

ing community throughout this colony, I certainly think no person should be allowed to carry on betting at any race-course unless on the terms and conditions imposed by the principal racing body in the country—a body which we can trust; and I certainly am not prepared to allow a number of individuals to come together, buy a few acres of land, call themselves, say, "The East Perth Racing Club," and thereby acquire a free right to carry on any sort of betting, and to violate the law which applies to all the rest of the community, but does not apply to such people simply because they have bought a piece of ground and established a race-course. If the Premier will modify this Bill so that betting be allowed only on racecourses under the control of or authorised by the West Australian Turf Club, I shall be very glad to give it my support; but I shall strongly oppose any exemption in this Bill, the effect of which will be to allow any number of individuals to come together, buy a piece of land, call it a racecourse, and then, upon that land, within the fence which they put round it, carry on the betting in the freest possible way, without let or hindrance. That, I think, should be stopped. I ask the Premier and the Attorney General to introduce some legislation which will stamp out these totalisators and the gentlemen who run them, and which if it cannot stamp out, will strictly control these sweeps and "consultations" which are growing to such enormous dimensions in this small colony.

MR. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I do not think I have ever had to listen to such an oration as that which has just been delivered by the member for East Perth (Mr. James), who says we can have betting on large racecourses. I am an advocate for the rights of the people, and I say that what one class of people have a right to every class have a right to the same. Either it is fair to allow everybody to bet, or we should not have betting at all. No particular class should have the privilege to bet. The poorer class, who have not so much money to pay big entrance fees to racecourses, should not be debarred from going to see horse-races and to bet if they so desire. The law should touch everybody or nobody. I think we should have further discussion

on this matter; therefore I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PREMIER moved that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday next.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 12 minutes to 10 o'clock p.m. until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 29th August, 1899.

Papers presented—Question: Bubonic Plague, Precautions—Divorce Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Customs Consolidation Amendment Bill, second reading; in Committee, Clause 1 to new clause, progress—Permanent Reserves Bill, second reading—Public Education Bill, second reading, in Committee, reported—Truck Bill, second reading, Amendment negatived, Division—Excess Bill, first reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Return showing appointments made by Metropolitan Waterworks Board, as ordered on motion by Hon. R. S. Haynes.

By the PRESIDENT: Further Supplementary Report by Auditor General, relating to amendment of the Audit Act.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION—BUBONIC PLAGUE, PRECAUTIONS.

HON. A. P. MATHESON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, If the attention of the Government had been called to the fact that the bubonic plague was prevalent in a virulent form in Mauritius, and

also at Delagoa Bay. 2. Were the Government aware that ships were now expected at Fremantle from both these places. 3. What steps, if any, the Government proposed to take to prevent the possibility of Western Australia becoming infected.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied:—1, Yes, in Mauritius, but not Delagoa Bay. In the latter case it is only reported to be at Magada, a place near Delagoa Bay; 2, The Government has no particular information; 3, All ports known to be infected, or from whence the disease might be brought, are declared "infected ports," and all vessels from such ports are strictly examined, and liable to quarantine.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The Government might know.

DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by HON. F. M. STONE, and read a first time.

CUSTOMS CONSOLIDATION AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell) in moving the second reading said: It is only necessary for me to make a very few remarks. The Bill is copied from the Victorian Act, and there are amendments to Part XVI., which relates to carriers. It has been thought the time has arrived when, under certain circumstances which have arisen in different parts of the colony, it is desirable to license persons for the purpose of transacting business relating to the entry or clearance of any ship, or of cargo, and so on. I am sure the Bill will commend itself to hon. members, especially those who have to do with customs and duties of that kind. It is very desirable we should have persons on whom we can rely to conduct our business at the custom-house, if we are unable to do it ourselves. The sections it is proposed to introduce into the Customs Consolidation Act, 1892, are to be numbered 244A, 244B, and 244C. The Bill says the Minister may appoint such places as may be necessary from time to time as ports at which customs agents may be licensed for the entering and clearing of ships and entry and clearing of goods. The Minister may grant licenses in such form and manner and to such persons as

he may think fit, to act as agents and so on for the transaction of the necessary business. These persons are to be under a bond or security not exceeding £250. Under the Victorian Act the amount is not exceeding £500. The sum is a moderate one, I think, taking into account the importance of the business very often entrusted to persons acting as agents for others in the clearing of their goods from the custom-house, especially for those persons who are living in distant parts of the colony and not able to overlook the matter themselves or to enter their own goods. Even here in Perth or in Fremantle it is a common experience for persons to entrust the execution of this kind of business to agents, who are continually practising it, and they find it to their advantage to do so. The third sub-section of 244B provides that the Minister may revoke such license on the ground of misconduct or for other causes, but it also gives the agent the right to demand an inquiry, and that inquiry is to be conducted under the provisions of the principal Act, of which this forms a part. Sections 24 and 25 enable the Minister himself to summon witnesses or to appoint an officer of customs to do the work, to administer oaths, and make the necessary inquiry. This section also provides that during such inquiry the agent must cease to pursue his calling. In the meantime the licensee or his clerks cannot act as agents. The licensee may appoint a clerk or clerks in the conduct of the customs business, but their names must be indorsed in the presence of the Collector or Sub-collector of Customs. These are the principal features of the Bill as it is introduced, and, knowing what transpires at different times, and that quite recently frauds have been perpetrated upon consignees, hon. members will see it is highly necessary we should have these provisions from the Victorian Act. I am not able to tell why they were not included at the time the consolidating Act was passed, most probably it was some oversight; but at any rate they were not adopted, and the necessity has now been forced upon the minds of the Collector of Customs and the Minister: hence the Bill that has been introduced. I have to make one or two small amendments, merely substituting the plural. I think there has been some oversight, in Section 244C, and it

will be necessary to improve that section. For instance I propose to strike out the words "clerk or servant" and insert the words "clerks or servants." I will add two words lower down in the Bill to make it read correctly, and that I will do when we get into Committee. I do not think I need say anything more, except that the Bill has had the support of the members for the port, and it has the entire concurrence, I think, of the custom-house agents, who have been asking for this legislation for some considerable time as a protection to themselves and to those who employ them. I move the second reading of the Bill.

HON. A. P. MATHESON (North-East): There are one or two points in the Bill which may require explanation; otherwise the Bill is a desirable one. First, according to Clause 244A, it may be implied that agents who register their names will be allowed to clear goods only in the Perth bonded store. The general impression is that the Government intend that the Bill shall apply not only to the Perth bonded stores, but also to those at the ports. There is another matter in Clause 244B, Sub-clause 3. When we consider that, according to Clause 244C, the licensee may appoint clerks, surely it is desirable that, in the case of the misconduct of a clerk, the licensee should suffer as if he had misconducted himself. That is the one point on which the Bill is lacking; otherwise the Bill is a good one.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON (North): I would like to ask the Colonial Secretary, is it compulsory on the Government to appoint agents in all the small ports of the colony, such as Wyndham, the Ashburton, and so forth; because, according to Sub-clause 2 of Clause 244B, an agent has to find security to the amount of £250.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The sub-clause says "may appoint."

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2: Amendments to Part 16 of 55 Victoria, No. 31:

HON. A. P. MATHESON moved that in Clause 244B, Sub-clause 3, after "licensee" the words "licensees or clerks"

be inserted. As the clause stood, the Minister would be unable to revoke a license already granted if there was any fraud or misconduct by reason of the action of the licensee's clerk or clerks.

HON. W. T. LOTON: If a clerk were acting in the place of the licensee, that clerk would become the licensee?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: No; the clerk would not take the place of the licensee. He was a third person.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The license of the licensee had to be indorsed with the name of the clerk.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The amendment was not necessary, because a licensee was held liable for the act of a servant. According to the Liquor License Act, the licensee was liable if he sold liquor on Sunday, and if the licensee was convicted twice he lost his license; but there was nothing in the Act to say that the licensee was liable for the acts of his servants. It was the same with regard to a solicitor who employed a clerk; if the clerk did away with trust funds the solicitor became liable.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: If that were the legal reading of the clause, he was prepared to withdraw his amendment.

HON. F. M. STONE: Clause 244 fully provided for the objection which the hon. member took. The Minister at any time could revoke a license.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that, in line 2 of Clause 244C, the words "a clerk or servant" be struck out, and "clerks or servants" inserted in lieu thereof; that in line 4, between "of" and "such," the word "any" be inserted; and in line 10, between "as" and "such," the word "any" be inserted.

Amendments put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

New Clause:

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Under the Bill a magistrate had the power to impose a penalty up to five hundred or a thousand pounds; there was no limit, he believed, to the amount of a magistrate's order. A justice of the peace might make a mistake on a question of law or fact, and if a magistrate made a mistake on fact, there was no appeal from that decision. That was contrary to the ordinary principles of law. If a justice made a mistake, there ought to be an appeal.

If a magistrate choose to fine a person £500, and he knew of such an instance, there was no appeal; the person fined was bound by the penalty.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Did that refer to all the provisions of the Bill?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Yes; to every provision, unless there was some provision in the Bill authorising an appeal, no appeal could be allowed. In the case of a merchant being called upon to account for certain goods, the Customs House officer had the right to go into the merchant's premises and ask for the invoice of the goods, and it might be that the merchant could not find the invoice; thereupon the Customs House officer had the right to seize the goods, and the magistrate could fine the person an amount up to fifty or a hundred pounds, and order the goods to be forfeited. The account the defendant could give might be very satisfactory. He had heard a wrong order made, although the majority of orders were right. It was a question of principle. He moved that the following new clause be added to the Bill:—

Appeal.—Any person feeling aggrieved by any order or conviction made by any justice of the peace, under the Customs Consolidation Act, 1892, may appeal against such order or conviction, under the provisions of "The Police Act, 1892," or the law for the time being regulating appeals against orders or convictions made by justices in petty sessions assembled.

Notice in writing had to be given within seven days; and the appellant must enter into a bond to pay costs, and the magistrate might remand him to prison pending an appeal, or order him to pay the fine pending the appeal, and in every way it was in favour of the Government. The power of appeal was much restricted, and as every provision was made for the protection of the Government, who were the prosecutors under the Police Act, which regulated all appeals, there was no harm in extending appeal here. He might be wrong, but he felt sure the omission was an oversight on the part of the draftsman.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What was proposed here was the law in Victoria.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: In New South Wales there was an Act under which a person could apply for a prohibition, and depositions were taken. They might have a different law relating to appeals in Vic-

toria, and he knew they had a different law in New South Wales.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no opposition on his part at the present moment to the new clause, but he proposed that progress be reported, so that the House might have time to consider the matter, and that he also might look into it. He distinctly remembered the discussion which took place on the Bill passing through another place, and he thought he took something like the same ground as the Hon. R. S. Haynes. In fact, he had always felt that the right of appeal was a precious privilege. In a case of this nature it was contended it was not right to give the power of appeal, and bearing that in mind, he would like to get the opinion of the law officers of the Crown. He, therefore, moved that progress be reported, and leave given to sit again on Tuesday next.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

PERMANENT RESERVES BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: This is a small Bill, but it contains an important principle, and one I feel sure members of the House will accept, namely, that when once reserves have been declared for certain purposes they shall not be alienated from those purposes except by permission of Parliament. I trust the principle will be indorsed by hon. members. I need say no more about the Bill, except that I do not propose to go into Committee upon it until next week. I have received an intimation from another quarter that it is intended to add to the number of purposes mentioned in the schedule for which reserves may be declared. At present it provides for parks, squares, or otherwise for the embellishment of towns, or for the health, recreation, or amusement of the inhabitants; and for cemeteries. I move the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I beg to support the second reading. This is a Bill that I have been long anxious to see introduced, and I have done what I could privately to hasten the day of its introduction. I am obliged for the

intimation of the Colonial Secretary that he does not intend to take the Committee stage for a week, as the Bill, while admirable so far as it goes, falls short in some respects of what is required. It will be noticed that some of the reserves of which the hon. member has just read the headings are to be placed under the protection of the Bill. But once they come under this Bill, they can only be dealt with by Act of Parliament. That is no doubt a safeguard for the purpose of such reserves as our gardens at the back here (Perth Public Gardens) which by a stroke of the Governor's pen to-morrow might be thrown open for building purposes, or for a fish market, or any other purpose. The same also applies to the Public Park. It might be cut up.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Or the Zoo.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Zoo, is protected by an Act of its own. The authorities were wise in their generation: they took care that they should have the same protection as this measure affords to other reserves, and have a special Act of their own. The trouble in this Bill is the impossibility of undoing reserves placed under its protection except by an Act of Parliament. There is a very large class of reserves which any Governor would be most unwilling to tie up in that manner. Owing to the spread of population not having reached them, or owing to the purposes not being sufficiently defined, or the need not quite recognised, they ought to be preserved and protected from the spoilers' hands—I mean the hands of the Commissioner of Crown Lands—yet there should be power in the Government to deal with them under less stringent terms than an Act of Parliament. Therefore, it seems to me that we should have more than one class of reserves, a class containing reserves which can only be dealt with by Act of Parliament; also a class containing reserves which may be dealt with by the Governor in Council, but only under certain conditions which would serve to protect these reserves. And lastly, I may point out that this Bill, even in regard to the reserves it makes, encumbers dealings with those reserves in a way that would be found most undesirable in a certain direction, for, once these reserves are brought under this Bill, not even a road can be

cut through them, and no adjustment of their boundaries can be made. And there are other matters which may occur to hon. members. All these things can be dealt with by means of a very few amendments. I think the suggestion to postpone the Committee stage very satisfactory.

HON. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): At first sight I was somewhat opposed to this Bill, thinking that it might apply to reserves made haphazard in country places. In many instances they are more of a country nature, and yet they are gazetted and go through all the formal proceedings the same as the reserves in towns. I see, however, by the schedule that they are not included. If it is intended to include the reserves in the country places I shall certainly oppose any such proposal, because it is found necessary sometimes within six or seven months to declare those reserves useless. Some surveyors passing through the district suggested that they shall be made but the reserves are not fitted for the people. The first the people know about it is that a reserve is gazetted without their having asked for it, and the reserve has been of no use at all. A splendid piece of country locked up, as it were, from sale, and from useful purposes.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Somebody must have recommended it.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Oh, no. The surveyors did it themselves. It will not be wise to include in the Bill reserves outside the towns.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

PUBLIC EDUCATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): I rise with pleasure to move the second reading of this Bill. The measure before the House last session was considerably larger than this: it was intended to consolidate the Educational Acts of the colony; but it has been thought desirable to limit this Bill to two points, to provide for free education throughout the colony, and to make provision for compulsory education. Considerable discussion has taken place over this Bill, and I am glad to say there seems to have been a very happy and

mutual arrangement come to, by which the persons holding different views on the education question have harmoniously agreed. I believe at present there is no real objection on the part of members to the Bill as it stands, nor by the members of the leading denominations of the colony. I believe there are no real grounds of objection to the Bill, and I trust that is the case in this House. I hope the Bill will pass through without amendment, excepting there may be discovered some verbal errors in the measure. I do not believe there are, as I have read the Bill through two or three times, and have not discovered any. In regard to free education, I am not particularly enamoured with that: I have always opposed free education; I have always considered it unnecessary, because, if a person has a dozen in family, it costs no more than one shilling to educate the twelve children at the Government primary schools, and I do not think the fee is more than three-pence for any one child.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Twopence.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There appears to have been a considerable demand throughout the colony for free education, especially by persons who have recently come from the other colonies, where they have enjoyed this privilege; but there is not free education in all the other colonies. It is not free in New South Wales, and I believe it is not free in South Australia, although I think it is free in Victoria. There has been a very considerable demand for free education in this colony, and I believe the Government, some two or three years ago, promised that free education should be introduced. That seems to have given a large amount of satisfaction throughout the colony, although some hon. members in this House share my opinion on this matter of free education. This Bill will, at any rate, remove any objections by parents who think that if education is compulsory it ought to be free. I know that some go a step further than that, but I do not agree with those persons, and I believe other members of the House are with me on this point. I refer to those who believe that religious instruction should not be given in State schools. I think that so long as the religious instruction does not interfere with the privileges and prejudices of the

various denominations, religious instruction should be given. We have books from which religious instruction is given. These were placed before hon. members last session, and I do not believe any religious denomination can object to the lessons being given from those books. It will be noticed by the Bill that the scale of fees provided has been altered. For instance, if a child has arrived at a certain age, that child can continue its education by the parent paying certain fees. The Government have also instituted technical education, which has met with a large amount of success: education in that direction requires development. It is only fair that persons deriving benefit from technical education should pay fees, and provision is made in the Bill for the Minister to charge fees for such education as this. The only other parts of the Bill relating to compulsory education differ very slightly from the Bill introduced last session, and which was passed by this House. Some little curtailment is made in one or two clauses. The clause which refers to the distance which a child between the age of six and nine years must travel to a Government or efficient school, is now made two miles. It was a mile and a half under the old Act, and a child from nine to fourteen years of age must travel three miles to a Government or efficient school. That is provided for in Clause 6. Then it is provided that a continuous attendance for two hours shall count half-a-day's attendance. Clause 7 provides that, on reasonable grounds, the Minister may accept excuses; that is if the child is under efficient instruction at home or elsewhere, and the Minister will be the judge of the efficiency of the education; or if a child is prevented from attending school by reason of sickness, danger of infection, and so forth, an excuse will be received. This is a provision that should be in all Education Acts, not only in this colony, but in other parts of the world. The Bill also provides that the Minister may, under certain circumstances, excuse children from attending during harvest time, or during other periods of the year when their services are required in the fields. Clause 9 provides for the appointment of inspectors to enforce attendance at school. Penalties are imposed for neglect; for the first offence not exceeding 5s., and for

every subsequent offence not exceeding 20s. The Bill also provides that for the purpose of prosecuting a parent the Minister shall be represented in any court by the compulsory officer or inspector. That provision had a place in the Bill which was passed last session. The onus of proof rests on the parents of the children. A certificate in the hand of the teacher is sufficient evidence without the attendance of the teacher. I think I explained last session that it was an onerous obligation on the part of the teacher, and involves serious consequences to the school, by making a teacher attend at the court. This difficulty has now been removed, so that the teacher is not compelled to take the attendance books with him, and leave his school to go to the court, and perhaps waste a whole day in waiting for a case to come on. I have known in Perth a teacher to wait for more than a day at a court in connection with school prosecutions. I am sure hon. members will agree with me that if the Bill provides for the education of children, the full benefit of that education should be received, not only for the sake of the children, but for the sake of others. If a child attends late, or is absent from a class, that child retards the progress of the other children in the class. The Bill provides for the filling up of forms for the purpose of the triennial election, and a census may be taken. The Bill also provides a schedule that may be filled up in accordance with Clause 15. There was an amount of discussion on this clause last session, and the provision contained in the clause embodies the result of the deliberations of hon. members in this House when the Bill was before them last year. The clause provides that all schools, other than Government schools, shall be found efficient by examination. The clause provides, as it did last year, and to which some exception has been taken, that the Minister may, provided he is satisfied—and that satisfaction must arise from a knowledge of the conditions of the school—certify, without examination, that a school is efficient. I have omitted to state that in Clause 16, some alteration has taken place, and the curriculum has been somewhat altered. That was contingent on the standard which, under the regulations, was altered. Now the re-

gulations state that it will be sufficient if children are found to be efficient in the instruction given in reading, writing, arithmetic, spelling and geography, as required by the Act or the regulations; and the Minister shall cause such school to be included in a list of schools which have been inspected and found efficient. I think that alteration was suggested from outside, accepted by the Inspector of Schools, and it has met with the approval of the Government. Clause 17 provides that there shall be a register; and if we are to have compulsory education more than in name, this clause must find a place in the Bill. It is taken from South Australia, and must, in the nature of things, operate for the better attendance of children at the primary schools of the colony. It also enables the department to ascertain what will probably be, in the near future, the requirements of any given district of the colony, so that the department may be prepared to place on the Estimates a sum of money necessary for the carrying on of that school. While moving the second reading of this Bill, it is only right to draw the attention of hon. members to some alterations of the regulations that have taken place, and which were recently placed in the hands of hon. members. According to these alterations, it is intended to give education on more liberal terms than hitherto we have been able to do. We have reduced the number of children necessary in a particular district from 12 to 10, and in other directions we have so provided that the Education Department may be able to undertake the education of children in sparsely populated districts. As we have, in the past, followed in the footsteps of New South Wales we have had to adopt similar regulations to that colony. We have been following New South Wales previously, and when New South Wales made an alteration in their regulations we followed them in that course. The only other clause I need refer to is Clause 19, which deals with regulations as to examinations for certain bursaries and scholarships. Hitherto the scholarships have been confined to Government primary schools, and my own opinion is, and I am strongly of that opinion, that they ought still to be confined to Government schools, on the ground that if we estab-

lish a State system of education we ought to make that system as perfect as we can, and we ought to hold out inducements to boys to continue their studies so as to obtain scholarships, and fit themselves for higher positions in life.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: At the expense of the High Schools.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I give my opinion. However, it has been decided by the Government that bursaries and scholarships as well as exhibitions shall be thrown open to competition by all the schools of the colony. The bursaries are money prizes, which are obtained by scholars being examined under the control of the Government inspectors, and the Government wish to keep these examinations under the control of the Education Department. I think it is desirable that the Government should fix the subjects for examination, and no objection has been taken by teachers of private schools in the colony to this course. I am glad to find that there is considerable emulation amongst the schools, and I had the honour of distributing the prizes to the scholars who won. The senior bursaries amount to £25 and the junior to £15. The scholarships are under the High School, and it is thought right to retain the scholarships at the High School. The Government have not thought fit to adopt the suggestion which was made to me that the boys winning the scholarships should choose the school at which to continue their education. Possibly by next year the matter will be reconsidered, and we may be able to take that further step.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Now is the time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause says: "All bursaries and scholarships granted by the Governor out of the public funds shall be open for competition among children being educated at any Government or other efficient school." Members will notice it is confined to efficient schools, that is to those which have been certified to be efficient. It is absolutely necessary that they shall be so, because we shall have some certainty of the quality of education which has been given. We shall also, to a great extent, guard against another great evil, which is of no benefit to the scholar. I refer to this point with some diffidence, as there is an hon. member who is able to speak with a great deal more experience

and knowledge of the subject than I can. But I think we ought to deprecate cramming by all means, and this in my opinion will, to a certain extent, if not to a very large extent, have that effect. The Governor may make regulations for the conduct of and subjects for examination for such bursaries and scholarships. That clause remains as it was, with the exception that scholarships are added to the bursaries now thrown open to the public schools. Any further explanation that is needed I will be able to give in Committee. I think I have mentioned the principal points in the Bill, and presumably I may repeat them, namely, the adoption of free and compulsory education and also throwing open the scholarships for competition among the different efficient schools or Government schools of the colony. I believe the measure will be very helpful in administering the system which has been adopted in this colony. Very considerable difficulty has been experienced in carrying out the compulsory clauses, and I am afraid parents have been very indifferent to the welfare of their children, and have allowed them to wander about the streets too much; but this will enable us to a very large extent to avoid that. When you remember that there is a provision in the Bill that a person employing a child under age is liable to be dealt with, and when I tell you that this system, having been adopted in England, is found to secure 85 per cent. of the truants from the schools, I think you will be satisfied it is a very wholesome provision. I move the second reading of the Public Elementary Education Bill.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central): I rise to support the second reading, and I think the Government can be congratulated on having solved a very difficult problem. In my opinion the moderation displayed by all persons who have taken this matter into consideration and who have taken, I may say, sides in the discussion, is to be commended. All through, the Bill seems to me to be one of compromise, and life, as has been said by a very eminent person, is made up of compromise. The only clause I propose to refer to is Clause 19, and I was very much surprised to hear what fell from the leader of the House, which does not seem to be in keeping with the spirit of

compromise that permeates the Bill. As the clause stands at present it reads thus :

All bursaries and scholarships granted by the Governor out of the public funds shall be open for competition among children being educated at any Government or other efficient school ; and the Governor may, from time to time, make regulations for the conduct of, and subjects for, the examinations for such bursaries and scholarships.

So that a scholarship is open to any child attending an efficient school, that school having been first declared efficient by the Minister. The test is by examination. There are several schools here in addition to the High School, and, if these schools are declared efficient for the purpose, children attending these schools may be educated there, and, if they are successful in passing a competitive examination and winning a scholarship, what does the master of that school say ?

HON. F. T. CROWDER : He loses his scholar.

HON. R. S. HAYNES : He loses his scholar after he has gone through the trouble and drudgery of educating him in the early and initial stages, and has been successful. Perhaps he has taken up a bright boy, or several bright boys, in his school, and has spent half an hour in the afternoon for the purpose of sending them on, knowing that when they arrive at a certain stage the parents will take them away, as perhaps they cannot afford to keep them any longer. After he has gone to all this trouble and the boys succeed in passing a brilliant examination, what is the result ? He loses his scholar, that scholar being taken away to feed the High School. In all common fairness, can such a system as that be supported ?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : Do you think the secondary schools will compete ?

HON. R. S. HAYNES : I do not see any difference between secondary schools and primary schools. There may be a difference in the schools, but there is no distinction in principle. If I were a schoolmaster I would be as sorry to lose a child five years of age as one of 14. The principle is the same, and I consider it would be most unfair to say the very excellent private schools we have here should go to the trouble of educating children for the purpose of feeding the High School. If the High School is

such a weakly institution that it requires £1,000 per annum (I think it is) for the purpose of keeping it up ; if it is such a weakly institution that it has to live on the bright children drawn from other schools, surely to goodness there is something wrong about it. But I do not think such is the case. I think the High School can live without that, and without being forced to commit an act of piracy among private schools. I do not think anything more contemptible than to go round and sneak another man's scholar ; and that is what the effect of the Bill will be. I appeal to members. I can quote the instance of the Scotch College here, which has been struggling along as hard as ever it could, since it started, and never has drawn a penny from the Government, but has so far been eminently successful. The principal did tell me the number of pupils.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : A hundred.

HON. R. S. HAYNES : A hundred pupils, and there are efficient masters. Not one penny have the College authorities received from the State, and now if they take the trouble to sharpen up a few boys from their school, and those boys are unfortunate enough, from the master's point of view, to win a scholarship, the College will lose them. Do you think any head master is going to instruct a child in order to lose him ?

HON. F. T. CROWDER : The child can go where he likes.

HON. R. S. HAYNES : I think it ought to be open to the scholar to select the school where he will continue his education, provided the school is efficient and is approved of by the Minister. The Colonial Secretary led me to believe on the last occasion that the matter could be best dealt with by regulation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : It can be dealt with by regulation now. I think the opinion of the House can be expressed about the matter.

HON. R. S. HAYNES : *Litera scripta manet.* If we are going to express our opinion, we should do so in a clause. The Colonial Secretary will correct me if I am wrong, but when I stated to the hon. gentleman it was only fair that these scholarships, being awarded to children educated at private schools, should be tenable at schools approved by the Minister, the hon. gentleman said he did not approve

of it—and I understand that personally he does not approve of it—but he did say this, and that certainly would be so if that was the spirit of the clause. I was quite surprised to hear to-day that the Government since then have come to a different conclusion. Such a regulation as that a scholarship is tenable at the school where the youth is educated, if he likes, is in accordance with the spirit of the Bill. If the Bill means that if these youths get scholarships they shall be wiped out of the private schools, which receive no State aid, and be sent to the High School, which is subsidised, I think that in fairness to these private schools we ought not to pass the measure. If that is the intention of the Government, I shall certainly vote against it. I put this forward to hon. members, and it is not a question of one side or the other. We have several schools. There are the Christian Brothers' College and the Scotch College.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: And the Grammar School at Fremantle.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I was speaking of Perth; and I hope to see a good Anglican school here. If we had this I think we should be well supplied with denominational higher class schools. I do not think it is the duty of the Government to educate in the higher grades of education. That, in my opinion, ought to be left to the parents themselves. I appeal to members, and I am sure I shall not appeal in vain, if they consider the remarks I have made fair and reasonable, to meet them with a spirit of toleration and not to deal unjustly by those persons who have come here and expended money in putting up buildings, and who are just as much entitled to the consideration of members as those who teach in the High School. In conclusion, let it not be understood that I in any way say one word against the High School. The High School has performed its duty in an admirable manner, though perhaps it has not been so successful in point of number; but that has yet to come. I have thought the thing over very fully, and think that on the whole the existence of the High School is justified, and I hope it will be more successful in future; but if the High School is going to be continued, do not commit a wrong upon the private schools, because that will simply

create bitterness. At the present time there is a friendly spirit of rivalry between the schools. Let us induce them to struggle one against the other, but not one at the expense of the other.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South West): I join in the congratulations of my hon. friend Mr. Haynes to the Colonial Secretary on the introduction of this Bill. It was lost last year, and many advantages which it distinctly holds out had to be suspended until the present session. I trust the Bill will go through now, and that what many people in this colony consider the boon of free education will be granted. I am sure, however, many members will agree with the Colonial Secretary that there are two sides to the question. Be that as it may, the majority of the persons in Western Australia have come from the other colonies, where free education has been the established rule for many years; they bring with them their customs and demands, and it is impossible to withhold free education from them any longer. In all other respects I think the Bill is satisfactory. I assume it is so, because the measure practically contains the provisions that were contained in the Bill which was passed by the House last session, with the exception of that provision in reference to religious education, which is a burning matter, and has been avoided in the present measure. I hope that question will not be thrown on the floor of the House during the present discussion. There is one other clause that comes in for a few remarks, and I will explain the object of that clause, to which strong exception has been taken by Mr. R. S. Haynes. The House will remember that on the last occasion the hon. member expressed himself very much in the same strain as he has done on this occasion, and several other members enunciated the same view; but I think the hon. member has fallen into somewhat of a mistake as to the scholarships and bursaries, which I will explain. I do not think the hon. member has realised the distinction between bursaries and scholarships. A bursary is intended to encourage instruction in the schools of the primary order.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The scholarships, you mean.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I may explain to hon. members that these names have

been altered during the last 12 years. The terms "exhibition," "scholarship," and "bursary" have undergone some change of meaning; but, so long as I get my terms, I shall proceed satisfactorily, and the Colonial Secretary will probably correct me if I go wrong. The bursaries are the lately established "exhibitions."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Money prizes.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Yes; money prizes granted by the Government, a matter for which I also struggled long. I am glad these prizes were considered two or three years ago, and granted. The scholarships are prizes given on examination to pupils who intend to proceed to a higher school.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That is not the meaning of the word "scholarship."

HON. J. W. HACKETT: We must take the words in their accepted signification. Bursaries and scholarships amount to this: a bursary is an encouragement to boys and girls of all schools so long as those schools are found efficient, and I believe even the efficiency is not required; but there are a series of prizes of a pecuniary kind granted to pupils who have distinguished themselves in what are called the primary schools.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: They must be examined.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member seems to me to confound the scholarships with the bursaries, in the amendment that he wishes to bring forward.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There is not the slightest difference. It is a payment of money.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: If I am allowed to proceed, I will explain the difference, and I will take upon myself to say, not in a conceited vein, that when I have done the hon. member will grant that I am right. A bursary is given as a prize to scholars of the primary schools, but scholarships have been instituted with an entirely different object. The object of scholarships is this. Our system of education in this colony is fairly well advanced as to primary schools.

HON. H. BRIGGS: Elementary schools?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Elementary schools, those schools giving education in reading, writing, arithmetic, and other

elementary subjects—all the subjects that are taught in elementary schools. Those are the subjects for examination for the bursaries to be granted; but the scholarships stand on an entirely different footing. As I was saying, the system of education in this colony is on a fairly satisfactory footing as to primary schools, and even in regard to secondary schools; but there is a disadvantage in this respect, that we have no university, and consequently we have no inducement, or a very small inducement indeed, for boys to proceed to a classical education. The object of the scholarship is to supply that want in a small degree. I am not arguing this from any desire to gloss over any matter, but simply to give the House information. The object of scholarships is to encourage classical instruction in the colony.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Cannot boys get a classical education at the Scotch college?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The scholarships might be done away with, of course; but, as long as they exist, their object is to encourage classical education. There is no other means of inducing boys taking up that line of education: there is no university to proceed to, and it is only under great difficulties that boys can be induced to learn the classics. The system of education is absolutely deficient in classical training. It offers no inducement for classical education, and we have made very little headway in that direction. The market for boys after they leave school is always open to those who have received what is called an English or commercial education; but the market for boys who have received a classical education is not large; consequently there are more schools which give an English and commercial education. Parents find it exceedingly difficult to send their boys to a school where the boys can receive a classical education. The object of giving a scholarship is to induce boys to go in for a classical education; otherwise the scholarship has no basis of existence, because everything that is done by the scholarship is done by the bursaries and exhibitions. The scholarships are to encourage boys to go in for the classics. The High School is the one institution in the colony which makes classics compulsory.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Is there no modern side?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Does the hon. member mean a "modern side" in a technical sense, or does he mean that a student may substitute a modern language for one of the dead languages? In the High School there is no modern side, but every pupil is compelled to take up the classics. I believe if this classical rule were relaxed, if scholarships were abolished and the school allowed to work on modern grounds, the money which is now given for scholarships would be thrown into the bursaries. With regard to scholarships, that is the one solitary contribution of the Parliament and the Government towards classical training. In the other colonies, many thousands of pounds are given annually for classical training; and in the other colonies the Government provide a coping-stone in the shape of a university. The series of prizes known as "exhibitions" have been abolished.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: They were successful, were they not?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I do not believe they were. These exhibitions were to allow boys to go forth from Western Australia to universities elsewhere. That was again a little attempt on the part of the Government to provide for the want of a university in Western Australia. My friend the Colonial Secretary and I do not agree in regard to these exhibitions. The hon. member thinks they worked well.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think they worked fairly well.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I also had a good deal of acquaintance with these exhibitions, in the way they were examined for and granted, and my opinion is unaltered. We have the fact that the exhibitions were the contribution by the Government towards carrying the classical training a little further; and the money which was given for these exhibitions has not been applied to any other classical purpose in the colony. The exhibitions have been wiped out. All the Government have done to help forward a classical training, I am shocked to say, is the establishment of these classical scholarships, which are competed for and held under the understanding that the boys proceed with their classical

training. The money is voted by Parliament, and the Government, in order to induce boys to go forward towards a classical education, cause them to attend the High School, because no other school in Western Australia has a bursary. A boy may get a scholarship, and if he goes to any other school he drops classics; therefore the scholarship is lost. In two cases out of three, a boy would not take classics.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That is questionable.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: To bring the material results more rapidly will be the whole purpose of these scholarships, if they are made tenable at the other schools, because the High School insists on classics, and no other school does so. This is intended as a small contribution towards classical education in Western Australia. It is the one contribution made by Parliament; and I have great pleasure in supporting the Bill.

HON. A. B. KIDSON (West): I would like to join with the hon. member who has just spoken, in congratulating the Government on the introduction of this Bill. I should like to heartily congratulate them on the satisfactory settlement they have effected in connection with a vexed question which was before the people a short time ago. I cannot help saying I agree with almost every word that has fallen from Mr. R. S. Haynes. I think he put the position, in connection with scholarships, very clearly and lucidly. It does seem strange that these scholarships, if provided by the Government especially for the purpose of the advancement of higher education, should be confined to one institution. Mr. Hackett told us that he was going to convince us before he sat down that it was quite right these scholarships should be confined to the High School.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I said that I would convince Mr. Haynes there was a distinction between a bursary and a scholarship.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: You have not done so, but have left me in a fog.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: The hon. member has not convinced Mr. Haynes the scholarships should be confined to the High School. He repeated, certainly 15 or 20 times, that these scholarships were for the purpose of a classical education.

He said they were originated for the purpose of encouraging pupils to go in for a classical education. That may be so. I do not know how they originated, because I had the misfortune not to be in the colony at the time, but that is a long time ago, and therefore they were originated at a time when there were not at hand the other establishments for the purposes of higher education that there are at the present time in this colony. Take, for instance, the Scotch College. I say advisedly the education at that institution, whether classical or modern, is every bit as good as that at the Perth High School.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: There is no doubt about that.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I never asserted what you have alleged.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I understood the hon. member (Mr. Hackett) endeavoured to convince members that these scholarships should be applied solely to the Perth High School.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Solely to classical education. I repeated that two or three times.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Then there can be no rhyme or reason why these scholarships should not be allowed to be competed for at those schools where classical education is given.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I do not think you listened to what I said.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I took particular notice of what you said.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: He has a bad case.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Why should scholarships not be competed for by schools giving a higher education? It appears to me there is no objection to it, except that the Perth High School is supported by Government, and it is desirable to aid it as far as possible with these boys. I may be wrong—and if so perhaps the hon. member will correct me—but my view is this: a bursary is a prize consisting of a sum of money in one amount, whereas a scholarship is a sum of money extending over one, two, three, or five years.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The fees.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: The fees. I have always understood that is the difference between a bursary and a scholarship.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: But there is a difference here with regard to a scholarship and a bursary.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I am simply dealing with the ordinary terms "bursary" and "scholarship," as generally used.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: A bursary can be expended anywhere, but a scholarship only in the one place.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: In the case of a scholarship the fees extend over a number of years.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: A bursary may extend over a number of years.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Then there is no difference at all.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I am willing to give that in to Mr. Hackett. Then there is no difference between a scholarship and a bursary; therefore why should bursaries be allowed to be distributed over the whole of the schools and a scholarship confined to one, if there be no difference? Perhaps the hon. member can give an answer. I cannot see it. My view—and I feel sure hon. members will be with me—is that it is quite competent for pupils to get as good an education at the establishments for higher education other than the High School, as at the High School, and, if I may be permitted to say so, I am inclined to think that they can get a better education at those other schools, judging by results.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: What are the results you judge by?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I will tell you. I judge in a great measure by the number of pupils who attend those schools.

A MEMBER: That is nothing.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: In my opinion that means a great deal, for the general public as a rule will send their children where they can get the best education.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is a question of quantity or quality?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: The feeling is that at those other schools the fees are just as high as at the High School.

HON. H. BRIGGS: Higher.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I do not know that they are higher.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I am informed on very good authority that they are.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: They have been raised at the High School.

HON. H. BRIGGS: I was speaking of two or three years ago.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I understand that the fees at the High School have been raised, the object being no doubt to get more pupils, because probably they found that other schools were charging more and getting more pupils; but I do not know whether the results they expected have been realised. I am given to understand it is partly so.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The prizes gained by the High School were of the most unqualified character at the late examination.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Because it was Moseley.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: They might have had one or two solitary instances, but one swallow does not make a summer, and I do not think the assertion alters one little bit the remark I made just now.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was not one, but there were four or five.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: But there were four or five from the Scotch College.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Perhaps they did not compete.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: They did, and they did not get it.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It is a melancholy fact that the number of scholars at the High School is not what it ought to be, in view of the large amount of State assistance the school receives. I am not going to say a word about the masters of that school. I do not know any of them except the head master, and I think he is a very accomplished man, but there is something unsatisfactory about that school. Perhaps the hon. member (Mr. Hackett) can tell, for he is chairman of the board. That school has had a head master, and numerous other masters, and a board, yet we find the school languishes with all the State aid it receives. What is the reason?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Question.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It has been a matter of notoriety for some considerable time. Take the Christian Brothers' College and the Scotch College and the schools at Fremantle and elsewhere: they seem to be flourishing, and yet the High School seems to languish.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It does not really languish.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It is only a short time ago, if my memory serves me right, that a Bill came before this House for a further sum because the High School had not enough from the fees, and yet the hon. member can still say the High School is flourishing. I will not say that I believe him, but I will forgive him. The hon. member in effect gave as the reason why these scholarships should be applied solely to the High School, that it was compulsory to have a classical education. That was mainly the reason he urged why these scholarships should be competed for there. I can tell the hon. member—perhaps it is a long time since he went to school—that I had a classical education, at one of the first public schools of the old country, and in nearly every one of the public schools in the old country they have a classical and modern side, and it is quite optional to the pupils or the parents to select either the classical or the modern education. Therefore I do not think there is very much in that argument about classical education being compulsory. I shall not take up the time of the House longer except to say I think members, and I hope the Government, will on reflection come to the conclusion that it is only a fair thing that these scholarships, if given at all, shall be competed for in any school thought fit, subject to such regulation as the Government may prescribe. In common fairness that should be allowed. Why the High School should be petted and pampered in the way it is, with the small result there is from it, I fail to see. I must appeal to hon. members to say it is not fair to the other schools doing such a large amount of good work in the education of the youth of this colony, to confine these scholarships to the High School.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Employment of children of compulsory age:

HON. H. LUKIN: Under this clause would the parents of children be liable to a penalty of 40 shillings if the children were employed, although they did not live within the radius of the school.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

Clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 18, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 19: Regulations as to examinations for certain bursaries and scholarships:

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved that the following words be added to the clause: "The scholarship shall be tenable at any efficient school selected by the holder of such scholarship, provided the Minister shall first declare such school to be efficient." The Sydney Grammar School, which was the oldest school in Australia, and at which most of the Judges of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and Queensland, and most of the leading men of those two colonies, were educated, had two different sides; there were the classical and modern sides. There was no comparison between the two sides of the school; on one side a boy could learn French and German, and on the other side Latin and Greek. The High School in this colony was apparently based on the same principles as the Sydney Grammar School, although it had not two sides; but that was no reason why scholarships should not be made tenable at any school besides the High School. It was contended that scholarships should not only be tenable at the High School because they were a gift from the Government to promote classical education. To-morrow the High School might have a modern side if it followed in the steps of the grammar schools of Australia and England; and then the real reason which Mr. Hackett had given for the scholarships remaining at the High School would vanish. We had been informed that the scholarships were given to induce boys to follow a classical education. If that be so, that was a direct insult levelled at all the other schools in the colony. It meant that boys were obliged to go to the High School to get a classical education. Boys could obtain a classical education at the Scotch College, or the Christian Brothers' College; they could get as good a classical education at any one of these schools. One bright boy did not make a school, and because one boy, to which Mr. Hackett had referred, had done well, it did not follow that if that boy had been to any other school he would not have done well. If that boy had been sent to the Scotch College he would have taken the same position, and so in regard to the Christian Brothers' College. He was

pleased to see the hon. member fighting for the institution of which he was such a prominent member. Although he was glad to see the High School prosper, still he did not wish to see it living on the pupils from other schools. It was not right that the High School should look round to the other schools of the colony for pupils to finish at its school. If he thought that the other schools of the colony could not impart as good an education as the High School, he would not move his amendment. The difference between a scholarship and a bursary was to his mind *nil*.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:

There was an intention on his part to make a proposal to Mr. Haynes to withdraw his amendment, on the understanding that what the hon. member referred to should be based upon the regulations. He would like to ascertain what meaning the hon. member attached to the words "efficient school," because it seemed to him to be open to some misconception. Efficient schools, as the words were used in the Bill, applied to primary schools. He gathered from what the hon. member said that he wished the term to be applied rather to the secondary schools, if one might so term them. It was never anticipated that competition would take place between the higher schools and primary schools in connection with scholarships.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: "Efficient schools" were defined as schools certified by the Minister to be efficient for the purposes of this Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would require some machinery to ascertain which schools were efficient. It was a question whether the High School, the Scotch College, or the Fremantle Grammar School would submit to have an examination by a Government inspector. They might entertain some doubt whether the inspectors of the primary schools of the colony would be competent to examine in classical knowledge, for instance, or in the higher branches of education, such education not being given in the primary schools of the colony.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That was rather lame.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What meaning did the hon. member attach to the word "efficient?"

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Efficient for the purposes for which it was required.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Efficient schools as intended by the Bill were the primary schools of the colony, whether they were private or Government. The paragraph was never intended to apply to secondary schools. We must send a scholar who had gained a scholarship to a higher school. The reason for giving a scholarship was that a scholar might pursue his education to a very much higher standard, and to do that he must go to a high-class school.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The school had to be approved of by Government.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Let the word "efficient" be struck out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Was one to understand the hon. member wished the paragraph to apply to any school which might be declared efficient by the Minister?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Those were, he thought, the words.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If hon. members thought with him in this direction, he was prepared to give Mr. Haynes an assurance that the matter would be dealt with in the regulations in the way the hon. member indicated. If the Committee allowed the Bill to go through as it stood, it would save a considerable amount of trouble, and he would promise the hon. member the point should be attended to and the machinery used for the purpose stated. By throwing the scholarships open to the various schools in the colony we were, to a certain extent, taking the ground from under our feet as regarded sending scholars to the High School; but for many years these scholarships had been in existence, the Act itself providing for the giving of scholarships to boys educated in Government schools, and it had been the practice—not by law but under the regulations—to send them to the High School. These were the reasons which influenced the Government in the matter. He admitted the original object of throwing the scholarships open was to give pupils the

selection of the school they would go to, and if the hon. member would accept his assurance and withdraw his amendment, he (the Colonial Secretary) was now prepared to give that assurance.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The manner in which the leader of the House had met him very much gratified him, and he gladly asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Anything he did in the direction of amending or helping to carry out the purposes of the Bill was solely with a view to improving the efficiency of the schools of the colony. He hoped nothing in his remarks would convey any conclusion other than that he most heartily welcomed the presence of all the higher schools of the colony. Both the Christian Brothers and Scotch College were doing good work. The Fremanle school had done good work in the past and was continuing that good work. With regard to the proposal of the Colonial Secretary, he was sure Mr. Haynes did not gather that the word "efficient" really meant a degradation of the schools rather than a raising of them. To allow these scholarships to be tenable at an elementary school—a school at which reading, writing and arithmetic would be taught—would be to lower a scholarship, which was the highest prize awarded in the colony. He (Mr. Hackett) was no enemy to throwing scholarships open to all schools, and he believed that was one of the grounds on which he urged the bursaries in years gone by. It had been contended that if they were open to every pupil, whether in the Government or private schools, or educated at home, there would be a test of the school, and the pupil and the teacher. This Bill might effect the same purpose, but the successes of the High School at the Adelaide examination (where not only one, two, or even three boys distinguished themselves, and brought honour to Western Australia) were of the most remarkable character. The boys not only held their own against all the boys educated at the Adelaide seminaries, but even surpassed them. He hoped the proposal of the Colonial Secretary would be accepted, and believed it would carry out in every sense the wish of the House.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause passed.

Clause 20—Sections of Schedule 2 of Incorporation Act incorporated:

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There was no appeal against any order by a magistrate; and if no appeal was provided for, the decision of the magistrate was final. The general fine was £2, therefore very few persons would appeal, but a justice of the peace had a right to order the parent or other person, liable for the education of a child, to pay 10s. a week, which might be continued for a number of years.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It was left to the Government to enforce that rule.

Clause put and passed.

Schedule—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

TRUCK BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: This is a Bill of a somewhat unusual kind, although the principle has been in operation for a great number of years in the mother country, and has been adopted by New Zealand.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: By any other colony?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am not aware. At any rate this Bill is chiefly drawn on the lines of the New Zealand compilation of the English Act; it has been so adapted to meet the circumstances of that colony, and hon. members, who no doubt have followed the debate in another place, know that the Bill has been very much modified to suit the circumstances of this colony. The persons whom this Bill will most probably affect, I believe, are the timber companies who are operating on a large scale in different parts of the country. Complaints have appeared in the public Press from time to time that persons are deprived by timber companies from entering on the stations and opening a house of business, and pedlars have been prohibited from entering on timber companies' reserves. In one instance I heard that violence was threatened if a pedlar entered on the precincts of the station; this pedlar was ejected. I am not prepared to say that any great complaints have come from the employees on the

stations; many of the employees have stated that no such complaints exist. They are satisfied to deal with the employers, and they say that the goods which they receive from their employers are sold as cheaply as other persons would sell them. But this Bill deals with a system which is opposed to the principle of our race, that there shall be a monopoly on the timber stations, and that the man who earns his wages by the sweat of his brow shall be prohibited from dealing with whom he chooses. It has been stated that goods are charged for at a very high rate, and I can substantiate that to a certain extent, as I have had complaints from people who are on these timber stations, but who are not employed by the timber companies. In one particular instance a case of kerosene, which is sold in Perth at 7s. or 7s. 6d., was charged 16s. for.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: What was the freight?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The freight was very trivial indeed; it would not add one sixpence to the cost of the article. In some cases these goods are landed on the very spot, therefore the cost of carriage would be *nil*; in other cases there is a short railway carriage, but the amount of the freight would not be great. The price charged in this instance was the effect of the monopoly existing on the station. Complaints have also been made to me by officials in the departments under my control in regard to the high prices charged by the timber companies for goods. I may say that we are treating the timber companies very fairly. The companies have the run of a large area of land, and have many other privileges granted to them.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Which they pay for.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think that assertion can be maintained; the companies contribute to the revenue of the country through their employees no doubt, but the companies get special terms on the railways, and in many other ways. The Government of the country are treating the timber companies very well indeed, and I do not think any complaints come from the companies; if there were grounds of complaint at some former period, these grounds must have disappeared for a

considerable time. I notice that a complaint was made by one company outside this colony, that a preference was given to the carriage of jarrah, which tended to prevent the use of Oregon and other timbers which are introduced from outside this colony. I think it is the duty of the Government, as far as they can, to protect the interests of those who are unable to protect themselves, and in this respect the Government have attempted to throw the shield of their protection around the timber employees to see that they have an open market in which to purchase their supplies. I am not very well acquainted with the history of the Truck Act, but a great deal of feeling has been created in the old country from time to time on the subject; strong measures have been adopted to enable persons to purchase their goods wherever they like, and I am sure that is a principle with which hon. members will fully agree. The principal feature of the Bill is that wages shall be paid in money, and not in goods. That principle, however, is modified to a considerable extent, and members will notice that a considerable number of exemptions are provided in the Bill, which will tend very much to remove the very objectionable features of the measure as it appeared when first introduced. At any rate the Bill has been submitted to the hostile criticism of various persons, amongst others the members of another place, and the net result has been the Bill presented to us for our careful consideration. I know there is room for the entertainment of different views on the measure, as it may be thought we are legislating in a direction in which some difficulties may arise. It is understood that many of the timber companies are not carrying on their business at a profit, and therefore they may be fully entitled to secure what further profit or benefit they can from the purchase of goods in the wholesale market, and retailing them to their employees. I think there is considerable ground for difference of opinion as to whether it is right for the Parliament to go so far as to say that the employer shall not give credit to employees. If we are to have a Truck Act, it does not appear to me that the measure can be constructed on lines very different to this Bill. It is not intended

to apply to several classes of persons—pastoralists or agriculturists and others—provided that no deduction shall exceed the ordinary real and true value of any necessities or goods supplied. This Clause 19 has a number of exemptions which I think to a large extent modify the Bill in a way that will benefit the employer. I am not aware whether any strong objection has been taken to the Bill by the employers or not, but whenever an alteration of the law takes place in this direction, there are always some people it must effect, and people will always complain when privileges which they have enjoyed are taken away from them. This applies to the levying of a tax. If a community has enjoyed, for a considerable time, immunity from certain taxation, that community does not like taxes being imposed. I think it is reasonable to ask that the large number of men employed on the timber stations shall be protected, because really the Bill affects very few persons outside those employed at the timber mills. I think the Parliament of the country have a right to consider the interests of the men in this matter. The men are to a large extent helpless under their employer, and it may be argued that under the Bill the power of the employer will still be exercised, only in other directions. We shall have to put up with that sort of thing, if it should arise, and I think we may leave it to the good sense of the employer and to the feeling which should and will doubtless exist between himself and his employees. If the employee is still satisfied with the goods sold at the store of his employer, he will purchase there, but will have to pay cash on the spot. I think we can easily conceive that is not a very bad state of things. Had the Bill been passed as originally introduced, it would perhaps have operated to prevent advances from being made, but that feature of the Bill has been excised, and now certain advances can be made, and certain advances can also be made in other directions, to persons who would, I think, come under the designation "employees," but would be really small contractors. Therefore, the features of the Bill, as I have said, have been modified very considerably in the interests of the employer, and I can conceive very little difficulty, if the employer

loyally considers his duty to his employee and the employee loyally considers his duty to the employer. I know something of the timber business. I know something of it in the old country and here.

A MEMBER: One experience was sufficient.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. I am afraid I shall not be tempted to go into the timber trade, but we find people are willing to do it, and to spend large sums of money to carry on operations which I hope are for the benefit of the colony generally, although I must express my regret at the reckless way in which forests are cut down, and at the amount of admirable growing timber sacrificed without any utility. I understand that probably only about 30 per cent. of the timber cut for the purposes for which it is being cut now is really available for the market, and I think the state of things a very melancholy one. Our forests are large, but they are not indestructible; and I believe no attempts are being made by these companies to plant other trees in the place of those cut down, or even to protect the trees that are growing from the ravages of fire; so that altogether, although they are large employers of labour, there are some features about the operations of these timber companies which are not reassuring. I do not know that this Truck Bill will make any difference upon that point, but I took the opportunity whilst speaking to make mention of it, and I have done so before. I think that if we can devise some means for the protection of our forests at an early date, it will be all the better for the next generation. I do not know that I need say much more about the Bill. I trust hon. members will give it very careful consideration. It is an honest attempt, I think. Hon. members laugh, and perhaps they will tell us presently why they do so, for I cannot conceive the reason of it. I think this is a very serious Bill as regards the interests of a large number of people—employers and employees. I should like to see a ready acceptance of the measure, and a desire on the part of hon. members to go into it carefully in Committee, state their reasons for objecting, and analyse the Bill, and, if it can be improved, let it be improved. Any improvements effected in this House will

have very careful consideration in another place, and perhaps we may be able to improve the Bill for the benefit of all concerned.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central): Strike out Sub-clause 9 of Clause 19.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Strike out the Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the Bill reaches Committee, which I hope it may, I shall have one or two small amendments to suggest. I think a mistake has been made in the printing of the Bill, and it was not made here, but in the New Zealand measure—at any rate, it is not to be found in the English Act. The language in Clause 14 is very vague, and can be improved. The principle of the Bill is the payment of wages in money.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That is all right.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The question only remains, whether the machinery which is employed here is calculated to effect its purpose; and, if not, whether the Bill can be so amended as to carry out the purpose. The hon. member (Mr. Haynes) shakes his head; and I am afraid I will not be able to make a convert of him.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Nothing in it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nothing in the objection (general laughter). I am glad to hear it. The Bill has a very limited application, and it does not affect certain interests in the colony which I think ought not to be affected—the agricultural, pastoral, and other industrial interests: I think they ought not to be included. Knowing as I do the circumstances of a station or a farm, I say it would have been almost impossible to include the interests to which I refer; but I see no reason why the principle cannot be applied to such industries as that carried on by timber companies. I do not think I need detain the House longer, and I therefore beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

HON. F. T. CROWDER (South-East): I move that the word "now" be struck out and "this day six months" inserted in lieu thereof. I do this because I consider this Bill class legislation of a very dangerous kind. It is brought forward ostensibly in the interests of the working man, but the working man does not require it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Do not forget it is of British origin.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I am reminded that it is of British origin, but a Bill which applies to England does not apply to Western Australia, where the circumstances are altogether different. I can quite understand a Bill of this sort having been introduced ten or fifteen years ago in Western Australia, because I remember several cases which occurred then in which the working men were compelled to purchase, or take out the whole of their earnings in goods, and to obtain money to buy anything else they were forced either into the public house or some other place. But I cannot conceive at the present day the necessity for the introduction of such a Bill as this, because the Premier admitted in introducing the Bill that he had received no complaints whatever either from the workmen or from employers. The only reason for introducing it was that certain storekeepers, I think, in Bunbury or somewhere else, appealed to him, and considered they had a right to a share of the trade now monopolised by certain timber mills. The leader of the Government in this House made out in no way a strong case why this Bill should go forward, and lest hon. members should not be aware of the circumstances governing the payment of wages to employees in timber mills in the colony, I would like to refer them to one timber mill of which I can speak with confidence, namely, the Karridale Mill. At the present time, at the Karridale Mill, the company employ, I think, something like 200 or 300 men, which means a population of about 1,500 to feed. Every day a time sheet is placed up at the mill, showing the number of hours which the workman works during the day and the number of hours during the month. If there is any dispute, it can be settled there and then. Nobody can point to an instance, as far as I can ascertain, where a man has been dismissed through the mere fact of buying goods from outside.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: He never gets the chance.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The Bill will not save him at all. At the present moment the plan adopted there is that a man may, at any hour he likes, or any day he likes, have a cheque for the money

due to him. To show that the men are satisfied with the state of things there, I may say they now have in hand £7,000 on which they obtain five per cent. interest. The men have no necessity whatever to let that lie in the hands of the company, nor do the company desire the men to let the money remain there. The workmen have, as I say, £7,000 in the hands of the company, and the whole of the money at the present day owing by the workmen to the company does not exceed £200. The company have been in existence for 10 or 15 years, and have imported hundreds of people and their families from the other colonies. The people, and even grandchildren of those first imported, are in the service of the company.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: In 15 years?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I quite admit they are smarter than you are.

A MEMBER: What about rabbits after that?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The people there live rent free, whilst the price of meat is a penny per pound cheaper than in Perth, and altogether the living is far cheaper and superior to what it is in Perth, so far as boarding-houses are concerned.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That is not saying much.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: A working man at Karridale can have the best of board for 18s. a week. If the contention is that the mill-owners are charging exorbitant rates for their goods, I cannot see how the people—and there are hundreds of them—could possibly live on 18s. a week. It is urged that this Bill is introduced to protect the working man; but I maintain, and I think members will agree with me, that it does not protect the working man in any shape or form, because Clause 5 is the main part of the Bill. That clause lays it down that the working man shall be paid in cash. That is all very well, but the exemptions under Clause 19 simply make the Bill one that will cause endless litigation, because I contend there is nothing easier, even under this Bill, than for a man to receive his wages with one hand and hand them back over the counter with the other. If he refuses to do that he is dismissed. You may pass whatever Bills you like of this sort to try

to alter what is conceived to be an improper state of things; but if I employ a dozen hands, and they are supposed to deal with me, and I find them dealing somewhere else, what is easier than for me to dismiss them? You cannot stop that sort of thing, nor can you regulate it. I maintain that by passing this Bill at the present day you would be doing an injustice and a cruelty to the working man, and I will prove it in this way. Although Clause 19 provides, amongst other things, that an employer can advance money to a working man for medicine and doctor's fees, the person who advances that money cannot sue for any advance made to the family of the employee during the time the employee was ill. Under the Bill the employer can advance goods to a man for six weeks when starting to work on a timber station; but how is it possible for a workman to provide the necessaries of life and feed those dependent on him, and pay off the advance in six weeks. This Bill refuses to give to the employer the right to sue when it gives that right to a storekeeper who starts in opposition to him. The millowner has as much right to sue for a debt as any other person, and I cannot see any necessity for class legislation of this sort. The Premier, in introducing this Bill in another place, pointed out that no complaints had been made to him by the men, but that he was simply introducing the measure because he had made a promise to a deputation to do so.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Did he say that?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The Premier did not say he simply introduced the Bill for that reason. He said he had been asked for the Bill by a deputation, but he did not say that was the only reason for bringing it forward.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: There have been no complaints by the unfortunate people whom we are wasting our time over with the idea of protecting people whom it is thought are being robbed by the mill owners. If the employees make no complaints, why should we interfere at all? There has been no instance given of a man employed on a timber station in the colony who could not obtain his money when he desired it; and an employee is not bound to deal with his master; he can deal with

whom he pleases. The real reason the owners of the mills will not allow the outside public to start businesses on the stations is that the moment a store is opened by a private person on a station, sly grog-selling is started, and the timber stations object to sly grog-selling. At Karridale the mill proprietors say they will not have liquor sold on their land, because a man may through drink lose an arm or a leg, and then the company may be involved in large damages. I think hon. members will vote to throw out this Bill. Before sitting down I would like to pass one remark in regard to the observations which fell from the Colonial Secretary in reference to the fact that the forests of this country are being destroyed. Hon. members will agree with what has been said by the Colonial Secretary, and I think instead of the Government wasting the time of this House by placing Bills of this nature before us, if the members of the Government were to put their heads together and devise some means to stop the destruction of the forests which is now going on, they would earn the goodwill of the people of this country. There is a law in Germany that every man who cuts down a tree must plant a fresh one. I know, so far as the timber industry in Western Australia is concerned at present, the whole of our forests are being destroyed. The centre of the tree is cut out, and there is a perpetual bonfire on the stations.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: What has that to do with the Truck Act.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The centre of the tree is the part that is no good, I understand.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The Government should immediately bring in a Bill to prevent the great destruction of timber in this country. I move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

HON. D. M. MCKAY (North): I second the amendment. I do not think the Bill will commend itself to hardly any person of experience; I am certain it will prove a great hardship to the labouring man, and will prove a prevalent source of annoyance to everybody. The Bill probably will profit a few trades-people who are anxious to exploit bush camps, and even then it will bring evil in its trail,

because experience shows us that the bush stores are a prolific source of sly grog-selling, and all understand what that means to an industry.

HON. E. McLARTY (South West) : I intend to support Mr. Crowder's amendment. I have read the Bill through very carefully, and I fail to see that it will be of any benefit to the working man. No doubt the intention in introducing this Bill was to stop a monopoly on many of the timber stations, and to give the outside public a chance of competing in the trade arising from these places ; but the Bill would in no way have this effect ; it simply provides that working men shall be paid cash. So far as I am aware, and I live, I may say, in the midst of the timber stations, I have never heard a complaint that the men were unable to get their money, and I think that if there was cause for complaint I should have heard it. I am not going to stand up for the timber stations but I say that no " sweating " is done—I think that is the general term used. I know at the present time of a timber station where the company compel every man on the station who has teams at work, to buy the whole of the forage from the station, and although the company pay starvation wages, the price charged for the chaff is very high indeed. I contend that this Bill would not do away with that: the monopoly will still exist on most of the timber stations. The companies have their private lines running into the forest for miles, and they please themselves entirely as to what they carry on those lines. If a man purchases forage from a store, or goods from a store, the company can refuse to carry the forage or goods on the railway. If some legislation were brought forward to make private lines come under the same jurisdiction and control as the Government lines, I think that would be a good thing. I know instances in which large numbers of men who have horses, cannot get forage to their places unless it goes over the timber companies lines, and the companies will not carry the forage, but they charge 100 per cent. more for the forage which they supply themselves than what other people charge. I fail to see that the passing of the Bill will be any assistance to the working man ; but I think it would bring the working man and the master into conflict, because the

man who is paid in cash, if he goes away to spend his money, will be told that his services will in future not be required, and we cannot legislate to make a man employ certain people. It is utterly impossible in this Bill to protect the men on the stations in any possible way, and I do not think there is much reason for the men on many of the stations to complain. Provisions are not sold at exorbitant prices, and very good stores are provided ; the stores supplied on some of the timber stations are as good as those which are obtainable in Perth. The men can get anything they require, and the prices are not out of the way. I do not think the prices are excessive for stores, but for forage, as I said before, the charges are excessive. If I thought this Bill would improve the condition of the working man, it would have my support, but, as far as I am able to judge, the Bill is not going to do that, therefore I shall support the amendment.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central) : I propose to support the second reading of the Bill, and I congratulate the Colonial Secretary on the lucid manner in which he introduced the measure, and also the Government for bringing in what undoubtedly is an unpopular measure in some quarters. I admire the Government for bringing forward this very dangerous and difficult question ; they are to be commended for having introduced the Bill. It is only natural there is inclination to vote in the direction which will serve the best interests of those persons we represent. Surely if members were to ask themselves how they would vote upon any given subject, the first question they would put to themselves would be this : " How would my constituents ask me to vote supposing I were on the hustings ? " If the question were asked of me " Are you in favour of the Truck Act or of allowing the present monopoly ? " which way would I answer it ?

A MEMBER : In favour of the monopoly.

HON. F. T. CROWDER : You would answer it by asking another.

HON. R. S. HAYNES : From the first time I appeared in public, 12 years ago, I have advocated a Truck Bill. I ask members not to come with their minds made up, so to speak, but to suspend their judgment until they have

heard both sides of the question. If they suspend their judgment, I think I shall be able to show some reasons why the Bill ought to be passed.

HON. D. MCKAY: Have you had experience?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: My own experience, and, if I am challenged much farther, I shall put the documents on the table of the House. Do not challenge me too much. Let me say this Truck Bill is not class legislation. A Truck Act was passed in England so far back as 1831, that being before the Reform Act, and the Truck Act was not called class legislation then, when there were rotten pocket boroughs. That Act has stood with very little amendment for 68 years, and I have never heard it called class legislation yet. From 1831 to 1837 the Act stood unrepealed. Then a small amendment was made with reference to justices having jurisdiction where the party resided. The Act stood from 1837 to 1887, 50 years, without amendment, and the amendments in 1887 were very trivial, only extending the provisions of the Act. In the first place the Act only applied to contractors, much the same as this Bill; but subsequently it was found that so ingenious were the employers of labour in England that they were sweating women. They even endeavoured to wring profit out of the unfortunate persons who were earning a few shillings by knitting wool, and the British Parliament interfered.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Circumstances are different.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: They are more honest here than in England.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: They can get their food all round.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If there were stores all round they could get their supplies, and not be bound to get their goods from the masters. Here it is said there are no stores in the vicinity, and therefore the people are bound to get the stuff from the master. All the more necessity for a Truck Bill, for them to be paid in cash. It is said that no cry comes from the men, but that is not true; for there is a doleful cry from them, but a cry which is not very loud, because we know very well what the result of an outcry would be.

A MEMBER: They would get the "sack."

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There would be plenty of persons glad enough to fill their places. Mr. Crowder drew a wonderful picture, pointing out that at Karridale there were grand-children raised up within 15 years of the advent of their forefathers, where a happy man sits down and smiles on 18s. a week, and has a table burdened with all the best things in the world. That is not the picture I have heard of, nor is it the picture that presented itself to an unfortunate man who went peddling there. That man was attacked and assaulted, his horses were turned adrift, and his goods destroyed. I think the wheels were taken off his cart, and the whole thing cast to the winds. Nobody did it. That was the lesson he learnt by going down to sell goods to compete with the owners of stores. I do not say it is worse there than anywhere else, for I believe it is exactly the same in other places. The same thing goes on in all places where there is in existence this infernal bartering and wringing the last drop of blood out of a man. There are industries employing a large number of men, and paying them 7s. or 8s.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: 14s.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I know. The ruling rate is about 7s. a day.

HON. W. T. LOTON: 7s. to 8s. is the average.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Certain engineers may get more.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Nine hours a day.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Work on a timber station is not child's play. The men work hard, and the occupation is a dangerous one. Their arms are cut off, and their fingers. I heard an hon. member say that sometimes they go into court and get £12,000 or £15,000.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: £1,200 or £1,500.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: My experience is not that, but twelve or fifteen witnesses say a person put his finger there purposely.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: A person got £1,200 for the loss of a finger.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Can any member point to any case where an action for injury has been brought successfully against a timber station?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And then go to the hospital.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Go to the hospital and find out how many have been admitted there.

A MEMBER: What has this to do with the Truck Bill?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: It has to do with the argument that the men are well treated there. My friend Mr. Kidson has perhaps more experience of people engaged on timber stations, and he will give his opinion as to whether the men have any reason to complain. I say they do complain, and they have great reason to complain, but their complaints are not loud.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: That is nonsense.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The hon. member contradicts it. You can go and get twenty persons to write letters from any timber station, and they will say they are perfectly satisfied with the state they are in. Strange to say, I referred to the Reform Act, and in that case objection was taken to it. The question was asked "What does the working man want a vote for? Has he complained?" One person would go and say, "My gardener, Bill, wrote a letter to the paper. Did you see that letter in the 'Times'?" He says he does not want a vote. If they do not want a vote, why should we give it?" It is the same with regard to the Truck Act. It is because those men, by virtue of their employment, are not free agents, it is necessary to introduce legislation to assist them in the same way that legislation was introduced to assist seamen.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Will it assist them?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not suppose any man would be so insane as to say that Act was not a good and proper one. In that Act provision is made with regard to seamen, because they are treated as persons who are in a dependent position and of roving habits. The Act is passed specially to put them on a better footing than an ordinary individual, because they are in a dependent position. Timber men are in exactly the same position. You admit the presence of the principle in one instance, and why refuse it in the other? There are some people who have made up their minds, and will not admit the force of any argument, and to such it is no use to address myself.

HON. D. MCKAY: This Bill will make the position worse than ever.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The hon. member has a right to express his opinion, and if he can show how the position will be worse, I will be prepared to change my views, but it is no use saying so without giving reasons. I am giving reasons why the Bill should pass. In answer to the first objection that it is class legislation, I say that the number of years it has existed in England ought to be a sufficient reply to the charge. I do not know that Mr. Crowder gave us any further information than this, that at Karridale the working men not only deal with their employers, but also bank with them. In other words, the company have made a profit on that money, and the employees are in credit. What a deplorable condition it is for men to live under.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: They can take their money out every week if they want it.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I say it is a deplorable thing to think they should work for 15 or 20 years, and, in the end, have money in credit with their employers. They do not know the value of money.

A MEMBER: Because they are thrifty.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: How would you like to work 14 or 15 years, and to say, "It is all right; my master has the money."

HON. F. T. CROWDER: They get 5 per cent.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There is no objection to a person saving money, but I cannot think of anything more horrible than people living in a primitive way, and bartering, without money passing between them. If you are going to build up a nation like that, I say "God help the nation."

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The men there own hundreds of houses in Bunbury.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I did not know there were hundreds of houses in Bunbury. Mr. McKay said that if the Bill were passed a certain number of ill-mannered, evil-designed people would exploit the camps of the workmen. If the camps of the workmen are going to be exploited, why should not every person have an equal chance? Why should you prevent the camp from being exploited by the merchant in another town, and

then allow the employer to exploit without any competition? If there is going to be exploiting of the people's camp, let it be open, and the people will then get the best value for their money. It is said that if the Bill be passed there will be sly grog-selling. I only know this: it has been said to be very prevalent upon timber stations, and in no way is it governed by the fact that a Truck Act exists or does not exist. It depends entirely upon the love of drink, and, if you will allow a house to be licensed, there will be no sly grog-selling, or it will be diminished. If you will not allow a house to be licensed, sly grog-selling will take place, notwithstanding any Bill you pass, because people will have drink; therefore that objection to the Bill falls. I will tell you the reason of the objection to the Bill. I was surprised at the hon. member (Mr. Crowder) being so well posted with regard to the amount of money expended and the way Karridale is worked and so on. I know the people owning timber mills have been very eager and anxious to try and secure the votes of members in this House to support their monopoly, and it struck me as something very strange to see them attempting to induce people to vote in their favour.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: You have no right to make that assertion.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Who has been canvassing you?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The hon. member was present when I was canvassed this afternoon.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Who was that?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I will not give the name.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Mr. Locke?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not intend to repeat the statement. It is very strange the owners of timber stations have been most anxious and eager to secure the failure of this Bill. Why? If timber sawing is a good business, let them make their earnings and profits in the same way as we do; and, if it is not a good business, let them shut it up.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: They work harder than you do.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The workmen?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Yes.

HON. R. HAYNES: Why allow the owner to come in and screw them down?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Why do the workmen allow it?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Because they have no other work. It is admitted in all Acts that we must stand by the weaker person, and if a weaker person is in a position of dependency we must put him in a stronger position.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: What about the Early Closing Act?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: No doubt when the hon. member ends his days, over his tomb there will be the Early Closing Act; but as far as the Early Closing Act is concerned, I say that measure was to protect the weaker class.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Would you vote for it now?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I see no reason why we should interfere with it, but I see a reason to condemn the way in which the Act has been worked. I admit the principle of protecting the weaker against the stronger, and if you admit that principle you are bound to protect the men on the stations. If you believe the working men on the stations are hardly dealt with and are paying more than they ought to pay for their goods, then we should protect them.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Then you object to a monopoly?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not object to a monopoly so long as it is an honest monopoly. I hope it will never be said that the penny or twopence profit which I make is wrung out of the working man.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have worked harder than you ever knew how to.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Then the hon. member does not look like it. If a man is paid at the end of his day's work in potatoes or chaff, or goods of any kind, what does the hon. member think of that? If, after a man has done his work, he must go to a store to be paid in kind; that he receives no money but only a piece of paper, is that right? I have seen these pieces of paper time after time, and instead of saying that the men had earned so much, there is some term used, I forget what it is now. If a man is going away he can get a cheque, but all the time he is working on the station he never sees money; he does not know what it is.

HON. E. McLARTY: That is not the way on the timber stations I know of; they have a regular pay day.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I am speaking of one station at Karridale, and I can produce documents to prove that what I am saying is correct.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: What about Jarrahdale?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not know; but how do the prices at Jarrahdale compare with Perth prices?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Very favourably.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Well, I only bought one article at the timber store there, and I paid 100 per cent. more for it than I would pay for the same article in Perth. Take the instance given by the Colonial Secretary; he said a case of kerosene which you could buy in Perth for 7s. 6d. was sold for 16s. The men on the stations will not come forward and give information, because if they do so they will get their "walking ticket." Why should the owners of timber stations want to tax what goes down a man's throat? Why should they want to make a profit out of every bite he eats, and every bite his children eat? I do not care who he is, or what he is, the man who votes to allow this system to continue ought to be ashamed of himself. I point out that this Bill deals with certain stations where there is a monopoly, and the Bill properly excludes, in Clause 19, seamen and persons employed in agriculture, fruit growing, or pastoral pursuits, or people engaged on sheep and cattle stations. I approve of these exemptions, and for this reason: it is unnecessary to extend the Bill to these places, because I have never yet heard that on a cattle or sheep station, or any other station up north, the men are charged one penny above what is a fair price, and there are no stores up north near the stations; the men have no opportunity of getting anything, especially in the far northern districts, except at the squatters' places.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: What about seamen; there are plenty of stores on a ship?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: This Bill does not apply to seamen. If members desire to throw out this Bill, let them do so, but before doing so let us pause. This Bill has been passed in another place where it has been discussed; it was passed in England years ago, but the wisdom the hon. member Mr. Piesse will bring to

bear on the subject will find some reason why we should not pass the Bill here, although it was passed in England. If this House throws the Bill out, I say advisedly it will be a step in the wrong direction. We are told that we are too conservative, that we do not march with the times, that we do not recognise the pressing necessities of the people, that we are old-fashioned, but at present the public have not been able to lay their finger on any resolution of this House that any member is ashamed of. We have always been to the fore; do not let us destroy the name we have by opposing this Bill which has been brought forward for our consideration. It is our duty to pass this Bill, because the eyes, not only of this colony, but of the other colonies, are on us in regard to this measure; and what will be said of this Chamber if we throw out a progressive measure like the Truck Bill?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Why have the Parliaments of the other colonies not passed Truck Acts?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: For the same reason, perhaps, that this Bill may not pass here; but if members vote according to their convictions, I have no hesitation in saying that this Bill will pass.

HON. D. MCKAY: May I make a personal explanation. I have been an employer of labour for years, and I have employed people in all phases of life, but I never made it a condition that the men should take anything from me at all.

HON. A. B. KIDSON (West): I have listened to the forcible and lucid speech which has just been delivered by Mr. R. S. Haynes, but I have failed to elicit from that speech one single reason why this Bill should be passed into law, and when I say this Bill, I do so advisedly. The hon. member in the course of his speech told us a lot about the hardships of the working men on the timber stations, that frequently a man loses a finger, an arm, or a leg; but I fail to see what that has to do with the truck system. It has nothing whatever to do with it. A Truck Act, I understand, is to prevent a man being "rooked," to put it in plain English, by his employer. That is the object of the Truck Act passed in the old country. Let us turn to the Bill before the House, and Mr. Haynes in speaking of this Bill informed the House that the measure was

a transcript of the Imperial Act. I do not think it is, and that is a very strong reason why I shall be against the Bill passing into law.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The English Act is more strict.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That is the reason why I am prepared to vote against the Bill before the House.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Twaddle.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: If the hon. member will permit me to give him the retort courteous, I would give the same retort to the speech which he has just delivered to the House; but I will not do that because it is not often the hon. member does talk twaddle.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I cannot give the retort courteous this time.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I would just like to refer again to what I say is the reason why I am not in favour of the Bill—because it is not strict enough. This Bill as it now stands is absolutely useless; it is no good whatever for the purpose for which it is intended; it is no good whatever, and I quote the words of the leader of this House that were it “an honest attempt to ameliorate the conditions of the labouring classes,” I should be the first to support the Bill, but I unhesitatingly assert that the effect of the Bill when passed will be absolutely abortive, and no good whatever. That is my opinion not formed in a moment, but formed after carefully perusing the provisions of the Bill.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Then why not pass it.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: The reason why I am not in favour of passing it is because I do not believe in passing legislation which is going to be abortive. We are not here with the idea of trying to plead public opinion. There seems to have been a little fuss down Bunbury way, and for the purpose of satisfying the people down there this Bill is brought forward, but not to carry out the object of a Truck Act. I unhesitatingly repeat what I mentioned just now, that this Bill will not have the effect it should have in the direction in which it is supposed to legislate.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Clause 3 is the clause.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: What good will the Bill do? The leader of the

House said it would ameliorate the condition of the workman; but how, in the name of fortune, is it going to do that? Instead of ameliorating his position, it will make it a great deal worse. I do not know whether members have taken the trouble to read the Bill; but, if so, they cannot come to any conclusion but that the Bill will make the condition of the men a great deal worse. At the present time workmen upon the stations can obtain a certain amount of credit, if they want it, but under this Bill they will have to pay cash for every half-penny worth of goods they get from the store, whilst there is nothing to prevent a person charging what he pleases, and, if the workman deals elsewhere, members can judge of the results. He will not be told in so many words, “if you will not deal with me I shall dismiss you,” but the fact remains that he will be dismissed if he does not deal with his employer and pay cash; therefore his condition will, I repeat, be a great deal worse than before.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Is not that an assumption which is not justified?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think it a very natural assumption. Why should the proprietors of timber stations and other places give up their stores?

HON. C. A. PRESSE: Nothing in the Bill says they shall do so.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: If they can see their way to make a profit out of it, in the ordinary course of things they will do so. That is a natural assumption under the circumstances. The fact that the mill owners are not allowed to give credit will not prevent them from keeping a store. Then you come to the exceptions, which make the Bill a great deal worse, because they take away the very small portion of benefit the workmen might obtain. A Bill of this kind should not pass unless it will have the effect intended, and, further, unless there is some grave reason put forward why it should be passed. The House should be satisfied before passing a Bill of this kind, firstly, that there is an evil to be remedied, and, secondly, that the measure brought forward to remedy that evil will do so, if passed into law. It seems to me that neither of those two things has been arrived at so far. I need not detain the House longer. The Bill is very comprehensive in its provisions, not only applying

to contractors, but all kinds of employers. I hope the House will not pass the second reading, and I cannot think the Government are very anxious about passing the Bill in its present form. If they want to bring in a Truck Bill, let them bring in one which will carry out the provisions, and not one which is faulty like this. Sub-clause 3 of Clause 14 seems rather to contradict the fourth paragraph in Clause 11, which says "for a third or any subsequent offence, a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds." Under Clause 14—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I propose to amend that.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I hope the House will not pass the measure, which, to my mind, is really put forward for the sake of appearance, and I assert that advisedly. I am entitled to my opinion as much as anybody else, and I repeat that the Bill in its present form is more or less put forward for the sake of appearance.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: How does the pea get under the thimble?

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think the hon. member knows more about the thimble-rigging trick than I do.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I cannot understand it.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: The hon. member certainly knows more about that class of thing than I do. I do not think it necessary to do more than again ask the House not to pass this measure. If the Government bring forward a Bill which will effect the object intended, no member will be more prepared to support it than I shall be.

HON. A. P. MATHESON (North-East): I have listened with great interest to the arguments brought forward for and against the Bill, and have failed to hear anything to induce me to vote for the amendment. The arguments against the Bill have throughout been most peculiar. On the one hand members have got up and said that the influence of the timber companies was always exercised to the very greatest advantage to the men; that the men had nothing whatever to complain of, and, in fact, that they lived a life of thorough satisfaction under the present régime. On the other hand we were told distinctly by other members that if any workman attempted to take advantage of whatever small

privileges might be provided in the Bill, he would—and then the hon. member (Mr. Kidson) came to a stop. He was unable to say what would happen, but he insinuated that the workman would immediately get his discharge. That was the only deduction to be drawn from the words used by Mr. Kidson. It appears to me perfectly clear that the Bill as a Truck Bill goes as far as any measure can until we have had an opportunity of seeing how such a Bill will work in this colony. The provisions of the Bill may be condensed into this, that the employer is bound to pay cash to the person employed, with some few provisos; amongst others a proviso dealing with chaff, which, I understand, met with the most hostile criticism—or, at least, the paragraph met with it—on the part of a gentleman who apparently spoke with a full knowledge of the facts in his district. The Bill provides on the whole that the workman shall be paid in cash. If the companies as a rule are treating their employees fairly, not one single company will object to that proviso. If, on the other hand, the companies or any one company is not treating its employees fairly, that company will naturally resent to the greatest possible extent the action of this Bill, and would undoubtedly immediately dismiss a man who attempted to assert his rights to be paid in cash. Under those circumstances, if the Bill becomes law, we shall within a very short time see which companies are treating their employees fairly, and which are not. When we hear of trouble we shall know that the company is not dealing fairly with its men.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: We do not want legislation just to find that out.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: That is an important point, and it occurs to me that we do want legislation to find it out, because certain hon. members, myself among them, are perfectly well aware that the men in a great number of cases have any number of complaints to make against the company, and, as Mr. Haynes said, they do not dare to ventilate them. They dare not go to the public Press, and if letters are sent to the Press they have to be written by what is commonly called an agitator, because such a man is the only one who dares to write to the papers exposing the position.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: That is the man who is doing it now.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That bears out the argument of Mr. Matheson.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The person who will tell you these things privately does not dare to speak of them publicly, and if the Bill will do anything to expose that position of affairs it ought to receive support. It invariably happens that when any Bill is introduced into this House that has for its purpose an honest intention—it may be in a mistaken direction, but an honest intention—to alleviate the various little troubles the working population in the colony suffer under, we are told by Mr. Crowder that it is class legislation of the very worst kind. We have had that expression *ad nauseum*. Time after time, whether on a question of reducing the hours of labour, or of preventing barmaids from being sweated, we have heard it, and now on the question of relieving the undoubted grievances of workmen on timber stations we are told that it is class legislation of the very worst kind.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: So it is.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It may be class legislation of the very worst kind from the hon. gentleman's point of view, but emphatically it is not so in my opinion, and I hope it will be found, when the division on the second reading is taken, that the hon. gentleman's point of view is not that from which members of the House are inclined to look at this business.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I do not think there is very much more to be said about this matter. We have had it debated fairly exhaustively, and to my mind the weight of argument is entirely in favour of passing the Bill; not because it is the best, but because it is, perhaps, the best obtainable at the present moment. Before I continue I may meet a point that has been made by more than one speaker, namely, that there has been no demand for any Bill of this kind. I beg to differ from my hon. friend, Mr. McLarty, on the point. Probably nine-tenths of the mills worked in this colony, or a very large proportion at all events, are worked in the province of which I have the honour to be the representative; and it is always my course when I go through my province to mix with the

workmen, timber men, farmers, and others, and I can most unhesitatingly assert that on not one, but many timber stations a demand for this Bill is heard; certainly in a whisper, but it is there in all its strength, nevertheless. I can give you numberless stories of cases in which the men believe they were unfairly dealt with. Perhaps they were wrong, and did injustice to their employers; but, at all events, they believed that their employers did not treat them in that spirit of fairness which every English employee has a right to demand at the hands of every English employer. Mr. McLarty referred to the price of goods, and said that commodities were retailed at a fair price on the stations with which he is no doubt familiar; but I think he will admit that the stations of which he speaks are those along the Government lines, where there are storekeepers in close proximity to the mills, where they can supply themselves by the Government line, and where it is practically impossible for an employer to enforce the practice which prevails on other stations. It was suggested that the real grievance is the want of a proper freight rate. I am with my friend on that point. Until private railways are made to do their duty, until they are supervised by the Government they will be a great source of grievance. I know of a case on one of the stations which has been indicated here in this House this evening, in which certain persons—they were Government officials—wanted to obtain goods at an outside store and convey them by a private railway. These officials went to the manager of the station, and he told them they would have an opportunity of getting the goods; that they were at liberty to deal where they liked; that there would be no objection to the carriage of the goods, and that every facility would be put in their way. As a matter of fact these persons purchased their goods for half the price they would have to pay on the station. The goods were placed on the truck, and that truck was lost for three weeks on the railway, and nothing was heard of it until the goods had perished. These men were so satisfied that that would be the fate of other goods purchased in the same way that they gave up ordering goods from the nearest town and dealt at the station store. One of the points I wish to make

is this. Our timber is disappearing, we have one of the most magnificent assets in Australasia in our forests. We are told that our forests are worth scores of millions of pounds, and at present our timber is disappearing with such a rapidity that in the course of a generation we shall see the forests non-existent. What does the country gain by the forests—practically nothing. This is my point, a small proportion of the timber, 30 per cent., is turned into a marketable commodity, and the rest is consigned to the bonfire. These timber forests should be one of our most valuable instruments in settling our country. We do not want a huge track south of Bunbury occupied by the timber cutter, and when he disappears to have the land left deserted. If the country storekeeper and the farmer were allowed free access to the timber mills to supply the employees of the mills, and were allowed to compete with the mill storekeeper, we should have every one of the timber stations a nucleus of an agricultural settlement with little towns and establishments springing up. Farms will increase, and we shall have a large and thriving settlement where at the present time cutters hold temporary sway.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: How are you going to get the goods there if the railways will not carry them?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That matter will have to be dealt with and settled, not only in the interests of the timber-owners, but in the interests of the country.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Is this Bill going to do that?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The first step towards that is a law which will force the storekeeper to get a footing where he is not allowed at the present time. I say that here you have an opportunity of establishing a settlement in the country, an opportunity which will be gone when the timber disappears, and which may not come again in a generation. What is the reason of this intense eagerness with which the timber-owners are holding on to the truck system? We know what it is; they found a great asset in our timber industry; our timber was becoming a popular commodity in London, and these timber properties were sold for two or three times their value. This over-capitalisation make the companies ensure profits, to pay dividends, from every

source they can, and the result is that if the Truck Bill is made a reality the shareholders in London will have to forego some of their dividends.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: They have never had any yet.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That is a mistake; the shareholders have had dividends up to 35 per cent., at any rate, to a very high figure, and now the dividends are coming down, the companies are not so profitable; and money has to be raised in every possible way. The companies have to make their monopoly more drastic; they have to "sweat" their employees all they can to add a few shillings to the dividends of the shareholders. If this Truck Bill is not passed, we shall have a bad state of affairs, and it is therefore our bounden duty to carry this Bill into law. The main principle, as the Colonial Secretary says, is that which really I thought needed no argument in the House to enforce, that is the right of a servant to deal where he pleases, and the right of the servant to be paid in the Queen's coin, not in goods which are valued by the master, and which he is compelled to receive at that valuation or leave his employ. This Bill goes further and says that a system of trade which is abhorrent to our English feelings shall not be allowed to continue. This is the only country in Australasia—I have never heard of it in any other colony, or in the United Kingdom—where a monopoly of such a character as this timber monopoly exists. It amounts to this: be these masters ever so humane or ever so generous, be they ever so filled with humane feelings for their employees, the men are still at their mercy, and Heaven forbid that Parliament should decree by casting out this Bill that is a desirable state of things. The hon. member Mr. Kidson says the only ground on which he opposes the Bill is that it does not go far enough. Then Heaven knows let the hon. member help to make it go further; but the hon. member knows that the most vital thing for the Bill in the present state of the composition of the House would be to make it more drastic; he knows that he would be driving one nail into the coffin of the Bill and the Bill will not get through if he drives that nail. I put it to the hon. member, does he think that this Bill will be injurious to the working

man? That is the argument which the hon. member Mr. Crowder used when he was on his feet.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: How is an employee to get an advance unless the employer makes him that advance?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That is allowed in the Bill; an employee is allowed to get an advance for six weeks, and there is an immense stream of exemptions in the Bill. I am sorry to say, I believe this Bill will not be very effective for the purpose for which it is to be passed, and I am only assenting to the passage of the Bill because of the principle, for I believe that a coach and four can be driven through many of its clauses. The Bill has been whittled down, and many of its clauses have been weakened; but the Bill establishes a principle, and if we can get one step, we can build upon that principle. This Bill commits both Houses of Parliament to the principle; it means that the Bill will be placed on the statute book; and if the measure falls short of what is intended, there can be sufficient amendments to make it operative. There will be amendments to deprive the Bill of the shadowy appearance which the hon. member Mr. Kidson described it as having, and I believe one of those to bring forward amendments to make the Bill effective, will be the hon. member, Mr. Kidson. We have got to the first story of this Bill and it will be some time before we reach the roof, when we do reach the roof, the Bill will be all the hon. member desires. I believe in the Bill, and I rejoice I am here this evening to give my vote in favour of it.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE (Central): I cannot altogether agree with some of the remarks which have been made to-night by some members as to this Bill, particularly the remark that if the Council see fit to carry the amendment, we shall be subject to considerable criticism. I think that if we carry the second reading of this Bill at the present time, we would be subject to more trenchant criticism than if we carried the amendment. We shall simply bring an amount of ridicule on this Chamber if we pass this Bill, and the measure is admitted by all supporters and advocates to be one that cannot carry out the ostensible object which it is brought forward to carry out. We have the admission of the warmest advocates

of this measure that the Bill is only to be used as a stepping-stone, and that until other legislation is brought forward this measure will be inoperative. Let the Government bring in an Enabling Bill so that we can have more control over the private railways and the timber areas, and then at a later date a Truck Bill could be introduced.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There would be too much button-holing; such a Bill would never get through.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: At the present time if this Bill is passed, it would be impossible to carry out its provisions as far as timber stations are concerned, particularly in places where outside persons cannot establish businesses. What would those men do who are without means of obtaining the necessary stores when they first go to work on a timber station. You cannot expect the owner or manager of a timber company to allow the establishment of stores by private people on their lease if the company does not approve of such businesses.

A MEMBER: Why not?

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: It would not be done. We are told one of the reasons why this Bill should be approved by the Council is that it is getting in the thin end of the wedge. I do not think we want to get in the thin end of the wedge by making a partial law of this kind. Why should we adopt such legislation in the case of timber mills and in no others? If the reports we hear from time to time from the North-West are even infinitesimally true, there is a greater amount of trucking, sweating, and swindling going on at pearling stations than is dreamed of in connection with timber stations. Why should you bring in a Bill and make it operative to only one section of the community?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: We can amend it in Committee.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: I think we are tired of amending in Committee, especially if we are to listen to the pleas put forward by Mr. Hackett.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: It is a case of the wolf and the lamb.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Those with me in the matter of the amendment made a representation to the Leader of the House that, if he will undertake to drop the Bill after the second reading, we will

go so far as to pass the principle, on the understanding that a proper Bill is subsequently introduced. This Bill would be absolutely useless, in my opinion, and I could not support it under present circumstances.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): I have listened very attentively to the arguments and reasons members have given in support of the amendment moved by my friend, Mr. Crowder, and I must confess I am considerably disappointed at the speech delivered by Mr. Kidson. Beyond the statement that the Bill is abortive, I failed to find any reasons given, except that the measure is not severe enough in its present state to carry out the objects intended.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I said it was no good.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member told us it was no good, that it was abortive, and not severe enough; but he failed to indicate it in any of the clauses.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think I did indicate it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I was particularly anxious to ascertain, because when the hon. member started I thought he had carefully studied the Bill and would be prepared to speak on the various clauses and point out the defects.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I challenged him twice.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: You are a wonderful man.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A large proportion of the clauses consist of transcripts of the English Act of 1831, which the hon. member was prepared to accept as being a solution of the difficulty. The Bill deals with a subject which those who have spoken on either side of the question have admitted to be difficult. As far as I can gather, the clauses dealing with the principle of the Bill are very few, and the rest are merely machinery for carrying it into execution. The Bill seems to me to be hedged about as safely as possible to prevent anything like oppression on the part of the employer. It has been said the workman cannot get his stores carried; and that is a fact. I dare say it is known to other members besides myself, that goods have been put down at a Government station and the timber companies have refused to carry

them, although actually the persons requiring them were not in the employ of the companies; so jealously do the companies guard the privileges of selling stores to the people in the vicinity. Mr. Hackett used the words "whittle down," and to some extent Clause 19, dealing with the exemptions, does whittle down the Bill, but these clauses were added in another place and were not introduced by the Government I believe. When we come to examine the exemptions, however, we find they are reasonable and tend to the better working of the Bill. As Mr. Hackett said, if we made the Bill too drastic in the first place, it would be unacceptable to a considerable number of members in the House. Mr. Kidson repeated continually that the Bill was no good, but when on his legs, he failed to show that it was no good.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That will not do.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did not hear the hon. member make any statement pointing out clearly and distinctly where the Bill failed.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Other members heard it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I am sorry I am so dense. Mr. Whitcombe said the Bill would expose the House to ridicule, but I cannot at all agree with him in that respect. He also failed to point out in what way the Bill would subject the members of this House to ridicule. It has not been disputed that the Bill is an honest attempt by the Government to meet circumstances which have arisen in the country. It has been asked for by a considerable number of people, and we were assured by several members to-night that if the employees on these stations dared to speak their minds they would certainly be in favour of the principle of the Bill. It is wise not to be too drastic in the first place. We should endeavour to meet the circumstances of the colony. An attempt has been made in another place to do so, and to put the Bill into such a shape as to make it as little burdensome as possible to the employer, whilst at the same time protecting the interests of the employee. The principle of the Bill is a good one, and, as Mr. Haynes said, it is in the interests of those who are unable to protect

themselves. The principle is clearly defined; namely, to pay wages in cash, and I fail to see that there will be any disadvantage to the employer, because he will take care to get cash for the stores. It will be simplifying his book-keeping to a very large extent and be the proper way to carry on the transactions of large companies like timber companies. Why should the House support a monopoly? Why should we sanction a state of things which prevents a man from going to these timber stations for the purpose of carrying on his business? Supposing a certain section of the community had a monopoly of the trade in the City of Perth or Fremantle, it would be resented, and rebellion, almost, would be the result. It has been clearly established—and Mr. Haynes referred distinctly to facts that he is able to substantiate, he says, by documents—that a system is carried on which is not to the interests of employees on those stations. Mr. Crowder has drawn a very nice picture of one of the stations.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: It is a true picture, too.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: From certain statements recently made I am much inclined to doubt whether it is justified.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: What about the Indian hawkers who went there?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There are white hawkers too, who got nearly killed. I trust members will face the position and pass the second reading of the Bill, if they feel, as I think Mr. Kidson really feels, that there is a need for the measure. In my opinion that is a rational deduction to draw from what the hon. member said.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: It is no good.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Make it good.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: You cannot.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The principle is here, and the details can easily be rectified. At any rate, I think you will be justified in making the attempt. If the House are not capable of amending a Bill, they have, I think, lost the intellectual power they used to possess. I have known Bills almost recast here, and recast in a useful form, and they have become the law of the land. I think the hon. member is get-

ting old and feeble and cannot devote attention to these things.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I will not retort.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I should be very sorry at any time to impute motives. I trust the House will consider that a Bill of this description, introduced with the object of benefiting a large class, is deserving of their most careful consideration, and that it is not sufficient for members to stand up in their places and say the Bill is no good, and that the legislation will be abortive, unless they give us good reasons why it should be so.

Amendment—that the Bill be read this day six months—put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	6
Noes	11

Majority against ... 5

AYES.	NOES.
The Hon. F. T. Crowder	The Hon. H. Briggs
The Hon. A. B. Kidson	The Hon. R. G. Burgess
The Hon. D. McKay	The Hon. D. K. Congdon
The Hon. C. A. Piesse	The Hon. C. E. Dempster
The Hon. F. Whitcombe	The Hon. R. S. Haynes
The Hon. J. E. Richardson	The Hon. A. G. Jenkins
(Teller).	The Hon. W. T. Lotou
	The Hon. H. Lukin
	The Hon. A. F. Matheson
	The Hon. G. Randell
	The Hon. J. W. Hackett
	(Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

EXCESS BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and, on motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:47 p.m., until the next day.