

the same. Subclause 2 is provided in case persons import into the State some substance, not at present defined as motor spirit, and also in case it is found that any substance, which might under the interpretation be defined as motor spirit, is not in fact used for propelling vehicles on roads. Clauses 3, 4, 5 and 6 are small machinery clauses providing for the registration of vendors; for the furnishing of returns to the Commissioner of Taxation; and for the payment of the money due and for penalty for failure. Clause 7, Subclause 1 makes provision whereby the consumer—namely the person who uses motor spirit, but who has purchased or obtained it outside the State for the purpose of propelling motor vehicles—shall pay. That is, say the Imperial Oil Company import petrol, sell it and pay the tax. Some of the petrol they would not sell, but use for propelling their vehicles. They would thus be vendors and consumers and would pay both ways. Similarly, any person or combination of persons might import for their own use, and provision is made that they shall periodically make declarations as to the quantity purchased or obtained, and pay just in the same way as the vendors do. Clause 7, Subclause 2 provides for payment by the consumer, who must, on the days set out, furnish declarations, showing the number of gallons of motor spirit purchased outside the State, and used for the purpose of propelling motor vehicles on streets or roads. Clause 8 enables any person who purchases motor spirit, which is used for any purpose other than propelling vehicles on roads or streets, to claim a refund of that amount, which, of course, he has paid to the vendor from whom he purchased. Clause 9, 10 and 11 are penalty clauses. Clause 12 gives certain power to the Commissioner to facilitate collection, and ensure that full payments are made. Clause 13 definitely provides that the whole of the proceeds shall be paid to the Main Roads Fund. Clause 14 relates to regulations. I move:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. J. Holmes, debate adjourned.

## RESOLUTION—STATE FOREST,

### Revocation.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution:—"That the proposal for the par-

tial revocation of State Forest No. 4, Collapsed upon the Table of the House on Thursday, the 10th December, be carried out."

*House adjourned at 10 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 15th December, 1925.*

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.3 p.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTIONS (3)—RAILWAY STATIONS

*Kellerberrin.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1. Has any definite decision been arrived at regarding the lighting of the Kellerberrin station yard? 2. In view of the growing importance of Kellerberrin, will the Minister cause inquiry to be made into the necessity for more adequate station buildings and offices, and the provision of an overhead bridge, as requested by the 20 citizens of the town?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, The office accommodation meets all present requirements, and in comparison with other urgent works there is no necessity for overhead bridge at present.

*Merredin and Carrabin.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Do the Government contemplate taking action during the present financial year to bring Merredin station buildings and yard up to date? 2, Can the contingency funds be utilised to provide for adequate trucking yards and the fencing-in of the Carrabin station property?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, No funds are available for this work.

*Tammin.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: Will he give further consideration to the petition of 234 Tammin citizens that improvements be made to the Tammin station and platform?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Consideration has been given to petition, and, in comparison with other works, improvements are not considered necessary at this stage.

**QUESTIONS (3)—WATER SUPPLY.**

*Broad Arrow.*

Mr. HERON (for Mr. Pantou) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he aware that he only water supply at Broad Arrow is he dam controlled by the Railway Department? 2, Is it a fact that the water has been declared by the department to be unfit for human consumption? 3, If so, will the Minister at once provide the necessary water or the residents of Broad Arrow?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes. 2, It has been declared as unfit for human consumption and should be boiled. It is understood that the Railway Department are posting notices to this effect. 3, If residents require a better water than the Broad Arrow water after boiling, Mundaring water from Kalgoorlie can be obtained by truck.

*Tammin Rock Dam.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: What is being done with the

Tammin rock dam? Is it still in a dismantled state, and why was it thrown out of use?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: (a) Tammin rock dam is being held as a reserve supply. (b) No. (c) It is temporarily out of use on account of the small quantity of water contained therein.

*Hills Settlers' Losses.*

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Premier: What steps are being taken to provide compensation to settlers whose holdings in the hills and adjacent districts are, on account of the water supply works being carried out, suffering damage because of the diminution of water flow?

The PREMIER replied: No damage is acknowledged. The works have been carried out within the law.

**QUESTION—SANDALWOOD.**

Mr. HERON asked the Premier: 1, What was the quantity of sandalwood held by the different firms in Fremantle or in transit at the 30th November, 1924? 2, What quantity was bought by the different firms from Crown lands and private property between the 30th November, 1924, and the 30th November, 1925? 3, What quantity was shipped from the 30th November, 1924, to the 30th November, 1925? 4, What quantity was held by the different firms, or in transit, at the 30th November, 1925?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Quantity of sandalwood held by licensees on the 30th November, 1924: Paterson & Co. Ltd., 1,950 tons; W.A. Sandalwood Co-operative Co. Ltd., 511 tons; Burrridge & Warren, 871 tons; John Hector & Sons, 349 tons; total, 3,681 tons. 2 (Crown land and private property respectively): Burrridge & Warren, 214 tons 5 cwt. 3 qr., 506 tons 16 cwt. 2 qr.; Hector & Sons, 610 tons 5 cwt., 18 tons 1 cwt.; Paterson & Co. Ltd., 4,072 tons; 1,864 tons 6 cwt. 2 qr.; W.A. Sandalwood Co-operative Co. Ltd., 1,745 tons 3 cwt., 715 tons 4 cwt. 1 qr.; totals, 6,641 tons 13 cwt. 3 qr., 3,104 tons 8 cwt. 1 qr.; grand total, 9,746 tons 1 cwt. 4 qr. 3, 5,481 tons. 4, Quantity of sandalwood held by licensees on the 30th November, 1925: Paterson & Co. Ltd., 4,999 tons; W.A. Sandalwood Co-operative Co. Ltd., 1,150 tons; Burrridge & Warren, 1,422 tons; John Hector & Sons, 149 tons; total, 7,720 tons.

**QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACT.***Motor Cycle Pillion Riding.*

Mr. STUBBS asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Is he aware that pillion riding on motor cycles is prohibited by law in South Australia? 2, Owing to the many serious and fatal accidents that have occurred in this State during past 12 months, will he instruct the Police Department to prohibit the practice? 3, Should legislation be required to prohibit pillion riding, will he introduce a Bill this session?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, Yes. It is the only place in the British Empire, so far as is known, where such a regulation exists. 2, It is not considered that pillion riding has been responsible for any fatal accident, and until the necessary power is obtained instructions such as mentioned could not be issued. 3, Provision is being made in the amending Traffic Bill to prohibit the practice.

**QUESTION—WAR RELIEF FUNDS.**

Mr. STUBBS (for Lieut.-Colonel Denton) asked the Premier: Do the Government intend to introduce this session a Bill dealing with war relief funds?

The PREMIER replied: No.

**QUESTION—PRISONERS, TRANSPORT.**

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Justice: 1, Do the Government intend to give effect to the motion carried in this Chamber on the 26th August, 1925, requesting the abolition of the present method of transporting prisoners? 2, If so, when is the change likely to be made?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: 1, and 2, The matter is receiving the consideration of the Government.

**QUESTIONS—(2)—SOLDIER SETTLERS.***Reimbursement of Losses.*

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have final arrangements been made with the Commonwealth Treasury for the amount of £796,000 to be allotted to the

State to make good any losses under the Soldier Settlement Scheme? 2, Is he aware that some of the settlers on the repurchase Kuminin station property are finding impossible to meet their financial obligation owing to over-capitalisation and the impossibility of dealing with the rabbit menace? If so, will he have investigations made, by an expert officer, to determine how it is possible to assist these soldier settlers—either by eradicating the rabbit and completing the vermin proof fences, or by writing down the capital cost to a sum that will make it possible for the settlers to meet their financial obligations? 4, Will he treat the matter as urgent so as to save next year's crops?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: No. 2, No. 3 and 4, The matter will be dealt with by the Soldiers' Settlement Board, the members of which are Mr. E. A. McLart (Managing Trustee, Agricultural Bank), Mr. F. V. Cooke, and Mr. C. J. Moran (Trustee of the Bank), and Captain H. Throssel V.C. This Board has full knowledge of the conditions and financial position of each settler, and will deal with each case on its merits.

*Distribution of Relief.*

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: In view of the grant of £796,000 to the State by the Federal Government in reduction of the debt owing for soldier settlement, what is the policy of the Government in regard to passing this relief on to individual soldier settlers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: While in Melbourne I made arrangements to have the agreement on which this grant depends finalised with amendments proposed by the State, and to be forwarded at any early date. When finalised, the question will be considered by the Soldier Settlement Board, which Board, having full knowledge of the conditions and financial position of each settler, will deal with each case on its merits.

**MOTION—SITTING HOURS.**

On motion by the Premier ordered:

That for the remainder of the session the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business at 3 p.m. instead of 4.30 p.m.

## MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.40]: I move—

That during the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be introduced without notice and to be passed through their remaining stages on the same day, and all messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day they are received.

This is the usual motion that we adopt towards the end of each session. It is not the intention of the Government to take advantage of the suspension of the Standing Orders to introduce any new Bills, nor to unfairly force through all their stages any Bills now on the Notice Paper. Ample opportunity will be given for the discussion and consideration of the Bills before us, but in order that we might if possible close the session this week, it is necessary that we should be able to deal with a Bill in all its stages at the one sitting, and to deal with messages from another place as they are received.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [4.42]: We accept the Premier's assurance that we now have all the legislation we are to be asked to consider this session. It is the usual thing to suspend the Standing Orders at the close of the session; indeed, it would be impossible to close the session without doing so. Apart from Bills, there are on the Notice Paper one or two important matters that I hope will receive consideration, as for instance the motion for a select committee to inquire into the dismissal of Police Constable Lambert. I hope the Premier will afford opportunity for the consideration of that motion before we adjourn. Also, there are one or two other matters on the Notice Paper that ought to be considered. I think we can safely agree to the Premier's motion.

Question put and passed.

## MOTION—STATE FOREST REVOCATION.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.43]: I move—

That the proposal for the partial revocation of State Forest No. 4, Collie, laid upon the Table of the House on Thursday, 10th December, be carried out.

There is down there a small area consisting of 27 acres that has been dedicated as a State forest. Unwittingly a number of miners had erected homes on this property, and it is thought desirable they should be able to secure some form of title to their homes. This cannot be done so long as the area is portion of a State forest. Under the Forests Act of 1918 the dedication of Crown land as a State forest can only be revoked in the manner in which I am attempting to do this, namely, by laying the papers on the Table and moving the motion I have moved. The information I am supplied with shows that when portion of the coal mining field at Collie was dedicated as a State forest, a small area of Crown land adjoining the Collie-Cardiff townsite was included in the area dedicated. Subsequent to the dedication it was found that a number of houses had been erected by the miners on the area without the necessary authority having first been obtained. The Lands Department consider it is better from the point of view of the local authorities that these people should have some tenure over the land they occupy, and the department request that this action should be taken to exclude the area from the State forest. The Conservator himself has no objection. The area is only a small one, and is not required. All things considered, it would be better that those who have their homes on the land should be able to secure some title, which is impossible while the land remains part of the State forests. So far as I know there is no objection from any quarter to this course being followed. It seems desirable, therefore, to revoke this small area, in order that those who have erected their homes upon it may secure the requisite titles.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [4.47]: I suggest that it would have been better if a map had been supplied so that members might understand what is proposed.

The Premier: Is there not a small map attached to the papers?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

The Premier: I thought there was a map there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is not here now. The area involved is small. I have no objection to this being done. The

State forest in the locality was reserved merely for the purpose of supplying the men with timber.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is quite usual with the extension of activities at Collie that land should be required for building purposes. No doubt the Lands Department are right in asking that these men should be allowed to get titles for this land. This will not take away any considerable part of the State forests, only a small area near the town which probably ought never to have been included. No doubt also the timber on the land in question has long since been cut out. I have no objection to the motion. I am glad that these men who have put up their homes are to get titles.

MR. WILSON (Collie) [4.49]: The land in question is near Cardiff, about six miles from Collie. These men built their homes 20 years ago, long before the Forests Department was created.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then those homes belong to the Government now.

Mr. WILSON: They belong to the men. I should like to see any Government try to take them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You must not threaten.

Mr. WILSON: Only half a dozen houses have been built on the area. These men now want to get their titles.

Question put and passed, and a message transmitted to the Council acquainting them accordingly.

## BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Miners' Phthisis Act Amendment.
2. Fire Brigades Act Amendment.

Transmitted to the Council.

## BILL—COTTESLOE ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER.

*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS (Hon. J. C. Willcock—Geraldton) [4.53] in moving the second reading said: Under a private Act passed in 1899 a syndicate obtained the privilege of supplying electric light within the road district now comprising the Cottesloe municipality, and the road dis-

tricts of Peppermint Grove and Cottesloe Beach. The Act conferred on the local authorities the option of purchasing the undertaking, and the works were, in the exercise of that option, acquired some years ago by the Municipality of Cottesloe under and subject to the private Act of 1899. In 1923 the road districts of Peppermint Grove and Cottesloe Beach approached the Electricity Supply Department with a view to obtaining a direct supply of current from them. This might have been carried out, subject only to a modification of the department's agreement with the Fremantle Tramways; but the Government did not desire then to enter into competition with the Cottesloe Municipality regarding the supply of current to Peppermint Grove or Cottesloe Beach. Negotiations then took place with the three bodies I have referred to, and an agreement was arrived at whereby the Government would take over the scheme there and administer it.

Mr. North: Was this done by the Government now in office?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. The negotiations were commenced some time ago. Everything was arranged before we took office.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I suppose this is a variation.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There is no variation.

Mr. Davy: It is making legal something that was illegal.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. It is making legal something that was done to meet the wishes of the people concerned, and which it is now sought to ratify by Act of Parliament. This confers a benefit on the three public bodies concerned, and the residents affected, and makes more efficient the lighting scheme and brings about a reduction in the rates charged. The parties to the agreement are the three local authorities I have mentioned, and the Commissioner of Railways, acting on behalf of the Government. The draft agreement was approved at a meeting of the Cottesloe Municipal Council, as announced in the "West Australian" on the 8th March, 1924, and entered into on the 19th September following. The price paid by the Government for the undertaking was £17,000 as follows:—Cash, £4,216; bond issued by the Treasury bearing interest at 5½ per cent. £4,200; a total of £8,416. The Commissioner of Railways took over the liability of the municipal council under it.

electric lighting debentures held by the A.M.P. Society for £10,500, at £8,584, the sum of £1,916 standing to the credit of the sinking fund for redemption. The effect of the agreement is that the districts within the area controlled by the three local authorities have received a more efficient supply of current, at a reduced cost to the consumers.

The Minister for Lands: I disagree with you there.

Mr. North: The voltage is better.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. We have put in transformers and spent a lot of money in substituting copper wire for other wire, which did not give an adequate supply. The service ought now to be efficient; most of the people in the district say it has been more efficient since the department took it over.

The Minister for Lands: They said that before.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: There was one other party which had some rights over the area, namely, the Fremantle Tramways and Electric Lighting Board. It was originally set out in the agreement that they had the right to supply current to anyone within five miles of a certain point at Fremantle. A portion of Cottesloe came within the radius. An agreement had to be made whereby those rights would be conserved. That was done in an indenture dated the 3rd March. The agreement provided inferentially that the three local bodies should in every way possible assist in the ratification of what had been done. The agreement covers the schedule of the Bill. There is no alteration in it. It is merely thought desirable that the agreement should be ratified. The parties concerned, as well as the general public, are agreeable to this. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned.

## BILL—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

### *Message.*

Message from the Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

### *Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.3] in moving the second reading said: I need hardly remind members that the funds

expended on group settlement have been disbursed in accordance with votes which were approved by Parliament when the Estimates were considered year by year. Those moneys, which have been expended by the Department of Lands and Surveys, totalled to the 30th November last £2,557,218. The time has arrived when a number of groups should be dissolved, so far as the scheme is concerned, to enable each settler to work on his own area. The assistance which the State has rendered to each settler should enable him to make a good start, and with diligence and proper methods he should be able to succeed. I cannot guarantee that every man on group settlement will be successful, but if he is not, then the failure will not be due to insufficiency of the assistance which has been rendered him by the department. That assistance is considerably more than has been rendered to any farmer who started on his own account. By the agreement under which each group settler was put on the land, and which each settler signed, it is contemplated that at the dissolution of his group a settler shall, if he so desires, enter into a mortgage to the Agricultural Bank. To enable that to be done, the agreement provided that the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank should be sole arbitrator regarding the amount of money to be charged to each holding. The agreement says—

No title is to be given to any block until all are prepared for settlement. Interest on outlay on each block will be capitalised until the successful applicant is released for work on his own farm. Where drainage work is necessary, blocks will be charged with their proportion of the cost. The amount to be charged against each block will be determined by the General Manager of the Agricultural Bank, but the aggregate charges in the group must not exceed the total expenditure, and the group member must abide by the decision of the General Manager aforesaid. This means that the General Manager can, if he thinks it fair to do so, reduce the cost of preparation of earlier blocks, and spread the amount of reduction over other blocks. Men who are new to the work know that their work improves with experience.

Every group settler signed that undertaking when he went on his group. The present Bill is brought forward for the purpose of enabling the Agricultural Bank to take control of those persons who, when a group is dissolved, are not in a position to carry on on their own account. The Bill provides for the establishment of group areas by notification in the "Government Gazette," and em-

powers the Minister to exceed the limit of 160 acres prescribed by the Land Act. Hon. members are aware that the land in some of the areas on which group settlers have been established is inferior to the land in other areas, and that consequently the holdings in areas of the former description are larger than holdings in other areas. On repurchased estates the least acreage of a holding is 63 acres, being swamp land; but on Crown lands the least acreage is 71 acres, and the maximum 490 acres. It is considered that on a fair basis of valuation the 490 acres would only be equal to the 71. The department found it necessary in some cases to grant larger areas in order to enable group settlers to make a livelihood. Provision is also made for the granting of conditional purchase leases. Hon. members are aware that under the old migration agreement there is no provision for payment for land. Under the new agreement, however, there is power to purchase land and charge the cost to the person who occupies it as a group settler. The Bill provides that charges may be made and leases granted under the Lands Purchase Act. Provision is also made for grants and conditional purchases to be subject to the payment of such part of the expenditure, including capitalised interest on group settlement, as may be apportioned in respect of survey and other fees. The amount of such expenditure chargeable to the settler is to be assessed and determined by the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank. This will bring the measure into line with the agreement into which the settler entered when he first went on his group. The Bill also provides that the group settler may, if he so desires, upon the issue of a grant or lease execute a mortgage to the Agricultural Bank payable by instalments over a period of 20 years and subject to the conditions applicable to the Agricultural Bank under the Agricultural Bank Act. This means that if the settler has cash and desires to pay the department off, he can do so. It is not necessary then to have a mortgage. He can, however, if he wishes to do so, execute a mortgage to the Agricultural Bank trustees. Then it is provided that if the settler does not notify the Department of Lands and Surveys within the prescribed time of his acceptance of the conditions provided by this measure, he shall cease to have any interest in the grant or lease of which he may be in occupation. By regulation the time will be prescribed within

which the settler shall be given notice of the amount apportioned to his holding by the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank; and if the settler does not take action in regard to the matter within a certain prescribed time, he ceases to have any right in the land.

Mr. Teesdale: Will the time be long enough to enable him to get an answer from Home? He may want to finance from Home.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is not very likely.

Mr. Teesdale: It is quite likely if he has friends with money. He may not want to go to the expense of a mortgage.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That expense is very small indeed. I do not think there is much chance of these settlers releasing mortgages. Some of the Australians on the groups might release mortgages.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should take some discretionary power.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of the migrants brought money into the country.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Very few. The position is that the discretionary power exists. The settler has the discretion himself. However, it is necessary to have the clause in the Bill: otherwise there will be difficulty. There is already difficulty in regard to piece work. Upon the cancellation of the old migration agreement we shall have power to carry on piece work. The great trouble, however, has been that numbers of group settlers have refused to sign an agreement to come under piece work. Under the new migration agreement we shall have power to enforce piece work, and any settler who will not accept piece work will have to get off his block. Where a majority of the group settlers say they want piece work, we will not in future allow the minority to refuse it. The idea is that in the case of any future group settlements the men shall have three months on sustenance and shall then go on piece work.

Mr. Teesdale: Three months is quite long enough, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Upon the settler accepting the mortgage, it can be entered into under the Agricultural Bank Act, 1906, and this measure, and shall have effect as an assignment by the mortgagor by way of further security over the livestock and other chattels, including progeny of livestock, so far as such livestock and other

chattels were supplied to the mortgagor by the Department of Lands and Surveys, or acquired by him out of advances made to him by the department. That provision is somewhat similar to a provision in the Bill carried last year. It is further provided in regard to expenditure for development and for livestock and chattels made by the Department of Lands and Surveys that such expenditure shall be deemed an advance by the Agricultural Bank. This places the bank in the position of agents for the Department of Lands and Surveys in regard to collecting the principal moneys expended without increasing the capitalisation of the bank by the amount expended by the Group Settlement Department. In other words, the Agricultural Bank are to act as agents for the Department of Lands and Surveys in the collection of moneys already expended for development and for the purchase of chattels used by the group settlers. That money will not be added to the amount of the Agricultural Bank's capitalisation. The Bill goes on to provide that all moneys received by the Agricultural Bank for payment of interest and principal in respect of mortgages shall be paid to a credit suspense account to be kept at the Treasury. The measure then provides that this amount shall be used for or applied to the payment of the administration expenses of the Agricultural Bank, and to recoup the Consolidated Revenue for interest and sinking fund, and also for moneys appropriated to the scheme, and subject to such payments relating to group settlement as Parliament approves. This means that the interest and sinking fund have to be provided, and that the departmental expenses incurred by the Agricultural Bank in the collection of moneys have to be paid, and that then the disposition of the capital shall be subject to parliamentary approval. That will be dealt with by Parliament while the Estimates are before the House.

Hon. G. Taylor: The money will have to be re-voted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, with the exception of interest payments. That phase will be dealt with as the Governor thinks fit. The British and Commonwealth Governments are contributing to the interest payments. That applies to the £1,000 that may be spent on each farm. We get that money at 1 per cent., the balance being paid by the British and Commonwealth Gov-

ernments as a recoup or as assistance to the State in connection with the land settlement policy. That will be for the purpose of meeting any losses that may be incurred, and the difference is to be used as interest on the money advanced. The payment of the capital or principal is to be subject to the vote of Parliament but that will not involve any decision until 10 years' hence.

Hon. G. Taylor: We shall not be here then.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is not unlikely. At any rate it will be 10 years hence before any of that capital is repaid. It is hard to say what Parliament will decide in those days, but it may be set aside for use in connection with future settlements. It will not be available for the Agricultural Bank, but will be left in a suspense account to be dealt with as Parliament may direct in the future. The Bill also provides for the partial dissolution of groups. That is necessary for economy in working. When a group is nearing completion, the work cannot be carried out with economy by the whole of the men being employed on the remaining blocks to be dealt with. In practice it has been found advisable that there shall be a partial dissolution of a group, so as to reduce the number of men working within a small area. If that takes place work will be done more cheaply and it will be better for the men themselves, because it will mean reduced costs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why the necessity for doing that by legislative means? Is it not a matter for administrative action?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is necessary because under the existing arrangements the group has to work as a group until 25 acres are cleared on each holding.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Then you can amend the agreement by means of the Bill!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The agreement has been cancelled and the advisory board think it necessary that the Bill shall provide for the partial dissolution of groups so as to overcome that difficulty in the future. It will be of advantage to the group settlers and to the State because it will decrease the cost of the work. If a group of 22 has neared the completed stage and there are, say, two blocks only requiring attention, it is not economical for the 20 settlers to work on those two remaining blocks. Thus by ex-



abling the groups to be partially dissolved, the work will be carried out more effectively in the interests of the settlers themselves and of the State. It is also provided that the Agricultural Bank may make further advances under the Agricultural Bank Act and such advances shall be equal in all respects with the advances made by the Lands and Surveys Department. That means that advances for further improvements or for stock must be secured from the funds voted to the Agricultural Bank for that purpose. The Bank trustees will have to accept the responsibility regarding any money advanced once mortgages have been entered into. It has been suggested that the Agricultural Bank should be allowed to draw upon the money that will be placed in the suspense account. I am strongly opposed to that because the responsibility would rest with no one. If advances have to be made through the Agricultural Bank the trustees will have to carry the responsibility and the advances will rank equally with those made by the Lands Department. The final clause in the Bill provides that the Agricultural Bank Act, 1906, and its amendments, shall be incorporated in the measure. These are the principal provisions of the Bill. From my experience during the last 18 months in connection with group settlement matters, I am convinced that the earlier the settlers come under the direction of the Agricultural Bank trustees, the better it will be for them. This is no party measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is a blessing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Consequently it will be better for the State and for group settlers generally if influence is not brought to bear regarding the scheme, and the impression removed that not sufficient is being done for them. The Minister and the Department are worried day after day for the expenditure of money far and away above that ever intended in connection with group settlement.

Hon. G. Taylor: And perhaps not legitimately required.

The Premier: No one ever asks for anything in that direction!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: From what I can gather, and from correspondence I have read, the intention of the group settlement scheme was to give the settler a start in order that he might earn a livelihood.

Unfortunately, owing to the want of legislation of this description, the Lands Department has gone much further than was ever intended when the scheme was started.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Will the group settlers' accounts be kept separate from the ordinary Agricultural Bank clients' accounts?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. As I was stating, it was never intended under the old agreement that the same assistance should be rendered to the group settlers as has been done. It is all very well to sit down and write out an agreement. We generally find that while the document may be all right theoretically, it is almost impossible to give effect to its full provisions. When I was speaking to Mr. Bankes Amery the other day I told him that if we had carried out the migration agreement to the letter, as was intended by the British Government, we would have driven off every group settler from his holding. It is commonly acknowledged that it is impossible to clear or partly clear 25 acres ready for the plough and then leave the whole scheme at that. If that had been done the settler could not have proceeded. He would not have had any money to carry the work any further. He would have had no funds for the purchase of a plough or for other necessities. Funds and plant had to be provided by the State. Without that the group settler would have been at a dead end and he could not have proceeded with the scheme. It was necessary for advances to be made in order to allow the settler to clear an extra area to be brought within cultivation so as to enable him to earn a livelihood while his pastures were growing. When the pastures were established and available for stock, the department would provide the cattle.

Mr. Thomson: Have you any idea what the estimate of the costs works out at?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not the exact figures with me. It is proposed under the new agreement, when it is finalised, that each settler at that stage shall have 15 cows. It is proposed that until he has that number of cows he shall be granted extra assistance to enable him to clear additional land so that he may earn a livelihood in the meantime. The number of cows to be provided varies from

5 to 15. By that means assistance will be rendered until the group is dissolved and thus the settlers will be helped to make a success of their holdings. Of course I realise that it largely depends upon the personal equation. The settlers will not make successes of the dairy farms unless they devote their minds to the work and exercise their intelligence as well.

Mr. Thomson: That applies to other walks as well.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. As the Royal Commission suggested, so I believe that if 50 or 60 per cent. of the settlers are successful, we shall have done splendidly.

Mr. Teesdale: Forty per cent. of successes would do.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In no other part of the world have better results been known. The Surveyor General told me that he read in an article that in Canada 25 per cent. only of the migrants were successful. Mr. McLarty, the manager of the Agricultural Bank, told me that if they were able to go through the whole of the settlers in the wheat belt, it would probably be found that very little over 50 per cent. of the settlers had proved successful.

Mr. Teesdale: And they were mostly Australians.

The Premier: That 50 per cent. refers to the original settlers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No Government could guarantee the man. We have to guarantee the land and that is all any Government can do.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is the position.

Mr. Sampson: Yes, and the scheme goes on.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We have at present 2,273 group settlers and 2,334 group holdings; and there are 61 vacancies, to fill which people are already on the water. Immediately the Bill is passed we shall be able to place 54 groups under the Agricultural Bank. The work is progressing, and consequently it is necessary that these people shall be placed upon their own responsibility, and to enable that to be done the Bill is introduced. The Agricultural Bank is safeguarded in every way. In future money to be expended will come from

the bank funds, and the bank trustees will have to accept full responsibility for the advances made.

Mr. Thomson: Are they compelled to make the advances?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The group settlers will be in the same position as every other Australian resident. The bank trustees have to accept responsibility under the Act, and it would be wrong for Parliament to say to them that they shall do this or they shall do that. It must be left to the trustees to decide what additional assistance shall be granted.

Mr. Thomson: Is there any indication regarding the capitalisation that may be reached under the Agricultural Bank. There is a limit regarding the general provisions governing the Agricultural Bank advances.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The limit will be exactly the same as with the ordinary Agricultural Bank advances. Hon. members can rest assured that the trustees will not advance more than the security will in their opinion justify. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. LATHAM (York) [5.28]: I support the second reading of the Bill. It is essentially a measure to be dealt with in Committee. It deals with many subjects that relate to group settlement, and, as the Minister has indicated, we have to work under an agreement not only with the settlers, but also with those responsible for financial assistance, particularly the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments. The Bill will give legal power to the Minister and give legal status to the people who are financing the scheme, as well as to the settlers themselves. I am pleased to see provision in the Bill for an increased area, because some men have been placed on holdings that are inferior to others. I do not say they are bad, but they are certainly inferior. Consequently, such men have been given a bigger area than that provided under Section 74 of the Lands Act which imposes a restriction of 160 acres. In some instances they have as much as 450 acres.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They get 160 acres free and the balance they pay for.

The Minister for Lands: The greatest area of any one settler is 490 acres.

Mr. LATHAM: These settlers should be placed on the same footing as a man who has 160 acres of good land. They should not be charged for the extra area when the extra

area has been granted owing to the fact that the land is a little less good. I hope the Minister will agree to a limit. There is a tendency on the part of surveyors and other people to say there is no limit to the area. I hope that in future the Government will survey the very best land for group settlers.

The Minister for Lands: If we were dealing with only the best land there would be no areas exceeding 160 acres.

Mr. LATHAM: That is so, and in many instances the area could be cut down to 100 acres. It will take a little fortune to clear and develop an area of 100 acres in the heavily timbered country. I have great faith in the South-West portion of the State. I honestly believe it will be to Western Australia what Gippsland has been to Victoria and the northern rivers to New South Wales. It is the natural dairying part of the State and is deserving of help. It is wise to bring the group settlers under the control of the Agricultural Bank as early as possible. Under the present system there is too much control. I mean that settlers are inclined to lean towards the Government for more than they would expect to get from the Agricultural Bank, and thus there is less likelihood of their taking the initiative in the working of their farms. Some of the settlers appear to have gone into the groups merely for the sake of the sustenance. They fail to realise that the land will be theirs some day if only they work properly. People who take on dairying must be prepared to work hard and long hours. If they do that for a few years, no doubt they will be all right. There are blocks that have been over-capitalised and provision is made to write down the capital cost to a fair amount, so that the settlers will be able to pay their interest and working expenses.

Mr. Thomson: Some of the blocks will have to be written down?

Mr. LATHAM: Yes; on some of the earlier groups the land was cleared more extensively than was necessary, and consequently the clearing has been costly. That will be obviated in future by giving the settlers three months' training and then allowing them to work out their own salvation. Men will work longer hours if they get some reward for it. I do not believe in the principle that a man can work only 44 or 48 hours a week. I know they can work longer and that they have a better opportunity to develop a farm if they do work longer hours. There is no doubt that results

can be obtained from working longer hours, and this applies to farming generally and dairying in particular.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Those engaged in dairying will have to work longer hours.

Mr. LATHAM: Yes, and when they do they will get some reward for it. Under the original conditions a man was expected to work 48 hours a week, for which he received 10s. per day. If he was an energetic man he would put in spare time effort, but 50 per cent. of the group settlers are not doing any spare time work.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Fifty per cent. of them?

Mr. LATHAM: Roughly 50 per cent. are working not more than 48 hours a week. If those people were put on contract—and the Minister has already had some experience of the amount that can be earned on contract—

Mr. Heron: They are poor contractors if they work more than 44 hours a week.

Mr. LATHAM: I daresay that the hon. member, when he had to work, did work more than 44 hours a week. To-day the real workers of the State work more than 44 hours and the hon. member knows it.

Mr. Heron: Then they are a poor class if they do that on contract.

Mr. LATHAM: Sometimes they work 16 hours a day, but they earn good money and it is a good thing for them. That class of man usually turns out to be a good, thrifty settler.

Mr. Heron: They are poor contractors if they work more than 44 hours.

Mr. LATHAM: That is where I disagree with the hon. member. They are jolly good people. New Zealand affords a good example. A lot of land there was settled under a system whereby the Government provided six months' work per year on roads or railways near the holdings of the settlers, and the remaining six months was devoted to improving the holdings. Those men received no sustenance from the Government.

Hon. G. Taylor: Was the road work contract or day labour?

Mr. LATHAM: Contract. Those people worked long hours, earned good money and devoted the money to develop their holdings.

Mr. Thomson: That sort of thing should be encouraged. It is the only hope of developing a holding.

Mr. LATHAM: The member for Leonora should not tell our settlers that 48 hours is long enough for a week's work. If dairying be restricted to 48 hours, God help this coun-

try, because there would be no dairying done. No one is any the worse for working long hours. The hon. member has worked more than 48 hours.

Mr. Heron: I am talking about a man on contract.

Mr. LATHAM: If a man is contracting on his own account, it is to his interest to work longer hours.

Mr. Heron: If he is contracting, 44 hours is enough for him.

Mr. LATHAM: That is a matter of opinion, temperament and physical ability. I hope that encouragement will be given to the group settlers. The Bill represents a step in the right direction. I have not had time to study the Bill closely, but I think there will be little cause to complain about it. We want statutory authority to carry on group settlement. I hope the Minister will make a success of it. His ideas on the work are sound. The South-West has long waited for something to be done there, and I hope this system of land settlement will be a success and will be the means of earning for Western Australia not only material wealth, but a fine reputation.

On motion by Mr. Thomson, debate adjourned to a later hour of the sitting.

[Continued on Page 2715.]

## BILL COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: This will be the first time on which the Coal Mines Regulation Act has been amended vitally since 1902, and the progress of the industry, together with the experience of the Act renders necessary various amendments to make the law satisfactory. One of the principal provisions is to stipulate a limitation of hours. The custom of the Collie mines for the last five years has been to work 7-hour shifts underground and this principle is in accordance with the arbitration award. It is also in operation in Great Britain, where coal mining is a very important industry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is the custom now to work the hours stipulated in the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then there need be no hurry to pass the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This provision will not apply to a manager or his deputy, engineer, mechanic, electrician or pumper, because those people are called upon to work longer hours when the necessity arises. Section 7 of the parent Act provides that no person in charge of machinery shall work more than eight hours consecutively, but the amending measure exempts from the section sinking, pumping, boring and coal cutting machines used for underground work. Boring and coal cutting machines are worked by men who are restricted to seven hours, but sinking and pumping operations may require the continuous working over a longer period than eight hours, and for that reason it is proposed to exempt them. The Mines Regulation Act, 1906, contains a provision for the control of Sunday labour in coal mines. It is proposed to repeal Section 47 of the Act wherein provision is made for these regulations to apply to coal mines. Section 47 will then apply exclusively to gold mines. Except for the first clause relating to continuous processes and smelting works, I have included in this Bill the conditions of labour obtaining in the Mines Regulation Act. Section 12 of the principal Act provides for payment by weight and that weighing shall be done as near to the pit mouth as is reasonably practicable. There has been considerable friction at Collie on account of the distance between the pit mouth and the weighing machines. It has been held that a quantity of coal is lost in transit between the pit mouth and the weighing machine, and of course the greater the distance, the greater the loss of coal. We desire to get over that difficulty by providing that the distance shall not be more than 200 yards, and that that must not be exceeded unless sanctioned by the Minister. That is a very fair provision, and I am glad to be able to say that it has been agreed to by the mining companies in the Collie district as well as the miners. Section 15 of the principal Act provides that the weights, balances and scales shall be inspected by an inspector under the Weights and Measures Act. The Bill provides for the appointment of an officer to carry out the functions of an inspector of weights and measures. At the present time an inspector does visit Collie, but the interested parties want an inspector on the spot who will not only check the

machines but also adjust them if necessary. The Railway Department has an officer at Collie who checks the weight of all the coal purchased under the railway contract, but that officer is not appointed under the Act. It is proposed by the Bill that the officer shall be appointed under the Act. It is hoped to secure the services of a man who will be able to fill the bill and who will understand fully the requirements of both the mine owners and the miners. In the principal Act it is set out that no person shall be employed in a mine in which there are not two separate openings for ingress and egress. The second opening is not required to be commenced until 12 months after coal has been struck in the first shaft. The Bill proposes to reduce the term to six months, it being held that the development of the field warrants the alteration. It is also provided that the two openings shall be similar in size so as to avoid confusion in time of danger. Members will realise that there is every necessity for such a provision, not necessarily in respect of a coal mine, but in every other mine, in order to give miners every opportunity to escape in the event of an accident. The Bill also provides for the manager having control of the mine, and his real authority is insisted upon. At the present time a manager can delegate his authority. That is unsatisfactory. It is provided also that one manager shall control one mine only. The experience of one manager having only nominal control over a number of mines has not been satisfactory on the Collie coalfield.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What do you mean by that?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That the mine manager has had no real authority whenever a question of legality in respect of accidents has cropped up. The deputy has been said to be responsible, and that has given rise to confusion and dissatisfaction. There is no difficulty in managers securing the necessary qualification, as the board can sit every six months if required, and miners and others can have the opportunity of applying for a manager's certificate. Under the existing Act no person is to be entitled to hold a certificate unless he has had practical experience for at least five years. The Bill provides that he must have at least five years' underground experience. Without that provision even the accountant could become manager.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: He has to work as a miner?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then you might never get a manager.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is not intended to make this provision retrospective, so that the existing position will not be interfered with. The Coal Mines Regulation Act provides for payments to an accident fund to be made by employers and employees. Under the Bill it is intended to inaugurate an aged and infirm coal miners' superannuation fund. One-eighth of the moneys collected towards the accident fund will be diverted to that fund and all adult males will have to contribute to this fund to the extent of 3d. a fortnight, and the owners an amount equivalent to that subscribed by the miners. I do not think any member will take exception to that proposal. There are several amendments to the schedule, the most important of which is the provision that 50 per cent. of the men employed in the mines shall be experienced miners. That is not a high percentage. If that is agreed to, it will result in a degree of safety for the employees that it is desirable to have. It is also sought to provide that the mining companies shall establish change houses and shower baths. These provisions are in existence in Queensland and in our own State in regard to gold mining. Unfortunately, there was no such provision contained in the Coal Mines Regulation Act that was passed in 1902, nor in any of the amendments to that Act. Everyone will admit that a person coming from underground requires a change and a shower immediately on coming to the surface. A miner is liable to a chill that may be followed by pneumonia by walking away from a mine in the clothing worn below. A man comes from the hot atmosphere below into the cooler temperature of the surface and the danger of rheumatics and a chill is recognised. Many lives have been lost by neglect in this respect and the desire is to prevent anything of the kind happening. Change houses and shower baths have been in existence on the goldfields for many years. Of course, it may not be necessary to compulsorily enforce the law in this respect, but it is desired to have it on the statute-book in case of necessity. There may be instances where operations have only recently been started on a mine and where it has not been possible to provide these con-

veniences. In such a case the Minister will have power to grant exemption for a time. The parent Act gives the definition of a boy as a male under the age of 18 years. The practice at Collie is to pay all employees as boys until they attain the age of 19 years, and this has been accepted by the Arbitration Court. This in no way affects the minimum wage at which boys may be employed, because under Section 5 of the Act boys of the age of 14 may be employed. It does, however, affect the contribution to the accident fund and the benefits therefrom, the boys' contributions and benefits being half those of the men. The Bill proposes to alter the definition by increasing the age to 19 years. It is also proposed in the Bill that the term "stratified ironstone" shall be omitted from the Coal Mines Regulation Act. The reason is that stratified ironstone is not known in Western Australia except at Yampi Sound and, to the occurrence of such in metaliferous mines the Mines Regulation Act is better applicable. The term "stratified ironstone" is taken from the British Act, where it is used because in England coal and iron are frequently found in the same mine and taken from the same shaft. So, when our Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1902 was under consideration, Parliament took this term from the English Act. However, in Western Australia the conditions are not similar, and so it is now proposed to remove it from the legislation. Another amendment in the Bill is that the Governor-in-Council may make rules to insist upon ambulance and first-aid-appliances being provided in the different mines. That will apply to every mining field in the State. It is also prescribed that the Governor-in-Council may make rules for the use of electricity and electrical equipment. Electrical power is now applied to quite a number of implements required in coal production, and so it becomes necessary to give this power to the Governor-in-Council. Also it is provided that the Governor-in-Council shall have power to make rules for the care of people and animals underground, a humane provision to be found in all other Mines Regulations Acts than ours. Those are the essential principles in the measure, and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

### **BILLS (3)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.**

- 1, Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act Amendment.
- 2, General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment.
- 3, Parliamentary Allowances Act Amendment.  
Without amendment.

### **BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Council's Amendment.*

Bill returned from the Council with a schedule of amendments which were now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; Mr. Latham in charge of the Bill.

On motions by Mr. Latham, the following amendments made by the Council were agreed to.

No. 1, Clause 2, Subclause (4): in line 3 insert after "vested in" the words "or acquired by"; in line 3 insert after "council" the words "during the period of closure."

No. 2, Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 3 as follows:—"This Act shall have effect only within the boundaries of the municipality of York."

No. 3, Add the following words to the Title:—"so far as relates to the municipality of York."

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

### **BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

Message received from the Council notifying that it had agreed to the Bill subject to a schedule of amendments.

### **BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Message.*

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

*In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Appointment of inspectors:

Mr. SAMPSON: Will the Minister give us some information as to the number of inspectors likely to be employed?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is not yet definitely known how many inspectors will be employed, but there will be a chief inspector who, probably, will attend to this measure in conjunction with some other office under the police. Nobody in the State has had very much experience of the administration of such an Act, and so an opportunity will be given to the chief inspector to visit the other States and see what is being done there.

Mr. LATHAM: Are the police going to do all the work?

The Minister for Justice: Practically all. The Governor-in-Council may appoint other inspectors if deemed advisable.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the appointment of these officers will be restricted to the police, for I am concerned about the cost of administering the Act.

The Premier: We have our eye on that, too. We do not want any increased costs.

Mr. LATHAM: Certainly the measure can be most economically administered by the police, who in the various centres will be able to keep their eyes on things.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There is no intention to create an army of inspectors to go wandering around the country spending money in supervising these weights and measures.

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

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In one place the clause says the Governor may appoint a chief inspector, and in another place it says the Minister may appoint a deputy chief inspector. The same principle should apply in each case.

The Minister for Justice: This is provided in case it is necessary to fill a temporary vacancy.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It ought to be done by Cabinet appointment, because the deputy may have to act for six months.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The chief inspector would not be expected to be away for six months. An appointment of that nature could well be made by Executive Council.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2, line 3, the word "Minister" be struck out and "Governor" be inserted in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Leader of the Opposition is not reasonable in this matter. What he proposes means that if the chief inspector is away for three or four days the appointment of a deputy must go through the Governor-in-Council. All that formality is quite unnecessary.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Amendment of Section 20:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose the Minister understands that there will be a considerable amount of stock on hand at the time the Bill passes.

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Many retailers will have to accept standard packages for some time to come.

The Minister for Justice: That is provided for.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Manufacturers in England will not put up parcels to suit this State. It may be impossible for standard goods to reach our markets as the Bill now stands.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is dealt with in another clause. The principle touched upon by the Leader of the Opposition can best be dealt with when we come to the schedule.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: People ought to get what they pay for. When the Act is proclaimed it may land many of our traders in an awkward position.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not see why the words "by retail" appear in Subclause 1, and "by wholesale" appear in Subclause 4. Many traders sell both by retail and by wholesale.

The Minister for Justice: Both subclauses specify that the weight shall be the net weight.

Mr. DAVY: What exactly does the word "package" mean, and what are the Minister's views as to this clause affecting a retailer of alcoholic liquors? Whisky and soda are sold by some kind of measure, though not a legal measure. Will the brewer who sells beer in hogsheads be affected by the Bill? Owing to the very nature of the wooden container used by the brewer, it is impossible for him to guarantee the accuracy of the measure, which varies all the time.

The Minister for Justice: That is provided for.

Mr. DAVY: Does this clause affect the licensed victualler in any way?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Things usually sold in the way indicated by the hon. member will not come under the Bill. But if someone wanted to buy a gallon or a pint of beer, it would have to be a gallon or a pint. If he asked for a bottle of beer, it would have to be a bottle of beer. If he asked for a bottle containing a sixth of a gallon, he would have to get a sixth of a gallon.

Mr. Davy: Does "package" include bottle?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Label for articles subject to climatic influence:

Mr. DAVY: The brewer sells his beer in a wooden barrel, which has to be repaired frequently by the insertion of new staves, the volume this being altered. A hogshead contains approximately 54 gallons, and may contain a gallon more or a gallon less.

The Minister for Justice: That will be allowed where it is stated on the invoice.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Offence of false representation:

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: In business it frequently happens that the dealer is the man who buys. A gold buyer, for instance, has scales. The same thing applies to buyers of secondhand lead or solder. In those cases the dealer has to tell the seller the correct weight. Generally it is the seller who states the weight. This clause makes the dealing purchaser equally responsible.

Mr. Withers: Who weighs sandalwood—the buyer, or the seller?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The buyer.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is a bad clause, though as regards the gold buyer the position is different from the ordinary, since the prospector cannot carry around scales with him. The clause proposes that the man who runs a store and buys from others shall be responsible to the seller for the correct weight of the goods. Surely the man standing alongside the scales can see the weight, and should not be permitted to raise the point afterwards. The Minister's scales on railway stations are often accepted by the seller as correct, though it occasionally happens that they are very much wrong. I hope those scales will be dealt with when this Bill passes.

Mr. PANTON: Does this clause cover a marine dealer?

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Mr. PANTON: Will he have to carry scales in future?

The Minister for Justice: If he buys by weight.

Mr. PANTON: Under this clause there is a possibility of a marine dealer being complained of to the police as having cheated people in regard to the number of bottles or bags bought by him from them. Would a man like Curtis under this clause be responsible for anything his agents did?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the hon. member has the fears he has mentioned, he can move an amendment to provide that the clause shall not apply to any article weighed, measured, or counted in the seller's presence.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That ought to be put in.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not think it is necessary to include that provision in the clause but if the hon. member desires to move an amendment along those lines, I have no objection.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 to 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Amendment of Section 51:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is fond of having two barrels.

Mr. Sampson: There are three in this clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister provides in the clause that the Governor-in-Council may by regulation prescribe the fees. On the other hand there is a schedule attached to the Bill setting out



the fees. Why is it necessary to have it both ways?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: During this session members have had their attention drawn to the fact that the fees payable to jurymen were fixed in the Act. It was necessary to amend the legislation in order to vary those fees. Here we have provided in the schedule the fees to be charged for the various services rendered under the measure, but in view of the possibility that in time to come it may be deemed advisable to alter the scale of fees, we provide that it can be done by way of regulations. Those regulations will be subject to the will of Parliament. If members do not agree with the fees set out in the regulations, those regulations will be disallowed and the fees will be wiped out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You should never do by regulation what you can do by Act of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: We are doing it by Act of Parliament. We prescribe the fees in the schedule. We do not wish to charge exorbitant fees.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But that is what you may do by providing powers to levy charges by way of regulations.

The Minister for Lands: But the regulation may provide for reduced fees.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the Government desired to levy exorbitant fees in the future, it would be merely necessary to provide for the fees being fixed by regulation. On the other hand, we set out the scale of fees in the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The schedule is the bunch of carrots, is it?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: If the House considered that the Government intended to make a taxation measure out of this legislation, they could disallow any regulations framed to increase the charges.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This clause nullifies the whole Bill.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But Parliament can disallow any regulations. Twenty-five years ago when the original Weights and Measures Act was introduced, policemen who largely carry out the work, were not getting half as much in wages as they do now.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why should the policemen be paid to do this work? Are not the people being taxed in various directions to pay for the police force and other services?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, but if we were to apply that principle and pay for all these services out of taxation all that would be necessary would be to impose extra taxation and then allow the railways to carry consignments without any freight charges. On the other hand the charges specified in the schedule are for services rendered to individuals and those individuals should pay for them.

Mr. DAVY: The Leader of the Opposition does not object to fees being paid for services rendered. No free services could be rendered by the Government because all the people have to pay for those services. A novelty is introduced into the Bill in that the Government seek power to alter an Act of Parliament by regulation.

The Minister for Justice: No, to alter the scale of fees.

Mr. DAVY: No, the Government propose to alter by regulation the charges for services rendered as set out in the schedule, which is as much part of the Bill as any one of the clauses. I have not heard of anything of a similar description having been proposed before. If the Minister considers that the regulations will be subject to the power of Parliament to disallow, that is not much safeguard.

The Minister for Justice: But it is.

Mr. DAVY: It is a poor old safeguard. When one considers the number of regulations that are laid on the Table, members have little chance of reading the lot.

The Premier: They never miss regulations in which charges are involved.

Mr. DAVY: It is not a true safeguard to the people that if members choose to read them, they may be disallowed. If the Minister's contention is correct, why not have everything done by regulation? Why not introduce merely a skeleton, or the beginnings of a Bill, and let the rest be done by regulation? I am sorry the Minister for Justice has not listened to his colleague, the Minister for Works, who strongly disapproves of legislation by regulation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Not when he himself makes the regulations.

Mr. DAVY: We criticised the leaving to regulation of the description of scaffolding and the Minister for Works had it inserted as a schedule to the measure. The Minister should cut out the schedule or paragraph (j2).

The Minister for Justice: Then I shall cut out the schedule.

Mr. DAVY: There is no precedent for it.

The Premier: It is in the original Act.

Mr. DAVY: If it is in the original Act, let us get rid of the vicious principle right away.

Mr. SAMPSON: I find no such provision in the original Act.

The Premier: Look at paragraph (k).

Mr. SAMPSON: But the fees referred to are prescribed in the Act and not by regulation. The fees are about one-half of those provided in this Bill. It was stated that the increase was only 50 per cent., but in some instances it is 100 per cent. Where no fee was charged under the Act, a heavy fee is now proposed.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope the Minister will not ask us to pass a schedule fixing fees and also give him power to vary them.

The Minister for Justice: I am willing to cut out the schedule.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Regulations are not designed to alter fees once they have been approved by Parliament.

The Minister for Justice: Parliament will have the right to review them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The measure prescribes the fees, and the Minister afterwards wishes to do what he pleases. There is no power in the original Act as the Premier suggests.

The PREMIER: I do not think there is any danger in passing the clause. Circumstances may arise making it advisable to vary the fees, and instead of having to bring down an amending Bill, we propose that it may be done by regulation. Where is the danger? My objection is that while the schedule of fees has to receive the consent of both Houses of Parliament before it becomes law, the regulations can be disallowed by either House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But this Bill can be defeated by one House.

The PREMIER: Quite so.

Mr. Davy: Regulations are good law until disallowed and that may be six months or more after they have been enforced.

The PREMIER: Very little harm could be done. The Government, if they were so minded, might carry on with fees that were not approved only during the recess. We have a somewhat similar situation under the Jury Act. It is admitted that the fee of 10s. per day for jurors is wholly inadequate. If similar power were given to fix the fees by regulation, that difficulty could be overcome,

but we cannot alter them unless we amend the Act. Merely because we desired to increase these fees or charges for services rendered, are we to bring down an amending Bill every session? Suppose we wipe out the schedule and let the fees be those fixed by regulation?

Mr. Sampson: One or the other.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I suggest that we strike out this paragraph. This is a clever thing, after all because, if your regulations are disallowed, you will still have the fees prescribed in the schedule.

The PREMIER: Having regard to the treatment of regulations by another place, wherever fees are concerned, it is necessary to have two barrels; otherwise we shall be asked to administer an Act without receiving any fees at all.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Now we have it. Did you think of that before?

The PREMIER: Yes, it has been brought home to me by the action of another place in disallowing regulations this session.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Which ones?

The PREMIER: The regulations under the Abattoirs Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Another place was right.

The PREMIER: It is threatening to disallow them again.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will be right again.

The PREMIER: But as soon as Parliament closes, another place will not be able to disallow them for six months. Suppose we abolish the schedule and leave the fees entirely to regulation?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, delete the paragraph giving the power to make the regulation.

The PREMIER: I prefer it the other way. As soon as the measure becomes operative, it may be discovered that a fee is inadequate or too high.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, there are 40 things that are too high; let us alter the lot.

The PREMIER: The hon. member would not permit us to alter an exorbitant or profiteering fee until the Act was amended?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you call your schedule one of profiteering fees?

The PREMIER: There might be an item in it which would be regarded as excessive after experience of the working of the Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Then we shall reduce all of them.

Mr. Sampson: Where does that appear in the Act?

The PREMIER: In paragraph (k). At any rate it might be argued that paragraph (k) could be interpreted in that way. If members do not desire the two, let us strike out the schedule.

Mr. DAVY: If Clause 17 is passed with Subclause (j2), we shall be guilty of an absurd redundancy. Under the principal Act the Governor has power to make regulations, not to prescribe the fees, but to bring the fees prescribed in the schedule into operation. Now the Minister proposes that the Governor shall have power not only to bring into operation the schedule of fees, but also to prescribe a different schedule.

The Premier: It is usual in most Acts not to set out the scale of fees, but to leave the fixing of them to regulation.

Mr. DAVY: I am prepared to leave the fees to regulation, but on principle I oppose the granting of power to the executive to alter what is contained in the Act.

The Minister for Justice: I intend to strike out the schedule in deference to the wish of the member for West Perth.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I remind the Minister that he will have a schedule all the same. We must begin by striking out paragraph (j2) reading "prescribing the fees for testing, verifying, and stamping weights, measures and weighing instruments." I move an amendment—

That paragraph (j2) be struck out.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	19
Noes	..	..	..	21

Majority against ... 2

#### AYES.

Mr. Angelo  
Mr. Brown  
Mr. Davy  
Mr. Denton  
Mr. Griffiths  
Mr. E. B. Johnston  
Mr. Latham  
Mr. Lindsay  
Mr. Maley  
Mr. Mann

Sir James Mitchell  
Mr. North  
Mr. Sampson  
Mr. J. H. Smith  
Mr. J. M. Smith  
Mr. Stubbs  
Mr. Thomson  
Mr. C. P. Wansbrough  
Mr. Richardson  
(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munale
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Panton
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Troy
Mr. Heron	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lamond	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In the last paragraph, (q2), provision is made for the examination and licensing of scale repairers. Does this mean that no man will be permitted to adjust scales unless he has a license? Will not a man who owns scales be permitted to adjust them if they should go wrong?

The Minister for Justice: Yes, he can adjust his own scales, but he must not adjust all scales.

Mr. Thomson: He cannot engage in it as a business.

The Premier: Anyhow, what is wrong with his getting a license?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He must stand for an examination before he can get a license. I move an amendment—

That paragraph (q2) be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Leader of the Opposition will realise that there are scales that require attention at the hands of skilled men. It is right therefore that people who make a business of scale adjusting should have a license. We cannot have amateurs going round offering to adjust scales, and perhaps damaging delicate instruments.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What do they do now?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Someone who is competent is engaged to effect repairs. The clause will protect scale owners. Instances have come under notice where really good scales have been spoilt by incompetent men.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 18—Amendment of Schedule C:

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I am not particularly wedded to the retention of the schedule. We have not had much experience in regard to charges. There are no experts in Western Australia.

Mr. Thomson: We had better stick to the conditions set out in the schedule.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The charges mentioned in the schedule have been put up by Mr. McAlister, of New South Wales, and are the result of experience in that State. The charges are considered fair and reasonable.

Mr. SAMPSON: The charges are very high compared with those of 1915.

The Minister for Justice: So is everything in comparison with the 1915 charges.

The Premier: What has been the increase in the price of newspapers?

Mr. SAMPSON: If a man buys a set of scales he will be compelled to pay these charges when he wants them tested. Store-keepers will surely object to pay these fees. Before the clause is struck out I want to point out that these fees are approximately 100 per cent. more than those in the Act of 1915. The striking out of the clause will suggest that the Assembly does not favour the imposition of such high charges.

The Premier: But everything is high as against the 1915 figures.

Mr. DAVY: I move an amendment—

That all words after "repealed" in line 1 be struck out.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and the report adopted.

## BILL—GROUP SETTLEMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [8.48]: I have studied the Bill during the tea adjournment and I am satisfied that it should be passed. It is what the group settlers have been requesting for some considerable time. It was gratifying to hear from the Minister that immediately on the passing of the Bill we shall have perhaps as many as 54 groups released from the control of the Lands Department. I hope they will all prove self-supporting and successful. The Bill provides for increasing the area of the blocks. Those fortunate enough to be on a group settlement are in a very much better position than many of our own people. As the result of certain vacancies on

the group settlements, a number of migrants now on the water will be placed on the land directly they arrive; whereas when a block of wheat land is thrown open we have as many as 40 or 50 native-born applicants for it. It suggests the wonderful opportunities Western Australia is giving to those coming out under the migration scheme. They are really on a better footing than are our own people.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Our own people can go on the groups if they like.

The Premier: But they won't.

Mr. THOMSON: I will not offer any opposition to the proposal that the group settlement blocks may be increased beyond 160 acres, but certainly I think there should be some limit to the area, just as there is to areas under conditional purchase conditions. It is provided in the Bill that the expenditure chargeable to group settlers shall be apportioned to each parcel of land intended to be granted, and shall be assessed and determined by the managing trustees of the Agricultural Bank. In Committee I will ask for further information on that point. There is abroad the impression that a good deal of writing down will have to be done. I presume we are not going to have a recurrence of what happened when the Industries Assistance Board came into existence in 1914. The board proceeded to work independently of the Agricultural Bank, and to an extent undermined the securities of the Bank by making additional advances.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The board protected the bank.

Mr. THOMSON: It certainly performed a very useful function and it was also a good book-keeping check for the bank itself.

The Minister for Lands: The board assisted the bank. It did not undermine the bank's securities.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, unintentionally by granting additional advances. The impression is that certain writing down in respect of the group settlements will have to be done, and I want to know whether it is provided that the amount to be charged against a settler will be determined by adding up the charges against the whole group and dividing the sum by twenty.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh no, no!

Mr. THOMSON: I want as far as possible to see that the Agricultural Bank will not have to do the writing down. It is also provided that if the group settler does not

accept the amount written against his block he will have to get out. That is where we have to safeguard the interests of the bank. I think the Bill does protect the bank. I am pleased that provision is made for the partial dissolution of groups. That is essential. The provision that the Agricultural Bank may make further advances requires careful consideration. Under the new migration agreement we are getting money at one per cent., and it is intended that any loss accruing in respect of group settlement shall be met by the difference between the interest charged by the Imperial Government and that which is being charged to the group settler. So long as that is understood, and so long as the Agricultural Bank will not have to carry the financial responsibility, the Bill is in the interests of the group settlers. Those group settlers desirous of making good require to know as early as possible the amount to be charged against them, so that they may be able to estimate their chances of success. I will support the Bill.

**MR. J. H. SMITH** (Nelson) [9.0]: I support the second reading of the Bill, which is a good one. The Minister said the group settlers would have to keep their part of the contract. That I agree with, but I think the capitalisation of some of the groups is too high. The Government should keep their part of the contract, and keep faith with the settlers.

The Minister for Lands: The Bill provides for that.

**MR. J. H. SMITH**: It does not provide for a writing down, or say whether that has to be done by the Agricultural Bank later. When the scheme was launched by the Leader of the Opposition the group settlers were led to believe that their liability would not exceed £1,000. In many cases it has reached £1,700 or £1,800, owing to the lack of experience shown. Does the Minister propose to give those settlers a fighting chance? If the capitalisation is left at £2,000, they will not have much chance. I am speaking of the earlier groups. The Northcliffe groups should not cost more than £1,000, but those near Pemberton and Manjimup may cost a great deal more than that. The member for York (Mr. Latham) said that not 50 per cent. of the group settlers were going in

for any sparetime effort. In my part of the country they are nearly all doing so.

**Mr. Latham**: Many of them have been on contracts.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH**: Not of late.

**Mr. Latham**: That is a good sign.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH**: The Minister is right in his desire to combine two holdings. Some of them are too small, especially where the land is not suitable for intense culture. I am pleased that 54 groups are to be disbanded. This shows progress. Unless better factory facilities are given to the settlers, as well as marketing facilities, they will find it hard to make a success. If these men are left to their own resources, some 20 miles from a railway, I do not know what will happen.

The Minister for Lands: None of those is ready for disbandment.

**Mr. J. H. SMITH**: Groups 117 and 123 on the Warren will soon be ready. The Minister has not said whether he proposes to send round conveyances to the groups to pick up cream for the nearest butter factory. Are we going to disband these groups and leave them to their own resources? Are we going to advance money from the Agricultural Bank for additional clearing on top of the 25 acres, or are we going to establish butter factories and make provision for transport arrangements? My remarks apply also to the Busselton area, as well as the Denmark area, although the people there are not so badly off in the matter of butter factories. I should also like to know if it is intended to establish creameries in the various centres.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Northam) [9.5]: This is the best piece of draftsmanship I have seen. The Bill has been most carefully prepared. It merely embodies the agreements that have been made. The financial clauses will be satisfactory both to the settler and to the Government. We get a considerable amount of help in our group settlement. The British and the Federal Governments are both helping us in the payments made for the first ten years, so that we shall have considerable funds. No member need fear that the taxpayers will be called upon to cover any losses on this form of settlement. It is the first time in the history of Australia that the British Government have helped as they are helping in the de-

velopment of Australia. The Government of this State had to face all the loss of the settlement of the wheat lands, and pay the full rate of interest from the beginning. In connection with the I.A.B., this State also had to take the whole liability. We have done this with great advantage to Western Australia. There must of necessity be losses on these big schemes. We cannot lay out huge sums of money without that sort of thing happening. We take men without money in order to develop the country. It is a great co-operative scheme. We all benefit by the gross production from the land. Every bag of wheat produced brings wealth to the country and revenue to the Treasury. It is production on which we live. Under the group settlement scheme we have all the conditions that should give us this production. I do not believe that the people will have to find one penny for any losses. I do not say there will not be losses, but they will not fall on the shoulders of the people. It is the first time in the history of the State that we have faced development under such favourable conditions. As time goes on we shall improve our methods. It is an entirely new scheme. It has been launched and tried, and has been in operation for several years. All those who have come to the State have approved of this method of dealing with British migrants. In order to populate the State we must face land settlement. We have no great secondary industries in which to absorb people, and our mining industry cannot take any of those numbers. We are just coming to the cropping stage with our groups, which is a most interesting stage. In the South-West all kinds of heavy crops, such as mangels, etc., can be grown. The Agricultural Bank will have charge of these settlers after they leave the control of the group settlement officials. The officials will see to it that they produce these crops. The South-West will do for Western Australia what Gippsland did for Victoria, and for Australia what New Zealand is doing. It is not a question of the cost of the holding, but a question of what it will produce. It will not help a man to have a holding costing £1,000 if it will only give him a living. If a holding costs £1,500 and the settler is on the way to becoming independent it is the type of thing we want.

The Premier: The cost is not the factor unless we take into consideration what the land will produce.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am sure the Minister will see to it that the settlers are put in the way of producing to the greatest possible extent from their holdings. They are doing very well and will continue to do so. Our own people are on the groups as well as the newcomers. I am willing to leave the question of butter factories to the Minister. He knows these things must be provided, and they will come when they are needed. I am also willing to leave to him the question of organising the collection of the produce. Probably that can be done through the butter factories in the different centres. It is important, when the settlers produce stuff, that they should be able to sell it, and market it without too much trouble to themselves. Organisation on that side is a matter of detail. Contract work will be a good thing if we can get it, but I doubt if we can do so in the early stages. It will be difficult to fix the right price for partial clearing. Some men will get too much, and some too little. It is difficult to say what is a fair thing. I am not going to object to contract work, but it will be some time before we come to a realisation of what can be paid. It does mean that someone must inspect closely in each area of clearing that is let. The trees vary in size and number. We only pick out a percentage of the trees now, and in some cases this is lower than in others. The settlers themselves are satisfactory, and the scheme is satisfactory. Through the South-West we shall before long reap great benefits. The Bill is a good one, but there are one or two things I will ask the Minister about in Committee. There is nothing in the Bill to object to.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [9.13]: I am pleased at the reception accorded to the Bill. I would inform the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) that it will not undermine the securities of the Agricultural Bank. The agreement provides how the cost shall be apportioned. Every member who went on the groups had to sign that agreement. It provides that the amount to be charged for each block shall be determined by the general manager of the Bank. The Bill merely provides that the terms of that agreement shall be carried into effect. The general manager must consent to any writing down that is done before the mortgage is agreed to, and he determines whether the expenditure is or is not in ex-

cess of the value of the work performed. He is the sole arbitrator, and the Government and the settler have to accept his decision. That provision appears also in this Bill. Therefore, I am unable to inform the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) what amount of writing down will be done. That cannot be stated until the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank has fixed the valuations. The member for Nelson also inquired in regard to markets. On the Annual Estimates I made the following statements:—

Arrangements are being made with the Metropolitan Dairy Farmers Co-op. Co., Ltd., to take the milk and cream supply from the Peel estate. By these arrangements the Peel estate settlers will have the advantage of sharing in the metropolitan milk supply. This co-operative company has commenced the construction of a factory, and will make arrangements to collect from the settlers their supplies pending the erection of a station for that purpose on the Peel estate. We have under consideration the removal of one of the butter factories that are closed down in another part of the State, to the Manjimup district to provide for the output of the dairies in the Jarnadup, Manjimup and Northcliffe area. Arrangements have been completed with the W.A. Farmers Company to control the butter factory at Albany. This factory will be in a position to take the supplies from the Denmark settlers. The settlers in the Busselton area can send their supplies to the Busselton factory, which is already in existence. The suppliers to this factory increased from 93 in October, 1924, to 196 in October, 1925.

Therefore, the Government have not lost sight of the marketing position.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The settlers make a lot of butter themselves.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, unfortunately; and that is the reason why some of our butter factories are not paying.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Two group settlers at Margaret River are making 110lbs. per week.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no fear as regards the Agricultural Bank, because the bank have nothing whatever to do with the expenditure before taking over, and then have nothing to do with the amount expended, but merely act as agents for collecting and paying the money into a suspense account at the Treasury. The losses, we hope, will be recouped from the difference in interest. The settler pays the current rate of interest, plus the usual bank charges, and the Government are getting the money at 1 per cent. Out of the

difference it is hoped the losses will be met. That is the reason why the Bill provides that the interest payments can be applied as the Government think fit.

Mr. Latham: Eventually there will not be any loss, because the productivity of the land will increase so greatly.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so; but if a farm is written down £100, that £100 must be found from somewhere. It will be found out of the difference in the rates of interest. The Leader of the Opposition raised the question of piece-work. There has been a good deal of difficulty in regard to piece-work.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There was bound to be.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When piece-work was started, the intention was to fix such prices as would enable a settler to get as much as he would get on sustenance—£3 per week. The State is only assisting the settlers to make farms, and the Government do not want to advance to them more than they need. However, there are good settlers and there are bad settlers. Again, a man good at farming may not be good at clearing. As a result, some settlers have not been earning as much as the amount of sustenance. I have, however, for the information of members the figures relating to piece-work on two or three groups; and I propose to quote them because a good many members have been informed that the prices fixed by the departmental officers have not been sufficient to enable the settlers to live. In the case of one group settler the net weekly earnings for 17 weeks were £5, and if the settler had cows, the amount he got from them, above the cost of feeding, would be in addition to the £5 per week. One settler for 31 weeks averaged £5 16s. 3d., and he has seven cows; two boys are living with him. Another settler earned an average of £6 18s.; he has four cows, and has one boy working with him. For 13½ weeks a settler earned £7 2s. 11d.; he had one son working with him. For 32 weeks another settler earned £2 4s. 2d.; he has three cows. For 31½ weeks a settler earned £8 7s. 9d.; he has two cows, and has two boys working with him. For 31 weeks a settler earned £3 18s. 5d.; he has one cow. For 31½ weeks a settler earned £5 18s. 1d.; he has five cows, and has one son working with him. For 30 weeks a settler earned

£3 0s. 11d.; he has two cows. For 31 weeks a settler earned £4 11s.; he has three cows. For 26 weeks a settler earned £1 17s. 8d. For 31 weeks a settler earned £5 4s. 1d. For the same number of weeks another earned £3 18s. 3d.; he has two cows. For the same number of weeks another earned £4 3s. 1d.; he has one cow. For 28 weeks a settler earned £4 12s. 10d.; he has two cows. For 30 weeks a settler earned £4 7s. 5d.; he has two cows. For 27½ weeks a settler earned £7 2s. 1d.; he has three cows, and has one son working with him. For 31 weeks a settler earned £4 8s. 8d.; he has two cows. For 29½ weeks a settler earned £3 2s.; he has one cow. And so on. Hon. members will see that on the score of their weekly earnings the settlers have not much to complain of regarding the prices fixed. I wish to emphasise that the figures I have quoted represent net weekly earnings, after deduction of cost of explosives. They show that the prices fixed by the officers are such as enable a man, if he works, to get a fair living. On the question whether the group settlers will make good, the accepted basis is that with 15 cows they will be able to earn, from cream and skim milk, about £15 per annum per cow, equal to £225 per annum. In addition there will be pigs to the value of £25, poultry to the value of £25, and produce to the value of £25 per annum. These items give total earnings of £300 per annum. If this forecast works out satisfactorily, undoubtedly those settlers who take an active interest in their farms will soon have them paying propositions, and will be able to meet their indebtedness to the State. The department assure me that in future no farm will cost over £1,500. Some of the existing farms have not cost that amount. It is proposed that on disbandment, if a person has 15 cows he shall get no assistance towards extra clearing. If he has 14 cows, he shall be assisted by the department to earn an additional £1 5s. per month; if he has 13 cows, £2 10s. per month; 12 cows, £3 15s.; 11 cows, £5; 10 cows, £6 5s.; 9 cows, £7 10s.; 8 cows £8 15s.; 7 cows, £10; 6 cows, £11 5s.; 5 cows, £12 10s.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But that cannot go on forever.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. That assistance will continue only until we get the settler up to 15 cows.

Mr. Lindsay: Does that mean 15 cows on the farm, or 15 cows in milk?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: All the 15 cows with which the settler is provided will not be in milk at once. Some difficulty is being experienced in obtaining stock. We got 2,000 springers in New South Wales, and they were thoroughly tested before arriving here, and were kept in quarantine for a month. In addition, they were closely examined by a veterinary officer in New South Wales. We have made provision for markets to deal with the cream from the settlers, and are endeavouring to provide a livelihood for the men until they are on a basis that will admit of success. I could make myself, as administrator of group settlement, one of the most popular men in the country; but the State must be protected. We cannot give everything to the group settler.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But we want the settlers to succeed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but while we advance to them what we consider is sufficient to enable them to succeed in the future, we must also protect the State. It is all very well to talk about writing down. It is much easier to write down than to write up, and it gives greater satisfaction. Every care must be used to see that group settlers are not dealt with unfairly, but are dealt with justly, and at the same time that fair play shall be given not only to the settlers but also to the State. Fair play must be given to both parties to the agreement. I have not the least doubt that the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank will see to that as regards the valuation of blocks and apportioning the amount of indebtedness to each block. Another point I wish to mention is that the Agricultural Bank have power to give further advances to group settlers. For the life of me, however, I cannot see why the group settler, who has been placed in a much better position than has ever been aimed at in any other part of the world to become a farmer and to enable him to make a good living, whose future is bright, because the market for his products is here, should be treated differently from any other person.

Mr. Stubbs: We do not want another I.A.B.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That will not happen, I hope, because group settlement matters are under different conditions. I realise that there are many diffi-



culties ahead. There have been nothing but difficulties right through the piece. It is a wonder that some of the officers have not broken down. Group settlement is not a thing that can merely be talked about, but a thing which at almost every hour of the day raises some grievance. Usually the grievances are of a very petty character. We try to satisfy them, but it is impossible to do that for everyone. To indicate to hon. members the type of complaint the department often receives from group settlers, I will mention one. A man had two dogs. He did not want one, so he gave it to a friend. A few days afterwards the younger dog was poisoned. The settler wrote to me and wanted to know what I was going to do about it. That shows what little things we have to deal with. When I was at one of the groups I received a deputation, the members of which complained that the doorstep at a cottage was a little bit too high. They wanted me to send a carpenter down to put a step in. It did not occur to them to get a log from the bush and fix the thing for themselves. These are the minor complaints that are constantly being received by the department. I am sure that Parliament desires that we shall extend a fair and square deal to group settlers having due regard to the safety of the State's assets, and we also expect that the group settlers will deal fairly with the State.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee.*

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Grants of holdings to group settlers:

Mr. THOMSON: Has the department any idea what land will be required for settlers beyond 160 acres?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: So far as I can say at the present time, it will not be necessary to get land to extend holdings beyond 160 acres. Some of the settlers have more than 160 acres at the present time, but I do not intend to make that the practice.

Mr. Latham: Will you not agree to provide a limit of 500 acres?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some settlers in the Busselton district have upwards

of 490 acres. Those settlers were promised the land free, and that promise must be kept. In other areas where the land is all good swamp land, some have 62 acres. The smallest area on suitable Crown lands totals 71 acres.

Mr. LATHAM: I hope the Minister will agree to limit the areas to at most 500 acres. If the Minister agrees to any larger area than that I think it will cost altogether too much, and the people will not be able to stand the capitalisation. It is not only the clearing costs, but the drainage costs as well that have to be taken into consideration.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Payment of expenditure on holdings:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister explain what the word "notifications" in Subclause 3 means?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The usual practice under Agricultural Bank mortgages is that when the bank forecloses the land has to be sold. In the case of group settlers, however, we cannot afford to wait until that is done, and it is necessary for some notification to be issued so that if one person leaves the holding, another one can be put on as soon as possible. It is necessary to express those notifications by way of regulations or in the mortgage.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Subclause 4 provides that if a group settler shall not within the prescribed time notify the Department of Lands and Surveys in writing of his acceptance of a grant or lease when tendered to him, he shall cease to have any interest in the land. I think that is a bit drastic, and the Minister should have some discretion. I suggest that after "shall" in the fifth line, the words "if the Minister so determines" be inserted.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Before dealing with that amendment I would like the Minister to explain whether it is proposed that the Agricultural Bank trustees in allotting the amounts blocks will have to carry, will take into consideration the full expenditure on the group or whether the trustees will have discretion to say how much will be allotted, thus providing for some of the expenditure to be written off.

Mr. Thomson: Subclause 2 provides that the amounts shall be assessed and determined by the managing trustee of the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Will the Minister explain whether the total expenditure is to be taken into consideration or whether provision will be made for portion of the expenditure to be written off? Some of it should be written off on account of bad management and waste.

Mr. THOMSON: Is it considered that the settlers will have any equity in their holdings? Some of them may have spent their own money and done a lot of work in their spare time efforts. There does not appear to be any provision for an appeal against the determination of the values.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There is an appeal to the Minister.

Mr. THOMSON: I have grave doubts as to whether the Minister would override a decision of the managing trustee.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Regarding the point raised by the member for Guildford, I think the amounts to be assessed by the managing trustee would really be the values. We all realise there must be some writing down in respect of some of the blocks and the managing trustee has power to apportion the charges to be levied against the blocks. The agreement every man has signed says the amount to be charged against the block shall be determined by the General Manager of the Agricultural Bank, but the aggregate must not exceed the total expenditure. In reply to the member for Katanning I could make myself one of the most popular men in the State if I gave everything that is desired, but I have to protect the State. When the manager of the Agricultural Bank fixes the charge to be made, we must bear in mind that the people on the land have received the money expended on them. Consequently we should accept whatever the manager of the bank fixes. It would be a mistake to bring the Minister into it. If he had to decide these questions, his life would not be worth living.

Mr. Thomson: He could decide only on the advice of his officers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Subclause 4 deals with a different matter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no desire on the part of the department to move any settler off the land. We had the greatest difficulty to get people to sign for their stock. Again, we had difficulty to get others to sign for piecework. Immediately they signed they knew that their interest

would start. There is no doubt the managing trustee will apportion the amount in accordance with the value of the land. As to spare time effort, settlers are fully aware of the position. Spare time work is not charged for, and I am not going to agree to pay for it. The settlers have been told repeatedly that any work done by way of spare time effort is not charged for by the department.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It could not be.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. The only work they are charged for is that on which the department have expended money. That statement has proved detrimental to spare time effort, because some settlers have concluded that spare time effort would be charged up when the block was valued. Some will not believe us when we tell them they will not be charged for it. All we shall consider is the land cleared under group settlement in group time and paid for with group money.

Mr. Griffiths: If you take a man off his holding he gets no allowance for it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No. Some settlers who have done extra work would walk off if they thought they could get the few pounds represented by their spare time work. If a man died we would charge the extra amount to his successor and pay it to his widow. Similar consideration would be extended to a man who had to leave his block through illness. Each case is considered on its merits.

Mr. LATHAM: Provision is made in the settlers' agreements that the amount to be charged will be determined by the general manager, but the aggregate charges shall not exceed the total expenditure and the group member must abide by the decision of the general manager. A valuation will be made by the Agricultural Bank. In making the valuation will the bank take into consideration the work represented by spare time effort?

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. LATHAM: More than likely it will and if so, such settlers will be unfairly treated as compared with those who have done no spare time work. All banks are alike; they make a valuation of the property. They would not write it down, because there would be assets for the amount.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The bank would decide on the records of expenditure.

Mr. LATHAM: Then the officials will

make a mess of it. Each block would have to be visited and the consideration would have to be given to the work done on the block. All I desire is that people who have done spare time effort will be credited with the amount.

The Minister for Lands: They will not be credited, but it will not be charged.

Mr LATHAM: We want to encourage spare time effort. We want to let the settlers know that when the valuation is made by the bank, spare time effort will not be taken into consideration.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no question of valuation. All that is said is that the expenditure on the groups shall be apportioned by the manager of the bank between the number of blocks. Who could make a valuation? Were the trees photographed, measured and counted? The men have drawn sustenance during the time the land has been undergoing clearing, and all the clause says is the manager of the bank shall apportion the total expenditure on the group.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is totally different from what the Minister says, and will make hundreds of thousands of pounds difference.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why?

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you take the full expenditure on the groups and then take the value of the blocks, you will arrive at a totally different figure.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course.

The Minister for Lands: It says "chargeable to the group settler."

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What will be chargeable to the settler? The Minister says the value. You say the expenditure.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The member for Guildford spent a lot of time on the Royal Commission and he should know.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is what the settlers and the Commission want to know.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: How could a valuation be made of the work? If it is found that the amount is too high, then will be the time to say whether there shall be any writing down. In common justice to the group settler, the cost of the work done will have to be charged up. Accounts have been carefully kept.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Would the writing down be done first?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: How was the sandplain country written down? Hundreds of thousands of pounds was lost on the light lands and there was considerable loss through the I.A.B. It would be absurd to do other than apportion the actual cost to begin with, and then to write down as occasion required. The 40 per cent. that will be received from the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments will enable the Minister to do that. This clause is in accordance with the agreement signed and must be given effect to.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: Settlers will not be charged for spare time effort?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No. This clause will exclude that. Many men have done splendid work in their own time. The writing down of lands generally by the Government proved a great hurt to the people: it destroyed the value of their lands. However, the writing down proposed here is a different thing.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I again assure the member for York that no person connected with the administration of group settlement ever had any intention of taking into consideration any area cleared by a group settler through spare-time effort. There was no expenditure by the State in connection with such clearing: even the cost of fracteur used for that work was deducted. Where there has been experimental work which the blocks should not carry, writing down will take place. The Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank will fix the amount to be written off, and the mortgage will be on that basis.

Mr. THOMSON: I am glad to have the Minister's assurance that spare-time effort is not to be taken into consideration. In that connection injustice has been done to another section of primary producers—those under the Industries Assistance Board. Grave dissatisfaction exists to-day amongst many clients of the board because of the fact that the trustees wrote down the values of properties to the amounts obtainable if the properties were placed on the market. That is correct from the Government point of view, but one result is that the man who simply drew his sustenance has had his property written down most, while the man who with his wife and children practised self-denial, and almost went without necessities—

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has made his illustration. Now I would like him to stick to the clause.

The Minister for Lands: Surely you do not expect properties to be written down below the market value.

Mr. THOMSON: I am glad to know that the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank, when making valuations of these blocks, will not take into consideration the value of the work done by settlers in their spare time. If we take two blocks of ground in the same group, and one settler has not done any spare time effort, but has only cleared his 25 acres within the meaning of the Act, while another man, by working with his wife and children on Saturdays afternoons and Sundays and holidays, has cleared a considerable area in addition, it cannot be said that the latter block is not of greater value.

The Minister for Lands: If the money expended has been the same on each, each of them will be given the same valuation.

Mr. THOMSON: I accept the Minister's explanation, and I hope the matter will work out that way. It has not worked out that way as regards clients of the I.A.B.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I want the Committee to realise the vast difference between the Opposition Leader's proposal and the Minister's. The Opposition Leader suggests that under this clause the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank shall take into consideration the total expenditure on the group and then allot a proportion of that total expenditure to the individual block, the amount of the proportionate actual expenditure on the block. In other words, each block is to carry its full share of the total expenditure on the group. It is all right if that is done. But the Minister for Lands says otherwise.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not understand the Minister to say that.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister stated that the amount to be assessed against the block should be the value of the block.

The Minister for Lands: The amount charged.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The amount charged is a totally different proposition from the value of the block. In that case the Minister reconciles his statement with that of the Opposition Leader. I regard the proposition as totally impracticable.

None of the groups can carry the full expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: Some can.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: I do not think so, though possibly there may be exceptions. There are groups from which the settlers will get excellent returns. Other groups, however, are totally different propositions. Yet the expenditure per block on the latter groups is almost equal to the expenditure per block on the best group. No. 1 group is a particularly fine bit of country, but the wasted expenditure on it has been enormous. The settlers have been there for years, but the group is not as far forward as No. 5 group. Even in the case of No. 1 group, therefore, the full expenditure could not be charged against the group without grave injustice. We cannot arrive at the amounts to be written off; we can only trust the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank to protect the State's interest and do what is reasonable and fair by everybody.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank will have to recommend what amount shall be charged in respect of each property, and then there will have to be writing down accordingly. Under Clause 6 the difference will be met out of the difference represented by the two rates of interest. A large proportion of the losses will be covered by that means. Through the Lands and Surveys Department the State has spent more on the group settlement system than was originally intended. Originally 25 acres were to be partly cleared ready for the plough, and if any additional area was to be cleared the money was to be advanced by the Agricultural Bank. However, that was found to be impossible, for it would have left the men on the group unable to earn a livelihood. Consequently the expenditure through the department had to be greatly increased. But that is no reason why we should write it down. It is impossible to do the work for £1,000, as originally intended. The one aim is to make of the group settlement scheme a success, and we hope that it will prove successful.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suggested an amendment to Clause 4 because I thought it was too drastic. Surely there should be some discretionary power. The Minister now explains that the man must go only if he refuses to sign the documents.

Even so, some discretionary power should be left with, say, the Minister or the trustees of the Agricultural Bank.

The Minister for Lands: I do not mind such an amendment, but do not bring the Minister into it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, Act or no Act, whatever the Minister does must stand. In such a case that is only right.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Interest and instalments of principal or mortgages to be paid to an account at the Treasury.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: This is the other important clause. It is proposed to create a separate fund. When the managing trustee declares the sum chargeable against a block, under Clause 5, the amount so declared shall be paid into a suspense account at the Treasury. But under Clause 8 the bank has the right to advance further moneys. Will that further advance also go into this fund, or is the proposal simply to put into this suspense account the amounts expended up to the time the values are declared under Clause 3? I cannot see why the account should be kept separate. It will always be there to be attacked by Parliament, whereas if the whole thing went into the Agricultural Bank it would be managed and controlled by the bank, and they would assess the total expenditure under Clause 3, the rest of it being written off. Under this the loss to the State will go on indefinitely.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The intention is that moneys advanced by the Lands and Surveys Department shall be paid into a separate account and not used for the purpose of increasing the capital of the Bank. The repayments cannot be used without the approval of Parliament. The money has been borrowed for a specific purpose and will be used for that purpose. The Agricultural Bank will collect these moneys and they will be paid into a separate account at the Treasury. In a later clause we deal with advances by the bank. The bank trustees desired that all moneys should be paid into this fund and that all advances should come under this fund. That would relieve the trustees of all responsibility. They would have the fund there to draw upon. I could not agree to

that, and so it was thought advisable that this fund should be kept entirely separate and used as Parliament approves.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This method of keeping accounts is quite right. The interest collected will be debited to a special account. In ten years' time this fund should become very considerable, quite enough to cover all possible losses under the scheme. If the Agricultural Bank were wise they would want to take the whole thing over as it is. In any event, this fund will be credited with the interest charged, and debited with the one per cent. that the Treasurer will have to pay. So the fund will grow rapidly. The bank would be on a very good wicket if they were to take over this fund. I entirely approve the clause.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6 and 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Further advance by Agricultural Bank:

Mr. THOMSON: Do the Government intend to increase the capital of the Agricultural Bank and what amount will it be necessary for the bank to provide under this measure?

Mr. Latham: The Agricultural Bank must be getting a lot of repayments from other settlers.

Mr. THOMSON: Yes, but that money is required for clearing, etc., in the wheat areas. I am a little afraid that we might find ourselves confronted with a position similar to that of the Agricultural Bank and the I.A.B. Assume that an advance of £1,000 has been made and the Agricultural Bank advances for further clearing, machinery, stock, etc., to the extent of £2,000 in all. It might be necessary to write down the loan to £1,500. According to my reading of the clause the bank would have to lose £250 and the Lands Department £250.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot follow the hon. member's argument. This advance would have nothing to do with the I.A.B. The I.A.B. advances on a gamble. The Agricultural Bank advances on improvements, and takes into consideration the security for the loan. We can rest assured that the bank will be careful about any advances made.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Power to make regulations:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move an amendment—

That the following be added:—"By such regulations the Governor may so modify the provisions of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 1909, relating to the payment of half-yearly instalments of the purchase money with interest under conditional purchase leases as to limit such payments during a period not exceeding 10 years from the commencement of the lease to interest only."

Thus interest only will be chargeable for the first 10 years and the amount of the advance will be repayable during the succeeding 20 years.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

## BILL—GUN LICENSE ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 26th November.

MR. CHESSON (Cue) [10.40]: I am not altogether enamoured of the Bill. The Act applies only to municipalities and to within a 5-mile radius thereof. This Bill will apply to the whole State. It seems to me a taxation Bill, designed to bring in more revenue. It will not bear equally upon the community as a whole. A large section of the people get their living with the gun, and others use it in protecting their property. The farmers protect their crops by means of the gun. Kangaroo shooters and dingo shooters make their living by the same means. Some of them use not only one gun, but have with them small arsenals. They carry guns and rifles of various kinds. Are they going to be charged a license for one gun or for all guns? Every member of their family uses a gun. Every prospector who goes out takes a gun with him, in order to provide his meat. When the Mines Department sends out a prospecting party it equips the men with guns and ammunition. The Premier said the Bill was introduced because of the trouble at Broome. I would prohibit the sale of all guns to Asiatics and stop them from carrying such weapons. If they like to run amok with a knife they cannot do much harm

to white people. Asiatics carry a knife as part of their stock-in-trade. My objection to the Bill is that it will press heavily upon a section of the community that is already carrying a big burden. I am going to oppose the second reading, unless I am informed that the Bill will be made to apply only to Asiatics.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—in reply) [10.45]: I propose to make drastic amendments to the Bill in Committee. If they do not suit the House we can abandon it. Any further discussion upon the Bill as printed would be merely waste of time, as I do not intend to adhere to it.

Mr. Marshall: I should like to know first what the amendments will be.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

### *In Committee, etc.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of preamble of 49 Vict., No. 18:

The PREMIER: It is proposed to abandon practically the whole Bill, except so far as it shall apply to Asiatics. It was never intended that the Bill should apply in the sweeping way that it does to the whole State. It originated as the result of a request from the white residents of Broome, who asked for some protection against the coloured people in the matter of carrying firearms. I shall vote against practically all the clauses that remain.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 3 and 4—put and negatived.

Clauses 5 and 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—put and negatived.

Clause 8—agreed to.

New clause:

The PREMIER: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 2:—"A proviso is added to Section 5 of the principal Act as follows:—"Provided also that no license shall be granted to any Asiatic or African alien, or to any person of Asiatic or African race claiming to be a British subject, except with the approval of the Treasurer."

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON : I move an amendment to the new clause—

That the following be added to the new clause:—"Provided further that nothing in this proviso shall apply to any person of the Jewish race."

The Premier : Are Jews Asiatics or Africans?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON : Those words have been included in similar legislation, and I did not think the matter needed arguing.

The Premier : I will accept the amendment.

Mr. LATHAM : I have not been able to get a copy of the principal Act, and I do not know the purport of the section to which these provisos are being added. Speaking from memory, the principal Act merely provides that licenses must be obtained within a municipality. Broome is not a municipality.

The Premier : This proviso will apply to all coloured people in the State.

Mr. LATHAM : But the Act deals only with licenses within municipalities.

The Premier : The proviso is perfectly clear.

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

New clause:

The PREMIER : I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 3:—"No Asiatic or African alien, and no person of Asiatic or African race claiming to be a British subject, shall use or carry a gun within any portion of the State, unless he is the holder of a license under this Act. Penalty, £50."

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

## RESOLUTION—POLICE PENSIONS.

Message from the Council received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution:—

That in the opinion of this House it will be conducive to the best interests of the State if provision be made for the payment of reasonable pension allowance to members of the

Police Force who may be injured, wounded, or maimed in the execution of their duty, and for adequate allowances to their dependants in the case of death."

*House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 16th December, 1925.*

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The DEPUTY PRESIDENT took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION.

Hon. T. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary : Is it the intention of the Government to introduce this session a Bill to authorise the construction of a railway to serve the country lying east of the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied : No. A Bill for this purpose will be introduced early next session.

## BILL—APPROPRIATION.

*Second Reading.*

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [11.5] in moving the second reading said : This Appropriation Bill follows the same lines as in past years and covers the whole of the Government's