

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 8th September, 1921.

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

NOTICE OF MOTION WITHDRAWN.

Mr. McCALLUM: On the Notice Paper appears a notice of motion in my name as follows:—

That By-law No. 66 under the Government Railway Act, 1904, laid on the Table of this House by the Minister for Railways on 23rd August, be disallowed.

I desire to intimate my desire to withdraw this notice as the Commissioner of Railways has fixed the matter up.

QUESTION—BUSSELTON JETTY, DREDGING.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Works: 1, Will he issue the necessary instructions for ascertaining if silting has taken place in the channel and/or basin to and environing the Busselton jetty? 2, Will he have the necessary soundings, etc., made to enable an estimate of the cost of deepening the channel and basin so as to provide for the berthing of vessels up to 27 feet?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1 and 2, The matter will receive consideration.

QUESTION (2)—RAILWAY COAL.

Collie Orders.

Mr. CHESSON (for Mr. Wilson) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What were the weekly orders for coal for weeks ending August 14, August 21, August 28, and September 3 given to each coal company operating in the Collie Coalfields districts? 2, The tonnage of coal supplied weekly by each company for the periods above mentioned?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied:—

(1)	14th Aug.	21st Aug.	28th Aug.	3rd Sept.	Total.
Proprietary ...	1,624	1,632	1,610	1,672	6,538
Cardiff ...	616	618	611	634	2,479
Co-operative ...	784	788	777	807	3,156
Westralian ...	616	618	612	635	2,481
Premier ...	560	564	552	572	2,256
	4,200	4,220	4,165	4,325	16,910

(2)	14th Aug.	21st Aug.	28th Aug.	3rd Sept.	Total.
Proprietary ...	1,675	1,814	1,702	1,931	7,122
Cardiff ...	620	617	617	385	2,239
Co-operative ...	788	808	726	829	2,951
Westralian ...	616	624	614	636	2,490
Premier ...	507	564	555	578	2,204
	4,206	4,227	4,214	4,359	17,006

Supplies imported.

Mr. CHESSON (for Mr. Wilson) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What was the price paid, per ton, for large and small coal from Newcastle, New South Wales, at wharf, Fremantle? 2, The price paid, per ton, for large and small coal from Newcastle, New South Wales, in wagons at Fremantle? 3, The tonnage of foreign coal to this State used by the Railway Department for the three months ended August 31?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, In ships' slings 44s. per ton large and 40s. per ton small. 2, In wagons 48s. 4d. large and 44s. 4d. small. 3, 727 tons, which includes 82 tons used at Port Hedland and Hopetoun.

QUESTION—LIME SUPPLIES.

Mr. MONEY asked the Premier: In view of lime not being procurable by agriculturists in accordance with the conditions contained in Clause 13 of the Special Lease Lake Clifton Act, 1916, what steps, if any, does he propose to take under the Act?

The PREMIER replied: Clause 13 of the special lease provides for supply of lime of a certain quality and price. As a result of the question the company has been communicated with on the matter.

QUESTION—NORTHERN GOLDFIELDS.

Visit of Sir Edgeworth David.

Mr. CHESSON asked the Minister for Mines: Will the Government take advantage of the presence in Western Australia of Sir Edgeworth David, the eminent geologist, to arrange for him to visit and report on the Cue goldfield?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: The work which Sir Edgeworth David is undertaking will not permit of his devoting the time necessary to make a detailed geological survey of the portion of the State set out in the hon. member's question, and there is no reason why he should be asked to undertake

a survey of this particular part of the State any more than every other part, and this would entail his remaining here indefinitely with a staff of field geologists. For the hon. member's information I would point out that the area mentioned in his question has already been mapped out and dealt with in Bulletins Nos. 7, by W. H. Campbell, 1903, and 29, by H. P. Woodward, 1907.

Mr. ANGELO asked the Minister for Mines: Will the Government take advantage of the presence in Western Australia of Sir Edgeworth David, the eminent geologist, to arrange for him to visit and report on the Upper Gascoyne goldfields?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: The work which Sir Edgeworth David is undertaking will not permit of his devoting the time necessary to make a detailed geological survey of the portion of the State set out in the hon. member's question, and there is no reason why he should be asked to undertake a survey of this particular part of the State any more than every other part, and this would entail his remaining here indefinitely with a staff of field geologists. For the hon. member's information I would point out that the area mentioned in his question has already been mapped out and dealt with in Bulletins Nos. 33, by A. Gibb Maitland, in 1909, and 83, by H. H. B. Talbot, 1920.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Mullany, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the Minister for Works (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Mr. O'Loughlen, leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Munsie (Hannans), on the ground of urgent public business.

BILL—STALLIONS REGISTRATION.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture and read a first time.

BILL—BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st September.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex), [4.42]: As one who is interested in building, I might be permitted to say a few words with regard to this measure. Generally speaking, I think members will welcome the Bill, which will bring all building societies under control. I understand that the object of this measure is to bring all societies under the Act. There is one clause, however, with which I fear I am not altogether in accord, namely, Clause 4, which seeks to make an alteration in the matter of auditing accounts. It must be within the knowledge of most members that some of the greatest swindles that have been worked in the world have been carried on

under the auspices of building societies, and we should, therefore, exercise great care to see that at least qualified auditors are engaged to audit the accounts of these societies. I hope that when the Bill reaches the Committee stage, the Minister will be prepared to submit an amendment which will ensure that at least a chartered accountant or an accountant who has passed the examination of some recognised body in Western Australia dealing with this particular profession, will be included in this clause. At the present time it is quite possible even as the Act stands for an accountant or even two accountants, without the necessary qualifications to be permitted to audit the accounts of building societies. As I have mentioned, great frauds have been committed in the past, and unfortunately, the sufferers have generally been people of small means. It is very seldom that people possessing considerable money have to avail themselves of the assistance of building societies. Therefore, it behoves us to see that these people of small means enjoy every possible safeguard.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 35:

Mr. PICKERING: I understand that the Colonial Secretary has an amendment to this clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That after the word "person," in line 1 of the proposed subsection, there be inserted "who has passed the final examination of some society or association of accountants approved by the Colonial Secretary and."

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

New clause:

Hon. P. COLLIER: On behalf of the member for North-East Fremantle, I move—

That the following new clause be added:—Section 4 of the principal Act is hereby amended by the addition thereto of the following to stand as Subsection 2: "Should any society hold land acquired prior to the coming into operation of the principal Act such society shall have power to sell or otherwise dispose of such land or to carry out any agreement already entered into by it in respect of any such land."

Personally, I was under the impression that the principal Act already contained this power. However, it is in any case desirable that the matter should be placed beyond doubt.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. P. COLLIER: Again on behalf of the member for North-East Fremantle, I move—

That the following new clause be added:—Section 17 of the principal Act is hereby amended as follows:—After the word "to," in line 3, add the words "and shall not be extended beyond." Strike out the word "or" after the word "pay," in line 4, and insert in lieu thereof the words "and (if any)."

The object of this new clause is to specify clearly that the liability of a shareholder shall not extend beyond any amount actually paid by him in respect of his share and the amount, if any, in arrear on such share.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no objection to the amendment.

Mr. A. THOMSON: How would the section read if amended as proposed?

Hon. P. COLLIER: The amended reading of the section would be, "Subject to the rules of the society the liability of any member of the society under this Act in respect of any share upon which no advance has been made shall be limited to and shall not be extended beyond the amount actually paid and (if any) in arrear on such share" and so forth.

New clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL.—GRAIN.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 6th September.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH (North Perth) [4.58]: Before proceeding to reply to the arguments which have been advanced against this measure, I desire to take exception to the statement of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that the Bill is a fraud. I do not know that the hon. member had any ground whatever for making such a statement; he did not produce one tittle of evidence to show that there was any fraud connected with the introduction of the Bill.

Hon. P. Collier: In using that word the member for North-East Fremantle did not imply any personal dishonesty.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I do not quite understand the Cornish language, but in good English and Scottish language the word "fraud" implies criminality.

Hon. P. Collier: That was not meant.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The implication would be that the directors of this grain elevator company, and the shareholders in the company, and the Government, and everybody else connected with the Bill, were implicated in some criminality.

Mr. Corboy: You know that the member for North-East Fremantle would not suggest that.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The member for North-East Fremantle said distinctly that the Bill was a fraud. Now, the Bill itself cannot be a fraud; and that word can only refer to the people who promoted the Bill—namely, the directors of the company and the shareholders in the company—and also the Government, and everyone else connected with the Bill and the bulk handling scheme. It would be just as correct for me to say that the opposition of the member for North-East Fremantle to the Bill was a fraud.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There is no analogy between the two statements.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The one remark referred to the Bill, and my remark—

Mr. SPEAKER: The member for North-East Fremantle merely said that the Bill was a fraud.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I say that the statement which I am indicating would be just as true as the proposition of the member for North-East Fremantle. However, I merely desire to resent the insinuation that any fraud is being attempted in connection with this measure, and to assure hon. members that I would be one of the last to rise here for the purpose of supporting any measure which in any way involved fraud. I have only to remind hon. members of the directors concerned in this company.

Hon. P. Collier: That is no way of replying.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The gentlemen connected with the scheme are animated, not by any idea of personal gain, but purely by a desire to ensure the introduction of a system which will allow the farmers to handle their grain in an economical way. Possibly some hon. members present do not know who are the directors of the company; therefore I will just mention their names. We have Mr. Basil Murray, who is well known to most of us, as being associated with our great wheat growing industry, and other kindred industries, as well as with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd. Then there is Mr. W. D. Johnson.

Mr. Pickering: Now we are getting it.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: He was a former member of this House, a member of the Labour Government, and an associate of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin), who stated in the House the other night that the Bill was a fraud.

Hon. P. Collier: No, he did not.

The Minister for Agriculture: He did not say it was the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: He did not refer to Mr. Johnson.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I was not referring to Bill Johnson.

Hon. P. Collier: He did not say the Bill was a fraud.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Then we have Mr. T. H. Bath, another former member of this

Chamber and a member of the Labour Government in which he was a colleague of the member for North-East Fremantle. No one would say that Mr. Bath would associate himself with a fraud or would be instrumental in any way in furthering a fraudulent measure. Another director is Mr. W. N. Hedges, one of our most capable business men of to-day. I think we are fortunate in having him on the directorate. Then there is Mr. Warren Marwick, an old and esteemed Western Australian resident. Mr. Deane Hammond is another old and respected settler who is on the directorate and no one would suggest that he would have anything to do with a fraudulent measure.

Mr. O'Loughlen: No man would make a charge of fraud against any one of the individuals you have named.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I believe that is so.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is not necessary, therefore, to proceed along these lines.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: An hon. member of this Chamber said this was a fraud.

Mr. Corboy: He did not use the word in that sense.

Hon. P. Collier: The hon. member knows the sense in which the member for North-East Fremantle used that word.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: If he used the word, these gentlemen must have been concerned.

Mr. Pickering: Have you mentioned the whole of the directorate?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I am a director as well.

Mr. O'Loughlen: At 3 p.m. to-morrow you will wake up and see what it really does mean. It takes you a long time to appreciate a thing.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Having made this point clear—

Hon. P. Collier: Honest men all!

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Having shown that we have no idea of perpetrating a fraud upon this House—

Mr. O'Loughlen: We should really carry a motion to declare you honest.

Hon. P. Collier: May I intervene, Mr. Speaker, with a motion setting out that they are all honest men?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Having cleared up that point—

Mr. O'Loughlen: To your own satisfaction.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I will refer to the great principle of bulk handling. Proposals under this heading have been before the public for 10 years or more. It has been admitted that bulk handling of grain is an economic proposition. Bulk handling has been a plank on the platform of every party represented in this Chamber. The Labour Party put it forward as one of their principal planks. They are very jealous at times when other parties claim that they were the first to introduce the principle. It has been

a plank in the platform of the Liberal Party, and I am certain it is a plank in the platform of the Country Party. Perhaps, too, our independent party of one will desire to own it as a plank. At any rate, bulk handling has been before the people of Western Australia for a good many years past. One of the first real attempts to bring the system into operation was introduced by the Labour Government. Hon. members will remember that when Mr. Bath was Minister for Agriculture in 1913, he authorised an inquiry by the Advisory Board into the merits of the bulk handling scheme. That board was composed of well known men and included Mr. G. L. Sutton, our wheat expert; Mr. A. F. Pearce of the Public Works Department, Mr. W. Lord of the Railway Department, and Mr. E. Stevens of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. After taking exhaustive evidence, the report of the Advisory Board was issued. It contained recommendations which, for the benefit of the House, I will read. They were as follow:—

1. That the system of bulk handling and shipping of wheat be gradually introduced in Western Australia.
2. That steps be taken to introduce the system at once so as to provide for the surplus above the amount already capable of being handled by our present bag facilities.
3. That provision be made for handling from five million to eight million bushels in the season 1915-16, at an estimated cost of £161,700, together with an additional £100,000 for railway facilities.
4. That an elevator trust be formed to determine the sites and arrange for the erection, design, and working of the elevators, and control of the receipt, delivery, weighing, cleaning, inspection, and grading of wheat.
5. That a wheat standards board be formed representing the producing, the milling and exporting, and the elevator interests. The duty of this board shall be to fix the standards or grades of wheat and to hear appeals against the grading by inspectors, and generally to arbitrate upon disputes with respect to the quality of wheat.
6. That the grades of wheat determined upon be as few as are practicable. Tentatively the following grades are suggested:—(a) No. 1, Western Australian Strong White, containing 95 per cent. of strong milling grain, translucent in character. Not smutty. (b) No. 2, Western Australian White, containing 95 per cent. unbleached white milling grain, opaque in character. Not smutty. (c) No. 2, Western Australian White, containing less than 95 per cent. of unbleached white milling grain, opaque in character. (d) No. 3, No grade. (e) No. 4, Screenings. (f) No. 5, Diseased wheat (e.g., smutty wheat).
7. That legislation be framed and passed through Parliament at an early date to provide the administration and control of the system as suggested in this report.
8. That before initiating the bulk handling system

steps be taken to obtain information regarding the different systems in use so that the best of each system may be available for application to Western Australian conditions.

That report was issued in 1914 by the Government of which the member for North-East Fremantle was a member. So impressed were the Government of the day with the desirability of proceeding with the erection of grain elevators for the bulk handling of wheat, that a contract with a firm in Melbourne, to proceed immediately with the work, was on the point of being signed. It was only because the Government went out of office that the work was not proceeded with. I am quite certain that had the Labour Government remained in office grain elevators would have been erected and the system would have been in operation to-day. Had that been the case there would have been no necessity for the Bill which is before us to-day. The company have drafted the Bill on the recommendations contained in the Advisory Board's report, because, although several other attempts have been made to deal with this question, we felt the recommendations of the Advisory Board provided the most sound basis upon which we could work. Later on the Royal Commission on Agriculture investigated this matter and they also reported strongly in favour of the bulk system of handling our grain. I do not think it will be necessary to read their recommendations. They were, however, equally as strong and they recommended the Government to proceed immediately with the erection of grain elevators to handle the wheat. Following that, the Lefroy Government made an attempt to deal with the matter. A Bill was passed to authorise the erection of grain elevators, but hon. members will remember that the Bill was rejected in another place. At that, the matter was allowed to drop. The farming community, however, were fully seized with the necessity for the erection of elevators and were sick and tired of waiting for the Government to undertake the work. They decided to take the matter in hand and the West Australian Grain Growers Co-operative Elevators Ltd. is the outcome of their decision. It was decided by the farmers to raise money among themselves and erect elevators so that they would be independent of any system of Government control. The work was made all the easier because the promoters of the company approached the Federal Government who received them in a very fair spirit. The Federal Government recognised the necessity for the erection of the elevators and were so impressed with the case we were able to put before them, that they readily agreed to advance £550,000 to the company. The Federal Government made certain conditions because they were lending us the money. They required us to raise £1 for every £2 they lent us. It was easy to agree to that proposal

and it was a simple way of dealing with the position. If they lent us £2, all we had to do was to put up £1. We felt that there would be no difficulty in doing that. We realised that it was a good business proposition and the company had no hesitation in agreeing to those terms. The Federal Government also stipulated that the shareholders must be grain growers. Outside speculators, such as millers and other dealers in grain cannot hold shares in a company. Furthermore, shareholders are limited in the number of shares they can take up. It was also agreed that the company could not pay more than eight per cent. dividends on the capital subscribed. That, I am sure, hon. members will admit was a very reasonable restriction.

Mr. Pickering: It is higher than the Westralian Farmers Ltd. pay.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That was the maximum. They cannot make a profit of more than 8 per cent.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes they can, but they can only pay dividends up to 8 per cent.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: There would be no sense in making profits to board.

Hon. P. Collier: There would be if you handled grain for a number of large shareholders and charged them a high price.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Provision is made for the appointment of a board. Another important condition is that the elevator company is bound to handle the grain of every grower, whether a shareholder or not. There is to be no preference to shareholders. The company must handle grain for all alike.

Mr. Pickering: And at the same rate.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes. It is also stipulated that we shall get the necessary statutory authority to operate in Western Australia. That, really, is the object of the Bill. If the Bill be not passed, I am afraid it will be many years before we have bulk handling in Western Australia. There will not be another opportunity.

Mr. Pickering: This is the second.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: It is the third or fourth attempt, and success is now in sight. The farmers have subscribed over 250 thousand shares. That speaks for the farmers' faith in the venture. Moreover, the Federal Government having undertaken to advance practically one bulk of the money for the erection of the elevators, it is an opportunity not to be missed. If we turn it down I am afraid it will be many years before another opportunity occurs. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) in his opposition to the Bill made many incorrect statements quite out of date, from which I shall be able to show that he is not as well acquainted with bulk handling as he imagines. One of his great objections is the lack of information concerning the Bill. He thought the intentions of the Grain Elevator Company were centred entirely on

Fremantle; that whilst we were asking for a monopoly of the handling of grain, we were picking out the only port likely to be a payable proposition, and that our intention was to get that going and then throw out Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton, leaving somebody else to come along and take them.

The Minister for Mines: According to the Bill, he is quite correct.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We have that power.

The Minister for Mines: You may get it, but you won't if I can stop you.

Hon. P. Collier: We will amend that in Committee.

Mr. A. Thomson: I think we will.

The Minister for Mines: If you take on bulk handling you must do the lot or none.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No matter what powers the company may have under the Bill, it has no intention of ignoring the outports.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have you any intention of starting elevators within the next five years?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We have. We have not deviated one iota from our policy. We must start somewhere.

The Minister for Agriculture: Will you get the same assistance from the Federal Government for outports as for Fremantle?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Just the same. We must start at the place which will serve the greatest number of people. And incidentally which will pay best. After that we can go on to the other ports. It is the intention of the company to do so. We have not called on the zones served by the outports to contribute to the capital of the company. Geraldton, Bunbury, and Albany have not been asked to subscribe, and will not be asked until we are proceeding with the erection of elevators at those ports.

Mr. Money: Unfortunately some have been asked.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No general canvass has been made of those districts. It is quite likely that one or two persons there are so fully seized of the importance of the elevators, and have so much faith in the scheme, that they have applied for shares, but no general canvass has been made.

Mr. Money: If you get a monopoly, we ought to be assured that it will be carried out in full.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: In the best interests of all concerned, we intend to carry out the powers given to us.

The Minister for Mines: Then why did you insert that proviso in Clause 3?

Hon. P. Collier: In case they get into difficulties.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Members are at liberty to amend the clause. The company will have no objection to any reasonable amendment.

Hon. P. Collier: There must have been some object in putting it in.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We are quite willing to submit the Bill to a select committee, so that members may be satisfied that the company is bona fide. It would be much better to appoint a committee to go into the matter because, although introduced by the Government, this is a measure is a private Bill conferring a monopoly on a company. I think a select committee should be appointed to go into the question to satisfy hon. members that the statements put forward in support of the Bill are all based on truth.

Mr. Sampson: Will the farmers of Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton have the right to form a company of their own in the event of your company not going ahead at the outports?

The Minister for Mines: Perhaps, after this company gets the plums.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Of course they would not have the right to go wherever they liked. The member for North-East Fremantle held that it was very objectionable to give the company a monopoly. He should remember that the company is debarred from dealing in grain, is not allowed to buy or sell wheat. All that we ask is a monopoly over the elevators.

Hon. P. Collier: That is everything! What else is there?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The Leader of the Opposition raised no objection to the granting of a monopoly for the construction of a railway from Meekatharra to Horse-shoe. Not only was that a monopoly, but it was a departure from the established policy that the State shall own all railways.

Mr. Money: Were they compelled to construct it?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: At all events, the monopoly was granted to the company.

Mr. Chesson: The State has the right to take over the railway at any time.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I am not opposing it, but I point out that the Leader of the Opposition did not raise any objection to it.

Hon. P. Collier: There is no analogy between the two propositions.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No, the company granted the railway monopoly was a private mining company, whereas this is an incorporated company. The member for North-East Fremantle appears to have forgotten that the Fremantle tramways constitute a monopoly of the ratepayers, as against the users of the trams, just as this will be a monopoly of grain-growers as against the users of grain. Some monopolies are for the distinct benefit of the people. The hon. member said there was no monopoly under the American system. He was not correct in that, because in Canada the railway companies control the wheat to the sidings, and will not allow it to be handled in bags, insisting that it must come to the elevators in bulk. We do not ask for any such monopoly. We are not encroaching on the present method of handling grain. To-day the far-

mers send their grain in bags to market, which the hon. member said was the cheaper system for the farmers. We are not encroaching on the farmers' right to send his wheat in bags to market. All that we ask is that we shall have the right to erect elevators for the purpose of handling grain in bulk. The farmer can still send his wheat in bags if he likes. Thus it will be seen that our monopoly is not in any way objectionable. The hon. member also informed the House that the Canadian grain elevators were under Government control. That is not correct. At Port Arthur, which I think he quoted, he said there were 16 companies controlling elevators, and that they were unable to operate successfully until the Government stepped in and took control. The hon. member also said that in response to representations from the farmers, the Governments of two or three of the provinces had appointed Commissioners who had established terminal elevators at various ports. In order to show how wide of the mark was that statement, I shall quote from the report of the Chief Grain Commissioner of Canada, Dr. McGill, presented to the Minister for Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Pickering: For what year?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: For 1914. Dr. McGill stated—

There are 2,558 elevators licensed in the three provinces. Their total storage capacity is estimated at 81,720,000 bushels. None of them is owned by the Dominion Government or the railway companies, and in Alberta and Saskatchewan none of them is owned by the provincial Governments. The Manitoba Government owned and operated a line of elevators for a time, but subsequently leased them to a company. Two or three municipalities experimented with them also, but not with the happiest results. With these exceptions all the elevators are owned and operated by commercial companies or farmers' co-operative companies.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. Pickering: Has there been any change since 1914?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No. The leasing by the Government of Manitoba of their elevators to a co-operative company is confirmed by a work on the "Grain Trade of Western Canada," published by a well-known member of the grain trade operating in opposition to the co-operative elevators. This authority, referring to the operation of Government elevators by the Manitoba Government, says—

This was carried on for two years, sufficiently long to give it a fair trial. Each year there was a heavy loss. Their elevators were then leased to the Grain Growers' Grain Company who now operate the same buildings, not only for warehousing, but also for merchandising of grain. Although

their operations showed a loss at first, it seems now to be on a profitable basis.

The grain elevators of Canada, therefore, are not under the control of the Government or municipal authorities as the member for North-East Fremantle stated. They are run entirely by co-operative companies and their operations, covering a fairly long period and over 2,000 elevators, have been successful, whereas when the Government or municipal authorities tried to run them, they were not successful. The hon. member's argument that it would be better for the Government of Western Australia to run these elevators is not borne out by the experience in Canada. The hon. member also referred to the present system of fixing the fair average quality for wheat. I think he said that the fair average quality was fixed by two officers of the Department of Agriculture. That is quite erroneous. It is fixed by the grain committee of the Chamber of Commerce and a very poor system it is. I understand that the grain committee of the Chamber of Commerce get their agents to send in samples of grain from all over the country, and naturally the poorest class of grain is sent in with the object of reducing the standard to which they have to conform. It is an out-of-date system of arriving at the fair average quality.

Mr. Pickering: You mean the present system here?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes, and if this measure accomplishes nothing else, it will do something to improve the present system. It will enable us to arrive at an accurate standard.

Mr. Pickering: Will it increase the standard?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That will depend largely on the board. The method of arriving at the standard, however, will be more reliable than the present system. Instead of it being in the hands of the grain merchants in the city, it will be in the hands of the board to be appointed under this measure. It will be a step in the right direction.

Mr. Mann: Will it be accepted by the Chamber of Commerce?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes, and when our wheat is sold in Europe it will bear the hall-mark of the Government upon it.

Mr. Mann: Will the overseas markets accept it?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes. The member for North-East Fremantle was concerned to know whether the elevators would pay, and quoted a lot of figures to show they would not. The hon. member reminded me of the story of the Indian regiment. An anti-temperance lecturer stated that in one year 50 per cent. of the teetotalers died, while the mortality amongst drinkers in the regiment was very much less. When his statement was investigated, it was found that there had been only two teetotalers in the regiment and that one of them had died. Consequently the figures were rather misleading. The same might be

said of the hon. member's figures. On the question of cost, Sir Timothy Coghlan, in 1908, investigated this matter on behalf of the Government of New South Wales. In his report he stated—

Some of the objections raised against the adoption of bulk handling for Australian trade must be considered more or less fanciful, seeing that Argentine wheat, which has somewhat similar characteristics to Australian, is brought here in large and increasing quantities in bulk, and I can find no complaints regarding the manner in which it is handled. On the whole there appears to be a saving of about 2s. per ton on the London market on bulk shipments.

That was his conclusion after an exhaustive inquiry when the Government of New South Wales were contemplating the expenditure of a very large sum of money for the erection of elevators. The London and India Dock Company supported Sir Timothy Coghlan's conclusions in these words—

The only comparison of the relative prices for wheat ex ship in bags and bulk is with regard to Argentine grain, and these prices are identical, contracts usually being for bulk or bags and the weight of the bag is considered paid for as grain.

The hon. member also made a strong point of the fact that the farmer was being paid for the bag as if it were grain; the bag was weighed in with the grain and was paid for as grain. The hon. member omitted to mention that the bags, even at to-day's prices, cost 8s. a dozen. A bag weighs about 2¼ lbs., and although the farmer is paid for his bag as if it were wheat, he really loses 4½d. on each bag when wheat is 8s. a bushel.

Mr. Mann: Farmers will still require bags until country elevators are provided.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Quite so. It will take a year or two to erect them and we cannot proceed with the work until we have statutory authority. No doubt bags will be used largely for some considerable time, but when farmers realise the advantages of bulk handling, they will soon cease using bags.

Mr. Pickering: Is 7s. 6d. a dozen a high price for bags?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No, a low price. Bags cannot be bought for 7s. 6d. a dozen to-day; they would cost 9s. 6d. Before the war the cost was 5s. 6d. to 6s. a dozen, but I do not think they will ever come down to that figure again.

Mr. Latham: You can get them for 7s. 2d.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That depends on where they are purchased. While dealing with prices, it might be worth mentioning the London scale of handling charges. The latest available figures are for 1920, and they show that the cheapest rate for handling wheat in bags is 4s. 7d. per ton higher than for handling wheat in bulk. This approximates 1½d. per bushel or 1s. per quarter in favour of the bulk handling. The member for North-East Fremantle, in quoting his figures,

charged up the whole cost of handling, storage, interest and depreciation attendant on a 16 million bushel system to four million bushels of wheat. We have taken out estimates for a scheme capable of handling 16 million bushels in one season.

Mr. Pickering: That is in excess of the present production.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: It is in excess of the present output, but we realise that our wheat production is going ahead by leaps and bounds, and that in a few years' time we shall be exporting far greater quantities than we are at present. The country is being opened up and settled, and in the ordinary course our export of wheat will be very much increased. Therefore, we must make the necessary provision. It would be foolish to restrict the capacity of our elevators to the quantity of wheat produced last year. The hon. member in his criticism, however, took the whole cost of the 16 million bushel scheme as against our present export of four million bushels. This was very unfair. We do not contemplate erecting a 16-million bushel plant right away, but we are making provision for what we are likely to require in the next two years.

Hon. P. Collier: We shall export more than four million bushels.

The Premier: A four million bushel terminal elevator can handle 20 million bushels.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: This only provides for the terminal elevator at Fremantle. That is the weakness in the hon. member's criticism. He also made an undue allowance for depreciation.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Three per cent.?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The elevators will be mostly constructed of concrete, which improves with age. The allowance of three per cent. is too high.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The depreciation on machinery is as high as 10 per cent., and three per cent. is a very fair average to allow.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The Victorian Government in 1916 decided to investigate the bulk handling system. They engaged Messrs. Metcalf & Co., the same firm which I understand advised the Labour Government in 1914. This firm has a large connection, and is reputed to be one of the leading firms concerned in the erection of grain elevators. They went into the matter very exhaustively. I have here a copy of their report, which any hon. member may peruse. There are over 100 pages in the volume.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They went into it so exhaustively that they turned it down.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Not at all. They show conclusively that the saving by the bulk handling system would range from 2.4d. to 3.5d. per bushel. They went minutely into the question and found that this would be the result. The Victorian Railway Commissioners also went into the matter and drew up a report commenting upon the con-

clusions arrived at by this firm. They practically bore out what Messrs. Metcalf & Co. had said. The Railway Commissioners stated—

With wheat at 4s. 6d. per bushel and bags at 10s. per dozen, the bag loss per bushel, namely, 2.658d. added, makes the total cost under the bag system 4.981d. With wheat at 3s. a bushel and bags at 7s. 6d., the additional bag loss, namely, 2.05d., makes the total cost under the bag system 4.373d. The advantage to the bulk system in respect of export wheat therefore varies from a minimum of 1.793d. to a maximum of 3.231d. per bushel. The advantage to the bulk handling system in respect of wheat for home consumption therefore varies from 1.452d. to 2.89d. per bushel, and having regard to both classes of wheat the minimum saving per bushel is 1.452d. and the maximum 3.231d. as stated above.

They also say—

(a) That the production of wheat and the conditions surrounding the handling, storage and marketing in this State are such that the bulk handling system may be adopted with advantage to the farmer, the railways, and the State generally.

They then went on to say that the system should be introduced and maintained on a self-supporting basis. Messrs. Metcalf & Co. made an offer to the New South Wales Government, who were contemplating the erection of silos. They offered to construct the silos themselves at their own expense, and hand the silos over to the Government at the end of 25 years, free of charge. In the meantime they were going to handle the wheat at 2d. per bushel less than under the bag system. This firm must have been satisfied with the prospects or they would not have made this offer, and must also have been satisfied that the bulk handling system was cheaper than the bag system. They were going to make so much money out of the concern that at the end of 25 years they could hand the silos over to the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are only advisory engineers. They are not contractors and could not have done the work.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: They were prepared to find the money and the New South Wales Government were sorry they did not accept the offer.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We heard that before in another case, which some of you strongly condemned.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Reference has been made to the necessity for having bagged wheat in a ship's cargo. The member for North-East Fremantle stated that notwithstanding the fact that a large amount of wheat was carried in bulk, it was necessary to have a certain quantity carried in bags. I think the hon. member said that 25 per cent. of the wheat sent overseas had to be bagged.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I said a third.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That is worse still. A great deal depends on the structure

of the vessel. There must be a certain amount of bagged wheat in order to stabilise the rest of the cargo. In Canada many of the ships are specially built for the carriage of wheat, and in Ontario the grain is bagged in a certain way.

Mr. Latham: These bags are specially provided for the ship.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The grain is spouted into the hold in bulk, and the cargo is trimmed up to a certain level below the deck, so as to allow of the required number of tiers of bags to be placed on top. The bags belong to the ship. They are filled by two gangs of men, one party holding open the mouth of the sack, and the other filling the sack with grain by means of two-handle scoops. The bags are neither weighed nor sewn. They are tied, and then stowed on the top of the bulk cargo. When the vessels arrive in Great Britain the ties are cut and the grain turned out into the bulk cargo and elevated with the whole.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is so in some parts.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Wheat is bagged in this way merely to stabilise the rest of the cargo. It is done by the ship, and the bags are made of special material so that they will last a considerable time.

Mr. Pickering: Most of the ports in Europe are now handling wheat in bulk.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Nearly every port in Europe is specially provided with bulk handling facilities.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are perhaps three or four such ports in England. I made inquiries into the matter when I was there.

Mr. Money: These facilities are found in many ports in England.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Assuming that there are only four ports in England furnished with bulk handling facilities, the fact remains that 80 per cent. of the grain imported into Great Britain is handled by elevators.

Mr. Davies: And carried in bulk.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes. The member for Sussex referred to Continental ports. I can give him a list of these ports. Amongst others may be mentioned Marseilles, Havre, Rouen, Amsterdam, Hamburg, all of which, besides many others, are furnished with facilities for handling wheat in bulk. In two or three places where wheat is delivered on the Continent in bags, the bags are opened at the port and the wheat emptied into lighters, and taken up the canals and rivers in bulk. This shows that the bulk handling system is recognised as the more suitable. A farmer can still use bags if he wishes to do so, and if he thinks that bags are cheaper and that this offers the better system for the handling of his grain. The Bill does not take from him the right to use bags.

Mr. Latham: He can still send his money to Calcutta.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The Grain Elevator Company will have nothing to do

with the wheat pool, or with the buying or selling of wheat. It will simply be storing the wheat.

Mr. Pickering: It could not conflict with it.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: In no way whatsoever. The wheat is merely placed in the control of the company for its transfer from one place to another, and for its grading and cleaning. The insinuation that the company would play any part in raising the price of wheat, or in trafficking in that commodity is not founded on fact. All we are concerned about is the elimination of the great waste that is taking place in the handling of wheat. We wish to reduce the farmer's costs. We desire to improve his marketing. Every grower is entitled to the privileges of the grain elevator system, and there is no compulsion whatever. The member for North-East Fremantle, in concluding his remarks, urged the company to proceed slowly, and generally not to be in a hurry. That, let me say, is the policy of the company's board. We have not rushed things, but are going along slowly, and finding this policy to our advantage. For instance, there is the fact that the cost of materials has been decreasing. Moreover, new inventions are being brought under our notice every week.

Hon. P. Collier: You have not been able to go any faster; you had no statutory authority.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We have been anticipating this measure.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a nice state of affairs, to be anticipating Parliament!

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: It is indeed an awful state of affairs. No doubt that is where the fraud comes in. However, the board thought it wise to make all possible inquiries regarding the best systems of bulk handling.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a new way of doing business, anyhow, to anticipate the authority of Parliament.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We are not committed to anything; we are merely feeling our way and ascertaining which is the best system to introduce. That, briefly, is the policy of the board. Let me give an instance where it has been to the company's advantage not to proceed too quickly. Our original scheme contemplated the erection of elevators at country sidings. We learn now that it is quite possible we may be able to do away with country elevators altogether. The cost of erecting these elevators at sidings was a very considerable item, because in each case it was necessary to instal machinery for working the elevator, and to provide power, and to station skilled labour on the spot. For a large part of the year that labour would be idle, and the plant and machinery would also be idle. But now we hear of a system of travelling elevators—elevators that will proceed on wheels along the railway from

siding to siding. Such an elevator sucks the wheat out of the storage bins and deposits it in the trucks. Thus the one staff handling the travelling elevator, which will have its own power, can effect a very considerable saving, as compared with the system of a number of elevators at various sidings. The smaller sidings, which feared that they would be left out of the scheme, will be able to have their wheat handled by the travelling elevator. I mention this just by the way, in order to show that we have been considering a new idea which, in all probability, will be one of the features of the scheme when consummated. Now, with regard to bulk handling generally, I have here a report by Sir Thomas R. Price, Commissioner of Railways and Ports in the Union of South Africa.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A high authority, too.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That gentleman visited Europe, the United States and Canada for the purpose of investigating the storage and handling of grain—making the trip especially for that purpose.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And does he not say that the system of bulk handling was unsuccessful until it was controlled by the Government through commissioners?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: South African conditions are very similar to Australian conditions. I think the member for North-East Fremantle made a point of it that conditions in the United States and Canada were not similar to ours. But this report was made by a gentleman who went fully into the whole question, having in mind conditions very similar to those obtaining in this State.

Mr. Money: In Canada it is winter when here it is summer.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: In the course of his report, which was presented to the Parliament of the South African union, Sir Thomas Price says:—

It has to be remembered that in America the United States began with a plan of bagging, but very soon abandoned it because of the expense and the time occupied in doing the work; and Canada, with no inducement whatever than to secure the best and cheapest results, adopted the later practice of the United States in preference to the European method of bagging. All, with one accord, are abundantly satisfied they acted wisely in Canada in doing so; and, if it had not been done from the outset, that they would very soon have been driven by force of circumstances to take the step. Further, the railway staffs in the United States and Canada, from railway presidents down to the foremen in charge and the labourers employed in the handling of the grain, are equally unanimous and unwavering in their conviction that bulk handling of grain is the quickest, cheapest, and altogether the

best method. The testimony of steamship companies is to the same effect.

In the face of that opinion we would be very foolish if we did not make some effort to keep pace with the up-to-date methods of other countries in handling one of their chief products. Sir Thomas Price goes on to say—

I was very careful at every place throughout my tour to seek unbiassed testimony as to the experience in practice of the handling of grain in bulk on the railways and on the steamers. I consulted steamship owners, the managing directors, managers, and other principal officers of the great steamship lines trading to and from America; captains and other staff of the steamers, including the steamers on the lakes; railway presidents, vice-presidents, officers, and staff, down to the men actually handling the grain; grain buyers and sellers; brokers; produce agents; corn produce, and commercial exchange presidents and secretaries; farmers, and representatives of farmers' co-operative societies; Government Ministers and their principal permanent officials; the Director of Agriculture for the United States and his principal officers; the president, secretary, and other officers of the United States Railway and Commerce Commission, among many others. And I witnessed the actual operation repeatedly for myself. The gentlemen I interviewed differed in opinion and in practice on matters of detail, such as whether it was better to construct the storage bins in the elevator round or square in shape; whether the weighing of the grain should take place before or after it was cleaned; whether automatic mechanical weighing or recording the weights by a certificated weigher was preferable; whether the terminal elevators should be placed near the river, lake, or sea frontage, or alternatively set back a considerable distance to give room for merchandise warehouses, and connect the elevators with the water frontages by means of an extensive system of covered-in belt conveyors (generally spoken of as "galleries") and so on. But on the question of bulk handling of grain on railways and on ships, the provision and use of elevators, and the advantages of the belt system of conveyor over any other means for handling and conveyance, the consensus of testimony was quite remarkably complete and emphatic. Everyone held they were quicker, cheaper, and in every way more satisfactory, and that it would be impracticable to handle the present volume of the grain trade by any other means. Further, it was said "that any attempts to revert to bag loading would throttle a large part of the existing trade, would put an end to expansion, would increase railway working costs and diminish the service from the rolling-stock, would necessitate increased accommodation at stations, and so increase the cost of transporting and

handling the grain as to either grievously cripple the producer or increase the cost to the buyer—probably both."

The Victorian Royal Commission's report comments on the foregoing—

Every word of the last sentence is peculiarly applicable to the Australian bag method, as farmers are beginning to realise. Sir Thomas Price went abroad seeking for a system to supplant the South African system of handling maize in bags. That he was absolutely converted to the modern method of bulk handling is indicated by his next paragraph: "My inquiries and observations constrained me to come to the same conclusion, and that what is claimed in the case of America would be found to be the case in South Africa also in the main."

So far as I can see, Sir Thomas Price's report says nothing about any necessity for the system being under Government control. With regard to the bulk handling in vessels, Sir Thomas Price says:—

There was the same emphatic uniform opinion in respect of the expedition, lesser cost, and other advantages on the whole in favour of bulk handling of grain in steamers. Great surprise was expressed to me by the steamship authorities in America that it was thought there would, in face of the well known results, be any hesitation on the part of steamers trading with South Africa in welcoming the change. One of the authorities who spoke to me to this effect was the representative of a steamship line that had, many years ago, insisted for a time on grain that had been brought by rail to New York in bulk in the trucks being re-bagged before being shipped. After experience of bulk shipment they are not disposed to revert to bag shipment.

Similar views were expressed to Sir Thomas Price in Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam. The objection formerly advanced, that there were no facilities for bulk handling at outports, has largely disappeared. We have had various statements as to the savings to be effected. Those savings must amount to a very considerable sum. If this State had saved the cost of the bags used last year, it would have saved something like £100,000.

Mr. Latham: All that money went out of the State.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes, to India.

Hon. P. Collier: If you had had the elevators, you would have saved that amount in one year?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: No; but we would have saved that money going out of the State.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a different thing.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: If last year we had had the elevators which the Government of 1914 proposed to erect in that year, we would have saved something like £300,000 going out of this country for bags alone.

Hon. P. Collier: But what would be the difference between cost of handling in bulk

and cost of handling in bags on last year's shipments?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The total value of the bags on the largest export of grain that ever went through Fremantle was only £66,000.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: What price is the hon. member allowing for bags?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I am allowing 8s. per dozen.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: If the hon. member had been a grain grower, he would have known that he could not have bought bags at that price last year. My contention, however, is that grain elevators would have saved this State sending beyond its borders last year a sum of approximately £300,000 for bags alone. I do not say that that will be the case every year henceforth, seeing that the price of bags is falling. This country last year sent away £300,000 merely for bags.

Hon. P. Collier: And in any case this country would have sent away a considerable proportion of that amount—even if we had had elevators.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: But nothing like the full amount. A great deal of that money was sent out of the country unnecessarily. If only the member for North-East Fremantle had a farm, he would be in favour of this Bill. I think I have covered the ground fairly well, but I wish to emphasise that there is no question whatever about the advantages of bulk handling. They are admitted all round. Bulk handling must come in this State. Which is the best method of bulk handling is, no doubt, open to argument. Some people hold—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That the time is not yet ripe for bulk handling.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We must make a start sooner or later, but I acknowledge that we ought to hasten slowly.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Before the ten adjournment in reply to a question by the Leader of the Opposition, I said that the amount of money sent out of the State last year for bags was approximately £300,000. Even if we reduced that figure to £200,000 it would still represent a considerable sum of money. The question was whether there would be any monetary saving to the farmers through the bulk handling system in lieu of the bagging system. As to that aspect, supposing there was no saving to the farmers whatever, we must remember that a very large sum of money will be spent in this State. That money would be spent in labour and the country, directly and indirectly, would reap the benefit.

Mr. Willcock: That is a poor argument.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: The hon. member should tell that to his electors.

Mr. Willcock: It would be useless expenditure under any circumstances.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: If the cost to the farmer were the same for bulk handling as it would be for bags, spending the money in the country would be far preferable to sending that money to India, for instance.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How can you spend the money if you do not get it?

Mr. Willcock: You would be using capital expenditure for the purpose you suggest.

Mr. A. Thomson: They will still have to get bags to a certain extent.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I am dealing with the two aspects mentioned. By using bags we have to send £300,000 out of the country. I will assume for the sake of argument that it costs the farmer just as much money to have his grain dealt with under the bulk handling system. In that event the money spent under the latter system would be kept in this State.

Hon. P. Collier: That would not justify the expenditure of a huge amount of capital merely for keeping that money in the country without making a saving.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I think it is a good idea.

Hon. P. Collier: The farmers did not look at it from that standpoint.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: That is one of the reasons for their support.

Mr. Latham: It is a matter of patriotism.

Hon. P. Collier: That was not one of the reasons.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: It was one of the reasons. If that money is spent in Western Australia in wages, the labourers and others who benefit from the expenditure of that money will have more to spend on the products of the farm.

Hon. P. Collier: You say now that the farmer wants to keep the money in the country, yet at the same time he is crying out against the tariff and wants to send his money out of the country for the purchase of machinery.

Mr. Latham: In that case they are handing it over to someone else.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: It must be admitted by all sides of the House that there is no question as to the desirability of bulk handling of grain. Every authority is agreed on that point. Bulk handling is without doubt the best system for dealing with grain. It has been in use in Canada and America for some 40 years, and it stands to reason that if there were anything wrong with bulk handling, those countries would be loth to continue operating under such a system. Instead of that, however, other countries such as the Argentine, South Africa, and other grain-producing countries are gradually introducing this system. Western Australia must keep pace with other countries. We are depending to a large extent on our output of wheat. It is becoming the staple industry of Western Australia and we must provide modern and up-to-date methods of handling grain. The time is opportune for initiating a bulk handling scheme. It may take a year or two before the elevators can be erected, and the

sooner we have the power to initiate the system the better it will be for all concerned. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) preached a go-slow policy. He favoured marking time and doing nothing. That policy does not commend itself to me.

Hon. P. Collier: You have already admitted that the mark-time policy imposed by the Legislative Council last year has been beneficial to you.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: We have gained something in that direction but there is a limit to the mark-time policy.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you reached that limit?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Yes, we have. We want the statutory authority to commence operations. If members feel that this Bill provides too much authority to the company, I think we are quite prepared to have the condition restricted or reduced. I think we are agreeable to the concessions being reduced if members think we are receiving too much. I think the best way would be to appoint a select committee to go into the whole question. They could consider the Bill from start to finish. We have no desire to obtain any concession that would be injurious to the best interests of the country. All we want is a reasonable Bill to safeguard our position.

Mr. Pickering: Do you not think the Bill could be amended in Committee to meet any objections?

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I do, but no doubt it will have to be amended. It is the rule that a select committee of the House shall be appointed to consider Bills which are of a private nature. I take it this Bill is practically a private Bill. I wish to assure hon. members again that it is the policy of the company to initiate a system that will give satisfaction to the grain growers of Western Australia and the people who are depending on them.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [7.40]: I am in favour of the bulk-handling system, and I recognise, as the member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith) has stated, that the trend with regard to the handling of wheat is favourable to the bulk-handling system. When we realise that the system has been extended to so many ports in different parts of the world, it cannot be regarded as a failure. I was very much impressed, however, with the speech delivered by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) regarding the commercial difficulties of this State. The figures he gave and the quotations from impartial sources he placed before members would seem to indicate that—the member for North Perth is a Scotchman and as such should counsel delay—he would be better advised if he counselled delay, instead of rushing this proposition.

Mr. Pickering: We have been rushing it for the last year or two.

Mr. Latham: For the last four years at any rate.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It has been before the people for the past ten years.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I wish to repudiate the statement that the Labour Party as a party are opposed to this measure because it will result in the lessening of labour available at the ports. That is a statement which has been made in different parts of the State purely for political propaganda purposes.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: I gave you credit for being the first party to have bulk handling on your platform.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is so. On the other hand we have had people going through the country districts endeavouring to stimulate interest in this movement, and they have been making use of these statements as political propaganda. They have told the people that they should take shares in the company; that the Labour Party are against this Bill as they are against the farming community all the time, and further, that the Labour Party are up against the principle of bulk handling because it will mean less employment for the lumpers. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) when he was in the Geraldton district, said that I was personally opposed to the bulk handling system on that account. I repudiate that statement. The Labour Party are not up against the bulk handling system. I have not heard this question definitely or officially discussed by the members of the Labour Party, and I think that if one counted heads it would be found that there is not a majority against the bulk handling system so far as our section of the House is concerned.

Mr. MacCallum: On the other hand, we have always been in favour of bulk handling.

Mr. WILLCOCK: As the member for South Fremantle has interjected, the Labour Party have favoured the system for a long time past.

Hon. P. Collier: We were the first party to take the matter up and have an investigation carried out.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Now we are merely carrying on your good work.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yet people go round the country and say the Labour Party are up against this system.

Mr. Latham: At any rate such statements do not decrease the value of the Bill.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We had one of the most earnest advocates of the system reading at great length about Arkwright doing something 150 years ago regarding the installation of machinery.

Mr. MacCallum: He did not understand the position.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Evidently not, seeing that he did not give members the right quotation; he did not speak about the right type of machinery introduced by that inventor. The statements must have been made by someone in all seriousness, or the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) would

not have felt it incumbent upon him to read extracts of what different members had said.

Hon. P. Collier: That was the inference he was drawing.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am not opposed to bulk handling as a principle.

Mr. A. Thomson: Will you vote for the Bill?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Certainly, if it is amended as I desire. But if it were State money that was to be expended in this project, I would counsel delay because, during the past twelve months, we have seen the value of waiting. A similar Bill was defeated last year. Even if a start were to be made on the elevators straight away, the company would still reap considerable advantage by the delay of twelve months. In New South Wales the expenditure on the erection of elevators and silos has been enormous, and when we consider the interest to be paid on that huge capital expenditure it is doubtful whether the resultant saving will counterbalance the cost. All must recognise the efficiency of machinery. But we can have machinery so costly that it is not commercially profitable to use it. The final test should be whether or not it pays. Having regard to the huge capital expenditure involved in the erection of silos and elevators, and the conversion of rolling stock, I am not convinced that bulk handling will pay, and, as I say, if this were a Government measure, I would counsel delay. However, it is a private concern, and I believe in the liberty of people to do what they like so long as they do not infringe on the rights of others. The Federal Government are finding the money and, except as individual taxpayers, we are not concerned.

Mr. Money: It is only a loan.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If the State Government were lending the money, my attitude towards the project would be very different. I have said that machinery can be too costly to be profitably employed. Anybody with experience of outback mining fields knows that frequently mining companies will dig a hole in the ground and erect an immense pile of machinery, only to find that they cannot get enough out of the hole to render the machinery economically profitable. During the last two years, in my electorate a company erected a plant at a cost of from £18,000 to £20,000, and then found that it would only do as much work as one man had been doing previously.

Mr. A. Thomson: He must have been a pretty good man.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. He was a brother of the member for Cne (Mr. Chesson). Many things can be done, but only at too great a cost. We often hear that we ought to be producing cotton, tobacco, and other commodities. We can do it, but only at a cost.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We must take a certain risk or we shall never make a start.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am prepared to let the company take any risk they like, but I have to protect the interests of my electors in relation to the Bill.

Mr. Pickering: You can amend the Bill.

Mr. Money: Cut out the proviso to Clause 3.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Then my objection to the Bill would be removed. The measure is practically the same as that introduced last session, which contained this same objectionable provision. I raised strong opposition to it then. I thought it was only inserted as camouflage to secure the support of those at the outports, and that after the monopoly was once secured, those outports would be forgotten.

Mr. Pickering: Why not give a monopoly in respect of Fremantle?

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is just what the Bill seeks to do. A monopoly would be secured at Fremantle. If the monopoly is given at all, the monopolists should take a broad view of the whole of the State, and make arrangements accordingly. We know that the policy of the company is to build an elevator at Fremantle, and that will be the end of it.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: No, no.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Then why has not the company gone to Geraldton and Bunbury and Albany and sought to obtain shareholders, so that the whole of the work might go on simultaneously?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: That could not be.

Mr. Money: There is only 12 months difference now.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If we are to have the system in this State it should be applied, not merely to Perth and Fremantle, but to the State as a whole, including the outports, where, indeed, the elevators should be erected first. Every now and then some member, with tongue in cheek, declaims against centralisation; yet the first opportunity we have for installing a new system, we must have it in Perth and Fremantle alone. Why not have it in Bunbury, or Geraldton, or Albany, so that we may develop the outback portions of the State?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We start at Fremantle because there we can serve the greatest number of people.

Mr. Money: At the other ports less capital would be required.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That view should not actuate the company.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: That is one of the good reasons.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The capital cost of an elevator to be operated at one of the smaller outports would be considerably less than the cost entailed at Fremantle.

Mr. Pickering: Is your port sufficiently equipped for the purpose?

Mr. WILLCOCK: I hope it will be by the time the company is ready. As this is in the nature of an experiment, we should venture upon the smallest expenditure first.

Mr. A. Thomson: You do not regard this as an experiment?

Mr. WILLCOCK: In this State it is, and there are grave doubts as to whether or not it will be economically successful.

Mr. Latham: You do not believe that we are going to cease wheat growing?

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, but I think it is about time that, instead of increasing facilities for the export of wheat in the raw state, we should be doing something else with it.

Mr. Money: We cannot get markets for wheat in other than the raw state.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I have heard that before. Yet we can get markets for our flour.

Mr. A. Thomson: Then why don't we?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Because, through the action of the wheat pool, the price charged to local flour millers does not allow them to compete with flour gristed in other parts of the world. Because of that, we cannot get the trade.

Hon. P. Collier: We got the trade when wheat was reduced to 7s. for export.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. Our flour mill in Geraldton was working three shifts, but when the price of wheat was raised from 7s. 8d. to 9s. the mill had to close down; and although it has since re-opened, it has not been able to find employment for more than one shift. Because the price of wheat is fixed too high in Australia our flour millers cannot compete with those of America and other countries, particularly in respect of Java and other places where Geraldton used to do a considerable trade in flour. Instead of increasing facilities for the export of our wheat, we should be endeavouring to increase the quantity of wheat used up within the State, whether in dairying or pig-raising or gristing. Any such project should meet with our warmest approval.

Mr. A. Thomson: In pre-war days we could not keep the Katanning mill going three shifts a day.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We could keep the Geraldton mill going. As the farmers are putting their own money into this concern, I have no great objection to the Bill, provided they take a broad outlook of the situation. However, I object to monopolies unless they are in the hands of the State. The term provided for this monopoly is too long. We should not give away for practically nothing this right over such a long period without knowing what the effect will be, and side by side with this right we have to remember that the company will receive the advantage of a large sum of public money. We do not know what the effect will be. The company are out to erect silos at Fremantle, and when they have secured the cream of the trade, they may be content to sit down and not attempt to extend the system to other parts of the State.

Mr. A. Thomson: Not if you cut out the proviso to Clause 3.

Mr. WILLCOCK: When a similar measure was before us last year, I moved an amendment to cut out a similar proviso.

Mr. A. Thomson: I will support you on this occasion.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am pleased to have that assurance. If the hon. member, as acting Leader of the Country Party, can guar-

antee that the whole of his party will support him in that, I will vote for the second reading.

Hon. P. Collier: They had better bring it before their executive.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is easily seen that the company might only intend to erect a silo at Fremantle. They have made no effort to get their shares taken up elsewhere than in the Fremantle zone.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What would be the sense of getting shares taken up in the Geraldton zone if we did not intend to start there immediately?

Mr. WILLCOCK: It should be the company's intention to start at Geraldton immediately. The company will have only 12 months, and they will have to get a hustle on if they are going to get their share capital subscribed in the other zones within that space of time.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Will you help us in the Geraldton district?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Certainly, but I would like more information as to whether the scheme will be commercially profitable before I would advise any of my friends to put their money into it.

Mr. Pickering: You would not object to the shareholders' list including other than wheatgrowers?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Not at all. The capital of the company is too small to permit of them starting operations except at one port. If the system is installed in the Fremantle zone, it will cost the farmers in my zone an extra $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. to take advantage of the bulk handling scheme. Last year it was stated that the Westralian Farmers Ltd. were not interested in the measure authorising the construction of elevators. We were informed that it was an entirely new company. When the Bill was introduced into the Federal Parliament, however, we found that the Westralian Farmers Ltd. were the people whose names were on the Bill.

Mr. Pickering: Someone had to father it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes. Last year, however, we were told that this was to be an entirely new company, and yet three or four months later we find that the Westralian Farmers Ltd. are the people who are taking over the concern.

Mr. Pickering: The other company was not formed at that time.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It was stated last year that a considerable sum of money had been subscribed, and that the company would be formed. I am pleased that the Bill provides that the company shall not have power to deal in wheat, but even this does not sufficiently safeguard the position. With this company there may be subsidiary companies, and the company may be subsidiary to the Westralian Farmers Ltd. I have read something of America's experiences with regard to the bulk handling of wheat as a result of private people owning elevators and being allowed to deal in grain. An

examination of the transactions revealed that though they had bought wheat of seven or eight different qualities, when it came to selling the grain, a much greater quantity was sold as being of a higher grade than that at which it was purchased.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: That could not happen here.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There are some pretty shrewd business heads in America, and I maintain that it could happen here. Whenever the commercial system exists, there will be found people ready to take advantage of any opportunity. If the Westralian Farmers Ltd. are dealing in wheat and the grain elevators company are storing the wheat, there is nothing to prevent the wheat being sold at a higher grade than that on which it was bought.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: They would not have the certificate for it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is why I urge that the man who gives the certificate should be a Government servant, and not an employee of the company.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The fact that he was working for the Government would not prevent him from committing a fraud.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I can only say that I have a good deal of faith in the integrity of Government officials.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: They are no better than other men.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I have a good deal of doubt about people who are engaged in working commercial concerns of this description.

Hon. P. Collier: A commercial man is out for profits.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, he has something to gain by indulging in immoral practices. Let me outline the facts given in an American magazine. Of first grade wheat 10 per cent. was purchased, but when the grain was sold 30 per cent. of first grade was recorded. Of second grade wheat they received 50 per cent. and sold 50 per cent. It will be noted that some of this second grade wheat was sold as first grade wheat. Of third grade wheat they received 35 per cent. and sold only 15 per cent.; the remaining 20 per cent. was sold as second class wheat. The balance was sold in about the same proportions as it was bought. Only 10 per cent. of the wheat purchased was certified as being of first grade, and yet after it had been in the silos 30 per cent. was sold as first grade. We ought to be particularly careful to guard against anything of this kind, even though we stipulate that the company shall not deal in grain. The Government should have sufficient control over the officials so that they could be removed from office if circumstances warranted this course of action. This would be some guarantee of the integrity of the people upon whose report regarding the grade of the wheat the farmer will receive payment. I am pleased with the assurance

given by the member for Katanning that he will support me in endeavouring to have deleted the proviso to Clause 3, which is so objectionable. If that assurance embraces the support of the whole of the Country Party, the motion for the second reading will have my support.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.12]: I intend to support the second reading, and I think a majority of members present will do likewise. The unfortunate proviso to Clause 3 of the Bill is causing a good deal of uneasiness, particularly among country members who see in it a possible source of injury to country interests. We have on many occasions voiced the need for the country ports receiving their fair share of trade, and a proviso of this description in an important measure involving a large amount of shipping must cause uneasiness. I sincerely hope it will be possible to make it obligatory on the company to establish elevators at different country centres within the time stated, or alternatively within an extended time. This would, to a large extent, remove any feeling of uneasiness. With the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock), I agree that it would have been a very nice compliment to the country and would have shown that there was sincerity in our advocacy of country interests if, instead of the projected erection of this elevator in the closely settled centre of Fremantle, the first one were erected at Bunbury, Albany, or Geraldton. I hope that those responsible for the Bill will see the urgent necessity of living up to some of the claims we make when we are in the country.

Mr. SIMONS (East Perth) [8.14]: After very carefully considering the clauses of this Bill I have come to the conclusion that with certain safeguards which I hope can be fixed in Committee, the motion for the second reading should meet with the approval of the House. We have heard a great deal about the progress of Western Australia; we have heard a great deal about its future as a grain producing country; we have heard a great deal about the necessity for developing the country on big schemes and with big plant. Of course I recognise that the handling of wheat on the elevator system is really a public utility. It should be placed in the same category as the railway service, the water service, and the tramway service. It is no use getting up into the clouds of idealism and starting something of an impracticable nature, when what we should do is to start upon solid foundations. While it may be ideal for the State to construct grain elevators, I do not see any possibility of so costly a scheme being originated by the State for the next five or ten years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The State could finance it as well as a company.

Mr. SIMONS: The State has not done so, although it has had every opportunity in the past. We should get on with the develop-

ment of the country instead of talking so much about the necessity for doing so. In this particular case the farmers have set a good example in the way of self-help. City folk are often apt to regard farmers as people who are for ever running to the Government instead of helping themselves. We now find that settlers on the land are prepared to put up their own good money to establish a system which they believe will modernise the methods of wheat handling. I have seen this system in operation in Canada. We can never claim to be a progressive country until we have initiated something of the kind here. It is no use boasting about the progress we are making until we fall into line with other countries. To oppose this particular system of handling wheat is akin to advocating the abolition of motor cars and reverting to the tip-dray period of our civilisation. Since the State cannot carry out the work let someone else have a chance of doing so. We have often heard it said that we do not get enough return from the Commonwealth Government, or from the revenue of the Federal Treasury, or from the establishment of federation. Here is an instance showing Federal backing to the extent of something like £400,000 should this scheme be approved by the Western Australian Parliament.

Mr. A. Thomson: It will provide work which is badly needed.

Mr. SIMONS: We ought to be consistent about things. We now have an opportunity of getting some Federal money circulated in this State. During the war practically every pound that was raised by the various loans was used to bolster up manufactures on the other side of Australia. We got very little help ourselves from those concerns. That is another reason why I am in favour of this Bill. We shall get some hard-earned money returned from the Commonwealth to assist us in developing a part of Western Australia. There are some amendments I should like to see made to the Bill in Committee. The Bill provides for giving the sole right to a certain company to carry on this form of business, that right extending over a period of 25 years. The leases that are proposed to be given for the terminal elevator at Fremantle will have a duration of 99 years. It seems to me that the leases should be collateral with the term specified for the giving of these sole rights, and I hope that in Committee a proviso will be inserted in the Bill to meet this position. I also hope to see inserted in the measure certain safeguards such as will place the outside ports on the same footing as Fremantle. I do not think that any man who applies intelligent consideration to the welfare of this country can look with complacency upon one bloated seaport and one bloated capital in each State, but must have regard for the necessity for handling all our public affairs upon decentralisation methods. I hope that in Committee some amendment will be made to ensure

that the ports of Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury are given equal opportunity with Fremantle. Generally speaking we should be opposed to monopolies, which are distasteful to most of us. In this case, however, no one else seems to want to go into the business but this particular company. Apparently, the company has brains behind it, and possesses sufficient public confidence to raise the necessary capital. I have special confidence in the promoters of this company from the fact that they comprise among others Mr. W. D. Johnson and Mr. T. H. Bath, both of whom are reputable men and whose names are sufficient guarantee to warrant me in having faith in the company. Mr. Johnson has taken a deep and intelligent interest in the handling of wheat in Australia, and indeed was the father of the first wheat pool. I have the greatest respect for his ideas. I do not claim that he invented the wheat pool, because that was first invented by Joseph of Egypt. However, Mr. Johnson has shown that he knows a good deal about wheat handling, which constitutes a further recommendation in his favour. As a large amount of money is involved in this undertaking it is fair that the company should be guaranteed the sole right to do this work for 25 years. It is many years now since there was any big public enterprise shown in Western Australia, or since any great developmental work was launched. People are constantly making flamboyant speeches about the need for developing the State, but what the State needs is that something should be done. Of later years there has not been launched any scheme worth more than, say, £50,000. In the case under review we have an opportunity of launching a scheme involving an expenditure of about three-quarters of a million pounds. This will be one of the best advertisements the State can possibly have. It will be evidence that we are going to do something instead of talking about it. With the reservations I have made I propose to support the Bill.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [8.20]: I intend to support the Bill, because I consider that when the farmers of Western Australia ask the legislature to assist them in an undertaking that they are largely financing themselves, the least we can do is to carry out their wishes. Farmers play a very important part in the life of this State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They rule it.

Mr. LATHAM: It is about time they took up an attitude of that sort.

Mr. Simons: I hope that power does not make them drunk.

Mr. LATHAM: They are prepared to find the money for the purpose of floating this company. The gentlemen at the head of this company have evidently appealed to the wise men of the Commonwealth Parliament to assist them. Provided the Bill will do justice to Western Australia, there can be no opposition to it. The question of monopolies has been raised. I venture to say that two com-

panies of this kind could not exist in this State, because there would not be enough work for two to do, nor enough return for the expense involved. The farmer does not believe in centralisation. When a scheme like this is started it must have a beginning at some point, and the point chosen in this case is Fremantle. There cannot be any great objection to that, for the reason that Fremantle is better situated for the reception of wheat than any other port in the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The principle of decentralisation does not apply when the big departmental stores send their goods out.

Mr. LATHAM: That does not affect the Bill. The farmers are anxious to be able to extend the principle as quickly as possible to the other ports. The clause to which exception has been taken will not do the least bit of harm, or injure the chances of the other ports in the State of obtaining terminal elevators later on. This proviso is put in to protect the company. Later on it may not be in the interests of certain individuals to allow this company to operate. It may be that this company, which should effect a tremendous saving to the farmers as well as to the State, may become a big financial concern, and it may not be to the interest of some particular persons to allow it to continue. If this clause is eliminated a very necessary protection to the company will be taken away. I must associate myself with the member for East Perth in his praise of Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bath. I should also like to add to the list the names of Mr. W. N. Hedges, the member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith), and Mr. Basil Murray. We have in these gentlemen people who have been connected with concerns that have proved successful. The fact of their being associated with the company must ensure for it considerable prosperity.

Hon. P. Collier: Those opinions were not held when Mr. Johnson and Mr. Bath were associated with the Government of this country. It was not held then that it meant prosperity for the State.

Mr. LATHAM: At the time when the Labour Government were in office there was a tremendous drought, from which the State has hardly yet recovered. Whilst I do not hold the Labour Government responsible for the drought, I say it was a coincidence that they were in office when it occurred. This Chamber should concern itself mainly with protecting and safeguarding the interests of the State. Provided the rights of the State are conserved, members should not think they are called upon to interfere with the management of the concern. All they should be required to do is to model the Bill upon as good lines as possible for carrying out the work which the people concerned desire to undertake.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [8.26]: I am delighted with the words of praise and eulogy

which have fallen from members opposite with respect to the commercial knowledge and business acumen displayed by two gentlemen who are connected with this company, and who were formerly colleagues of mine in the Labour Government. This reminds one very forcibly of how often opinions change, and how frequently men's names are used to further a proposition by gentlemen, who only a few years ago unhesitatingly said that the fact of these names being associated with any project was sufficient to condemn the proposition. With the principle of bulk handling there is no difference of opinion in this House.

The Premier: And of co-operation.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) is not opposed to the principle of bulk handling. As has been rightly said by the member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith), the question of handling grain in bulk in this State was first taken up and made alive, and brought within the realms of practicability, by the Government of which I was a member. Because every member here believes it would be a good thing in principle, and would result in economy and saving both to the farmers and to the State, that is not to say that we approve or will swallow any measure that is brought before us to provide for its establishment. I am not at all influenced by hearing the names of any gentlemen who may be associated with any project. Whilst I have the greatest admiration for the business ability and intelligence of the Chairman of Directors of this company, and for Mr. Hedges, Mr. Murray and the other gentlemen who have been mentioned, I believe in examining a proposition on its merits, irrespective of the names of those who may be promoting it. That is a sound business policy to pursue. We must not swallow things because associated with them are the names of gentlemen of considerable standing in the commercial life of the community. When a similar Bill to this was before Parliament last year, its defeat in another place caused a cry all round from the supporters of the measure, who declared that bulk handling had been thrown back for an indefinite period, and that generally the farmers of this State would suffer in consequence of the action of another place. That action was universally condemned in agricultural circles. But now, after a lapse of 12 months, we have the member for North Perth, the chairman of the company, admitting that the defeat of the measure last year has proved beneficial to the company, that had the company been authorised to go on last year with the work of constructing the elevators that work would have been fairly advanced by now, indeed well advanced towards completion, at a much higher cost for materials than the cost will be now. Further, had the company been authorised to proceed last year, it appears that they would have proceeded to erect a silo at each country siding, whereas the mem-

ber for North Perth now admits that the necessity for that very heavy expenditure can be obviated by the use of a travelling elevator. The resultant saving should be enormous. Therefore it may be that if we still hesitate, if we again declare the time to be inopportune, the company in another 12 months will find that they are in a position to effect still further large savings.

Mr. Pickering: What about the Commonwealth loan?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I presume that that loan would be available 12 months from now, just as it is available now after having been promised a twelve-month back.

Mr. Latham: How about if a change of Federal Government occurs?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have great faith in human nature. Any other Federal Government coming along would probably be as much concerned for the welfare of the agriculturists of this State as are the present Government. Nor has it ever been the practice of any Government to repudiate contracts or obligations entered into by its predecessors. The member for North Perth drew a certain comparison on the aspect of monopoly. It is strange how, when circumstances suit, hon. members can throw over the theories of a lifetime. For years I have listened in this Chamber to declarations from hon. members opposite of their faith in the doctrine of supply and demand. The railing against the State trading concerns has been on the score that it is no function of the State to intervene in competitive business. The law of supply and demand has also been invoked against price fixing. In fact, it has been consistently urged that any interference with the law of supply and demand is quite wrong. I venture to say no member has held or proclaimed that doctrine more strongly than the member for North Perth. But now that hon. member is quite prepared to set aside that law for 25 years in order that this company may have a monopoly for that period. If during that period there should be such a development in our wheat growing areas as would justify the existence of another bulk handling system, its installation would not be permitted. In this particular instance the member for North Perth declares that the law of supply and demand must stand aside. The hon. member has said that I, amongst other members on this side of the Chamber, last session supported a monopoly for the construction of a railway from Meekatharra out beyond Peak Hill. But the hon. member is entirely mistaken. No monopoly whatever was granted in that instance. A certain company was merely granted a right to construct a railway. That involves no monopoly. If another company, having discovered some other mineral deposit in the same district, desired to work that deposit by an independent railway rather than by the first company's railway there would be nothing to prevent Parliament from granting authority for the construction of a second line. But here we have a pro-

posal to shut out all competition in the bulk handling of wheat for a period of 25 years. The member for North Perth seemed rather hurt at the remark of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that this Bill was a fraud. From that observation the member for North Perth drew the inference that my colleague was imputing criminal practices to the Government, and to the directors of the company, and to everybody associated with the undertaking. Of course we all know that the word was not used in any such sense by the member for North-East Fremantle. I believe that what that hon. member had in mind was that whilst the Bill purports that elevators are to be erected in each of the ports of Fremantle, Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton, there really is no intention whatever in the minds of the company at present—absolutely no intention whatever—to construct the necessary works at any other port than Fremantle. In that respect the member for North-East Fremantle considers the measure a fraud, and in that respect I too consider it a fraud.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: You are quite wrong.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Let us see if I am quite wrong. I think I shall be able to justify my statement from the utterances of the champions of the Bill. Hon. members generally are aware that the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) is a very careful speaker, one who weighs beforehand thoughtfully and lengthily any statement he makes in this House. The member for Williams-Narrogin is in the confidence of the company and in the confidence of the member for North Perth. He is thoroughly au fait with the whole business, and with what the company have at the back of their minds. Now, the company say that it is their intention to go on with the necessary works at all these ports. But the member for Williams-Narrogin states, "If successful at Fremantle, the company will then construct the works at the other ports." Let hon. members note those words "If successful." Those words show clearly that it is the present intention of the company to construct only the Fremantle elevator, and not even to begin the work of construction at any of the other ports until the Fremantle elevator has been completed and given a trial. Indeed, the same thing was admitted by the member for North Perth this evening by way of interjection during the speech of the member for Geraldton (Mr. Wilcock). The member for North Perth interjected, "You would not expect that we would carry on the work of construction simultaneously at all the ports, would you?" What do those words mean? They of course amount to an endorsement of the statement I have quoted from the member for Williams-Narrogin.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Nonsense.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They amount to an endorsement of the statement that the company intend to complete the Fremantle elevator and give it a trial and see how it

goes, and that the question of the construction of elevators at the outports will depend upon the company's experience at Fremantle. In that respect I say the Bill is a fraud. Looking at the Bill casually, reading it cursorily, one would think there was a genuine, bona fide intention to proceed with the whole of these works at the same time. The fact that the periods of cancellation vary as between the Fremantle elevator on the one hand and the outport elevators on the other hand, being four years in the case of Fremantle and five years in the case of all the other ports, shows what is the real intention of the company. Otherwise the period for construction would be the same at the outports as it is at Fremantle. Taking that fact in conjunction with the statements of the supporters of the measure, one can have no doubt whatever as to the true intentions of the company. The House would be doing wrong in passing legislation that would enable the company to get an exclusive right to the cream of the bulk handling business in this State. We should see that we get a system of bulk handling complete, a system that will serve all the wheat growers of this State, and every wheat-shipping port, and not only some of the wheat growers and one of the ports. Suppose the company proceeded to construct the Fremantle elevator, but fail to carry out their obligation in respect of the other ports. Then, we shall be told, the Government will exercise their right under the measure and revoke the licenses in respect of the other ports. But are we likely to get any other bulk handling company to take up the work of constructing the elevators required at the outports, when it is known that the first company have the benefit of the bulk of the trade, of the cream of the trade, namely, the Fremantle business?

Mr. Mann: Could not we amend the Bill so as to make—

Hon. P. COLLIER: I can assure the member for Perth that I intend to try to have the Bill amended very materially in Committee.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We tried to last session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, we tried last session, and we failed. However, with the infusion of new blood into this Chamber, with the inclusion of new and wiser heads, we should be more successful this session. Let me point out how the company have evidently benefited by the delay. Last session a Bill of only three clauses was thought sufficient to cover the whole of the work involved in this business—a Bill of three clauses! The measure now before us contains no fewer than 42 clauses—showing that within the last 12 months the company have discovered many features which necessitate enlargement of the scope of the Bill.

The Premier: The present Bill covers a wider range.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Either this Bill has been drawn loosely, or it has been drawn—I will not say intentionally—to specially favour the company. Even in the event of failure on their part to carry out their obligations in respect of ports other than Fremantle, cancellation of their licenses in respect of those other ports is not obligatory under this measure. This measure merely says that the Governor in Council "may" revoke the licenses. Again, with regard to the Fremantle elevator the present measure says that if satisfactory progress has not been made with the construction of the work within four years the Governor in Council "may" cancel the license. I can imagine what would happen in four years' time, if the company had not made satisfactory progress with the work, had been merely dawdling along, marking time until the four years had expired. If four years had expired, then it would be at the discretion of the Government whether they should cancel the company's rights. I cannot imagine the present Government, if they continue in power for four years hence—strange things may happen—or any Government drawn from the elements on the Government side of the House, proposing to cancel the rights of this company. Do hon. members imagine for one moment that they would be allowed to do it? They would not be allowed to exercise that right in four years, or eight years, or 18 years. I want to take away the discretionary power from the Government. Let Parliament set it down hard and fast and specifically that the Government of the day "shall," not "may" do this.

Mr. Latham: Would you not make any provision for unforeseen circumstances, such as wars, and so on?

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the event of war, or any other unforeseen circumstances, Parliament could rectify the position by an amending Bill. If unforeseen circumstances arose, and the company were legitimately entitled to receive consideration, the Government could bring an amending Bill before Parliament and the company would get consideration.

Mr. Latham: That would be to reconsider the Bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I prefer to reconsider the matter in the form of a small amending Bill rather than deal with it under this Bill and leave it to a Government which might—I do not say it would—be amenable to pressure from outside influences. That is the attitude I take up. I have not had an opportunity of examining the figures or making an estimate of the capital cost of the work, which would be of value. I believe, however, that the company have under-estimated the capital cost of those works. I notice, too, that we are without information on another point, although hon. members are here who should be in a position to give us the infor-

nation. I take it the directors of the company have carefully calculated the cost to the farmer of shipping in bags, and the cost involved in shipping in bulk. They should have an idea of the saving that would be effected. It conveys no information to say that last year we sent £300,000 out of this State for the purchase of bags. What is the estimated saving per bushel, or the estimated total saving to the farmers of the State? In the report of the advisory board on the bulk handling of grain, which body investigated this matter in 1913, some information was given on this point, but I do not know whether they allowed for the whole scheme on a smaller basis than is proposed by this company or not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They did not estimate that much of a profit would be received. Their report sets out that the estimated capital expenditure on a scheme aiming to handle five million bushels, included the following items:—terminal elevator and sidings at Fremantle, £80,000; 30 country elevators and sidings, £81,700; or a total of £161,700. Then there is another item which has not been mentioned in the course of this debate, and it is one of considerable importance to a Government who are so embarrassed from a financial standpoint at the present time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And of importance to Parliament, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is the question of what it would cost the Railway Department to handle this grain in bulk. The estimate made by the board in 1913 for the smaller scheme was £100,000, representing the sum required for rolling stock to handle the five million bushels.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On that estimate it would mean quite £200,000 or £250,000 now.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Owing to the increased cost of rolling stock, and increased costs in other directions, it would mean quite that amount. If provision were to be made for handling the larger harvest that we have now, it will be readily appreciated that the cost to the State for the provision of the necessary rolling stock cannot be less than £200,000. At any rate, the estimate given by the board in 1913 for the elevators and rolling stock to handle five million bushels was £261,700. The revenue was estimated by the board as follows:—Handling charges, including 14 days free storage—country elevators, five million bushels at 1d., £20,833; terminal elevator, five million bushels at ½d., £19,417; storage charges—500,000 bushels for three months at ½d. a month, 500,000 bushels for four months at ¼d. per month, £3,650; making a total of £34,900. The estimated working costs are also shown. The board provide for interest at four per cent. as against the five per cent. which would have to be paid to-day.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is six per cent. to-day. The company have to pay six per cent. to the Commonwealth Government on

the money advanced so far and they will have to pay more if the cost to the Commonwealth is more than six per cent.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At any rate it is six per cent. now and I do not think it will be any less. The board provide for interest at four per cent., insurance, maintenance and depreciation, fuel, stores, wages, etc., on £161,700. The working costs on this basis of four per cent. are shown as follows:—One terminal elevator at Fremantle, £10,129; 30 country elevators, £19,871; or a total of £30,000. This shows that, after making this provision, there is left available for administration, grain inspection and contingencies, the sum of £4,900. In the opinion of the advisory board that was the surplus that would be available for administering the scheme, grain inspection and so on.

Mr. Pickering: Did that provide for the whole plant?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It provided for the plant I have read out. I regret that the member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith) has not given us some information regarding the estimated saving to the farmers of the State. I am not going to oppose the second reading of the Bill. It is the farmers who are largely concerned. I do not take the view that we should not concern ourselves as to the Government assistance afforded to this proposition because the Commonwealth Government, and not the State Government, gave that assistance. After all, we have to pay whether in the capacity as taxpayers of the State or taxpayers of the Commonwealth. I would be quite prepared to safeguard the interests of the Federal Government in a matter of this kind, as I would be if it was the State Government who were assisting them. In any case, I do not know why the State Parliament come into this matter at all. We are to appoint a board which will be altogether a farce. I hope that portion of the Bill will be materially altered in Committee. On the board as proposed, the Government will be nominally represented by one member. If this is a private members' Bill, as suggested, why should the State Government be brought into the matter? It is the farmers' wheat, and we have been told that this is really a farmers' Bill. We are assured it is their concern. If that be so, let the farmers form a co-operative company in the same way as anyone else is permitted to do and carry on their business. The only way Parliament should come into this question would be to grant the necessary sites and leases of Government property, either at the ports or along the railways.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have got that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Apart from that aspect, let the farmers form their own company and accept their own responsibilities. If the directors do not manage the affairs of the company to their satisfaction, they have the means of remedying the position as shareholders in the company. I do not

believe in the Government coming into such a proposal, for, with their one representative on the board, neither the Government nor Parliament will have any real influence or power. On the other hand, they will have a moral responsibility to see the thing through.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And there will be the vote of Parliament.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Every year there will be an appropriation made by Parliament to meet the expenses of operating the board. I do not think this is necessary. The board should be cut out and the company should be allowed to manage the whole thing. It should be a question between the shareholders and their directors to provide all the machinery regarding standardising, grading, and so on. That is a question for the management of the company.

Mr. Latham: You must protect the interests of the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We did not protect the State's interest before the war. In those days the farmers sold wheat where they liked. There was no protection then.

Mr. Latham: There must have been protection for the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There was not.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The advisory board recommended the establishment of a board.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be, but Parliament did not make provision for a board last year.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The Bill was not completed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They were anxious to get the Bill through and it was considered that the people in the country suffered great loss because the measure was not passed. Let the company manage their own affairs and carry out the functions it is proposed to relegate to this board. Parliament should only come into this matter in order to give the company the right to operate the bulk handling system on sites at the ports or elsewhere along the railways. I propose to radically amend the Bill in Committee, if possible. Just to show how loosely the Bill has been drawn up, I will give hon. members an example. There is not a line in some of these clauses through which a lawyer could not drive a coach and four. I am not a lawyer but I am certain I could drive a coach and four through most of these clauses. I have had some experience, after passing the Forests Act, and the Land Act Amendment Act, which dealt with the pastoral areas in the North-West. That being so, I have looked closely into this Bill, and I find, for instance, that there is one clause which says that "the company shall not deal or traffic in grain." In order to evade that clause all that is necessary for the company to do is to form another company comprising perhaps exactly the same men and go ahead with their dealing in grain.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: That would not help us.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If they formed another company, or formed a company with a variation in the directorate of one man, they would entirely exempt themselves from this provision.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It would not help us at all. We can go into the open market and sell to the farmers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If it would not help, why not give the company a free hand? Why is this inserted, if that be so? There must have been some object in placing this provision in the Bill, and so aim at preventing the company dealing in grain.

Mr. Willecock: It is merely camouflage.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At any rate, this clause can be evaded easily. Anyone can see that.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Supposing another company was formed to deal in grain, would it matter?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Why, then, is this provision inserted in the Bill?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Well, strike the clause out and let the company deal with it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is proof of the looseness with which the Bill is drawn! "Strike it out, it doesn't matter." They throw on the Table a Bill drafted anyhow, and when a weakness in it is pointed to, they say, "Well, strike it out." Is that all the thought it received in its drafting?

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The shareholders do not want the company to deal in grain.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is just as well that the company should not deal in grain, because I can see many phases in which it would be undesirable. But the Bill does not prevent the company from dealing in grain, for the provision can be so easily evaded. It has been suggested that the Bill should go to a select committee. I think we could amend it ourselves, for we have had considerable experience since the debate which was held on this question last year. Seeing that members intimately connected with the Bill are so complaisant, so ready to meet us with "Strike it out," I have no doubt whatever that we shall be able to knock it into shape in Committee. I hope we shall be able to amend the Bill in a way which will safeguard all interests, ensure us against any piece-meal form of bulk handling, and secure the protection of all those connected with grain production whose interests can be served only through the outports.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [9.2]: I am in favour of bulk handling. I have always contended that, if possible, the pooling system should be continued until bulk handling is installed; because it is evident from the success which has attended bulk handling in other countries that this system is most satisfactory to the wheat-grower. The chief opposition to the Bill is aimed at the proviso to Clause 3. It has been alleged that the member for North Perth

(Mr. MacCallum Smith) is prepared to forego that provision. However, to do that would be equivalent to saying that the Government could take away the monopoly in respect of Fremantle in the event of the company not meeting its obligations towards the outports. Does it not seem unreasonable to expect that a company, starting with insufficient funds for the fulfilment of the contemplated requirements, should forego the provision in Clause 3 while still being subject to the condition that within a period of five years from the commencement of the Act it must construct elevators at the outports? If we are to cut out that provision it is only reasonable that the period fixed for the completion of the elevators at outports should be extended by two or three years. It is but natural that the company should select Fremantle as a starting point. Another aspect of the question which should be borne in mind is that the ports of Bunbury and Geraldton are at present unsuited to the requirements of the bulk handling system. For instance, at Bunbury it would not be practicable to instal bulk handling until a considerable amount of money was expended on reclamation works. On several occasions have I heard the member for Bunbury (Mr. Money) declare to the Minister for Works that it would be absolutely necessary to expend a considerable amount of money on reclamation works at Bunbury before bulk handling could be installed there. What prospect is there of any such extensive and expensive work being carried out at Bunbury in the immediate future? On the same reasoning, does the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) contend that Geraldton is ready for the installation of bulk handling, or does he admit, that certain reclamation works must first be carried out there?

Mr. Willecock: The Government propose that.

Mr. PICKERING: Then, what is the estimated cost of that work? In view of the condition of the finances, I cannot see any immediate prospect of these large works being effected by the Government. Therefore I am fortified in my contention that if we are to cut out this proviso to Clause 3, some extension of time should be granted to the company for the erection of elevators at Bunbury and at Geraldton. As for the constitution of the board, I should like to know why in this State members of Parliament are not eligible for seats on boards of this nature. In other States members of Parliament are appointed to such boards, and I do not see why they should not be eligible here.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Then you are not in favour of the doctrine one man, one job?

Mr. PICKERING: I will take as many as I can get, so long as they are remunerative. It seems that the establishment of another Government department is contemplated, together with the provision of

further offices. No doubt the Westralian Farmers Ltd. will be prepared to provide accommodation for the new Government department.

Mr. Johnston: Not unless they are paid for it.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like an estimate of the revenue expected to accrue from the operations of this board. The department is to be supplied from Consolidated Revenue with an annual sum to carry on the operations of the board. Therefore, it is only reasonable that we should be given some estimate of the revenue to be derived from the operations of the board, so that we might know the extent of the obligations to which we are to be committed. Section 23 provides that the decisions of the board in respect of any dispute or complaint shall be final and without appeal. Personally, I do not know that I would be prepared to invest the board with such powers. There is also the question of the change in the grain standard. However, that can be dealt with in Committee. The fines provided appear to me to be in some cases exceedingly high and in others unreasonably low. I am in favour of bulk handling and, given certain amendments, the measure will have my cheerful support. However, if the House decides to amend Clause 3, I certainly think that some extension of time should be afforded the company for the erection of silos in various parts of the State.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.10]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	30
Noes	4

Majority for .. 26

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Boyland	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Brown	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Carter	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Simons
Mr. Davies	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Durack	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Gibson	Mr. A. Thomson
Mr. Heron	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Willecock
Mr. Latham	Mr. Wilson
Mr. H. K. Maley	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Mann	(Teller.)
Mr. McCallum	

NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Money	(Teller.)
Mr. J. Thomson	

Motion thus passed.

BILL—LAND AGENTS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 1st September.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.15]: To the main principles of the Bill I have no objection to offer. I think the measure is a step in the right direction. When we remember the various statements which have been made with regard to the business of land agents, particularly of late, I think the time has arrived when steps should be taken to register and license those engaged in this business. But I cannot see why we should differentiate between land agents in the metropolitan area and those in the country. If it is right that the land agent in the city of Perth should be registered and licensed, it is also right that a land agent in Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie, or any other part of the State should also be registered and licensed.

Mr. Pickering: That is what I say.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All of them should be placed on an equality, the same as they are in New Zealand. We have been told that this Bill is almost a copy of the New Zealand Act. It does follow the New Zealand Act very closely, except in respect to one or two clauses and in the direction I have indicated. Every person in the metropolitan area who wishes to carry on a land agency business in future will have to pay a license fee of £5, but anyone outside the metropolitan area will not have to take out a license. This differentiation is quite wrong. If the principle of licensing land agents has worked well throughout New Zealand, why should it not work well here? I hope that in Committee the Bill will be amended accordingly.

Mr. Mann: The inland towns of New Zealand are larger than ours.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If it is necessary to license a man in the city to ensure that his business is conducted in a proper manner, the same necessity exists as regards the man in the country. It is just as likely that a man in the country will get on the wrong track.

Hon. P. Collier: The people in the small towns require protection just as much as those in the large towns.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would not mind if we differentiated in the fees in city and country, as we do in the case of auctioneers, but all land agents throughout the State should be registered.

Mr. Pickering: And the people of the country should have the guarantee, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When the Premier was moving the second reading, I asked by way of interjection whether a company could nominate an employee to be their licensed representative. The licensed representative of a company should be the manager; he should take the responsibility for the company. He should not be able to nominate a clerk in the office to bear the responsibility and relieve the company from any stigma which might be brought upon it. Where a company carry on business in several offices the person conduct-

ing the business on behalf of the company at other than the head office should also be an approved person and should pay a small fee. A branch office of this description would be competing with other land agents who had to pay the full fee. A company or person carrying on a larger business could afford to pay an additional fee, and the person in charge of the office should be guaranteed so that the public may know that the business would be conducted in a proper manner. Such a person should have to apply to the magistrate in the same way as the manager of the head office. I have some doubt whether the provision for a trust account will be altogether a protection.

Mr. Mann: Land agents will have to find a fidelity bond.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am aware of that. It is proposed that clients' moneys be paid into a trust account. The idea is to prevent such moneys being attached by a creditor. There is a possibility of one person's money being paid into a trust account, and another client's money not being so paid in, and who could say whose money had actually been paid in to the trust account? The question is whether every client's money should not be put into a separate trust account.

Mr. Mann: You mean to earmark each client's money.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. If it is necessary to have a trust account, it seems reasonable that each client's money should be protected. This Bill is designed to protect the public against any land agent who might be tempted to do wrong.

Capt. Carter: Would not the one trust account protect all clients?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: An agent might sell two properties and pay the money in respect of one property into a trust account. The money in respect of the other property, however, might not be paid in. Who could say whose money had actually been paid in?

Capt. Carter: The agent would be contravening the law by not paying in the second amount.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that, but what protection would it be to the two clients?

Capt. Carter: The law can only provide that an agent shall do so. It cannot make him do it if he wishes to default.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This provision is designed to protect the public and to get at the dishonest agent, not the honest man.

Mr. Pickering: How are you going to remedy it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), who is a legal man, is doubtful whether this clause will be workable.

Mr. Mann: I think your suggestion would make it worse.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I merely threw out the suggestion in the hope that members would discuss it.

Capt. Carter: You mean to have a series of trust accounts?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. Under the Municipal Corporations Act, the municipalities have to keep separate accounts in respect of their loans.

Mr. Pickering: But they would not have many.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A fair number, but I do not know that they always observe the law. This Bill is a step in the right direction and I trust that it will receive the approval of Parliament.

Captain CARTER (Leederville) [9.25]: I only wish to deal with the suggestion thrown out by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin). This clause is obviously designed to protect the public against the unscrupulous individual. It does not appeal to my reason that any detailed attempt to make an agent open a series of trust accounts, one for each client, would be effective. I have had some experience in this line of business and I know firms in this city who handle trust accounts for probably hundreds of different clients. It seems to me that if this Bill is passed, it will be quite a successful safeguard for the public if it states that a trust account shall be opened for all moneys received on trust in the course of business. I think we will be fulfilling the desire of all straightforward and honest land agents who I, as a member of the Association, know desire the Bill, if the measure is passed in its present form. I do not see that we should cast any further duties upon individual agents. By making it necessary for all trust moneys received by a firm or individual agent to be banked to a trust account until the final disbursement is made, we shall be doing all that is desired, which is the safeguarding of the interests of the public.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.27]: I think Clause 8 should be amended to embrace all moneys received by a land agent in respect of the sale of land or other business transacted by him. Land agents carry out other business apart from the mere sale of land. Clause 9, too—

Hon. P. Collier: I think we can best discuss those clauses in Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may refer only to the general principles of the Bill. On the second reading I cannot permit him to discuss each of the clauses.

Mr. SAMPSON: I would like the Bill to go a little further and require agents to set out on their accounts a statement of the actual position with regard to rates and taxes, as it frequently happens that land is sold on which a large amount of rates remain unpaid. A little while afterwards the purchaser discovers that he has to pay considerably more than he expected, as of course the land is due for any rates outstanding.

Mr. MANN (Perth) [9.29]: I had the pleasure of introducing to the Minister the deputation of members of the association who desire this Bill to be placed on the statute-book. Since a house and land agent would have to go before a licensing court to obtain his license, and since he would have to be well recommended, and have to obtain a renewal of his license from time to time, there would not exist the same possibility of fraud that may exist to-day, and it would not be possible for any person to merely hang up his sign and call himself a house and land agent. Furthermore, the house and land agent would have to take out a fidelity bond which to some extent would secure his clients against fraud. The trust account of a house and land agent would be just as secure as the trust account of a solicitor. The solicitor pays the money into the one account.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not the same thing.

Mr. MANN: A solicitor receives money on behalf of his clients and pays it into a trust account. The same thing would apply to the house and land agent.

Hon. P. Collier: I have known of solicitors who have betrayed their trust.

Mr. MANN: Only on rare occasions.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was a serious case of that kind in Perth a little time ago.

Mr. MANN: The Bill contains provisions to guard against any emergency. Subject to one or two slight amendments, which can be made in Committee, I will support the Bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.32]: I was inclined to support the second reading of the Bill until I heard from hon. members that it met with the hearty endorsement of the land agents' association.

Capt. Carter: I was speaking of respectable ones.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I take it that only respectable ones belong to the association. When a body of men engaged in the same business, band themselves together in the form of an association and desire legislation ostensibly to protect the public—

Mr. Mann: Does not the Bill suggest that?

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is always urged by any association that such legislation is for the purpose of protecting the public—it generally happens it is intended primarily to preserve the interests of those connected with the association. Sometimes this takes the form of monopolist legislation or exclusive legislation. There may be so many persons engaged in a particular profession, and those concerned may be doing well in it, but if others are allowed to enter into it the profits may be distributed over a greater number and individually the profits will decrease. There is a desire to preserve a nice little monopoly in this case.

Mr. Mann: The Bill does not do that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It does, to the extent that a man will not be able to follow the

business unless he can secure backing to the extent of £500.

Capt. Carter: That would only cost him 50s. a year with any reputable company.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A company may not take every one. Why single out the land agents? Why not include the butcher, the baker, and the grocer?

Mr. Mann: They do not handle trust moneys.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They may not take the public money in that sense, but they are in a position to take the public down. The object of the Bill is to prevent unscrupulous land agents from taking down the public. There are many other forms of business besides that of a land agent in which the men engaged are able to take down the public. Why not insist that the grocer, the baker or the butcher should go before the court and receive the endorsement of the magistrate before being allowed to carry on business?

Mr. Mann: The licensed victualler has to do that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is a totally different matter.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the house that is licensed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no comparison between conducting the business of a licensed house and conducting that of a land agent.

Mr. Mann: There is just as much reason for comparison as in the case of the butcher.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Instead of dealing piece-meal with the various businesses, that of a land agent to-day, and that of an architect to-morrow, why not bring in a comprehensive measure to deal with them all? Why not say that every man who desires to carry on business whether at barbering, auctioneering, or selling groceries, bread, or anything else must apply for a license in the manner prescribed in this Bill, and satisfy the Court that he is of good character and fit to be entrusted with the important work of supplying the public with their requirements? I am surprised that members who stand for the encouragement of private enterprise should favour legislation calculated to hamper it. If I should be defeated for my seat in Parliament at some future date I do not know of any employment that would be more suitable to me than that of land agent or auctioneer. I have to look to the future. When one is defeated for Parliament one is left not only bankrupt in pocket but bankrupt in reputation as well. In that event it might be very difficult to find three reputable citizens to give one the necessary recommendation, or any society which would undertake the liability of £500. I do not want to be placed in the position of possibly having to go to all this trouble and appearing before a magistrate before being able to start in business. The magistrate would certainly bear in mind all the time that I was a defeated politician, and was down and out. I have been before a magistrate as a member

of Parliament and I do not know how I should get on as a defeated politician.

Mr. Angelo: Take to the church.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Perhaps I am too hardened in the ways of the world to adopt that course. I have no desire to place any obstacle in the way of any citizen who desires to earn an honest living.

Mr. Mann: You do not suggest that the Bill places such an obstacle in his way?

Hon. P. COLLIER: At present, any man who desires to become a land agent may obtain a piece of tin, paint upon it the words "Land Agent," get an office table, some sheets of paper, and set up in business.

Mr. Mann: And handle trust moneys.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He is bound to do business with any client who comes along. It is not altogether the business of Parliament to protect foolish people, and save them from the results of their folly if they go to an unscrupulous land agent.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We protect them from the garroters.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Take the business of the hon. member. There is no business in the community which has such a far reaching influence upon the social, commercial, and economic life of the country as that of a powerful newspaper. Any man can set up in that business without going before a magistrate and obtaining a fidelity guarantee.

The Minister for Mines: He need not be a man to set up in that business.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A newspaper is one of the most powerful agents for good or ill that anyone can conceive of. A newspaper has the power to mould the thought and opinions of every man and woman in the country in which it circulates. It is now proposed to pounce upon comparatively inoffensive land agents and say they must go before a magistrate, who will closely scrutinise their features and judge of their character from their physiognomy. Even then the land agent has no guarantee that he will get a license. The member for Leederville says that all he has to do is to get three reputable men to recommend him and take out a fidelity bond at a cost of 50s. a year. It will still be optional with the police magistrate, who may be influenced, or prejudiced, to refuse a license. The magistrate possesses discretionary powers. He may say, "I do not like the look of the man, or the colour of his hair, or his hard face, and although he is well recommended I believe he is capable of doing a dishonest action if he gets the opportunity."

Capt. Carter: The magistrate must have good ground for refusing the license other than the facial expression of the individual.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Every magistrate is not gifted with sound commonsense. As I have said, a man can start a powerful daily or weekly newspaper to-morrow and its ramifications may extend to the confines of the State. It may leave its impress upon the mind and character of every individual who

is unfortunate enough to peruse its columns; but he has not to take out a license to do that. He has not to produce any certificate as to his character nor enter into any fidelity bond. He has not to stand up in a police court and bear the scrutiny of a police magistrate. I could extend that illustration to butchers, bakers, grocers, and others engaged in various forms of business.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What about the chemist?

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the case of the chemist and the architect it is necessary to see that these men are qualified for the work they intend to do, and they have to pass examinations to prove that.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Don't you think the public ought to be protected?

Hon. P. COLLIER: We leave the public exposed in a hundred and one directions to be cheated and defrauded. The responsibility rests largely upon the individual who is doing the business, whether with a land agent for the purpose of buying or selling land, or with any other business person. The individual must take the precaution of making the necessary inquiries for his own sake.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We protect the individual from burglars.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The garrotter comes behind him in the dark. He does not know the man is there and is taken unawares. In the other case he walks into the office of the land agent with his eyes open and in broad daylight. There is no comparison between the cases. Why not protect the man who goes into a butcher's shop and buys bad sausages?

Mr. Mann: He is protected under the Health Act.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that he is. There are tailors who sell suits at £8 or £9 which are not worth 50s. One may go into a draper's shop and buy several yards of nice strong looking calico, for which one has to pay top price, but when one puts it into water one finds it is full of lime and is nothing but a rag. Against all this shoddy there is no protection.

The Premier: But you see what you buy.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the Premier asks Parliament to say deliberately that it is our duty and responsibility to protect all the members of the public who are not able, or not wise enough, or not far-seeing enough, or lack the necessary qualifications, to protect themselves, possibly I shall be prepared to go with him. But I say, let us do it comprehensively, embracing all trades and businesses—not singling out a few persons such as land agents. My view of the Bill is that it goes either too far or not far enough.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It is a step in the right direction.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but such a little step as not to be worth taking. Let us take a good stride forward, or else stay where we are. True, a little revenue will result to the Treasurer from the passing of the Bill; but otherwise I think it is not worth while going

on with the measure. However, I shall not oppose the second reading. With regard to land agents generally, I do know of one or two individuals who took down the public with regard to the sale of land. They have got out of the State. In any case, they had such standing in the community that they would have experienced no trouble whatever in securing the necessary certificate as to character; they would have got registered all right.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [9.48] I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion for the adjournment of the debate lapses for want of a seconder.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: On this measure I take the same attitude as the Leader of the Opposition has adopted. My conviction is that one can have too much legislation. With the Leader of the Opposition I hold that if we are going to license everybody who sells land, we should license everybody who sells anything else; and so we shall go right on until we have licensed everybody who lives. Still, it appears to me that there is something more in the Bill. Certain people apparently desire to secure a monopoly by causing these licenses to be imposed and these guarantees to be put up—thereby shutting out all other competitors. For the life of me I cannot see why I should have a license in order to sell a piece of land any more than I should have a license to sell a horse, or a bullock, or a motor car, or a sausage.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In order to sell a sausage, you must get the health authorities to agree.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I have not to get the health authorities to agree to my selling a sausage; but if I sell a crook sausage, the health authorities come down on me. If I sell any crook land—whether I have a license or not—there is no authority to come down on me. In the matter of land transactions, the proposed license will not protect the public in even the slightest degree. All the jokes that I have known of in connection with land selling—I have known of a few—have been put up by men who would experience no difficulty whatever in obtaining the license.

The Minister for Mines: But how about retaining it?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They would not want to retain it after they had put up their jokes. Then they are flitted, flown.

The Minister for Mines: But we shall have £500 of their money then.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is the point. About a dozen men in Perth want to prevent anybody else from coming in to do business in land selling.

Hon. P. Collier: And they are supporting this.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and strongly.

Mr. Corboy: And not half of them are in the association.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: They want to keep all the commissions for themselves.

Capt. Carter: The association numbers about 45 firms.

Mr. Corboy: Yes, and the most respectable land agents will not join the association.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And some of the most disreputable have joined it. Why, I ask again, as the Leader of the Opposition has asked, should we have a license at all in this regard? Is there any more danger in buying a house or a piece of land than in buying anything else? If one buys bad food, one becomes sick; but one cannot buy land that will injure one's health. The Bill is one which I think members of this Assembly should protest against. This is the kind of thing that comes up again and again. A man has a bit of land to sell. Not having the time to go around and look for a buyer himself, he places the bit of land with another man to sell for him. The buyer of land more particularly than any other buyer, in my opinion, can go and judge the purchase for himself; and if the land does not suit him, he need not buy it. But here we have an attempt to make a close corporation of a business which, after all, has not too good a reputation.

The Premier: We want to improve that reputation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Then I say the Premier is going the wrong way about it by possibly keeping out of the business many fairly decent men.

Capt. Carter: The Bill does not mention the association, and does not confine the license to members of the association. Anybody may get a license.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The only thing with regard to which, so far as I can remember, the Parliamentarians of Australia have not been as honest as they might have been is land transactions. I remember a picture of a man standing with his hand behind his back, and a friend is asking him, "What is the matter with you, old fellow?" The reply is, "I have got land agent's elbow." Outside of all that, and with every due respect to land agents, I am of opinion that the people of this country can protect themselves, particularly in buying land.

Hon. P. Collier: Taking them all round, land agents are just as honest as any other class of traders.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and land is no more than any other commodity, and there is no more reason for establishing a close corporation in the selling of land than in the selling of any other article that is traded in. I trust the House will not pass the Bill. We are running right on to a condition where almost every line of life will be controlled by statute.

Hon. P. Collier: Regimentation.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, and red tape, and regulation, and registration, and license. In this instance, at all events, we are being asked to impose legislative restrictions which

are absolutely unnecessary. Generally speaking, the better course is to allow people some little liberty, some range of choice, protecting only the absolutely foolish and allowing other people to do what they want to do. So long as a man does not interfere with the rights of other people, why should we interfere with him? As a matter of fact, if we continue on the lines of this Bill, we shall reach the breaking point, because, after all, human nature will run along those lines on which it wants to go. I trust that the Bill will be rejected, and that the seller of land will not be considered anything different from the seller of sausages, or of calico, or of sugar, or of any other commodity. The person buying land can judge the land for himself. He is buying the land and not the agent.

Mr. Latham: The agent often buys you.

Mr. Clydesdale: Rather, the agent sells you.

Mr. Underwood: If he is selling me, it seems to me that I should be licensed.

The Minister for Mines: Your looks would put you out of court.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I trust this Bill will not be passed. It is not warranted, and it will not serve any good cause; if it serves no good purpose, it should not be passed. On the other hand, it may interfere with people who are doing legitimate business.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [10.2]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Question put and negatived.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [10.3]: There is a good deal of misunderstanding regarding this Bill. We simply say that a man who sells land as a land agent and who receives money for the sale of land belonging to another person, shall properly account to the owner of the land for the money derived by that sale. We protect the public. To compare the man who is a land agent with the man who sells calico, is absurd and ridiculous. A person buying calico can see the material before him and see exactly what he is buying.

Hon. P. Collier: So can you see the land you are buying.

The PREMIER: This Bill does not protect the buyer, but the seller of the land. The Bill provides that a man who sells land must be licensed and be guaranteed by a fidelity bond; when he receives money on account of the sale of land owned by a client the agent must place that money in a trust account, which means, of course, that if the land agent owes money to other people, the money received for the sale of the land cannot be attached by his creditors. We provide in a very simple fashion protection to the public who place their business in the hands of land agents. We are entitled to do that, and it should be done. We license auctioneers and we

have done that for the past 40 years. I think it was in 1873 that the first license was issued. The time has come when we should license land agents. To say that the business of the land agent is the same as that of a man who sells sausages, is absurd. Sometimes the transactions which pass through the hands of land agents are very large indeed. Large estates are placed in their hands for sale, and big deposits are handed to the land agent when the sales are made. We ask that the land agent shall be a man of good repute and that he shall take such steps as are necessary to safeguard his clients' money. I hope the House will agree to the Bill. It is a simple measure that can easily be understood. It is asked for by the land agents themselves. It will not set up any monopoly. There is no limit to the number of licenses that can be issued. It is a good measure and it should be passed.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—AUCTIONEERS.

Debate resumed from 1st September.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.7]: This Bill is merely a consolidation measure, so far as I can see. It contains the provisions now in the various Acts, and there are no new clauses, with the exception that auctioneers are licensed the same as land agents. I think the condition of affairs has changed considerably since 1873. I do not see any necessity now for district licenses. There might be provision for general licenses and country licenses only. General licenses authorise the auctioneer to sell in any part of the State. A district license is a license for magisterial districts outside the city of Perth and the town of Fremantle. In my opinion, district licenses should be cut out altogether, for they are not required. As a matter of fact, the whole area from Midland Junction to Fremantle is really one town and there is no necessity to differentiate as in 1873. There should also be provision in the Bill whereby a person, whether a licensed auctioneer or not, should be able to sell goods in connection with charity movements.

The Premier: I think there is provision for that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not think so.

Mr. Mann: Look at Clause 11.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is for bazaars, etc., but not for general charity auctions, and so on.

Mr. Mann: It provides for bazaars or sales of gifts for charitable or church purposes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If so, I must have overlooked that point. At any rate I am of the opinion that the district licenses should be struck out of the Bill and only two licenses

retained, the country license and the general license.

The Premier: We would lose a good deal of revenue if we did that.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [10.10]: I do not complain of the general principle underlying this Bill, but I would like to see one or two alterations made in connection with it. There is a provision for a special license which costs the applicant a guinea.

The Premier: That is the provision now.

Mr. McCALLUM: Many of the auctioneers who are carrying on business in a small way do their own work. If such a person falls ill, he must engage someone to do the work for him. That person would have to procure a special license and it would cost a guinea a day. That is a very heavy penalty to impose upon an individual who is placed in that position.

The Premier: They pay that now.

Mr. McCALLUM: Then it is a heavy penalty. Auctioneering is particularly hard on the voice and auctioneers have to rest occasionally. Provision should be made whereby an auctioneer who is unable to continue his work through illness or some other legitimate cause, may obtain a special license for his assistant covering a week or some such period. He should not be compelled to take out a daily license. There is another matter, but I do not know whether it is possible to deal with it under this Bill. Some of the European market gardeners have suggested that protection should be afforded them by means of an amendment to this Bill to enable them to rest on Sundays. At present they have to get to the markets on Monday mornings in order to secure the benefit of the Monday sales. To do that, they have to work on Sunday afternoon and evening.

The Premier: That is a matter for the Fremantle municipality to deal with.

Mr. McCALLUM: It is a question of whether it can be dealt with in this Bill. Chinamen will work all day Sunday and get to market early on Monday morning. In order to compete with Chinamen, the Europeans have to do likewise. They want to cut out the Sunday work if possible and be in a position to enjoy their Sunday rest as others do. Would it be possible to prohibit the sales on Monday mornings by amendment to this Bill?

The Premier: I do not think it would be possible. It is really a matter for the Fremantle Municipal Council.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Fremantle Council would only be able to legislate for their own district.

The Premier: But the sales are held in the Fremantle district.

Mr. McCALLUM: That would not prevent anyone selling at a private market.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are private markets there now.

Mr. McCALLUM: I would like the Premier to consider this point, for I think he would be willing to give these gardeners the consideration they seek. Apart from these two points, I see no objection to the Bill.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [10.13]: When the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) was speaking, the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) interjected that Clause 11 provided for auctioneers selling goods at bazaars and sales of gifts for charitable or church purposes. On looking at that clause again, I think the member for North-East Fremantle is right. With the member for North-East Fremantle, I think that any person should be able to act as an auctioneer for those purposes without being licensed.

Mr. Mann: I agree with that.

Mr. CORBOY: The suggestion by the member for Perth was not correct. Clause 11 does not cover the position referred to by the member for North-East Fremantle. Clause 11 merely provides that a person engaged in auctioning goods for charitable or church purposes may act as an auctioneer after sunset or before sunrise. The ordinary licensed auctioneer is not allowed to do that. The point raised by the member for North-East Fremantle is one worthy of consideration.

Mr. Mann: I am afraid what you say is right.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Granting of licenses.

Mr. SAMPSON: I move an amendment—

That after "Act" in line 6 the words "subject to the deposit of a fidelity bond of £500" be inserted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 to 10—agreed to.

Clause 11—No person to act as an auctioneer after sunset or before sunrise:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The question of selling vegetables on a Monday morning is an important one. I think an amendment might be made which would cover the suggestion of the member for South Fremantle. As a rule, the white community in this State does not work on Sundays. Yet in the suburban areas Asiatic gardeners work on Sundays, bring their vegetables to market next morning, and so kill the white man's market on the Tuesday morning. I remember that when I was a boy the north country fishermen used to fish on Sundays and send their catch to market on Mondays,

thus flooding the market against other fishermen who refused to fish on a Sunday. It resulted in a riot, and every fisherman who came into port on that day was thrown into the sea. It served to stop the practice.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Well, why not chuck the Fremantle Chinese gardeners into the sea next Monday?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Fruit may come in from the country on Saturday and be sold in the markets on Monday morning, but most of the vegetables are grown in the suburban areas. There are many complaints from vegetable growers at Fremantle that their Tuesday's market is spoilt by the Monday's auctioneering of Chinese grown vegetables. The municipal council can close the municipal markets on Monday, but cannot interfere with private markets. Many of the white vegetable growers are returned soldiers.

The Premier: Well, what do you want to do about it?

The Minister for Mines: Amend the Sunday Observance Act to provide that Chinamen shall not carry vegetables on Sunday.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It can be done under this clause, which restricts the hours of selling. If restrictions can be imposed in one direction, they can be imposed in another. I think it would be justified when we see returned soldiers deprived of their market by Chinamen who are prepared to work all day Sunday.

Mr. Sampson: The vegetable grower, like the fruit grower, is forced to work every hour of the day in order to make a living.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: These returned soldiers do not bring in their vegetables for Monday morning's market.

Mr. Boyland: They do it in Kalgoorlie.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Some of them may have to do it. Apparently the hon. member is in favour of Sunday labour.

Mr. Boyland: Nonsense!

The Minister for Mines: You want to prevent Monday labour.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The man who lives several miles out of town has to leave late on Sunday night in order to get his vegetables to market on the Monday morning, having previously worked all day Sunday getting ready for the journey.

Mr. Money: But people want vegetables on Monday morning.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They can manage with what they buy on Saturday.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: How many Chinese are there?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A good number. This has been a serious grievance at Fremantle for some time, and we are entitled to give the protection desired if we possibly can do so.

Mr. McCALLUM: I hope members on the cross benches will support this proposal be-

cause it comes from a primary producers' organisation. The Spearwood market gardeners met last night and asked me to endeavour to get this provision inserted in the Bill. They are complaining of the opposition of the Asiatics. The development at the Peel Estate, where the Premier is settling returned soldiers who are concentrating on market gardening and dairying, will cause more serious conflict with the Asiatics than now exists. If we can meet the request of these producers and provide that they shall have their Sunday off, we should do so.

The Minister for Mines: This is not the Bill in which to do it. You want to amend the Municipal Corporations Act giving the council power to make a by-law to that effect.

Mr. McCALLUM: What is more simple than to provide in this Bill that there shall be no auctioneering of vegetables on Monday?

The Minister for Mines: In Fremantle. What about Kalgoorlie?

Mr. McCALLUM: I do not suppose that vegetable growers at Kalgoorlie wish to work on Sunday.

The Minister for Mines: Fremantle is the only place where it applies.

Mr. McCALLUM: What about Perth? Does not it apply to the gardeners at Osborne Park? It applies in every district where market gardening is carried on. If we prohibit auctioneering on Monday, these people will refrain from working on Sunday.

Mr. Mann: You are going to prevent all the retailers from carrying on business on Monday, because they get their supplies on that day.

Mr. McCALLUM: Nothing of the kind. If there is no auctioneering on Monday, there will be no need to work on Sunday.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: All the retail shops would have to close on Monday, because they would be unable to get supplies.

Mr. McCALLUM: They could have supplies carted in on Monday.

Mr. Mann: You have seen hundreds of these dealers' carts coming in on Monday.

Mr. McCALLUM: I think there is as much fruit and vegetables produced in the Fremantle district as in any district.

The Premier: You cannot settle that point here.

Mr. McCALLUM: I move an amendment—

"That after 'company,' in line 4, the following words be inserted: 'and no person shall act as auctioneer for the sale of vegetables between the hours of midnight on any Sunday and midnight on any Monday.'"

The MINISTER FOR MINES: While it might be the desire of every member to prevent unnecessary labour on the Sabbath, there are ways of doing this which would be

effective and others which would be absurd. I am afraid the amendment is absurd. This Bill deals with the licensing of auctioneers, and the only restriction placed on their operations is that they shall not conduct sales between sunset and sunrise. To say that because one person is called upon to work on Sunday another shall not work on Monday is a positive absurdity. It would be tantamount to saying that because we run a train out of Kalgoorlie on Sunday which does not reach its destination until Monday, we should not permit anybody to work on Monday in order to prevent the Sunday work. We cannot legislate on those lines. This is not a general principle applying to the whole State. It applies largely to Fremantle and to a certain extent to Perth. Surely it should be a question to be decided in those areas. If the Fremantle people can do without vegetables on Monday, the local authority, under the Municipal Corporations Act could make a by-law to prevent sales on Monday. The Kalgoorlie Council could do likewise if it was so desired. It would be a simple matter for the hon. member to bring down a small amendment to the Municipal Corporations Act giving the council power to make a by-law, so that the necessary restriction as regards Monday sales could be imposed. What we are proposing to do is to provide for the licensing of auctioneers to conduct the business. It is undesirable to allow auctions to take place at night, because people want to know what they are purchasing.

Capt. CARTER: I represent a large proportion of the vegetable growers in the metropolitan area. The regular market days for vegetables are Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, and the retailers buy their supplies from the wholesalers for distribution on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. If the retailer cannot buy on the Monday he will have to buy on the Tuesday and the Wednesday, which will leave him no time in which to distribute his goods. The amendment will leave things open for unscrupulous agents. It will not prevent Chinamen and other aliens from cutting their vegetables on Sunday and taking them round to the houses on Monday. This will seriously affect the white retailers. The amendment should not be carried.

Mr. BOYLAND: I am opposed to the amendment. There are other parts of the State to be considered besides those mentioned. The people of Kalgoorlie want to be able to get the fresh vegetables that are grown on the fields, and, if anything interferes with the marketing of their vegetables when they become ripe, they will suffer great loss.

Mr. ANGELO: My suggestion to the European vegetable growers is that they should amalgamate and arrange with the auctioneer not to sell on the Monday the vegetables that have been gathered by Chinamen on the Sunday.

Progress reported.

BILLS (4)—FIRST READING.

1. Courts of Session.
 2. Reciprocal Enforcement of Judgments.
 3. Local Courts Act Amendment.
 4. Evidence Act Amendment.
- Received from the Council.

BILL—FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.54 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th September, 1921.

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

QUESTION—REFRIGERATOR, PERTH.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House the report of the board of inquiry or commission in connection with the proposed erection in Perth of a refrigerator?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: It is not clear from the question what report is required by the hon. member, but he may inspect any papers relating to this matter and then move for what he requires.

QUESTION—FRUIT STALL, PERTH RAILWAY STATION.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Will he take the necessary steps to establish a fruit stall or kiosk at the Perth

railway station? 2, If so, will he make it a condition of leasing that the daily period during which such stall or kiosk be kept open for business be such as to give opportunity for travellers on all trains to purchase fruit?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1 and 2, The right to sell fruit at the Perth railway station is embraced in the lease of the rights to sell refreshments, which lease does not expire until the 30th June, 1923. The Commissioner proposes to arrange suitable accommodation for the display and sale of fruit, which will enable the lessee to make a feature of this branch of the business.

TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to inform the House that I have appointed as temporary Chairmen of Committees the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) and the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo).

BILL—STALLIONS REGISTRATION.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

BILL—BUILDING SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [4.37]: A notice of a proposed amendment appears on the Notice Paper for consideration on recommitment of this Bill. That amendment was prepared in order that it might go before another place when the Bill is being considered by members there. I do not know how it came to appear on the Notice Paper of the Assembly. I do not intend to move for the recommitment of the Bill. I move—

That the report of the Committee be adopted.

Question put and passed; the Report adopted.

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 1st September.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.39]: As the Bill provides for the continuation of most of the provisions of the existing Inspection of Machinery Act, 1904, and for a few amendments, it is essentially a measure for consideration in Committee, and I do not propose therefore to take up the time of the House in discussing the Bill at the second reading stage. Generally speaking, the Bill meets with my approval. It must be expected, of course, regarding any Act that has been in operation without amendment for the past 17 years, that the experience of the department in administering the Act