of it and the reasons leading up to the introduction of this Bill. I stated at the outset that this was not a new industry. I was rather interested to find that we have records of whaling in Western Australia as far back as 1837. In that year, according to the "Perth Gazette" of June 10th, the first whale caught in Cockburn Sound on the Saturday before yielded fours tons of oil and whale bone. The carcase was brought into a jetty and cut up by the two companies concerned in the capture. Apparently in those early days at least two companies were operating here. On August 13th of the same year a whale killed a man just outside Arthur Head, Fremantle, while himself engaged in killing the animal. It is rather strange that one man should be engaged in killing a whale, and that it should in turn get the better of him. The "Perth Gazette" of August 13th, 1837, gives particulars of the various ships engaged in those days in the whaling industry. It quotes their tonnage, the highest being 460 tons and the lowest 220 tons. The quantity of oil secured ranged from a few gallons up to 2,100 gallons. A lot of interesting information is contained in those early newspapers. As the years have gone by, the value of the products derived from whales has considerably increased. I noticed one paragraph which appeared in the "Perth Gazette" of August 22nd, 1846, which is rather interesting. It says that 200 sperm whales in one school entered Geographe Bay on the 14th of that month, and that sperm whales in soundings was an occurrence seldom seen. Of these, 21 were captured. The whales that were killed were all small, but were worth something like £3,500. On the 16th August of that year a large white whale was caught at Bunbury, and on the 18th a hump-back whale was caught at Fremantle. A shark and a thrasher ate most of the hump off the whale while it was being towed in. Mr. Bateman, of Fremantle, killed the shark, which was 16ft. in length. The estimated returns for that season were 200 tons. I quote these few extracts to show that the whaling industry has been a valuable one, and that to-day with our up-to-date appliances we are able to capture more than were captured in those days. It will be realised from the figures I have quoted that this is one of the most valuable industries we have. The Bill is a protective one.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What is the royalty and what are the fees proposed?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Those will be fixed by regulation. I would suggest that the license fee should remain as at present, namely, £50, but that a royalty of £1 per whale should be sufficient to meet the case. At present there is no limit to the number of boats that may operate on behalf of the company that is now licensed. On that license fee the company may have one whaler or more. At present it is working four whalers, but the license fee remains at £50. The suggestion is not to increase that fee, but to add a royalty of £1 per whale caught. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

House adjourned at 5.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 4th September, 1928.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, notifying assent to the Financial Agreement Bill.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have nominated the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert), the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), and the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton), as temporary Chairmen of Committees for the present session.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC, MISS BRECKLER'S LICENSE.

Mr. MARSHALL asked the Minister for Works: 1, Was Miss Breckler, who caused a more or less serious motor car accident some considerable time ago at the intersection of Barrack and Murray Streets, prosecuted for a breach of the Traffic Act? 2, If not, at whose instigation and for what reason was prosecution withheld? 3, Did Miss Breckler continue to hold a driver's license from the date of the accident to the expiration of the year for which the license was issued? 4, Was the license renewed at the expiration of that year? 5, Is Miss Breckler still in possession of a driver's license? 6, If not, on what date was the license cancelled or forfeited?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. 2, Because after a very thorough investigation the Crown Law authorities advised that no offence had been committed against the Traffic Act and Regulations. 3, Yes; because there is no power to cancel same. 4, No; and the Commissioner of Police has issued instructions that in no circumstances is the license to be renewed. 5, No. 6, Answered by replies to Nos. 3 and 4.

QUESTION—FOOD AND DRUG REGULATIONS.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Health: When will the Food and Drug Regulations, 1929, published in the "Government Gazette" of 17th August, be laid on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: The Food and Drug Regulations, 1929, will be laid upon the Table of the House to-day.

QUESTION—STOCK, SALEYARD FEES.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: What was the total amount of fees collected on stock sold at Midland sale yards during the past twelve months?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: £4,627 8s. 4d.

QUESTIONS (2)—STATE SHIPPING SERVICE.

Misappropriation of Funds.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Minister for Agriculture: Is it intended to take any further action against D. C. Watts, of Darwin, for the recovery of the misappropriated funds of the State Shipping Service?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: The Crown Law Department advise that in April, 1919, judgment for debt and costs was entered in the Supreme Court at Perth for the State Shipping Department against D. C. Watts, who was domiciled in Darwin; that efforts to obtain satisfaction of the judgment were made unsuccessfully; and that in August, 1920, the matter was dropped with the approval of the Hon. Minister then controlling the State Shipping Department, because a solicitor in Darwin acting for the Government had advised that Watts was so hopelessly involved financially that there was no prospect of obtaining satisfaction of the judgment. Inquiries will be made as to Mr. Watts' present financial position, and when information is available the question of further action will be given consideration.

m.v. "Koolinda" and Shark Bay.

Mr. ANGELO asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Will he ascertain from the manager of the State Shipping Service why the motor vessel "Koolinda" failed to call at Shark Bay coming southward on the last trip? 2, Is he aware that the existence of the fish freezing works at that port is entirely dependent upon the "Koolinda" calling there regularly? 3, Did not the Minister promise the people of the North-West, through the member for Roebourne, quite recently, that in future the published timetable of the State Shipping Service would be strictly adhered to? 4, Why has this promise been broken already?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, The reasons for the omission of Shark Bay were: (a) the vessel was running behind schedule owing to bad weather at Fremantle in July, and the alteration enabled the ship to leave Fremantle on the next northern trip in time to take advantage

of the tides; (b) the acceleration of the "Koolinda" obviated a considerable delay at Fremantle awaiting the next favourable tides; (c) the m.v. "Kybra" had visited Shark Bay in the week previously to relieve the position at that port, and to load frozen fish for the southern market; (d) The m.v. "Koolinda," southward bound, was a full ship, including frozen meat from Wyndham Meatworks, and the agent at Shark Bay was so advised; (e) the s.s. "Minderoo" was scheduled to call at Shark Bay within a few days of the date of the omitted visit. 2, No. During the last three months extra opportunities have been given the proprietor of the Fish Freezing Works to ship per m.v. "Kybra." The m.v. "Koolinda" is also required to carry frozen products from Wyndham, which port only has an opportunity of shipping every two months. 3, Yes. 4, Exceptional circumstances over which the management has no control may at any time upset schedules, as was the case in the instance referred to.

BILL—ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER AGREEMENT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon P. Collier—(Boulder) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is rendered necessary because of the decision of the Government to take advantage of the Commonwealth housing scheme. There are some minor amendments in our existing Act, which the board, as the result of their experience in administering it, found it would be advisable to have made for the better working of the Act. The Bill contemplates an alteration in the interpretation of the word "worker." In the Act the term includes "any male or female." We propose to amend that by altering the words to "married or unmarried persons with dependants." The word "worker" will then comprehend those who are entitled to take advantage of the Act. At present it is open to single persons without dependants to secure a worker's home, and I think that was not really the intention of the Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If you cannot get a wife, it is hard that you cannot have a home.

The PREMIER: The man who intends to get a wife within a reasonable time, will come within the new definition, but it would be advisable for him not to delay too long.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We do not want bachelors in this country.

The PREMIER: I do not know that bachelors in this State are entitled to the benefits of the Act.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am democratic, and believe in everyone having a go.

The PREMIER: It is also proposed to raise the annual income of those who would be entitled to come under the Act from £400 to £600 a year. When the Act was passed, money values were only about half what they are to-day. I think the sum was originally £300 It then became £400, and it is now proposed to raise it to £600.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It follows the increase given to members of Parliament.

The PREMIER: We still want to make them eligible. The latest increase would have placed them outside the scope of the Act. It is also proposed to raise the amount that may be granted for a home, from £600 to £800. This is rendered necessary because of rising costs and values.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of costs, certainly.

The PREMIER: Undoubtedly because of the increase in costs it is difficult to build for £600 a brick dwelling of a size sufficient to house a family.

Mr. Mann: Would the £800 include the value of the land?

The PREMIER: The land has to be provided. In these days of high costs, £800 is not an excessive amount to spend in erecting a home. The Bill also provides that the re-appraisement of land held under Part 3 of the Act—that is the portion dealing with leaseholds—shall take place once in every ten years, instead of once in 20 years as at present.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You cannot do that with existing leases.

Hon. G. Taylor: In other words, will this be retrospective?

The PREMIER: It is always open for Parliament to amend even existing leases, without breaking a contract.

Hon. G. Taylor: You could make it optional.

The PREMIER: We could make alterations that would be of advantage to the individual.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is all the other side to an agreement have a right to do.

The PREMIER: That is so. There is another slight amendment that will provide for the payment of the annual land rent under Part 3 to be made in instalments as prescribed, instead of, as in the existing Act, being paid quarterly or half-yearly. As a matter of fact, that part of the Act has never been strictly adhered to because the payments have generally been fortnightly or monthly. The board has followed the practice of adopting the shorter periods, although the Act provides for the longer periods.

Hon. G. Taylor: The shorter period has proved more suitable to the tenants?

The PREMIER: Yes. In future we say that those payments shall be made as prescribed and it will be the shorter periods that will be prescribed. It has been found necessary to do that in practice, and that particular part of the Act has been a dead letter.

Hon. G. Taylor: A working man would be able to find the money fortnightly or monthly, whereas he might find it difficult to provide the money quarterly or half-yearly.

The PREMIER: Yes. Often a worker may have spent the money by the time the longer-period payments fell due, and thus the shorter-period payments will be of advantage to the board and to the lessee. Another amendment will allow a lessee who has paid for his dwelling in full to obtain a certificate of purchase, subject to the payment of ground rent and rates and taxes. In the past, the position under that heading has been somewhat obscure owing to the wording of the Act. After consultation with the members of the board, I find that for the convenience of the board and the lessees themselves, that part of the Act has not been adhered to strictly. In fact, most of the amendments that are embodied in the Bill have been included in order to make legal the practices that have been adopted in the past. Another alteration that is provided for in the Bill will limit the obligation of the board to purchase the lessee's interest in the leasehold home after a period of three years. At present, any lessee possessing a home under Part 3 of the Act can ask the board to purchase his interest in the dwelling at any time after he has been granted the leasehold of his home. It is now proposed to say that that obligation shall not rest on the board until the lessee has been in possession of his home for three years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That does not mean that the board must purchase the building, whether it desires to do so or not.

The PREMIER: But the board has to purchase, in accordance with the provisions of Part 3 of the Act. If a person desires to get out of his home and no one will take it over, the board has to purchase.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is, to relieve the man of his liability.

The PREMIER: Yes, the board takes over the lessee's liability and pays to him whatever that obligation may be. Now we say that that obligation shall not apply until after a period of three years.

Hon. G. Taylor: And that provision has been obligatory on the part of the board.

The PREMIER: Yes, but in future it will not be obligatory until after three years.

Hon. G. Taylor: Will the board be able to take over a home within the period of three years?

The PREMIER: Yes, voluntarily; as it is now, the board has no choice in the matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: At any rate, it means that the obligation upon the man, who has built the home, to make the payments, will continue for three years.

The PREMIER: That is what it means. There is a new provision that is important. It sets out that the price to be paid by the board shall be the amount of the instalments paid off the capital cost, plus the cost of improvements and additions made by the lessee with the approval of the board. At present, if a lessee of a home held under Part 3 of the Act desires to do so, he can call upon the board to take over his dwelling. The position under the Act is rather obscure as to whether the lessee is entitled to the instalments he has paid plus the cost of any improvements he may have added to his home, or whether the lessee is entitled to the actual capital value of the building at the time.

Mr. Thomson: That is, at the time when the building is sold?

The PREMIER: The Act is rather obscure on that point, as to whether the lessee is entitled to the actual market value of the dwelling at the time the board takes it over.

For instance, the lessee may have built his home ten years ago at a cost of £500. Because of the increased value of his land and so forth, that home may be worth £700 or £800 on the market to-day. The Act does not make it clear whether the lessee will be entitled to the increased value of his home from the board when it takes the premises over, or whether he is entitled only to the instalments he has paid, plus the value of improvements and additions. Personally, I do not think he is entitled to get the increased value from the board. The home at that time would not be his own. In effect, the lessee has been a tenant, paying a weekly amount in repayment of the cost price of the home. It would be a dangerous thing for the board to accept the responsibility of purchasing a dwelling at the increased value, for it has to be remembered that values may fluctuate at any time. They may be up to-day, but with a slump in values next year, values may go down.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But they have not done so.

The PREMIER: Not so far. At any rate, the Act has not been clear on that point.

Hon. G. Taylor: You do not want the lessee to have the benefit of the unearned increment?

The PREMIER: No, I do not think he is entitled to it, seeing that the board may be involved in a loss later on.

Mr. J. MacCallum Smith: Who will shoulder the loss if values fall?

The PREMIER: If the lessee is repaid the amount of his instalments, plus the value of improvements and additions carried out with the approval of the board, there can be no loss to him.

Hon. G. Taylor: There is always the possibility of a sale to someone else.

The PREMIER: The board cannot do anything else with a property. The lessee cannot sell to anyone except to the board. A lessee can sell on the open market only after he has actually paid for the building and received his certificate from the board. Provision is made for that in the Bill. The position of such a lessee who has paid off the house is rather vague under the Act. The amendment we propose in the Bill will entitle such a lessee to a certificate, and the only liability he will have to shoulder will be the payment of land rents, plus rates and taxes. When a man reaches that stage, and desires to dispose of his home, he need not approach the board at all. Under the Bill, he will be free to sell his property on the open market for what he can get, and the lessee will benefit by the accrued value that may attach to the building. That is perfectly right, because he has paid for his property and it is his own. If the value of that home increases by £200 or £300, it is just that the lessee shall have the advantage of the increased price. On the other hand, that is not the position of such a lessee before he has actually paid off the cost price of his home.

Mr. Thomson: But does not the man pay for his home as he goes along?

The PREMIER: Instead of indulging in this cross-examination, before members have even had time to read the Bill, I think it would be better to allow me to proceed. If members read the Bill, they will find it easier to grasp the situation.

Mr. Thomson: We were endeavouring to get your meaning as you spoke.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The PREMIER: The hon. member will have no difficulty in getting my meaning after he peruses the Bill. He cannot expect to understand it before he reads the measure.

Mr. Mann: Just one other point before you proceed: If the lessee owed £100, would the board accept that amount in full payment and give the lessee his clearance?

Mr. Panton: That is the position now.

The PREMIER: The board has always done that. Then the man can sell in the market and get the benefit of any increased market value. The Bill provides that unless he has paid the amount in full to the board, the obligation on the board will be to pay the instalments that have been paid plus the cost of improvements and additions, but not the increased market value of the building at the time the board takes it over. I think that is a reasonable provision. There is another amendment that will bring our Act into line with the Commonwealth legislation. The amendment I refer to extends the period of the loan to 35 years for a brick building and to 25 years for a wood and iron building. That is necessary because of the higher amount we are now making available for constructing homes, namely, up to £800. It is a different proposition having to pay off £500 over a certain period and having to pay off £800. The larger amount makes the weekly payments greater and in consequence of that, the period of repayments has been extended under the provisions of the Bill. We also propose to restrain or restrict a lessee or borrower from allowing his property to remain unoccupied. There is no

provision in the existing Act to deal with such a position should it arise.

Hon. G. Taylor: Have you had any such instances?

The PREMIER: I think there have been some, and the board has had no power to deal with the position. Under the Bill, we propose that the board shall have the same power over such a lessee as if the man had defaulted in his payments. The board may step in and take action to protect its assets. Hon. members will agree that a house that is left unoccupied deteriorates quickly. The amendments I have outlined have been found necessary by the board in the light of experience gained in administering the Act over a number of years. There is also a small amendment that will prevent the sale of a worker's home to a person other than a "worker" within the meaning of the Act. That is necessary, because it was never intended that these homes should come into the possession of anybody but workers. The last clause in the Bill deals with the Commonwealth Housing Act. It contains the provisions of the Commonwealth Act, which must be inserted in our Act before we can operate under the Commonwealth measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: Will the Commonwealth Act apply to only the metropolitan area?

The PREMIER: No, it will apply to any part of the State. But really it will be for the authority under the Commonwealth Housing Act—that is, anybody that may have authority to operate under that Act—to say. Such authority is not confined to any particular bodies. Any body that has statutory authority to build homes,—for instance, it may be a municipal council—can come under the Commonwealth Housing Act. So for the time being having authority to build homes, and wishing to come under the provisions of the Commonwealth Act, we insert the amendments contained in Clause 18.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Are your Public Works Department going to do work for them?

The PREMIER: Yes. We shall be an authority under their Act, and the Commonwealth will advance the money to us to build homes under the conditions set out in the Commonwealth Act. Then we will do the whole thing.

Hon. G. Taylor: Are you responsible to them for repayment?

The PREMIER: We are responsible to them for the repayment, and for the payment of interest.

Hon G. Taylor: So we stand to lose, but they are all right.

The PREMIER: If the board or authority administering the Act—in this instance, our Workers' Homes Board—were to make blunders or mistakes or bad investments, it would be we, not the Commonwealth, that would stand to lose.

Mr. Thomson: On the other hand, you will have the advantage of drawing on a considerable amount of money.

The PREMIER: Yes, we shall be enabled to increase our activities in the way of home building because of the additional amount of money to be made available by the Commonwealth Government. But I do not fear any risk of loss, because fortunately the Workers' Homes Board have been remarkably free from losses.

Mr. Thomson: And the Government will let the Workers' Homes Board continue to do the work. We do not want a repetition of the soldier settlement troubles.

The PREMIER: There has not been a single loss under the Workers' Homes Act since 1912. There has been an original capital of £600,000 put into the erection of workers' homes in this State without any loss. The repayments have all been reinvested as they came in. Since the war started, until a couple of years ago the only further money that was available for workers' homes was the money coming in by repayments. That enabled the board to carry on their work. They have been remarkably successful and have managed their affairs extremely well. Some of the provisions in the Commonwealth Act are that loans may be made up to a maximum of £1,800, which is tremendously in excess of our own provision. Then the limit of income of those who may avail themselves of the Act is £12 per week. Loans may be made for the discharge of mortgages on existing dwellings, or to purchase a property. That is a wider scope than is to be found in our own Act. I expect that the first rush of applicants under this Act will be to discharge mortgages. As I say, the money may be used for that purpose. It will be within the discretion of the board administering the Act as to how they will meet the number of applicants. If there are more applicants than there is money

available, I take it the board will exercise their discretion, and build new homes rather than discharge mortgages on existing dwellings. For the moment I do not know what moneys will be at our disposal for that purpose. Advances are to be limited to 90 per cent. of the valuation, and the funds are to be advanced by the Commonwealth Bank. For the moment, the rate of interest to be charged on the money advanced to us is 5½ per cent. There is no stipulation as to what we may charge. Probably we shall charge just sufficient to cover the cost of administration.

Hon. G. Taylor: About 6 per cent.

The PREMIER: Perhaps a little more. Generally speaking, we charge 7 per cent. with a rebate of ½ per cent. for prompt payment. If money should become dearer or cheaper than it is at present, I take it the interest charged by the Commonwealth Bank on money advanced to the State Government will vary accordingly. Those are the main points. In Clause 18 of the Bill is a recapitulation of the provisions of the Commonwealth Act. As a matter of fact, if we are to take advantage of the Commonwealth Act, Clause 18 may not be amended, since there is nothing there but what is essential to enable us to comply with the provisions of the Commonwealth Statute.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The weakness of all Commonwealth proposals is that we have to take them or leave them.

The PREMIER: Well, they passed the Act and laid down certain conditions, and if we are to operate under that Act we must comply with those conditions.

Hon. G. Taylor: You make the necessary provisions in Clause 18.

The PREMIER: Yes, really to comply with the Commonwealth Act. I mentioned earlier in the session that we hoped to be able to confine our State expenditure under our Workers' Homes Act to the building of country homes. Nothing definite has been decided in that respect, but I hope we shall be able to meet the demands for homes in the city and suburbs by money made available by the Commonwealth, so that all our own funds, whether from repayments of existing loans or from new capital, may be used for the erection of country homes.

Mr. Richardson: What allowance will you require each year?

The PREMIER: It will be dealt with by way of an estimate. I am asked now for an estimate of our requirements under the Commonwealth Act. But it is very difficult to make an approximate estimate, seeing that the maximum amount, £1,800, is so much greater than our maximum, and that it will be possible to operate under various provisions that do not exist in our Act. It is not easy to estimate the applications that we shall receive.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you propose to go to £1,800 under the Commonwealth section of your activities?

The PREMIER: It will rest with the discretion of the board. If there are more applicants than there is money available, it will be for the board to say what use shall be made of the money.

Mr. Thomson: Still, it is a good investment. You get £180 deposit, and you have the value of the land.

The PREMIER: Well, if the Commonwealth have the money available, it is all right. The Bill, if passed, probably will not come into operation until January. We have to get the machinery going. So I have made a tentative request for £10,000 per month, after the new Act comes into operation. That would be at the rate of £120,000 per annum. That is subject to variation according to our experience and the number of applications we receive. For the time being I have asked for £10,000 per month which, of course, will be supplementary to our own fund. That should serve to relieve the housing difficulty, both in the city and in the country districts.

Mr. Angelo: Will the country include the North?

The PREMIER: There is no place excluded. The administration of the Act is in the hands of the board, and there is no exclusion of any part of the State.

Mr. Angelo: We had 20 applications at one time, yet could not get a single home.

The PREMIER: In the past the chief objection of the board to building homes in the North has been that the amount provided for in the Act was not sufficient for the erection of a home up there. This, surely, will put that right.

Mr. Angelo: I vote for the Bill.

The PREMIER: Certainly £1,800 should suffice to erect a home, even in an aristocratic town such as Carnarvon. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Pearling Act Amendment.

2, Municipal Council of Collie Validation.

Received from the Council.

BILL—FERTILISERS.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: "Citrate soluble phosphoric acid" is defined as the phosphoric acid determined by the method to be prescribed. Surely methods are known by which the percentage can be described.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This is merely a definition. The Bill was drawn at the instance of agricultural chemists. There would be a percentage of citrate soluble phosphoric acid and a percentage of water soluble phosphoric acid, and that would be set out in a formula. There must be a recognised formula for testing it, and it is essential that the percentages should be set out.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But the definition says that the method by which the values will be determined have to be prescribed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is set out in the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Clause 7 provides that the content must be what it purports to be. Let me refer to the definition of "dealer," the only one to which exception has been taken. Members objected that the dealer would have to be registered. That is not so; it is the fertiliser that has to be registered. For fertiliser manufactured within the State there will be one registration only, not a hundred registrations by as many different agents and dealers. The point is that an agent or dealer must not deal in fertiliser that is not registered. If fertiliser is imported the agent responsible for its importation must register it before it is put on the market. Once the fertiliser is registered, it may be sold by anybody. If it can be shown that the definition would require every dealer to be registered, I shall have it amended.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister adopts an easy way to get over the difficulty.

The Minister for Agriculture: Explain just what you desire.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Bill says that the method is to be prescribed, and all I asked was why the method was not set out in the measure. Clause 7 does not give the method. The method is well known and it could be set out. It is the duty of Parliament and not of the officials to make the law. If the definition of "dealer" stands, everyone who deals in fertiliser will have to be registered. All we require to do is to ensure that the fertiliser offered for sale contains the values registered. I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "dealer" the words "or vendor of or dealer in" be struck out, and the word "of" inserted in lieu.

We hope to protect users; that is all. Suppliers of fertiliser furnish to the department an analysis, and they must supply in accordance with the analysis. We do not want to have fifty dealers called upon to register the same fertiliser.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: What we are endeavouring to secure is that every person manufacturing, importing, or indenting fertiliser shall be responsible, and not merely that such persons shall be registered. The term "dealer" includes vendor. It is an offence to sell a fertiliser which is not registered.

Mr. Davy: But Clause 9 says it shall be unlawful for any person to sell any unregistered fertiliser.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That is what we want. If this clause had regard only to registration, there might be something in the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition, but the clause also deals with persons who vend fertiliser, and it holds them responsible if they vend an unregistered fertiliser.

Mr. Davy: If the dealer can only sell a registered fertiliser, why impose any other obligation on him?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If this clause dealt only with persons responsible for registering fertilisers, I would probably agree with the Leader of the Opposition; but we want a wider application than that. Under the Bill we shall have a

complete register of fertilisers permitted to be sold in Western Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have that to-day.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But at present the registrations are annual. If the Bill becomes law, we shall each year have a definite register of all the fertilisers permitted to be sold in Western Australia. The register will not then include fertilisers which have gone out of use. Any fertiliser not appearing on the list made from the register could not be sold at all. The words "vendor or dealer in fertiliser" are certainly necessary in the interpretation of "dealer." If the amendment is carried, certain dealers will be relieved from the responsibility——

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of registering?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No; of dealing only in registered fertilisers.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course not.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then the Bill is not an improvement on the existing Act, because at present no one can sell fertiliser except in accordance with the registration. With the invoice a certificate setting forth the contents has to be furnished.

The Minister for Mines: Suppose the contents are not there, what is the position now?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The position is as it will be under the Bill. The inspector takes a sample, and if on analysis the value is not found to be there, a prosecution ensues. The registration of a fertiliser is all that is necessary, because sales of the fertiliser must be in accordance with the registered details.

The Minister for Railways: Suppose a man dug up some valueless stuff and sold it as fertiliser?

The Minister for Mines: He would be a vendor.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and he could not sell under the measure without registration. All I am concerned about is to save people needless trouble. Dealers in fertiliser all over the State should not be asked to register. If we find that the vendor is under the Bill, will the Minister for Agriculture agree to my amendment? A dealer buying from the Mt. Lyell company should not be required to register. If the Minister finds that the position is as stated, will he agree to have the matter dealt with on recommittal?

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes.

Mr. DAVY: Clause 9 says it shall be unlawful for any person to do certain things. Then follows a series of clauses which put the onus on the dealer. If "dealer" is to have the meaning given it in the interpretation clause, all sorts of obligations will be put on persons like country storekeepers, who cannot possibly know anything about the matter. The country storekeeper would be called upon to forward samples for analysis under Clause 11.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not now dealing with Clause 11.

Mr. DAVY: I am illustrating my objection to the definition of "dealer" in Clause 2 by referring to Clause 11. I wish to point out what will happen if "dealer" is left as it is now in Clause 2. Under Clause 11 the Minister could then require a country storekeeper to forward a sample for analysis by the Government chemist. The storekeeper would have to open a sack of fertiliser and extract 2 lbs. of the contents and send it along to the chemist. That does not seem to me either necessary or fair. Any person who sold an unregistered fertiliser would be guilty of an offence under the Bill. Or if one farmer sold fertiliser to another farmer, he would be liable to prosecution.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Bill is a highly technical one, and the Minister will be well advised to allow it to go to a select committee.

The Premier: We had an experience of a select committee on the Inflammable Liquid Bill. We did not hear anything more of it!

Mr. Mann: That was a very necessary select committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I would point out that we are discussing Clause 2, and not a select committee that sat in the past.

Mr. LAMBERT: There are many technical points in connection with the Bill, which is a useful one. I do not know that any good purpose will be served by discussing some portions of it at length, because it will involve much waste time. We have expert officers retained to deal with these matters and I do not think the Minister should be called upon to endeavour to give information that is probably beyond his scope. There are a dozen and one points in connection with the technical terms embodied in the interpretation clause that could

be explained easily by a technical man, and I hope that at a later stage the Minister will agree to have the Bill referred to a select committee. The Bill aims at protecting those who should be protected, and it is probable that the Bill will meet with considerable opposition in another place.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Registration of fertilisers:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Fertilisers are registered now, and I take it the Minister's desire is to wipe out the registrations that are no longer necessary. Is it proposed to charge substantial fees? What are the fees to-day?

The Minister for Agriculture: There are no fees.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister say what fees will be charged?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Hon. members will note that the clause bears out what I stated previously. Under paragraph (a) it is set out that no brand shall be registered if, in the opinion of the Minister, it is substantially identical with any other brand registered, or which any other person is entitled to have registered. The point is that there will be one registration of a fertiliser, and there will be no future confusion.

Mr. Lindsay: What about the different brands of superphosphate?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Different brands of superphosphate have different contents and consequently, different values. There must be a certain percentage of phosphoric acid in a fertiliser, but, of course, there may be a higher percentage in some brands. There may be a disposition on the part of a firm to boom their particular brand, and in the course of that booming they may state that the phosphoric acid contents of their fertiliser are higher than is actually the case. Someone should be held responsible for such a position. We propose that the annual registration of fertilisers shall be made in June of each year, because that is the period when most of the fertiliser goes out. Then again there is the difficulty regarding amended formulae. There may be a certain fertiliser on the market and those concerned may notify the department that they intend to amend the formula. The old fertiliser can remain on the register and the amended formula has to be taken into consideration as well!

Mr. Lambert: The department should lay down the formula and make others adhere to it, not somebody else lay down the formula.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We insist upon the manufacturers sending in formulae covering the brands of fertilisers sent out by them, and upon the standards being maintained.

The Premier: In other words, the people are protected.

Mr. Mann: Was the Minister right in saying that a certain company endeavoured to boom their product?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That has been done in the past. A difficulty arose in Victoria where a firm sold fertiliser at £20 per ton, whereas, upon analysis, it was discovered that the market value of the fertiliser was about £8 per ton.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They could not do that here under our Act.

Mr. Lambert: Yes, they could, in respect of specical fertilisers.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We desire to make sure that the manufacturers deliver the goods in accordance with what they claim for them.

Hon. G. Taylor: The fertilisers must be true to the trade description.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: As to the fees to be charged, it is intended that up to a minimum of 20 fertilisers, the registration per firm shall be £5, with 5s. for every additional fertiliser registered.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What is the £5 intended to cover?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There is a considerable amount of work attached to the registration of fertilisers. In the past it has been the practice for the department to supervise the various fertilisers. These are sampled and when the samples are sent to the department, they are analysed. This work has been a losing proposition, hence the provision for fees.

Mr. Teesdale: Let those who receive the service pay for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Many of those concerned do not object to the introduction of the Bill.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you provide that dealers shall pay fees?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I have no objection to the fertiliser manufacturers paying the prescribed fees so long as they pay the fees out of profits and do not pass on the cost to the farmers.

The Premier: The fees do not amount to much, having regard to the volume of the business transacted by the manufacturers.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so, but there may be some who manufacture small quantities.

Mr. Teesdale: They will be blotted out directly; there is no chance for small people in this country.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know about that. There are a great many small people living in this State and they will continue to do so. While I will not raise any objection to the fees the Minister has indicated, because I know the department does a great deal of work in connection with fertilisers, I hope the Minister will regulate the fees so that those who supply small quantities of mixed fertilisers to private horticulturists and others, will not have to pay the full amount.

The Premier: Will they come under the Bill?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes. If a man provides a special fertiliser, it must be registered. The Minister has the power to fix the fee to be paid at a figure he thinks commensurate.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does the Minister contemplate providing for the dealers who put up fertilisers in small parcels? In Perth one can buy 7 lbs. of different classes of fertilisers, one for potatoes, one for grass and a third for flowers. Will all those have to be registered?

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, all fertilisers must be registered.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then the department will have a very large number of registrations to handle. And if the fertilisers are all to be analysed, it will be necessary to extend the departmental laboratory.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The need for supervising the trade in fertilisers is very real. Only recently an imported line purported to contain 20 per cent. of phosphoric acid, whereas analysis showed that it contained 10 per cent., and that it contained also 30 per cent. of sand. As for the practice of selling fertilisers in small packets, there is a danger of its being abused unless some responsibility is thrown on the manufacturer. Except he is required to register all his fertilisers, we have no control over them. Some manufacturers frequently change their formulae.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They are registered at present.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but because the change can be made without cost, manufacturers do change their formulae, merely for business purposes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you propose to charge £5 for altering a registration?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, but if they alter the content of their fertiliser, they will have to declare it.

Mr. LAMBERT: The supervising of the whole of the sale and distribution of fertiliser in this State should be put on a practical basis. The manufacturer sells on a Government analysis, and on that value the farmer buys. I do not see why the State should be called upon to pay the cost of the supervision that allows the manufacturer to carry on his business. We should set a standard of what is to be expected of a fertiliser company, lay down a formula for each of the manures, and make the manufacturers subscribe to it. It is not right that a technical Bill like this should be discussed in a promiscuous sort of way here. Rather should it be sent to a select committee that would be capable of removing some of the objectionable provisions that will cost either the farmer or the manufacturer quite a lot of money. Moreover, such a committee might discover a way of removing a little of the influence of officialdom so apparent in the Bill.

Mr. TEESDALE: For the first time within my recollection I am inclined to support the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert). This is a highly technical Bill and of great importance to the farmers. I agree that it should be sent to a select committee, and that the greatest care should be taken to see that sand is not sold as fertiliser. Still, I hope it will not be expected of every storekeeper in the country that he shall send down to the Agricultural Department samples of the manures he has to sell. That would be very hard on the storekeeper.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—Particulars of application:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That there be added at the end of paragraph (g) the words "at the date of registration."

When a fertiliser is being registered it is as well that the manufacturer should declare the value of the fertiliser at that time. The fertiliser people do not object, but they want to declare as at the date of registration.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you want this provision at all? It is of no use to anybody.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The information has been valuable to the department. They can then determine whether the fertiliser has chemical properties equal to its declared value.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Of course they cannot.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Of course they definitely can.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The chemist can only determine the content. I am coming to think that proposed select committee is required.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I may say this Bill has already had the advantage of a highly expert select committee, in that it has been approved by a conference of agricultural chemists representing the States of the Commonwealth. The Bill, they said, came nearest to their idea of a Fertiliser Act. But to revert to the paragraph: The manufacturers are quite prepared to register a definite price as at a given date, but of course they will not be responsible for the price fluctuating.

Mr. Lambert: If you store a fertiliser for a few months it seriously depreciates.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

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

Clause 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Offences relating to the sale of unregistered fertilisers or the use of unregistered brands or names or of unbranded packages:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will this clause necessitate the branding of every bag of fertiliser? If so, it will mean unnecessary expense which someone will have to bear.

The Minister for Agriculture: I have an amendment to delete paragraph (e).

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That will overcome the difficulty.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That paragraph (e) be struck out.

The retention of the paragraph would impose a hardship.

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

Clause 10—Section 9 to apply to importers:

Mr. LAMBERT: Who is going to foot the bill for this? The expense should be borne by the people who sell their fertiliser on the analysis of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We would have no control over manufacturers outside the State, and so we have to place the responsibility on the agent.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If the manufacturer is not in the State, the importer must foot the bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It does not follow that there would be an immediate analysis when fertiliser was imported.

Mr. Thomson: I hope there will be an immediate analysis.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The responsible party is the manufacturer, but we must hold the agent responsible for imported fertiliser.

Mr. THOMSON: I thought the Bill was designed to ensure that all fertiliser would be true to the registered standard. Before registration is granted, an analysis should be made to ensure that the fertiliser is of the requisite value.

Hon. G. Taylor: You want the analysis made first?

Mr. THOMSON: No certificate should be issued until the department is satisfied that the fertiliser is up to standard.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The indentor must be fully responsible. He can declare the contents of the fertiliser, but surely he must register before the fertiliser arrives. It is the department's duty to see that the fertiliser is in accordance with the registration. It is not for the department to determine what the importer is selling; he must declare it.

Mr. Lambert: The department should lay down a set formula.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But could the department say that no fertiliser should come into the State unless it contained certain percentages of water soluble and citrate soluble phosphoric acid?

Mr. Lambert: All the manufacturers in the State could be compelled to do it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so.

Mr. Lambert: And also others sending fertiliser into the State.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The department's job is to ensue that the fertiliser sold is up to the standard registered. The manufacturer must live up to his registration and the producer is protected to the extent of the registration.

Mr. LAMBERT: If we wish adequately to protect farmers against exploitation by people whose business it is merely to sell stuff, the Government should prescribe zones and stipulate that certain phosphate should be supplied in accordance with the rainfall in those zones. The chemists have dealt with the matter in only a theoretical way, but we should apply it in a scientific manner. If vendors of mineral phosphates are going to use the hallmark of the Government, they should pay for it. Anyone who takes a sample for analysis to the Government laboratory has to pay a charge of 25s. Why should wealthy local manufacturers go scot free, and be allowed to sell their goods on a Government certificate without paying any fee?

Mr. THOMSON: I should like to be sure that before a certificate is granted the department will know that the goods will be delivered according to the certificate issued. We should see that fertilisers which are below the standard required by agriculturists are not allowed on the market. The fine provided in the Bill for such an offence is altogether too low. The Minister rather alarmed me when he said there was no guarantee that the department would insist upon analysing any fertiliser before a certificate was granted.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This clause merely provides that the importer shall be equally liable with the manufacturer for carrying out the provisions of the measure. It is not intended to put the Government hall-mark upon any given brand of fertiliser. The guarantee is that the various brands are effectually policed and kept up to standard. It would be misleading if we said that such and such a brand was registered and contained a particular variety of fertilising ingredients. The formula is registered, and if fertiliser is then sold at below the standard registered, action can be taken.

Mr. THOMSON: The manufacturer may claim that his manure is capable of doing certain things. If the officers of the department know that the fertiliser will not do these things, will they still issue a certificate, irrespective of whether the brand is efficient for the purpose for which it is required?

Mr. Lambert: They have no control over that.

Mr. THOMSON: Then we should provide for control. The Bill does not go far enough. If any kind of fertiliser can be registered, so long as it is sold according to the formula people may be hoodwinked into buying it. The Government should issue certificates only upon fertilisers that are of proved value to the State.

Mr. LAMBERT: It will be easy to insert a qualifying clause to provide that it shall be competent for the department to withhold a certificate when it is deemed desirable to do so. Chilean saltpetre is extensively advertised as a suitable ingredient for wheat growing, but I do not know that our farmers would care to use it for that purpose. We are fortunate in having within the State two excellent fertiliser manufacturers, the Mt. Lyell and Cuming Smith companies. When their hall mark is placed upon the bags, these companies believe that the contents absolutely conform to the formulæ lodged with the Government. If the Government are to be the foster parents of the farmers here, they should lay down a law by which if, for instance, the Germans were to send in thousands of tons of fertiliser, with a claim that it would produce cereals——

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: They could not do that under the Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT: No. But when the formula has been deposited, their obligation ceases.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What more can be done?

Mr. LAMBERT: A considerable amount. Fertilisers might be put on the same plane as foodstuffs. The effect or registering the formula is to give a certificate. Where the responsible officers say a fertiliser is not of use under certain conditions here, its sale should not be permitted.

Mr. Davy: Do you say farmers should use only fertilisers dictated by the Agricultural Department?

Mr. LAMBERT: No. All the plant foods are known according to their standard and solubility, and their applicability under various conditions. The officers of the Agricultural Department could define zones and intimate that within such and such a zone to grow a certain product such and such a fertiliser should be used A man using the fertiliser by rule of thumb would not be in a position to judge what was right and what was wrong.

Mr. C. P. WANSBROUGH: Really this is a machinery clause. What the previous speaker has indicated is not comprised within the Bill at all. I consider we are unduly delaying the clause and causing the Minister unnecessary trouble.

Mr. THOMSON: I must draw attention to the fact that a preceding clause which provides that a list of dealers who have registered fertilisers, and all fertilisers registered, together with a synopsis of information supplied in accordance with Clause 7, may be published in the "Government Gazette," or in the "Agricultural Journal," or in such manner as the Minister may direct, as soon as practicable after the commencement of the measure, and thereafter as soon as practicable after the 1st July in each year. The Bill therefore intends to register every chemical manure sold in Western Australia. This is certainly a machinery clause. The Government should take power to prevent the marketing of any manure that does not give the results claimed by the manufacturer. We certainly have reputable firms manufacturing superphosphate in this State, and I cast no reflection whatever upon them; but as regards any fertiliser that is imported, the department, before issuing a certificate, should be satisfied that such fertiliser will be worth the amount of money to be charged to the public for it.

Mr. Davy: Where does the measure say that certificates are to be issued?

Mr. THOMSON: That has been stated by the Minister, who knows what he intends in introducing the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do you want this power taken as regards imported fertilisers?

Mr. THOMSON: I want it taken. In my opinion the Bill does not go far enough.

Clause put and passed.

[*Mr. Angelo took the Chair.*]

Clause 11—Sample of fertilisers to be supplied for analysis:

Mr. LAMBERT: If the previous speaker desires that there should be some qualifying restriction on the departmental officers, this is the place to insert it. The clause should provide that in any case the Agricultural Department may withhold registration. For instance, where they thought a fertiliser was being introduced merely by way of an advertising stunt and being sold for purposes for which it was of no use, they should be empowered to refuse to register.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Registration does not relieve either the manufacturer or the importer from responsibility, but the very fact of registration imposes responsibility.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It fixes responsibility.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Once a manufacturer or importer declares that he is selling an article containing certain chemicals, the Agricultural Department issue a formula of it. Registration therefore makes the person registering liable, and does not in any way relieve him of responsibility. It is an entirely different thing, however, to ask the department to guarantee that the fertiliser is as specified.

Mr. Marshall: Suppose an inferior standard of manure is sold, who knows anything about it? Not the buyer.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We cannot prevent that.

Mr. Marshall: You can, by dealing with it in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. Although we do not guarantee such things, officers of the department do advise the agriculturists of the State as to suitable manures for various districts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is their job.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is not for the department to standardise manures. They merely register; they do not give a guarantee that a manure will do this, that, or the other thing.

Mr. Griffiths: You do not guarantee what the manure will do.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No, and I do not think the department should be placed in such a position. Those who use fertilisers in this country have experience and obtain advice. They would not

become wildly excited by the introduction of a new fertiliser.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is right. All that is provided is that a man who sells fertilisers must supply manure that is up to the standard registered, failing which he will be prosecuted by the Government and also, perhaps, by the farmer he has defrauded because his crops have been adversely affected by the inferior fertiliser. The Government could not do more than that. No ordinary farmer would be able to say what the percentage contents of the fertiliser were. Departmental officers sample the fertilisers and see that they are up to the standard registered by the firm.

Mr. Griffiths: The contents are often higher than the firms claim.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course they are. The firms supplying fertiliser in Western Australia comprise decent people who wish to help the farmers. The Cresco Company will also be supplying soon, and I believe they will act along the same lines as the other two firms already here. We shall have no difficulty with the firms established here, and the imported manures must come under the control of the Government as well. The Government should not, and could not, tell the farmers that they could take whatever fertilisers were supplied to them because the State guaranteed them. All that the Government could say was that they would register the brands and would prosecute firms selling fertilisers that did not comply with the formulae registered.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not asking for Government interference or Government control, but it is strange to hear members saying that there will be no Government guarantee. Under Clause 7 various requirements are insisted upon, and if a firm sells manure that does not comply with what is specified in the Act and in accordance with the formula registered, a prosecution will follow. The Leader of the Opposition says that Government control or guarantee is not required, but he says it is the duty of the Government to police the business and see that manure supplied is up to standard. If that is not a guarantee by the Agricultural Department that the manure supplied to farmers is in accordance with the formula registered, I do not know what it is.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Government do not guarantee it.

Mr. THOMSON: If the manure is not up to the standard registered, the department will prosecute the firm supplying it.

Mr. Davy: That is a different thing altogether.

Mr. Panton: The department cannot guarantee that the manure will grow anything, but merely that it is supplied in accordance with the formula.

Mr. THOMSON: That is the point I am dealing with. If the fertiliser is not in accordance with the standard registered, those supplying it will be punished. If that is not giving the people indirectly a Government guarantee, I have a lot to learn.

Mr. Mann: Under the Licensing Act whisky must contain not less than 25 per cent. of proof spirit, otherwise the licensee is liable to prosecution. The Government do not guarantee that the whisky is up to 25 per cent.

Mr. Davy: The Government can prosecute a grocer for putting sand in his sugar, but they do not guarantee that there will be no sand in sugar.

Mr. THOMSON: If I did not feel sure that the passing of this measure would guarantee to the farmers that fertilisers sold would be up to the standard registered, I would not waste my time dealing with it. With all due respect to those who think otherwise, I maintain that the Bill represents a guarantee to the farmers that the fertiliser purchased will be in accordance with the formula submitted to the department. If it does not mean that, what does it mean? It is a guarantee that manures must be up to standard, otherwise a prosecution must follow. I do not ask the Government to guarantee or take any particular manure under their wing, but the Government should have power to refuse to register a manure that will not be beneficial to the farmers of this State. The Bill does not contain any power that will enable the department to refuse to register any fertiliser that is manufactured here: Is that not so?

The Minister for Agriculture: We do not say they must be registered.

Mr. THOMSON: The Minister, in the earlier part of his speech, did say they would have to register.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 12—Invoice to be given on sale of fertiliser:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Paragraph (f) provides that there shall be accurately and clearly stated on the invoice the net weight of the fertiliser sold. However, there are difficulties here, and we do not want to impose unnecessary conditions on the selling of fertiliser. It is rather too much to expect that the net weight shall be accurately stated, especially if the package has to be transported a long distance. We do not see that the condition would effect any good, and so we do not feel justified in imposing it. Therefore, I move an amendment—

That paragraph (f) be deleted.

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

Clauses 13 and 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Limits of variation:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—"Provided also, that in the case of phosphoric acid, an excess of water soluble or citrate soluble may be set off against a deficiency of acid soluble, and an excess of one of the water soluble or citrate soluble forms may be set off against a deficiency of the other."

The reason for the amendment is that it would permit of a little necessary variation when the test is being made. Then no exception would be taken to that variation, so long as the aggregate quantity of phosphoric acid was contained in the fertiliser.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have no very strong objection to the amendment, but I am not altogether satisfied with the clause as a whole. When farmers buy manures, they buy them on the unit value, in which the phosphoric acid is 22 per cent. water soluble, which works out at 4s. 9d. per unit. Under this provision, the manufacturers might find it possible and expedient to reduce that 22 per cent. If the Bill is for the purpose of protecting those purchasing manures, it ought to protect them in respect of the certified quality.

Mr. LAMBERT: Possibly the hon. member has not studied the amendment. Although there may be a variation in the solubility quantities, yet the aggregate phosphoric acid must be up to the quantity laid down in the formula.

Mr. Lindsay: That is not provided in the clause.

The Minister for Agriculture: Yes, in paragraph (b).

Mr. LAMBERT: It is only a question of safe variation for the sake of correct analysis. I think the hon. member can rest assured that this is quite safe. I am not so certain about the allowed variation of 7 per cent. of lime. While it is quite proper to allow a variation in the phosphoric content water soluble, citrate soluble or acid soluble the lime content should not vary. So I cannot divine the reason for that variation of 7 per cent. Still, if the Act is to work smoothly, a variation of the phosphoric acid content should be allowed within reasonable limits, and I certainly think the limits here prescribed are reasonable.

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

Clause 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Sale of fertiliser incorrectly described as "bone manure" an offence:

Mr. TEESDALE: I think some protection should be given to the dealer. An ordinary storekeeper purchases some fertiliser, and when it is examined by the inspector it is found to be below the required standard, containing some adulteration. In those circumstances it is pretty hard to charge that storekeeper with an offence when he has got his fertiliser from a reputable firm and is selling it in all good faith. I could understand a charge being laid against some firm making a speciality of artificial manures, but to hold an ordinary storekeeper responsible for some adulteration of which he knows nothing, and to fine him £10 or so, seems to me pretty hard. I hope the Minister will endeavour to find some way of protecting a reputable storekeeper from such a risk.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This clause is rather important. It most certainly should be counted as an offence against a dealer who describes as bone manure any phosphate fertiliser that he may be offering for sale.

Mr. Davy: Is bone manure more valuable than phosphate fertiliser?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Well, rather. By selling ordinary phosphate fertiliser as bone manure, a dealer is misleading the buyer into thinking it is of greater value than it really is.

Mr. Teesdale: You can scarcely accuse the storekeeper of doing that.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The one who is actually responsible is the one who has registered the article. The object is to prevent buyers from being misled as to the content of the manure. This is one of the means by which fraud is practised.

Mr. Teesdale: The buyer would not be misled by the storekeeper.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The man who registered the fertiliser would be held responsible. The storekeeper would say it had been supplied to him, and he would not be proceeded against.

Mr. DAVY: I presume the Minister is referring to Clause 39 which gives to a person who has been prosecuted and convicted, the right to bring a civil action against the man who supplied the fertiliser, but it is no defence against the prosecution.

The Minister for Agriculture: The responsibility is removed from the vendor if the stuff was supplied as registered fertiliser.

Mr. LAMBERT: The clause is necessary and useful. It will prevent manufacturers from selling steamed bone mixed with some other ingredients as ground bone.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 18—Sale of fertiliser different from that demanded:

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Clause 17 refers to "every dealer" and Clause 18 refers to "any person" selling such fertiliser. Would the person be protected in the same way as is the dealer?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The person who sold the fertiliser would be held responsible in the first instance, but if it were supplied to him as a registered fertiliser, the liability would be shifted to the person actually responsible.

Mr Davy: Under what clause is it constituted a defence?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: That comes later in the Bill. If the fertiliser had not been tampered with, the person who sold it would have a complete defence.

Mr. Davy: Not unless it is constituted a defence.

Mr. Teesdale: The retail milkman has a similar defence against the wholesaler.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The responsibility should be placed on the person who registers the fertiliser. That has been the aim throughout the Bill. If it is not clearly constituted a defence as suggested, I shall be prepared to make the necessary provision:

Clause put and passed.

Clause 19—Sale of fertiliser not in conformity with standard.

Mr. THOMSON: If there is no guarantee, who will prescribe the standard mentioned in this clause?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The object of the clause is to protect a buyer who has ordered fertiliser and is supplied with other than what he ordered. The standard would be prescribed by a firm like Cuming Smith .

Mr. Lindsay: The standard that is registered.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes. If anyone bought on their standard, they could not supply an inferior line. Although we do not insist upon a given standard, we provide that where a standard is registered, the buyer can claim to receive that standard.

Mr. DAVY: I think the Minister is quite wrong. Clause 37 proposes to give the Governor power to make regulations providing, amongst other things, standards for fertilisers. I was under the impression previously that the Bill was not intended to give the Government power to lay down particular standards. I thought the object was to let the purchaser know what the manufacturer claimed to be selling. I think Clause 19 relates to Clause 37 (g), and if so it puts an entirely different construction on the whole Bill. It is not in accordance with the views the Minister has expressed. He has said it is not the intention of the Government to dictate to manufacturers as to what any fertiliser shall contain.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We insist that when a brand has been registered a firm shall not supply something inferior to it.

Mr. DAVY: The Bill proposes to go further. The Government are taking power to make regulations whereby standards may be prescribed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: This clause takes the place of Section 12 of the Act. Whether we prescribe the standards or not, they are set up and the brands are registered with the department. If a firm registers a brand and supplies something of a lower standard, it will be

guilty of an offence. The Government do not intend to set up standards, but when an owner does so, it is our business to see that he delivers goods that conform to his standard.

Mr. Davy: Will the Minister recommit the clause if he finds it means what I say?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. THOMSON: If the Minister does not intend to set up standards, what is the necessity for the Bill? Will any fertiliser manufacturer be allowed to sell manures which are of but little use to agriculturists? Are outsiders to be allowed to compete with reputable firms which have set up good standards? Apparently anyone is to be allowed to sell any kind of fertiliser so long as it conforms to the formula which has been registered.

Mr. Davy: You want the Government to dictate to the manufacturer the kind of fertiliser he shall make?

Mr. THOMSON: No. I want to protect the honest manufacturer against the dishonest one.

Mr. Davy: I think this clause was inserted by mistake.

Mr. THOMSON: And the mistake has been repeated in Clause 37. I would not have voted for the second reading if I had thought the Government did not intend to prescribe the standard on which fertiliser should be sold. The Minister should report progress.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Minister has not conveyed to me the impression that it is the intention of the Government to set up standards, but merely to provide for the registration of standards set up by manufacturers, and to see that these are adhered to. The member for Coolgardie said it was the function of the Government not only to set up the standard required, but to create zones and prescribe the kind of fertiliser that should be used in each zone. The member for Katanning says the Bill is of no value because the Government have not set up any standard. If I have not correctly gauged the purport of the Bill, will the Minister inform the Committee what that is?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I would point out that the clause contains the words "differs therefrom otherwise than in the manner and to the extent allowed by the regulations." To a certain extent the Bill does set up standards. I shall go in the question which has been raised relati to bone fertiliser and bone manure. T present clause replaces Section 12 of t Act, which section makes it an offence sell a fertiliser under a wrong descriptio

Progress reported.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister f Justice in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Arrangement with Commo wealth as to rolls:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I unde stand there may be some alteration in Cor monwealth boundaries. For what date a the joint rolls in view?

The Minister for Justice: The Commo wealth boundaries cannot be altered unt 1931, after the census.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I unde stand the Commonwealth can transfer a di trict to another division. The other day saw a statement that the Commonweal proposed certain amendments in regard Victoria. Great confusion might be caus by the amalgamation unless ample time ar the utmost care were given to perfecting t rolls.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: T Federal law provides that the only time which alterations shall take place in Feder boundaries is the year after the census h been taken. Victoria's population is increa ing comparatively with that of other State and Victoria might be entitled to anoth seat in the Federal Parliament. A se might be taken from New South Wales an given to Victoria. However, such a thing only to be done every 10 years on the bas of the census figures.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But it can done at other times.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I d not think so; not unless a special law to th effect is passed.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—First rolls:

Mr. THOMSON: There should be a join claim card for the Commonwealth and th

State. The form should be on similar lines to the form used by the State and Federal Taxation Departments. It may sound parochial to say so, but the intention of the Bill is to hand over everything to the Commonwealth officials. Anyone who enrols will have to be placed on the Federal roll. As there is a difference in the Federal and State enrolment periods, we should have a claim card showing definitely that the applicant has applied for State as well as for Federal enrolment. To-day the person seeking enrolment fills in two separate cards; under the Bill there will be one card for enrolment both State and Federal. Our Chief Electoral Officer should have the right to examine the cards.

The Minister for Justice: He will have every right to do that.

Mr. THOMSON: If a man comes to Western Australia from one of the Federal divisions in the Eastern States and resides here for three months, he becomes eligible to have his name placed on our Assembly roll.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: When the claim card has been filled in by the applicant, he is put on the Commonwealth roll; and—unless he is found not to be entitled to have his name on the Assembly roll—the Commonwealth roll being used for Assembly elections, he will be allowed to vote on that. If, however, he is found not to be entitled to vote for the Assembly, a mark will be placed against his name, and that mark will refer to a footnote stating that he is on one roll and not on the other.

Mr. Thomson: Such persons will be clearly indicated?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The great advantage of the proposed arrangement is that provision is made for a joint claim card. Our officials will have access to the rolls we shall use. Some people are entitled to vote at Federal elections, but will not be entitled to vote at State elections. There will be a few such people.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, but very few.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: People who transfer from other States to Western Australia will have to be here for three months before they become eligible to be enrolled for the State elections, although they will be able to vote at Federal elections after they have resided here for one month.

The Minister for Justice: Such people will be indicated by a footnote on the roll setting out that they will not be eligible to vote at State elections until such and such a date.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Those people will have to be watched. The small amount of money that will be saved by this arrangement is not the important consideration. What does matter is that we shall get a clean roll. Through the postal officials the Commonwealth Electoral Department have special advantages enabling them to keep the rolls clean. We have not that advantage.

Hon. G. Taylor: We have our electoral registrars in the country districts.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But they have to look after a large number of rolls.

The Minister for Justice: A registrar in a country district generally deals with his rolls on the basis of applications made and claim cards received.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is so. I do not know that the joint roll has worked as satisfactorily elsewhere as the Minister seems to think.

The Minister for Justice: I have made inquiries and I have not heard of any complaints. The object of this move is to get a clean roll and to enable people to exercise the franchise if they are entitled to it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In connection with our electoral laws, nothing crooked or wrong should be practised in the slightest degree. The provision of a joint roll should help in that direction. I hope it is not the intention of the Government to withdraw the electoral registrars stationed in the country districts.

The Minister for Justice: We will not have to retain all of them, but we will have to retain the services of electoral registrars at central polling places for Legislative Council elections, because there is a lot of work to be done in connection with the Council rolls.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The first roll should be prepared as soon as possible, because the work will take at least 12 months. I hope the Minister will see that we get a clean roll for use at the next election.

The Minister for Justice: If there is a redistribution, we shall not attempt to secure a joint roll until we know what is going to happen with the redistribution proposal.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Instead of dealing with the small Bills that have been before us, does not the Minister think it would be better to go ahead with the redistribution and see where we stand?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are dealing with Clause 7 and it has nothing to do with a redistribution of seats.

The Minister for Justice: It is our intention, as soon as the Act is proclaimed, to have the roll fixed without delay.

Hon. G. Taylor: The Bill will become operative only after it has been proclaimed. Until then, the existing Electoral Act will stand.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, the agreement has not been entered into yet. We want as little trouble as possible in connection with the signing of claim cards and to secure rolls that will be as clean as possible.

Mr. THOMSON: I move an amendment—

That at the end of the proviso to Subclause 1, the following words be added:—"And such claims shall be made on a joint claim card."

The object of the Bill is to simplify matters and to have one claim card only. My amendment will achieve that end.

Mr. Davy: But the clause does not deal with the making of claims at all, but merely with claims deemed to have been made.

Mr. THOMSON: The Minister indicated that he proposed to abolish the positions held by electoral registrars in the country districts and to hand over the compilation of the rolls entirely to the Federal Government and the Federal Electoral Registrar. I want to provide distinctly for the joint claim card, because I desire our State electoral officers to continue in the positions they now hold. Only by that means can we secure a clean roll. How can the Chief Electoral Officer in Perth know that the roll for Katanning, for instance, does not contain a number of names that should not appear? The officer has to depend upon those who are resident in the electorate and who are conversant with local affairs. I have yet to learn that the Chief Electoral Officer is in a position to determine whether names are improperly included or whether some may be entitled to be enrolled for the Commonwealth and not for the State.

The Minister for Justice: But how many will there be?

Mr. THOMSON: I am dealing with the principle underlying the whole matter, and I desire the State to retain control over th State electoral officers. The Minister ha stated that the agreement will represent small saving in money and that the mai reason for the arrangement is the conven ence of the public. My amendment wi facilitate the achievement of that objectiv There is no difficulty about it at all.

The Minister for Justice: This is not th place for the amendment.

Mr. THOMSON: It has to be dealt wit partly here. We are dealing with claims.

The Minister for Justice: Not in th clause.

The Minister for Mines: Subclause might be the place for your amendment.

Mr. THOMSON: However, I thought desirable to raise the question here in ca it was ruled afterwards that we should ha dealt with it on Clause 7. I am quite willin to bring it forward later, but this is th clause on which it should be discussed.

The Minister for Justice: No; Clause 1 is the place for it.

Mr. THOMSON: Very well, if it will n be ruled out on Clause 17, I will withdra the amendment for the time being.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Power of Governor-in-Counc as to subdivisions of districts:

Mr. THOMSON: This clause gives th Governor very wide powers in the alterin of divisions.

The Minister for Justice: No, only sul divisions.

Mr. THOMSON: Well, the boundari of subdivisions can be altered by the Go ernor, and that affects the electorates.

The Minister for Justice: No, only th subdivisions.

Mr. THOMSON: I should like the Mi ister to explain the intention of the clause

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Th clause deals only with subdivisions. If b cause the Federal people have subdivisio in the Katanning electorate, it is considere desirable that the State also should have su divisions there, the Governor may decla subdivisions in that electorate. But it unthinkable that the Governor should ha power to alter the boundaries of an ele torate.

Mr. Davy: It is unthinkable that yo should get such a proposition through.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: would be, yes. The hon. member is entire

wrong in suggesting that the clause gives power to the Governor to alter the boundaries of any division.

Mr. THOMSON: This means that we have to alter the subdivisions of our electorates in conformity with the Federal subdivisions.

The Minister for Justice: No, no.

Mr. THOMSON: That was the meaning of the Minister's second reading speech. He said that as far as possible we should make our boundaries co-terminous with those of the Federal Parliament. The Federal divisions have a quota of 8,000 electors. The present quota in our country electorates is about 4,000. The Commonwealth people amend their boundaries only once in ten years. In the interests of the State and our growing population we may find it necessary to amend ours more frequently. I should like to see a Federal Districts Act on the lines of that introduced by the Leader of the Opposition when he was Premier, an Act to provide for the appointment of a Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: The clause has nothing to do with a redistribution of seats.

Mr. THOMSON: I am not referring to a redistribution of seats. I am merely giving an illustration. I should like to see an Act under which a Commission, such as that provided for in the Electoral Districts Act, would from time to time amend the boundaries of the State electorates without referring the question to Parliament at all. In view of the fact that our population is rapidly increasing, and that the quotas in the various electorates are much smaller than those of the Commonwealth divisions, it may be found necessary to amend the boundaries of our electorates much more frequently than we have done in the past. So it is only reasonable that we should ask the Federal Government when next they amend their boundaries, to make them co-terminous with our own. That would be better than endeavouring to make the boundaries of the State electorates co-terminous with those of the Federal electorates, in which they have a quota of 8,000 electors. If the boundaries are not to be made co-terminous, where is the benefit of the Bill, since in some districts we have a State roll and in others a Commonwealth? I am fearful that in our desire to simplify matters a little we are going to make things a little more difficult for the Electoral Department, particularly in view of the difference between the periods after which one is entitled to enrolment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member is rather confused in his ideas. When, under the Federal Electoral Act, the first divisions were made, there was no difficulty. But we have not altered our boundaries for about 13 years. On the other hand, the Federal boundaries have been altered. I take it that when next we amend our boundaries we will make them as nearly as possible co-terminous with the boundaries of the Federal divisions. If we once get them right, there will not be much trouble about it afterwards.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Surely we shall retain the right to have subdivisions! There are five Federal members compared with 50 members in this House, and if we have to make our boundaries agree with theirs, I shall vote against the Bill.

The Minister for Justice: No; the idea is to take cognisance of existing boundaries.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We could not make our divisions subservient to the Federal divisions.

The Minister for Justice: The Federal authorities agree to make their divisions coterminous with ours.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Certainly we are not going to alter our boundaries to coincide with theirs.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—Changes to be made in rolls on subdivisions of districts or alteration of boundaries:

Mr. DAVY: Why is "district" mentioned in paragraph (b)? It appears to have slipped in by mistake. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (b) the words "of a district or" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There appears to be no necessity for the words. I shall inquire why they were included and, if they are not needed, they can be deleted. There is no intention to give anybody power to alter boundaries; in fact it could not be done under this measure. Possibly the words have been copied from the Victorian Act in which they are covered by a different definition.

Mr. DAVY: On that assurance, I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—Rolls for district and subdivisions:

Mr. DAVY: Why is it provided in Subclause 4 (a) that the rolls "may" be in prescribed form? I think the word "shall" should be used as in the succeeding paragraphs. I should prefer to see the form prescribed in the Act.

The Minister for Justice: How can you prescribe it?

Mr. DAVY: If the Minister asks that question, I reply by asking why he talks of a prescribed form?

The Minister for Justice: It may be necessary to prescribe a form.

Mr. DAVY: If that is so, the word "shall" should be used. We are entitled to have definite knowledge as to the form in which the rolls will be compiled. I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 4 (a) "may" be struck out, and the word "shall" inserted in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Unless more substantial reason is given for the alteration, it should not be made. The Bill might be passed without other amendment, and it would then be necessary to reprint it for the sake of one word.

Mr. Davy: That is a shocking reason for not accepting the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: This has been in the Act for the last 20 years. The rolls have been printed in a way satisfactory to everybody. Still, it may become necessary to prescribe how they shall be printed. The clause, worded as it is, is quite satisfactory.

Mr. DAVY: It is ridiculous to say that the roll may or may not be in the prescribed form. Either the whole thing should go out as rubbish, or the paragraph should be made mandatory.

Mr. Angelo: We have already established a precedent by passing a clause which says that the rolls "may" contain something.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Would the manner in which the rolls are printed be considered the form?

The Minister for Justice: You may prescribe that they shall be printed on one big sheet.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: At one time the supplementary rolls were printed on paper of a different colour from the main roll. It does not appear to me that much value attaches to the use of the word "shall" in this case.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Additions, etc., to new rolls:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Registrar mentioned in this clause is our official.

The Minister for Justice: He is a Federal official who will be under our Chief Electoral Officer.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If he is a State official, why does the Bill provide that he may make additions, alterations and corrections to a new Commonwealth roll? Apparently this would happen just prior to a general election.

Mr. Thomson: The Registrar should do this after consultation with our Chief Electoral Officer.

The Minister for Justice: He will do so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Federal officials compile the roll except under this clause when our Registrar may make additions and alterations. Can our official add names except those which are sent on to him by the Commonwealth official?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The rolls are brought up to date just before an election, and are then printed.

Mr. THOMSON: We are handing over the whole of the rolls to the Federal Government.

The Minister for Justice: That is what I have been trying to convey ever since I introduced the Bill.

Mr. THOMSON: The clause gives the Commonwealth Registrar complete control. On the other hand, Clause 14 empowers the Chief Electoral Officer to have rolls printed.

The Minister for Justice: Yes, when rolls are needed for a State election.

Mr. THOMSON: Will our Chief Electoral Officer be able to control the Federal officials? The position is surrounded by difficulties.

The Minister for Justice: The Commonwealth officer is to do these things in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer.

Mr. THOMSON: I am anxious to safeguard Western Australian rights. The only officer who can do anything is the State Chief Electoral Officer.

The Minister for Justice: But other persons can do things by his direction.

Mr. THOMSON: The officer who to-day compiles the Katanning rolls, if I may quote that instance, is in every way qualified to ensure that those rolls are correct. He should have the opportunity to check the rolls in future; but the Bill hands over the whole matter to the Federal Government, and the only check, apart from that exercised by members themselves or by country organisations, will be that of the Chief Electoral Officer, who, sitting in Perth, cannot possibly obtain knowledge whether certain names should be on the Katanning roll or not.

The Minister for Justice: Under the measure it is his duty to put on the name of every person entitled to be enrolled.

Mr. THOMSON: The Chief Electoral Officer, from his office here, would not be in a position to purify the rolls, of, say, the Geraldton electorate. I refer to the State point of view. We must accept the Commonwealth rolls compiled by Commonwealth officials.

The Minister for Justice: What is wrong with that?

Mr. Marshall: It must be admitted that the Federal rolls are more up-to-date.

Mr. THOMSON: I do not admit it. If the hon. member is willing to hand over our Electoral Office to the Commonwealth, I am not.

The Minister for Justice: We shall still require a Chief Electoral Officer and staff.

Mr. THOMSON: I want to have the same facilities for checking rolls in future as we have to-day.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If the rolls were printed only a month before an election, there would be a nice mess.

The Minister for Justice: Under Clause 4 the Chief Electoral Officer can print the rolls whenever he thinks fit, without reference to anybody.

Mr. THOMSON: I move an amendment—

That after the word "shall," in line 2, there be inserted "in consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer."

If the Minister considers that his officer should have control, there should be no objection to the amendment.

Hon. G. Taylor: Clause 24 provides for that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Yes, and so does Clause 38. However, some question arises as to the force of "may" and "shall." The carrying of the amendment would mean that the Commonwealth Registrar could not make additions, alterations or corrections without the Chief Electoral Officer. If the latter were not available, the registrar would not be able to do those things.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 5th September, 1928.

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

BILL—EDUCATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (South-East) [4.34]: I understand that Mr. Brown was good enough to secure the adjournment of the debate for me, and therefore I take this opportunity to thank him for his courtesy. It is rarely that we have the chance to discuss so important a subject as education, which I look upon as one of