

Hon. J. F. Cullen: What about estimated earnings of the railway?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I had some information in regard to them. It is estimated that the railway will carry about 500 tons per week.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Where from?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot give you any further information on the point. It was supplied to me, and like the hon. member I wanted further information regarding it.

Hon. M. L. Moss: I should think you would.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That information was supplied to me. It came from one of the departments, and before making a statement to that effect in the House I thought it just as well to investigate the matter a little further. I hope hon. members will view this question having regard to the altered conditions, and that the prejudice of the past, if any prejudice has existed, will be dispelled, and that it will be the resolve of the House to consider this proposal on its merits. I feel certain that if hon. members will carefully examine these reports they will give favourable consideration to the proposition, and the railway will be built. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. M. L. Moss: Will the Minister lay on the Table the reports from which he has quoted, and if Mr. Sutton, the wheat commissioner, has made any other report on the subject than the one alluded to, will the Minister also lay that on the Table?

The Colonial Secretary: I will be only too pleased to do so.

On motion by Hon. D. G. Gawler debate adjourned.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

Report of Assembly managers received.

House adjourned at 10.42 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 3rd December, 1912.

	PAGE
Questions: Collie Coal, Spark Arresters in Agricultural Areas, Railway Orders ...	4101
Leprosy in the North-West ...	4103
Papers presented...	4103
Annual Estimates, Ways and Means Report ...	4103
Bills: Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, Recom. ...	4103
Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs' Act Amendment 3a. ...	4105
Government Tramways, Bill to be laid aside	4105
Wyalkatchem-Mount Marshall Railway, 2a. ...	4105
Melville Water and Freshwater Bay Road, 2a., Com. ...	4108
Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage, 2a., Com. ...	4110
Industrial Arbitration, Conference of Managers, Report ...	4112
Jetties Regulation Act Amendment, 2a. ...	4131
Roads Act Amendment, 2a. ...	4131

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTIONS (2)—COLLIE COAL.

Spark Arresters in Agricultural Areas.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, In view of the large reduction of the local coal orders for the Railway Department, and the consequent result that the coal miners of Collie are now working only half-time, and as such reduction of the coal orders is brought about by the total exclusion of Collie coal in the agricultural areas of the State through the alleged liability of the local coal to more freely cause fires by sparks from the locomotives than the imported coal, will he appoint a representative commission of inquiry to make investigations into the matter with the object of finally deciding the vexed question of whether Collie coal is more dangerous to the farming industry than the imported coal? 2, How much compensation has the Government paid to settlers during the past five years through fires caused by Collie coal? 3, Will he make inquiries from the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia as to the number of fires caused by sparks from coal, and the amount of compensation paid by the various Governments for losses to the settlers during the past five years? 4, Will the Government consider the question of offering a reward for an efficient spark arrester,

such spark arrester to be approved of by the railway officials?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No useful purpose could be served by appointing a representative commission of inquiry to make investigations into this matter. It has been demonstrated that Collie coal is more dangerous to the farming industry than imported coal, and this is recognised in the agreements with the coal companies. 2, Compensation paid during the past five years in respect of fires caused by locomotives has been as follows:—1911-12, £180; 1910-11, £297; 1909-10, nil; 1908-09, £156; 1907-08, nil; total, £633. A great deal of expense has been caused in following trains to extinguish fires, and in otherwise preventing fires, by fire breaks, clearing reserves, etc. The Government is not liable in respect of fires which originate outside the railway fence, and the compensation paid represents loss due to fires which have spread from within the Railway Reserve. 3, Inquiries will be made. 4, The most efficient spark arrester known to railway science is used on the Western Australian Government Railways, and its maintenance in perfect order is a subject of constant vigilance. The commercial value of any practical improvement in spark arresters would, of itself, carry a fortune which would be sufficient reward to its inventor. The number of notions for improved spark arresting appliances which are constantly being brought forward and investigated or tested, is evidence that the question is one which requires no reward to stimulate inventors.

Railway Orders.

Mr. A. A. WILSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1. Is he aware that the local coal orders for the Government Railways have been reduced forty per cent. for the week ending November 30th, 1912, as against the highest order given in the winter months of this year? 2, Is it not a fact that this Government and former Governments did agree to take 80 per cent. of Collie coal for nine months of each year, and 70 per cent. of Collie coal for the remaining three months (summer)

of the year, of the total coal used by the railways—less the Geraldton and Pilbara districts? 3, What is the reason of such drastic reduction in the local coal orders?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes; recent orders for Collie coal, with the comparative orders last year, are as follows:—

Week ended.	Order 1912.	Corresponding Order, 1911.
9/11/12 ..	2,700	2,360
16/11/12 ..	2,652	2,245
	5,352	4,605
23/11/12 ..	2,280	2,246
30/11/12 ..	1,944	2,200
	4,224	4,446

The order for the week ended 30/11/12 is below the average, owing to stocks having become too large in the previous week. The order for the week ending 7/12/12 is 2,094 tons. 2, It was formerly a provision of the coal contracts that 80 per cent. of Collie coal would be used except between the 15th November and the 15th February, when only 70 per cent. would be taken; this provision applied to all Government railways except to sections north of Walkaway, the Hopetoun-Ravensthorpe railway, and between Albany and Narrogin, where no Collie coal at all was used. The proportion of agricultural railways was then 25 per cent. of the whole mileage open; it is now 40 per cent. The corresponding provision at the present time is that 80 per cent. of Collie coal shall be used, excepting and excluding on the northern railways, the Marble Bar and the Ravensthorpe railways throughout the year, and in the agricultural districts from the 15th November to the 15th February each year. The practice is to use Newcastle coal exclusively as far as possible in agricultural districts between the dates mentioned, and any variation of this practice would not only render the Government open to charges of negligence, and heavy losses owing to not using the best coal available, but would no doubt cause an outcry from the agricultural industry. 3, The reduction of orders referred to is due generally to the operation

of the contract clause on the subject relating to agricultural districts, the growth of which makes the reduction proportionately larger than in previous years.

QUESTION—LEPROSY IN THE NORTH-WEST.

Mr. McDONALD asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to land leprosy aborigines at Carnarvon on their way to Dorre Island? 2, What precaution will be taken to prevent contact with aboriginal patients already on the island?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, A Government officer has visited the islands with a view to arranging a scheme for the complete segregation of the lepers on the island, and the Government are now awaiting the receipt of his report.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier: Further return re crop reports in the Esperance and Norseman district (ordered on motion by Mr. Moore).

By Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Report on State-aided immigration for the year ended 30th June, 1912.

By the Minister for Works: 1, By-laws of Goldfields Water Supply—Amendments of. 2, Plans of Wyalcatchem-Mount Marshall Railway.

By the Attorney General: Eleventh annual report by the Registrar of Friendly Societies of proceedings under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act and under the Trades Union Act.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1912-13.

Report of Committee of Ways and Means adopted.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

On motion by Premier, Bill recommitted for an amendment.

Mr. McDowall in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

New clause—Mortgage bonds may be exchanged for inscribed stock or debentures:

The PREMIER moved—

That the following be added as a new clause:—“(1) The Governor is hereby authorised to issue to the holders of mortgage bonds, in the manner prescribed by and subject to the General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act, 1910, inscribed stock or debentures in exchange for mortgage bonds of an equivalent amount issued under the principal Act: Provided that all mortgage bonds received in exchange for inscribed stock or debentures shall be forthwith cancelled by the Colonial Treasurer. (2.) On an exchange being effected under this section, the amount to be carried to the credit of the redemption account under section twenty-one of the principal Act shall be a part of the moneys required by such section to be applied to the purpose, duly apportioned to the balance of the mortgage bonds outstanding after such exchange. (3.) Interest on and contributions at a rate to be prescribed by the Colonial Treasurer to a sinking fund for the redemption of such inscribed stock or debentures shall be paid by the bank to the Colonial Treasurer half-yearly and applied by the Colonial Treasurer to recoup the Consolidated Revenue Fund in respect of such interest and contributions.

The amendment merely complied with a wish expressed by various members that the bank should have power to redeem mortgage bonds by issuing debentures or inscribed stock. This would enable the House to utilise moneys appropriated from time to time through a Loan Bill for the redemption of mortgage bonds if necessary to meet anything of an unforeseen nature so far as the Savings Bank was concerned. Eventually, under these powers, we would have only one fund connected with the Agricultural Bank. That would be a fund provided by means of a Loan Bill and would furnish a capital upon which the Agricultural

Bank would operate without going to the Savings Bank or the money market.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Premier was to be complimented on having introduced this new clause. Power was being taken in the correct way to redeem mortgage bonds now existing, and he hoped that the Premier would follow this up by placing on the Loan Estimates an amount sufficient to cover the whole of the present indebtedness. He hoped, too, that under this new arrangement it would be possible to allow the operations of the Bank to apply to all the purposes to which the institution was intended to apply when the Act was amended last year. The Committee should know from the Premier whether it was the intention of the bank to advance money to pay off liabilities. There had been a shortage of money up till now, but under this new arrangement by which capital could be borrowed from outside, the intentions of Parliament as expressed in the Act should be complied with, and the farmers should be relieved as far as was possible by recourse to the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. S. STUBBS: One realised the great difficulty that the Government had at the present time in finding sufficient money to enable all the demands made on the Agricultural Bank to be met. He knew that the advances asked for by the settlers were dealt with on their merits, but if the Treasurer could see his way clear to advance a sufficient sum to enable all claims that were now waiting to be dealt with by the trustees to be met so that the lessees could pay off existing liabilities it would be one of the best things done by the present Government for the farming community.

The PREMIER: The point raised by hon. members had been previously discussed on the second reading and during the Committee stage. The Government proposed to continue the policy now in operation of lending money to farmers for the purpose of enabling them in the first place to improve their holdings and turn their land to good account, and secondly, whenever desirable, and essential in the interests of the State as well as in the interests of the holders, to assist them

by lifting their existing mortgages and relieve them of the payment of an exorbitant rate of interest. Hon. members would realise that the first duty of the bank was to the agriculturalist who was desirous of turning his land to good account and could not procure money elsewhere. As had been previously stated, during the first four months of the present financial year the bank had advanced £73,000 to pay off existing mortgages, which was a greater amount than had ever been previously loaned for that purpose during the whole existence of the bank. If the demands on the bank continued at that rate, an amount of over £750,000 would be required during the financial year, and hon. members would appreciate the position the Government were in when they had to find that amount of money for one department alone.

Mr. S. Stubbs: I was not sure whether you were going to continue that policy.

The PREMIER: Absolutely. The Government had experienced difficulties during the year, which in the interests of the State and of the agriculturists themselves had not been made widely known. They had assisted the farmer to an extent never previously attempted, and they proposed to continue to do that.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is a mere assertion.

The PREMIER: The assertion was proved by the figures which had been quoted.

Hon. J. Mitchell: But the limit has been extended to £2,000.

The PREMIER: The question of advancing up to the limit was absolutely in the hands of the trustees, who had to satisfy themselves that the security was a good one and that it was advisable to advance up to the limit. Members would realise the difficulty the Government had experienced in finding money, but notwithstanding that fact, £230,000 had been advanced by the bank during the first four months of the year as against £280,000 advanced during their predecessors' last year of office. The new system would not be appreciated so much in the first few years, but in fifteen or twenty

years time it would have provided for the Agricultural Bank a definite capital like that provided for the chartered banks by the contributions of the shareholders, and on that capital the bank could operate from year to year, and ultimately perhaps be able to carry the agricultural industry without the farmers having recourse to the chartered banks for assistance. If the Committee would consider the figures which had been quoted it would be seen that the Government were doing all that could be possibly done in the circumstances.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: There was no questioning that the Government were doing all that the money at their command enabled them to do. But now that the method of finance was being altered, he was asking if the Premier could not see his way clear to enable the bank to do all that the Act intended it should do. The promises held out when the previous amendment to the Agricultural Bank Bill had been introduced had been ruthlessly broken.

Mr. Munsie: They have done more in one year than you did in five years.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The bank had advanced more money, but the limit was much greater. The system of finance was being altered and he was expressing the hope that this would relieve the funds of the bank to enable effect to be given to the intentions of the Act, and the hopes expressed by the Minister when introducing the Bill. He was pleased that the Premier intended to establish a permanent capital, and he complimented him on the manner in which the amendment had been drafted.

New clause put and passed.

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

BILL—KALGOORLIE AND BOURDER RACING CLUBS ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—GOVERNMENT TRAMWAYS. *Council's Message—Bill to be laid aside.*

The MINISTER FOR MINES: (Hon. P. Collier) moved—

That a message be transmitted to the Legislative Council requesting them to lay aside the Bill in order to permit of the introduction in the Legislative Assembly of a similar measure in which the provision to which objection has been taken will be remedied.

Question put and passed.

BILL—WYALKATCHEM-MOUNT MARSHALL RAILWAY.

The Minister for Works laid the plans of the proposed railway on the Table.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) in moving the second reading said: In presenting this Bill for the favourable consideration of the Chamber I might explain that we are endeavouring by this railway to open up one portion of the country that has been settled for some considerable time. I refer more particularly to the area known as Coweowing. Mount Marshall is of more recent settlement, but as far as Coweowing is concerned a fair number of settlers have been there for some years and they have been agitating, and justly so, for some considerable time for railway communication. It was thought by those people that when the Dowerin-Merredin line was constructed it would be taken sufficiently near to enable them to utilise it without any large amount of carting, but this was an impossibility. As a matter of fact, I have stated before and I desire to emphasise it again, that the Dowerin-Merredin line went altogether too close to Coweowing. However, the people have gone on tilling the soil and waiting in patience for a railway to be constructed. Successive Governments have promised this railway and the Advisory Board some considerable time ago reported in regard to this particular area. I do not desire to go into detail as to the report of the Advisory Board further

than to state that the present Government gave very serious consideration to the report and have taken the responsibility of urging Parliament to depart from the route recommended by that board in favour of the route that is now submitted to Parliament in the shape of tapping the Dowerin-Merredin line at Wyalkatchem and going to Mount Marshall. The main difficulty in regard to the Advisory Board's report is the fact that it is very difficult to serve that very fertile portion of Cowcowing with the line as proposed by the board, for the reason that the Cowcowing lakes intervene between a large portion of the settled area and the line as proposed by the board, and it was very difficult indeed to construct a line to serve these people who were a long way outside the radius generally recognised as the carting distance, namely, $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles. By adopting the report of the Advisory Board, the carriage of grain and produce from Mount Marshall and Cowcowing would have been largely increased—as a matter of fact it would have been increased by 30 miles—and we were of opinion that our duty, in addition to providing railway facilities for the people, was to give them the shortest possible route to get to the market, at the same time seeing that no body of people were isolated. Consequently, I am prepared to admit that it is a difficult matter to serve this area and I suppose there is room for argument as to the best route, but I want to explain that the Government gave very serious consideration to this matter and had the advice of the expert officers, the Engineer-in-Chief, an authority on railway construction, an officer from the Lands Department—I think the Surveyor General—and Mr. Stead of the working railways, and these officers, in company with the member for the district (Mr. A. N. Piesse) enabled me to go into the matter exhaustively and make a recommendation to the Government which was adopted in favour of the route from Wyalkatchem to Mount Marshall. While we departed from the route recommended by the Advisory Board we have not departed from it without having behind us the support of the departmental officers.

I do not think there is any need to give any further detail in that regard. I think every member has heard of the Cowcowing area and has also heard of the more recently settled Mount Marshall area, and it is generally recognised that both of these areas deserved some years ago this assistance that we now propose to render them. Going into detail with regard to the railway, the length of the line is 50 miles; the distance from Perth to the commencement of the line is 139 miles; the gauge is, of course, 3ft. 6in.; and the weight of the rails 45 lbs., the usual weight of rails used on agricultural railways. The sleepers are 6ft. 6in. by 8in. by 4in.; the ruling grade will be one in 60, that is a standard grade used in agricultural railway construction, as also is the 20 chains radius for the sharpest curve. The estimated cost of the line is, construction £55,000, rails and fastenings £37,000, total £92,000. Thus the cost per mile is £1,850. I am prepared to admit that, like most of our agricultural areas that are outside fair or possible carting distance, the population of these areas is not large. This remark applies to this area just as it does to the Esperance district and I think we can say generally that until we supply railways in order to give the people the opportunity of developing their land, we cannot expect the people to settle there. In this particular area the resident occupiers number 116, the acreage held by them is 150,117 acres, and the population is 311. The land under cultivation this year is 10,745 acres; and the area cropped for wheat is about 3,000 acres. I may point out that the land cultivated is large when compared with the area cropped, but that is due to the fact that the people have wisely gone in for fallow. Consequently, the 7,000 acres is under fallow ready for cropping next year. The land cleared represents 13,835 acres and the area ringbarked 49,580 acres. The estimated crop for 1913 season is 25,660 bushels. The vacant land within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles radius of the line is 563,000 acres.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You include the lake in that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, that would be included. The land alienated is 222,000 acres. Large holdings, including grazing leases, number 33 and represent 54,000 acres. There is no pastoral land held but the pastoral land available amounts to 500,000 acres. The total area within the influence of the railway, that is within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of either side, is 800,000 acres. Homestead leases held number 91 and one homestead lease has been applied for. The permanent reserves total 15,000 acres and the principal timbers, which are an indication of the class of land, are salmon gum, murrell, and gimlet. I would point out in this regard, that while the land already taken up is to a very large extent timber land of the kind already referred to, a considerable portion of light land has been taken up and from experience gained during the last two years a considerable amount of this light land is being taken up. While the plan indicates that the line is running through a considerable portion of light country, which a few years ago was thought to be of little or no value, I would point out that this land is being taken up to-day and a number of people pin their faith to the light land as against the timber country. I do not intend to go into the relative merits of the two but on this particular line we have heavy timber country that was so popular a few years ago and light country which has been becoming so popular since. The cost of clearing varies from 15s. to 30s. per acre. Those are the details in regard to this particular proposal. This line has been given preference by the Government over the lines already authorised and it is our proposal to make this one first. It will be put in hand immediately the present programme is drawing to completion. Of course we will not finish the present programme before starting other lines as we have to get one or two other lines in hand and well under way before we can undertake further new constructions, but the first line to be put in hand will be this line, to open up the Cowcowing and Mount Marshall country. The Advisory Board reported in favour of running from

Wongan Hills into Nungarin on the Dowerin line. While we are not in a position to state definitely as to whether the ultimate junction will be on the Dowerin-Merredin line, or continued to the Eastern Goldfields line, we are in a position to state that it is our definite intention to continue the line from Mount Marshall so as to serve Lake Brown and other areas on which people are settling and on which a considerable amount of land is cleared and a fair amount of acreage is under crop this year. While the line, as proposed, runs to a point at Mount Marshall, this may be taken as the first portion of a line which will eventually be continued to serve the Lake Brown and other areas between Mount Marshall and the Eastern Goldfields line. I am not in a position to say definitely, because the matter has not been investigated; but the Government intend, during the recess, to have this investigation so as to deal with the matter and submit a proposition to Parliament that the construction may go right along after we reach Mount Marshall, and that there will be no delay in serving those areas at Lake Brown and the other places I have already referred to. Of course the area this year and last year has not been so favoured as in previous years, but hon. members will have noticed by the report published by Mr. Paterson, who, is, of course, recognised as an authority, that the Mount Marshall country and the country north of the line has really fared well in comparison with other areas. I can speak somewhat feelingly in this regard. I am settled on land a long way further south, and we certainly did not get the results that they have obtained at Mount Marshall and those particular places, owing to the fact that the rain they received came at a more favourable time than in other areas. So this year is a vast improvement on last year. I am very pleased to say that the water difficulty will not be acute as it was last year. We have been fairly successful in boring operations at Mount Marshall, and a number of wells sunk last year will be available this year, while a number of the dams constructed before the

Government took office and since have been fairly well filled, with the result that the water supply does not present the difficulties it did twelve months ago. Generally speaking the area is well able to carry on. They have a water supply to put in their crops, and I hope to be able to build the line with the same expedition in which we are building lines now, faster than ever experienced before. Thus I hope it will be constructed in reasonable time to give these people the assistance they deserve. I have pleasure in submitting the Bill for the consideration of the Chamber. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell debate adjourned.

BILL—MELVILLE WATER AND FRESHWATER BAY ROAD.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th November.

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont) : I have very great pleasure in supporting this Bill. The Minister for Works has dealt with the question from the general point of view, with regard to the general advantage that the road to be constructed will be to the community at large, and I need not take up the time of the House in dealing with that aspect. The aspect to which I wish to confine myself is how it will affect my district. The people of Claremont, I need hardly say, are very much in favour of the measure. As a matter of fact, for some considerable time they have asked that something should be done to give them access to, and control over, the foreshore. A road round that portion of the foreshore has been contemplated for many years, but the local authorities have always been faced with the difficulty created by the fact that the titles of the land abutting on the foreshore extend to high-water mark, as it is easily understood that in the event of a road being constructed these titles would really take in the road itself.

Consequently it is necessary that some Bill should be passed to vest in the Government the land on which the road is constructed. In some cases the high-water mark extends right up to the fences on the foreshore, and when there is a westerly wind blowing, it is impossible for people to get along the foreshore and use that portion of the beach. There is no desire, as far as the local authorities are concerned, to interfere at all with private interests. As a matter of fact, the great majority of owners of land abutting on the beach are strongly in favour of the construction of such a road. It is just as well that it should be clearly understood that the proposition is to resume only the land below high-water mark, land that could not be used by these owners except for jetties, bathing sheds, and boat houses, and here I would like to clear up a point that is not fully dealt with in the Bill: I would like the Minister for Works, when replying, to state how far the Bill will interfere with the existing rights of owners who erect these jetties, boat houses and bathing sheds, and how much it will interfere with those that are already existing. I hope that the Bill will pass. The people of the district require access to the foreshore. The beach at Claremont, the part I particularly speak of, is very beautiful, and it is very much used by people in the summer. The local authorities find some difficulty in making arrangements for the control of bathing on the foreshore, and they are unable to make the improvements they are prepared and anxious to make for the benefit of the people who visit the beach. On the larger question one can readily understand what a magnificent drive it will mean if this road is constructed right from Perth. If the Bill is carried it will open the way for the construction of such a road right from Perth to Peppermint Grove along the river frontage. I need say very little more. I think the Bill ought to commend itself to every member of the House, and I have much pleasure in supporting it with all the power that I can.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (in reply) : The hon. member whose district is largely interested in this Bill has raised the question as to whether it is intended to interfere with the existing rights for the erection of jetties, boat houses, and bathing sheds, etcetera. I would point out to the hon. member that these licenses are granted annually. While people have the right to the high-water mark they have no right to construct anything below that without the approval of the Government, and as they get their approval to-day for that purpose, there is no reason why they should not get approval in the future. It is a common practice to grant licenses annually, and these are renewed continually. Exactly the same thing will apply if this Bill becomes law. There will be a roadway put round, but outside the road these people will have the right to put up jetties and bathing sheds and other conveniences which every person has a right to subject to the Government approval along the Swan River. There is no intention to stop licenses being granted in future so far as the present Government are concerned, and I do not think any Government are likely to interfere with the continuation of existing rights for the granting of licenses for this purpose. I am glad to see that the Chamber apparently intends to concur in the Bill. I sincerely trust it will become law. There is no doubt the people of the Claremont district and of the metropolitan area generally are largely interested, because they should have an opportunity of availing themselves of this ideal pleasure resort at Freshwater Bay.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. McDowall in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Power to construct road :

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of Subclause 2 "the land on which it is constructed" be struck out and "the land on which

the said road is hereby authorised to be constructed shall on the commencement of this Act" inserted in lieu.

The object of the amendment was to give the right for the utilisation of the land between the time the Act came into operation and the actual construction of the road. There was a certain area below high water mark which would be immediately available to the public, and the desire was to give the public the right to utilise this at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. S. STUBBS : A good many years ago he had purchased a block of land facing the Swan River at Claremont, and Mr. Surveyor Hardy, who surveyed the block, defined the boundary at high-water mark. In the course of time he (Mr. Stubbs) had the block fenced down to within a little distance from high-water mark, his object being to allow the public access to the foreshore. But not very long afterwards the water encroached, and since that time he had twice removed his fence back to leave room for the public to pass between the fence and the water. What position would he be in concerning the title to that particular land which the public were using to-day ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : The boundary of the land was not the fence, but the survey peg. The Bill provided that land should be reclaimed from high water mark, and the high water mark was to be defined by the Surveyor General. He was of opinion that so far as the hon. member's ground was concerned high water mark would be the original survey peg. It would be impossible for the Government to construct the road, if for instance, one block was half a chain in from, and the next block, on higher land, half a chain out into, the water. The boundaries would all be brought into line, and any difficulty would be overcome by reclamation. There was no desire to take an inch of land from anyone. The Surveyor General would define high-water mark, and from that the department would reclaim.

Mr. S. Stubbs : The Surveyor General would find he had a knotty point to decide, for some of the owners down there

defined their boundaries as being out in the middle of the river.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Such people would lose the water right. There was no intention to take any land, but the department would certainly take the water right, and so those people who claimed to the middle of the bay would lose that right. Once determined, high-water mark would be recognised as the existing boundary of everybody's land.

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

Clause 3—Surveyor General to determine high water mark:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No appeal was provided against the finding of the Surveyor General, not even an appeal to the Minister. He moved an amendment—

That after "shall" in line 3 the words "with the approval of the Minister" be inserted.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was no objection to the amendment other than the contention in some quarters that the Minister for Works was becoming an autocrat with a manifest desire to be in everything. The amendment might provide a safeguard against possible difficulty.

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

Clauses 4, 5, 6—agreed to.

Title:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS moved an amendment—

That in line 1 the word "for" be struck out and "to authorise" be inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed, the Title as amended agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments and an alteration to the Title.

BILL—WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th November.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): This debate will give an opportunity to dis-

cuss the amalgamation of the various water supply departments of the State, together with other schemes more or less connected with that work. It also gives us an opportunity, and I hope members will avail themselves of it to the full, of discussing the financial methods of the Government in regard to trading concerns. Probably this aspect of the question will receive most attention at the hands of members. In the past trading concerns have not been subject to any Act compelling the Government to keep their books in a businesslike fashion, and the result is that we know very little of the transactions generally. Now that it is proposed by the Government to embark on many trading concerns and new works which will mean the expenditure of a fairly large sum of money, it will be wise to, and I think the House should determine just how it is to be informed from time to time as to the result of the operations of these various undertakings. The Minister has already amalgamated the various water supply offices and has appointed an under-secretary to control this particular branch of departmental work. The great work of course is the control of the Kalgoorlie Water Scheme. It would be very easy for me to discuss at considerable length the operations of the scheme alone, but I venture to say that at this late stage of the session it is undesirable that we should do more than merely discuss the merits of the Bill as presented to us. I cannot, however, let the occasion pass without referring to the management of the Kalgoorlie Water Scheme up to the present. It has been said that the scheme does not pay its way. I believe if interest were credited on the sinking fund which stands to the credit of that scheme, it would be found that the general revenue contributes very little indeed. Thirteen years from now practically the whole cost of that scheme will have been paid. In the past there has been a loss year by year which has had to be met by the people, but generally it may be said that a magnificent and valuable scheme will be handed over to the people completely paid for in thirteen years. While it may be urged by the Minister that, day

by day the pipes are becoming less valuable and expenditure is constantly necessary to renew them, still there is no gainsaying the fact that the scheme has done its work satisfactorily. Permanent work, representing a large portion of the expenditure, particularly the weir, will be there for many years and, if the pipes are renewed and kept in order, in thirteen years the people of the State will have a tremendous asset paid for largely by the users of the water. This is due to the fact that when the Kalgoorlie scheme was laid, the sinking fund was made very heavy, far too heavy I think, and it was a burden which in the past proved fairly great. If the sinking fund had been reasonable, say one per cent. or a half per cent., it would not be necessary for the Minister to charge as much for the water as he and previous Ministers have been compelled to do. I want particularly to refer to this scheme as it applies not only to the goldfields but also to the agriculturists along the route of the line. I believe there is an opportunity for close scrutiny and for the keeping of books which will disclose in detail the result of the sale of water not only to the mines but to the farmer, and I believe it is the duty of the Minister, and I hope he will agree that it is his duty, if he finds that the rate he proposes to charge, namely 4d. per acre in addition to £5 for a homestead fee, is more than enough to reduce the charge, and that he will have the books kept in such a way that he will be able to come to the House and say definitely that it is not necessary to charge the present amount and that the House ought to agree to reduce the rate charged against land and also the rate per 1,000 gallons of water. In all these schemes whether they be railways or any other Government undertakings, I realise that the users have to pay. We cannot expect the general public to foot the Bill for special services rendered; therefore I think the general revenue has no right at all to benefit by an excessive charge against those who use the water from this scheme. I do not know how far the various schemes upon which the Minister has entered for the supply of water to the

east and west of the Kalgoorlie main have progressed, but I understand that a large quantity of the pipes has been sent out and that some lines of pipe have been laid down. I do not know whether the Minister will inform the House if the cost will be less than anticipated, but I would like the Minister to say whether it is a fact that the price of water to the mine-owners has been reduced since the price of water was put up to the agriculturists. It is rumoured that this is so, and if it is so, the Minister should advance some very good reason for his action in that regard. Dealing with water supply generally, I agree in having one department to control all the supplies. In the old days the Department of Agriculture dealt with the supply as far as dams and wells were concerned. Under this amalgamation the Minister should be able to do his work much more economically. The town supply also will be brought under control of the Minister and I think there is an opportunity for good work. We hear a lot about the pure milk supply; and while that of course is very desirable and very necessary, I believe it is not as necessary as a pure and wholesome water supply. No matter what one may do, one can never escape coming into contact with water. It is used every day and by us all, and of course if there is any ill result from it, that result becomes general. The towns which are supplied by the Kalgoorlie scheme have derived a great benefit. Prior to the scheme being made available in the district where I come from, we had a very bad water supply indeed, and the result was not pleasing to contemplate. To-day we have a plentiful supply of good water and no one can tell what the value of it has been to the place. It is much appreciated by all who have had experience of it, and I urge upon the Minister that there is a great work ahead of him to supply the townships as far as he can with a pure and plentiful supply of water. It is a good thing that this amalgamation has been brought about because it gives the Minister an opportunity in this direction. I know from my own experi-

ence that there is an opportunity and a need for someone to pursue this work energetically. In regard to sewerage, particularly the Perth scheme, again I will urge that proper books are necessary in order that the cost of the work might be properly ascertained. It will be absolutely wrong to write up against the general revenue any amount as a charge for the carrying on of that scheme. The scheme should pay for itself. The people who benefit by it should pay for it, namely the people in the metropolitan area, and if there is any profit made on the working of the scheme it should go to those people and not to the general revenue. There can be no gainsaying the fact that in every work of this nature it is wrong absolutely to make a profit over and above working expenses, interest and sinking fund, and if a profit is made it should not go to the benefit of the general taxpayer. While all should pay for enjoying special services none should benefit except those who pay for those special services. The Minister has a great opportunity in connection with irrigation and drainage work in the South-Western portion of the State. I believe it is the intention of the Minister to go on energetically with the snagging of rivers and cutting of drains, and generally making the south-west land available for settlement. Without drainage it will be useless, and without irrigation and drainage it will be impossible to put the south-west to full use and settle it with a large number of people. I do not know whether the Minister noticed a report in this morning's paper by the South-West Commissioner, but those who have read it will recollect that the Commissioner referred to this very work. The fall in the south-west between the hills and the coast is almost everywhere sufficient to enable drains to be undertaken at moderate cost. The rivers, however, have in course of time become blocked up by fallen timber and the collection of debris has resulted in flooding the country and waterlogging the land so as to render it unfit for use. I am glad that the Minister proposes to carry

on energetically the work of snagging the rivers and draining the country. If he travels around the country he will find that this work must extend practically from Albany to Perth. There is a magnificent stretch of country in the far south-western corner that cannot be used until he gets the rivers cleaned out and drains cut. It will be almost impossible on some of the rivers to keep the bridges up unless he provides for a clear getaway for the water. We imagine that this is a dry country but with a wet winter the south-west corner registers as much as 50 inches of rain. The Minister will see he has a great opportunity to do a grand work for the State in the direction of irrigation and drainage. May I express the hope that he will see that an official is appointed whose duty it will be to attend particularly to this work. We have a fairly large area of country which can be used without irrigation, but it must be drained, and it must be drained thoroughly. A new department of this nature cannot be set up without adding to the administrative cost of the State. That must be provided for, but it is in the interests of a useful work.

The Minister for Works: This will reduce the administrative cost considerably.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I am not going into that, because I believe the Minister will find a great opportunity for activity, and I believe that the administrative cost must increase.

The Minister for Works: That is so.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If it had not been that the Minister will have opportunities for much greater things he would not have brought the Bill down. I entirely agree there could be no increase in the cost of administration which will be borne so cheerfully and which will produce such good results as the additional cost in this connection.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

Conference of Managers.

Mr. SPEAKER: The time has arrived for the holding of the conference be-

tween the managers appointed by this House and the managers appointed by the Legislative Council on the Arbitration Bill. I shall now suspend the sitting.

Sitting suspended from 5.0 till 8.25 p.m.

Report of Conference Managers.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker): Since the adjournment of the House the managers appointed by the Assembly have met the managers appointed by the Legislative Council and have had a conference with them as to the Council's disagreements. The conference has been lengthy and has resulted in a certain compromise suggested from each side and agreed to ultimately, with one exception, which I shall make clear in reading the report. The result of the conference has been embodied in the form of a message which it is my purpose to move shall be sent to the Council. I do not wish at this stage to create any unnecessary discussion, as I wish to expedite matters, and as this message clearly sets forth the conclusions arrived at, I shall read it and move it—

The Legislative Assembly begs to acquaint the Legislative Council that since the receipt of its Message No. 38 a conference of members representing both Houses has been held and the following understandings have been arrived at:—

Result of deliberations of conference of managers appointed by both Houses on the Industrial Arbitration Bill, 1912:—

1. Constitution of court. The managers have agreed that the court shall be constituted as it is at present constituted under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1912.

2. Grouping of related industries.—The managers agree that the grouping of related industries remain as in the Bill as amended upon recomittal in the Legislative Assembly.

3. Industrial matters.—The managers have agreed that Subclauses (d) and (e) of Clause 4 shall be struck out of the definition of "Industrial Matters,"

and that Clause 85, Subclause 1, Division (d) shall be struck out of the Bill.

This has reference to preference to unionists, either unions of workers or unions of employers, and I ought to explain that your managers felt that the whole Bill itself was of the nature of preference to unions, inasmuch as, without belonging to a union, it was impossible to obtain the assistance of the Court of Arbitration. Therefore, in a large measure, what was sought to be obtained by the words of the provisions now eliminated is obtained by the spirit and purpose of the Bill and will be, under the management of the court, practically all that we can at this stage of our industrial progress desire.

4. Rural Workers.—The managers agree to omit the amendment proposed by the Legislative Council excluding agricultural and pastoral workers from the provisions of the Bill. (Mr. Mitchell dissents).

In regard to this I may say the hon. member for Northam desires to place upon record that he dissents from the admission to the benefits of the Act of rural and pastoral workers.

5. Domestic Servants.—The managers have agreed that domestic servants shall be excluded from the definition of the word "worker," in Clause 4 of the Bill as proposed by the Legislative Council.

The agreement here is in the nature of a compromise, and although it is not recorded nor wished to be recorded, the managers, with the exception of the member for Northam, representing this Chamber, and some of the other Chamber, desired to see these included, but to save the measure they were excluded.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is not a fair statement.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think it is.

6. Aiding Strikes outside the State.—Clause 7, Subclause 4, Division 4; this to remain as printed in the Bill.

This is to remain as printed in the Bill; that is to say, the position taken by the Assembly is maintained. Unions may,

if they so desire, aid strikes in the other States.

7. Industrial agreements and common rule.—It has been agreed that Clause 40 shall stand as printed, but that the following proviso shall be added thereto :—

“Provided that before acting under this section the court shall give all parties likely in its opinion to be affected, notice by advertisement or otherwise of its intention to extend the operation of such award, and shall hear any parties desiring to be heard in opposition thereto.”

I may say that was the intention of the Assembly when the Bill was before them, but by some means it was not added. This brings awards and agreements into line, and when it is proposed to extend the locality covered by an award it is held to be only fair that parties to be affected by it shall have notice of the intention, and if they so desire shall have the right to be heard.

8. Award to be a common rule.—

Clause 79 to stand as printed.

That is to say, all awards when delivered are to be a common rule, as in the old Act of 1902, and as continued in the Bill of 1911.

9. Joint sittings of both Houses—

Clauses 55 and 127, Subclause 4, to be amended so that both Houses of Parliament shall act as hitherto, namely, as separate Houses.

10. Legal practitioners.—Clause 64, Subclause (4) is to stand as printed, with the addition of the following proviso:—Provided that when the court is sitting for the trial of any offence, counsel or solicitor shall be entitled to appear and be heard before the court on behalf of the prosecution or of the defence, with all the powers of a counsel or solicitor appearing on the trial of an offence in a court of summary jurisdiction.

I may say this House has already agreed to this proviso, and now it is to be included in the Bill.

11. Award of court.—Clause 85, Subclause (1)—Division (a) to stand as

printed. Division (d) as previously reported to be deleted. Division (e) to stand as printed, with the addition of the following words—“in any industry except workers engaged in the agricultural and pastoral industries.”

I want to remind hon. members that Division (e) refers to the limitation of hours for piece-workers, and that is to stand. The proposal of the Council was to delete that altogether. The managers have agreed to recommend that the clause shall stand, with the addition of the following words, that is to say, to regulate the hours of piece-workers:—“in any industry except workers engaged in the agricultural and pastoral industries.”

12. Government workers — Clause 101—Warders employed in prisons and nurses and attendants in all hospitals for the insane are to be included in the Bill.

Consequential amendments—All necessary consequential amendments to be made to carry into effect the above understandings.

Amendments requested by the Council and already agreed to by the Assembly are to be included in the Bill.

This, then, is the report to be forwarded to the Council with the following request:—

The Legislative Assembly therefore returns the Bill to the Legislative Council and requests that it will give effect to the above understandings by making the necessary suggestions for the amendment of the Bill.

Hon. members will observe that the Assembly managers have not obtained all that they desired, but I believe that a compromise which is not at all disgraceful to this Assembly has been effected. At all events, the measure has been saved. I am confident that with these amendments and with these understandings carried into effect we shall have the best Arbitration Bill in the Commonwealth. The great features we have sought to obtain, the grouping of industries, the recognition of unionism generally, the facilities for obtaining a hearing in the court, the removal of all the technical formalities, the making

the court as far as possible the final court—all these matters will be greatly to the benefit of unionists in Western Australia; and though, as I say, we have not achieved all that we wished when introducing the Bill originally, I am sure everyone will confess that we have made great strides, and that we will by these means succeed in placing on the statute-book a workable Arbitration Act to which both sides of employment can have recourse. I trust that by these means we shall tide over those industrial struggles which might be severe and in the last degree trying, not only to the parties concerned, but to all sections of the community if we did not place an arbitration measure on the statute-book. I move therefore—

That the report and request be transmitted by Message to the Legislative Council.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam): I think consideration of the report should be adjourned until to-morrow.

The Premier: We want the amendments to-morrow.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Bill has to be redrafted to include the amendments.

The Attorney General: They will consider our measure, and the Bill will be redrafted after that.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope the consideration of the managers' report will be adjourned until to-morrow. I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I was somewhat surprised at the remarks which fell from the lips of the Attorney General. What happened in that conference room was supposed to be secret, with the exception of the dissent that I made in this one instance. But the Attorney General, in dealing with the report, spoke of the attitude of some of the managers on the question of the inclusion of domestic servants. It was monstrously unfair, and I venture to say that never before in the history of Parliamentary life has confidence been so misplaced. We left that room 10 minutes ago determined that all that had happened there should be secret; then the Attorney General makes an explanation in the House in which he says that I with some

others wanted domestic servants to be excluded. If I had as little regard for the word I gave a quarter of an hour ago I could tell a tale which would place a very different application upon that told by the Attorney General. I am surprised that the Attorney General should have been guilty of such a breach of confidence, that he should have discussed in any way any matter leading up to the recommendations sent down to the House.

The Attorney General: I desire to make an explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. member consent to the Minister making an explanation?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Oh, certainly.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member is entirely misunderstanding my motive and what I am doing. As one of the managers for this Assembly I have a perfect right to take this Assembly into my fullest confidence as to the reasons for the recommendations made, and I want to inform the Assembly that whilst it was agreed that the Houses themselves should be the first to receive the report and the reasons therefor, it was agreed that we should hold confidential all that had taken place there, privately, in the lobbies and outside. Mr. Moss, one of the managers for the other side, distinctly said he desired to give reasons for certain changes he had himself agreed to, in respect to rural workers in particular. He was as strong for keeping rural workers out of the Bill as any hon. member before he came to the conference, but he has now agreed that rural workers shall have a place in the measure, and he wanted to explain that to the Council; and he gave the managers distinctly to understand that he would make that explanation, whereupon I said that in like measure I wished to explain to the Assembly my reasons for the course adopted by the managers for the Assembly, and I am in duty bound to do it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I still maintain that all that happened there leading up to the conclusions we arrived at was of a confidential character. I have no objection, so far as I am personally concerned, to all being told, but I object

to the word compromise. I believe that everyone of the matters was considered on its merits. Just fancy agreeing to exclude domestic servants in order that we might agree to include farm labourers! It would be ridiculous and I am surprised that the Attorney General should have said as much as he has in this regard. It is perfectly patent to everyone that there were at that conference three members who held political views that are diametrically opposed to mine and they could assuredly have disagreed with any one of the suggestions brought forward.

The Premier: Of course.

The Attorney General: We could have lost the Bill.

Mr. Harper: It would have been a good thing if it had been lost.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Everyone is anxious to have the Bill. I believe the Bill is an improvement on the Act as it stands. I am not a very strong believer in compulsory arbitration. I doubt whether it will effect all the Premier expects, and I am not sure that the Premier himself has not expressed the very same views.

The Premier: You have not heard me express anything of the kind.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have not heard the Premier, but I believe he has expressed the view that arbitration has not done—

The Premier: I have heard certain things about you.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Up to date the Arbitration Act has not worked satisfactorily, and to-day there is talk of taking a ballot at Kalgoorlie to see whether the miners will uphold the law of the land or strike. I wish to say with regard to the rural worker that the position is this. It will be recognised here that the Committee agreed, where the rural worker is a piece-worker, he is not to be included under the Act. The managers agreed to that. It cannot be argued that all workers shall be included because the managers agreed to the domestic servant being excluded. With regard to the Bill, the Attorney General very properly has told the House that it is a measure for the unionist and does

not recognise the free worker. A man must be a unionist before he can avail himself of the provisions of the measure.

Mr. Taylor: A free worker can get the advantages and benefits without contributing to a union; that is the disadvantage of it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: He can avail himself of all the benefits of unionism assuredly if a common rule is applied. Why not? He does not benefit at the expense of the hon. member.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: He is a bit of a leech.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No one objects to fair wages and no one wants anything but fair conditions. In dealing with the farm worker the Attorney General has told the House and we know that this is a unionist measure. It is for unionists and unionists alone. It is sought in the Bill to bring all workers into unions. It is sought to make all contribute to the political funds of these unions, and that is why farm workers are particularly desired. I have no objection if the farm workers desire, and if they express a desire to come under the Act or of any other worker doing so, but since it is made compulsory that before men can avail themselves of this Act they must be unionists, I think we are entitled to look into what has happened regarding the agricultural worker. There have been paid organisers who have travelled this country in sulkies specially provided. There have been members of this Chamber who have toured the country in order that they might induce the agricultural worker to join the unions, and will the House believe it, so far they have not joined a union?

Mr. Munsie: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: They received a very cold reception wherever they went.

Mr. Heitmann: The strongest union in Australia includes farm labourers.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The agricultural worker has shown no desire to join a union, largely because he leads a life which gives him time to think and he is coming to the conclusion that these parasites who travel the country in the interests of contributions to union funds

are not desirable. The farm worker is the most independent man in the State. When considering the definition of farm worker we must realise that it is very hard to define him. There are hundreds of men working on farms, who are not farm labourers in the true sense.

Mr. McDonald : And the same can be said of farmers.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : There are men who have never driven a horse and never will be able to drive a horse. They are employed to do some of the rough work on the farm, and so are accounted farm labourers. If one went into Barrack Street now, I believe it would be possible to get 15 men who would call themselves farm labourers and who could form a union, and these men who have nothing to do with the industry could dominate throughout the State the workers who are actually engaged as farm labourers. I think that is very undesirable indeed, and I believe the formation of a union representing all the actual farm workers would be a very difficult thing when we remember that these men are employed in small numbers on the various farms, and that the farm districts extend from Albany to the Murchison. Therefore, it will be seen that to get a union representative of all the farm workers would be practically an impossibility. So impossible is it that the agricultural workers have definitely refused to form a union, notwithstanding that they have been invited, not only by the organisers but by members of this Chamber.

Mr. Munsie : We shall soon show you they will organise now they have the right to get to the court.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : They have had the right for 10 years.

Mr. E. B. Johnston : Then why take it away?

Hon. J. MITCHELL : They have the right to form a union and they refuse to do so. Until they form a union I do not propose, so far as I am concerned, to agree to their inclusion in this measure. There is no need to include them because the Attorney General says the Bill is not for the free worker but for the

unionists. When the farm labourers of this State—the genuine farm workers—come together and form a union and obtain registration, I shall not object to them being included in the measure. In the meantime, I object to giving to 15 men, who are probably not farm labourers but simply men occasionally employed on farms, power to form a union.

Mr. McDonald : You can multiply that 15 by 20 for the present membership.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : I would like to know where the union is.

Mr. McDonald : You will know in time.

Mr. Gardiner : You will know when the next elections come on.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : I wish the elections were coming to-morrow. The hon. member would know all about it. I would be on the other side of the House, and many members at present on that side would be outside of the House.

Mr. E. B. Johnston : Good-bye to you when it comes.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : I have dealt with the hon. member once. I merely rose to explain that I have dissented from the inclusion of farm labourers for the reasons stated. This is a Bill for unionists and for unionists alone. With that I disagree. All workers should have the right to approach the Court, and I am opposed to the idea that before men can approach the court they should be compelled to contribute to the political funds of the political unions of Western Australia.

Mr. Foley : You voted for it one night when your leader was away.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : I voted for preference to unionists. It was entirely a misunderstanding, but my friend opposite voted against preference to unionists.

The Premier : No. it was compulsory unionism you voted for with your eyes open.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : It is permissible for any man to make a mistake.

The Premier : It was no mistake.

Hon. J. MITCHELL : The Premier has done nothing else all his life, but

make mistakes and since he has been on the Treasury benches—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member cannot refer to that.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have nothing more to say. I believe that the decision arrived at in this report will be acceptable to the great majority of the members of the House, and to the members of another place. I hope the Arbitration Bill will be very much improved by the amendments which have been agreed to. There is no doubt it will be improved, and I hope that all that can be expected of arbitration will result. It is most desirable that the strikes threatening shall be settled by the easiest possible means in the speediest manner. We do not want industrial trouble, but we want industrial peace and we want men to enjoy reasonable wages and good conditions, and if men are to enjoy reasonable wages and good conditions we must encourage the employer, and so it is essential to frame a Bill which is fair to all.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan): I agree with the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) that the measure as we hope it will be finally adopted after this conference, will certainly be a great advance on the existing Conciliation and Arbitration Act, but I want to remove any impression which may get abroad from the hon. member's remarks that because on one occasion he insisted that his dissent should be noticed, this would prevent other members from explaining that the agreements arrived at were in the nature of a compromise, and I want to urge that, in order that the members of this Chamber as well as the public might understand the position. Is it necessary to tell the hon. member and other members of this Chamber that we really adhere to the Bill as previously introduced? Surely it is not necessary for me to deny that anything at the conference caused me to change my views on some of the matters and that we are asking the Assembly to express a change of opinion upon those matters! Would the hon. member lead the Chamber to believe that I have been convinced by him that preference to unionists is a

bad thing, because we met in conference and had to decide whether we would accept or reject or lose the measure? Is it necessary to explain that having introduced the Bill to include domestic servants I have thrown them overboard because they have no right to come under the provisions of this measure? Because the Attorney General made it perfectly clear that this was in the nature of a compromise, the member for Northam says he has divulged something of a confidential nature regarding that conference. The Attorney General explained that the opinion was expressed between managers—I will not say who—that we should not express any opinion in either Chamber as managers with regard to the decisions arrived at. Mr. Moss himself distinctly stated, on the question of rural workers, that he wanted to be able to tell the Chamber that he still adhered to the position that rural workers should not be included, and I venture to say that, when the time arrives, Mr. Moss will, with the concurrence of the managers, state that he still adheres to that principle, but he said that in the nature of a compromise, and in order to obtain this we had to compromise, and on other matters the same condition prevails. We were faced with the position of having to make some compromise and accept in return something which we knew that another place was not at first willing to concede, or else we had to lose a measure. I want to be perfectly frank to the managers from another Chamber, and say they appreciated that point from the outset, and we wanted to arrive at some conclusion so that we could return to both Chambers and ask members to agree to the amendments and allow the measure to be placed on the statute-book. The Council managers made a compromise and so did we, and though that does not alter my opinion in the slightest regard, we are taking the responsibility of recommending that these modifications be made.

Mr. Monger: And you ask us to vote blindly?

The PREMIER: I would not ask the hon. member to vote otherwise because it would be impossible. We are not asking anyone to vote blindly. We have had

this matter before us for weeks, and as a matter of urgency these amendments will again come before the Chamber for consideration.

Mr. Monger: I know that.

The PREMIER: Then what is the hon. member complaining about? These amendments will come before us again and we will have to accept them or lose the measure. Surely, in order to avoid loss of time we can send the message forward and allow the suggestions to come back in this form, and then we can consider whether it is desirable to accept them or lose the Bill altogether? I am not desirous of discussing the pros and cons of these various suggestions; I only make these remarks to make it clear that although we have not altered our opinions we have arrived at a fair compromise in order not to lose the Bill.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): In supporting the motion I realise that I am not alone on this side of the Chamber in thinking that as the measure left this House it was indeed a better measure than it is now, but I want to congratulate the managers from this House and also from another place in meeting in conference this afternoon with the object of coming to an arrangement satisfactory to both Chambers, and in order to save the measure that has been done, and no matter how strongly the hon. member for Northam and those who sit with him feel in connection with the portions of the Bill remaining and which they opposed, I am confident in saying that on this side of the House there are equally strong feelings held in connection with what the managers have compromised on, but to save the measure we are prepared to accept the recommendations of the managers.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It includes the farm labourers.

Mr. TAYLOR: It includes them in a certain degree. I want to prove to hon. members that the statement made by the member for Northam with reference to being able to form a union under this Bill with fifteen rural workers in Barrackstreet, or any other place, who could then cite a case for the Arbitration Court and

thereby make such arrangements, which, to use his own words, all genuine farm labourers would have to abide by, is wholly wrong. Fifteen members of any union, as a union, cannot cite a case for the court. A union has no power as a union to cite a case. It was decided by the High Court five or six years ago that a union is not an employee and that it cannot cite a case, and that the members of the union have to locate their disagreement with the employer so that they can go before the Court. If this union of which the hon. member speaks were formed, a union of fifteen, who were going to dominate all the agricultural labourers in the State, it would have no standing in the court.

Hon. J. Mitchell: This Bill will simplify the procedure.

Mr. TAYLOR: It will not simplify the point I have raised, and this Bill is not interfering with the decisions of the High Court, and unless the president of our own court looks in the future more lightly upon that decision than he has done in the past, that decision will always stand, but the president of the court has been firm upon that point ever since the decision has been given, and the workers have been put to a lot of expense and inconvenience and delay in arranging and locating their disputes. I hope the people generally will not be led away by the statement of the hon. member for Northam in that particular. One cannot but feel pleased that there is every possibility of this Bill finding a place on our statute-book, and, as the Attorney General has pointed out repeatedly in this House from the time he had made his second reading speech, it had removed technicalities; it has simplified in every way the procedure, and facilitated the workers and the employers taking their cases to the court and having them decided on their merits. If it will do that, and I believe it will, arbitration in this State will have a fair trial and we shall learn whether it will be as warmly received by the people as it has been received in the past. I am sorry that the Bill has not gone further, but it is pleasing to me after having been in this House for so many years, to know

that we have been able to do something for the rural workers, a body in regard to whom in the past we have failed. Now we have placed those other than pieceworkers on the same common ground as the other workers in the State, and if the Bill has done that it has done a great deal. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. McDONALD (Gascoyne): The knowledge that the managers have agreed is indeed a source of pleasure to all because there is no doubt they have put before the country what the people have been waiting for for years, a workable arbitration measure. As hon. members have pointed out, it must be patent to all that the Bill when it comes back after this Message has been considered in another place will not be as perfect a Bill as it was when it left us originally. That it would be mutilated to a certain extent was not unexpected, still the result of the conference has been that a Bill which will be workable and beneficial to the majority of the workers has resulted. There is at least one fly in the ointment, but before I touch that fly I want to express regret that a weak body of people like the domestic servants have been excluded from the provisions of the Bill. These people at present are not organised, but the organisation which is taking place in every branch of every industry will eventually reach domestic servants, and owing to that they would ask that they should receive the benefits of a measure such as this. The point to which I object is the fact that while the hours of pieceworkers are limited in every industry, in the rural workers' industry and the pastoral industry there is to be no limitation. We give in every other case power to say that pieceworkers shall do a certain number of hours per diem or per week, but we put no limitation on the rural workers or the pastoral workers. Shearing is pastoral work: in fact with the exception of certain works generally throughout the year in the way of fencing and well-sinking, shearing is the principal portion of the work connected with the pastoral industry. Yet shearing is all done by piecework, and shall it be said that in the event of a case

being cited by the Australian Workers' Union under this Act that the Court of Arbitration should have power to say that those men should work ten or more hours a day, or rather that it should have no power to limit those hours of work to the eight hours forty minutes which prevails now? What an anomalous position for the pieceworkers to be placed in? At the present time the Australian Workers' Union are not registered under any Arbitration Act for the simple reason that the benefits to be derived from that Act which has been in existence up to the present day, were not such as to give the members of that union sufficient inducement to come under the protection of its provisions. We have been waiting for three years, and although other branches of the organisation are registered under the Commonwealth Arbitration Act, we in Western Australia remain aloof hoping almost against hope that the time would come that in Western Australia, the State in which we work and for which we are working, would give us an Act that would prove of some benefit. Now we find that this Bill, excellent as it is in many respects, debars the workers in the pastoral industry so far as piecework is concerned of having the hours of work limited by the court. There was nothing more to be expected when we saw the opposition to every measure likely to benefit the agricultural or pastoral labourers which came from another place the constitution of which we know.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not discuss another place.

Mr. McDONALD: If the other place must not be discussed, well—According to the mention made by the Attorney General, so far as pieceworkers are concerned—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! What remark did the hon. member make in respect to my ruling about the other place? Did the hon. member question my ruling?

Mr. McDONALD: Not at all. The constant opposition in this Chamber to any measure likely to relieve the rural or pastoral workers is nothing else but an invitation to those engaged in those two industries, seeing that they cannot take

advantage of the law, to take the gloves off and engage in a rough and tumble and let the best win. There is an older member than myself in this House connected with the pastoral industry who has put up some big fights, and I am perfectly safe in saying that should there be any reason for another fight we would find him, old as he is, just as willing and vigorous as when he fought twenty years ago in another State. It has been said there is no branch of the Rural Workers' Union in Western Australia. I speak as a member of the executive, and at present I am Acting Secretary of that particular union. We have on our books over 300 financial members of the Rural Workers' Union in Western Australia, and I have copies of the regulations signed by various members of that union in various portions of the State. One effect of the lack of arbitration in this State for rural workers has been that they and the pastoral workers were driven willy-nilly to take advantage of the Commonwealth Act. However, as far as the other things are concerned, the remaining industries must benefit greatly by this measure, and taking it all in all the rural and pastoral workers, weak as they are and only partially organised, are benefiting by the Commonwealth Act, and at the same time we can fearlessly and hopefully wish success to the Arbitration Act as it will be in future as a guarantee of a very large amount of benefit for every industry in the State.

Mr. HARPER (Pingelly): I regret that this report is to be agreed to because I have the greatest antipathy for compulsory arbitration. I know what a fallacy it is, and there are not many in this House who have had experience of both sides of the question.

Mr. Foley: You have never been on any side except one, so far as arbitration in this State is concerned.

Mr. HARPER: I claim that I have experience of both sides so far as the mining industry is concerned. It is true that there have not been any great strikes or troubles in that industry.

Mr. Green: No thanks to you.

Mr. HARPER: The hon. member has never employed anybody and is not

likely to. He is living on the credulity of his unsophisticated supporters.

The SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw that statement.

Mr. HARPER: I withdraw.

Mr. Green: You were sacked—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Green: You were sacked in Broken Hill—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Green: You were sacked in Broken Hill for sleeping in a drive.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member for Kalgoorlie will not keep order when I am calling for order I will name him. I will not allow any hon. member to interrupt when I am calling for order.

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker I just want to say—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will apologise before he says anything else.

Mr. Green: I apologise, but I would point out that the remark was made under provocation.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is responsible for much of the provocation.

Mr. HARPER: That is my opinion of arbitration. There is a strike pending on the goldfields at the present time and the employees are not willing to submit to arbitration. It is a case of heads they win, and tails the employers lose. I regret very much that the agricultural industry, which we expect to play an important part in the future of Western Australia, is to be brought under the scope of this measure. I am debarred from giving my definition of the word arbitration and my opinion of the miners, because I know very well that this House has declared war between employer and employee.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw that statement. It is a reflection on this House.

Mr. HARPER: I will withdraw it; but I do not know how to get around

this question in accordance with the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member must never accuse this House of trying to make a quarrel between people.

Mr. HARPER : It seems to me that arbitration is like a civil law case; both litigants put in the best defence they can for their own respective sides, and in the result both lose. They fight the matter out to the bitter end, and the result is nil. No power on earth can make people employ labour if it does not pay them, and no power can compel men to work if they do not want to. Arbitration in my opinion is only a diabolical farce. There is no necessity for it. It ought to be our duty to try to conciliate the parties rather than to create strife, and arbitration means nothing more nor less than the creation of strife. So long as the employees get their own way and a favourable award on each and every occasion arbitration is a very splendid thing for one side, but when reverses come along it is a very bad thing. If the workers want anything more than they can get from the Arbitration Court of Western Australia at present I do not think many industries can survive. I certainly do not think that the agricultural industry will survive this Arbitration Bill very long. I want to give my opinion in the best interests of the employer and the employees, and it is that these conditions will make employment scarce in the agricultural areas. I know what arbitration is and how difficult a matter it is to come to a conclusion with regard to the varying rates of pay.

Mr. Foley : In all your citations you put in for a reduction.

Mr. HARPER : It is very hard to arrive at a denomination of all agricultural pursuits. There are so many varying grades of work, and it is a very difficult matter for the president of the Arbitration Court to deliver awards which will give anything like satisfaction. All these matters mean more expense, and a good deal of time will be wasted and money lost in fighting cases

which are absolutely futile in the end. We have the experience of New Zealand, which has been the home of advanced legislation. During the last six years they have had in New Zealand no less than 66 strikes, and about 4,723 people have been out of employment in consequence. They have lost nearly a quarter of a million pounds in strikes, despite the fact that they have arbitration there. They found out not long ago that about 7,000 farmers had to appear before the court for breaches of awards. It will be seen, therefore, that arbitration in that country has proved futile. I hope these provisions in regard to agricultural labourers will never be placed on the statute-book of Western Australia. If we want to cripple the industry we might as well say so straight away. We know the agricultural areas are struggling under the existing conditions without having any more impositions placed upon them. It is absolutely impossible for the agricultural areas to stand up under any more than they have to bear at present. With regard to preference to unionists, this House has endeavoured to bring about that preference, and the only way we can combat that will be for every one of us to join a union.

Mr. O'Loughlen : Perhaps they would not have you.

Mr. HARPER : That is just the trouble. There would come a time when the free labourers would not be allowed to join; when work was scarce the unions would be like secret societies or masonic lodges and only those well qualified and high up in the order would be allowed to join these conservative institutions. That is what the unions are aiming at. We had that experience on the goldfields in regard to the engine-drivers. I sat on the examining board and the engine-drivers' representative opposed as many of the candidates as possible.

The Premier: You sat on the board to examine engine-drivers?

Mr. HARPER : I did.

The Premier : Great Scot !

Mr. HARPER : Great Scot again ! If I had not sat there, a lot of the engine drivers who have certificates now would not have obtained them. The engine drivers' representative was there to oppose every candidate getting a certificate, whether he was qualified or not.

The Premier : That is a deliberate misstatement.

Mr. HARPER : It is not. This representative submitted a number of questions to the candidates that he himself was unable to answer, with the idea of keeping out fresh candidates and preserving the conservatism of his organisation. When work was scarce the unions would prevent the free workers from joining, if they succeeded in bringing about preference to unionists. We find them reducing the quantity of work done, even to the extent of limiting the hours of piece workers. However, that is a point the Government have waived and I am glad of it. At any rate, if we have to submit to this never-ending matter of arbitration in agricultural areas it is certainly a fatal blow to the industry.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) : I did not intend to say anything in this matter, had it not been for the remarks of the member for Pingelly (Mr. Harper). Almost at the outset he made use of the statement that throughout the gold-mining industry in Western Australia in every instance where a case had been cited before the Arbitration Court the employees received an increase; but, as one who has had some experience in industrial matters in Western Australia in connection with the mining industry, I can say that in no instance on the goldfields have the miners received an increase from the Arbitration Court in the past and are now desirous of refuting it. I believe that the mere fact of having arbitration on our statute-book, bad as the Act has been from the employees' point of view, has been the means of keeping industrial peace in Western Australia. I would like to refer to the statement of the hon. member that numbers have been on strike in New Zealand. The difference between New Zealand and our State, even under the old Act, is that

in New Zealand arbitration is not compulsory; that is the reason why we have had so many strikes in New Zealand. I am pleased the managers from both Chambers have agreed or made a compromise. I really believe that the measure that will be placed on the statute-book will be a benefit, not only to the employees, but also to the employers generally throughout Western Australia.

Question put and passed, and a Message accordingly forwarded to the Council.

BILL—WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from an earlier period of the sitting.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (continuing) : I hardly know where I left off before going to the conference, but I believe I was discussing the question of finance. I object to a proposition which will make it that revenue to be received shall go into the Consolidated Revenue in the ordinary way and that all expenditure in connection with the various undertakings, of which there will be a good number under this Bill, shall come out of the general revenue.

The Minister for Works: Do you object to Parliamentary control?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, I believe in Parliamentary control, but I believe this is not revenue in the true sense, and that we ought to give a true statement of affairs in connection with these various undertakings.

The Minister for Works: That is what the Bill is for.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I believe the result will only be confusion, and that we shall not understand where we are. I admit the system exists to-day, but it is none the less wrong for all that. There is no confusion under the Railway Act, because the railway revenue is credited separately in the monthly abstract, and the working expenses are debited sep-

arately, and, apart from that, there is a quarterly statement made necessary by the Railway Act which appears also in the monthly abstract, so that anyone who cares to see how the railways are being worked and just what the cost is and just what the profit is can see it without trouble. It is not so with the public batteries, nor with the agricultural ventures, nor with mining, and so far it has not been the case with our State steamers, or with our butchers' shops, or with the milk supply, the hotels, water supplies, or any others of these ventures. The accounts are confused, and it is utterly impossible for the public to go through the published monthly statements which should set out exactly what is happening.

The Minister for Works: We are introducing the Bill for that purpose.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister says that the Bill will provide for a clear statement.

The Minister for Works: Yes; read Clause 17.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I have read the Bill carefully, but I would point out to the Minister for his benefit that under the Agricultural Bank Act the business works smoothly, and each year we see what the profit is. That seems to be a perfectly reasonable and right arrangement. I believe if we had put an ordinary Government official there we would have had just the confusion that exists in other departments, but we had as manager Mr. Paterson, who was a farmer before he was a Government official, and I believe it is due to him that he has managed to keep the Agricultural Bank affairs separate from the ordinary form of Government departments, and that it is due to him that we know how we stand in regard to that undertaking. I know the Minister has provided in Clause 11 and Clause 17 that accounts shall be kept audited and reported on. I had proposed to move an amendment that it should be compulsory to keep the accounts under the double-entry system and to have them properly audited and to have a proper balance-sheet and profit and loss account in connection with each of these trading affairs submitted to Parliament from time to time. I proposed

also to insist that the smallest undertaking run as a business undertaking should be reported on separately by the Auditor General in order that the country might know what is going on; but the Premier has given notice of his intention to introduce a Bill dealing with trading accounts, and he has been good enough to explain to me some of its provisions. No doubt when the Assembly has finished with that measure and when we have amended it, as we usually do measures the Government have brought down, we shall have on the statute-book an Act for the proper keeping of accounts. The Minister desires that every one of these undertakings shall stand by itself so that we can know exactly whether an undertaking is paying. This is absolutely essential, because under this measure the Minister will be dealing with agricultural water supplies, the Coolgardie Water Scheme, and the sewerage of Perth and many other undertakings quite apart from the ordinary expenditure in connection with the carrying on of public affairs. Each concern that means a special benefit to some individuals should be paid for by the individuals concerned, and I object to any profit made from any of these undertakings for supplying special services going to the general revenue, because I believe that the people concerned should get the full benefit of their contributions, and that they should pay for the work done for them and no more. It is undesirable that water supplies should return any profit except bare expenses, and I am satisfied from the remark made by the Minister that he will see to it that the accounts in connection with the agricultural water supplies from the Coolgardie scheme will be properly kept, and that the users will benefit to the fullest possible extent. I am glad to have that assurance, because the question of water supplied from the Coolgardie scheme has caused many of our farmers considerable concern. We are managing many trading concerns apart from those mentioned in the Bill, and I repeat that, while we must make these ventures pay, we cannot expect to make a profit. I hope that the Minister will see they are sound business

undertakings, and I hope it will not be found later on that they are merely giving expression to the socialistic ideas that now have a place among the legislators of this country. I have no objection to the Bill. I believe it is necessary that the Minister should take the power he is seeking to take, and I hope that before the Bill passes through Committee the Minister will let us have a look at the Trading Accounts Bill in order that we may see what is provided there.

The Minister for Works: The Trading Account Bill is largely based on this Bill. The trading accounts will be run as we propose to run these.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If that is so some amendment will have to be made, because in Clauses 11 and 17 it is not proposed to do much other than keep the accounts as accounts are kept now. It is not proposed that the Treasury Regulations shall not apply in the case of trading concerns. I have been in Government departments long enough to know that the Treasury Regulations provide for utter confusion. There is no possible chance, if they are obeyed implicitly, of having a satisfactory statement of affairs; and no one knows better than the Minister the trouble he has had in this connection. It is impossible to know where we are if the Treasury Regulations are followed.

The Minister for Works: They cannot override an Act of Parliament.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Treasury Regulations are amended from time to time in accordance with the requirements of any Act passed by the House.

The Minister for Works: The object of this Bill and of the Trading Accounts Bill is to get away from the Treasury Regulations so that we can give Parliament a true balance-sheet.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister admits that I am correct in saying that the Treasury Regulations provide for confusion.

The Minister for Works: Absolutely, but this Bill overrides that.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is high time the Trading Bill became law, and it is high time we took into consideration the question of simplifying the accountancy

in the public departments with a view to cheapening it very considerably. I am quite certain that if the best accountants in the department were given a free hand and were paid 20 per cent. more, we would get a very handsome return for our money. The Premier is going to make a departure that we must commend him for, but I want him to believe that we can do better than he is doing under this Bill. I think he should definitely provide for books being kept on the double-entry system as in merchants' offices. If he does not do that then a loophole will be found and we will more or less continue on the system we have now. However, we will have an opportunity of discussing the Bill in Committee, and of discussing the Trading Bill, and between the two I hope we will make a start in straightening out these accounts. I wish to say the Minister has one of the most capable men at the head of this department. At the same time the officer has not the freedom he should have, because we permit the Treasury Regulations to dominate the situation. I have pleasure in supporting the Bill. I believe it is necessary and right. I wish the Minister joy with the work he has in hand. I can foresee a great deal of trouble before him, and I expect that before he gets all these departments into shape and properly reorganised under the new system, he will have a few sleepless nights.

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont): I think generally that the Bill is undoubtedly a step in the right direction. It makes for the concentration of all these separate undertakings, brings water and sewerage under one head, under one control and with one engineer for the technical staff. I think that must result in improved administration together with marked economy so far as the undertakings are concerned. But there is one part of the Bill to which I would like to draw attention, and I hope the Minister for Works will see his way to making some amendment of it in Committee. Although the Bill provides for the keeping of separate accounts on a proper basis it does not provide that the revenue or the earnings of each undertaking shall be credited to

that particular undertaking, but permits the revenue from all these undertakings to go into Consolidated Revenue and the expenditure to be expended by Appropriation by Parliament. Each undertaking should be distinctly separate in this respect.

The Minister for Works: So it is, as far as the balance sheets and books are concerned.

Mr. WISDOM: Yes; I agree that that is so, but so far as the earnings and expenditure is concerned, or so far as profit and loss is concerned on each separate undertaking, it should be provided that the profit or loss should be debited or credited as the case may be to each undertaking.

The Minister for Works: Yes, it is.

Mr. WISDOM: I am glad to hear that. I have looked for it in the Bill but have failed to find it.

The Minister for Works: Clause 17 makes that perfectly clear.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is a little bit too general.

The Minister for Works: Well, I am prepared to make it more definite.

Mr. WISDOM: Clause 17 provides that the Minister shall cause balance sheets of assets and liabilities of the department generally, and in respect to each undertaking, to be prepared, together with a profit and loss account. That is all right, but if a profit is made on one undertaking in one district and a loss is made on another undertaking in another district the said profit will be paid into Consolidated Revenue and will therefore go to make up the loss on the other undertaking.

The Minister for Works: No; that is not so.

Mr. WISDOM: Then if it is not so my objection goes for nothing, but I have yet to be convinced that such is the case. I see nothing in the Bill to provide that profit and loss shall be credited and debited to the undertaking concerned, and shall affect the rate or charges to be made on the people who are responsible for each undertaking for the following year. Unless such provision is made then we have, for instance, in the first year, a profit made on one

undertaking going to cover the loss on another undertaking; and, as the Minister pointed out on the second reading, in the case of a profit in one district it would give the people reason to approach the Minister for a reduction of the rate, while in the case of a loss this would give the Minister reason for increasing the rating in the district concerned. Then again, although after the first year it will be possible for the Minister or the board to estimate fairly closely what the expenditure and revenue will be, and to get nearer to a balance, it will be quite impossible at any time to estimate this exactly, so that each undertaking must result in successive years in either a profit or a loss, and under the Bill this is perpetuated. I merely mention this in order that, if it is the intention of the Minister that each undertaking shall stand by itself and shall be self-supporting, and that any profit made in one district shall be credited to that district, while any loss made shall be debited to the district, it will be an easy matter when in Committee for the Minister to make any necessary amendment in that direction. I am glad that this measure has been brought down, as it may in some way tend to improve the supplies in some of our suburban districts, more particularly the Claremont and Cottesloe districts. We have suffered there for many years under a very bad water supply, bad in quality and inadequate in quantity, and I believe it is the intention of the Minister to do what he can to remedy that evil. I hope the Minister will not forget that when he has all the powers and the facilities, and also all the difficulties which will devolve on him when the measure becomes law, he will not forget that important section of the community lying between Perth and Fremantle. The same remark applies to the question of sewerage in the district. I am prepared to support the Bill, and I hope that when in Committee if the provision which I have mentioned with regard to profit and loss on separate undertakings has been omitted from the Bill the Minister will see his way to correcting what he must realise to be a defect in the proposed system.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (In reply) : I think the speeches that have been made are simply urging that the Bill should do those things which the Bill was framed to do. The members for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) and Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) both urged that separate accounts of the separate undertakings should be kept, and that a true profit and loss account should be prepared for Parliament of each separate undertaking. That is the object of the Bill. The Bill is brought in for that purpose, and the Government have brought in the Bill because they agree with the remarks of the member for Northam, that if we try to run these undertakings under the Treasury Regulations concerning the accounts it will be an impossibility to give Parliament a true account, which will be clearly understood by members, as to exactly how each undertaking is progressing. We believe the trading concerns are sound, but we have no right to go on with the trading concerns because we are of opinion that they are sound, unless we can submit to Parliament and the people a true account showing the profit and loss account in order to demonstrate that our trading concerns are sound. It is proposed to keep each account separate, not only in the books, but a separate account has to be submitted to Parliament, so that every member can see exactly how each undertaking is operating. I agree with the member for Claremont that there will always be a little profit or a little loss shown. That operates to-day under existing conditions. For instance, Northam, as far as the goldfields water supply is concerned, shows a profit, and Midland Junction a profit. Under existing conditions we cannot interfere with it, and it is difficult to regulate it. Then take Katanning. There we have a concern in respect to which we have estimated a rate to bring in just sufficient revenue to make the thing pay; but after a year's operations it may be necessary to reduce the rate. In the meantime we have made a certain amount of profit. The profit in that

case would go into Consolidated Revenue, and, by running them together, while Consolidated Revenue will get the profit on some undertakings it will get the loss of others. There is a levelling up and a levelling down. It does not matter how we operate, there must be twelve months experience before we really get a true criterion as to what rate will return the revenue necessary to operate the concern.

Mr. A. E. Piesse : How would you recoup the loss ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : Through Consolidated Revenue; or the rate will have to do it.

Mr. A. E. Piesse : You do not propose to make it up in subsequent years ?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : No I agree with the member for Northam that it is distinctly wrong to attempt to make a profit on water supply. Water supply is the last thing we should make a profit upon. All that we should try to do is to make the various supplies operate so that their shall be no burden cast upon one section of the State by the supplying of another with water. To make a profit on water would be absolutely wrong. The only argument urged against the Bill is that we are going to take this money and put it into Consolidated Revenue. The benefit of this is that we are going to give Parliament absolute control of revenue and expenditure. It is to go into Consolidated Revenue, and as soon as that happens Parliament knows all about it. But to-day under the Metropolitan water supply the Minister has absolute control. I have money there and can do as I like with it. There is no control as far as Parliament is concerned. It is all right to have trading concerns and to have different accounts so that each of the different concerns may be shown, but it is wrong for a Minister to have the right to expend money in a trading concern as he thinks fit. Parliament should have control of all these concerns, and there is only one way to do it, and that is by the provision in this Bill. In this Bill I am after exactly the same thing as members desire.

Bill. In this Bill I am exactly the When in Opposition year after year I urged this amalgamation of the water supplies, and urged this method of general administration of the water supplies. Now I have the opportunity it is being brought into operation and I can assure members that I am after exactly the same thing that they want. If they is being brought into operation and I can make it more definite so that Parliament can have a true balance sheet I will be repared to adopt their amendments.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. McDowall in the Chair, the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Lands and works vested in the Minister :

Hon. J. MITCHELL : Would the Minister explain why this clause was necessary ? Already under the various Acts the lands were vested in the Minister. This clause could not apply to a measure which was not law such as the Irrigation Bill.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This applied in contemplation of the Irrigation Bill being passed. If it did not pass that portion would be inoperative, and it would be deleted in another place, but in order to get the provision in the Government were anticipating the passage of that measure. The clause was necessary to vest these lands in the Minister. There was just a question whether the water supply was not vested in a board. The object was to make it clear that the Minister was the board, as far as the administration was concerned. If a board was constituted the Minister had power to say how much land, and what portion of the concern would be vested in the board.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 8—agreed to.

Clause 9—Receipts and expenditure :

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The clause stated that all money collected should be paid into the Consolidated Revenue Fund

or to an account in the Treasury to the credit of which such moneys might be lawfully paid. If that was given effect to the provision in paragraph (b) was unnecessary.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The object was purely to give the right during the construction or working of a temporary water supply. At Narrogin there was really not a water supply in operation and yet there was. The Government could not strike a rate, but certain sums were charged for certain services. In a case like that a separate account was credited and the money was allowed to lie until the rate could be struck and the thing could be got in going order. The object was to facilitate the starting of a concern and getting it on a proper basis. There were one or two schemes in the Great Southern which were not complete, and which had not yet been put on a proper footing. If it was made binding that all money should go into Consolidated Revenue the Government could not have a suspense account. This clause was framed to create a new system and to get away from the Treasury regulations to which the hon. member had referred. Nothing could interfere with the methods of keeping accounts as set out by this measure.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It was difficult to know why the money should be paid into a different account as the Minister could only make payments out of moneys to be appropriated by Parliament. If the Minister meant that this account was to take the place of an ordinary suspense account he could understand it.

The Minister for Works: That is so.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Would the Minister have power to draw against that account?

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The intention appeared to be to have a temporary account and an amendment was necessary to enable deposits to be withdrawn.

The Premier: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The point was worth looking into. Money might be put into an account and there might be no way of getting it out. If it was to be

made a suspense account the Minister had better take sufficient authority to enable him to withdraw money.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—Accounts:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Until he had heard the statement of the Premier that afternoon of the intention to bring down a Trading Accounts Bill he had intended to move an amendment as follows:—

Such books shall be kept under double-entry system and notwithstanding any provision in the Audit Act to the contrary shall be audited and reported on by the Auditor General showing in connection with each trading concern 1, a correct balance-sheet; 2, such other report as the Auditor General may think advisable. Provided also that the Auditor General shall determine as to the separation of trading concerns grouped under this or any other Act for the purpose of giving effect to the foregoing.

Would the Premier say if it would be possible to get a clause of this kind inserted in his Trading Accounts Bill so as to apply to all undertakings?

The Premier: It is in this Bill in Clause 17.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, it was not.

The Premier: Yes, profit and loss account certified to by the Auditor General.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That was totally different.

The Premier: It is absurd to mention the double-entry system in an Act of Parliament.

The Minister for Works: Subclause 2 of Clause 17 provides exactly what you ask.

The Premier: Except that it does not provide for double entry.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Not only should the books be kept as proper trading accounts, but the Auditor General should determine how the accounts should be separated. Would the Premier afford him an opportunity of moving the amendment to the Trading Accounts Bill?

The Premier: Yes, you will have an opportunity.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Then he would endeavour to have his amendment embraced in the Trading Accounts Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 13—Depreciation:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We should provide here for a reduced sinking fund. The Kalgoorlie scheme had been a source of trouble because the sinking fund had been too high. He had often wondered whether it would be possible to average on these water schemes so far as the sinking funds were concerned. The Minister in arranging the extensions should take into consideration the fact that he already had a large sinking fund provided by the undertakings and he could reduce the amount in connection with future extensions.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would not be possible to average the sinking funds by creating a smaller sinking fund in connection with the extensions, but to show that the Government agreed with the hon. member, until the present Government took office the same sinking fund was being charged for town supplies in agricultural districts, and the Government reduced it. Where the Government used cast-iron pipes it would be ridiculous to have a three per cent. sinking fund. That had been reduced but it had only been reduced one per cent. It was questionable whether the Government could go to the extent the hon. member suggested.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You have done it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Where the goldfields water supply operated the Government had done it. In agricultural towns it used to be three per cent. but that had been reduced.

Hon. J. Mitchell: In future extensions such as the York and Newcastle extensions a lower sinking fund than three per cent. should be provided.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No doubt, where we could do it.

Mr. Green: Why not on the main conduit?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We could not go back on the three per cent. sinking fund, which was fixed when the loan was raised. He was prepared to look into the question the hon. member

had raised but he doubted whether the Government had the power to do what was suggested.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15, 16—agreed to.

Clause 17—Accounts to be audited:

Mr. WISDOM: Subclause 1 provided for compilation of the assets and the liabilities of the department together with a profit and loss account. For the sake of clearness it might be advisable to provide that the profit and loss account should be for each undertaking. Otherwise it might be considered to mean a profit and loss generally on the whole department. The intention surely was that it should be a separate profit and loss account for each undertaking.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So far as his reading of the clause was concerned, it appeared to be quite clear, but he would be willing to accept the hon. member's suggestion. At any rate he would make inquiries and if the clause was not clear the Bill could be recommitted.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister ought to provide that the statements should be published in the *Statistical Abstract*.

The Premier: They have to be presented to Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government Statistician would get particulars from the balance sheet and insert them in the *Abstract*.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 18, 19, 20—agreed to.

Mr. WISDOM: It might be advisable to insert a new clause on the following lines: "That each undertaking shall stand by itself and any profit or loss in any year shall be credited or debited respectively to such undertaking and shall be taken into account when fixing the rates or charges for the following year for each undertaking." The matter had been fully debated on the second reading. The Minister had agreed that such a system would be desirable and therefore no difficulty should be anticipated. The profit went into the general revenue and there seemed to be no reason why it should not be credited to the undertaking that made the profit, so that in the fol-

lowing year they could have the advantage of any profit that might have been made in the previous year in the same way as an undertaking which made a loss should be debited with that loss and a rate struck to cover the loss. While Clause 17 provided explicitly for the preparation of a profit and loss account and a general statement, it did not provide that each undertaking should be credited or debited with the profit and loss of each year. Therefore under this system the undertaking making a profit would lose that profit, which would be absorbed by the whole of the department and go towards paying the loss made by other undertakings. Thus the undertaking making the profit would have no chance under the Bill of getting the benefit of that profit.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member seemed to be of opinion that if a profit was once paid into Consolidated Revenue the operation closed, and that next year the credit for the preceding year would not be taken into account. That was not the intention of the Bill. A proper profit and loss account must take into consideration the profit or loss in the previous year, and there must be a "carry forward." The hon. member was aiming at the same object as the Government, and inquiry would be made as to whether Clause 17 did adequately express their intentions. The point would be investigated whether the profit and loss account provided for in Clause 17 would be a profit and loss account in the true sense.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: In connection with a particular work there might be a surplus of £1,000 for the year and that would be paid into Consolidated Revenue. The balance sheet would show £1,000 to the good, but that would not be shown on the balance sheet for the next year. A trading concern should pay its way and no more.

The Premier: We must make a certain amount of profit out of it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister for Works had made it clear that he did not want a profit. Where people had a water supply and sufficient was earned to pay interest, sinking fund, and working

expenses, they should receive credit in the next year for any surplus. They might get a reduced charge, but in the meantime they would have contributed to the revenue something they should not contribute, and something which the Minister did not want them to contribute. He did not think the Bill clearly provided what the member for Claremont desired, namely that each trading concern should stand alone and the people who were served should receive full credit for their contributions.

The Minister for Works: I am prepared to look into the point.

Mr. WISDOM: The Minister's assurance that his intention was the same as that of the proposed amendment, and that the point would be investigated was satisfactory. He would not press the amendment.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—JETTIES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) in moving the second reading said: This is a very short Bill of two clauses and it is unnecessary for me to take up the time of members at any great length, because the measure has already been approved by another place. For some considerable time it has been considered necessary that a clause such as this should be inserted in the Jetty Regulations Act, 1878; in fact, the late Colonial Secretary stated that it was his intention to introduce such a measure, because that care is not taken, which one would expect, to see that no damage is done when vessels are being berthed. This has led to a good deal of expense being entailed upon the Government, and also has caused much annoyance to those trading to the various ports. The Fremantle Harbour Trust Act and the Bunbury Harbour Board Act both contain provisions almost identical with those contained in this Bill. Only the other day one of the boats trading on the

North-West coast damaged the jetty at Carnarvon to such an extent as to cost the State about £600, and there have been continuous complaints of damage done to other jetties. We are merely asking in this Bill that Government jetties should be on the same footing as those of the Fremantle Harbour Trust and the Bunbury Harbour Board. The Fremantle Harbour Trust Act contains this section—

Where any injury is done by a vessel, floating timber, or material, or by any person employed about the same, to any part of the works or property of the commissioners (1) the owner of such vessel, floating timber, and material; and (2) in case the injury is caused through the act or negligence of the master of such vessel, or of the person having charge of such timber or material, the owner and also such master or person shall be answerable in damages for the injury, but the Commissioners shall not recover twice for the same cause of action.

There is a similar clause in the Bunbury Harbour Board Act. This measure will not be used for the express purpose of making undue charges on the shipping, but principally for the protection of the taxpayers of the State. As I have said, this measure has already passed another place and I have much pleasure in moving—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—ROADS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) in moving the second reading said: I do not intend to take up much time in moving the second reading of this Bill, because it is practically confined to three clauses. It is true there

is a number of clauses in the Bill but they are simply to rectify clerical errors or printer's errors or alterations where it has been found impossible to administer the existing Roads Act. It will be remembered that the existing measure was based on the distinct understanding that it would be subject to review by Parliament before the end of this year, and it was the intention of the Government to introduce a comprehensive amending Bill, but on going into the matter, owing to the lateness of the sitting this year of the roads board conference, and also the desire of the Government to bring the Municipalities and the Roads Acts more into touch with one another, the Government decided simply to bring in a small amending Bill to continue the existing measure until next year, and then to amend the present Act so as to overcome the difficulties which have presented themselves. Next year the Government intend to bring in a comprehensive local Government Bill to cover both municipalities and roads boards. We believe there is room for big improvements in regard to the administration of our local government and it is impossible to get that improvement where we have two Acts that are so much in conflict with each other. Although administered by the one Minister, the Acts are so different that it is almost impossible to carry on local government in a satisfactory manner and consequently we have decided to bring in only those amendments that are absolutely urgent and next year to bring in a measure which will deal comprehensively with local government. I have already stated that the major portion of the amendments in this Bill are to overcome printer's errors and other errors that have been discovered, but there are three matters which I desire to draw attention to, and they are matters of importance, inasmuch as they make an alteration in the present state of affairs. The first is in regard to a fee which was imposed in respect to subdivision of land. I cannot quite understand, although I was in the Chamber at the time, how Parliament came to place the section in the Roads Act, making it compulsory for everyone subdividing

land to put up an amount equal to £3 per chain for all the roads in a subdivision. It is too high and it has had the effect of stopping subdivision. It is in the interests of the country that land should be subdivided, and the more land there is subdivided the better it is for the country generally. Instead of putting a clause in the measure to prevent subdivision, we should do something to encourage it. I think it is a mistake which crept in through some misunderstanding on the part of members, and it has done considerable harm. The amendment as introduced limits the amount to be paid on subdivisions of less than half an acre. In regard to every subdivision of half an acre and under, a roads board may impose an amount per chain up to the maximum of £1. The roads board can make it 6d. per chain or can make it as much as but not more than £1 per chain. If the subdivision is of land over half an acre there is no fee at all. When we have subdivisions such as that by the Midland Railway Company of large areas of agricultural land we should not place any impost on it, but rather encourage it. Where we have subdivisions inside a municipality or roads board or where we are dealing with suburban land for the purpose of settlement, there may be cases where the local body feel that some charge should be made, and we make provision for them to say what amount it shall be up to £1. That is one of the big amendments to which I wish to draw attention. The next amendment of importance is that dealing with the abolition of the exemption from rates now existing in the Roads Act for land for two years after approval. Members will recollect that the Chamber inserted this amendment with a view of assisting those who were taking up land by preventing the roads board from levying rates for two years after the land had been approved. In operation, however, this has not worked out to the advantage of the settler, but to his disadvantage, and two roads board conferences have prayed that this provision should be deleted. The reasons are that the settler is disfranchised. He does not have a say on

the general expenditure of the roads board's funds or in the election of the members of the board. A settler generally desires to pay his rates so that they will earn the Government subsidy and the rates, plus the subsidy will enable him to get his road made. To-day he does not pay rates and does not get roads, and he does not have a say as to how the Government subsidy shall be expended. It is a universal desire throughout roads board areas that this provision should be deleted, so that rates might be levied, that the Government subsidy might be secured on them, and that necessary roads might be constructed. The third and the last amendment is that dealing with the rating of timber areas. The law at present provides that timber areas, like pastoral leases, shall be rated at twenty times the annual rent. It was considered at the time that provision was inserted that timber leases were somewhat on the same basis as pastoral leases and that the provisions would operate exactly the same. The clause was really framed to meet the rating of pastoral leases, but timber leases were inserted, and it was found that it did not apply because some of the old timber leases were granted free of rent altogether. Twenty times nothing is nothing, and the result is that some of these timber areas are not paying any rates. For other timber areas the annual rent has been fixed at 11s. 4d. per acre, and they have to pay twenty times that amount, which makes the rate prohibitive. Consequently it has become necessary to alter that clause. Under this Bill we propose to make it 5s. per acre, so that we will have a definite fee fixed for timber leases which will apply generally. This will show a big reduction in some cases and in others it will impose taxation.

Mr. E. B. Johnston : It is a lot less than the valuation which the settlers pay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; but it is very fair because it is not right to tax timber areas at the same rate at which agricultural or pastoral land is rated. These lessees only go on the land for a given time, and cut off the timber

and the land is then available for other purposes. It will be recognised that 5s. per acre is fixed as a compromise, and while it will increase the payment in some cases, it will decrease the payment in others, and make the provision absolutely fair. These are the only three amendments outside of those inserted purely to get over the printer's and other errors, that crept into the Bill, which was rushed through at the tail end of last Parliament.

Mr. A. E. Piesse : What about the powers of boards to build agricultural halls?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is inserted in the Bill. It is a small matter.

Mr. A. E. Piesse : Have there been any requests for that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is necessary, for in some cases roads boards have taken over the agricultural halls and they have no right to do so under the Roads Act. I will give illustrations when the Bill is in Committee showing that it is necessary to make provision to legalise what has already been done. In the hon. member's electorate I can give an instance of where the board desired to do this, but was prevented by the Roads Act, and there are other cases. I look upon that as a small amendment, because it is to overcome and legalise what has been wrongly done under the Roads Act. The Bill is essentially a Committee Bill and I will give members the fullest information on the various clauses when the Committee stage is reached. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.56 p.m.