

BILL—KOJONUP RACECOURSE.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. K. Maley—Greenough) [11.2] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to provide for the improving and utilising of a reserve at Kojonup as a racecourse and recreation and show ground. The Kojonup Race Club trustees hold a 99 years lease of reserve 1440 for racecourse purposes. The Kojonup Agricultural and Horticultural Society's trustees hold reserve 17376 for a show ground under a vesting order under Section 42 of the Land Act. Those bodies wish to combine and concentrate their efforts on reserve 17376 by improving and utilising it for a racecourse, recreation and show ground generally, as reserve 1440 is considered to be too far from the centre of the town for the purpose. The race club desires that reserve 1440 be granted in fee simple with permission to sell, freed from trusts, in order that the proceeds may be applied to improving reserve 17376, and the local bodies have agreed to reserve 17376 being granted to the Kojonup Road Board for the aforesaid purposes. The Bill therefore provides for the surrender by the race club trustees of reserve 1440, and the granting of the same in fee simple to the road board with power to sell, provided that the proceeds are applied to the improvement of reserve 17376 to the satisfaction of the Minister for Lands. The Bill also provides for the granting in fee simple to the Kojonup road board of reserve 17376 in trust for the purposes of racecourse, agricultural show ground, and public recreation. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

House adjourned at 11.5 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 20th November, 1923.

	Page
Leave of absence	1489
Bills: W.A. Trustee, Executor, & Agency Co., Ltd., Act Amendment (Private), 3a. ...	1489
Inspection of Machinery Act Amendment, Com.	
Factories and Shops Act Amendment, 2a. ...	1496
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act Amendment, discharged ...	1502
General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment, discharged ...	1502
Municipal Corporations Act Amendment, 2a. ...	1502
Kojonup Racecourse, 1a. ...	1503
Adjournment: Special ...	1503

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Kirwan leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. Cornell (South) on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LTD., ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).

Read a third time and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 15th November, Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; Hon. T. Moore in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 15:

Hon. A. Lovekin had moved an amendment as follows:—

That in line 1 of the proposed new Sub-section 4 the words "under twenty-one years of age" be deleted.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Since the previous sitting this matter has been further considered and I propose to submit an amendment of similar purport, but in slightly different form. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That after "age" the following be inserted:—"or between that age and fifty."

If that be agreed to, I propose to move to insert after "lift" the words "unless he (a) has served the Empire in any war or (b) is physically incapable of undertaking more exacting or laborious work. Provided that no person so employed shall be paid less than the minimum wage prescribed for adult

labourers." The object is to preserve this small measure of employment to those who have served their country in a war. One sees able-bodied men and women engaged in attending lifts when they might be doing work more useful to the community. The amendment provides that if a person has served the Empire in a war, then irrespective of age he shall be eligible to be employed in a lift. Returned soldiers now are all over 21 years of age, but I am sorry to believe we have not yet reached the end of war. No one can tell how near the next war may be, and if young men return from it maimed and injured, they should be eligible for this light work without any question as to their age or other qualifications. Persons over 21 and otherwise physically incapable may also undertake this class of work. The amendment will preclude the employment of those persons physically capable of doing other work more useful to the community.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Who is to determine whether a person is incapable of performing more exacting or laborious work? Will it rest with the employer or will the employer and the prospective lift attendant be dragged into a court to have the point determined? I have every sympathy with the returned soldier and I feel nothing but disgust for those people who, having lifts which maimed soldiers are capable of operating, are not giving them such employment. I wish to ensure that maimed soldiers be employed, but we must be careful how we word the amendment, in order that there may be sufficient men available to operate not only the existing lifts, but others which undoubtedly will be installed in future. A man who has lost a limb but is otherwise in good health is without question perfectly capable of doing this work. But many men who have not lost a limb are by reason of ill-health incapable of operating lifts.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment we are now considering is the insertion after "age" of "or between that age and fifty years."

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: My point is, are there enough "wingies" and "stumpies" in sufficiently good health to look after all these large passenger lifts, which is fairly laborious and nerve-straining work? In one establishment with which I have some connection there are, I am told, at least 1,000 people travelling by the lift in one direction each day.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: At a consultation with the president and the secretary of the "wingies" and "stumpies" Mr. A. A. Wilson and I were informed that if employment on lifts could be confined to "wingies" and "stumpies," jobs could be found for nearly all of them, and that there are now unemployed 16 "wingies" and "stumpies" who are capable of this work. The question whether lift attendants are unfit for more laborious work would be decided by the inspectors of machinery under the parent Act, with which this measure, if passed, would be incorporated. If an inspector of machinery is in doubt on the point, he will have power to call for a medical certificate.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Can any member inform us of the number of "wingies" and "stumpies" who will be available to fill the positions if this measure passes?

Hon. A. Lovekin: We were told 16 are now unemployed, as I have mentioned, who are available for this work.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: According to the 1922 report of the Inspection of Machinery Department, there are 67 electrically driven passenger lifts registered in the State, some of them working by shifts.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The lifts are nearly all automatic.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I fear there might not be sufficient "wingies" and "stumpies" available to fill the jobs.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Then the other classes of men would become available.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill provides that men employed on lifts on the 28th October last shall remain in their positions. Sixteen "wingies" and "stumpies" are now available for employment on lifts. Automatic lifts are largely taking the place of lifts requiring attendants. As regards an inspector of machinery deciding whether a man is or is not fit for harder physical work, I would say that an inspector of machinery is not a competent inspector of the human body. I am sorry that another deadlock seems to have been reached. We reported progress on Thursday last in order that those concerned might submit a suitable amendment. It is a matter for regret that apparently the question has not been given sufficient consideration.

Hon. T. MOORE: I do not think the amendment would prove workable. An inspector of machinery is hardly competent to decide whether a lift attendant is a fit and proper person for the position. Therefore that portion might well be omitted. I hope the Committee will now pass the amendment before the Chair.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That the following be added after "lift" in the first paragraph of proposed Subsection 4:—"Unless he (a) has served the Empire in any war."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the first paragraph of Subclause 4 as amended:—"or (b) is physically incapable of undertaking more exacting or more laborious work."

I propose this further amendment because a lift job is suitable for those not possessed of full vigour and because I do not desire that there shall be a scarcity of operators for lifts.

Hon. T. MOORE: If no objection is raised to this amendment other than that which has been raised already, the words might as well go in. However, I regard this further amendment as unworkable.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: These amendments were put on the Notice Paper before the second reading was passed.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: That is against the Standing Orders.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I asked for leave to put them there.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: The hon. member places so many things on the Notice Paper that I do not read them.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: It would be easy for Mr. Lovekin to bring forward an amending Bill.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Why waste time doing that?

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: The object of the Bill is to afford the "wingles" and "stumpies," a measure of justice, and from the point of view of form, it is not right to mix that question up with one relating to regulations. I support the ruling.

The President: The ruling of the Chairman of Committees, which I have supported, is in accordance with precedent and with the Standing Orders. The amendment introduced is relevant to the Bill. I can understand the dissatisfaction in connection with it, because speaking from long Parliamentary experience, to amend an Act is never without danger, as it affords an opportunity to members to advance proposals they would not otherwise submit.

Hon. T. Moore: After hearing the opinions expressed by several members, I will not press the motion. I have entered my protest, and if I can judge the attitude members will adopt, short shrift will be given to the amendment. I ask leave to withdraw my motion.

Motion by leave withdrawn.

Committee resumed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I adhere to the amendment I have already placed before the Committee. Section 36 provides for the payment of fees prescribed in the regulations. I do not desire to alter anything, but the amendment will mean that the fees already prescribed will be included in a schedule attached to the Bill. I moved in that direction so that the public may know definitely what fees they will have to pay. If taxation is to be levied and fees are to be charged, it is the duty of Parliament to impose them and not leave it to the whim or caprice of a department. The Government cannot object to my proposal, for they have prescribed the fees, and I merely propose to have them included in a schedule to the Bill. The mover of the Bill in another place has informed me that he has no objection to the amendment.

Hon. T. Moore: The Government may have an objection, and the Assembly too.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: That may be so, but both Chambers will agree that it is the function of Parliament to tax the people and to prescribe fees. I am taking this step because departments alter fees and, though either House may disallow them, the moment

Parliament is in recess a new set of fees is framed and those fees have the force of law until Parliament meets again and disallows them. The people have no redress whatever.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Parliament is ignored.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Surely no Government will object to the fees they prescribe being incorporated in the legislation affected! If the fees are included in the Inspection of Machinery Act, it will not be necessary for people to be driven from pillar to post to know if the fees are correct. We will then avoid the necessity for residents of Wyndham writing to Perth to know if the fees charged are in accordance with the regulations. If I sought to reduce the fees the Government might object, but as I intend to include them *en bloc*, there should be no objection to the amendment.

Hon. T. MOORE: I hope the Committee will reject the amendment. I will not go into the merits of it, but I ask members to take into consideration the object of the Bill. It is vital to a section of the community we desire to assist. The Bill has not had a speedy passage, and if we agree to the amendment, which is irrelevant to the Bill and the objects sought to be attained, it will be held up in another place and possibly be defeated. We know that the Government have certain ideas regarding regulations, and we must realise that there will be a force opposed to the amendment. If Mr. Lovekin cares to introduce another Bill seeking to secure what he desires, we can deal with the measure then. I ask members to agree to the Bill as introduced in order to render assistance to the "wingles" and "stumpies."

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The amendment will not do any harm.

Hon. T. MOORE: The Government have a majority in another place and they will oppose the amendment. I trust that even now Mr. Lovekin will agree to withdraw his amendment.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Mr. Moore would be right in his contention if we were to have an opportunity at a later stage to discuss the proposed new regulations in connection with the machinery department. To-day we have government by regulations—not government by Parliament. Parliament is ignored. I believe it is the intention of the department—I shall be pleased if the Minister can contradict my statement—to immediately increase the fees levied under these regulations. It may be said that we can deal with that matter; unfortunately we cannot do so. When Parliament is prorogued, the regulations come into force and nothing can be done until Parliament meets again in July or August. Why should regulations have the force of law if they are brought in after Parliament is prorogued? Even though we disallow the regulations when Parliament meets again, that will not get over the difficulty because the department demands the payment of the prescribed fees and, though those fees may be disallowed or reduced by Parliament, the department does not make any refund. I can give the Committee an experience of my own.

When regulations were gazetted some 12 months ago and excessive fees imposed, I issued instructions that the fees should be paid, because I felt sure that Parliament would not agree to them and that we should secure a refund. Although the fees were reduced by Parliament to the extent of 33 1/3rd per cent., we did not receive any refund because the department held that the regulations and fees had the full force of law until they were disallowed. There was thus the anomaly of one section paying 33 1/3rd per cent. more than another section in the same industry during the currency of the one financial year. That is wrong. If the amendment be agreed to we shall, for once at any rate, have government by Parliament and not by departments. Parliament should not be ignored as it has been in the past. If we agree to the amendment, and the Bill as amended is dealt with by the Government in another place, we shall know upon what ground they oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I appeal to Mr. Lovekin to withdraw the amendment. We are unanimous regarding the Bill itself, and the desire to get over an existing difficulty. If Mr. Lovekin wishes to tackle the question of government by regulations, it is easy to introduce another small Bill and we can then fight that issue. I assure Mr. Lovekin he will get my support if he tackles that question. We should not tangle up the Bill under discussion with an amendment such as the one the hon. member suggests. Let us comply with the wishes of those who introduced the Bill and let Mr. Lovekin open up the other question separately. If he does that he will get my support. I hope, however, he will not persist in his desire to tack the amendment on to the Bill.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Mr. Lovekin will be well advised to withdraw the amendment. Does he realise the real significance of it? He will curtail the powers of this House considerably, powers for which the House fought tooth and nail a few years ago. He proposes to take away from this House the rights which were insisted upon and won when the Labour Government were in power. The simplest way out of the difficulty is to bring the matter forward in a direct way. If Mr. Lovekin insists on his amendment he will jeopardise the Bill.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I have no intention of taking away any of the rights this House possesses. As both Houses have to pass Acts of Parliament, so should both Houses have the right to repeal or change them. If the amendment is agreed to, it will mean that both Houses will have the right to say whether the fees in the schedule shall be increased or decreased. It is perfectly right that either House should have power to disallow regulations. No one is more strongly in favour of the Bill than am I, and I do not intend to take any step that will jeopardise its chance of getting through. I have reason to believe, however, that if members will agree to the amendment it will be accepted by another

place, whereas if we introduce a separate Bill it will have no chance of getting through this session. I will give this assurance: if the amendment is accepted, and another place will not agree to it. I will undertake not to press it when the Bill comes back to this House. Let us submit it first, and see how it fares in the Assembly. I believe the majority of members in the other House will agree to an amendment of this description. I tried to protect the position last session by bringing in an amendment to the Interpretation Act, to provide that regulations should not come into force unless they had been on the Table of the House for a certain period. Another place, however, threw out that Bill. Now I am told that many members of the Assembly have seen the error of their ways, and will welcome an amendment such as the one I have now moved.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: If I had any doubt about the impropriety of Mr. Lovekin's action in tacking the amendment on to the little Bill before us, it would have been dispelled by the speech of Mr. Lynn. Mr. Lynn took occasion to launch an attack on the policy of the Government in regard to their method of finance, and thus complicated the issue before us. The Bill is entirely the outcome of sentiment, and we are anxious to see that justice is done to the maimed returned soldiers. It is not proper, therefore, that on such a Bill an attempt should be made to insert a clause dealing with finance and then for an hon. member to make an attack on the financial methods of the Government.

Hon. T. MOORE: A big political issue.

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Hon. R. J. LYNN: I do not know what Dr. Saw is driving at. He never loses an opportunity, if it suits him, to suggest something that was never intended. I resent that kind of thing. There is nothing sentimental about the Bill, and I say that it is an immoral thing to frame regulations when Parliament is not sitting and when we have no opportunity of objecting to them. The amendment moved by Mr. Lovekin is fair, and no exception should be taken to it because the Government refuse at the present time to disclose the exact position with regard to regulations.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is not a Government measure, and it is not the right time to discuss the question whether fees are to be increased or decreased. Mr. Lynn evidently is afraid that the Minister for Mines has in contemplation an increase in the fees in connection with boiler inspections, or something of that kind. I have no such knowledge; I have not discussed the question with my colleague. At the same time, I have no desire to interfere with any member who wishes to debate this all-important question. I appreciate the position taken by Dr. Saw and Mr. Holmes, and I ask any hon. member who wishes to bring the subject of regulations under notice to move directly in that direction. Then we can have

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Hon. R. J. LYNN: I do not know what Dr. Saw is driving at. He never loses an opportunity, if it suits him, to suggest something that was never intended. I resent that kind of thing. There is nothing sentimental about the Bill, and I say that it is an immoral thing to frame regulations when Parliament is not sitting and when we have no opportunity of objecting to them. The amendment moved by Mr. Lovekin is fair, and no exception should be taken to it because the Government refuse at the present time to disclose the exact position with regard to regulations.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: This is not a Government measure, and it is not the right time to discuss the question whether fees are to be increased or decreased. Mr. Lynn evidently is afraid that the Minister for Mines has in contemplation an increase in the fees in connection with boiler inspections, or something of the kind. I have no such knowledge; I have not discussed the question with my colleague. At the same time, I have no desire to interfere with any member who wishes to debate this all-important question. I appreciate the position taken by Dr. Saw and Mr. Holmes, and I ask any hon. member who wishes to bring the subject of regulations under notice to move directly in that direction. Then we can have

a fair and square fight on it, and send the matter forward to the Assembly.

Hon. A. Lovekin: And find it placed at the bottom of the list.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member has no right to say that. If the Bill is returned with Mr. Lovekin's amendment tacked on to it I shall be sorry for its fate. I appreciate the attitude adopted by Mr. Holmes, especially as I know the strong views he holds.

Hon. A. Lovekin: If we pass this Bill without the amendment, you will not give an assurance that the fees will not be altered before next session.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The Government do not contemplate harassing any industry, and do not desire to increase fees unduly.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Can we take it this matter will be allowed to remain in abeyance until we get an opportunity to discuss it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member must not ask that question on such short notice. It may be considered desirable to reduce some fees. Would the hon. member deny the Minister for Mines the right to reduce fees to the mining industry if it were found possible to do so? This House and another place each has the right to disallow regulations, but if we adopt the hon. member's suggestion, any action respecting regulations taken by one House will have to be endorsed by the other House.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Have you ever heard of fees being reduced?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member is seeking to deprive this House of a privilege it has long enjoyed.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Do you approve that both Houses should do it?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have not expressed an opinion. The present practice is fairly effective. If the amendment be rejected, I take it that will settle the whole question.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is so.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: For the position that has arisen, Parliament alone is responsible. This House has allowed the present and past Governments to treat its decisions with disrespect, but the House has only itself to blame for that. There will be ample opportunity to deal separately with the question raised by Mr. Lovekin. If necessary we can hold up Government business. It is quite within our province to do that until such time as the Government see fit to comply with the wishes of this House. The question should not be fought out upon a Bill of this description and at the expense of maimed soldiers. For that reason I am supporting the Bill and suggesting that another Bill be introduced, in which the question be made a straight out issue. Under existing circumstances either House may disallow regulations.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is of no value.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It would be of value if this House took the stand it should take, but if the House continues to submit

to the juggling of successive Governments, the fault rests entirely with the House. If the schedule were inserted in the Bill and the amendment were accepted by another place, no reduction could be made in the fees, except with the consent of another place.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You have never heard of the Government reducing fees?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But this Bill is being passed for all time. I am hopeful the time will come when these imposts—taxation by indirect methods—will have to be reduced, especially when our secondary industries increase.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You cannot get any reduction now. The regulations are outside our province.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That is the fault of this House. If we permit our decisions to be ridiculed and treated as waste paper, we are to blame, not the returned soldiers. Let us put the returned soldier in the place he ought to occupy and let us deal with the Government afterwards. Then if a majority of members are of my opinion, we shall put the Government also in their place.

Hon. G. POTTER: If this Bill is defeated, as Mr. Lovekin evidently desires it should be, returned soldiers will be driven to despair. If this is not a sentimental measure, the speeches on the second reading certainly exuded sentiment. The main object of the Bill is being obscured by the introduction of a question that has previously been discussed here. Surely, after the experience of last session, Mr. Lovekin can have no doubt of the support that would be accorded a separate Bill embodying the principle for which he is contending.

The Minister for Education: It could be introduced this session too.

Hon. G. POTTER: Mr. Lovekin says if he introduced a separate Bill it would probably be kept at the bottom of the Notice Paper, and not discussed at all this session. If there is a danger of another place regarding a separate Bill as so obnoxious as to merit treatment of that kind, is it not logical to believe that this Bill would be treated similarly if the proposed amendments were inserted? I am in sympathy with Mr. Lovekin's object, but this is not the place to endeavour to give effect to it.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The amendment does not seek to alter any of the existing fees. I agree with Mr. Holmes that the principle advocated by Mr. Lovekin should not be embodied in this Bill. It has been suggested that the Government intend at an early date to increase certain fees.

The Minister for Education: The Government have not said so.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I suggest that progress be reported to give the Minister an opportunity to ascertain whether it is intended to alter any of the existing fees. On the 16th November the Government issued some regulations dealing with engine-room record books and passenger and goods lifts. Though members have been discussing the question of

passenger lifts, they apparently were unaware of these regulations. I suggest that the Minister should give us an assurance that the Government do not intend to alter the existing regulations.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If that is the only condition upon which this Bill will be agreed to, the hon. member will not get an assurance from me. It would be unfair to ask the Government to determine their policy at a moment's notice. If the fate of the Bill is to hinge upon the fees to be charged during the next six months, members must take the responsibility for rejecting the measure. The hon. member's suggestion is not fair. This is not a Government Bill, though it has the sincerest support of the Government. Mr. Harris said he agreed with Mr. Holmes, and I hope he will do so. Let this Bill be dealt with on its merits and any member will then be at liberty to embody the other principle in a separate measure.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I feel almost persuaded to follow the suggestion of hon. members for the sake of the Bill now before us, but if to-morrow I submit a separate Bill embodying these amendments, I wish it to be understood that I am not being deceived by the suggestions of the Minister. Last session a State Trading Concerns Act Amendment Bill was sent to another place, and at the end of the session it was at the bottom of the list. A Bill that I introduced to be considered with the Scaffolding Bill is at the bottom of the Notice Paper, and is likely to remain there. This shows how unfairly the Government use their position when they wish to defeat a Bill. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments

Sitting suspended from 6.17 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central) [7.32] in moving the second reading said: There is no need to deal with this measure at very great length. I believe certain hon. members consider that the Bill is not sufficiently comprehensive and does not include certain provisions which are desirable for the preservation of human life. With that view I largely agree. However, small though the Bill is, it will go some way in the direction desired. As one who has had exceptional opportunities of observing the results of lead poisoning, I strongly recommend the measure to the House. Its introduction is due to the fact that quite recently there has been established at Fremantle a white lead factory. When such an industry is initiated here, legislation must be passed to safeguard the health of the

employees and to prevent future hardships in establishing essential precautions. Had such a course been followed in connection with other industries here and in the Eastern States, the toll on human life would not have been nearly so heavy, and the cost of subsequently providing the necessary safeguards would not have been nearly so great. I need not go outside our own borders to illustrate the position. Had proper precautions been taken in the initial stages of our mining industry, we would not now be losing the flower of our manhood. Even the most prejudiced will admit that this grievous loss could have been avoided had proper safeguards been established in the early stage of the mining industry. The Wooroloo Sanatorium, though a tribute to the humane feelings of the Government and the people, yet stands as a monument to the neglect of past Ministries to provide or else to enforce regulations safeguarding human life. The object of the present small Bill is to minimise the danger of lead poisoning. In connection with other proposals of this nature it has been asserted that the moment we seek to introduce such legislation, we must be regarded as aiming a blow at the establishment of secondary industries in Western Australia. I do not think that charge can be maintained against myself. Though I realise the danger attaching to the manufacture of white lead, I would not for a moment say that the industry should not be carried on here, under proper safeguards. Throughout the world lead poisoning is recognised as being responsible for intense suffering and for heavy loss of life. Legislation dealing with the problem has been passed by almost every civilised country except Australia. We, unfortunately, lag behind other nations in this respect. Persons engaged in the white lead industry have no redress under the Workers' Compensation Act, and as Western Australia has no law providing compensation in respect of occupational diseases, a measure of this kind represents the only protection upon which workers in the white lead industry can rely. Therefore, it is up to us to follow the example of other nations and initiate legislation of this character. As far back as 90 years England, under the Poor Laws Commission, set up regulations governing the manufacture of white lead. Other countries have gone much further than the present Bill proposes. To appreciate the importance of the subject, one need only refer to the recommendations of the International Labour Conference of the League of Nations held at Geneva in October, 1921. The conference lasted from the 26th October to the 19th November of that year. Amongst other questions of worldwide importance discussed, questions affecting Australia, was the handling of white lead. Ultimately the conference decided that women and boys under 18 years of age should be prohibited from engaging in the manufacture of white lead or in any other trade, such as the manufacture of paints, in connection with which white lead was used.

I realise that the quotation of extracts and statistics is not as a rule very interesting, but the present matter is of such vital importance that I feel I must leave no opening for any allegation that a case has not been made out for the Bill. Therefore, I find myself compelled to detain the House by making some quotations from the proceedings of that International Labour Conference. I may mention that the attitude of a similar conference at Washington towards anthrax was much the same as that recommended by the Geneva conference towards lead poisoning. I quote from the Geneva report—

In order to achieve something practical at once, the conference voted a recommendation in favour of the protection of women and children against lead poisoning. This recommendation prohibited the employment of women and young persons under the age of 18 years in all industries in which the risk of lead poisoning exists. Up to the time of the Geneva (1921) conference effect had been given to the recommendation in the legislation of two countries (Great Britain and the Netherlands). During the past year three more countries (India, Japan, Poland) have either passed legislation for this purpose or intimated that their existing legislation already applies the provisions of the recommendation. In India the necessary provisions have been laid down in the Factories Amendment Act which came into force on the 1st July, 1922. In Japan, Section 10 of the Factories Act covers the ground. The situation with regard to the protection of women and young persons against lead poisoning in Poland, though in general conformity with the Washington recommendation, is not uniform over the whole country, for the question is regulated separately by the Russian and German law still in force in the parts ceded by the two countries. Measures are, however, being adopted for the revision of existing legislation with a view to unifying the two systems, and an order has already been issued by the Ministry of Public Health in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare concerning the notification of cases of poisoning from lead and other substances. The Government of South Africa considers that adequate provision is made in the Factory Act for securing protection for women and young persons against lead poisoning. In Germany, where the Government has proposed the adoption of the recommendation, existing legislation is considered to be in general conformity. In Brazil Bills have been introduced with a view to giving effect to the recommendation. In Bulgaria approval has been authorised by Parliament, and existing legislation is in conformity with the recommendation except insofar as the question of the possible substitution of by-products of white lead by other non-poisonous substances remains to be dealt with when the Health and Safety of Workers Act is amended in the near future.

In Spain the Royal Order of the 25th January, 1908, prohibits the employment of young persons under 16 and of female workers of minor age in industries in which there exists a danger of lead poisoning. The Government of Hungary has under preparation a Bill for giving effect to the recommendation. In Italy protection is afforded against the danger of lead poisoning in the case of young persons under 15 and female workers under 21. In Switzerland, Section 7 of the Federal Act of the 31st March, 1922, concerning the improvement of women and young persons in workshops will enable effect to be given to the recommendations by means of an order issued in pursuance of the Act by the Federal Council. In Denmark and Sweden the question of protection against lead poisoning has been made the subject of inquiry. Mention was made in the 1921 report of Bills introduced in Chili and Portugal.

It goes on to say:—

Although the Commission was not empowered under the terms of reference to make definite proposals for this purpose to the conference, it gave sympathetic hearing to a motion by Mr. Bidegaray, the French Workers' Delegate, asking that the question of the use of white lead in house-painting should be raised. Unable to go further, the Commission expressed the opinion that the subject should be placed on the agenda of the next session of the Conference. Hence a question which had given rise to violent controversy came to be placed on the agenda of the 1921 Conference.

The conference came to the following decision:—

(a) For the prohibition of the use of white lead and sulphate of lead and of all products containing these pigments in the internal painting of buildings, except where the use thereof is considered necessary for railway stations or industrial establishments by the competent authority after consultation with the employers' and workers' organisations concerned. (b) For the prohibition of the employment of males under 18 years of age and of all females in any painting work of an industrial character involving the use of white lead, etc. (c) For the regulation of the use of white lead, sulphate of lead and of all products containing these pigments, in operations for which their use is not prohibited. The prohibitions are subject to the following exceptions:—(1) White pigments containing a maximum of 2 per cent. of lead expressed in terms of metallic lead may be used. (2) White lead may be used in artistic painting or fine lining, subject to definition and regulation by the Governments. (3) Painters' apprentices may be excepted from the prohibition contained in Article 3, summarised under (b) above. (4) Prohibitions do not come into force until six years after the closing of the 1921 Conference, i.e., 20th November, 1927.

It shows the extent to which the conference was prepared to go in safeguarding those engaged in the use of paints. Article 5, eventually agreed to, reads as follows:—

Each member of the International Labour Organisation ratifying the present Convention undertakes to regulate the use of white lead, sulphate of lead, and of all products containing these pigments, in operations for which their use is not prohibited, on the following principles:—1

(a) White lead, sulphate of lead or products containing these pigments, shall not be used in painting operations except in the form of paste or of paint ready for use.

(b) Measures shall be taken in order to prevent danger arising from the application of paint in the form of spray. (c) Measures shall be taken, wherever practicable, to prevent danger arising from dust caused by dry rubbing down and scraping.

2 (a) Adequate facilities shall be provided to enable working painters to wash during and on cessation of work. (b) Overalls shall be worn by working painters during the whole of the working period. (c) Suitable arrangements shall be made to prevent clothing put off during working hours being soiled by painting material.

3 (a) Cases of lead poisoning and of suspected lead poisoning shall be notified, and shall be subsequently verified by a medical man appointed by the competent authority. (b) The competent authority may require, when necessary, a medical examination of workers.

4, Instructions with regard to the special hygienic precautions to be taken in the painting trade shall be distributed to working painters.

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was appointed by decree of 2nd June, 1922, for the purpose of considering the modification of existing regulations which may be necessary in order to conform to the draft Convention. The Government of Canada has examined the draft Convention from the point of view of the respective competence of the Dominion and Provincial authorities, and has decided that the matter of the Convention is within the competence of the Provincial legislatures. Preparations for applying the Convention have been begun in Great Britain by a consultation between the Home Office and the Painters' and Decorators' Industrial Joint Council, a body upon which are represented the principal employers' and workers' organisations concerned. As a result of these conferences draft regulations have been drawn up and approved by the Industrial Joint Council which, at the same time, adopted a resolution urging the Government to give effect to the regulation without delay. An order of the Bey of Tunis of 10th April, 1922, prohibits, after the expiry of one year from the date of promulgation, the use of white lead, plumbiferous oils, and all specialised products containing white lead both in the internal and external painting of buildings.

That is what has been done in other parts of the world. Australia has done little or nothing in this direction. The Bill merely safeguards those engaged in the manufacture of the raw material. I view this also from another point. Probably Western Australia has the richest lead deposits in the world, and in my opinion the ramifications of the industry will greatly extend, even up to Northampton, where the lead is produced. I want to see that, while the employers get a fair deal, those engaged in the handling of the product shall be duly safeguarded. I have had experience of lead poisoning, and I realise the necessity for protecting those engaged in the industry. I have here a valuable work on the subject written by three eminent specialists: Drs. Hope, Hanna and Stallybrass, men very high in their profession. They have given a life study to this question and so their opinions ought not to be lightly rejected. I do not anticipate any opposition to the Bill, but I want to quote one or two extracts from this valuable work entitled "Industrial Hygiene and Medicine." Under the heading of "Industrial Poisons and their Effect" these authorities state—

Compulsory adoption of general measures to prevent industrial poisoning by lead has been in force for many years. The general measures provide for (1) The removal of fumes and the reduction of dust by special exhaust ventilation mechanism, wet cleansing of floors, etc.

Doctor T. M. Legge, the Chief Inspector of Factories in Great Britain, in his annual report for 1919 states—

As right notions of the causation of lead poisoning are of first importance, I emphasise again my belief, after perusal of some 25,000 reports on cases which have occurred

in the past, that locally applied exhaust ventilation is the sheet-anchor in the protection of the workers from lead dust and fumes, and that these alone are the causative agents.

I understand no provision has been made for ventilation in the new building at Fremantle. Probably that is the fault of the management, but it will be our fault if we allow it to go uncorrected. These authorities go on to say—

(2) The abolition of manual labour as much as possible, the use of automatic machinery, and the introduction of wet processes, *e.g.*, watering of white lead chambers and smelting mixtures, and the grinding of white lead with oil, etc. (3) The use of respirators and overalls where much dust is produced: the latter should fit closely round the wrists and neck, and be frequently washed. Hours of labour in dusty processes should be shortened, and alternation of work arranged for. (4) Washing and bathing facilities (standardised requirements in regarding to lavatory accommodation) have now been inserted in almost all recent regulations for dangerous trades. (5) Special rooms for meals. (6) Frequent and regular medical supervision and inspection of the employees, with suspension of work in case of sickness. Of all the individual precautions to be adopted, those relating to personal hygiene are by far the most important. Very little trouble is required, and the dangers to health and life can be easily avoided. Oliver's view is that lead poisoning may be easily caused, and may be almost as easily prevented, especially by personal cleanliness. The hair, beard, and nails should be kept short, so that there may be no harbourage for dust. A suitable cap should be worn. At the end of work, and before meals, the mouth should be rinsed out and the face and hands and nails thoroughly washed with soap and hot water, a nail brush being used to cleanse the nails, and some hypochlorite of soda or turpentine added to the water; baths should be taken frequently.

Reference is made to a law passed in Great Britain in 1920 which is known as The Women and Young Persons Act (Employment in Lead Process)—

Provision must be made to carry away the fume or dust by means of exhaust draught operating on the dust or fume as nearly as may be to its point of origin. The persons employed must undergo the prescribed medical examination at the prescribed intervals, and records kept. No food, drink, or tobacco should be brought into or consumed in any room in which the process is carried on, and no person shall be allowed to remain in such room during meal times. Adequate protective clothing in a clean condition shall be provided by the employers and worn by persons employed. Suitable cloak room, mess-room and washing accommodation as may be prescribed shall be provided for the use of the

persons employed. The rooms in which the persons are employed, and all tools and apparatus used by them shall be kept in a clean condition.

Nothing of the kind is contemplated in this Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Most of those things are here.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: It does not go as far as that.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It refers to cloak rooms, meal rooms, washing, baths, etc.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: It provides only a minimum of inconvenience to the employer. It is merely a small preventive measure, which does not go nearly as far as the others to which I have referred. The regulations continue—

The occupier shall provide and maintain a suitable mess-room, adequate for the number of persons employed and remaining on the premises during the meal intervals, which shall be furnished with (1) Sufficient tables and chairs, or benches with back rests:

Hon. A. Lovekin: Another authority says the meal room should not be near the factory.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: That is not as good as those to which I now refer. The regulations continue—

(2) Adequate means for warming food or boiling water; (3) Suitable facilities for washing, comprising a sufficient supply of clean towels, soap, and warm water where not otherwise provided. The mess-room shall be (1) Separate from cloak-room; (2) Be placed under the charge of a responsible person and kept clean; (3) Be sufficiently warmed for use during meal intervals.

Then provision is made for baths being compulsorily supplied for both sexes. It is also provided that—

Every person employed in a lead process shall be examined once a week (or at such other intervals as may be approved) by the surgeon, who shall have power to order suspension from employment in any place or process. No person after such suspension shall be employed in a lead process without the written sanction of the surgeon. This Bill does not cover all that ground. It certainly provides for the Health Department having the necessary authority to examine the premises, and power to inquire into the health of those engaged in the industry.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Does the Bill extend to printing offices?

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I think not.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Lead is largely used in printing offices.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: That is so. The object of the Bill is to deal with the manufacturing stage of the raw material. I do not know whether what I have quoted deals with the lead used in printing offices.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: I think printing offices are included.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Bill provides for every place where lead is used.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: It is also provided that—

The occupier shall provide and maintain sufficient and suitable overalls and head coverings and clean respirators, and shall cause them to be worn as directed in Regulation 25. At the end of every day's work they shall be collected and kept in proper custody in a suitable place set apart for the purpose. They shall be thoroughly washed and renewed every week. Sufficient and suitable bath accommodation (douche or other) with hot water laid on, unless the water supply provided is so arranged that a warm douche for the face, neck, and arms can be taken. There shall be facilities, to the satisfaction of the inspector in charge of the district, for the workers to wash out their mouths. Before each meal, and before the end of the day's work, at least 10 minutes in addition to the regular meal times shall be allowed to each worker for washing.

The Bill provides for the washing of overalls weekly, but what I have quoted refers to the provision of new clothing every week. This is one of the main differences between the British law and the Bill before the House.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Paper clothing ought to be provided.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I have quoted these things to show how seriously the specialists in the world view the handling of white lead. Members may deal with the matter from the practical standpoint. Dr. Saw may deal with it in a professional way, and Mr. Kirwan and Mr. Lovekin may deal with it from the point of view of the printing trade. I require no books of reference to understand the danger of lead poisoning, for I have had practical demonstrations of it. At the age of 16, and until I reached the age of 19, I was employed in the Broken Hill mines at the worst time in their history. I have seen a great deal of the effects of lead poisoning. I had two doses of it myself, but was able to pull through. I had medical friends there who were interested in me because of the interest I took in this subject. I could paint a pathetic picture of the harrowing scenes I witnessed at Broken Hill. I have seen men in every stage of lead poisoning.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: We have seen them here.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I have lived amongst them and worked amongst them. I have seen men in the prime of life enter the mines, and six months later they have been dying a lingering death. I should lay myself open to a charge of neglect if I did not do my best to get through a Bill of this kind, which means so much to the cause of suffering humanity. The industry in Western Australia is in its infancy, but it will grow, and these precautions should be taken in the initial stages. My hands are crippled as the result of my experience in Broken Hill, and when Parliament goes into recess I must have an operation, and at least one of my fingers will have to be removed. I feel sure that Mr. Dodd's

ill-health is largely due to his association with the Broken Hill mines. Small as this Bill is, it is of the utmost importance, for its object is to minimise the dangers from lead poisoning. The men who went to the front were prepared to sacrifice their lives for their country, but the lives of those who worked in the Broken Hill mines were sacrificed on the altar of greed and big dividends. That is the only jarring note I shall sound. It came to my mind when I thought of the bad times at Broken Hill. I am prepared however, to take this charitable view of the situation as it existed in Broken Hill, that perhaps the authorities there sinned in ignorance of the laws of prevention. We, who have our eyes open, have no excuse for sinning in this respect, for we should be able to benefit by the experience of others. We want to go forward along proper lines. Only those who have witnessed the sufferings due to lead poisoning can appreciate what they mean. The disease saps the heart of the country, and of our manhood and womanhood. This Bill will cause no inconvenience or hardship to those controlling the industry, and I am sure that members will give it their earnest support. If we take precautions in the initial stages it will be realised later on that we at least had some milk of human kindness in our composition. If this had been done in earlier days, there would not be so many men dead from the ravages of this disease, nor would there be so many men in the Sanatorium. I can quote my own experience of the Fingal mine. Hon. members will hardly find a man living now who was working in that mine in the early days. I was on a committee that investigated the position in connection with the Fingal mine, and one object was to find what had become of the large number of workers imported for that mine. We had the assistance of the Italian Consul but we found that not one of those men who were brought to Western Australia to work in that mine was alive then. We found also that very few Britishers who had been employed there were in existence. There may have been one or two at the Sanatorium, where they were lingering out their last days, or at the Old Men's Home.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Was that from lead poisoning?

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: No, but I am quoting that instance to show that the neglect of to-day will have the same effect as the neglect of yesterday. If the Bill would work any hardship upon any individual or set of individuals or curtail the success of any secondary industry, I would be the last to place a stumbling block in the way. Having looked into the question thoroughly, I am satisfied that no hardship will be worked, and that if we make the necessary provisions in the early stages of the industry, we will act in the interests of the company interested in the manufacture of white lead, of the State, and of the young manhood and womanhood of Western Australia. I commend the Bill

to the earnest and sympathetic consideration of hon. members, and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Spurburban) [s.13]: I support the second reading of the Bill, more particularly because many years ago, when I was a resident at the London Hospital, I saw a considerable number of unfortunate victims of chronic lead poisoning. The ill-effects of chronic lead poisoning have been known for many centuries. They were known to the ancient Greeks and Romans. It has been said that there is no chemical in ordinary use so capable of causing chronic poisoning as are the compounds of lead, nor is there a chemical other than lead handled by so many people, nor is there a chemical put to such a variety of uses as is lead. A French physician interested in industrial diseases, Dr. Layet, enumerated 119 occupations in which the danger of chronic lead poisoning arose, and amongst all other compounds those used in the manufacture of white lead stand out pre-eminently as the most dangerous of all. I understand that the factory that has been started in Western Australia will deal with the manufacture of white lead. Formerly when we spoke of white lead we meant a compound of carbonate of lead mixed with hydrate of lead. That compound was highly poisonous.

Hon. J. Duffell: Is that a compound such as Champion's white lead?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I could not say. The particular white lead at Fremantle is not made from that compound, but from the basic sulphate, which is not so highly poisonous. Lead may gain entrance to the human system through three different channels. Most of it gains entrance through the respiratory system. Formerly it was considered that the greatest danger was due to the taking of lead into the stomach. It is now held that the most dangerous means is through the respiratory passages. Experiments on animals have shown that lead taken in through the respiratory system is 100 times more dangerous than when ingested into the stomach. I bring forward that point to emphasise the necessity for providing, as is contemplated in the Bill, for adequate ventilation, and keeping down the dust. It is by not keeping down the dust that arises from the lead that the respiratory system is affected most, although the fumes also affect the individual. There is also the danger of ingestion into the stomach. That is largely due to the carelessness of workers who eat their food, suck their fingers or bite their finger nails, without washing their hands. I will quote evidence from Queensland illustrating the dangers run by children from white lead used in the painting of fences, verandahs, and so on. A large number of cases of chronic lead poisoning, resulting in paralysis and occasionally in blindness, occurred among children in Queensland. The ages of the sufferers ranged from three and four years up to eight and 10 years. They were ad-

mitted in considerable numbers at some of the big hospitals in Queensland, particularly at the hospitals in large towns. For a long time the causation was obscure. It was undoubtedly proven in the end that they were cases of chronic lead poisoning, resulting in paralysis. It was shown eventually that the danger arose in this way: In a climate such as that of Queensland the paint becomes dry and powdery. The children rubbed their fingers on the paint and were in the habit of sucking their fingers or biting their finger nails. After a while this gave rise to paralysis and, in some cases, to incurable blindness. The remedy was very soon shown to be the removal of the children from their environment, the application of certain remedies, and so, the clearing up of the disease. Occasionally cases were experienced where permanent paralysis or blindness followed owing to the children continuing these unfortunate habits. That result was most clearly shown in Queensland and I refer to that aspect to demonstrate to members the dangers arising from lead poisoning.

Hon. A. Lovekin: A paper in the "Forum" for September dealt with that matter fully.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The symptoms of lead poisoning are many and very serious. Occasionally they result in death. Not infrequently they lead to permanent blindness. They also cause anaemia, colic, convulsions, delirium and coma, kidney diseases, arterio-sclerosis, paralysis, infection of the joints, to which Mr. Hickey has drawn attention, and, in the case of women who are pregnant, it frequently leads to abortion. I have here the well-known medical work entitled "Osler's Modern Medicine." It contains a paper dealing with industrial diseases and lead poisoning which was written by Dr. Edsall, Professor of Medicine in the University of Pennsylvania. He did not write the article with the idea that I should quote it in this Chamber, but as he is an authority on these diseases, I shall read what he says regarding prophylaxis and treatment. He says—

Were the industries that cause exposure subjected to reasonable regulations and these actually enforced, and were the workmen not only given opportunity to keep themselves clean, but required to do so, industrial lead poisoning would largely disappear. Cleanliness is the most important point in prophylaxis, and the most difficult one to carry out, owing to the utter carelessness of most workmen. Much of this is due to a lack of proper comprehension of the dangers and the methods of avoiding them, and many poisonings are avoided in those works where the policy of instruction is adopted instead of the narrow custom of belittling the danger. But many workmen will not voluntarily keep properly clean, and hence those at all seriously exposed should be required to do so.

I am glad these are his words and not mine, in view of the fact that at some future time I shall be standing on the hustings. He goes on to say that in America, where he was writ-

ing, the regulations are not so efficient as in Europe. He says—

The regulations existing in a number of European countries are examples of what needs to be done; the most important of these regulations are those that demand certain forms of ventilation, height of ceiling, isolation of the most dangerous parts of the work from the other portions of the plant, apparatus for the exclusion of dust or for the removal of that which escapes into the atmosphere, daily cleansing, and such construction of the walls and floors as to permit of easy and thorough cleaning, the provision of separate eating rooms and of free baths, the exclusion of women and children from the dangerous parts of the work, limitation of the hours of work and of continuous exposure of the same individuals to the most dangerous parts of the work, and the services of a physician who has power to "lay off" any suspicious cases from work and who must report such cases. In some countries it is also required of the workmen that they change their clothes and bathe after working, wear gloves or rub their hands with grease when at work, and do not eat, drink alcoholic beverages, or smoke or chew tobacco in the workrooms.

That will be sufficient to show the necessity there is for such provisions as are contained in the Bill. In the United Kingdom chronic lead poisoning was made a notifiable disease in 1895, but it was not until 1906 that it was brought within the scope of the Workers' Compensation Act. Dr. Legge, who is the medical adviser to the Home Office, working on the view that the greatest danger of lead poisoning arose from dust and fumes, concentrated his attention on the prevention of dust and fumes, and their removal if found. The result of the excellent precautions taken in the United Kingdom may be shown in the figures I shall quote. Hon. members must bear in mind that as this disease was brought within the scope of the Workers' Compensation Act in 1906, naturally it has to be assumed that more cases of chronic lead poisoning would be reported, and particularly the lighter cases, than formerly, because people probably ignored the lesser forms of lead poisoning as they could not get compensation. In 1900 before it was brought under the Workers' Compensation Act, 1,018 cases of lead poisoning were notified in the United Kingdom, whereas in 1919, in spite of the fact that they had been brought under the Workers' Compensation Act, and also in spite of the fact that the number of people employed in these factories had largely increased, there were only 206 cases. Regarding manufacturers of white lead, in the years 1900 to 1904 the average number of cases notified was 183, whereas from 1915 to 1919 the average annual number of cases notified in the United Kingdom was only 17, less than one-tenth. In the pottery trades in the years 1900 to 1904 the yearly average was 119

cases, whereas in the years 1915 to 1919 they had fallen to only 19. These figures show conclusively that, provided adequate precautions are taken—and I believe the precautions taken in the United Kingdom are second to no other country in the world—lead poisoning can be practically wiped out. I trust the Bill, small as it is, will have the result desired.

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

BILL—PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT AMENDMENT.

Order discharged.

Order of the Day read for the second reading.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.33]: I move—

That this Order of the Day be discharged from the Notice Paper.

My reason for submitting this motion is that I was expecting certain information to arrive from England having reference to one of the clauses of the Bill. As it has not come to hand, and as the Order has appeared on the Notice Paper quite long enough, I have no intention of carrying out my original desire to proceed with the second reading.

Question put and passed; Order discharged.

BILL—GENERAL LOAN AND INSCRIBED STOCK ACT AMENDMENT.

Order discharged.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [8.34]: I move—

That this Order of the Day be discharged from the Notice Paper.

My reason for taking this course is that another Bill has been introduced in the Legislative Assembly which is in effect a continuance Bill and will make the Bill now before us unnecessary.

Question put and passed; Order discharged.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [8.35] in moving the second reading said: Dr. Saw paid me the compliment of saying the other evening that I was always endeavouring to find a better 'ole. I appreciate that remark; that is what I try to do, because I consider it is far better to endeavour to improve things than to continually harp on the same old saw and get no further forward. This Bill is the sequel to the measure we disposed of the other day, and I think it will be better for the community to have this on the statute-book in preference to the other. We are all

agreed as to the desire to preserve human life and limb as far as we possibly can. That is what I wish to do by asking members to pass this Bill. It is also common ground that the measure we had before us the other day was not suitable for a State like Western Australia, with its million square miles of territory.

Hon. T. Moore: It required your tactics to find that out.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: How would it be possible for us to employ an army of inspectors over such enormous territory to supervise the erection of every kind of structure above 8ft. in height? The underlying feature of the previous Bill was that it should have application to the metropolitan area. I have no objection to that, but I cannot conceive the utility of a measure that will prevent a man putting up a silo, or a haystack, or a single-storey cottage, unless he invokes the aid of an inspector to see that the paraphernalia connected with the erection of the scaffolding is in order. In the metropolitan area, where large buildings may be erected, I am prepared to do my share to protect life and limb. Fortunately, however, there has not been any need for legislation of this description in the past. I have failed to find on inquiry from insurance companies that a single claim has been made in the last 25 years arising out of an accident due to faulty scaffolding. I wish to confine the Bill now before the House to the metropolitan area in the first place, and any other municipality or road district that wishes to do so may bring into force under the measure regulations for the protection of persons using scaffolding. At the present time all municipal corporations have an obligation cast upon them to protect the public from bricks or stones or debris that may fall from the upper floors of a building in course of erection, as well as the obligation to see that the buildings being erected are safe for people to go into. The only matter they are not obliged to see to is the safety of the scaffolding.

The Minister for Education: That is the most important of all.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It is of equal importance to seeing to the safety of the public. Under Section 303 of the Municipalities Act it becomes the duty of the local authority to see that the pathway in front of the building in course of erection is boarded over for the purpose of protecting passers-by. It is also necessary for the local authority to see that a proper pathway outside the pavement is provided with a railing around it, so as to protect the pedestrians from the road traffic. It seems to me that an inspector who is doing that work can just as well see to it that the scaffolding used on that building is as safe as the building itself. Therefore I propose to give power to the municipality to frame regulations for the control and supervision of scaffolding in or adjoining any building under construction, demolition, repair, or renovation, and for the protection of the lives

of workmen engaged in connection therewith, and the general public.

The Minister for Education: Are you making that compulsory?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I am providing for power to be given under Section 179. That section gives authority for the making of quite a number of regulations, and already there are many in existence in respect of buildings. If this is to apply to the metropolitan area only, and that is all that can reasonably be asked at the present time, the building surveyor will see that scaffolding is safely constructed and that the public are properly protected. That is a better scheme than to bring in a Bill as far-reaching as the one we disposed of a few nights ago, and which, had it become law, would have proved a dead letter. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [8.42]: It has to be borne in mind, as has been suggested by Mr. Lovekin, that the duties incidental to the erection of buildings within the city are usually carried out by the municipal authorities. The local authorities have, for many years past, been given full powers in connection with the supervision of the erection of buildings. As it is a duty that devolves upon them, surely that which is part and parcel of the work of erecting buildings, namely, the scaffolding used, should also come within the scope of the authority of those particular bodies. I agree with Mr. Lovekin that it is unnecessary to create another department, which unfortunately we are prone to do from time to time. The local bodies employ staffs to carry out duties in connection with buildings, and it will be no great tax upon the energies of those officers if they are asked to add to their duties the work of seeing that scaffolding is properly erected. I support the second reading of the Bill.

On motion by the Minister for Education, debate adjourned.

BILL—KOJONUP RACECOURSE.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. Ewing—South-West) [8.45]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, 27th November.

We have practically cleared our Notice Paper, and I am informed it is not likely that anything of great importance will come to the House this week. Early next week I hope to be in possession of the Appropriation Bill, which will keep members busy for a considerable time. It would not be right to ask members to attend during the next two days, when there will be practically nothing to do.

When we meet next week, I hope we shall sit continuously on each of the three days and perhaps on an extra day per week, so that the session may be brought to an end early in, or by the middle of, next month.

Question—put and passed.

House adjourned at 8.47 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 20th November, 1923.

	PAGE
Mr. Speaker's Illness ...	1504
Select Committee, Pension rights of J. B. Connolly	1504
Questions: Cotton growing enterprise ...	1504
Group Settlements—1, Sustenance payments;	
2, Furniture and blankets; 3, Busselton	
show, holiday ...	1504
Woorloo sanatorium ...	1505
Dairy cows, Fremantle district, outbreak of	
disease ...	1505
Bills: W.A. Trustee, Executor, and Agency Co.,	
Ltd., Act Amendment (Private), 1R. ...	1505
Land Act Amendment, 1R. ...	1505
Native Mission Stations, 1R. ...	1505
Public Institutions and Friendly Societies Lands	
Improvement Act Amendments, 1R. ...	1505
Gnowangerup Reserves, 1R. ...	1505
Kojonup Racecourse, 3R. ...	1505
Government Business, precedence ...	1505
Loan Estimates ...	1506
Annual Estimates, report ...	1514
State Trading Concerns—	
State Ferries ...	1514
State Hotels ...	1514
State Implement and Engineering Works ...	1533
State Quarries ...	1539
State Steamship Service ...	1539
State Sawmills ...	1542
Wyndham Meat Works ...	1546

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

MR. SPEAKER'S ILLNESS.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [4.31]: Mr. Speaker, before proceeding with the business of the day I wish on behalf of the House to say how pleased we are to see you back amongst us again, restored to health.

Mr. SPEAKER: I thank you.

SELECT COMMITTEE—PENSION RIGHTS OF J. B. CONNOLLY.

Report presented.

On motion by Mr. Hughes, report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the pension rights of J. B. Connolly received and read, and ordered to be printed.

QUESTION—COTTON GROWING ENTERPRISE.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Premier: 1, Will the Government make inquiries as to the *bona fides* of an American delegate (Mr. F. G. Emery) who recently visited Queensland in connection with the growing of cotton in Australia? 2, Are the Government aware that this delegate represents strong financial groups in New York, whose intention is to arrange the migration of 500 young cotton farmers from the State of Arizona to take up land with their own capital in Australia for growing cotton and general farming? 3, Can anything be done to get into touch with these farmers and place the resources of this State before them with the idea of securing their settlement in the North-West?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, The hon. member told me of the proposal. 3, Yes, if the result of the inquiry referred to in No. 1 is satisfactory.

QUESTIONS (3)—GROUP SETTLEMENTS.

Sustenance Payments.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that considerable delay takes place in the payment of sustenance allowance to group settlers? 2, If so, will he see that steps are taken to expedite such payments? 3, Is he also aware that the system of payment by cheque necessitates the collection of large amounts by representative group settlers, which might, through untoward circumstances, result in considerable loss to the groups? 4, If so, could not a system of payment in cash be substituted?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. There was some delay; but payments are now made at regular monthly intervals. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3 and 4, Payment is by cheque, and this system cannot be altered.

Furniture and Blankets.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that no provision is made for absolute necessities in the way of furniture and blankets for group settlers, but that any requirements of this nature have to come out of sustenance allowance? 2, If so, will he consider the desirability of capitalising a sufficient sum for this purpose on similar lines to the practice in connection with freights and fares?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. Local married men have their furniture, etc., before going on to groups. The Migration Department in London has been advised that married migrants should bring their bedding and cooking utensils with them. 2, Answered by No. 1.

Busselton Show, Holiday.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: In view of the fact that Friday, the 14th December, is the date for the Busselton show, will