the object, that this cry for a land tax is like a flag that is waved periodically to raise a cheer when people's spirits are drooping; but on this occasion I regret to see that the Colonial Secretary's spirits appeared not to be raised—he was rather lugubrious. But the Minister did his best to carefully coat this pill, not with one coat only, but he painted it over with three or four beautiful colours; although, after all his care, members can see the nauseous ingredients are there. While perhaps this tax may do some little good in assisting to increase the revenue, still the harm it must work will more than counterbalance any good it may achieve. I do not feel inclined to support the Bill; and although I know the Colonial Secretary has urged that it is necessary to raise farther revenue in the present condition of the State, yet I believe that with the advance made in the development of our industries, with the economies I have pointed out as already made and other economies that must and can be made by the Government, there is no necessity for a land tax at the present time.

On motion by the *Hon. G. Randell*, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND TAX.

Measure to impose a tax was received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.42 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 12th September, 1907.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By *the Treasurer*: Orders in Council under Section 35 of the Audit Act.

QUESTION — PERTH SEWERAGE PIPES.

Mr. H. BROWN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Who is responsible for the introduction of the Monier pipes for the Perth sewerage scheme? 2, What amount of royalty is being or is to be paid by the Government or contractor for same?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The Government, on the recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief. 2, The pipes are now being manufactured under contract, and the Government is unaware what royalty the contractor is paying to the patentee.

QUESTION—WATER PIPES, MAYLANDS.

Mr. H. BROWN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What was the cost of the 8-inch pipes from West Guildford to Maylands connecting the Goldfields Water Scheme with the metropolitan system, including all materials and laying, and distance laid? 2, Is the 8-inch pipe in direct connection with the metropolitan system, or does it discharge into a surface reservoir? 3, On what professional advice was the 8-inch main approved and adopted?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, £5,148 12s. 3d. (4 miles 1

chain). 2, Directly connected with the metropolitan system. 3, Recommended by the Superintending Engineer after consultation with the Chief Engineer of the Goldfields Water Supply Administration.

BILL—LAND TAX.

Third Reading, Debate.

The PREMIER moved (on the measure to impose a tax)—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Mr. FOULKES regretted that the Ministry thought it necessary to impose so heavy a tax, which in some parts of the country would do great injury. Some Fremantle properties had been seriously depreciated by the shifting of the railway station and by the transference of the railway workshops to Midland Junction. Near the old railway station site many buildings were practically vacant, and returned no income to the owners. The local taxation was sufficiently heavy, and the land tax in addition might be insupportable. The Government should even now reduce the tax from 1½d. to 1d., or better still, start at ½d.

Mr. Walker: What would the tax realise at ½d.?

Mr. FOULKES: The tax should be made as light as possible, and the burden distributed over all classes of the community. By imposing an income tax, which he feared was necessary, the Government would derive revenue from people whom the land tax would not touch, and who could well afford to pay their fair share of taxation. Such a firm as Foy and Gibson would pay little towards the land tax. Unduly heavy taxation would not in the long run benefit the Treasury. At the end of the seventeenth century the French Government made taxation heavier and heavier, till the people were practically starved. In England, from 1813 to 1815, during the severe depression caused by the war with France, the Government impoverished the people by excessive taxation. The greater the burden of taxation the less likely was the Treasurer to receive an adequate return. A member asked why he (Mr. Foulkes) supported the Bill. All along he had been consistent, believing in imposing the tax, but wishing to distribute the burden as widely as possible. The difference between himself and the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher) was that the latter wanted no tax at all, but he recognised the fact that it was necessary to have a tax and, that being the case, that it should be distributed not only on people who owned property, but also on people who derived incomes from other sources.

Mr. H. BROWN (Perth): The land tax would have a very baneful effect both on Perth and Fremantle. There were very many empty shops and offices in Fremantle at the present time. Very few taxpayers in the metropolitan area seemed really to understand how the tax would affect them. It had been said that it was introduced for the purpose of bursting up large estates and "getting at" the large landowner. It would, however, do nothing of the kind, and the man who would feel it most was the unfortunate tenant in the metropolitan area. A man had asked him only the previous day what the effect of the land tax would be in his case. He occupied 27 feet of land which was valued at £250 per foot, so that the unimproved value was £6,750. At 1½d. in the pound he would have to pay over £42. The value of the premises on the land was estimated at £1,000, and as the value of improvements in his case must be £1,350 before he could claim the exemption and get a ¾d. tax he would have to pay the full amount. This man was the owner of a flower shop, and he said his municipal rates now amounted to £35 a year, therefore the iniquitous land tax would exceed the municipal tax by £7 a year. The harshness of the land tax was shown by the fact that the £42 would have to be paid at 30 days' notice. In nine cases out of ten in Perth and Fremantle the tenants were covenanted under their agreements to pay all rates and taxes, and the land tax would press most harshly upon them.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—ELECTORAL.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 28th August; *Mr. Daglish* in the Chair, *the Attorney General* in charage of the Bill.

Clause 17—Qualification of Assembly electors:

Mr. ANGWIN asked whether under the clause it would not be necessary in some instances for a man to fulfil a seven-months residential qualification in the State before voting, instead of six months as was the case at present. This impression might be created owing to the fact that a man had to be in a district for one month before he could vote for that particular electorate. If he had not fulfilled his six-months residential qualification it might be necessary for him to wait an extra month before being able to vote.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: All the clause required was that a man should have fulfilled a residential qualification in the State of six months, and that included one month in some particular electorate for which he would vote. If a man had been six months in the State he must have resided for one month in a particular electorate, and could file his claim for that. If he desired to vote for another district then he could obtain a transfer.

Mr. ANGWIN moved an amendment in Subclause (3)—

That the words "the wife of any member of the Legislative Assembly" be struck out.

The clause provided that a member of the Legislative Assembly and his wife should have the right to vote for the district which that member represented, whether the member was residing in it or not. This provision should apply to the member, but why should it be extended to his wife? Members should be encouraged to reside in the district which they represented.

Mr. SCADDAN: In the case of goldfields members, it was essential that some such provision should be made: for it was impossible for a member representing a goldfields constituency to reside in that electorate while the Assembly was sitting. The member had to live in Perth, and if a fresh election occurred while he was living there he was placed in the position of going up for re-election in a district for which he had not a vote. He (Mr. Scaddan) had already been twitted with this. It was only right also that the provision should apply to a member's wife. Personally, he desired that his wife should reside where he did, and both a member and his wife should be allowed to vote in the district which that member represented. The clause ought to be retained as it stood. Members for metropolitan districts were placed in a different position, for they could always reside in their electorate; but this did not apply to members for goldfields constituencies.

Mr. HORAN: The subclause was absurd and should be struck out, and the only reason it was included in the Bill seemed to be to give a man and his wife a vote each in the district which the member represented in Parliament; and sometimes one or two votes decided an election.

Mr. HEITMANN opposed the amendment. For four or five months of the year he lived at Cue, where his home was, and considered himself entitled to vote in that electorate. It was petty to urge that Ministers or other members desired the clause for the sole purpose of securing an additional vote in an electorate.

Mr. WALKER: The only reason even apparently justifying the provision was that without it members representing remote constituencies might be disfranchised if absent from their electorates performing legislative duties in Perth at the time of revising the rolls. Other citizens were incommoded equally with members of Parliament by reason of their employment taking them away from their homes, as in carrying out a contract. Why then give members of Parliament this preference and the additional privilege of selecting the constituency for which they were to be enrolled? The only advantage apparent in the clause was that it would give a member of Parliament an additional vote in his own constituency, and one vote was occasionally valuable in an election. Once a member's duties were

over in the House, he was on the same level as other people, and his privileges should be no more and no less than those of other citizens.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In nine cases out of ten a member, and particularly a member representing a goldfields constituency, was elected in the first instance because he was resident in the district, and had done some public service there. In the discharge of his legislative duties a member had to reside some months in Perth, and under the law, after an absence of three months doing his duty in Perth, his name would be taken off the local roll; hence the provision that a member might have the privilege, if desired, of retaining his name on the roll for the district represented by him, if absent for a longer period than three months. [*Mr. Horan*: But could he have two votes in that way?] No; under the subclause a member had only one vote. This provision was no innovation, for it was in the Commonwealth electoral law. As pointed out by the member for Ivanhoe, the absence from the roll of the name of the member for the district was sometimes regarded as a grievance by local electors, who saw in that fact an indication that the member had deserted the district and ceased to be interested in its fortunes. To adopt the amendment would be to enact that it was fitting a husband's domicile should be different from that of his wife. That would not be a desirable enactment to make. Apparently the member for Kanowna took exception to the fact that this provision applied only to members of this Chamber; but the members of another place were elected on a property qualification, and might be electors in a province without residing therein. Those members of this Chamber who were compelled by their public duties to reside out of their electorates, at least for some months in each year, had a genuine grievance, which would be remedied by the clause.

Mr. STUART regretted the amendment emanated from the Opposition side. While he could not reside in his constituency, he desired to have his name on the local roll. Some members representing country electorates were elected subject to the condition that they should reside in their electorate; the result being that on each Thursday they were compelled to leave town, sometimes before their parliamentary duties for the week were completed. Though under no such obligation himself, recent events had shown that a provision of this nature was necessary. The danger of opening the door to dual voting, which some members feared, was provided against in the succeeding subclause.

Mr. ANGWIN: Members were not compelled by their parliamentary duties to remain away from their homes for longer than three months continuously, though there might be exceptions in the cases of members representing Pilbarra, Kimberley, and Gascoyne. [*Mr. Heitmann*: What about Murchison and Cue?] Murchison districts could be reached by rail. If the only evidence members could afford their constituents of continued interest in the district was the inclusion of their names on the local roll, it was clear their interest in the district was small. If the amendment were lost, he intended to move another to make it compulsory that each member should be enrolled for the electorate he represented.

Mr. TAYLOR: There was some justification for the amendment as to a member's wife. So far as he was concerned, so long as he had a vote for the place where he lived he would be perfectly satisfied; but it was not wise that the wife of a member should vote in her husband's electorate. If that happened to be an outlying district, the wife would not know the conditions existing in the district, and possibly the election might turn on one vote. Of course the wife knowing her husband so well might vote against him. Members were often defeated where they were well known, but succeeded in getting elected in districts where they were unknown. They even went so far as to Busselton to secure election. If the argument held good that the wife would probably be sufficiently acquainted with the needs of her husband's outlying electorate it was a good argument for making the whole of the State one electorate; but it would be a bad precedent to give mem-

bers' wives the opportunity of voting in electorates about which they knew nothing.

The Attorney General: The words "and the wife of any member" were not in the Federal Act.

Mr. UNDERWOOD supported the clause as printed. It was not advisable for the member to be disfranchised, nor his wife. It was impossible for him (Mr. Underwood) to reside in the Pilbarra electorate, and it would be useless to have his name on the roll for the district where he now resided, because at election times he would necessarily be in his own electorate and would thus be disfranchised. In the case of the wife it should be made optional, because if it were made compulsory for her to vote in her husband's electorate, in the case of his (Mr. Underwood's) wife she would be disfranchised at the next election, because she would have to remain where she resided unless he went to the expense of taking her with him to Pilbarra.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. ANGWIN moved an amendment in Subclause (3)—

That the words "may claim to" be struck out, and the word "shall" inserted in lieu.

Later he would move to strike out all the words after "member" in the same subclause. A member might be pretty well secure in the district he represented, but might be residing in a district where there was likely to be a close contest; his name might be struck off the roll for the district he represented and might be placed on the roll where he resided. One could not see why a member should be deemed to reside in a constituency where he did not reside.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the hon. member read the first portion of the clause, he would see that in the case of a citizen of the State the declaration was that he should be entitled to be enrolled as an elector. That was the proper phraseology; but the hon. member wished to place a member of Parliament in an inferior position, and say *nolens volens* that he should be enrolled.

Mr. Walker: That should be the case in regard to every elector.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Now it was suggested there should be no choice to a member of Parliament, but that he should be compulsorily enrolled for the district in which he resided.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Clause 18—Disqualifications:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That Subclause (3) be struck out.

In an age when we claimed to be enlightened, although there were certain deeds we did which rather vitiated that claim, there was a certain going back to the days of barbarism when one sought to exclude from the exercise of the franchise persons because they were in receipt of relief. There had been occasions when, through drought or flood, citizens were compelled to accept relief. In South Australia, New South Wales, and Victoria the Government had repeatedly come to the assistance of settlers, and given them seed-wheat and provided them with food. We had a number of men in Western Australia who had been the pioneers of industry, men in the Old Men's Depot to-day who had been amongst those who went out to Southern Cross or from Perth in the early days and traversed the whole of the goldfields of Western Australia, and were amongst those who opened up that country and made it available for the larger population to follow. By reason of ill-luck they had been compelled to accept the charity of the State in their old age, and consequently we would not allow them to exercise the franchise. It was altogether out of keeping with liberal principles. A discrimination was made between those who received an allowance termed "charitable relief," also those who, because they got something more than a certain amount of that relief, received what were called pensions. We had been told by the Attorney General that these pensions could not be claimed as a right, but were nothing more than a bounty which the State gave them. Therefore so far as pensions were concerned we had the payment of a bounty,

just the same as this charitable relief was a bounty to those other persons.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: When moving the second reading of the Bill, he referred to this subclause and pointed out that the reason it was found in the electoral laws was that those who were at the mercy of the generosity of the State were not to be taken as persons possessed entirely of free judgment. Since making that speech, he had looked up some authorities on electoral laws, and he would like to read to the House a note taken from *Rogers on Elections,* in which he quoted the authority of Whitelocke. He pointed out that persons who were or had been within a certain time obliged to depend wholly or in part on eleemosynary assistance had been held by Whitelocke and other authorities to be disqualified by the common law, not only because from their indigence they were unable to contribute to the wages of their members —this was referring to antique times— but because from their dependent situation their voices were no longer free. But the receipt of alms was only considered as evidence of inability, which evidence might be rebutted by circumstances, and the franchise was considered as suspended and not annihilated. We had passed an electoral law in 1904, when some of the members now in the House were then members of Parliament, and this qualification was placed on the statute book. The provisions existing were passed in 1889 in the Constitution Act, exactly the same phraseology being used as in the present Bill. Besides that there had been electoral laws passed within recent times in the States of Queensland and New South Wales.

Mr. Angwin : The hon. member quoted the Commonwealth law just now.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : Whatever was proposed in any law must stand on its own merits ; it might be supported by precedent and it might not, but it must stand on its own merits, and he was the last in the House to be bound by precedent. The Act of Queensland which was passed in 1905 was passed by a Parliament and Ministry that must undoubtedly be classed as liberal in the extreme, and the disqualification in the Act of 1905 of Queensland was in effect the same as the disqualification which the hon. member wished to strike out. Exactly the same provision was to be found in Canada, and we had heard a lot lately of the great progress of the liberal Government in Canada.

Mr. Bath : The Canadian Government was not regarded as liberal.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : The Prime Minister of the Dominion was recognised throughout the world as one of the most liberal statesmen of the age; and the Canadian statute had exactly the same omission, likewise the Victorian Act of 1890 and the New South Wales Act of 1902. Precedent alone did not justify the disqualification; but it was evident that those dependent on public generosity and making no refund to the public, should not have the franchise.

Mr. Angwin : The relief might be received for a few weeks only.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : Then the moment relief ceased, the person became entitled to vote. Pensioners were in a different category, for pensions were payments for services rendered. It was long recognised that the Government would have an undue influence over the votes of recipients of charity, and there was no just reason for altering what had always been the law since parliamentary elections were instituted.

Mr. HUDSON supported the amendment. The Act of 1899 did not contain this disqualification, nor had the Attorney General shown that the Act had resulted in any improper practice or any evil requiring a remedy. In ancient times, before the secret ballot, persons receiving poor law relief were debarred from voting because they must otherwise have voted orally. By the Bill an elector might be disfranchised because he was momentarily accommodated in a charitable institution subsidised by the State.

Mr. WALKER : The very reasons advanced for the subclause were good reasons for its deletion. The principle dated back to the time when the only qualification for the franchise was property, and the man who did not hold property had to secure permission to live. At that time the borough, which

had to pay the election expenses, naturally objected to persons voting if they could not contribute to those expenses. The Attorney General relied on long-established custom. Was not that the argument against the Reform Bill of 1832? Blackstone gave a list of disqualified persons, including females, and those who had within a certain period received parochial relief or disqualifying alms. Yet in England itself an agitation was proceeding for the removal of these disqualifications, amongst which the receipt of medical aid was no longer to be found. The Australian States had slavishly followed the old common law of England. Here in this latest measure we embodied that old law. Was repetition any argument of the excellence of anything? Rather it was an argument for the opposite. It was argued that a man who received alms was not a free man. [*The Attorney General*: No; had not a free mind.] Not having a free mind, the man could not be a free man. The hon. member would not give that man a chance to have a free mind. Some members desired to give that man a free mind. Could not a man, though bullied in his institution, yet go out and vote as his mind directed? There might have been objection in the old days, if the guardians of these institutions brought along those in their custody to vote solidly; for when those custodians could watch those old men to see how they voted, it might have been right to say that those old men should not vote being so liable to be subjected to intimidation; but with the substitution of the ballot-box for the system of open voting, any man could vote as his mind directed, and so the argument existed no longer. If the argument held good against giving votes to those in receipt of alms, it held good that every civil servant should be deprived of his vote because he was under considerable surveillance, especially in some of the outlying centres of this State. Every civil servant were more or less under the thumb of the Government in power. [*Mr. Foulkes*: No.] No, because we had the ballot, and every civil servant could vote as he chose. Civil servants were in receipt of Government funds and given work which in some instances was pure charity: yet we did not deprive them of their right to vote. If it was safe to trust our civil servants, why not trust those in our charitable institutions? Government servants were not free in mind, because they were in receipt of Government money and Government employment; if a civil servant was likely to vote for anybody he was likely to vote for one who would give him constant employment; yet one would not deprive the civil servant of the right to vote on that account. Then how could we in conscience in this democratic age deprive those unfortunate men who had given the best time of their lives to the service of the country of their right to vote in their old age? Why should it be a penalty to have got old and worn out one's life, to be no longer capable of competing with fellow men? Was it not an anomaly that when a man who happened to have friends to support him, or property on which he could fall back, was possibly on the verge of the grave, weak in intellect in the extreme, a magistrate could come to his door and take his vote, while the man who had no family, or whose family was away from him and who happened to get into the Old Men's Depot or to in any way receive Government aid, though his intellect might be strong and only his body weak, was deprived of the right to have a say in the selection of his representative in Parliament, or a voice in the making of the law? There were scores of men on the goldfields, old prospectors most of them, who were in receipt of a few rations a week. When they got a chance they went out prospecting and relieved the State of giving this temporary support. Some of them had been known, since there were goldfields in the State, for their energy, manliness, industry, and zeal in the search for the precious metal; yet when they were worn out and had to fall back on charity to the extent of a few shillings a week, they were told that they could not vote.

Mr. Bath: Would it apply to Pat Hannan, who received an allowance?

Mr. WALKER: Exceptions were made. Some received pensions. Sir John For-

rest received a pension, and we would not disqualify Sir John Forrest; then why should we disqualify the poor? Was it said of those who received sustenance in a modified form that their brains were gone, that they could not be entrusted with a vote, that they were incapable of doing right when it came to the ballot-box? Was that asserted? [*The Attorney General*: It was not by him.] Then by whom? If their judgment was still sound why deprive them of their votes? Was it asserted that they were not morally qualified? Was a penalty to be placed upon misfortune? Were they to be stamped out of citizenship and put on the level with criminals, lunatics, and idiots? Was there a solid foundation for depriving Mr. Wilbur of a vote? That gentleman had been unfortunate owing to his treatment by the departments and had been reduced to ask for Government aid, and though fit to sit on the Treasury bench, was not to have a say as to who should represent him in Parliament.

At 6.15, *the Chairman* left the Chair.
At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Mr. WALKER: What kind of times were these when it was desired to prevent persons who were in receipt of assistance of a charitable character from having the right to vote. It reminded one of the days of Edward VI., when such persons were ordered by Act of Parliament to be treated as slaves, to be chained and to be compelled by beating or otherwise to perform any work assigned to them, be it ever so vile. However, the treatment of the poor had now improved, even in England itself, and they were no longer looked upon as lepers, as mere objects of contemptuous pity to be run into the workhouse and compelled to break stones. If there was one thing he admired the Asiatics for it was their respect and veneration for the old and infirm, and it was to be regretted that a similar feeling towards the aged did not exist here. The clause under discussion was a relic of barbarism. At the present time the Federal Commonwealth were considering what tax should be levied in order to pay old age pensions, not as a charity but as an absolute right to every man in the State. While this was being done by the Federal Parliament this State, by the clause, were endeavouring to place every humiliation upon the old and to deprive them of their citizenship. Let the Attorney General look at some of the poorer and some of the richer sections of the community and compare their intellects and minds, for if he did so he would find more genuine understanding, more practical common sense, more keenness of perception among the poor than among those who might be described as being of the leisure class; yet he was disfranchising one and giving franchise to the other. There were some people it was true who were wholly supported by charity—those who were members of the old men's and old women's homes—but they did not exhaust the class of those who received charitable aid. There were a vast number here, more particularly those families who had been deprived of the breadwinners, who from sheer stress of hard misfortune, not from their intellectual incapacity, were compelled to seek for outdoor relief. Mr. Longmore could give numerous examples of that class. There were men who by accident were rendered incapable of earning bread, and those men and their wives and families had to seek a little charitable aid; and yet the Bill proposed to bar them from the rights of citizenship, and place them on the level of criminals and lunatics. Who was responsible for the clause being inserted in the Bill? [*The Treasurer*: It has been there all along.] The Bill was a new one, and was brought forward with the idea of giving people the right to vote; the old Acts had resulted in preventing people from voting. After a long fight adult suffrage had been adopted in this State, and now the Government were trying to go back to the old laws which existed in the time of Edward VI. We recognised that a man, however poor he might be, was a citizen, and why should his poverty deprive him of his vote? The very pioneer of the goldfields represented by the Attorney General, Mr. Hannan, the discoverer of

gold in that quarter, was in receipt of £200 a year, making himself to that extent the subject of the charity of the State. He would be disqualified from voting, but the drunken loafer, if he did not ask for sixpence from the Government, would have a vote. He (Mr. Walker) had met men incapacitated from working through breathing in foul gases in the bowels of earth, corrupting the blood. These men were prostrated and could no longer compete with the youthful citizen; and if they fell back on the charity of the State their liberty was taken from them and they were disfranchised. When an opportunity was presented in this new Bill to give old men their justice, why take it from them? Here there was no respect for age. When a man was old enough he was thrown into a home and left there to wither. It was a disgrace to the State that such a thing were possible.

Mr. BOLTON: From the annual report of the Superintendent of Public Charities it would be seen that the regulations governing and controlling the issue of outdoor relief throughout the State had recently been altered. Rule 7 provided that relief in the shape of rations might be granted to the aged, infirm, sick persons, and widows or deserted wives with children to support. Very commendable, but it made the argument all the stronger that these persons should not be deprived of the franchise. Then another clause provided that relief should be given for not exceeding a month at a time, and anyone receiving relief for a month preceding an election would be deprived of a vote. Again, an allowance in lieu of rations might be granted on the approval of the Colonial Secretary. There were many people receiving 5s. per week for a given term, and because of this they were to be disfranchised. Rule 15 described what was to be the scale of relief allowed, and the Attorney General would disfranchise a person because he received a pound of bread or an ounce of sugar.

The Minister for Works: Look at Clause 56.

Mr. BOLTON: That clause provided that the Superintendent of Charities should at stated times forward to the Chief Electoral Officer a list containing the names and addresses and previous occupations of every person, not under 21 years of age, who had been received as an inmate of any public charitable institution during the preceding three months and who continued in receipt of such relief. Clause 56 did not cover this point. Any patient in a hospital subsidised by the Government could be disfranchised. During the past year 2,316 adults were assisted either in money or in kind by the department, and of these only 609 received permanent relief. Why not be as liberal as the Federal Government? No matter how temporary the relief, if given a month before the closing of the rolls, a frequent event, the recipients would be disfranchised. It was argued that most of the men receiving permanent relief had not brains enough to exercise the franchise; but the superintendent reported that among the men at Claremont the proportion of indifferent character was small, the great bulk being reasonable and well-behaved. They were quite as capable of voting as was any member of the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The argument of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) was beside the point. Here was no question of intimidation, but a question of undue influence arising from the fact that all recipients of permanent charitable relief were dependents; hence in Great Britain the franchise had always been withheld from such persons. Those who were not, like Mr. Hannan, pensioned as a reward for services rendered, were simply receiving charity, and their votes could be easily influenced by the Government. He would be prepared to draft an amendment to prevent the possibility of a man's being disfranchised for receiving temporary rations. The desire was not to disqualify any but those wholly dependent on public charity, and consequently not called upon to discharge the duties of citizenship. The subclause could be amended by inserting "wholly dependent on" before "the receipt of relief." There was no desire to inflict any hardship on a man merely because he was a pauper. No one could say with

certainty that he would never be impoverished. Some escaped poverty by their own efforts, others through good fortune. As to hospitals, Section 28 of the Constitution Act, 1899, excluded from the franchise persons in receipt of charitable relief from the Government or any charitable institution. That had been modified by adding the words "subsidised by the State"; and the section had been held not to apply to Government hospitals, nor was it intended to apply to patients in or persons otherwise relieved by such hospitals. If desired he would add to the subclause the words "except as a patient under treatment for accident or disease at a hospital." He hoped members would acquit him of any harsh feeling towards persons in necessitous circumstances. Those wholly dependent on charity were discharged from the duties of citizenship the performance of which was rewarded by the franchise. Minors, though married, were not given the franchise, because we considered their judgment too liable to be unduly influenced. So with persons wholly dependent on charity. The old age pensions of other States were not to maintain but to contribute to the maintenance of the pensioners.

Mr. Taylor: A man whom this Bill debarred from voting would be eligible in other States.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The desire was to confine the disqualification to those wholly maintained by the State. When the name of Hannan was mentioned surely it must be acknowledged that merit came in. It was not because Hannan was at Coolgardie at the time of the discovery of that field that the reward was given; it was for exceptional services rendered to the State. But merit did not come into the giving of charity. The only claim for charity was that the person seeking it was indigent. That was not the claim under old age pensions; residence and other qualifications were necessary, none of which were demanded in the giving of charity. Those in charitable institutions were not in a position to exercise that judgment we required from a citizen of the State. They were not discharging their duty as citizens, were not earning money, and possibly were not rearing children. By accepting the proposed amendment he (the Attorney General) had outlined, the House would not place a bar on any man who received some financial relief to enable him to earn a living, nor on those who obtained relief in hospitals for the treatment of disease.

Mr. BATH: The argument of the Attorney General was that because the State, recognising that it had some duty to perform to the aged and those in distress, fulfilled that duty imperfectly by putting the aged and distressed in some institutions, it was a good reason for depriving them of the franchise, while if the State fulfilled its duty perfectly and extended relief in the shape of old age pensions those persons had the right to exercise the franchise.

The Attorney General: Could anybody be maintained on an old age pension?

Mr. BATH: In Victoria and New South Wales, in many old mining camps would be found old age pensioners living in their own huts, and living fairly comfortably, without being deprived of many things, on the 10s. a week they received. The effects of the neglect of the State should not be visited on those compelled to receive aid. That there was a percentage of the population in every country on whom society collectively had inflicted some injustice was recognised in almost every modern country. If society allowed those to die like dogs in the ditch, society would be doing something criminal, though as a whole society could not be made to suffer for it; but it was recognised that these unfortunate people were entitled to pensions, and that the receipt of the pensions did not deprive them of their rights of citizenship. In Great Britain it was being recognised that old age pensions were now within the realm of practical politics; and in Germany there was a humanitarian recognition of the duty of the State to these unfortunate people; but this proposal of the Attorney General was inadequate. Mr. Wilbur, who was an inmate of the Blind Asylum, would be deprived of the franchise by the Attorney General's proposal.

The Attorney General: Was the Blind Asylum not a hospital?

Mr. Walker: No; it was one of our charitable institutions.

Mr. BATH: That fact showed how imperfect would be the modification the Attorney General suggested. The Attorney General quoted the disqualifications contained in the electoral Acts of the other States in this regard, but South Australia and New Zealand had not retained the provision in their Acts. The Attorney General should recognise that we could not keep in line with modern development by maintaining in the Bill this illiberal proposal, this survival of olden times. It was to be hoped that the hon. gentleman would do the full measure of justice and delete the objectionable proposal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: One aspect of the question was missed altogether. In the past owners of property had claimed excessive rights, and reformers had made every endeavour to obtain justice for those not so well endowed with this world's goods; and in pursuit of that policy a great cry was made that there should be no taxation without representation. That principle was recognised in our local government. No single man residing in a boarding-house had any say, and members opposite would not claim that he should have, in the management of local institutions. [*Labour Member*: Yes, it was claimed.] Now, instead of asking for no taxation without representation, some members were asking for representation without taxation. [*Mr. Walker*: That would be a happy state.] It would be an unfortunate position if those without responsibility had a great voice in the control of the affairs of the State. If members were to visit those institutions they would find there men of very advanced age, many of whom were approaching, and some of whom had entered, the period of senile decay. One would imagine from what had been said by the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) that all the intellect, virtue and merit in the State were to be found in the charitable institutions. There were many worthy men there who had been unfortunate, with whom everyone sympathised; but at the same time it was going a step beyond the cry for no taxation without representation, to ask now for representation without taxation. He failed to see the justice of such a demand. He admitted it was harsh to take away the rights of citizenship from a man who perhaps was the head of a family and in indigent circumstances and desired charitable relief for a few weeks in order to tide over a time of stress. His case was very different from that of the regular inmate of charitable institutions. One objected to the argument that persons who on account of service they had done to the State had been granted pensions should be put on the same plane as those persons who were absolutely indigent and were inmates of charitable institutions. These latter were entirely without responsibility.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Attorney General and the Minister for Works had done nothing but convey the idea that poverty was a crime, and that because a man was poor and in his declining years and was in receipt of support from the State he should lose his rights of citizenship. The Attorney General had argued that there was a difference between a man receiving an old age pension and one receiving support from the State, and he stated that no old age pensions in Australia would be sufficient to maintain the men who were in receipt of them. These pensions were a right and justice to the aged of a country, and the relief which was given to the old men here took the place for the time being of those old age pensions. It was absurd to say that because a man had given the best of his life to his country and had became old and decrepit through accident and had to look to charity for his existence he should be debarred from a vote. It was appalling that such a suggestion should be made in a State like Western Australia. The Commonwealth had not inserted in their Electoral Act any such clause; and he would ask them to point out where the Commonwealth had suffered from their giving votes to the old and poor. This State should make equally as liberal laws as the Commonwealth. Members had spoken of an existing depression; but it was no wonder

there was such, when legislation was brought down to the House which was nothing more than a relic of the days of barbarism and slavery. Every man in the State who was of sound mind and not a criminal should have the right to record his vote. The State should support its old citizens just as children should support their parents in their old age. The Attorney General had stated he was prepared to give a vote to those who were only in receipt of partial aid; but let him go farther and give it to all. It was to be hoped that the Attorney General would allow the subclause to be removed and thus do something in keeping with the democracy of Australia.

Mr. J. A. S. STUART: This provision evidently got into the Bill by reason of the fact that a lot of the Acts in force in Australia at the present time came into force impliedly because they were in force in the old country, but we were not up-to-date enough to repeal those laws when that was done in the old country. He did not see how the paragraph could be amended to be acceptable to members on the Opposition side. He understood the Attorney General would forego a certain portion of its brutality, but he (Mr. Stuart) could accept nothing but the striking out of the subclause. When a cyclone happened on the goldfields some time ago, people accepted relief from the State, and these people were to be ever afterwards debarred from exercising a vote.

The Attorney General: That was not the meaning of the subclause.

Mr. STUART: On one occasion he was on a relief committee which was distributing seed wheat to a number of distressed farmers, and some of these farmers refused to take that wheat because in that State where this action was taken there was a similar provision to this in force. The case of Mr. Kidson, the Premier of Queensland, had been held up as an example. But this provision passed by the Kidson Government was responsible for the defeat of the Home Secretary of Queensland who had the administrating of the law. Even the aboriginal blacks of this country had more respect for the aged than members who supported this proposal. On the authority of the *Labour Leader*, a paper published in England, it had been decided in Australia by the courts that to prohibit persons from the use of the vote because they were in receipt of relief was illegal. He regretted to see that the Attorney General wished to perpetuate an illegality. Members should not be satisfied with anything but a straight cut issue, and show that we were not willing to perpetuate this iniquitous system.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Having learned from the Chairman that it was not open for him to move the amendment he had indicated, he would promise if the subclause was carried to recommit the Bill at a later stage.

Mr. W. C. ANGWIN: The Attorney General should bear in mind that there was a large number of persons in the charitable homes of the State who did a certain amount of work, and consequently assisted by their labours in maintaining those institutions. Only last session he brought before the House an instance where over £200 worth of cement work was carried out by the inmates of the Fremantle home, and the men who had performed the work were awarded 1s. 6d. per week by the Government.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	20
Majority against		..	3

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Bath	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Davies
Mr. Collier	Mr. Draper
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Holman	Mr. Gull
Mr. Horan	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Layman
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Stuart	Mr. Male
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Underwood	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Walker	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Ware	Mr. Price
Mr. Heitmann (*Teller*).	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Veryard
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).

Amendment thus negatived: clause passed.

Clause 19—Electoral rolls:

Mr. BATH had an amendment to move, but, as suggested by the Attorney General, it could be deferred till Clause 27.

Clause passed.

Clause 20—agreed to.

Clause 21—Existing rolls:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment that the following be added to the clause:—

Provided that all claims for enrolment passed by the registrar prior to one week immediately preceding the polling day fixed for any election shall entitle the claimant to vote at that election.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This amendment would be more appropriate in Clause 44, which determined the time at which a claim became valid.

Mr. BATH: Clause 44 only dealt with claims received in the interval between ordinary elections, but the amendment would provide for an unexpected election. Clause 21 would enact that until new rolls under the Bill came into use, the rolls existing at the commencement of the measure should, as altered from time to time, be used. In 1905 an unexpected general election found the rolls unprepared. Such an election might be fought out on incomplete rolls. Provision should be made that all claims lodged with the registrar by a given time before polling day should be placed in a supplementary roll and the claimants permitted to vote. This was the proper place for the amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Apart from the obvious irrelevancy of the amendment, it could not be effective. Claims were to be received until one week before polling day; hence for at least two or three days after nomination day there would be no rolls. The invariable practice in this and other countries was to make no addition to the rolls after issue of the writ; for how else could candidates ascertain who were entitled to vote? At the recent election in West Perth, in most favourable circumstances, the rolls were published some three days after the issue of the writ, though the utmost expedition was used. What a howl would be raised if candidates had to wait for the rolls till the eve of the election. The law gave ample opportunity for the enrolment of every person entitled to vote, nor had there been any complaint, even under the existing law which did not provide for a census, that any name had been improperly omitted from the roll. At the recent election, to secure a complete list, machinery was used which was now incorporated in the Bill. Certain expenditure incurred in connection with the West Perth election might be questioned, but nothing else. The proposal set forth in the amendment was opposed to the provisions of the Bill, and we were really discussing it at a stage when it was entirely irrelevant.

Mr. SCADDAN: In Clause 44 it was provided that claims were not passed by the registrar until they were in his hands 14 days, and that would allow three weeks before an election. The Attorney General was wrong in arguing that under the amendment claims received one week prior to the polling day would not be allowed.

The Attorney General: Rolls could not be printed in time.

Mr. HUDSON moved an amendment on Mr. Bath's amendment:—

That the word "passed" be struck out, and "not objected to" inserted in lieu.

The object of the Bill was to give everybody the opportunity to vote, and this amendment would serve that purpose.

Mr. BATH: The Attorney General had very little idea of the expedition with which printing could be carried out. A day would be sufficient to print a supplementary roll. The amendment, if carried, would provide that the rolls would not be out of date, but in the clause as printed there was possibility that many would be disfranchised. There seemed to be no object to be gained by the farther amendment proposed by the member for Dundas.

Amendment on amendment withdrawn.

Amendment (Mr. Bath's) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	15
Noes	21
Majority against ..	6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Bath	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Davies
Mr. Collier	Mr. Draper
Mr Holman	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Horan	Mr Gordon
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Gull
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Stuart	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Keenan
Mr. Underwood	Mr. McLarty
Mr. Walker	Mr. Male
Mr Ware	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Heitmann (*Teller*).	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. S. F Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Veryard
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Layman (*Teller*).

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed.

Clauses 22, 23—agreed to.

Clause 24—Printing of rolls:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "whenever the Minister so directs" be struck out, and "as soon as practicable after the closing of such rolls" inserted in lieu thereof.

The clause as it stood provided that the roll should be printed whenever the Minister so directed, but it was essential that the details of the work of the department should be kept as free as possible from party influences. The amendment would mean that the chief electoral officer would really be in charge of the issue of the rolls. The amendment would read in connection with another amendment which he would propose to a subsequent clause, and which set out that the rolls should be issued on specific dates of each year. If that course were adopted the electors would know when to expect the rolls, and this would be far better than allowing the Minister to issue them when he pleased.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Care must be taken in dealing with a measure to see that undue expenditure was not caused in regard to the printing of the rolls. If the suggestion to have them printed every year were adopted it would mean a very heavy expense, for in those circumstances it would be necessary to print for circulation all the rolls of the State once a year. The chief electoral officer suggested that provision should be made for the printing of the rolls on some fixed date antecedent to the date of holding general elections. The idea was that the date be some four or six months before the elections, and that then rolls for every electorate should be prepared for circulation and not merely for inspection. Whenever a by-election took place the department had the rolls for that particular district printed. If the House thought the Minister should not be given the power suggested by the clause, he personally had no objection to having the power placed directly in the hands of the chief electoral officer. He would be sorry to see that course adopted, however, for whether in charge of the department or not, he would always be glad to have someone to take the responsibility of the department, and answer for its actions to the House. It would not be fair to take from the Minister that power of printing the rolls, and then make him responsible in the House if the rolls were not printed at the right time.

Mr. WALKER: Even if the Minister were not given the power, he would still be responsible for any laches on the part of the officer. The experience of the State had been that thousands had been disfranchised owing to too much power being left in the hands of Ministers. [*The Attorney General*: Had that been the experience lately?] There was a new chief electoral officer, and at the present time there was not one word to be said against either him or the administration of the department. We had seen, however, how Ministerial management had been abused in the past, not only here but elsewhere. It would be wise to carry the amendment. The man who knew best when the rolls were completed, and when all the work in connection with them had been done, and that the rolls were ready for printing, was the chief electoral officer. One was anxious that the officer should have some discretion. As the clause stood, how could there be any anticipation of emergency. Who could say when there would be an election?

Mr. BOLTON supported the amendment. It would be rather absurd to have all the rolls reprinted for every division of the State too often. He would support the Attorney General if it were made mandatory for the supplementary rolls

to be printed in March, June, September and December. Other supplementary rolls were absolutely necessary. At the last election the rolls for North Fremantle had not been printed as revised for a number of years. It would be little expense and trouble if the supplementary rolls were printed as indicated. The registrars would then know when to expect the supplementary rolls.

Mr. FOULKES: The Committee should not agree to the amendment on account of the tremendous cost that would be entailed. The Government Printing Office now cost £30,000 a year, and we could not afford to spend these large sums. Complaints were made that due provision was not made for people to be placed on the rolls, but look at the result of an election. In a keenly contested election in Perth where there were polling places 300 yards from every house, only 70 per cent. of the people voted. It was a low percentage considering the facilities given. It was quite sufficient to have a roll printed soon after a Parliament was elected, and the supplementary rolls could be issued as the Bill provided.

Mr. HUDSON could not agree that people were not anxious to have their names on the roll. Only last week he had an application by telegraph to see that rolls and transfer forms were sent up. He would support the amendment because it gave greater facilities to people who desired to have their names on the rolls. If the suggestion of the member for Claremont were carried out, at the end of three years an elector would have to go through about a dozen rolls to see of his name were there. It would mean no end of confusion.

Mr. ANGWIN: The matter should be left in the hands of the Chief Electoral Officer to see when the rolls should be printed and issued. Members did the country a great deal of harm by continually saying what the State could not afford. If the rolls were printed at a convenient time before an election that would be quite sufficient, for anyone anxious to ascertain if his name were on a roll could obtain that information by applying to the electoral office. The registrars were willing to give all the information possible. It was not altogether advisable to leave this matter in the hands of the Minister, it should be left to the Chief Electoral Officer to see that the rolls were prepared, and issued at the proper time, and he should not be guided by the Minister. He could not get away from the idea that some Ministers used their influence to prevent people from getting on the roll and in keeping back the printing of the rolls.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If members thought it advisable to strike out the word "Minister" and insert "he" in lieu, there was no objection. An amendment of this character would be accepted.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "the Minister" be struck out, and "he" inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed; clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 25—Supplementary rolls:

Mr. FOULKES: Why were these to be issued in March, June, September, and December? Twice a year ought to suffice.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The Chief Electoral Officer did not anticipate that the expense would be great. There would be few additions in three months. Transfers, except in mining towns, would not be numerous. Supplementary rolls would not be so bulky as the main rolls.

Mr. BATH: The words "whenever practicable," in Subclause (*b*), should be struck out. It was imperative that a supplementary roll should be prepared for every general election or by-election, immediately after issue of the writ.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: A by-election might occur suddenly; and if it were for a northern constituency it would be impossible to have supplementary rolls printed after the issue of the writ; hence the new names must be written in. To strike out those words would make the printing compulsory.

Mr. BATH: At every election many persons accepted the roll as evidence that they were not entitled to vote.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The names of new claimants would be written

on the supplementary rolls issued for a by-election, if it was not possible to print them.

Mr. Bath : And everyone who bought a supplementary roll would find the names written in ?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Certainly.

Mr. HUDSON moved an amendment—

That the words "printing is" be inserted after "whenever" in Subclause (b).

It would read "whenever printing is practicable," thus confining the discretion to printing or writing, and eliminating any discretion as to time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : The inclusion of these words would be simple redundancy. The meaning of the subclause was to have the supplementary rolls printed where practicable.

Mr. JOHNSON : There should be no discretionary power given to the registrar as to whether he should issue a supplementary roll or not ; we should make it compulsory. The amendment was certainly superfluous and should be withdrawn. The real point was to make it imperative by striking out the words "where practicable."

Amendment withdrawn.

Mr. JOHNSON moved an amendment—

That the words "where practicable" be struck out.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL : It was necessary that the supplementary roll should be issued ; if not printed, at least in writing. That was his (the Attorney General's) desire, but it was necessary to retain the words "where practicable" in order to meet the desire to have the supplementary issue printed if possible, but written where printing was impracticable. An amendment would be brought down to meet the case on recommittal.

Amendment withdrawn; clause passed.

Clauses 26 to 29—agreed to.

Clause 30—Arrangement with Commonwealth :

Mr. ANGWIN moved an amendment in Subclause 2—

That paragraphs (a), (b), (c) be struck out.

It would not be wise to enter into such an arrangement with the Commowealth, one reason being that it would be clearly shown on the rolls that certain persons were disfranchised, as far as the State elections were concerned, owing to their being in receipt of charitable relief from the State.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The clause was the same, word for word, as Section 30 of the Commonwealth Act, 1905. The reason for its insertion was that it was desired to divide the expense of making rolls between the Commonwealth and the States and, if it were found feasible, for the two bodies to reciprocate. The reason why it was necessary that the rolls should state that certain persons were not eligible to vote either for the Commonwealth or the State, was that the local rolls would not merely apply to the Legislative Assembly, but also to the Legislative Council which had a property vote, and all knew that the Commonwealth law had no property qualification. In addition, there was the position of a man who had been in Australia for six months and was therefore entitled to vote for the Commonwealth elections; but the local laws provided that a man had to be six months in the State before he could vote at State elections. Consequently, in the former instance, a man would be entitled to vote at Commonwealth elections but probably not at State elections. Both measures must therefore provide for marking on the rolls those persons who possessed State rights only, and those who possessed Commonwealth rights only. The provision would have to be made if the State was going to reciprocate with the Commonwealth.

Mr. BATH: While it might help the State Department to have some of the electoral work done by the Commonwealth officers, it would be a bad day for the Commonwealth Electoral Department when they placed work in the hands of the State Department. The two departments had very different traditions. In

the Federal Department, as far as enrolment of electors was concerned they had a liberal interpretation and sought to enrol as many voters as possible. The tradition of the State Department, on the contrary, was to get people off the roll as much as possible. If an arrangement was made with the Commonwealth to rely on the State in the matter of enrolling voters it would mean the disfranchisement of many electors. From the point of view of the Federal electors he objected to the clause, and he intended to vote against the clause altogether.

Mr. ANGWIN: The State rights for the Upper House had nothing to do with the Commonwealth rights, so it was brought down to this point, that the only persons who would be marked as having Commonwealth but not State rights would be those who had been in the Commonwealth for six months but in the State for less than that time, and those persons who were receiving charitable relief from the State.

Question (that the clause stand as printed) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	.. .. ..	21
Noes	.. .. ..	13
Majority for	.. ..	8

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Angwin
Mr. H. Brown	Mr. Bath
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Davies	Mr. Collier
Mr. Draper	Mr. Holman
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Walker
Mr. Layman	Mr. Ware
Mr. Male	Mr. Stuart (*Teller*).
Mr. Mitchell	
Mr. N. J. Moore	
Mr. S. F. Moore	
Mr. Price	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Veryard	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).	

Clause thus passed.

Clause 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Inspection of rolls by the public:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That in lines 3 and 4 the words "within the prescribed hours on at least two days in every week" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu, "on any week day during office hours."

According to the clause, the roll would be open to inspection only on two days in any week, but the rolls should be open to inspection during the office hours of the registrar; that was the position in other Electoral Acts.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL would consent to an amendment were it not for the fact that only in Fremantle, Perth and Kalgoorlie were there electoral officers. In other places the officers were connected with other departments. If there were electoral registrars to carry out the work, there would be no objection. When an election was pending the services of officers in other departments were given up to this work, but we had no right to ask for those services throughout the year. We should not saddle officers with the duty of making the rolls available for the public when these officers had so many other duties to discharge. The provision would not be workable and could not be carried out if it were prescribed. Where there were electoral registrars the roll was always available to the inspection of the public.

Mr. HUDSON: There was no very great difficulty in carrying out the proposal if the lists were open to public inspection. The duty of the officer would be to place the list on the counter and allow an elector to look over it and see if his name were on the roll. In country districts there would be great hardship if the rolls were only open on two days, as people only visited the town occasionally, and they might not visit on the day the roll was open to inspection. Public officers in country districts were always in their offices for part of every day.

Mr. BATH: The position was precisely the same in other States of the Commonwealth as it was in Western Australia; officers carrying out other duties being appointed electoral registrars. In the New Zealand measure it was provided that any person could inspect the roll on any week day during office hours. In Queensland he might see it on every day but Sunday, and so also in New

South Wales, where many police constables were electoral officers.

Mr. STUART: In small electorates two days a week might be ample; but what about people who came to town once a month or once a quarter? The present unsatisfactory state of the rolls was largely due to their inaccessibility. A man not knowing whether he was enrolled made another application. Registrars would be happy to have the rolls open for inspection every day, and it was hard that the Government, evidently ignorant of local conditions, should put all sorts of obstacles in the way of would-be electors.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Better withdraw the words suggested and insert "whenever practicable," so that the registrars might, when they could, afford the desired facilities. He objected to saddling officers with duties which from lack of time some must refuse to discharge. In Newcastle the officer acting as land agent, treasury cashier, electoral registrar and registrar of births deaths and marriages, had sometimes to go to Northam, and he had no assistant. Members were thinking of populous places. The registrar's office was not the only place where a roll could be inspected. Anyone one could purchase a roll or a supplement, and make it available to the public.

Mr. BATH: There was a story of a man who went to Hades, and the devil agreed to provide him with ice whenever practicable: but the temperature being high, it was never practicable. If at Newcastle the registrar was not available, some other public officer could discharge the duty.

Mr. HUDSON: Appoint places other than the registrar's office—the police station or the school. The Dundas registrar was in Norseman, and about 1,000 people lived 200 miles from the registrar's office. We should have some regard for them.

Mr. BATH: Duplications were often caused, not designedly, but through the inability of claimants to ascertain whether they were enrolled.

The Premier: Make a departmental regulation that a copy of the roll should be kept at the police station.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. HUDSON moved an amendment—

That the following words be added to the clause, "not exceeding the sum of one shilling."

The roll must be printed for the purpose of the election, and for the use of the registrar, so that the cost of printing copies was comparatively small. He had intended to make the figure two shillings, the price usually charged, but that was too high.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The usual price was two shillings for a full roll; supplementary rolls were supplied at a smaller figure. The department was entitled to ask for some reimbursement, but the price charged did not amount to the cost of printing.

Mr. ANGWIN: Commonwealth rolls were supplied for a shilling.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Clauses 33 to 36—agreed to.

Clause 37—Rolls, how prepared:

Mr. ANGWIN: The clause provided that new rolls were to be prepared in the manner specified in the proclamation or prescribed by the regulations. The Act provided that before any person's name was struck off the roll the person should be summoned to appear before a revision court, yet by proclamation without any appearance before the revision court names were removed of persons who could not be found. For the purpose of providing that every person would know what action was taken before names could be removed from the roll he moved an amendment—

That the words "the proclamation or prescribed by the regulations" be struck out, and "this Act" inserted in lieu.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member was really dealing with Clause 39, which showed the procedure for preparing new rolls. In that clause provision was made whereby the registrar in preparing new rolls should strike out the names of all persons who, from information supplied by the Registrar-General of Deaths, appeared to be dead. The amendment was not in the proper place,

and had nothing to do with the section under discussion.

Mr. BATH: The Bill was the most reactionary one in the Australian States to-day, and the Attorney General evidently thought because he was in charge of it that it was a perfect measure and could not be improved upon. Whenever an effort was made by a member to move an amendment the Attorney General jammed his hat down on his head, and refused to accept any alteration.

The Treasurer: Why did not the hon. member address himself to the clause?

Mr. BATH: The remarks he had made applied to the clause, for they showed the attitude the Attorney General was adopting.

The Treasurer: Better progress would be made if the hon. member paid more attention to the clause and less to personalities.

Mr. BATH would not go to the Treasurer for lessons in politeness. The Minister could be as rude as any member he had ever met.

The Chairman: The hon. member must discuss the clause and not indulge in personalities.

Mr. BATH: The remarks he had made were with a view to explaining the attitude the Attorney General took up with regard to the Bill. The Minister had not referred to the clause under discussion at all but to a subsequent one. When there was any opposition to any clause, the Attorney General immediately took strong exception to it.

The CHAIRMAN: The member must discuss Clause 27. The remarks made by the Attorney General were perfectly in order. If they were not, then the hon. member could have drawn attention to them.

Mr. BATH: That was the course he was adopting at the present moment. When the Attorney General opposed an amendment he should give reasons for doing so. As to the clause under discussion there was nothing to show what the regulations would be. The Bill itself should specify how the new rolls should be prepared, and it should not be left to a proclamation or regulation. The Bill should also state on what date the new rolls would be issued.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	.. ..	10
Noes	.. ..	17
Majority against	..	7

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Brebber	Mr. Angwin
Mr. H. Brown	Mr. Bath
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Davies	Mr. Collier
Mr. Draper	Mr. Holman
Mr. Eddy	Mr. Hudson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Stuart
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Layman	Mr. Underwood (*Teller*).
Mr. Mitchell	
Mr. Price	
Mr. Smith	
Mr. Veryard	
Mr. A. J. Wilson	
Mr. F. Wilson	
Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).	

Amendment thus negatived; clause passed.

Clause 38—Electoral Census:

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "If the Governor so orders" be struck out.

The clause provided that the new rolls for the State should be prepared from the results obtained by means of an electoral census if the Governor so approved. It should not be a question of the Governor ordering such to be done, but rather one of departmental routine. The words proposed to be struck out were unnecessary.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was necessary to put a reservation of some kind in the clause. There was a certain portion of the State in which it was impossible to take an electoral census, and we should have to take the stock returns when they came in. In the Kimberley and Gascoyne districts, it would be impossible to carry out an electoral census unless at great expense. An officer would have to travel hundreds of miles perhaps to collect one name. If the word "Governor" was objected to, the word "Minister" could be inserted, but it would practically mean the same.

Mr. BATH: The Attorney General took up the attitude that if exceptional circumstances had to be met the only way to meet them was to put in a provision that would apply to every electorate in

the State. If the words were retained they would not only apply to Kimberley, but to every electorate, which was what he objected to. We were seeking to make the electoral law as workable as possible. We provided a system, which the Attorney General said was advantageous, that of taking an electoral census, but he mutilated it by saying that if the Governor so ordered, the officer could refrain from taking the census in any part of the State. Why did not the Attorney General try to meet the exceptional circumstances?

Mr. STUART: If the electoral roll was to be based on the stock returns, then the officer whose duty it was to collect the returns would only come in contact with those who had stock, therefore there would only be one class of people on the roll. If that was the object, the Minister was taking a straight track to expose his hand. The man who had no stock would not get on the roll.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It was not possible to take an electoral census throughout Western Australia, but it would be done wherever possible. If the words were struck out we would be obliged to send out census officers into districts where they would have to travel hundreds of miles and not find a single elector, for there were districts where the population was almost non-existent.

Mr. BATH: Did the Attorney General mean that the electoral census would only be taken by officers outside the police force?

The Attorney General: Police officers would be appointed as far as possible.

Mr. BATH: If police officers were appointed, would that not be an electoral census under the Bill?

The Attorney General: Yes.

Mr. BATH: Then there would be no difficulty in obtaining a census. In New South Wales the provision in regard to this matter was much more liberal, and the result was more complete rolls. The position was no more difficult in Western Australia than it was in New South Wales. If an electoral census for the preparation of the rolls was advantageous, the police officers in the Kimberley district could carry out such census for the foundation of the rolls in that district.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. BATH moved an amendment—

That in Subclause (2) the words "in the manner prescribed by regulation and at such time or times as the Governor may direct" be struck out.

The electoral census would then be taken under the supervision of the Chief Electoral Officer in the manner prescribed by him. He was the head of the department, intimately connected with the department, and was the best person to decide as to the means of carrying out the census. The officer would have the control of the work, which should not be left to regulation or to the discretion of the Executive Council, which was what it meant.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The amendment would practically delete the whole subclause. The census would naturally be carried out, like any other departmental work, under the direction of the Chief Electoral Officer, and would be taken when opportunity arose. The Minister would be advised by his permanent staff.

Mr. BATH: The subclause left an opening for corrupt practices such as were adopted in October, 1905. The power sought should not be capable of being used in an underhand fashion. Party control of the census should be eliminated.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Strike out "Governor," in the last line, and insert "he."

Amendment withdrawn.

Mr. BATH moved an amendment in Subclause 2—

That the words "Governor" be struck out, and "he" inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed.

Mr. ANGWIN: What was meant by Subclause 3—that the results of the census should alone be used for the purpose of preparing new rolls? Would those electors missed by the census-takers be disfranchised? Recently he had found thirty persons whom he knew intimately missed at the East Fremantle census.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If we prepared a roll from numerous sources, we should have nothing but a muddle. The census, if properly taken, would include everyone. There might be omissions, and those omitted must supplement the census by claims. Without a form of claim, an applicant for enrolment could be enrolled before the census was completed; afterwards he must file a claim. The subclause did not prevent a name being added, but in the absence of claims the census would be taken as correct.

Mr. BATH: Though the census was advantageous, it should not be the only basis of the roll. The secretary of a local body in the Katanning district stated he had ineffectually pointed out to the registrar that the roll was hopelessly out of date; and that the police had compiled a supplementary list of about 300 names, and sent them in; but these did not appear on the final supplementary list. The effect was that the big percentage of those not on the rolls were labourers. This showed that if the police were preparing the basis for the rolls many electors would be missed. We should strike out the whole subclause.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the hon. member would give him particulars the matter would be inquired into.

Mr. HUDSON: Fully three months must elapse between the taking of the census and the issue of the roll from the printing office. In the meantime a person who had been missed by the census would not be aware that his name was off the roll. Thus if we limited the making of new rolls to the census alone it would create a hardship. He moved an amendment—

That the word "alone" be struck out.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: By Subclause 2 of Clause 39 the Chief Electoral Officer was required to send a notice to any person whose name was omitted from the new roll made up on the census if that name appeared on the old roll. What more could we provide? The person whose name was omitted, on receiving notice from the Chief Electoral Officer would immediately claim to be replaced on the roll.

Mr. Hudson: That was good for urban districts.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It applied to every district.

Mr. Underwood: No; if the census officer missed a man in the Pilbarra district a notice might not reach the man.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That was why permission was given not to take a census in every case.

Mr. HUDSON: No doubt if the Attorney General were administering the electoral law everything would run smoothly, but other Ministers might be administering the law and might order a census to be taken in outlying districts.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The system of sending out notices was most unreliable in a district like Pilbarra, especially if there were sub-districts. A man might move from Nullagine out into the bush and eventually turn up at Station Peak. In the meantime the census might be taken and the man would not be reached by the census officer. The notice in the ordinary course would be sent to Nullagine and there would remain and the man would be disfranchised.

The Attorney General: Pilbarra was a district where a census would not be ordered.

Amendment negatived; clause passed.

Clause 39—agreed to.

On motion by *the Attorney General*, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.42 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.