NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Panton
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Marshall	(*Teller.*)

PAIRS.

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Angelo	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Teesdale	Mr. Lambert
Mr. C. P. Wansbrough	Mr. Clydesdale

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Amendment of Section 47:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause provides that the president, if not a judge of the Supreme Court, shall be appointed for seven years. It would be better that the president should not have an eye on his reappointment after so short a term. If the Minister insists upon his proposal, will he consider appointing lay members also for seven years? In this small matter he might meet our wishes.

The Minister for Works: I will consider the matter.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—Amendment of Section 48:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move an amendment—

That after "sa'ary" in line 6 there be inserted the words "(not being less than £600 per annum)."

There is no idea in the minds of the Government to reduce the salary of the assessors. This will, however, leave the question of fixing it in the hands of the Governor-in-Council. The salary cannot be less than £600 if the amendment is carried.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The appropriation for the amount is at present fixed by Act of Parliament, and there is no good reason for arranging it otherwise.

The Minister for Works: The salary of several high officials in the service is fixed by the Governor-in-Council.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The salary should still be fixed by Act of Parliament. It is an extraordinary thing to say that the amount should not be less than £600. If the Minister wants to make it £800, why does he not say so? He evidently desires to treat the assessors as ordinary officials, whose salary will come up for review every year. I protest against this sort of thing.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 30th September, 1924.

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

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [4.33]: I move—

That the revised Standing Orders of the Legislative Council, drafted by the Standing Orders Committee in pursuance of the instruction given to them on the 5th August last, be adopted.

On the 5th August the following resolution was passed on my motion—

That it be an instruction to the Standing Orders Committee to consider the advisableness of amending the Standing Orders, especially in view of the alterations made in the Constitution Act, 1889, and the Constitution Acts Amendment Act of 1899 during the session of 1921-22.

That resolution was passed by reason of the very material amendments that were effected to our Constitution in 1921. Those amendments have a very important bearing on the relationship between the two Houses, especially in the matter of money Bills, and although the Constitution amendment was effected in 1921, our Standing Orders have remained as they were. It is essential that the Standing Orders be brought into conformity with the Constitution. If the Standing Orders be not in conformity with the Constitution, they are ultra vires. The members of the Standing Orders Committee felt that the task with which they were entrusted was one that would be attended with many difficulties. Apart altogether from the alterations to the Standing Orders necessitated by the alterations to the Constitution, the instruction included a direction that any other alterations considered necessary by the Standing Orders Committee might be effected. The Standing Orders Committee have held a considerable number of meetings and have gone through the Standing Orders over and over again, and the expectations as to the amount of work that would be entailed have been fully realised. The English language is so framed that it

is rather difficult to express in words exactly what is meant. The most simple sentence often bears two or three different interpretations, and the framing of new Standing Orders is a very delicate matter. If one Standing Order be altered, it is bound to have a bearing upon other Standing Orders, and unless those making the alterations be very careful, it is possible that changes may result in confusion becoming worse confounded. A week ago I laid on the Table the amended Standing Orders, and to-day in moving for their adoption, I shall refer to only the important alterations. There are quite a number of alterations to which it would be waste of time to refer. In some instances the verbiage has been altered, the meaning has been made clearer and some of the clauses have been recast. In other instances the position of the clauses has been altered in order that subjects relating to one another may be brought together to simplify reference. One of the first alterations recommended to which I draw attention has reference to the President and the Chairman of Committees. The changes effected are merely such as to convey a clear interpretation of the Constitution. It is provided that the President and the Chairman of Committees shall continue in office until death, resignation or removal by an absolute majority of the Council. In other words, the President and the Chairman of Committees may be removed by a vote exactly similar to that by which they were appointed. Another Standing Order effecting a rather important change is a new one to stand as No. 104. It has reference to a motion for the disallowing of regulations and provides that such a motion shall take precedence over Government and private business. The reason for this is obvious. A motion to disallow a regulation may be adjourned and placed at the bottom of the Notice Paper, and quite a considerable time may elapse before it can be dealt with. Meanwhile the regulation may be in operation, and fees may be collected under it. At a subsequent stage it may be found that a vast majority of the House is opposed to the regulation. This has occurred, and it is manifestly wrong that a regulation to which a majority of members are opposed should remain in operation. The new Standing Order is in accordance with the Standing Order of the Senate, and I think it will also be found amongst the Standing Orders of most Houses of Parliament. Another amendment deals with the question of voting. When in a division the votes are equal, the President or the Chairman of Committees can at present exercise a casting vote. He can vote exactly in accordance with what he considers to be right. Though of course there are certain rules that are usually followed in exercising a casting vote, the President or the Chairman of Committees has absolute discretion. In the case of the President there is a constitutional bar that prevents any alteration in the matter of the casting vote. Under the Constitution the President is expressly given a casting vote, and even if it were desired, nothing could be done to alter that so long as the Constitution remains as it is. However, there is no constitutional bar as regards the Chairman of Committees. We should not forget that this is a very small House, and that it may be desirable to have the full voting strength of the House exercised on important questions. The provision we recommend is that when in Committee the Chairman of Committees may vote if he so desires. It entirely rests with him whether he shall exercise a vote. If he votes, there is a provision as to the method by which he shall vote. Then, whether the Chairman of Committees votes or not, if the votes be equal, the question passes in the negative. Another matter to which I may refer is one affecting the question of the title of a Bill, but the change proposed is really only in accordance with the practice which has been adopted in this House for some time. The original Standing Order 174 states—

> The title of a Bill shall coincide with the order of leave, and no clause shall appear in such Bill foreign to its title.

That Standing Order has always been interpreted to mean that the title of a Bill when presented shall coincide with the order of leave, and that no clause shall appear in such Bill foreign to its title, but that subsequently the Bill might be amended and the title altered. However, to make the Standing Order clear, the words "when presented" are inserted, so that the Standing Order now reads—

> The title of a Bill when presented shall coincide with the order of leave, and no clause shall appear in such Bill foreign to its title.

Of course there is another Standing Order which explains that the contents of a Bill must be mutually relevant. A change to which I think reference should be made is in Standing Order 187 of the old Standing Orders, and No. 185 of the new. No. 187 was an innovation that was introduced only a few sessions ago, and it was introduced at the instance of Mr. Colebatch. It meant that notices of amendments could only be given after the Bill had been read a second time. The new Standing Order suggests the very reverse. It says—

> Notices of amendments to a Bill when in Committee may be received at the Table at any time after the second reading has been moved, and may be printed on the Notice Paper.

That, I think, will much facilitate the work of the House, and enable members to place on the Notice Paper amendments which they consider may have an important bearing on a Bill and may influence the votes when it comes to the question of whether or not the Bill shall be read a second time.

The last amendment to which I shall refer before dealing with the all-important amendments regarding the financial constitutional changes is in Standing Order No. 329 of the new and No. 333 of the old. No. 333 of the old Standing Orders refers to conferences between the two Houses. It states—

> The managers for the Council shall, when a conference is terminated, report their proceedings to the Council forthwith.

Hon. members will recollect that only last session the question arose as to whether or not, if a conference failed, the Bill was determined. Under the new Standing Order it is clearly provided that if a conference between the two Houses fails to agree, the Bill shall be deemed to have been determined. The new Standing Order reads—

> At conferences the managers for the Council shall be at liberty to confer freely by word of mouth with the managers for the Assembly. If no agreement be reached, the Bill or other matter referred to the conference shall be deemed to have been determined.

I think it is advisable that the House should fully realise the importance of that change. It will mean that if a conference be decided on, and if managers be appointed, any one manager, by declining to agree, shall have the power to determine the Bill.

Hon. J. Duffell: Is not that the practice at present in Melbourne, that unless the conference managers are unanimous the Bill is determined?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: It is the practice usually pursued; but in the case of a Bill that came before this House last session the question arose, and a decision was given which implied that, in the opinion of the Chairman of Committees, at any rate, the Standing Order was not clear on the point. The Standing Orders Committee think it advisable that this change should be made so that the question shall be removed beyond doubt, and that the onus shall not in future be placed on the President, or on the Chairman of Committees, of interpreting what previously was held by some to be the practice—a practice that in some cases was followed and in other cases was not followed.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The point was not clear in the old Standing Order.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The new Standing Order certainly makes the position clear. I would like, in coming to the changes rendered necessary by reason of the alteration of the Constitution, to refer briefly to what actually were the changes effected in the Constitution by the Constitution Act Amendment Act of 1921. Under that amendment Sections 66 and 67 of the Constitution Act were repealed, as also was Section 46 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act. The three sections deal with Appropriation and tax Bills and also provide that no money vote or Bill is lawful unless recommended by the Governor. The three sections in question are not long, and I think it is desirable that they should be read. Section 66, referring to Appropriation and tax Bills, reads—

> All Bills for appropriating any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or for imposing, altering, or repealing any rate, tax, duty, or impost, shall originate only in the Legislative Assembly.

Section 67 reads—

> It shall not be lawful for the Legislative Assembly to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of any part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or of any rate, tax, duty, or impost, to any purpose which has not been first recommended to the Assembly by Message of the Governor during the session in which such vote, resolution, or Bill is proposed.

Section 46 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, which was also repealed, deals with alterations in money Bills. It reads—

> In the case of a proposed Bill which according to law must have originated in the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council may at any stage return it to the Legislative Assembly with a message requesting the omission or amendment of any items or provisions therein; and the Legislative Assembly may, if it thinks fit, make such omissions or amendments, or any of them, with or without modifications.

The sweeping nature of the change that was effected in the Constitution when those sections were repealed, will be evident when I read what was substituted for them. One section was substituted for the three sections which were repealed, namely Section 53 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act. That section, which relates to the power or powers of the two Houses in respect of legislation, was taken bodily from the Commonwealth Constitution Act and embodied in our Constitution. It reads—

> (1) Bills appropriating revenue or moneys, or imposing taxation, shall not originate in the Legislative Council; but a Bill shall not be taken to appropriate revenue or moneys, or to impose taxation, by reason only of its containing provisions for the imposition or appropriation of fines or other pecuniary penalties, or for the demanded payment or appropriation of fees for licenses or fees for registration, or other services under the Bill. (2) The Legislative Council may not amend Loan Bills or Bills imposing taxation or Bills appropriating revenue or moneys for the ordinary annual services of the Government. (3) The Legislative Council may not amend any Bill so as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people. (4) The Legislative Council may at any stage return to the Legislative Assembly any Bill which the Legislative Council may not amend, requesting by message the omission or amendment of any item or provision therein, provided

that any such request does not increase any proposed charge or burden on the people. The Legislative Assembly may, if it thinks fit, make such omissions or amendments with or without modifications. (5) Except as provided in this section, the Legislative Council shall have equal power with the Legislative Assembly in respect of all Bills. (6) A Bill which appropriates revenue or moneys for the ordinary annual sevices of the Government shall deal only with such appropriation. (7) Bills imposing taxation shall deal only with the imposition of taxation, and any provision therein dealing with any other matter shall be of no effect. (8) A vote, resolution, or Bill for the appropriation of revenue or moneys shall not be passed unless the purpose of appropriation has in the same session been recommended by message of the Governor to the Legislative Assembly.

Casual reading of the substituted section in our Constitution would lead one to suppose that the change had been of a very radical nature; but in order to see the full extent of the change it is necessary to read the recognised authority on the interpretation of the Commonwealth Constitution. I refer to Quick and Garran's "Annotated Constitution of Australia." I would like to read the interpretation placed on the substituted section in our Constitution by Quick and Garran. Quick and Garran refer to the second paragraph of Section 53 which reads—

> That the Legislative Council may not amend Bills imposing taxation or Bills appropriating revenue or moneys for the ordinary annual services of the Government.

and they go on to say—

> It takes from the Senate absolutely the power to amend tax Bills and annual appropriation Bills, whilst the third paragraph restricts its power to amend other appropriation Bills. The financial disability of the Senate may be thus classified and reviewed seriatim:—(1) The Senate cannot amend proposed laws imposing taxation; (2) The Senate cannot amend the ordinary annual appropriation Bill; (3) The Senate cannot amend any Bill so as to increase proposed charges or burdens on the people.

Then these authorities go on to say—

> Public expenditure may be divided into and considered under three separate headings.

That is, there are three separate kinds of money Bills. These three separate headings are—

> (i.) The costs and expenses of maintaining the ordinary annual services; (2) Fixed charges on permanent appropriations; (3) Extraordinary charges and appropriations.

Quick and Garran go on to define at length the three classes of money Bills, ordinary annual expenses, permanent appropriations, and extraordinary expenses. It would take too much time, and this is not the occasion, to go into details of the interpretation of those three classes of money Bills, but Quick and Garran make it clear that the restrictions of the power of amendment by the Senate refer only to one of the three classes of money Bills, and this is the substance of a very lengthy statement contained in Quick and Garran's work:—

> From the above enumeration and discussion of the various kinds of appropriations it will be seen that the Senate is denied the power to amend only one of the three kinds of Bills appropriating revenue or money. It is true that annual appropriation Bills constitute by far the largest and most important of all appropriation Bills, embracing, as they do, the expenditure necessary for the maintenance of the ordinary administrative departments of the Commonwealth. Whilst the Senate, however, could not amend an ordinary appropriation Bill, it could, with unquestionable constitutionality amend a public works Bill, a railway construction Bill, a harbour improvement Bill, a Bill relating to the salary of the Governor-General, a Bill relating to the salaries of Ministers of State, a Bill relating to the allowances of the members of the Federal Parliament, a Bill appropriating fines or other pecuniary penalties, a Bill for appropriating fees for licenses or fees for services under a proposed law. This power of amending appropriation must be read in conjunction with the limitation prescribed by paragraph (3) of the Section.

Paragraph (3) states—

> The Legislative Council may not amend any Bill so as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people.

I thought I should quote those paragraphs from Quick and Garran in order that the position might be made plain to the House. I am not sure that at the time the amendment of the Constitution was made, another place was fully alive to the extension of the powers of the Legislative Council that were then granted. So far as the alterations in the Standing Orders affecting Bills that the Council may not amend are concerned, we took those Standing Orders bodily from the Standing Orders of the Senate without alteration. In the first Senate where those Standing Orders were framed, there were the ablest lawyers in Australia. Sir Richard Chaffey Baker, who was president, Sir Josiah Symon, Sir John Downer, Mr. R. E. O'Connor, afterwards a High Court judge, and quite a number of other leading legal lights of Australia were members of that Senate, and I think we cannot do better than embody the Standing Orders of the Senate with reference to Bills that the Council cannot amend without any alteration whatsoever. In conclusion, I wish to say that the Standing Orders Committee are not desirous of rushing through the

adoption of these Standing Orders. At the request of the Standing Order Committee I laid on the Table of the House last Wednesday the amendments, and while we do not wish that these amendments should be adopted immediately, at the same time it is desirable that the House should finalise the matter as soon as possible. If the debate be adjourned, as I presume it will, I hope that we shall be able to finalise the Standing Orders by next Thursday. I submit the motion.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5.10]: I notice that the committee have not touched Standing Orders 3 or 32 in the old print. Several hon. members have directed my attention to the second last page of "Hansard," which shows that amongst the officers of the House we have not, as an officer of this Chamber, a clerk assistant. As the old records will show, we always had a clerk assistant. Standing Order 3 gives the definition of "Clerk" as follows:—

> The Clerk of the Legislative Council, or the Clerk Assistant when performing his duties.

To my mind and to the minds of other hon. members, that presupposes, if it does not definitely say so, that there shall be a clerk and a clerk assistant in this Chamber. Standing Order 32, I think, confirms that opinion because it reads:—

> In the case of the unavoidable absence or illness of the Clerk, his duties shall be performed by the Clerk Assistant.

I presume that if illness were to befall our worthy Clerk, and we had a Clerk Assistant, the Clerk Assistant would automatically function, but without a Clerk Assistant you, Sir, would have to improvise to get over the situation. The position is one that I think you, Sir, may be able to clear up. The Standing Orders provide that in the unavoidable absence of the President a Deputy President shall be elected, but the Standing Orders do not provide that in the unavoidable absence through illness of the Clerk that the House shall elect a Clerk Assistant. The Standing Orders do not set out how we shall appoint the Clerk Assistant. I have no desire that there should be an acrimonious debate on this subject. Probably you, Sir, may ease the situation by outlining your future intentions in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: In reply to the Hon. Mr. Cornell I desire to say that the reasons for a Clerk Assistant not having been appointed are too lengthy for me to explain at this juncture. In the general interests of the House I deferred making the appointment. So far as the work is concerned, in the event of the absence of the Clerk—there has not been such an occurrence in the last two sessions—it is within the power of the President to appoint a Clerk Assistant. As I have already said, the reasons for an appointment not having been made are too lengthy to explain just now. I intended to make the appointment in time for the next session, but as I understand there is a desire amongst many members that it should be made during this sesssion, I will take steps to see that the position is filled by the present Usher of the Black Rod.

Members: Hear, hear!

On motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, debate adjourned.

BILL—HIGH SCHOOL.

Third Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.15]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5.16]: I wish to make a personal explanation. I have looked up "Hansard" as to what occurred in Committee in connection with this Bill. Several members have reminded me that at the close of the last sitting, when referring to Dr. Saw, I made a somewhat unhappy choice of words. I referred to that hon. member's "dictatorial personality," whereas the words I intended to use were "his persuasive personality."

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—BUNBURY ROAD DISTRICT RATES VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.17] in moving the second reading said: The audit of accounts of the road board district of Bunbury disclosed the fact that the rates were levied at a meeting that was never held. The minutes of the meeting were inserted in the minute book purporting to levy the rates, and are dated on a Sunday, which would have been illegal. The meeting had been advertised as having been held on the Sunday. The matter was brought to light by the Government Auditor during the annual audit, and upon inquiries being made the information was elicited from the chairman and members of the road board that no such meeting, as represented by the minutes, was held, but that the information was inserted by the late secretary, and the signature of the chairman obtained to the minutes. Some of the rates have been collected. The Bill is necessary to validate that rate, and enable the board to collect the balance, as well as legalise the action already taken by it. The board were not parties to the irregularities disclosed by the auditor, and since then the gentleman re-

sponsible for that state of affairs has severed his connection with the board. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

MOTION—WATER SUPPLY, HILLS SCHEME.

To suspend operations.

Debate resumed from 18th September on the following motion by Hon. A. Lovekin—

That in the opinion of this House no further work should be proceeded with in connection with the proposed Canning River and Wongong Creek Reservoirs until—(a) an engineer having experience in masonry and concrete construction has been appointed and placed in charge of the undertakings; (b) proper plans, specifications, and estimates have been prepared; (c) public tenders have been called for the construction and carrying out of the works.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan—in reply) [5.20]: I can scarcely press this motion in view of the satisfactory reply given the week before last by the Colonial Secretary. I submitted the motion to ensure that experienced engineers shall design these costly works in the hills. I made the deliberate statement that in the department there was no officer who had designed similar works, or who had any active experience in their construction. Those members who have followed the reports of the evidence taken by the select committee on the water supply will have realised that this is so. After considering the matter, the Government told us that before these works were proceeded with they would take the necessary steps to see that some qualified engineer reported on the designs to begin with. Members who have followed the reports of the evidence, to which I have referred, will also have noticed how necessary it is there should be proper specifications in connection with these works. It has appeared beyond doubt that it was due to the want of proper plans and specifications dealing with the collapsed filter beds that the fiasco at Mt. Hawthorn ensued. That is admitted. The Government, through the Leader of this House, have undertaken to see that proper plans and specifications are prepared for all such works in future. We cannot complain about that. As for the other point with which the motion deals, that tenders should be called for the works, I can scarcely press that at this juncture, although I am in favour of it, because it is the policy of the present Government that works should be undertaken by day labour. Although one might offer a contrary opinion, it would be difficult to do so seeing that the late Government ordered these very works to be carried out by day labour. I can, therefore, hardly hope to successfully induce the House to insist that the work shall be done by contract, at any rate during the time the Labour Government are in office. I believe the time is not far distant when even members of the present Government, and their followers, will see the advantage of having such works constructed by contract rather than by day labour. Under the day labour system there are many faults that are covered up which would be disclosed under the contract system. If members desire to see the difference between work done under these two principles, they can go first to Barrack-street, where the roads are being taken up under the day labour system, and then to St. George's-terrace where they are being repaired under the contract system.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not a fair comparison.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I think it is, if the hon. member will only watch the organisation of the two different undertakings. I do not think there is much difference in the work done by individual workers, whether they are on a day labour job or a contract job, but the methods of carrying out the work and the organisation connected with it make all the difference. That, however, is beside the question at present. I believe in the course of time even the present Government will be converted to the contract system. Having got from the motion all I can expect, and having obtained what I considered to be of immense benefit to the country, namely, the statement that these costly works will not be proceeded with unless there is a properly qualified engineer to supervise them, and adequate plans and specifications are prepared, I think I have obtained all I can hope for or expected to get, and with the leave of the House will withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

BILL—TRUST FUNDS INVESTMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.27] in moving the second reading said: When the Life insurance Companes Act of 1889 was passed road boards were a minor quantity, and existed principally as advisory bodies, or to expend any moneys entrusted to them by the central Government. When the Trustees Act of 1900 was passed, there was no provision in the then Roads Act for road boards to raise money; consequently only

municipalities were the recognised authorities to issue bonds, and they were mentioned only in the two Acts referred to. Since then road boards have had the additional authority conferred upon them, and are raising loans. For this purpose it is necessary that the two Acts that allow bonds to be accepted by the Treasury, and for insurance companies and other trustees to invest their moneys in road boards, as they do in the case of municipalities, should be amended, and the necessary authority is submitted in this Bill. It was not until 1902 that the authority was passed that enabled road boards to raise money, but that measure imposed so many restrictions in the way of getting an absolute majority for the purpose of raising a loan that it could not be availed of until the measure of 1911 was sanctioned by the legislature. Now that the road boards do raise loans, it is found that the money is generally raised locally or from loans by trustees and others having trust moneys at their command. This Bill merely places road boards in the same position as municipalities, and enables their bonds to be recognised by trustees and also by the Government. The road board conference, by their executive, as well as the individual boards, requested the Government to introduce this legislation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.30]: I do not raise any objection to the measure because the road boards are to be armed with the same power as municipalities. The probability is that a decision in this matter will rest with the person lending the money. We have to take into consideration, however, that Western Australia is a vast State, and if we grant this extension of powers to road board districts we may be the innocent means of compromising trustees who may invest their funds with road boards. Road boards may be regarded as a sound proposition, and yet from time to time we have seen the boundaries of road board areas altered and whole road board districts absorbed into other local governing districts or become defunct. It may be that if we agree to the Bill, circumstances may arise when a trustee will invest funds in a road board that in course of time may become defunct. We should insert an amendment to enable trustees placed in such a position to approach the Government, who should be able to safeguard the interests of the investors, should conditions alter as I have indicated. Hon. members should have regard to that phase. It is as well to have some such safeguard on behalf of road boards themselves.

Hon. A. Burvill: In the event of a road board becoming defunct, would not new boards take the position of the old one?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It would be questionable as to who would be responsible for the repayment of the funds invested in such a district.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Would not the new board take over the liability?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It is for us to consider the question from that standpoint. An old board may be absorbed into two or three different road board districts. It is necessary to have some safeguards on behalf of the trustees, otherwise trustees may not be inclined to invest in road board debentures.

Hon. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.35]: The point raised by Mr. Hamersley is an interesting one. The Bill really constitutes an amendment of the Trustees Act of 1900. In that Act there is provision for trustees to make investments under suitable safeguards in loans to the Government and to municipalities. It was found necessary in the Old Country to make certain provisions under which trust funds could be invested, and by the Act of 1893 trustees were allowed to invest only in certain securities, amongst which were any securities "the interest of which was for the time being guaranteed by Parliament"; "in nominal or inscribed stock issued, or to be issued, by the corporation of any municipal borough having, according to the returns of the last census prior to the date of investment, a population exceeding 50,000, or by any county council, under the authority of any Act of Parliament or provisional order"; "in nominal or inscribed stock issued, or to be issued, by any commissioners incorporated by Act of Parliament for the purpose of supplying water, and having a compulsory power of levying rates over an area having, according to the returns of the last census prior to the date of investment, a population exceeding 50,000, provided that during each of the 10 years last passed before the date of investment the rates levied by such commissioners shall not have exceeded 80 per centum of the amount authorised by law to be levied." Seeing that the Old Country found it necessary to introduce those limitations regarding the securities in which trust funds might be invested, it is rather surprising that our legislation contains no similar limitations. We are faced with a decline in population in various parts of the State. For instance, at the present time the Kalgoorlie Road Board operates over territory formerly included in the Broad Arrow and Kanowna road districts. At one time Kanowna had a population of 20,000 people. In such circumstances those people would be entitled to raise a loan equivalent, under the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act, to 12 times their annual revenue. The population of Kanowna has declined until to-day there are but 451 people in the district. Thus the security available is very much reduced. Consequently seeing that the Bill is practically an amendment of the Trustees Act, it would be well within the

duty of the Government to introduce provisions for limitations of such a description. There is another instance affecting the Southern Cross district. There was a municipality there some years ago and it was decided to raise a loan to purchase an electric lighting plant. The municipality rapidly declined and eventually a proposal was introduced to incorporate the district in the Yilgarn Road Board area. That was done but before the incorporation could take place, a vote of the ratepayers in the district had to be taken as to what was to be done regarding the liabilities contracted by the Southern Cross municipality. The only condition under which the people of the outlying districts would agree to the move being made was that the loan and the charges in connection with it should be borne by the ward affected by the loan where it was raised. This illustration shows the necessity for some such provision and I commend that point to the notice of the Minister.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.40]: The Bill will be a boon to all sound road boards. The fact that the Minister has power through the columns of the "Government Gazette" to nominate the members of such boards, is sufficient security for the trustees to invest their funds in road board loans. The very fact that the Minister guarantees the boards to the extent of issuing their names in the "Government Gazette" implies that both the Minister and the Government are concerned, in the event of anything going wrong with a road board district. In such an event the Minister for Works would take over the business and liabilities of the board and see that the ratepayers met their obligation. Before anything were done as suggested by Mr. Hamersley, a trustee would naturally see that his interests were safeguarded. The very fact that the Minister has to appoint the members of the board places the Government in the position of having to stand behind such boards when loans are raised.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.42]: The Bill largely widens the powers of investors as set out in the Trustees Act. Local authorities are limited to investments that depend on securities charged on the property of any municipality. Now it is proposed to extend that power to enable trust funds to be invested in debentures of any road board or road district. That is a beneficial provision for the local authorities concerned, but the trustees are charged with serious responsibilities in connection with the investment of trust funds. They have to be satisfied before investing trust funds that the investment is a sound one and that the district raising a loan is likely to be in a position to pay interest and other charges, and ultimately pay the principal.

Hon. H. Seddon: That should be made an obligation.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: I contend it is an obligation under the Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There are some trustees who do not exercise that wise precaution that one might expect such men to evidence. For the purpose of extending some measure of protection, I think the limitations referred to by Mr. Seddon in connection with the provisions of the Trustees Act in the Old Country are most commendable and well worthy of consideration by the Government before the Bill passes. I am in sympathy with our road boards and would give them every facility that the municipalities have; indeed I would place some limitation on investments in municipalities; because when trustees have a free hand to invest in road board or municipalities' stocks, without some safeguard as contained in the Trustees Act of Great Britain, there is a grave risk. It is only right that some protection of the sort should be provided in the Bill, for it affects not only the road board but also our children who are to come after us, and whose heritage may be unwisely invested by our trustees. We should seek to safeguard that position while at the same time helping the road boards. I suggest that some member move the adjournment of the debate with a view to allowing us a little more time for consideration of the Bill.

On motion by Hon. G. W. Miles, debate adjourned.

BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 18th September.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.48]: The Bill of last session will be fresh in our minds. The one before us calls for sympathetic consideration inasmuch as it provides protection for life and limb. At the same time it is not exactly the Bill we had last session. That of last session contained provisions for exempting scaffolding of not more than 8 feet from the horizontal base. For some reason that has been omitted from the Bill before us. Moreover, I have yet to learn that either the workers or the people generally have asked for the Bill. Already sufficient protection is afforded by the local authorities in their inspections of plans and of buildings. The Bill will mean considerable additional expense to be borne by those desirous of building homes for themselves. I do not see any necessity for having special protection for scaffolding less than 8 feet in height from the horizontal base. When in Committee I will move an amendment devised to exempt scaffolds up to that height.

Again, usually scaffolding is the work of experienced men who are in a position to know even more about it than do the inspectors. Moreover, the Bill provides that a certain type of scaffolding shall be erected. At present in cottage work scantlings and floorings are used for scaffolding purposes and are afterwards taken into the construction of the building itself. If special planks have to be cut for scaffolding, it will mean unnecessary expense to be borne by owners of the building. Of course on buildings of several storeys some protection should be afforded. During the last 20 years we have had but very few scaffolding accidents, and those only of a minor nature. The recent fatality in Forrest-place, of course, should have been prevented under the Inspection of Machinery Act; it had no relation to a Bill such as this. Every necessary precaution is being observed by the contractors for the safety of their employees, and, of course, in their own interests. The Bill will increase building costs in more ways than one, for it provides for the making of regulations, some of which will impose fees. When in Committee I will move the insertion of a new clause providing that before the regulations are brought into force they shall bear the imprimatur of both Houses of Parliament. By that means we shall ensure that the regulations are not too harsh. Should the regulations be brought into operation while Parliament is in recess, and should they be disallowed by Parliament, the disallowance could be made retrospective. I am not in favour of the provision giving power to the inspector to suspend work for seven days while the contractors appeal to the magistrate. This seems to me absurd. The magistrate would know nothing about building construction.

Hon. E. H. Gray: He would be guided by experts.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: It would be much better to appoint a board of three to deal with this instead of leaving it to the magistrate.

Hon. E. H. Gray: More fees!

Hon. J. DUFFELL: One member of the board should be a member of the Builders and Contractors' Association. This would save trouble and would bring expert knowledge to bear on the matter under consideration. However, the Bill is one for consideration in Committee and I think we might well pass the second reading.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE (Metropolitan) [5.58]: Like Mr. Duffell, I am on the side of the protection of life and limb, but I hold that any and every Bill should be justified by its sponsors. So far nothing has happened in respect of scaffolding that would necessitate the Bill, and the setting up of a department to control scaffolding. On investigation I find that during the past 20 years we have had but very few scaffold accidents and those of only a minor nature, and frequently attributable to the workmen themselves, over whom no Act would have any control. So it seems to me the Bill will merely harass the building trade and increase building costs. The Governor's Speech informed us that the Municipal Corporations Act is to be amended. As the municipalities have control over the plans, specifications, and supervision of buildings I do not see why arrangements cannot be made to entrust the work of scaffolding inspection to them. This is another reason why the Bill is not required. If the measure passes the second reading, I cannot approve of the proposal that the Act shall have effect in such parts as the Governor-in-Council may define as districts for the purposes of the Act. If we agree to that, we may as well adopt the obnoxious provisions of the measure of last session, to which representatives of rural districts took such great exception. They said it would be impossible to build a haystack unless there was an inspector of scaffolding to see it done. Dealing with small buildings in and around the city, one can understand how difficult it would be for contractors to carry on under this measure. They are constantly changing their scaffolding, and it would be necessary for them, after moving the scaffolding from one part of the building to another, to await a visit by the inspector before the workmen could use it.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not the experience in other States.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: But that is the power proposed to be given under this measure.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The builder could not use his joists for scaffolding.

Hon. J. M. MACFARLANE: I am advised by the trade that the workmen who build the scaffolding are given carte blanche. They have the right to reject any pole, plank or rope submitted for use. I have been looking at some of the large buildings, and the scaffolding there seems to be the safest. Specially selected men of experience are entrusted with this work, and they take no risks. That is proved by the freedom from accident during the last twenty years. Clause 2 defines "gear" as including any hoist, crane, or conveyer. Those things do not come within the category of scaffolding gear. Scaffolding is erected inside or outside a building to enable workmen to carry out their work, but hoists, cranes and conveyers come under the Inspection of Machinery Act, and should be dealt with by the Machinery Department. As there has been no demand for this measure I am prepared to vote against the second reading, but should it reach Committee I shall do my best to secure the amendment of some of the vicious clauses that are liable to create difficulty and increase building costs.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [6.5]: It is not necessary for me to speak at length on this Bill seeing that last session I fought hard to get the Council to pass a somewhat similar measure, introduced by the Government of which I was a member. A very determined fight then resulted in the Bill being thrown out. It may be argued that this Bill is somewhat more drastic than that of last year. If it be so, it is within our power to remedy that in Committee, but to the principle of the Bill we should all be able to agree. Mr. Macfarlane spoke of there being no demand for such legislation, and said there had been no serious accidents to justify it. If I remember rightly, there was an accident in Forrest-place a few months ago.

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: That was not a scaffolding accident.

Hon. J. EWING: It was an accident that should have been avoided. A bolt was defective, and the breaking of that bolt cost a man his life.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That comes under the Inspection of Machinery Act.

Hon. J. EWING: But had we had a scaffolding Act, no doubt the inspector in the course of his duty would have discovered that defective bolt.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No.

Hon. J. EWING: I do not think any member can conscientiously vote against the principle of the Bill—the safeguarding of the lives of the workers. Mr. Macfarlane said the measure was not called for, but Mr. Dodd, who is one of the fairest men in the House, said there was another accident, due to the absence of scaffolding inspection, not long ago. Thus, since the previous Bill was before us, there is evidence of the need for such legislation. I hope members will reconsider their decision of last session and agree to the second reading, and thus show the people that they desire to safeguard the men who work on scaffolds. We have legislation to safeguard the miners, and no one can tell me that it is not necessary to have inspection of the scaffolding used on the big buildings being erected in Perth. Some magnificent buildings are being constructed in the city, and although contractors do look after the scaffolding, I think they would like to be relieved of the responsibility by having it inspected, as is proposed under this measure. The cost would not be great. In New Zealand, Queensland, and other parts of Australasia where similar legislation is operating, there are very few inspectors. I understood the Minister to say that the measure will be applied only to the metropolitan area for the time being. Yet members talk about inspection for building a haystack. It is all rubbish.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Does the Bill say that?

Hon. J. EWING: We must trust the Government to administer the law in the interests of the people. They have no desire to harass those in the building trade. Their desire is to protect life and limb, and surely we should support them in that desire. I could not salve my conscience if I voted against the second reading, and members representing the country districts should not hesitate to support it. No sane Government would apply the measure to country districts unless the circumstances warranted it. If, in a country district, buildings of three or four storeys were erected, surely it would be only reasonable to apply the measure to that district! It is monstrous to argue that because the Government have the power to proclaim the Act throughout the State, they will exercise the power. The previous Government had no intention of extending the measure to the country districts, and I do not think the present Government intend to do so, either. Though I shall support the second reading, in Committee I shall probably suggest some amendments.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—NOXIOUS WEEDS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 3rd September.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [7.32]: I support the second reading, and congratulate the Government on the introduction of the measure, and also on the spirit of equity which permeates the provisions of the measure throughout. Previous Bills dealing with pests of various descriptions have aimed at penalising the private landowner, while exempting Crown lands and railway lands in every part of the State. But under this Bill the responsibility of carrying out the duties imposed is cast upon the municipalities and road boards, and with regard to railway lands the measure provides that the Commissioner of Railways must eradicate noxious weeds. Further, the Bill provides that as regards Crown lands within one mile of settlement the Government shall be responsible for the eradication of weeds. As to road boards, under this Bill they must eradicate weeds on highways before proceeding to interfere with private owners. One clause with which I desire to deal particularly is No. 21, which was introduced into the Bill, I understand, at the request of the executive of the Pastoralists' Association. However, a new executive have come into power since, and they see the danger of the clause as I see it. Having discussed the matter with the Minister, I think the clause can be amended so as to meet the necessities of the case.

Hon. J. Cornell: It should be easily adjusted.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Yes. As a fact, I have agreed with the Minister that I shall first confer with the Agricultural Department and arrive with them at what will be a fair thing, and that thereupon the Crown Law Department will draft the necessary amendment. The clause reads—

> (1) All stock brought into the State from elsewhere shall, immediately on being landed at the port of disembarkation or crossing the border, or if consigned for carriage by the Trans-Australian line at Kalgoorlie, be received into the custody of a Government inspector and by him kept in strict quarantine until he is satisfied that they are entirely free from the seeds of noxious weeds. (2) In the case of sheep the inspector shall keep them in quarantine until shorn, unless the Minister is satisfied that such sheep are intended for exhibition purposes and exempts them from the provisions of this measure.

What the framers of that provision had in view was the keeping of the seeds of noxious weeds from being distributed, as was claimed to have happened, through the wool. However, the clause will not get over the difficulty. Firstly, in order to improve our flocks it is necessary not only for owners to import high-class rams and ewes, but for Eastern breeders to bring their stock here for exhibition purposes, and for sale after exhibition. One sees the difficulty which arises. People in the sheep trade know that no one will purchase a ram of any description unless he sees it in the wool. It is not the carcase of the animal that matters so much, but the wool which the animal produces. The buyer wants to see the ram, or or that matter the ewe, in its wool before he purchases. The clause would permit the exhibitor to bring the sheep here, but after having exhibited them he would have to take them away. If he brought them here shorn, no one would buy them. I respectfully point out that it is not the sheep in the wool that introduces seeds. A shorn sheep is more likely to pick up seeds than a long-wool sheep. It is when the sheep are shorn and turned out on the pasture, when the hard carcase lies on the ground, that the seeds of noxious weeds are driven into the skin. We have had experience of this. The Stock Branch of the Agricultural Department once issued a regulation that sheep should be dipped for lice and tick. In dry areas, however, the lice and tick drop off and die. The experience has been that owing to the various regulations many squatters have been burdened with difficulties, not as regards the destruction of lice and tick, but because of the amount of seed that the dipping took out of the wool of the shorn sheep. Sheep are generally dipped a month or so after being shorn; and after they have gone through the dip it is necessary to have a body of men—this is my experience—skinning off the seeds and the rubbish taken out of the wool while the sheep passed through the dip. Therefore a lot of us have been converted to dipping, not for the sake of destruction of lice and tick, but for the improvement of the wool, for the sake of the removal of the rubbish the dipping takes out of a sheep recently shorn. The clause provides that imported sheep shall be kept in quarantine until shorn, but makes no reference to shorn sheep arriving here. High-class sheep are bound to come here in the wool, but someone might go over to the Eastern States and buy off the shears a couple of thousand ewes, which he sees before they are shorn. That sort of consignment really is likely to spread the seeds of noxious weeds all over the State. The clause might well be equitably amended so as to meet the case. I notice that the interpretation of "Minister" is "Minister for Agriculture, and includes any responsible Minister of the Crown." This definition raises the question whether or not we have irresponsible Ministers of the Crown.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We have had some.

Hon. J. Cornell: This is an innovation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The interpretation raises the question whether Honorary Ministers are responsible or not. Certainly it impresses on my mind the thought that we may have had or may have irresponsible Ministers. Clause 11 provides for the allocation of the expense of destruction of noxious weeds between the owner and the occupier through the medium of regulation. To me it seems that the matter is one for common law, and not to be fixed by regulation. Clause 12 provides that if any landowner prevents or obstructs an official from coming on to the premises to see about noxious weeds, the official may get a document signed by any justice of the peace. Well, we have in this State irresponsible as well as responsible justices of the peace. The next-door neighbour may be an irresponsible justice, and so the clause may have far reaching effects. Clause 28 provides that the Minister may appoint commissioners for the purposes of the Bill—

> When, in the opinion of the Minister, any local authority is not carrying out or exercising its powers or duties under this Act efficiently, the Minister may appoint a commissioner to exercise the powers of the local authority under this Act.

I would have objected to that provision but for the fact that I have lately been serving on a Royal Commission inquiring into one of our road boards, and that I now recognise the necessity that may arise for a commissioner to step in and see that justice is done in connection with the ordinary administration of road boards. I regard the innovation as a wise one.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [7.43]: I recognise the great need for this Bill, because it is important that full power should be given to deal with noxious weeds. A little time ago I had the opportunity of reading something about the difficulties that have been caused in Queensland through the spreading of certain noxious weeds. Prickly pear is the one weed which apparently is causing a great deal of trouble and of loss to Queensland. The figures which were quoted in the article I read indicate that many million acres of Crown land in Queensland are now out of use because of the presence of prickly pear.

Hon. J. Ewing: Four million acres.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Very much more. According to the latest figures, the area which is densely affected with prickly pear amounts to 10,419,650 acres. In scattered areas the figures are 13,760,802, making a total of 24,179,707 acres. Those are the figures for this year and one can realise how rapid has been the growth of this particular weed which was originally introduced for some beneficial or ornamental purpose.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: And yet we are always asked why we do not follow the example of Queensland?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: In 1913 the area densely infected with that weed was 3,582,374 acres, while in scattered areas the figures were 12,224,055 acres, making a total of 15,806,429 acres, a difference of between eight and nine million acres.

Hon. J. Cornell: The chief cause of the spread of that weed in Queensland is the good quality of the soil.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: At any rate I hope that the weed will not be introduced here, and I certainly think every precaution should be taken to see that it is not introduced.

Hon. J. Cornell: It thrives on good land only.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The figures I have quoted show that the area brought under this pest was equal to 837,328 acres per annum, or 2,300 acres per day. The Lands Commission in Queensland have been dealing with the matter for a long time, and they are still seeking to cope with what seems almost an insurmountable difficulty. If we in Western Australia can do something to prevent such a terrible devastation as has been the case in Queensland we shall accomplish some good, At the same time we must see that the measures we carry out are just and equitable. It has occurred to me that Clause 15 may work rather harshly. It provides that an attorney or agent of an owner who is absent from the State shall be deemed to represent his principal in respect of any land owned by that principal, and that the local authority may treat such attorney as the principal and shall be personally liable. I suggest that that is hardly a fair proposition in regard to one who is merely acting as the agent of an absent owner. It is quite possible that an owner on going away may leave his property in the care of an attorney and that the attorney may not have been provided with funds for the purpose of carrying out the work required of him under the Bill. Suppose that a principal, having left the State without making that provision, and during his absence has lost what money he possessed, then the agent by reason of his having assumed the duty of agent is to be visited with the penalties provided by the measure.

Hon. G. W. Miles: How are you going to obviate that?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: By providing that he shall be required to carry out any notices served upon him to the extent of any moneys he may have in hand belonging to his principal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And if he has no money will you allow the weeds to grow?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If an owner neglected to carry out the requirements of the Act, the local authority would have power to step in. If they have not the power, they should get the power to attach the property for any failure on the part of the owner to repay any amount that may have been expended by the local authority in carrying out themselves the notices they have served.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who will reimburse the local authority?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The local authority will be in exactly the same position as they would be with regard to their rates if those rates were not paid. The local authority in such a case simply puts the land up for sale. It is only right, if an owner goes away and leaves an agent unprovided with funds, that there should be some power such as that given to local authorities to carry out necessary work and to attach the land.

Hon. A. Burvill: You mean that the cost of eradication should fall on the land?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The position would be that the land would be charged with the cost of eradicating the weeds. Why should an agent who has merely assumed the duty of attorney for an absent owner, be visited with the cost of carrying out this work? Under Clause 15 the agent is made personally responsible.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Frame an amendment to that effect.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I shall do so. I agree with what Mr. Holmes said with regard to Clause 21. I intend to support the second reading, and in Committee will suggest amendments which I think will have the effect of improving the measure and make it beneficial for the State.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [7.55]: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, because I consider it necessary that there should be such a measure on the statute book. When the Bill reaches the Committee stage I intend to suggest amendments to several

clauses. I am in accord with what Mr. Holmes said with regard to Clause 21, and particularly Subclause 2 of that clause, relating to sheep being shorn in quarantine unless the Minister is satisfied that such sheep are intended for exhibition purposes. Let me refer to a position that might arise with regard to stud stock. A pastoralist may bring across 20 or 30 stud sheep from the Eastern States, and according to this measure, the sheep would have to be inspected at the port of disembarkation and be shorn. Hon. members will see how unjust that procedure might be towards the purchaser. The sheep may be shorn immediately after arrival, and then possibly put into trucks and railed 400 or 500 miles in cold weather to their destination. By the time they reach their destination the sheep may have contracted cold and died. Imagine the loss to the pastoralist! The clause should be amended so that the sheep would be kept under inspection until such time as the authorities considered they were clean and could be railed to their destination. The proposed procedure will be a serious drawback to the pastoralist who is endeavouring to improve his herds, and for that reason I should like to see an amendment carried. One thing that appeals to me more than another in connection with the Bill is the part that the Government should play regarding the keeping clean of Crown lands through which roads pass. It is a moral impossibility for farmers and local authorities to keep their lands clean if nothing is done on Crown lands by the Government and the railway authorities. There are many seeds that are carried for miles by the wind, and my opinion is that the distance provided in the Bill, one mile from cultivated land, is not sufficient. The distance should be greater. I travel a good deal about the country and I have passed through miles of territory owned by the Government on which noxious weeds are growing prolifically. It is impossible for the farmers and local authorities to keep their lands clean unless the Government set an example. This is a very important matter indeed. I who deal largely in farm produce, know from experience that noxious weeds are getting a serious hold in Western Australia and something should be done quickly, otherwise in the space of a few years, the bulk of our produce such as hay, will be of very poor quality owing to noxious weeds. But the Government should be the first to move and play their part in connection with the eradication of noxious weeds, otherwise it will be useless for the farmers or local authorities to succeed in whatever efforts they may make.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: This Bill provides for that.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: Up to within only a mile of cultivated land. Land that is 10 miles away to-day from cultivated land may, in the near future, be within half a mile of it. I do not know whether the double-gee is classed as a noxious weed, but I know it is worse than most weeds of that description. A few years ago, during the war, there was a shortage of straw and hay. Compressed straw was needed at the breweries, where it was used for packing, and was required by the racing people for bedding. Many tons of what was supposed to be good compressed straw came down from the Northam district, and a lot of it found its way to Belmont, where so many stables are. When the bales were opened it was found that it could not be used for the horses. They lay down on it once, but never again, because the presence of double-gees made it impossible for it to be used. At the breweries also it was impossible to use the straw for packing, and the whole lot was ultimately destroyed. The double-gee is a prolific grower, and in a wet season it will grow up the stalks of wheat nearly as high as the wheat itself. We must have a Noxious Weeds Act, and the Government must do their share with the road boards and the farmers in eradicating such weeds. Mr. Nicholson referred to the prickly pear in Queensland. This plant covers an increasing area of good land every year, but even in that State there is a diversity of opinion regarding it. About two years ago I attended a conference in Queensland of the associated Chambers of Commerce. When we came to deal with the prickly pear several Queensland members opposed the eradication of all the species, contending that there was one kind softer than the others and that made good feed in times of drought. Most of the members of the conference, however, were in favour of eradicating the prickly pear, which covers a very wide area of good land. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [8.3]: I support the Bill. Under its provisions the local authorities will have a little more power than they have under the present Act. Sometimes people will not carry out the instructions of the local authority, and its power has been questioned when it has attempted to enforce its orders. In many cases a local authority has had difficulty in recovering costs if it has employed men to eradicate what is presumed to be a noxious weed. The double-gee, referred to by Mr. Stephenson, is in this State what the prickly pear is in Queensland. The double-gee is certainly troublesome, but has been regarded in many cases as a useful product. Bicycle riders meet with some difficulty because of it.

Hon. J. Cornell: And so do people with bare feet.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Cyclists overcome the difficulty by placing a piece of wire across the forks of their machines, which has the effect of pulling the double-gees off as the wheels revolve. It is a useful plant in many ways. The Act contains the names of many so-called noxious weeds,

and at the instance of the department or the local authorities thousands of pounds have been spent in trying to eradicate them. No one complains much about stinkwort. Right up to the fences of some properties stinkwort grows in abundance, but if sheep are being carried it causes no trouble because they eat it during the summer, and derive a good deal of nutriment from it. If the neighbouring paddock is not stocked probably the plant will take possession. A farmer who intends to put in a crop, but carries no sheep, may denounce it as a noxious weed, but it is not so to the man who does carry stock. The same thing applies to other plants. Near the township of Toodyay there is growing what is called salvation Jane. This was placed on the noxious weeds list of South Australia, where it is known as Paterson's curse.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is one of the best fodders in Australia.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: It has now been removed from that list, being regarded as one of our most valuable fodders.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is also taken out of the New South Wales Act.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: There are several types of star thistle, and many attempts have been made to eradicate it. This, too, has been looked upon as a useful plant, and has been taken off the list of noxious weeds in the Eastern States, though it remains on the Western Australian list. It is astonishing how often we are able to find virtue in the ills under which we thought we were suffering in the past. This Bill is certainly an improvement on the Act we now have. I will support members who wish to amend it with regard to sheep imported in the wool. A great deal of harm can occur to valuable sheep if they are shorn at the port of disembarkation and sent to their destinations in open trucks. Although the sheep may not die on the way, their vitality and usefulness may be impaired by the treatment accorded to them. The difficulty could be overcome if they were shorn on arrival at their destination. The Bathurst burr can be very destructive and very harmful, and carries very readily in wool. It does not, however, readily fall out of it.

Hon. J. Cornell: It cannot be combed out.

Hon V. HAMERSLEY: There should be some stipulation by which the sheep brought into the State in the wool could be shorn on arrival at their destination. With these alterations I think the measure will meet with approval, and I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [8.10]: I rise in consequence of the remarks made by Mr. Hamersley. This Bill may cause a good deal of irritation to settlers. No fewer than four clauses provide for the making of regulations. I strongly object to government by regulation, and am with the Labour Party in that respect.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: When they are in opposition.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It does not matter whether they are in opposition or not.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: That is when they object to regulations.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: In justice to them I would say they are always the same, whereas some of the other parties are not. Clauses 5, 6 and 30 provide that the Governor may make regulations, and Clause 26 provides that the local authorities may make all sorts of regulations and fix fees.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Under Clause 11 they decide the responsibility between the owner and the occupier by regulation.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: A good deal of irritation and possible injustice may be caused to settlers by these local bodies making regulations. Settlers may be put to a great deal of unnecessary expense by some local authority taking an extraordinary view of a particular noxious weed.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It is a nice scheme for getting even with a neighbour.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: We should endeavour to avoid piling up the costs in these matters. Clause 11 provides that recourse shall be had to a judge in Chambers. It then goes on to say that the money may be recovered in any court of summary jurisdiction. Why should a settler outback have to go to a judge in Chambers and incur this unnecessary cost? Surely the stipendiary magistrate of the district could deal with the matter just as easily as a judge, and save this cost. I support the Bill, but must leave it to other members who know more about the matter, to make those amendments that may appear necessary.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [8.13]: The Bill is essentially one for Committee. Mr. Hamersley is to be complimented upon the excellent speech he has made. The prevention by eradication of noxious weeds should not only be encouraged but enforced. In the early days of settlement in the Eastern States many weeds, as Mr. Hamersley pointed out, were classed as noxious, but with the advancement of settlement, and the aggregation of stock, many of these so-called weeds have proved a blessing in disguise. We should profit by that experience. The only danger likely to arise will be through the zeal of the inspectors themselves. I remember when Paterson's curse was regarded as a noxious weed in New South Wales, but the reason for that was that it grew on country that had not been stocked up. With the advent of dairying in the Wagga and other districts it was found that towards the end of summer and when drought conditions prevailed, Paterson's curse was a blessing in disguise. Then again, the star thistle grew on the best land, and in the driest periods of the year cattle and sheep consumed the whole of

the thistle when it was dried off. We must be guided by the Administration and we will find that as the country becomes more and more stocked, many of what are considered noxious weeds now will be a blessing rather than a curse. As to the eradication of double-gees, I do not know how that can be accomplished. In my opinion a start should be made with the municipalities and in the larger towns, for it is to those centres that the farmer has to look for the spread of weeds to his holdings. I think the Minister will agree to an amendment in Committee regarding the clause affecting the importation of stud sheep. Breeders in the Eastern States pride themselves not only upon the condition of their valuable stud sheep, but upon the surroundings where the sheep are grown. Such growers would not dream of permitting noxious weeds to exist on the paddocks where the sheep were running. Farmers purchasing stock need have no fear that the sheep would carry seeds of noxious weeds. I hope the Bill will be amended in one or two directions. The success or otherwise of such legislation also depends upon the activities of the Government in keeping Crown lands free from noxious weeds. If all parties are alive to the position the passage of the Bill will be of benefit to Western Australia.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [8.21]: I am pleased with the consideration given to the Bill, for the speeches of hon. members have demonstrated that the House is in accord with the principles of the measure. Objection may be raised to some of the clauses, but those objections can be met in Committee. I shall not attempt to rush the Bill through, but shall agree to sufficient time elapsing to enable members to frame such amendments as they may deem necessary. In view of the importance of the measure, I shall postpone the consideration of clauses from time to time if necessary. I have already arranged with Mr. Holmes to interview the officers of the Agricultural Department regarding Clause 21, and later to confer with the Crown Solicitor. That clause was inserted to meet the wishes of the pastoralists. At the time that wish was expressed the executive of the Pastoralists' Association was slightly different from the executive of to-day, but in January, 1923, the secretary of the association wrote to the Director of Agriculture as follows:—

> I desire to thank you on behalf of my executive for your attendance at our meeting on the 23rd instant in connection with the important matter of the prevention of the introduction of noxious weeds and insects per medium of sheep coming into this State from the Eastern States in the wool, and asking for an expression of opinion from members of this association as to what measures should be taken by the Government to protect the State from such pests introduced in this manner. After a full discussion, represented by members of all parts of the State, it was generally agreed by my executive that something on the following lines should be laid down by the Government:—(1) That all sheep (other than sheep for exhibition purposes) arriving from the Eastern States, either by rail or sea, should be shorn at point of disembarkation. (2) The points of disembarkation would be—by sea, Fremantle, Albany; by rail, Kalgoorlie, or any point on main trunk line.

Since then it has been discovered that that suggestion hardly meets the position, and an amendment to the clause affected is necessary. I shall give ample opportunity for that to be done. The point raised by Mr. Nicholson regarding Clause 15 also merits consideration. That clause throws on the attorney personally the responsibility for clearing a holding. It seems unfair to thrust such a financial responsibility that might easily run into a few hundred pounds, on to the attorney, and I shall consult the Crown Solicitor as to what the clause really means, and state the facts to the House.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 17th September.

Hon. A. BURVILL (South-East) [8.25]: I support the second reading of the Bill. After hearing the conflicting statements of hon. members who have spoken I deemed it my duty to look into the principles of the Bill and to ascertain if I could find proof that the Bill was wanted. Two points have to be considered; the suitability of land for closer settlement near railways, and, in the second place, the demand for such legislation. In considering the first point I secured statistics from the Railway Department showing the mileage and population in this and other States. I find that in New South Wales there are 411 men, women and children for every mile of railway; in Victoria, there are 364 men, women and children for every mile of railway, and in the other States the number of people per mile of railway is as follows: Tasmania, 332; South Australia, 217; Queensland, 134; Western Australia, 94. I also find that in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia they have extensive waterways, and in Tasmania the coastal areas provide facilities for transport as well. In Western Australia the Midland Railway Company's line, which extends for 277 miles, and the Commonwealth railway from Kalgoorlie to the border, another 400 miles, have not been taken into consideration. Those two railways would bring Western Australia's total down to 90 men,

women and children per mile of railway. If we consider that 46 per cent. of the population of the State live in Perth, it will be readily seen why we have so few people for every mile of railway in Western Australia. During the course of his speech Mr. Stewart inferred that there was no good land available in large estates. In the course of his speech he said:

> The Leader of the House the other day told us that for years the country had been calling for closer settlement. He did not give us proof of that; it was simply a statement.

The Palingup Estate in the Great Southern is a successful soldier settlement, and everyone there is doing well. On the other hand, Mr. Holmes stated that there is plenty of Crown land if the people would only go out and look for it, instead of going to the Trades Hall and all the rest of it.

Hon. J. Ewing: Where are they to go to find it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: That is what I want to find out. It is of no use going in for closer settlement unless we have means of transport, either by rail or by water. In the South-West it is particularly necessary, because the produce there grown is far more bulky than that in the wheat belt. I know of one man who grew 42 tons of potatoes on four acres of land. He was within a mile of the railway station and therefore it paid him to grow potatoes. There is equally good land in the group settlements out from Denmark towards Nornalup. But the settlers there are 26 miles from the railway and until the railway goes out to them it will be impossible for those settlers to make potatoes pay. I notice that the Minister for Lands has decided that there shall be no further groups put out there. I do not blame him, because until the railway goes there, the settlers cannot hope to make good. The same thing may be said of wheat. It is agreed that if a man is more than 12½ miles from a railway, wheat growing will not pay him. During the last few days I have been down to Newdegate. The settlers there are growing wheat 35 miles from a railway. They waited on the Minister and asked him to provide transport facilities for them. I wish to prove the demand there is for land. I know a returned soldier whose land was forfeited during his absence from the State. On his return from the war he wanted to go wheat farming. On several occasions he got me to help him in his search for suitable land. He applied for a number of blocks, but was always turned down, presumably because he was a single man. I met him the other day working as a yardman in a hotel on the Great Southern, and on inquiry I found that he had abandoned his quest for land. He was disgusted.

Hon. J. Ewing: He deserved the land.

Hon. A. BURVILL: For information as to the number of applicants for land I went round to the Lands Department and made inquiries. As a result the following list of applicants for land has been compiled:—

Repurchased estates: McKenna's estate; about 4 miles from Lake Grace, 4 holdings from 999 to 1,991 acres; 38 applicants, April, 1923. Buckland Estate, near Northam, adjoining Burke's Siding, 15 holdings, from 40 to 352 acres, 48 applicants, May, 1923. Buckland Lot 6, 163 acres, Burke's Siding; 7 applicants, May, 1924. Roseholme Estate, 2 miles from Muckinbudin, 8 blocks—994 to 1,000 acres, 53 applicants, May, 1923. Buckland Estate, adjoining Burke's Siding, lot No. 4, 277 acres, 9 applicants, July, 1923. Dardanup Estate, adjoining to 2½ miles from Dardanup, 10 blocks, from 48 to 70 acres, 16 applicants, July, 1923. Inering Estate, about 5½ miles from Carnamah, 15 blocks, from 683 to 1,176 acres, 90 applicants, February, 1923.

Crown lands, Newdegate; about 36 miles from Lake Grace, 30 locations from 1,000 to 1,600 acres, 91 applicants, August, 1922. Jilbadji Location 29, 11 miles from Burracoppin, 998 acres, 10 applicants, September, 1922. Yilgarn Locations (4), from 5 to 15 miles from Walgoolan, 15 locations—from 900 to 1,000 acres, 103 applicants, October, 1922. Roe locations (2), about 21 miles from Narembeen, 1,000 acres each, 25 applicants, October, 1922, Avon locations (2); about 6 miles from Muckinbudin, 14 blocks, 879 to 1,497 acres, 60 applicants, April, 1923. Avon location 14327, 14 miles from Muckinbudin, 937 acres, 10 applicants, June, 1923. Yilgarn Location 466, 8 miles from Boddalin, 1,000 acres, 13 applicants, June, 1923. Westonia Sheet 6, from about 10 to 25 miles north of Burracoppin, 26 locations from 640 to 1,000 acres, 65 applicants, July, 1923. Yilgarn locations 174 and 197, 9½ miles from Walgoolan, 999 acres each, 33 applicants, August, 1923. Yilgarn Location 264, 4 miles from Yerbillon, 1,000 acres, 18 applicants, September, 1923. Avon Location 14030, 15 miles north of Burracoppin, 921 acres, 11 applicants, October, 1923. Roe locations, 56 at Newdegate, 40 miles from Lake Grace, 1,006 acres, 25 applicants, October, 1923. Avon Location 22720, 6 miles from Muckinbudin, 1,386 acres, 17 applicants, October, 1923. Yilgarn Location 146, 5½ miles from Carrabin, 925 acres, 42 applicants, November, 1923. Avon location 15980, 25 miles from Nungarin, 11 applicants, 771 acres, December, 1923. Avon Location 15982, 20½ miles from Burracoppin, 995 acres, 13 applicants, January, 1924. Ninghan Locations (2), 12 miles from Muckinbudin, 1,000 acres each, 27 applicants, December, 1923. Yilgarn Locations (2), 6 blocks, adjoining to 6 miles from Noongar; 1,000 to 1,300 acres, 35 applicants, January, 1924. Avon locations (2), about 12 miles from Muckin-

budin, 1,000 acres each, 30 applicants, February, 1924. Yilgarn Location 197, 8½ miles from Walgoolan, 999 acres, 44 applicants, March, 1924. Williams locations (2), 996 and 910 acres, 12 miles from Kulin, 17 applicants, April, 1924. Roe Location 404, 37½ miles from Lake Grace, 919 acres, 16 applicants, April, 1924. Yilgarn Locations (near Bullfinch), adjoining Bullfinch (3), from 770 to 1,000 acres, 29 applicants, April, 1924. Williams Locations (2), 11 miles from Gnarming, 2,000 acres, one holding, 23 applicants, April, 1924. Yilgarn Location 464, 4 miles from Boddalin, 1,155 acres, 33 applicants, May, 1924. Ninghan Locations (2), 15 miles from Beeubbin, 1,000 acres, one holding, 36 applicants, May, 1924. Williams Location 9934, 6½ miles from Harrismith, 790 acres 15 applicants. May, 1924. Avon Location 22721, 6 miles from Muckinbudin, 1,089 acres, 53 applicants, June, 1924. Yilgarn Location 191, 13 miles from Walgoolan, 982 acres, 57 applicants, June, 1924. Yilgarn Location 99, 4 miles from Boddalin, 1,000 acres, 36 applicants, July, 1924. Avon Location 20460, 4 miles from Booraan, 1,026 acres. 27 applicants, July, 1924. Avon locations (2), 1,000 and 999 acres, 66 applicants, July, 1924. Avon Location 22725, 4 miles from Muckinbudin, 1,420 acres, 43 applicants, July. 1924. Melbourne Locations (2), 9 miles from Damboring. 1,999 acres, one holding, 17 applicants, August, 1924.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Have these applicants any cash, or do they want the Government to finance them?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I will tell you about that presently. Just now my object is to show that there are plenty of applicants for land. The list continues:—

> Roe locations 199 and 200, 28 miles from Kondinin. 1,300 acres (one holding), 21 applicants, August 1924; Avon location 19528, 16 miles from Bendering, 1,000 acres. 92 applicants, August 1924; Roe location 476, 36 miles from Lake Grace, 1,011 acres, 41 applicants, August 1924; Victoria location 6222, three miles from Koolanooka, and Victoria location 6297, three and a-half miles from Bowgada, 941 acres each. 22 applicants, August 1924; Avon locations 15988 and 15990, 12 miles from Kalkalling, 1,660 acres (one holding), 20 applicants, September 1924.

I have adduced sufficient evidence to prove that there are plenty of men looking for land, and I have been asked whether they have any capital.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do not you think a percentage of them are already holding land?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not think so. The people who settled in the Lake Grace district some years ago are still there and are doing well. The people at Newdegate are 35 miles from a railway, and all they want is railway communication and a school. They are not desirous of leaving their holdings. Most of their homes have iron roofs and bag sides, but the people are quite content to battle away.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Are not they drawing their 10s. per day?

Hon. A. BURVILL: No. Here are the particulars of Avon location No. 19528:—

> Number of applicants, 92; number who appeared before a board or supplied declarations, 56; number with two or more years' local experience, 41; number with capital, 41.

Particulars of the capital possessed by the 41 applicants are:—

> One with £1,000; three with £800; one with £600; one with £535; one with £500; one with £400; one with £320; two with £300; one with £250; twelve with £200; three with £150; one with £120; five with £100; eight with less than £100.

Hon. J. Cornell: Which one got it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not know.

Hon. J. Cornell: I bet it was the one with the least money.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It must have been a good block.

Hon. A. BURVILL: I did not obtain particulars of the capital of every applicant, but I think the details are available at the Lands Office. I picked out another Avon block, locations Nos. 22808 and 22811, situated 18 miles from Narembeen. The particulars are:—

> Number of applicants, 66; number who appeared before a board or supplied declarations, 47; number with two or more years' local experience, 32; number with capital, 33.

Particulars of the capital possessed by the 33 applicants are:—

> One with £1,050; one with £900; one with £800; one with £750; one with £500; one with £400; two with £300; one with £275; one with £260; four with £200; three with £150; four with £100; and 12 with less than £100.

Hon. J. Cornell: You ought to have found out who got the block.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If those people cannot get land under a closer settlement Act or as a result of the Government building more railways, they will have to go to some other State, for apparently land is unavailable here, or there would not have been so many applicants for the one block. I consider we must have legislation to bring about closer settlement and I support the Bill. The measure, however, will require a good deal of improving. The principal objection I have to the Bill is the constitution of the board. Clause 2 sets out that the board shall consist of three members to be appointed by the Governor, one member to be an officer of the Lands Department, and one an officer of the Agricultural Bank. The third member is to be appointed from time to time and to be eligible for reappointment. One of the members of the board shall be appointed by the Governor as chairman. So

far as I can judge the board is to be a nominee board of the Government, and to those who own large estates, this will not be fair in more ways than one. In the first place, a board will not be required up to a certain stage. The Lands Purchase Act would meet all requirements for private treaty, so long as an owner was willing to sell. Perhaps after that a board might be necessary. If such a board were appointed I suggest that the owner of the land should be permitted to nominate one member, the Government should nominate another member, and the third member should be a magistrate or judge to adjudicate. It is not fair to ask Government officers to be the appointees of the Government that happen to be in power. If the Government appointed a member of the board as I have suggested, they could call upon the Surveyor General or the Manager of the Agricultural Bank to give all the necessary evidence as to certain land being required for closer settlement. The owner of the land could put his case, and the magistrate or judge could then settle the question. A board of that kind would be much fairer. I certainly object to the board as proposed. I directed the attention of the Colonial Secretary to the fact that there is no mention in the Bill of the minimum area of land to be acquired or the minimum price to be paid for it. Under Clause 3 it would be possible to take the smallest area. It might be necessary in the interests of workers' homes to resume small areas, but I do not think it is intended the Bill should cover that. At any rate there should be something definite on the point. The Bill provides that land shall be deemed unutilised and unproductive, notwithstanding that it is partially utilised or productive. This provision should be altered. What is unutilised and unproductive land within the meaning of Clause 4? I agree with other members that a man may be putting his land to good use, but he may not be putting it to the most productive use from the point of view of the railways in that he may not be producing enough freight. I know of wheat farms having been purchased and devoted to sheep. The purchasers are improving the grazing qualities of the land and are doing well with sheep, but they provide little freight for the railways. When an applicant for land inquires for a selection he cannot get this land, but has to go out 30 or 40 miles from a railway. Even then he cannot always get it. It would be better if another Bill were introduced to impose a tax on unimproved land values with the object of compelling large holders of land to help to pay for the cost of the railways. We have spent £20,000,000 in railway construction and about £800,000 has to be paid annually by way of interest by the users of the railways. When a man departs from wheat growing and takes on sheep grazing on a holding adjacent to a railway, the freight returns are diminished, and that man does not pay a share equal to what is paid by other users of the railway. Neither does the unused land in the city pay its share. If the Government imposed a tax of 4½d. in the pound on all unimproved land, there would be about 40 million pounds worth in the whole State. Of that more than one-third is in the metropolitan area, and the proceeds from such a tax would go a long way towards building fresh railways or reducing the freights on existing railways.

Hon. J. Ewing: That Bill is being brought down, is it not?

Hon. A. BURVILL: I do not know. As to land unutilised and unproductive, or only partially utilised and productive, there will be considerable difficulty in Committee in framing a just amendment to meet requirements. The only method I can see is to adopt a graduated land tax. According to the use to which a man puts his land, so should it be taxed.

Hon. V. Hamersley: What is the best use to which he can put it?

Hon. A. BURVILL: That should be left to the man himself. If he decided to utilise his land for sheep and his land was alongside a railway and capable of growing wheat, that man, at the present price of wool, could afford to pay a considerably higher land tax. The Bill of last session contained a provision for the payment of treble the amount of land tax by an owner who wished to be free from the operations of the measure. At that time I objected, and suggested that the tax should apply to all unused land, but my suggestion was not accepted. It appears to me that a tax on unimproved land offers the only way out of that difficulty.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about the extra income tax that is paid by a man who is doing well?

Hon. A. BURVILL: Clause 6 provides that a man can, if he chooses, cut up his land and sell it. I do not agree with the clause, for it contains no provision for the case of loss arising in the event of a man's inability to sell the land after he has cut it up. He might sell only a block here and there, representing the best of his land. The clause would frequently be found unworkable.

Hon. J. Ewing: Anyhow, it would be very difficult to apply.

Hon. A. BURVILL: Clause 7 deals with compensation. Where there is a mortgage, the debt is to be turned into compensation. That is a matter which wants clearing up. I am inclined to believe that if the Bill becomes law, then, before any land whatever is resumed, the banks will begin to move and close down on mortgagees. I do not know whether these are properly protected. Another objection I have to the Bill is that C.P. land is brought within its scope. I fail to see that a man should be working under a land-purchase contract

with the Government and have his land taken from him by an Act of Parliament before his contract is completed. C.P. land is taken up under certain restrictions, and subject to certain payments, and to conditions as to clearing, and improving. In my opinion it is unfair that another Act of Parliament should give the Government power to wipe out a time contract of that kind. It is too much like confiscation. I admit that after the contract has been completed, at the end of the 21 years, the man should be obliged to obtain his title. The case would be met by an amendment providing that C.P. lands shall not be interfered with until the term of the lease is up, and by a clause compelling the holder of C.P. land at the end of the 21 years to apply for the Crown grant, so that he shall not be able to evade this measure. As far as my limited experience goes, we have not had a measure which requires more amending than this one. From what I have seen of the Lands Department, from what I know of railway statistics, and from what I have observed in my travels, I am convinced that there is no measure more urgently needed in Western Australia to-day than a workable closer settlement Act. This is not the first Bill of the kind we have had before us. Such measures have been dealt with rather harshly by another place. Sometimes another place sends up to us a Bill that is not altogether a credit to another place.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member is out of order in referring thus to another place.

Hon. A. BURVILL: If I may, I should like to illustrate my meaning. An American cooper once went out west, worked there for some time, and then returned. He was asked how he had got on. His reply was, "I came back because there was too much repair work out there. A man would fetch a barrel to have staves put in, and sometimes to have hoops put on, and sometimes to have a head put in as well. But at last a man brought a bung-hole and wanted a barrel put round it." I consider this Bill to be little more than a name, and I have much pleasure in supporting its second reading.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.5 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 30th September, 1924.

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

QUESTION—SPAHLINGER TREATMENT.

Mr. LATHAM asked the Honorary Minister for Public Health: 1, Has the Spahlinger treatement for consumptives been tried in the Wooroloo Sanatorium? 2, If not, in view of the many reported cures in other parts of the world will he have a trial of the treatement made here?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister) replied: 1, No. 2, There is none of Spahlinger's serum available, but the Commonwealth Government is to be advised by the British Government when any further facts are available upon the subject. At the Imperial and Economic conferences a motion was submitted by Mr. Massey, Prime Minister of New Zealand, that a committee should be appointed to consider the question of M. Spahlinger's treatment. The Australian representatives on this committee were Senator Wilson and Sir Joseph Cook. The question was fully discussed with the medical officers of the British Government, after which an adjournment was made for three days, and M. Spahlinger was asked to be present to meet the committee. He, however, declined to attend. Finally, it was decided that the British authorities, on behalf of the countries represented, should take any necessary action at any time that M. Spahlinger could satisfy them in the matter. The position, therefore, is that the matter is being closely watched, and that the Commonwealth Government will be notified immediately any further information is available.

QUESTION—MOTOR ACCIDENTS METROPOLITAN AREA.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the total number of recorded accidents with petrol-propelled vehicles in the metropolis, including Fremantle, Midland Junction, and suburbs, for