

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

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

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

House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 3rd September, 1914.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

The Colonial Secretary and State Steamships.

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

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

the special requirements of the North-West trade, she not having been designed for such work and owing to the many special features about her—which were, no doubt, desirable for the purpose for which she was originally intended—these all tend to make her a very expensive ship to run, and, owing to her small carrying capacity, a very difficult one to earn revenue with. However, the results from this last trip are highly satisfactory, and I have no doubt will appear so to the Government.

With regard to the voyage No. 20, the expenses of the voyage as set out in the statement accompanying the letter were as follows:—Wages, £988 4s. 9d.; wine account, £143 16s. 6d.; water, £39 11s. 10d.; coal, £1,200 18s.; fodder, 18s. 9d.; general disbursements, £841 8s. 4d.; making a total of £3,294 13s. 2d. With regard to insurance, accident accounts for £60 and marine £180, a total of £240. Depreciation, one-twelfth of £4,000, amounted to £333; interest, £325; a total of £898, or a grand total of the items I have just given of £4,092, 13s. 2d. On the revenue side freight amounted to £2,030 6s. 9d.; passages £1,625 17s.; the bar, £387; subsidy, £458 16s. 8d.; a total of £4,522, giving a net profit of £410. This profit is absolutely net, as it is gained after taking into account every known disbursement due to this voyage. The hon. member suggested that the vessel should be presented as a gift to the Imperial Government. There is scarcely any necessity to make a gift of the vessel to the British Government. I believe they are already flush of ships and I hope, before long, they will be still more flush.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I am very sorry you cannot give her away.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is such a thing as making an exchange. I have a scheme under consideration now which may result in a very satisfactory solution of a problem which has perplexed my mind for many months past.

QUESTION — LIQUOR LICENSE PROSECUTION.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH asked the Colonial Secretary: 1. Is the liquor inspector, on the prosecution of an hotel-keeper on the goldfields for having liquor adulterated with water, entitled to claim £5 2s., railway fare and sleeper accommodation, and also witness fees at the rate of 15s. a day? 2. Does he receive the £5 2s. or does it go to the department? 3. Has the inspector a periodical railway ticket, and, if so, does the department supply it? 4. Is it fair that either the department or inspector should make a profit on his railway fare, or on the inspector's salary, in view of the fact that the minimum fine is £5, and £2, analyst's fee, is always added? 5. Will the Minister direct the return to the parties who paid same any profits wrongfully made under the above circumstances?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2. The fare is not paid to the department but to Treasury reimbursements in aid. 3, Yes. 4, The Government does not make a profit on the railway fares. The inspectors' all-lines tickets cost £42 10s. per annum each, and it is only just that fares should be credited to the State when journeys are made by inspectors for the purpose of conducting a prosecution. The first-class ordinary fare plus sleeping berth is the basis adopted, as that would be the amount involved did the State not provide "all-lines" tickets. Inspectors are paid a travelling allowance by the State when out of town, and the fee claimed as witness in such cases is considered to be equitable. 5, In view of the information contained in the foregoing answers it is not proposed to make any refunds.

QUESTION — EMERGENCY LEGISLATION CONFERENCE.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM asked the Colonial Secretary: Why, at a conference in connection with emergency legislation convened by the Premier on the 1st instant, no representatives of the

Pastoralists' Association or the Farmers and Settlers' Association were invited?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: It was considered that the conference as convened embraced the interests concerned.

QUESTION—MATERNITY HOSPITAL.

Hon. C. SOMMERS asked the Colonial Secretary: What steps have been taken by the Government to erect a maternity hospital, as promised in the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied as follows: Draft plans have been prepared and approved of by a committee consisting of three members of the medical profession.

BILL—LEEDERVILLE RATES VALIDATION.

Third Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [3.8]: I move—

That the Bill be read a third time.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.9]: I should like to say in regard to the point I raised yesterday, as to the extent of the clause, I am now quite satisfied that the clause, as printed, would not affect the ratepayers to the extent that I anticipated. I am quite satisfied to allow the Bill to go through.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st September.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [3.10]: I moved the adjournment of the debate on the second reading of this Bill with a view to going carefully into it, and this I have done. I realise that it is absolutely necessary that the department should have power to do quite

a number of things. Diseases in plants are very far-reaching and form one of those troubles which unfortunately has got a considerable grip in this State. The utmost that the department can do at the present time is to keep them in check as much as possible. Of course, in this Bill there are some clauses which are very drastic, and amongst them is one in particular, namely Clause 32, which throws the onus of proof upon the defendant. When we get into Committee I shall ask to have that clause postponed for a short time until I can look into it more fully and get some information upon it. Apart from that, while there are very drastic measures in the clauses of the Bill, I realise that the officers of the department must have full power to enter an orchard and do various things. This may be inconvenient to fruit-growers to a certain extent, still I think the measure will be for the benefit of the fruit industry at large. I realise that such a measure as this is required. When the Bill gets into Committee I shall deal with the particular clause I have mentioned. I shall assist the Government in carrying the measure through and beg to support the second reading.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East) [3.13]: A very large proportion of the fruitgrowers in the State are in the province which I have the honour to represent. I have had certain representations made to me regarding this Bill. I recognise, with the hon. Mr. Clarke, that very wide powers must be given to the department, but I think they are asking a little bit more than is necessary in the way of discretionary power. In Committee I am going to try to get two amendments effected, both of them being very important. Practically, the Bill leaves everything to the department. Now it may be said that all interests will be equal to the department. That is to say, that the department will deal quite impartially with little and big amongst the fruitgrowers. That is just where my faith fails, Mr. President. There is a lot of human nature in departmental officials and they will naturally value com-

mercial interests above all others. In short, the big grower will be their main concern. As for the little fellows and the owners of home gardens, to the departmental officer they are a kind of second-rate nuisance. The departmental officer says, "Commercial interests are at stake, and for the sake of commercial interests we are going to deal drastically with the little fellows, who are to a great extent a trouble to the department." Now, I am not imagining the position. I happen to know that the department's first idea was a registration fee of from £1 to £2; that is to say, the owner of a home garden with his half dozen trees for his family would pay £1, and the owner of 1,000 acres of fruit trees would pay £2. Of course, the owner of the 1,000 acres would say, "Oh, that is quite right; it is the little fellow who is the danger. The big owner for his own sake will watch against disease; but the little fellow will not, because his livelihood is not at stake." However, this is only one side of the question. I hold that the healthiest condition of a country obtains when the largest proportion of its people are on the land, making their homes on the land; and the healthiest home is the home that grows fruit for itself. Therefore, Parliament must encourage home gardens. I recognise that if there is a tree at all, there is danger of disease; and therefore I am quite with the department in saying that everybody, even the person having only a single fruit tree, must register. But I want to deal gently with the small owner. If the Minister in charge of the Bill will consent to grade the fees from, say, 5s. upwards, then I shall be quite satisfied with that part of the Bill. I am not, however, satisfied to leave that part as it is now, to leave the department to fix all fees. I am certainly not content with that. The majority of the small owners would be forced to chop down their trees, because it would not pay the owner of half a dozen trees to incur a fee of £1 per year. Why should he incur such a fee? I shall move in Committee that the fees be graded from, say, 5s. up to £5, according to the area of orchard. I ad-

mit that this would be a rule of thumb arrangement, but there is no better way of doing it. I have only one other amendment that I shall ask the House to insist on and that is a provision similar to that which the Government placed in the Irrigation Bill, and which we improved yesterday in Committee. The provision is that all regulations framed under this measure shall be subject to disallowance by either House of Parliament. With these two amendments, I, as representing a large proportion of the fruitgrowers of this State and knowing their minds, am quite content to grant all the other drastic powers asked for on behalf of the department.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: The fruitgrowers were parties to this Bill, you know.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: That is to say, the fruitgrowers' executive. That is true. But the executive represents the big growers, the commercial interests. I want to bring forward the domestic interests, the home garden; and I am sure that the departmental officers, when they come to think the matter out will say, "We want every man to have his own vine and fig tree."

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.19]: I am in some difficulty over this Bill, and I think other members will be when they realise the position. The Bill is required; that is to say, the eradication of disease in the orchards of this country is a matter which concerns not only the fruitgrowers, but the public generally, and the question we shall have to ask ourselves is whether we are just going to pass this Bill practically without any amendments, whether we will let it go through whilst realising that a great many of its clauses should not be there. The measure throws a very heavy responsibility on the Department of Agriculture, and I think the heads of that department would themselves be the first to acknowledge that they have not a sufficient number of inspectors, and that they have not sufficiently experienced inspectors, to exercise the very great powers proposed to be put into their hands. I certainly am most unwilling to hold up

the business of the country at the present juncture in order to discuss this Bill. I will, however, call attention to Clause 8—

Every occupier of an orchard in which any disease appears shall, within twenty-four hours after first discovering or becoming aware of its presence, give written notice thereof to an inspector or to the Under Secretary. Then, if one wants to know what disease is, one finds in the interpretation that—

“Disease” means any parasite, of whatsoever kind, and whether of vegetable or animal nature, which commonly attacks or is found on plants.

If we had an expert going round the orchards of this country, I guarantee that he could not go into a single orchard without finding at any rate something that should be reported.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Would that interpretation apply to black aphid on citrus trees?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The hon. member knows perfectly well that it does. One reason why I am prepared to give these powers to the department is that from an experience of 15 or 20 years I know that practically no use will be made of the powers. There is talk now about registration of orchards. Those hon. members who are interested in fruit-growing will remember that Mr. Lindley Cowen, who was at one time head of the Agricultural Department, took a great interest in this matter; and I preserve amongst my papers, and preserve carefully, a receipt given me by Mr. Lindley Cowen for “5s., registration of an orchard.” Speaking without the book, speaking from memory, I am under the impression that years ago an Act was passed insisting on every orchard in this State being registered. That act was in the hands of the Agricultural Department, and, again speaking without official knowledge and without returns, I should be very much surprised if 20 per cent. of the orchardists in this country ever registered as I did under Mr. Lindley Cowen’s regime at the Agricultural Department. Then there is the matter of penalties, which is dealt with in Clauses 30 and 31. I would ask hon. members particularly to read Clause

30 in connection with the clauses I have just quoted relative to giving notice of appearance of disease. Clause 30 reads as follows:—

Every person who commits any offence against this Act shall (if no penalty is hereinbefore specified for the offence) be liable on summary conviction to a penalty not exceeding one hundred pounds.

The following clause provides that—

The minimum penalty for any offence against this Act shall be one-twentieth of the maximum, and no court or magistrate shall have any power to reduce such minimum.

One does not require to emphasise that to see the absurdity of the position. The orchardist is called upon to send notice within twenty-four hours of the appearance of disease of any kind on any plant in any orchard, and if he fails to send notice as required there is a minimum penalty of £5, which cannot be remitted. I do not think that this is the kind of thing that members of Parliament or the fruit-growers of this State or the general public really wish to see. At the same time, I am certainly not going to oppose the second reading, because I realise that a measure of this kind is necessary. The only suggestion I can make to the leader of the House, in order to save time, is that there should be some provision for appeal to a Minister, because otherwise it really does not matter whether we pass this or not. If we look at this Bill, if we understand it, and if we realise that the Department of Agriculture is going to put it into force, then I do not want anything more than these three clauses which I have read. If one could appeal to the Minister, the position would be different. Personally, as a small fruit-grower, although I do not like the Bill going through at this pace, although I think it ought to be fully discussed, still, in all the circumstances, I would ask only for that one amendment of an appeal to the Minister, and that nothing should be done until the appeal has been heard. We all know what inspectors are in every department. Some of them are incapable, and some of them are officious, and

they will do damage to an orchard before the owner has a chance of appealing. I am trying to discover a way by which we can save time, by which we can meet what is admitted to be a serious position of affairs. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Cullen, as representing fruit-growing districts, pointed that out. But how can we do a fair thing to the fruit-growing industry and at the same time do a fair thing to ourselves in view of the circumstances in which we find ourselves at the present moment? All of us are anxious to assist the Government in getting through business as quickly as possible. Once we begin to discuss this Bill, in Committee, in the directions indicated by hon. members, we shall encounter all sorts of difficulties. There will be the question whether the Minister can accept such and such an amendment. Then there will be the sending of the amendment to the Lower House. Next, there will be indignation at being bothered with this sort of thing at the last minute. The result, most likely, will be that the Bill will be thrown out, when probably it is wanted. Having looked carefully through the measure and given consideration to all the circumstances, I would suggest to the Minister, and suggest also to hon. members generally, that the Bill might be accepted with the insertion of a provision that an appeal may be made to the Minister, and that until the appeal has been heard nothing shall be done. With such a provision, I personally would be prepared to let the measure go through without discussion.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: We might get disease scattered all over the country.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: In the meantime?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Yes.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am not discussing that, because I do not agree with the hon. member, and I think I could satisfy the hon. member and satisfy the House that he is wrong. However, I will not take up the time of the House in that direction at present. I am simply looking for means whereby we can get through this Bill with as much satisfaction to everybody concerned as may be possible in the circumstances. I think if

the Minister will agree to my suggestion—and I cannot see any very great objection to it myself—that we could let the Bill go through with a mild protest. We must, however, have some kind of appeal from the departmental officers to the Minister before damage is done.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: In regard to the penalties?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: With regard to the penalties and with regard to the eradication of disease. An appeal will not take very long. The orchardist will be able to get the telephone or the telegraph to work, and notify that there is an appeal coming along. Otherwise I fear serious damage might be done by an inspector acting hastily, without the possibility of appeal to the Minister. Fifty or a hundred pounds' worth of damage might easily be done and the unfortunate orchardist involved would have absolutely no redress.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [3.29]: Whilst I have no intention of opposing the Bill, it is perfectly clear to me that if the measure goes through the House in its present form it will prove fatal to nearly all private gardens. There are numbers of men, owners of farms and stations all over the State, who have a few trees and grow a little fruit. These men not only do not know how to cure disease when they come upon it, but most of them, I fear, will not know a disease when they see it. The consequence, under this Bill, would be that they must be fined. Under Clause 8, they are liable to be fined if they fail to report disease existing in their trees within 24 hours of the discovery of such disease.

Hon. A. Sanderson: They must be fined.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM. A great many of them will not know whether their trees have disease or not. They grow a little fruit—very imperfectly. I admit—

The Colonial Secretary: They have to report within 24 hours after first discovering disease.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Within 24 hours after they become aware of it.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: According to that, a man need not discover disease in his trees for six months. An inspector may come along and say, "I will look at your garden" and if he sees black scale there, he can summon the owner. If the owner declares that he was not aware of the existence of the scale the inspector might tell him that he ought to have known, and the result will be that the owner will be dealt with in a drastic manner. Orchards deserve to be treated from a commercial point of view, as the Bill contemplates, but while I am not saying this with any hostility to the Bill, we ought to try and find out how an individual can be protected from the proposed drastic treatment, and how he might be enabled to grow a little fruit. I know where black scale and other diseases exist, and from these orchards the owners get sufficient fruit for their families. My friend has put the matter so clearly that I do not think there can be any doubt about the drastic state of affairs which will exist in the case of small gardens.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [3.33]: I support the remarks made by Mr. Sanderson. I feel there should be the right of appeal. We have frequently seen the effect of the work of some of the inspectors of the various branches of the public service, and under the Act which we have on the statute-books dealing with orchards.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: It is their duty.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: But they exceed their duty. They come along as has been done in the past and order the destruction of some fruit trees which may possibly be a source of revenue to a poor person, and afterwards it is discovered that perhaps the difficulty could have been got over without the destruction of the tree, but after the tree has been demolished it cannot be replaced. The question of registration was suggested by the orchardists themselves, and it was their suggestion also, that it was only fair and right that compensation should be paid. The orchardists suggested they

should pay a fee of £1 to £5, or whatever they could agree to amongst themselves, and that the whole of the money should go into a fund from which they could pay compensation whenever trees were destroyed. I think that was reasonable and right, but this Bill it seems to me has been drawn up to take advantage of the good suggestion of the orchardists seeing that they were willing to subscribe to a fund. The department are quite willing that they should do so by way of registration, but they are not going to disburse that fund in the way anticipated by the orchardists, for under Clause 28 we see that there is to be no compensation paid in the case of destruction, so that the department intend to purloin the fund in the interests of departmental expenditure generally. There should be the right of appeal to the Minister, and I think it should be recognised in case of absolute destruction of an orchard, and the livelihood of the owner being interfered with, that compensation in some form should be paid. I will not put any obstacle in the way of the passing of the measure. I realise that many orchardists are anxious to see a measure of this nature on the statute-book. We have been told by Mr. Clarke that the orchardists are anxious to see the Bill go through, but I think it is due to members that we should not be asked in a few moments to pass a measure of such a drastic nature. I am quite willing, however, to fall into line with other members if they are satisfied with the Bill, provided there is provision for a definite appeal to the Minister, and the clause suggested by Mr. Cullen is inserted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [3.38]: Mr. Cullen suggested that the minimum fee for registration should be 5s. I might inform the hon. member that the minimum fee at present is 2s. 6d.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I am content with that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was a proposal that the fee for registration in connection with the efforts to eradicate the fruit fly should be £1.

but that proposal on being submitted to Cabinet was turned down, and the minimum fee of 2s. 6d. was decided upon. There is no provision made for appeal, and the Parliamentary Draftsman considered it unnecessary to do so, as the Justices Act gives every right to appeal to the court. Sir Edward Wittenoom said the Bill would be fatal to small gardens. These small gardens, from the experience of the inspectors, are the chief disseminators of the disease.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: It is true, that is the trouble.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will be useless to introduce legislation of this character and not make it apply to the small orchards.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: The small orchards will have to go.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Sanderson referred to the drastic penalties and pointed out that the maximum was £100. That is identically the same as the maximum penalty in the principal Act, the Insect Pests Act, which has been in operation for 16 years, and against which there has been no complaint.

Hon. A. Sanderson: It is the minimum penalty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We have gone further and established a minimum penalty for any offence against the Act, so that the administration of the Act might not be reduced to a farce. A man may be convicted of a serious offence against this Act and fined only a few shillings. This has been done under the Fisheries Act, magistrates having imposed a nominal penalty for a breach.

Hon. A. Sanderson: They know all the circumstances of the case.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It has been considered advisable to determine the minimum. Mr. Hamersley stated that the registration fee should go towards the payment of compensation to those whose orchards had been destroyed. That was not the intention of the orchardists. The intention was to provide more inspectors for the department, and that provision has been made in accordance with the suggestion of the fruit-growers' conference.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Interpretation:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is well that members should know what they are doing. The interpretation of "disease" is any parasite of whatever kind, and whether of vegetable or animal nature, which commonly attacks or is found in plants. I gather that the Minister is not in favour of the suggestion I made that the appeal should be to him.

The Colonial Secretary: After conviction?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Before anything is done. It is the question of rooting up vines that I am thinking of. Here we have disease meaning a parasite of any kind, and we are to trust to the Agricultural Department.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: I would point out that some of the orchardists' best friends are found on plants, and the interpretation of disease includes parasites of any kind found on plants. Take for instance the lady-bird; that is always found on plants. I think the Minister should make the position clear by striking out the words "or is found on plants." Lady-birds are found on plants and they are our friends. I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "Disease," the words "or is found on" be struck out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The interpretation of disease here is very much like what it is in the original Act which reads, "Disease means insect, fungus or parasite found on or attacking fruit or plants." All these measures must be administered with a certain amount of commonsense.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I hope the Minister will not bring forward that argument again—that it is found in the original Act. Probably that Act was passed as we are asked to pass this measure now, without discussion. In saying that it has worked all right, I know some

thing about the administration of the Agricultural Department. If the Minister will give this single concession I will let the Bill go.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We cannot give any concession. If members want this concession then they are not in favour of the Bill, and it should be thrown out.

Hon. E. M. Clarke: That is hardly fair.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The original definition says, "found on or attacking fruit or plants." That is very different from the definition we are now asked to pass in this Bill.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5, 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Appointment of officers:

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Will the Minister give an assurance that no inspector under the clause will be appointed unless he is duly qualified by a departmental examination.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Before any inspector is taken on he is submitted to a written examination and also a practical examination in the field.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is rather unfair to take advantage of one's position here to make comment favourably or unfavourably about officers of the department. No doubt the department do the best they can. An officer who has long since left the department, with whom I was well acquainted in his capacity as inspector—and he should have known something because he had an orchard in the district which was very badly mismanaged—was appointed an inspector under the Act and did many things which the department would not agree with.

The Colonial Secretary: How long since?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I will not give any details at all.

The Colonial Secretary: But that makes all the difference.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Then I shall put it in another way. I ask is the chief inspector satisfied with every officer who is at present under his control? It stands

to reason he is not. It is not fair to say that every inspector appointed is capable.

Hon. R. G. ARDAGH: The Minister has stated that before an inspector is appointed he must undergo a written and practical examination; that ought to be a sufficient assurance.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I know one individual who was appointed under the Act in the West province. He was transferred from one department to another, from His Majesty's prison to an inspectorship under this Act. That man never had any experience in an orchard.

The Colonial Secretary: When was the appointment made?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Two years ago. I have an assurance given me now that the department will insist on an examination.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No such appointment as that mentioned by Mr. Lynn has ever taken place since the present Government have been in power.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We do not want to be misled. We have heard a statement by Mr. Lynn and it has been flatly contradicted by the Minister. It is a serious thing if an orchardist is to be under the control of an inspector who is not competent, men without experience, because an inspector has the right to order the uprooting of trees.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I do not desire to mention names, but I will give the information to the Minister privately, and he can make the necessary inquiries. If he finds the information is not correct I shall require some explanation from my informant, but I have not the shadow of a doubt that my information is correct.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Notice to be given of appearance of disease:

Hon. J. DUFFELL: What is the meaning of the words "every occupier of an orchard"? An orchard means any garden. Suppose I have an orange tree growing in my backyard, and I notice black aphid on the tree, is it necessary for me to give information to an inspector at once?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause is very clear, and again, it is an

exact copy of Section 6 of the Insect Pests Amendment Act of 1898, and it does mean that if the member notices aphids on an orange tree in his back yard he must give notice within 24 hours after having discovered it.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Prunings to be destroyed

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The words "although the same be not affected" appear in the clause, and it seems to be a hardship.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: These words are necessary or there would be no means of preventing the spread of disease.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16—Young plants for sale not

to be grown near trees in bearing:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The words

"prescribed distance" are used in the

clause. What is the prescribed distance?

An orchardist may have to grub out trees

because someone near by has started

growing young plants.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE. The object of

the clause is that a nurseryman shall not

grow young plants among full-grown

trees. If such trees are infected it is

quite possible for the disease to be com-

municated to the young plants destined

to be sent away to orchards. The clause

is necessary.

(Clause put and passed.

Clauses 17 to 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Onus of proof:

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: The clause as-

sumes a man to be guilty, whereas under

British law a man is assumed to be inno-

cent until proved to be guilty. Cases

may easily occur in which it will be diffi-

cult to prove innocence.

Hon. J. R. CULLEN: There is no need

whatever for this departure from the or-

inary procedure of British justice. The

inspectors have ample power. I shall

vote against the clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It

will be very difficult to secure convictions

without the clause. There will be only

the word of the inspector against that of

the owner of the orchard. The inspector

may request the orchardist to take cer-

tain action, and the orchardist may ne-

glect to take that action. The clause, however, would make it incumbent on the orchardist to prove that he had carried out the instructions of the inspector.

Clauses put and negatived.

Clauses 33, 34—agreed to.

Clause 35—Regulations:

Hon. J. CULLEN: I move an amend-

ment—

That the following words be added at the end of paragraph (c) of Sub-clause 2:—"Provided that the registration fees shall be graded from 2s. *ad. upwards, according to area.*"

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Will an orchardist registered under the old Act be required to register again?

The Colonial Secretary: The registration of orchards has not been insisted upon for some years past, consequently it will be necessary to have registration all round.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It will be an injustice to ask people who have registered under the old Act to pay another

fee.

The Colonial Secretary: There has not been a fee collected.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I have in my safe a receipt signed by Mr. Lindsay (owner for the registration of my orchard in 1897 or 1898.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: You will have to pay your fee every year.

Hon. J. Duffell: According to the Minister, every one who plants a fruit tree in his back yard will have to register.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Very necessary, too.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: I know an instance of a practically deserted orchard which is reeking with fruit fly. The department should have all the powers necessary to prevent this sort of thing. I was once called upon to register an old fig tree that stood on a vacant block which I had purchased only a month or two before. On the other hand, I have not paid a registration fee for many

years.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I was under the impression that the registration of an orchard was not for the purpose of collecting fees, although a fee must be paid, but in order that the department may

have a record of that orchard. I gather now that it is proposed to collect an annual fee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is so.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Under the Bill "orchard" means any land used for the purpose of growing plants, or any place where any plant is cultivated or, having been cultivated, is growing. That means that everybody who has a garden will have to register every year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There must be registration every year, and there must be registration even if a man owns only one tree capable of carrying disease. The minimum fee is 2s. 6d. There is provision in the original Act for this registration, but the Act has never been administered, because the department has not had sufficient power.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Will the Minister say whether, in the case of one property on which there are five or six different plantations of only one or two trees each, it will be necessary to register each plantation as a distinct orchard?

Hon. J. F. Cullen: They ought to.

Hon. F. Connor: You will make every tree pay presently.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Unless the plantations are in close proximity they must be registered separately. If, however, they are on the one block, it will not be necessary.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I have on my property a number of different centres. At each habitation for the workers fruit trees have been planted for the benefit of those people. If an owner of a property is to be liable to this annual registration and fee, it will be far better to grub up the trees.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I think it is very necessary that there should be registration of every place where fruit trees are grown, but I would like to have some assurance that the Bill does not mean exactly what it says. Apparently there is to be an annual registration and, if for every place where any plant is growing, it will cover every house in Western Australia.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And every workers' home.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Under the definition of "orchard" we learn that it means any place where any plant is cultivated, or where any plant which has been cultivated is growing. Consequently, it would include every house in the State. If some means can be found to confine the registration to places where fruit trees are growing, I will be content. If people desire the luxury of growing fruit trees, they must do their part to prevent the spread of disease.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: While I agree to a great extent with the clause, I view with alarm the proposal that everyone owning even an apple tree or a pot plant should have to pay half a crown a year for the privilege. The case will be met by a single registration without having to pay the fee every year. Registration is necessary, because even in the metropolitan area there are places badly infected with disease such as Dalkeith and the University site.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member's proposal would not be sufficient. Provision is made for the collection of fees to provide for inspectors, and this has been done at the request of the fruitgrowers' conference. A number of inspectors will be required to administer this law, and fees will be necessary. The general taxpayer cannot be expected to bear this burden.

Hon. A. Sanderson: The general public will have to do so.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Probably it can be claimed that every plant on earth would be embraced, but that is not the intention. The department are concerned about fruit and have little concern in regard to ordinary plants.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: If this clause is enforced, every householder in the State will have to register his place. Surely this is not contemplated. It will mean that anyone growing a box plant on his window sill, having a plot of violets, a hedge plant or even a lawn will have to register his premises and pay half a crown a year. I am in sympathy with the object of the Bill, but an amendment is necessary.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: While the definition of "orchard" is very wide, no reasonable man could extend it to include every place. The African boxthorn carries over the fruit-fly from season to season, and probably other plants also. The object of the department is evidently to be placed in a position to order the destruction of such plants.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I wish to move an amendment to paragraph (b) of Subclause 2, with the object of protecting those who do not grow fruit trees. The inspector should have the power mentioned by Mr. Clarke, but registration and the payment of fees should be confined to those who grow fruit.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the hon. member can move his amendment it will be necessary for the other amendment to be withdrawn.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

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

That after "orchards," in line 1 of paragraph (b) of Subclause 2, the words "containing one or more fruit trees or grape vines" be inserted.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: The object of this clause is simply to permit regulations to be made. If the properties concerned were not registered the inspectors would have no cognisance of what was being grown.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It should not be necessary to register a flower garden.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: It may be necessary. These powers should be vested in the authorities so that if it becomes necessary regulations can be issued.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The amendment will not meet the case. The department will be given complete control over all the plants in the State.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Quite right.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If it is quite right the amendment will not alter the position.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It will, because otherwise flower gardens will have to be registered.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Mr. Clarke desires that the department should have control over other plants than fruit trees, which might carry the fruit-fly from season to season.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: They have that control, but it is a question of registering flower gardens.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The Minister said the object was to collect fees from fruitgrowers to enable more inspectors to be employed. According to the *Year Book* there are 20,000 acres of land under orchard, and allowing an average of ten acres each there will be 2,000 orchards each at 2s. 6d. returning £250.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Some of them will pay much more.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The total amount would not exceed £300, and the object of the fees will not achieve what the Minister desires. The department will have this enormous power, but I am satisfied that as in the past it will not be enforced. The department will have control over everything grown in the State, and it depends entirely on the Administration what the effect will be. I do not see how we can escape from registering every place in the State.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: The departmental officers know where fruit trees and vines are grown, and I suggest that it would be better to insist on registration after the different places have been inspected by the officers of the department.

The Colonial Secretary: You would want an army of inspectors.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: Already the department know where the orchards are.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: New ones are planted every week.

Hon. C. SOMMERS: No, every winter. I commend the suggestion to the Minister, and think it will be a good way out of the difficulty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot accept the suggestion of the hon. member. I can see that it would involve a great deal of expense. Our object is to throw the obligation on the orchardists to register. If the suggestion were

accepted it would mean that we would have to put on a big staff of inspectors to visit the orchards, and even the backyards of people who were growing fruit trees, in order to ascertain which owner of land upon which fruit trees were growing was registered under the Act. I do not object to Mr. Colebatch's amendment. It seems to me to leave things as they were.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I only wish to draw attention to the importance of the words "all or any" in this particular section. I take it that these words would mean that it would be within the power of the Governor to make regulations regarding any class of orchard. If it were thought advisable that only orchards containing one or more fruit trees or grape vines should be registered, it would be within the power of the Governor, under the Bill as it stands, to only include these particular orchards. It is entirely a matter of discretion, and we must give the Government credit for having some commonsense, more especially as under the Bill they have power to make regulations providing for the registration of special orchards. It does not necessarily say all orchards.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I now have to re-submit my amendment to this clause as follows:—

At the end of paragraph (c) of Sub-clause 2 to add the words "provided that registration fees shall be graded from 2s. 6s. upwards according to area."

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

Clause 36—agreed to.

New clause—Regulations and by-laws:

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 37—"(1) Any regulation or by-law made or purporting to be made under or by virtue of this Act shall—(a) be published in the 'Gazette'; (b) take effect from the date of publication or from a later date to be specified therein; and (c) be judicially noticed, and unless and until disallowed as here-

inafter provided, or except in so far as in conflict with any express provision of this or any other Act, be conclusively deemed to be valid. (2) Such regulations and by-laws shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within 14 days after publication if Parliament is in session, and if not, then within 14 days after the commencement of the next session. (3) If either House of Parliament pass a resolution at any time within one month after any such regulation or by-law has been laid before it, disallowing such regulation or by-law, then the same shall thereupon cease to have effect; subject, however, to such and the like savings as apply in the case of the repeal of a statute."

New clause passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 97:

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I would like an assurance from the Honorary Minister that in regard to this clause it shall apply only to places wherein a number of foreigners are residing. In certain portions of the State we know that foreigners are in great preponderance. It will be necessary that the measure should apply thereto. At Broome, for instance, the foreigners are in a great majority over the whites, and I can understand the closing of hotels altogether up there. But in a place like the metropolitan area I do not think it is likely to be required. I think the Minister should give some assurance that it is not intended that this shall apply to the metropolitan area.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I do not think there is any likelihood of the Bill being

brought into operation at all. To give the assurance mentioned by the hon. member would be very wrong and very unwise. In the places which I have mentioned there are many foreigners who are subjects of a country not at war with our Empire. Take the goldfields, where there are large numbers of Austrians and Italians. To single out a particular place where Italians are congregated would be about the worst thing we could do at the present time. If we were assured that it would only affect Austrians or Germans, belonging to countries with which we were at war, I could understand the suggestion. This Act provides for something which may happen, but which I do not think will happen.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 116:

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I desire to draw the attention of hon. members of this House to certain statements which have been uttered by members of another place. We can only gather from these statements, that if unlimited powers are granted, as provided by this clause, we shall not know where we are going to be landed. It will do more, in my opinion, to create a panic than anything which has been before the House. It will only be a matter of a few days when the Minister will be waited upon and asked to close hotels at six o'clock in the evenings, if the clause is passed. Recently a certain section of the community waited upon the Attorney General and asked him for certain amendments to the Licensing Act, and almost before they commenced to put forward their case he pointed out that they were only asking for half a loaf, and he went on to say, "Return me and my party to power and you will get anything you want." In the face of these remarks it behoves us to review hurried legislation of this kind calmly and fairly. What I propose to do is to move an amendment as follows:—

That the first four lines be struck out and the following inserted in lieu:—
"Notwithstanding anything in Section

97 of the principal Act, the Governor may from time to time by proclamation declare that no licensee shall have to keep his licensed premises open for the sale of liquor, or sell any liquor, or permit or suffer any liquor to be drunk or consumed in, or upon his licensed premises at any time before nine o'clock in the morning, or after nine o'clock at night, upon any day in the week except under the authority of an occasional license."

I am prepared to admit that is drastic, but at the same time we know what to expect, and the public will know what to expect. They will know that they cannot, under any circumstances, get a drink before nine in the morning or after nine at night. I think the amendment would meet the wishes of the majority of the people; but the Bill, as we have it before us, gives power to close at any time or altogether. If some fanatical word went forth that the hotels were to be closed at six o'clock, a great deal more harm than good would result. If the amendment I propose is agreed to we will know exactly that there is something definite about it. In the Bill there is nothing definite. It seems to me that the Ministry bringing down the Bill has not sufficient vertebra to say definitely what they consider, in any shape or form, should be placed in this Bill in the way of restriction.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: I intend to support the clause as it is. Notwithstanding the assurance we have had from the Honorary Minister that he hopes no portion of this Bill will be put into force. I trust the Government will not be afraid to put any portion of the measure into force if the necessity arises. My fear is not that the Government will enforce it too drastically, but that the Government will fail to enforce it in cases where it will be required. I have always protested against legislation of a fanatical nature in connection with the licensing laws, but it is not encouraging for us to find at the present time in country towns, when every other class of business is practically at a standstill, the hotels are doing a bigger trade than before, and it

is not unusual to see a number of men, whom the farmers are unable to keep in employment, coming in with big cheques—which I hope have been well earned—and knowing that it is extremely problematical when they will be able to get their next employment, immediately proceed to knock down those cheques. These men when remonstrated with will invariably declare that the Government will have to look after them. I certainly would not be a party to limit discretion in the manner the amendment proposes. If the Government think it necessary to close the hotels at six o'clock, the responsibility will be on them and the decent section of the community will not be afraid.

Hono. J. F. CULLEN: The closing of licensed hotels, subject to police surveillance, may be the means of sending men with their cheques, to whom reference has just been made, to shanties which will grow up in an hour like mushrooms, but I am ready to give the Government the powers asked for in this clause. I am sure these powers are safe with any set of responsible Ministers.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I hope the Government will adhere to the Bill as it has been introduced. This, or any other Government, can always rely upon me to curtail in every possible way the opportunity to obtain liquor. I recognise that the liquor evil, not only in this State, but throughout the world, is the curse of the present century, and I trust the Government will adhere to the measure as it stands. I would be a national prohibitionist to-morrow if I thought by putting down liquor we would not be driving people to consuming drugs.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I think it would be wrong to include in a Bill of this nature a provision such as that moved by Mr. Duffell. If at some future time the hon. member will bring forward an amendment of this kind to the Licensing Act, I shall be very glad to give him my support. I hold fairly extreme views in regard to the liquor question, but I recognise that I have no right to force those extreme views upon the majority of the people. This Bill is purely an emergency one, and

I agree with what Mr. Colebatch has said. I think the Bill gives the Government drastic power, but that may be needed, and hon. members can fairly trust the Administration, at a time like this, not to overstep the mark.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: No remark which has been made will induce me to alter or withdraw my amendment. We are fully aware of the fact, and there is no getting away from it, that a number of people are at the present time out of employment, or on short employment, and I think an amendment such as the one I have moved would in itself be sufficient to call the attention of those not already thrown out of work to the fact that in the near future they may be in a similar position, and that then it might be too late to conserve what they are earning at the present time. The amendment would have the effect of awakening people to the existing stern realities, and to enable them, before it is too late, to conserve what they are earning at the present time. I have not heard one remark which will induce me to withdraw my amendment. I realise the necessity for it and those engaged in the liquor trade, I am sure, would abide by the amendment, if it were placed on the statute-book.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: Clause 2 puts an immense power into the hands of the Government. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the Government hold very strong views on this suggestion. I would be the last to suggest that they would be likely to make an unfair use of the power, yet we must remember that the Attorney General told a deputation the other day that they had not asked for half enough and that if they had asked for more they would have got it. The power is large to be in the hands of men of these extreme views. I agree with Mr. Colebatch that facilities should not be continued for men to knock down their cheques in country towns. I would like to protect those men from handing over their money to the publicans. Seeing the reception the amendment has had at the hands of the Committee I would

suggest to the mover that it be withdrawn.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Power to search for and seize liquor:

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I move an amendment—

That after "be" in line 4 the words "for illicit purposes" be inserted.

I am satisfied that the clause does not convey the intention of its framers. If we give a policeman power to enter a private house and search for liquor where will we get to? Only the other day in Sydney a policeman went into a house and levied blackmail. There is no need for this kind of legislation at all.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I hope Mr. Cullen will not press the amendment; certainly the clause is an extremely drastic one.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: It is positively dangerous.

Hon. J. E. DODD: But it is necessary that it should be drastic. If the amendment is persisted in there will be no need for the clause at all, because all the powers are given under the previous clause. We find that even under the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act the police have not sufficient power to-day. There is nothing in any Act of Parliament which prevents any person from storing in his house as much liquor as he may desire, and consequently it is easy for persons to get in a big store of liquor, and it is equally difficult to prove that it is for illicit purposes. This is done on the goldfields, and, I understand, in the timber districts also, where foreigners are dealing in large quantities of wine—some of it known as "pinkie."

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The existing Act deals with that.

Hon. J. E. DODD: No, not in the way we would like to deal with it if the emergency should arise. Surely at a time like this it is not asking too much that the police should have power to search a house for large quantities of liquor. As for the Attorney General, may I point out that this measure cannot be

brought into force except by proclamation, and that therefore it is not for any one Minister alone to consider.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I voted heartily for full discretionary powers to the Government, but it is an entirely different matter to give discretionary powers to a policeman. Furthermore the Minister misses one of the points I press. The clause would give a policeman power to search if he believed there was liquor in any house; my amendment will give him the same power if he believes there is liquor there for an illicit purpose.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is a drastic clause no doubt. Last session of Parliament we passed the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act, one of the most drastic pieces of legislation ever put on the statute-book. It was not in operation six months before those for whom it was made evaded it. This very clause is now in operation in portions of the State, and I commend the man who put it into operation. For some sections of the community only drastic legislation is of any avail. On the Kurrawang woodline, before the passage of the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act, the "bumboat" went out and sold along the line. To-day foreigners along that line band themselves together and order supplies of liquor from the nearest town, and the man who used to take it out on the "bumboat" and sell it, now takes it out and delivers the orders, and so gets over the provisions of the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act. If the clause is agreed to the only portions of the State where it is ever likely to be put into operation are those places where foreigners are congregated. On the Kurrawang woodline there are over 400 foreigners—mostly Austrians and Italians—and if they become primed with liquor during the present European crisis we may have a small war in our own State. There is nothing to prevent 50 Austrians on the woodline ordering 50 cases of whisky in Kalgoorlie and nothing to prevent a man from delivering it. The question is one of administration, and the administration of this measure will be in the hands of the police. Further, the

measure is not likely to be enforced except on the goldfields; and I have sufficient confidence in the integrity of the police force to believe that the powers under this Bill will not be abused. Probably, if the Committee refuse to agree to the clause, some of my constituents will be placed in a very awkward situation indeed. I hope the clause will pass as it stands.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not think that if Mr. Cullen carries his amendment the effect will be to protect the public to any greater extent than is provided by the Bill. After all, it only comes to what the police officer believes. It is entirely a question of what the policeman says he believes.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I should like to get a little more information as to what the clause really means. I presume that under this clause the police may take action all over the State; so that really the meaning of the clause is that it will be an offence to have liquor on your premises at all; and, therefore, if a policeman, on examining unlicensed premises, finds liquor on them he can confiscate it. Suppose an Italian or Austrian or other foreigner has a dozen or half a dozen bottles of beer in his place; under this clause a policeman would have power to go into the place and seize the liquor, although the liquor had been paid for and there was no intention of selling it. That is a very strong power indeed to entrust to the police; and we know there are police officers and police officers. If a constable is disposed to be interfering or excessively zealous, he may cause a good deal of trouble under this clause. Even if a combination of people have a quantity of drink on unlicensed premises, it can, under this clause, be taken away and confiscated.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: The Honorary Minister said just now that Clause 4 conferred on police officers practically all the powers that Clause 5 gives them. But Clause 5 goes very much further.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I say that if this amendment is carried there will be no need at all for Clause 5.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: Clause 4 in plain words gives police officers all powers in relation to illicit sale of liquor under this measure, which prevents the supply of liquor in proclaimed districts or outside such hours as may be proclaimed. All the powers conferred on police officers by the principal Act may also be exercised under this measure, wherever it is suspected or believed that offences are being committed against this measure. Therefore, it is necessary to refer to the principal Act, Section 123 of which chiefly confers powers. The section reads—

1. Upon complaint on oath before any justice of the peace that the complainant suspects and believes any liquor to have been sold

(a.) by any person not holding a license authorising the sale thereof; or

(b.) by any licensee at or in some premises or place not authorised by his license and to be specified in such complaint, and

(c.) upon reasonable grounds being therein shown for such suspicion and belief,

such justice of the peace may grant a warrant to any police officer to enter and search any specified premises or place; and such police officer may break open any doors not opened within a reasonable time after demand, and may seize all liquors which he then and there finds

Are not those powers sufficient to enable the police officer to work under this measure, and cannot we then delete Clause 5, which is the bone of contention?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can move to strike out Clause 5 after this amendment has been disposed of. I would ask hon. members to speak to the amendment.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: It is rather difficult to keep within the actual bounds of the amendment, in view of the arguments which have been used by the Honorary Minister. The Honorary Minister said that there are certain powers under the Illicit Sale of Liquor Act. So far

as I can see, however, those powers are not given to the police under this Bill, which confers on them only the powers under the main Act of 1911. The Illicit Sale of Liquor Act Amendment Act of 1913 goes much further than the main Act of 1911, and I think it would have been well to include the powers of the later Act in this Bill.

Hon. J. E. DODD: That later Act still continues.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: But not as regards this measure. Under the clause now before the Committee, however, a policeman might, for instance, take a case of whisky out of my cellar. Why should that power be required, seeing the extensive powers which the police already have? The only thing the amendment seeks to impose on the policeman is that he shall believe that the stuff is there for illicit sale. Why should not he believe that? Why should he be allowed to seize liquor which is stored on premises for lawful purposes? The amendment would do no harm, and it would take the sting out of the clause.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I would like to meet the wishes of the Committee, but I am not satisfied that the Committee desire the inclusion of the amendment. Where the police believe there is a large amount of liquor stored on premises, they have the right to enter and search those premises. We know that there are such places on the goldfields.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Why should the police have power to take the liquor away?

Hon. J. E. DODD: They have that power when they can prove the liquor is there for sale or for illicit purposes.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: But the clause does not say so.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In circumstances like the present, surely we should give some power to the police in cases where a large number of foreigners may have a considerable quantity of wine stored—and bad wine at that. Unfortunately, most of them drink wine. Had Mr. Gawler seen the orgies which occur at these places he would know what it is we are trying to prevent, especially at such a

time of excitement as this. On one occasion the foreigners actually took possession of a place on the Northern Goldfields; and they are in a majority at various centres. Therefore the Government consider that the police should have these powers, which I do not disguise are extreme. They will, however, only be used in proclaimed areas, and not all over the State. The liquor that is taken possession of is confiscated only for so long as the measure continues in force; not altogether. It may be necessary for martial law to be proclaimed, but it is much better to pass a Bill of this character than to go to the Federal authorities and ask for martial law to be proclaimed.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

New clause—Power to reduce rent:

Hon. J. E. DODD: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 6:—"Any lessee or sub-lessee of licensed premises may require his lessor to abate a proportionate part of the rent reserved by the lease during the operation of any proclamation under sections two or three of this Act, and, in default of an agreement between the parties, the matter shall be referred to the Chairman of the Licensing Court for the District in which the licensed premises are situated as sole arbitrator under the Arbitration Act of 1895, and the arbitrator may, in his discretion, award that the rent to be payable by the lessee or sub-lessee during such period shall be at such reduced rate as the arbitrator shall, in the circumstances of the case, deem reasonable, and his award shall be binding upon the parties and final."

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: This seems to me to make provision that the landlord shall forego some portion of his rent in consideration of the sale of liquor being stopped. But what about the license; will the Government make any rebate?

Hon. J. E. DODD: That is a matter I cannot give a definite answer about. I take it the Government will deal fairly

with any person provided they can do so within the law.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILL—PERTH MUNICIPALITY GAS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.40] in moving the second reading said: Some few years ago the Perth City Council purchased the undertaking of the Perth Electric Light and Gas Company Limited, but before doing so they secured Parliamentary authorisation for the raising of £525,000. After the purchase and after all expenses in connection with the purchase had been settled they had a balance of £55,000. Since then the Perth Council have not been able to spend the money, and now they approach Parliament with the object of getting legislative sanction to spend the money in another direction, still in the direction of assisting the business of the municipality as manufacturers of gas and suppliers of electric light. Owing to an alteration in the electric current from the direct to the alternating system it has been found necessary to make purchase of certain appliances, and these will run into a fairly large sum, so it is proposed to utilise the £55,000 that remains after the Perth Gas Company had been paid by the Perth City Council, in the direction of accomplishing the reforms of the electric lighting rendered necessary by the agreement between the Perth City Council and the Government in connection with the power. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received acquainting the Council that the requested amendments had been made.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

MOTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK ADVANCES.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter "That in the opinion of this House the action of the Government in withholding 50 per cent. of the advances to the farmers is against the best interests of the country."

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East) [5.44]: I have only a few words to say. I must support the motion. It is not the intention of the motion to merely criticise an ordinary administrative act of the Government, but it goes much further in criticising an act of repudiation on the part of the Government. The reduction of the advances by 50 per cent. was not intended to apply to future transactions, but to transactions which had already been completed as far as the bank are concerned. The bank had been applied to for advances and the individuals had been practically directed on their part to make commitments in respect to the money to be advanced. They made contracts and the payment of only 50 per cent. means that the contractors in some cases and workmen in other cases have been deprived of their money, and in some cases storekeepers have been deprived of their money. Of course we understand that it is only for the time being and that ultimately they will all be paid, but the inconvenience is

very great and it is not a nice thing for our Agricultural Bank to do something which, if it were done by a private banking institution, would compel that institution to close its doors. I do not think the Government should have allowed the finances of the Agricultural Bank to get into such a position that it would have to repudiate the obligations it had entered into. There might at any time arise circumstances which would compel the trustees of the Agricultural Bank to decrease the volume of their operations, and to say, "We cannot do as much as we hoped to do," but there should not be a time when the Agricultural Bank could repudiate the obligations it had entered into. The Government were embarrassed no doubt by the action of a past Federal Government in opening the Federal Savings Bank in opposition to the State Savings Bank. Two or three years ago our State Savings Bank showed an excess of deposits over withdrawals amounting to half a million of money in a single year, all of which was available for the Agricultural Bank and kindred institutions, whereas last year, consequent very largely upon the action of the Federal Savings Bank, our State Savings Bank actually had to pay out in withdrawals £46,000 more than it received. The Government are entitled to sympathy on that account. When we recollect that during the last three years the Government have borrowed no less than 10 millions of money, it is discreditable that this institution should have been allowed to run short of funds in this way. We had a long debate last night over workers' homes, and I refer to it now because at the same time as the Government made their announcement that the Agricultural Bank were cutting down their advances by one-half, they made an announcement in connection with workers' homes that the board might stay its hand. I wish to illustrate the different treatment meted out to the two parties concerned. I have a letter received from a client of the Agricultural Bank, and signed by the managing trustee under

date 2nd September. I do not intend to read the first portion of it as that applies to financial details between the client and the bank, but I will read the latter portion which states—

I regret that the amount of capital which the Government can place at the disposal of the bank for the present will only enable us to pay half the value of your certificate. The balance will be made available when the Government are able to finance on the usual lines.

Therefore, to-day the Agricultural Bank can give its clients no assurance of immediate relief. It has to tell its clients that the money which the Government can place at the disposal of the bank will enable it to pay only half the value of clients' certificates. This is the attitude taken up towards the clients of the Agricultural Bank. I also have a copy of an extract from a newspaper, which, according to the signature required to articles dealing with Federal politics, is edited by a party member of "our party"—not my party, but the other party—and concerned in the ownership of it, I understand, is the Colonial Secretary himself. This extract appeared in the *Geraldton Express* on the 24th August—about a fortnight ago—

Keen disappointment was occasioned last week among all sections of the community when word came that work of erecting workers' homes was not to be gone on with. About a dozen applications for houses had recently been approved and of course successful applicants were disappointed when, on account of the war, the Government decided not to build at present. Naturally, too, tradesmen, labourers, merchants, and business people generally were much concerned. It must be said, however, that all concerned viewed the matter philosophically and were prepared to submit to the ill-fortunes of war.

Apparently they made no protest and under circumstances it would have been extravagant behaviour on their part if they had done so. The article goes on to say—

All will be pleased to learn that the Government have reversed their decision and it has been decided to immediately commence the erection of the buildings which have been approved by the board.

These are not buildings in the course of erection which it might be desirable to complete, but it has been decided to commence the erection of buildings approved. The extract continues—

Mr. H. Wilkinson, the officer in charge of the works, is now making the necessary preliminary arrangements, and hopes to have the work in hand in the course of a few days.

I do not know whether that statement is right or wrong; I have given my authority for it. If it is incorrect it is very wrong indeed to mislead the people in Geraldton with the idea that the Government will go on building workers' homes for them, and it is particularly wrong when it is done on the eve of an election in which no doubt they are very much interested; but if it is right the position is worse, because it would be no less than criminal for the Government to go on with the erection of new homes at a time when the Agricultural Bank is compelled to write to clients and tell them it cannot definitely say when it will be able to meet its obligations.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.50]: This is practically, as the hon. Mr. Colebatch has stated, a motion of no-confidence in the Government and I tremble when I think of the possibilities if, after the motion is carried, we are forced to appear before the country prior to the 21st October as has already been arranged. I will not say it was an electioneering speech, but it synchronises so happily with the eve of the coming elections that one can see it is very possible it might have some effect in assisting the cause of the Liberal—cum—Country party on Saturday next. The hon. Mr. Baxter said the Government took an unwise and drastic step in restricting the advances of the Agricultural Bank by 50 per cent. The position is that either the hon. gentleman has

a superficial knowledge of the situation or that he is deliberately unfair to the Government. When war was declared, we received a cable from the Agent General strongly advising us to conserve our financial resources as much as possible as the money market in the Old Country had been closed to all borrowers. We had at the time a fair amount of money in hand; we had quite enough to carry us on for some months, but we did not know how long the war would last, we do not know now how long the war will last—it might last only a few months or it might last a few years. Consequently it was necessary to husband our resources in order to be able to meet other engagements as well as the engagements entered into in connection with the Agricultural Bank advances. The hon. Mr. Baxter implied that the Government should be in a position to meet a crisis of this kind. It has been pointed out that we have borrowed a large amount of money during the last three years, but we have borrowed it only with the anticipation of spending it quickly. No sane Government would borrow money to hoard up for the future, because if we borrow money we have to pay interest on it straightaway, so that all Governments simply borrow enough to carry them on over a period of a few months. About six months ago when we raised a loan on the London money market, we could have raised considerably more than we did, but if we had done so, we would not have been able to utilise it and would have been paying interest on a large proportion of it from then until now. The Agricultural Bank approves, we discovered when the cable communication came from Sir Newton Moore, amounted to close on £600,000. There were also commitments in other directions, and of course only limited loan moneys were available. We had to husband our resources. We realised that the Federal Government might come to our assistance; indeed it was their duty to come to our aid, because they have the monopoly of this note issue, and the State Government have no power to issue notes, a power which they could have

enjoyed under other circumstances. We met Sir John Forrest in conference and placed the position before him. He could give us no definite assurance that the Federal Government would extend relief to us, but he gave us some little hope that if we were in a position to contribute to the gold reserve, the Federal Government might be able to issue notes to the extent of four times the amount of gold we were prepared to deposit. We saw the necessity more than ever for husbanding our resources, a phrase to which the hon. Mr. Baxter takes strong exception, because we realised that for every pound we could put down to the Commonwealth, we would be able up to a certain limit in the discretion of the Federal Treasurer to lift up four notes. According to the hon. Mr. Baxter we were sacrificing the position of hundreds of men on the land. War entails sacrifices and this war is entailing sacrifices on people in every part of the British dominions. All brave spirits must be prepared to endure sacrifices. In England now they are enduring sacrifices: those fighting on the battle fields for our national existence are making sacrifices, and the widows of soldiers—the new-made widows—have to endure sacrifices, and is not the farmer prepared to make some sacrifice? Under such circumstances as these, I would be sorry to think he was not prepared to do so, and I would be sorry to think that Mr. Baxter is truly representing the farmer's ideas and opinions. I contend that what we did will prove to be the salvation of the farmer. We shall have considerably more money than we would have had if we had adopted the suggestion of Mr. Baxter and Mr. Colebatch. If we had handed out this money we would have so much less to put down now to the Federal Treasurer who insists that 25 per cent. of the money we require must be deposited in gold. The promise comes from the Federal Treasurer that his Government will finance the State Government. Yes, but only to a limited extent, although a contrary impression has been created by none less

than Sir John Forrest himself. He sent a wire to Albany stating that the Albany harbour works could now be proceeded with, as the Federal Government were supplying the State Government with funds. Our loan expenditure for last year was on an average £240,000 per month. Our requirements this year to permit of necessary public works being proceeded with amount to £197,000. We decided not to ask for anything unreasonable from the Federal Government. In view of the fact that Sir John Forrest stated when we consulted him that they could only lend to a limited extent, we asked for a loan of £130,000 a month. We cut down the amount as much as possible. Shortly afterwards we noticed in the Press that the Federal Government had stated that they were prepared to lend the States sufficient money to enable public works to be carried on to their full volume. The Premier thereupon telegraphed to the Prime Minister and asked if it was correct, and if he was prepared to advance money to the State in order that public works could be carried on to their full volume. The Prime Minister wired to the effect that what we had asked for was quite high enough; inferentially he would not be in a position to supply more. In return for the use of the notes which cost the Commonwealth merely the expense of printing we shall have to pay something like £60,000 a year, or 4 per cent. interest on the money. The Government brought in a Bill authorising the increase of the capital of the Agricultural Bank by half-a-million. Under the old authorisation £600,000 was approved of but not paid. The hon. Mr. Baxter is evidently under the impression that there was no necessity for the Bill I submitted for the consideration of the House the other night. He apparently forgets that the Agricultural Bank approvals are a commitment, and that without parliamentary authorisation no commitment can take place. The position of accounts in connection with the Agricultural Bank was when I introduced that Bill that there was only available

in the way of commitments the sum of £260,000. The bank could not constitutionally commit to any greater extent without fresh parliamentary authorisation. The hon. Mr. Baxter in suggesting that the bank was authorised for a commitment of £900,000 forgets that we have to go by approvals, and that every approval amounts to a commitment, and that we must not exceed the amount authorised by Parliament. When I introduced the Bill £260,000 remained which we could provide by way of commitments. At the rate of progress at which money has been lent in the past that amount will soon disappear. Although the money is not actually handed out, the fact that approval is given is sufficient to constitute a commitment. Mr. Baxter said that a minute had been issued to the public service that public servants would not be put off, and that there were hundreds of men in the Government Departments who could be done without. The dogmatism of the hon. member is cheerfully refreshing. It seems that he is not in his right place; he should be appointed the Public Service Commissioner of the State; and if he could discover hundreds of persons in the public employ who were not earning their money, or who could be dispensed with, if he received a salary for that work of £5,000 a year it would be a good plan for the Government to secure his services and give him an opportunity of exercising his genius. With regard to the civil service, the Government are not prepared to shoulder all the burdens, consequent upon this war, upon the civil servants of the country; these are prepared to make sacrifices, and have already made a commencement in that direction. They are organising and we find that they propose to contribute to a special fund, which contribution will mean a sum of something like £15,000 a year. The policy of the Government is that all backs shall bear a fair share of the burden which has to be borne whilst the war is in operation, which war will probably continue for some time to come. The hon. member's speech was a marvel of inconsistency. He says, "Are we to con-

tinue to borrow in order to keep things going?" He condemns borrowing, but he apparently forgets that the whole of our agricultural railways are constructed out of borrowed moneys. He does not appear to be aware that the amounts from the Agricultural Bank are at present mainly advanced out of loan moneys. I may say that almost all these moneys are so advanced. He is evidently not aware that the seed wheat and fertilisers which the Government have supplied to agriculturists in dry areas in order to tide them over the drought have been purchased by money which has come from Loan Funds. He says that the farmers want assistance to tide them over bad times, and if the Government do not assist them he asks who will? What inconsistency! In the first place he says that we should cease borrowing money and then goes on to say that the farmer wants assistance, and asks who should render that assistance except the Government. I have a very lively recollection of what took place a few nights ago when the hon. gentleman joined with others in refusing to protect the Government in connection with their transactions in respect to seed wheat and fertiliser. They absolutely refused to give us security; and this will stand on record against them in the pages of *Hansard*. They have tied the hands of the Government, and have prevented them from rendering any future assistance to the farmers. He says that there is no thrift in Western Australia, and that there are fourteen houses of amusement in Perth. He did not say that the Government were to blame, but judging from the tone of his speech he must have intended that the Government were open to censure by reason of the fact that the people of Perth, instead of going about with the features of an undertaker, decided to go in for innocent and harmless amusement. The hon. gentleman said that the Government should advance five shillings an acre on fallow, and that they should have granted assistance in the way of seed wheat and fertiliser to the extent of £300,000 instead of £90,000. This would

have meant still more borrowed money, still more loans, and yet he said that borrowing should be discontinued. I think I must now withdraw my remarks concerning the wisdom of his being appointed Public Service Commissioner; there should be wider avenues for the exercise of his genius in the position of Treasurer of the State. I contend that what the Government have done—and it has been approved by the people of the State—is in the best interests of the country. The delay in connection with the payment of advances by the Agricultural Bank to the extent of fifty per cent. has placed the Government in a very much stronger financial position than could possibly have been the case in other circumstances. The war had not broken out a fortnight, the notification of the war had not gone forth a fortnight, and scarcely had the Government decided to restrict advances, when there was a clamour in every agricultural district of the State, engineered by the gentlemen who had their eye on the forthcoming election. Is that British pluck, British endurance, or British fair-play? The money, so far as we have received any from the Federal Government, amounts to £20,000. That is all they have been able to supply us with up to date. We had to put down £5,000 and were returned £20,000 in notes. We are ready to put down considerably more as soon as the Commonwealth Government are ready to furnish the paper money in place of sovereigns.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Have they told you they are not ready?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I understand so. It is no fault of ours. We have the money, and we are in a position to borrow, under the terms offered, a fairly large amount.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: And they are not willing to give it to you?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot say.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It is as well to be definite.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have not been in communication with the Premier for the last two days. I have no doubt that the motion will be carried, probably by a narrow majority if it goes to a division. I do not intend to call for a division, but I leave it to the good sense and to the justice, impartiality and fair-play of hon. members, and would ask them whether at this particular period of our history, with this crisis before us, a motion of this character should be tabled. I contend that it should not be carried in view of the explanation I have given, and if it is carried I can assure hon. members that it will cause no sleepless nights to the members of the Ministry.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: That is right.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East—in reply) [6.8]: The Colonial Secretary has taken a long time to explain the position of the Government in regard to withholding advances from the farmers. I still can see no reason why this has been done, even in view of the fact as has been said that they are only husbanding their resources. The Premier knows that they are going to get a certain amount of money from the Federal Treasurer. Surely he can do something better than he has done for the farmers. The evidence shows that even up to a late hour yesterday he had not done anything better for the farmers than to pay fifty per cent. of the advances due from the Agricultural Bank. Both the hon. Mr. Cornell and the Colonial Secretary have made use of statements that I was merely doing this from the electioneering point of view. I say emphatically that I have no interest in the elections beyond the interest of an ordinary elector. It is well known that there are no candidates out in the interests of the Country party, and no hon. member in this Chamber can accuse me of working in any election for any particular candidate.

Hon. J. Cornell: Have you no aspirations?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: None whatever. The hon. Mr. Cornell stated that the

miners had not received any benefit during the past few years. I can say in that regard that the miners have enjoyed good wages and constant employment, and have been in a position to be able to enjoy every luxury, which has been denied to the man on the land. The man on the land has been content to slave on, and wages and cash have been an unknown quantity to him. It has been a pure existence for the man on the land, and luxuries have been unknown to him.

Hon. J. Cornell: The miners are assured of an early death at least.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The remarks of the Colonial Secretary this afternoon have not convinced me that anything has occurred to prevent the Government from carrying out their just obligations; they should be prepared to meet obligations like this. I cannot understand what kind of finance they call it when during the first week of a war they curtail their expenditure and refrain from meeting their obligations, and reduce by fifty per cent. the advances from the Agricultural Bank. If any private banking institution were to do the same thing, what would be thought of it?

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): A moratorium was declared in England during the first few days of the war.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We have the Premier's assurance that the employees of the service are not going to be put off and retrenched. The Colonial Secretary has not replied to my remarks as to why in view of the fact that they have cut down the advances to the farmers by fifty per cent. the same thing has not been made to apply to the Workers' Homes scheme. As he has not referred to it, I take it that this is correct. Certainly the statement demands some reply from him. It shows that what I stated yesterday afternoon in this Chamber was quite correct. There is no getting away from the fact. The workers' homes legislation was class legislation. It seems to me that a hundred per cent. should have been advanced to the farmers just as it has been advanced for the building of workers' homes. If it is right in one case it is

right in another. There is no doubt that preference has been shown to the worker, and that this preference has been proved up to the hilt. The Colonial Secretary in stating the amount authorised to the Agricultural Bank mentioned the sum of £160,000. As I said yesterday, under the old authorisation, the authorisation was close on £900,000, which had to be provided, during the next half-year, and to which I take it this new authorisation is meant to apply. I do not think they can find more than this sum of money, and therefore there is no need for any new authorisation. We are told that in the near future they will meet the full hundred per cent. I have every reason to believe that the statement is correct, that the amount which is being provided from the Agricultural Bank this month amounts to something like £16,000 only. As a matter of fact it takes £40,000 a month to carry the Agricultural Bank through. In reference to the question of borrowing, what I stated yesterday afternoon was that borrowing should be curtailed, and that the sooner we did that in this State the better it would be. I quite recognise that agricultural railways are provided out of borrowed money, and that we cannot go on with them without borrowing a certain amount of money. I was merely desiring that the Government should not go too far. The Colonial Secretary admitted that the interest on the amount proposed to be borrowed from the Federal Treasurer would mean another £60,000. It is really alarming the way in which this interest bill is creeping up. I do not think there is any need to reply any further, and I will leave the matter in the hands of the Chamber.

Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT—STATE OF BUSINESS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central): I wish to inform hon. members that there are two Bills before another place. One is the Postponement of Debts Bill, and the other an in-

dustrial measure. There is to be an amendment to one of the Bills, which will probably be accepted, and that will necessitate a clean print being made. Therefore it is impossible for us to conclude our business to-night.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Do you think we will finish on Tuesday?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.
Question passed.

House adjourned at 7.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 3rd September, 1914.

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

QUESTION — RAILWAY, WONGAN HILLS-MULLEWA.

Mr. MOORE (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: 1, When will the ballasting of the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway be completed? 2, Will he favourably consider the reducing of all rates for carriage of all goods directly the ballasting is completed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: It would be impossible for me to give from memory either the date or the information required by the hon. member. Therefore I shall have to ask him to give notice of the question.

Mr. MOORE: Then I give notice of the question for the next sitting.

QUESTION — SLEEPER HEWERS' LICENSES.

Mr. LAYMAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is he aware that many hundreds of men in the South-West previously working as sleeper hewers are now out of employment owing to their not being granted hewers' licenses; also that some of the said men, together with those dependent on them, are in a state bordering on destitution? 2, If so, will the Government reconsider its determination to refuse to grant licenses to these men?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: The question is one which requires some consideration, and I will ask the hon. member to give notice of it.

QUESTION—ROAD MAINTENANCE, CLAREMONT.

Mr. MONGER (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is it a fact that the Minister has served a notice upon the Claremont Roads Board requiring them to put that portion of Railway-road facing the Karrakatta cemetery in repair? 2, Has the board refused to comply with such notice? 3, If so, what action does the Minister propose to take in the matter?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: It is true that the Public Works Department took exception to the state