriousness with which the Minister presented the Estimates is more or less in keeping with that of the institution itself. I do not wish to be tiresome, but it is pleasing to know that the gun at the Observatory is still fired daily. Thus we pay £1,947 for having the gun fired at 12 o'clock every day.

Mr. Withers: One o'clock.

Mr. LAMBERT: Is that so? The seismographic records are of great public interest and scientific benefit. I do not know whether, owing to the volcanic nature of this State, the instruments are ever overworked, but it is pleasing to know that for the payment of £1,900 odd we have such instruments of great scientific interest and value to the State. I also note that the Government Astronomer winds the clock at the Edith Cowan memorial. I am pleased to know that for this expenditure of £1,900, including the cost of overtime and temporary assistance, the Government Astronomer finds time to wind the memorial clock. That clock is situated in a very troublesome place; at least I find a difficulty to dodge it when driving home in my car at night. If he placed a light on the memorial, it would be of more service than winding the clock. I learn that the transit observations are being carried out and that the southern star list—I understand that is a Japanese star—has been completed with the exception of the final computations. About a quarter of a century ago, after a world conference of leading astronomers, it was decided to catalogue the stars, but unfortunately our astronomer, after ten years of laborious work, found that he had been pointing the telescope in the wrong direction. That was discovered when it came to making the final computation. To suggest that a saving could be effected by handing the instruments over to an institution like the University and using the building for the Department of Agriculture, even to providing for an agricultural chemist to deal with some of the problems which forever will confront the agricultural industry in this State, I suppose, would be regarded as sheer stupidity. So long as the Government Astronomer proceeds with the final computation of his stars, I dare say Parliament will be satisfied, notwithstanding that under Federation astronomical and meteorological work is purely a national concern. If members consider that the

Government are justified in increasing the Vote by £341, spending altogether £1,947, when the money would be a useful contribution towards overcoming the verminous state of the Fremantle Gaol, or preventing the herding of first offenders and youthful offenders with hardened criminals, or towards improving the social service mentioned by the member for Subiaco, namely the provision of milk for school children, well and good. Evidently needs of that kind are of no account as compared with an institution of this character.

Mr. Sampson: The milky way is important.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know how long has elapsed since the Government Astronomer furnished a report of this useful institution. It is comforting to know that during the year the celestial objects were viewed by 2,712 people, this at a cost of £1,947.

Hon. C. G. Latham: A lot of people look at the stars without going up there.

Mr. Stubbs: Especially falling stars.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not going to suggest from which angle the hon. member views them. Think of the educational value of the Observatory to the public—children looking at a few stars through the telescope! It reminds me of the words of Professor Henry Drummond in his book "Temporal Life in the Spiritual World," "This is too great a theme for me to handle; it must assuredly be handled by greater minds when we, like streaks of morning mist, have merged into the infinite azure past."

MR. CROSS (Canning) [7.57] rose to speak.

Hon. C. G. Latham: The Southern Cross arises!

Mr. CROSS: Some of the statements made regarding the reception home at Point Heathcote might be misleading. Some members have said that there is an immediate need for increased accommodation at the institution. If increased accommodation were made available, I dare say it could be utilised, just as increased accommodation would be useful at other institutions, but my information is that there is no overcrowding at the institution. Neither is there any difficulty about a shortage of beds. The general conduct of the institution reflects great credit upon the staff.

Mr. Stubbs: Who queried that?

Mr. CROSS: No one.

Mr. Stubbs: We all recognise the fact.

Mr. CROSS: I have not heard of any complaint on that score, but I have heard of patients who have left private hospitals and gone to the institution and paid for their accommodation because they received better treatment there. I consider that there is no immediate need for an enlargement of the institution. The existing buildings are sufficient to cater for the people who unfortunately need accommodation. The State is fortunate in having a matron of the calibre of the lady in charge, and fortunate also in having such a staff. A large percentage of the people who have to enter the institution to receive a few weeks' rest and benefit from the good attention are able subsequently to return to their homes.

MR. HUGHES (East Perth) [8.0]: Constant complaints have been made in the last couple of years concerning the overcrowding that occurs at the Point Heathcote Home. I happen to be the secretary of the employees' union and therefore know something about the matter. At this institution there is a ward for male patients designed to accommodate 14. Across the passage there is a reception room, but patients are not permitted to be kept there. Recently, in addition to the ward itself being filled to capacity, 12 patients have been put to sleep on the floor of the reception room, and the furniture is moved in and out every day. That is not fair to the staff or the patients. If anything happened, the staff would be held responsible. Some patient might get hold of an article of furniture, strike one of the attendants, and do him serious injury. Apart from worker's compensation, the employee would get no redress. We have also complained repeatedly about the overcrowding at Claremont. The Inspector-General admits that the place is too full, but he can get no money for extensions. Perhaps we shall get some redress when somebody has been killed. We have also tried to induce the authorities to put a stop to the practice of an attendant being locked up for the night with a number of insane persons. When I was last before the Arbitration Court on this matter, I told the President that somebody would be killed, and that then we should get redress. An attendant was locked in with 38 patients, and whilst he was looking after

one patient another hit him on the head with a glass bottle. But for the intervention of one of the patients, the attendant would certainly have been killed, but as it was he became mentally affected himself and will never work again. The regulations provide that dangerous articles must not be left lying about. If they are left about the attendants can get no redress under the heading of employers' liability. If a man refuses to work under these conditions, he loses his position, and if he is hurt while working under these conditions the defence is one of contributory negligence, and he gets no compensation. As things are, we have to look to Ministerial action, so that our people may work under safe conditions. The Arbitration Court says that it has no control over the domestic arrangements of the institution, and yet it will prescribe the number of men who can handle a sling on the Fremantle wharf. The Minister should be prepared to meet the reasonable demands of the employees, to ensure their safety. The women attendants have to remain at call for 24 hours a day, notwithstanding that they are supposed to work only 44 hours a week. The authorities insist that they shall live on the premises in case they are needed. The liberty of the employees is thus greatly interfered with. Why should a nurse, especially one in an institution of this character, be compelled to live on the premises when she is off duty, and have her leisure hours interfered with? If it is necessary that a certain number of girls shall live on the premises in case of emergency, they should be paid special rates for complying with that demand. These employees are practically industrial soldiers, and are under the direction of the management for seven days a week. The Arbitration Court will not interfere in the matter. The work is nerve-racking, and for that reason it is necessary that the nurses should get away from the institution some time every 24 hours, and yet for six nights out of seven, when they are off for the evening, they must return by 11 o'clock at night. Those girls who are forced to live in are constantly complaining of the food. The control at the institution is divided between the Inspector-General and the Managing Secretary, whose endeavour it is to run the hospital as cheaply as possible. The Managing Secretary has discovered one avenue of economy in the food supply for the staff. For years we have had to carry on a running fight to maintain anything like a

decent supply and variety of food. It was only after we threatened industrial action that the staff were given the luxury of fresh fruit on their tables once a week. Naturally, it is highly difficult to give girls the variety of food they need. Because of the conditions of their work, they are all under high tension, and more or less pernickety in the matter of food. Putting an ordinary shilling restaurant meal before them leaves them unable to eat it, so that frequently they go out and buy their own food. The food put before them is edible, but to them not eatable, being food in the mass. The girls should be treated like any other set of industrial workers—should be told, "Your hours are so and so, and you are expected to work those hours, and that is all that is expected of you—to come here and do the work for which you are paid." What does it matter to the Minister or to the Department if a girl is out dancing until midnight or 1 a.m.? Why should these girls have to rush away from a dance at 10 o'clock in order to catch the last bus? Why should that relic of industrial conscription be permitted to survive in their case? This is A.D. 1936. The most pressing question is that of accommodation, since it affects the health of the girls. There is no reason at all why the regulations should not be immediately amended to provide that all a girl is expected to do is to fulfil the conditions laid down by the Arbitration Court, and that in other respects she shall not be interfered with by her employer. I could end the thing in a day by calling a strike of the girls, against which no Government could hold out for a day; but it would be terrible to take such drastic action in order to secure a common-sense improvement in the conditions of our girls, and consequently we have hesitated to take it. The patients are such that other people could not possibly be placed in charge of them promptly. Out of a regard for their responsibilities to the patients, the girls have gone on enduring the present conditions. If there is to be a 40-hour week, that system should start here, with the girls employed in mental institutions.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Aborigines, £20,042; Registry and Friendly Societies, £28,321; Gaols, £28,321; Harbour and Light and Jetties, £23,273—agreed to.

Vote—Mental Hospitals and Inebriates, £104,872:

Item, Salaries and Allowances, £65,872.

Mr. CROSS: The statements I made with regard to Point Heathcote and the accommodation there were made in good faith, on information I obtained to-day from members of the staff employed there. I may add that I have myself made several inspections of the place, which is in my electorate, but without seeing any overcrowding. If there is overcrowding, it should not be permitted to continue. The Minister informs me that there is, in fact, overcrowding.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Observatory, £2,047—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—BOAT LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council, and read a first time.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 8th October.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.25]: In the absence of the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) I wish to make a few general observations on the Bill. The measure seeks to make conditions easier for employees in many directions, as regards both factories and shops. I propose to deal shortly with a few of the main features as stated by the Minister for Employment. The first point is that factories in which fewer than four persons are engaged shall be brought within the scope of the principal Act. The Minister went on to say that people now making pickles and jams in small homes would be subject to the full conditions of that Act. Then the 44-hour week principle is to be brought into play if the Bill becomes law. There is to be a resting period for women engaged in ironing and pressing. There is to be prohibition of premiums in regard to employment in various businesses, and measures are taken to empower magistrates to obtain

repayment of premiums where the cases are proved. There is a State-wide provision forbidding late closing. That is sure to be a highly controversial matter. There is also limitation of hours in which motor service stations may operate, including Sunday afternoons. All these things represent improvements from the point of view of employees, and they are going to cost industry a great deal of money. In order to make the position clear from this side of the House, I got into touch with various Chambers of Commerce, the Chamber of Manufacturers, and the Retailers' Association; but I have not yet been able to obtain their replies as to any suggested amendments, the time being too short. The second reading of the Bill was moved only last Thursday. My remarks, therefore, must be purely of a general nature, pending the receipt of information from the persons mostly concerned. As to bringing factories employing fewer than four persons within the scope of the Act, this is a harsh provision and will actually prevent occupants of small homes from making jams or pickles to be sold on the Armadale-road and in similar localities. We must bear in mind that very many persons in Western Australia have not yet got back into industry. Thousands of people are still on the hands of the State. Is this the way to encourage them to get back into industry? Of course, it makes the position more difficult. As regards the 44-hour week, there is the possibility of a 40-hour week being launched at any time by the Commonwealth Parliament on a Federal basis. In my opinion it would be better for the State at this juncture to refrain from introducing a piebald measure of this nature, going half-way. We have a good Act, and surely it would be more advisable for us to leave the question of 44 hours in shops and factories to a later date, when the Federal Government will have completed their 40-hour week inquiry. The next point is the resting period for women ironing and pressing, on which I have no proposals to offer. However, if the resting period can be arranged, it will surely be an advantage. Still, I would rather hear first from the persons concerned. Then comes the question of the State-wide Saturday half-holiday. That is another highly controversial matter. I understand that at present in the country districts each locality decides for

itself whether or not it will have the late shopping night. It appears that a great many districts prefer that condition to remain. If to-day there are certain districts opposed to the condition, they could have got rid of it by local vote. But this proposal is to make a State-wide measure and cut out all late-night shopping. That will give rise to a lot of opposition, and I do not think it is wise for us to interfere where local districts have power to arrange this as they please. The next proposal is to limit the hours of motor service stations. I understand a great many of the bowser operators and owners would like that provision, for they feel there is a shortage of work during late hours and on Sunday afternoons, and so they would prefer to close down. But we have to consider the public. The Bill does not propose to include country districts, but it gives the Minister power to include those districts later on. Regarding petrol stations, one can understand the desire to reduce hours when there is insufficient trade to warrant the premises being kept open. However, if any move is to be made in that direction, would it not be better to have some arrangement whereby in each district a few of the plants would provide a skeleton service? If that cannot be done, I would rather see things remain as they are. If a roster could be arranged, provided that certain stations remained open, it would be all right, but otherwise it would be better to leave things as they are.

Mr. Fox: The employers are looking for that.

Mr. NORTH: Yes, but we in this House have to consider the public as well.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why not provide for the butchers' shops?

Mr. NORTH: Well, of course, meat will keep. For me the only question at issue is that we have at present a facility for the general public, and it is easy to understand from the point of view of the Government that they are making a move in the interests of those in the industry. The fact remains that we have the public to consider, and I think it would be better to leave things as they are.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then you are in favour of opening all places?

Mr. NORTH: Those seem to be the most general of the points the Minister had in mind, although of course the Bill is quite a

long one. The fact remains that nearly all these innovations mean an extra charge upon industry; they will cost a certain amount of extra money. This is neither the time nor the place to discuss whether or not we are to have increasing prosperity to meet those extra charges. It might be argued that we are going to have improved conditions in Western Australia, and in consequence all the increased charges suggested in the Bill will rest lightly on industry. In that case I would support every one of them, except the proposal to close the petrol stations, which at least should maintain a skeleton service. But we have no guarantee of this increased prosperity to carry these extra burdens, and until we have I am not prepared to support innovations, although there is a certain move in the Federal sphere which will bring about a great improvement in industry. When that time comes it will be a good opportunity to consider all these amendments. This is one of those Bills which, in view of the fact that there are two sides to it, calls for a select committee in order that we may get the whole of the viewpoints thrashed out and so have something to put before the House in order that we might improve the chances of getting the Bill through another place. It is of no use spending a lot of time on a Bill which probably may be lost in another place. If we could manage to get a select committee to thrash out these matters it would meet the case so far as I am concerned, and in those circumstances I would support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. C. G. Latham, debate adjourned.

BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 22nd September. Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Employment in charge of the Bill.

Clause 8, False Advertisements (partly considered):

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on the following amendment moved by the Minister for Employment:—

That after "publisher" in line 2 of Sub-clause 4 the words "of any printed statement or printer, publisher," be inserted.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: A great deal of advertising goes over the air these days, and

the Minister promised to give consideration to that.

The Minister for Employment: I have included that.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That after "Western Australia" in line 3 of Subclause 4 the words "or against any broadcasting company operating in Western Australia and dealing in advertising business," be inserted.

It is obvious that the Bill should provide for action in cases where improper statements are made over the air.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I have no objection to the proposed amendment. It is reasonable that broadcasting companies should not be immediately prosecuted for the transmission of advertisements that may be false in some particular. It seems reasonable that in this regard they should be placed on the same footing as the printers of newspapers or leaflets advertising goods.

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I move an amendment—

That in line 32 of Subclause (4) of Clause 8 all the words after "against" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"the printer of any advertisement, dodger, or catalogue, or against any person acting under the authority of any such printer, publisher, or proprietor unless—

(a) in the case of a newspaper—

(i) the printer, publisher, or proprietor has been warned by an inspector of the falsity of such statement, or of any other statement substantially the same as such statement, and that the publication thereof is an offence under this section; and

(ii) the printer, publisher, or proprietor has on any day after the receipt of the warning, published or authorised or permitted the publication of such statement or any such other statement in any issue of any newspaper in Western Australia printed, published, or owned by him (as the case may be);

(b) in the case of any advertisement, dodger, or catalogue contained in any written publication other than a newspaper—

(i) the printer has been warned by an inspector of the falsity of such statement or of any other statement substantially the same as such statement and that the publication thereof is an offence under this section; and

(ii) such printer has not immediately withdrawn from publication all other advertisements, dodgers, or catalogues in his possession."

The object of the amendment is to make clear the position of people connected with the publication of advertisements in newspapers, or persons concerned with the publishing of advertisements or dodgers wherein goods are advertised for sale, and we provide those people with safeguards against prosecution in such cases because, as I explained at a former stage of the debate, we feel that those concerned with the publication of newspapers and dodgers of the description mentioned shall not be immediately prosecuted in the case of their publishing a false advertisement, but shall have some warning regarding the nature of the falsity of any advertisement, so that they may have an opportunity of refusing further publication.

Mr. HUGHES: I suggest that the Minister should drop the words "by an inspector" which appear in paragraph (a) (i), and paragraph (b) (i). As the clause at present stands, the warning could come only from a factory inspector, because in the Bill an inspector means an inspector appointed under the Factories and Shops Act. It might be a very difficult thing to get a factory inspector sufficiently fortified with information to give the warning, with the result that long before a warning could be given, incalculable harm could be done. If the words "by an inspector" were dropped, it would not impair the efficiency of an inspector to give a warning, but would place any party sufficiently interested in a position to give that warning.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I do not propose to accept the suggestion of the hon. member. If we agreed to such an amendment, we would have no authority charged with the responsibility of issuing the necessary warning.

Hon. C. G. Latham: You would have unauthorised persons issuing it.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Any Tom, Dick or Harry might warn someone connected with a newspaper that a certain advertisement was not true, but the persons conducting the newspaper would not know whether the warnings given were genuine or not. If members of the public were given power to issue warnings, they might do so without any justification whatever. They

might make them with the idea of damaging the conduct and management of a newspaper or printing office. Unless the warnings are given by someone with authority, they will not be as effective as we desire. It would be very difficult to launch any prosecution against persons associated with a newspaper or printing office on the mere say-so of some irresponsible person.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That after the word "possession" in subparagraph (ii) of paragraph (b) the following proviso be added:—"Provided that such withdrawal shall not include catalogues, books, or publications in which such advertisements are purely incidental and which are not newspapers or periodicals within the meaning of the Act."

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I ask the member for Swan not to press this amendment at this stage. I was not aware it was on the notice paper until this evening. I will undertake to have a discussion with the proper authority and if there are no complications likely to arise as a result of the insertion of the proposed amendment the Bill can be recommitted at a later stage.

Mr. SAMPSON: I ask permission to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph be added to Subclause (4):—

(c) in the case of a broadcasting station licensed to deal in advertising by wireless transmission—

(i) the management has been warned by an inspector of the falsity of such statement or of any other statement substantially the same as the statement published by wireless transmission and that the publication thereof is an offence under this section; and

(ii) the said management has immediately withdrawn from its list of scheduled advertisements any such advertisement or advertisements declared to be false within the meaning of this Act.

The principle is exactly the same as that which applies to the newspapers and is submitted for the purpose of affording the same protection in respect of statements made over the air.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: If the hon. member will look at the amendment on the Notice Paper in my name, and

which has been accepted, he will see that the words are as follows:—"unless such printer has not immediately withdrawn." In the hon. member's amendment he sets out "unless the said management has immediately withdrawn." The word "not" does not appear.

Mr. SAMPSON: I can say in this instance that it is a printer's error, though really it is an oversight on my own part. With the permission of the Committee, I will amend paragraph (ii) of my amendment to read, "The said management has not immediately . . ."

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

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 9 to 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Goods without trade descriptions to be seized:

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added to the clause:—"Provided that if no action be taken against such owner or person in possession of such goods within one calendar month of the taking possession of the goods, such goods shall be returned to such owner or person at the end of such calendar month.

The clause provides that if an inspector finds any goods to which the prescribed trade description has not been applied, he may take possession of such goods. Further on, the inspector is given the privilege of having 12 months in which to commence proceedings. This means that he may keep the goods for 12 months. That is not reasonable. If he is going to commence proceedings, surely he can look into the matter and give a decision within a reasonable period, such as one month. Believing he can do so, the amendment has been worded to compel him to return the goods if at the end of one month he cannot proceed with the charge.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: This is a clause of the Bill which we hope it will not be necessary to put into effect when the Act becomes operative. I can assure members that this power will be used only in very few, if any, cases. It is necessary to have the power so that the provisions of the Act may be fully enforced. I hope, therefore, that the member for Katanning will not take an unduly practical view of the clause; I mean, that he will not feel that when the provision becomes operative, inspectors given these

powers under the measure will be looking for every opportunity to seize undescribed goods and hold them for long periods. If any goods are seized—and I hope it will not be necessary for any goods at all to be seized—they will only be seized in very extreme cases and will certainly not be held for a longer period than is essential to enable a decision in regard to a prosecution being arrived at. One month may be far too short. It would be better to allow the matter to remain discretionary, because the time required might be one month and three days or perhaps six weeks, or even two months. I feel that the amendment would make the position too restrictive. The clause, I repeat, will only be used in extreme cases and goods will not be held for a moment longer than necessary.

Hon. C. G. LATHAM: The Minister should not tell us what he proposes, for it is not in his power to propose once the Bill leaves this Chamber. I have heard similar suggestions from Ministers before. Amendments have been carried here, the Minister telling the Committee, "You have nothing to fear." But when the law is printed and on the statute book, those administering it have to obey it. Then it is not a question of justice, but a question of law. A reasonable limit should be placed on the period. If a month is too short, the court should be given discretionary power to fix the period, instead of that matter being left entirely to officials. I have known exhibits—money in some instances—to be held by the police for unnecessarily long periods. The Minister's interpretation may be entirely different from that of a judge or magistrate. I hope the amendment will be pressed.

Mr. WATTS: Were the Minister to be the sole inspector under the measure if enacted, I would be quite content, because I feel sure the hon. gentleman would be entirely reasonable. But we have had experience of the administration of such powers by officials. They exercise every power given them, without the least delay and sometimes without excuse. Legislation of this nature should lay down exactly what Parliament intends, and should leave officials as little discretion as possible within the four corners of the measure.

Mr. McDONALD: I support the amendment. The Bill is intended to protect the rights of the public, but such legislation

should also protect the rights of traders. Parliament ought to lay down clear safeguards to prevent traders from being unduly penalised in connection with their business. By all means let a fair deal be given to the public, but let us know exactly what the rights and liabilities of traders are under the measure. If goods, possibly in large quantities, are taken away by the inspector, a reasonable time for their return should be set out in the Bill. I regard a month as ample.

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

Clauses 16 to 23, Schedule—agreed to.

Postponed Clause 5—Trade descriptions compulsory in certain cases:

Mr. WATTS: I move an amendment—

That in the proviso paragraphs (a) and (b) be struck out.

This is another aspect of the question of proclamation or regulation previously discussed. I have already set out the objections I have, and I believe many members have, to the granting of power by proclamation, over which the Chamber has no jurisdiction whatever. In the case of regulations the power of disallowance can be exercised by a majority of the Chamber. The control of Clause 5, one of the most important provisions of the Bill, is placed entirely in the hands of the Governor-in-Council, which virtually means the Minister administering the measure. I hold that it is for this Chamber to have some control over legislation affecting not only the public but also those engaged in business. The power of altering the various classes of goods to be controlled by the Bill should be left in the hands of the Legislature and not in those of the Governor-in-Council.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: This principle was debated on the previous clause, and a majority of members felt that as the Bill is of a policing nature, it is one in which the use of proclamation can be sanctioned. The same arguments as were put forward in support of the use of proclamation in regard to the previous clause apply to this one. Since the Bill was introduced, various alterations have been made in Clause 5, and other amendments appear on the Notice Paper. These have the effect of making the clause far less strict, to the ordinary observer, than was previously the case. Representatives of all the trading organisa-

tions have been interviewed, and are now quite prepared to agree to the provision.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They are satisfied with the Bill now, are they?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Yes, to a large extent, almost in its entirety.

Hon. C. G. Latham: They are not satisfied.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I think the Leader of the Opposition has not seen them during the last few hours.

Hon. C. G. Latham: I have had communications from them within the last day or two.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Not within the last day. The alteration proposed here deals with the method by which specifications of goods in the Schedule, and proclamations in regard to them, may be suspended or lifted or dealt with in other ways. I oppose the amendment.

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

Ayes	19
Noes	23

Majority against	4
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AYES.

Mr. Boyle
Mr. Brockman
Mrs. Cardell-Oliver
Mr. Doust
Mr. Hill
Mr. Hughes
Mr. Latham
Mr. Mann
Mr. North
Mr. Patrick

Mr. Sampson
Mr. Seward
Mr. Shearn
Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Thorn
Mr. Warner
Mr. Watts
Mr. Welsh
Mr. Doney

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Coverley
Mr. Cross
Mr. Hawke
Mr. Hegney
Miss Holman
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Lambert
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Millington
Mr. Munsie
Mr. Needham
Mr. Nulsen

Mr. Raphael
Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. F. C. L. Smith
Mr. Stoyants
Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Troy
Mr. Wilcock
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Wise
Mr. Withers
Mr. Fox

(Teller.)

PAIRS.

AYES.
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Stubbs

NOES.
Mr. Collier
Mr. Marshall

Amendment thus negatived.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I move an amendment—

That a new subclause, to stand as Subclause (2), be inserted as follows:—

“(2.) It shall not be necessary to affix the prescribed particulars relating to the manufacturer and to the goods on the goods themselves but it shall be sufficient compliance with this section if such particulars are at-

tached to any covering, label, reel, placard, or thing used in connection with the goods, provided that the same are at all times in sufficient proximity to the goods and conspicuously displayed so as to be clearly and easily referable thereto by any person proposing to purchase the goods.”

The amendment has been framed to meet the fears of those who regarded the clause, in its original form, as difficult of application. The wording of the clause has been interpreted by a number of people in a number of different ways, and traders have become fearful of the practicability of doing what it prescribes. In order that there shall be no doubt as to what is required, the amendment has been prepared. It will make it clear that no impossible proposition will be forced upon traders.

Mr. McDONALD: When this matter was discussed previously, I criticised the proposed amendment, but I now find my remarks were unfounded and were due to a misapprehension, which was not entirely my fault, as the amendment was not then on the Notice Paper. I did not understand from the Minister's speech exactly what was intended. The amendment he has moved will improve the Bill, and will be of assistance to traders. I understood, however, that it was suggested the earlier part of Clause 5 would be amended.

The Minister for Employment: No.

Mr. McDONALD: Then I must have been under a misapprehension. As the clause is not to be further amended, I shall oppose it because I do not think it is yet in a form that is quite satisfactory. It will impose upon traders an obligation to do a number of things that will be not only expensive but extremely difficult to carry out. The clause should be re-drafted and, from information I have received, I thought there was a chance that it would be re-drafted to enable traders to give effect to its proposals on a limited scale. This clause in particular has been taken from the Victorian Act of 1928, which was copied in New South Wales in 1931, and was also copied in South Australia last year. In all those Acts in the other States the goods that were affected were, I think, subsequently the same as those set out in the schedule to the Bill. Although New South Wales passed a similar clause to this affecting goods similar to those in our schedule, last year the New South Wales Parliament amended that Act, and eliminated all those goods from the schedule except, I

understand, bedding and furniture. While I have not had time to read the "Hansard" reports of the debates in the New South Wales Parliament, I take it that Parliament amended that Act last year because they found there was great difficulty in the way of traders carrying out the directions of the Act in regard to goods.

The Minister for Employment: Do you suggest an amendment to Subclause 1?

Mr. McDONALD: I thought there was considered an amendment to Subclause 1. But I am mainly interested to see an amendment to the schedule, and as the Minister has that in view following the legislation in New South Wales, it will largely remove the difficulty that I see.

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

Progress reported.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

On motion by the Minister for Justice, Order of the Day for the second reading of the Judges' Retirement Bill (No. 1) was discharged from the Notice Paper.

House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 14th October, 1936.

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

BILL—PEARLING CREWS ACCIDENT ASSURANCE FUND.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.34] in moving the second reading said: As members are aware, men engaged in the pearling industry are excluded from the operation of the Workers'

Compensation Act. As a result of that and a desire to have some method by which employees might be compensated if they are injured, or their dependants might be compensated if employees are killed in the industry, this Bill has been submitted. Following conferences between the Minister for the North-West, the Pearliers' Committee, and representatives of the men, the clauses of this Bill have been settled. It is proposed to establish a fund to be controlled by a board to be known as the Pearling Crews Accident Assurance Board consisting of seven members, namely, the chairman of the Broome Pearliers' Committee, the president of the Japanese Club, the pearling inspector at Broome, and four elected members. The Bill provides that the board shall have full power to deal with matters arising from the operation of the fund. They will be able to strike a levy on those engaged in the industry. The holders of pearling licenses shall provide an amount equivalent to that to be contributed by the members of the crews on the particular boats. The Bill contains a scale on which the contributions to the fund shall be based. Provision is made that for the first three years the board shall have power, by means of an insurance policy, to ensure that funds will be available in the event of accidents involving compensation in excess of the amount in the fund at the time. After the expiration of three years, the board will have the right to fix the contributions on the basis deemed necessary to meet the then existing requirements. The scheme is an excellent one; it is one which could very well have been put into operation many years ago. The fund is to be controlled exclusively by the people engaged in the industry, namely the employers and the employees, and payments from the fund to those entitled to receive them will be determined by the board. The Bill empowers the board to make payments to the Consul for the particular country of which the employee is a national, or to the club at Broome to which the employee belonged. That club is different in form from a club as we know it; it is an organisation which looks after the welfare of employees and appears to be satisfactory to them. I do not think I need say anything more because the Bill speaks for itself. It is not intended that the payments to be made shall be anything like equal to the scale provided under the Workers' Compensation Act, and it might be that a claim for death will not exceed £50, while amounts