

shall be distributed. The amendment is reasonable and necessary. People frequently change their names and their residences in order to evade their responsibilities to the State Children Department. When eventually caught, they may owe up to £250 or £300.

Mr. Mann: I sometimes wonder why the courts are so lenient with such defaulters.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The reason is that there is no possible hope of getting the money from the man if he is sent to gaol. However, in some recent cases men have been sentenced to imprisonment, not too severe a penalty for a man who has money but will not pay for the support of his children. The object of the sixth amendment is merely to make the Act as a whole apply to the State Children Department. I do not know why the limiting words were inserted in the original Act. The seventh amendment is not very important either, but there have been cases in which the department have met with trouble in resuming possession of a child entrusted to other people. This does not refer so much to foster mothers as to persons who get hold of a ward of the State, or "State child" as the present term is, and refuse to deliver the child to the departmental officers when it has been discovered that the home is unsuitable, or that the person is unsuitable for having control of a child. In such circumstances the department has met with refusals, and obstacles have been placed in the way of the return of the child. The seventh and last amendment proposed by the Bill adds a new paragraph to Section 123, making it an offence if a person—

having a ward in his or her care neglects or refuses, on demand, to hand such child over to an authorised officer of the department or a police officer authorised to receive the child.

Mr. Thomson: What objections do they raise?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: There are many objections raised.

Mr. Mann: Although the people may not be bringing up the children in accordance with the desires of the department, those concerned become attached to the children.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: That is so in many instances. In more instances, however, particularly with children who have been released on probation, and for whom positions have been found, the departmental officers have discovered that the children have been given employment that was

not suitable. Sometimes they have been worked for too long a period each day, and in many instances they have been employed at work that was too hard for them. The departmental officers have demanded their return.

Hon. G. Taylor: It was no fault of the child.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: No, the places were unsuitable for them. In such circumstances great difficulty is experienced in getting children back. The clause will bring the Act in this respect into conformity with other provisions regarding offences relating to State children and the penalties will also apply. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, debate adjourned.

BILL—BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.33 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 12th October, 1927.

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

QUESTION—ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES.

Hon. E. ROSE (for Hon. A. Burvill) asked the Chief Secretary: Will he lay on the Table of the House a map showing the electoral boundaries of the Federal divisions and the existing electoral boundaries of the Legislative Assembly districts?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Yes.

MOTION—COASTAL LIGHTING AND BUOYING.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [4.35]: I move—

That the buoying and lighting of the coast from Owen's Anchorage to Wyndham is unsatisfactory, a source of danger to navigation, and requires immediate attention.

The main reason I have for moving this motion is the grounding of two vessels in Shark Bay recently. I do not think any blame is attachable to the captains of those ships, or to the department. I consider it is the fault of the present and past Governments in not voting sufficient money to have the various harbours properly buoyed and lighted. I was on the "Gascoyne," the first ship to come out of Shark Bay when the place was supposed to be lighted so that ships could go into Denham Sound by night. Previously there was a channel, but I do not think it has been surveyed for some years. There were four buoys on the port side going in, but one has been removed. The type of buoy is altogether unsuitable. If the Government are going to open up the harbour, they require to afford proper facilities, without which there is danger to both property and life. In this instance in Shark Bay, through there not being proper buoys placed in their right positions, probably it will cost the State £20,000 owing to the grounding of the "Koolinda." I left on the "Gascoyne" on the 4th September, and we went into Shark Bay. She was the first ship to come out by night. As I wanted to see things for myself the captain did me the honour of asking me up on the bridge. After passing the first lighted buoy coming out, the vessel grounded. We could not then see the second light. There was a moon, and when the captain got his bearings he found he was on the $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathom patch. It showed that the buoy we had passed was not in its proper position as indicated by the harbour authorities. I understand a Commonwealth ship placed the lights on the buoys. As I have said, the buoys are most unsuitable, the fault for this lying with the Government for not giving the department sufficient money to provide proper buoys for the marking of the channel. If they had there a buoy similar to the Blinker buoy, off Fremantle, ships could see it at a considerable distance. The type of buoy in Shark Bay is that known

as the nun buoy. It comes to a point and it requires to be ballasted up to about a ton weight. Instead of that they should have a cask buoy, which would stand upright and carry a beacon or light on it. I have discussed this with navigators and with pilots also. They tell me that on the Java coast cask buoys are provided and navigators can rely on their being in position and being visible at considerable distances. At Beadon the "Koolinda" was found on her way down south. Both captains discussed the position. The "Koolinda" on coming out of Shark Bay grounded at the spot where the "Gascoyne" had grounded a few days previously—again proving that the buoy was out of position—and, as members know, the "Koolinda" was there for 15 days. The Chief Harbour Master went up. I do not know whether he went out to that buoy or whether Captain Norris went out with his sextant and got the proper position. The "Centaur" came in later and Captain Rose took the bearings of the buoy from his ship, but did not go to the buoy himself. I have here a copy of his report to his owners. On the trip north he said he would not go into Denham Sound until the place was properly surveyed and the buoys were placed in their proper positions. Consequently he laid off the outer buoy, and lighters had to take the cargo in from there. He told me he had one of the best pairs of binoculars obtainable, notwithstanding which from that buoy he could not see the second lighted buoy. There should be there four buoys of proper type, so that they will stand up. These nun buoys lay over in a gale of wind, and so their lights are reflected in the water and cannot be seen at any distance. Ships should be able to see them four miles away. In the "Gascoyne" we could not sight that second buoy, although it was only two miles away. Let me read from the report the captain of the "Centaur" sent to his owners at Liverpool:—

Shark Bay. Alteration of buoys, Denham Channel. 12-9-27. Heard unofficially at Port Hedland that the "Gascoyne" had been aground in Denham Channel for 12 hours, and later that the "Koolinda" was ashore at the same place. Decided something was wrong.

The unofficial information he got from me. The report continues:—

Decided something was wrong, and on the 13th September sent the following telegram

to Dalgety's, Perth:—"Is reason known 'Koolinda' and 'Gascoyne' running aground Shark Bay. Think the buoys must be out of position. Reply urgent, as depends whether call there." Reply received as follows:—"No advice 'Gascoyne' touching. Harris, Chief Harbour Master, no advice buoys out of position. 'Koolinda's' position 25 degrees 56½ minutes S., 113 degrees 20 minutes East." Still thinking there must be a reason for it sent another telegram to Dalgety's: "Insist upon reason for vessels grounding Shark Bay, otherwise will not go there. Position given does not warrant it. Reply urgent, Carnarvon." At Carnarvon, on 15th, received reply as follows:—" 'Koolinda's' position out of channel. Authorities state channel clear. There has been an alteration of Denham Channel buoys. Obtain full information wharfinger, Carnarvon. Harris left by 'Kybra' Tuesday night inspect position. You can get direct touch with him by wireless. Leave call Shark Bay absolutely your discretion. Advise us what you decide." This was the first intimation as to the change of buoys. Mr. Lewington told me he obtained it in the most casual fashion. I asked the wharfinger for any notices he had received of the change of buoys, and eventually received two, bearing the printed date of 19-8-27, to come into force 1-9-27.

I understand it is the usual procedure that if any alteration is made in buoys in any other part of the world, longer notice is given to navigators. I should say that at least a month's notice ought to be given of any such alteration. The report continues:—

Left Carnarvon at 1.0 a.m. on 16-9-27 to have good daylight for bearings. On picking up the two entrance buoys was puzzled as both were painted black, and instead of the port hand buoy being the same as advertised, it had a staff and ball the same as was previously on the starboard hand.

In the first place the buoy on the starboard hand should have been painted red, and in the alteration that he received the buoy on the port hand was similar to the buoy on the starboard hand. They said the instructions were that the buoys were as they were before, which was misleading. The captain goes on to say—

Stopped the ship, took careful bearings, and proceeded slowly through the channel on bearings, but checking the buoy's position, also "Koolinda's" on passing, and found her position given as correct. Chart shows 3½ fathoms at the spot. Proceeding further found the new South buoy one mile north 15 degrees east of position given in notice.

I do not know who is responsible for that, or whether the buoy drifted after it had been placed there. If the buoy had drifted, this was due to the fact that it was not properly

moored. Whoever is responsible for the buoy being out of position should be dealt with very severely. I understand the "Kyogle" placed lights on the buoys. I have it on hearsay that the captain of the "Kyogle" stated that he could not see the light from one buoy to the other when the lights were placed in position. I do not know yet whether the Chief Harbour Master or the harbour authorities have verified the point as to the buoy being out of position. At all events it was the position of the buoy that caused both the ships to run aground.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is very serious.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. The captain goes on to say—

Attribute that as the reason for both ships stranding. Went to the usual anchorage, and on our way back anchored ¼ mile off "Koolinda," and took off her mails and 68 passengers and proceeded on voyage. I informed the authorities and Dalgety's that I absolutely refused to call at Shark Bay anchorage on the trip north unless buoyage system was improved beforehand, but would anchor off the outer buoys, and cargo could be lightered from there.

The captain stated that when he anchored there he could not see the light on the second buoy. He goes on to say—

The "Koolinda" found only 7½ feet low water in the spot indicated, and was aground 15 days, and eventually got off with a damaged rudder and propeller.

By the chart where the "Gascoyne" was aground, the channel was to the south side of the ship. When the captain got his boat out with an officer to take soundings with the lead to find the deep water, he found that the shallow water was still to the south and that the deep water was to the north. This shows that the channel requires to be resurveyed, if ships are to continue using that entrance into Denham. The people of Denham consider it is necessary that ships should call in there. The other lights should be dismantled, as they are useless for night navigation, or better lights should be provided. Proper facilities should be provided there, so that the ships shall get into the channel in daylight. The captain goes on to say—

Enclosed please find a copy of notice with errors attached.

That is what he has to say in reference to Shark Bay. I include Owen's anchorage because, in the notes, there is a reference to

the channel of the Success Bank. The captain goes on to say—

Owing to ships passing through, think this channel is rapidly silting up. With draft 16 feet forward and 16 feet 6 inches aft this vessel took a nasty sheer against a hard-over helm going between the shoalest part, and took some time to recover. Have urged that the channel be resounded before the next cattle season.

It is urged that the channel should be resounded before the next cattle season commences. This channel takes the ships into Owen's Anchorage from Fremantle. The entrance to the Success Bank channel is only 300ft. wide. This entrance should be widened if it is intended to continue using the channel. It should also be kept properly dredged. A ship must have a certain way on it if it is to keep steering way on. Captain Rose told me that in this case when going through the Success Bank Channel he had his helm hard apart when the vessel took a sheer. When he got through the channel, he had to anchor for half an hour to calm down and recover his nerve before proceeding to Robb's Jetty. Something should be done to enable cattle to be landed on the North Wharf. They could then be trucked to the abattoirs at Robb's Jetty. I do not know whether the Government have sufficient room or facilities at the North Wharf for the handling of cattle, but, if they could be handled there, it would mean a considerable saving to the growers, and probably lead to cheaper freights. The ships also would not require to take the same risks they now take in going to Robb's Jetty. This might also save the Government the cost of keeping open the channel. The country may be saved some expense, for I understand that the channel is only used by cattle ships going from Fremantle to Robb's Jetty. The captain goes on to say—

I see no reason why stock cannot be discharged on the North Wharf, and relieve ships of the danger which there always is in going to Robb's Jetty. Have told this to Dalgety's, and they are taking this matter up with the harbour authorities.

The Government might well inquire into this phase of the matter and see whether it is possible for stock to be landed at the North Wharf, and so obviate the necessity for keeping the channel open. At Geraldton there is a considerable range at the old jetty. The harbour authorities should provide springs for the mooring of ships. The State Shipping people have one or two springs of their

own, but the springs require to be at least 8in. in diameter. I suggest that the Government should provide springs for all ships.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not the practice, is it?

Hon. G. W. MILES: No. If the Government provided the springs they could charge the ships for the use of them. Private ships have had springs on the jetty, but time after time ships have not been able to lie at the jetty because of the range. If springs were provided the Government could charge a fee for the use of them. Oversea ships that come into the wharf pay private companies for the hire of their springs. If a ship gets ashore at any of these ports, they are immediately declared to be unsafe ports, the freights go up, and damage is done to those ports for all time. The outlay is only a small one, and not more than half a dozen springs would need to be supplied. This should be done at Geraldton. I should also like to refer to the new harbour there. I am glad to see this work proceeding, but I am sorry it is not going on at a faster rate. The entrance to the harbour is very similar to the entrance to Robb's Jetty across the Success Bank. The channel provided is only 300ft. wide. The same argument will apply to going into the new harbour as to going across Success Bank. It is necessary to bring a ship in at a fair rate of speed in order to keep the steering way on. When she gets inside, she is in a harbour smaller than Fremantle, and the ship then has to be pulled up. When a vessel goes into the Fremantle harbour, she is able to travel only at a slow speed. When a ship is approaching a wharf, she cannot travel too slowly. In this case the State pilots will have to handle oversea ships at Geraldton. I hope the Government will look into the question whether it would not be politic for the channel leading into the new harbour to be widened to more than 300 feet as is proposed. There is also a range at Carnarvon. I am advised that springs ought to be provided there by the Government and a charge made for the use of them. The same thing applies to Beadon, where there is also a range. We happened to be there in the "Gascoyne" in September, and to be lying comfortably on the weather side of the jetty. The "Koolinda" was on the other side, and she broke six or eight mooring lines as she lay there. If proper springs were provided at these ports, it would be safer for all shipping. I understand the Government intend

to make a survey for a harbour in the vicinity of Cossack. I hope the Government will carry out their promise and get on with the work as soon as possible. The Roebourne people had their land appraised when they had jetty facilities, but since that time the jetty was washed away by a cyclone. They have now to lighter their stores ashore and lighter off their wool. I hope the Government will expedite the matter of providing jetty facilities in the vicinity of Cossack. At Port Hedland the question has been before the Government and previous Governments for many years. At that place a reef runs out. There is an outer bar there, and ships have to wait until the tide serves before they can enter. The reef which runs out makes a kind of natural breakwater. At the end of the reef is a steel beacon, and this is lighted when steamers are coming in. There are also two buoys in the harbour which are lighted when steamers are approaching the port. It is the duty of the Government to have an automatic light on the steel beacon. Pearlers have to make these ports in willy-willies or cyclones, and they have to find their way along that reef on the lee side as well as on the weather side. They have to judge the distance between the reefs as they go in. The Chief Harbour Master informed me that an automatic light could be installed there at a cost of £100. I hope the Government will see that such a light is placed on the steel beacon at the entrance to the Port Hedland harbour. Another place where I think a light is required is on the Lacepede Islands. This is probably a Commonwealth matter. Such a facility would enable ships to go inside the islands, when proceeding to Derby, and save themselves 12 hours where they have to wait for the tide. I went up once from Port Hedland to Derby in the "Gorgon" to catch the "Minderoo." She had gone on to Wyndham to bring down the men engaged at the Wyndham Meat Works. The "Kangaroo" had met with an accident on that occasion, and had to proceed to Sourabaya for repairs. The "Minderoo" took her cargo on to Wyndham. We anchored about ten miles from Derby off Point Torment, in order that the ship might go into the Derby jetty on the slack tide. At midnight the captain of the "Gorgon" weighed anchor and started for Derby. After proceeding for a mile or so he found that the soundings were getting very low and that he could not see the Derby jetty light.

I understand it is proposed to erect a light at Point Torment. I do not know on whose authority this is being done. If it is necessary to put up this light, the work should have been done in April, May, June and July, during the cool weather. I presume that in order to show a surplus the Government have kept back the money set apart for the light and waited until the end of the financial year before doing the work. I do not know which Government is responsible for this, Commonwealth or State. The material has been sent along, and the work will have to be done in the hot wet weather. As a consequence it will cost between 30 and 40 per cent. more than would otherwise have been the case. Navigators with whom I have spoken say that the light is unnecessary and that all that is wanted at Derby is a decent light on the jetty, a light that they can see 10 or 12 miles off. Whether the Point Torment light is erected or not, and I presume it is going to be erected, the light on Derby jetty requires to be strengthened. Only a little while back the steamer "Gorgon" lost 12 hours through not being able to see that light. Between King's Sound and Cambridge Gulf there is a most dangerous spot. This, however, is a Commonwealth question, but the State should urge the Commonwealth Government to erect a light at Adele Island. Navigators have now to go outside the islands and shape their course 20 miles beyond them owing to the strong currents running there. It not infrequently happens that navigators have found themselves at daylight no less than 10 miles out of their course. I do not know who recommended the proposed Lacrosse Island light, but I understand it was the head of the Meat Works. To erect a light there will be a waste of money. It is high land, and if a light is placed at that spot it will not further the interests of shipping at all, because all ships that go in there cannot go up Cambridge Gulf until daylight. As in the past, they wait outside until day dawns. This is a matter that should be investigated and certainly the opinion of navigators should be obtained before a definite position is fixed for a light on that part of the coast. A light on Adele Island would be of greater use than a light on Lacrosse Island. The Wyndham Meat Works jetty has only a short head and the ships that berth there, being much larger than our coastal vessels, extend beyond that

short head. Unless the Government provide mooring buoys at that jetty for the safety of the ships that berth there, we will find the ships breaking adrift. That will mean that insurance at Wyndham will go up and the port will receive a bad name in the shipping world. The outcome of that must be higher freights. The question of providing mooring buoys there is very important, and should receive the attention of the Government. While on the subject of Wyndham I might say that the pilot launch at that port should be scrapped. It was a most unsuitable boat from the start and it is now more useless than ever. Consequently it is merely waste of money to attempt to effect repairs to it. The pilot has to go out on this launch and there is no accommodation of any description for him. Certainly he should have a place wherein to sleep and wherein to have a wash and brush-up before boarding a steamer. It frequently happens that he is many hours on this launch before he boards a vessel arriving there. On many occasions, too, the launch has broken down and the pilot has had to abandon it and complete his journey to a steamer in a 10ft. dinghy. It is a standing disgrace that the department has not provided decent facilities to enable their officers to carry out their work. An up-to-date launch is required at Wyndham.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Does he want a barber on the launch?

Hon. G. W. MILES: No, but a man feels that he wants a shave and a wash if he has been for 12 hours on a launch of that description.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Surely he can go for eight hours without a shave up there.

Hon. G. W. MILES: It would not cost very much to erect a cabin at the after end of the launch. The officer in question is a good servant; otherwise he would not have put up with all these discomforts. I have touched on the principal points. My desire in moving the motion was to ventilate some of the grievances that are always coming under my notice, in the hope that action might be taken by the Government.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Have you any estimate of the cost of all these suggestions you have made?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It is for the Government to go into that question. If it is their intention to open up harbours, they must provide proper facilities; otherwise

they will run ships into danger. I hope the Government will accept my remarks in the spirit in which they have been made.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [5.7]: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion. Mr. Miles has gone to a lot of trouble in preparing the information that he has given to the House, and it should be to the advantage of the Government to act upon the suggestions that have been made. It is a serious matter when a vessel goes aground by reason of buoys being out of their correct position. I have recently been along that coast and have seen for myself some of the difficulties under which vessels labour. I can only say that I would rather be anything than the captain of one of those vessels that trade along the North-West coast. He may be on deck all day and all night and then, if he gets into port in good time, there are so many visitors to see him that he does not get a chance to have a decent sleep. I may be pardoned for referring to a telegram I received from Wyndham only last night. This emphasises the inconvenience and discomforts under which people in the far North labour if anything goes wrong with the vessels that trade on the coast. The telegram reads—

Understand "Koolinda" future sailings uncertain. Most unfortunate our mails to Onslow and arriving here uncertain. Business people and station owners shortly out of supplies, and with approaching wet season position assuming serious aspect.

I have referred this matter to the member for the district in another place, and I have also mentioned it to the Leader of the House, who is the Minister for Shipping, and he has promised to take the matter in hand promptly. I merely quoted this telegram to show how serious the position can become for people in that part of the State. With tropical rains, and they are likely to fall shortly, the unfortunate station people in the distant North will not be able to get stores out for the summer on account of the boggy nature of the country. I hope that the Government will act upon the information that has been supplied by Mr. Miles and do their utmost to prevent a continuance of the difficulties to which he has referred.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Hickey, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Bill reported with an amendment, and a message accordingly forwarded to the Assembly requesting them to make the amendment, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a message from the Assembly.

BILL—MENTAL TREATMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [5.13]: I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without voicing one or two remarks on the subject of this Bill. To me it does not appear to be very much more than a machinery measure, but an investigation of the plan of the proposed boundaries puts quite a different aspect on the matter. After having looked at that plan, I am wondering whether the Bill will have the effect of bringing about joint rolls, or whether it will simply multiply the rolls that we have without giving us any great advantage. I have a recollection that in the early period of the war a conference of State electoral officers took place in Sydney, the object of that conference being to evolve a system whereby joint rolls might be brought about. The date of the conference is so far back that the details are hazy in my mind. I have made an effort to trace the report in the library but without result. I would like to suggest to the Chief Secretary that if the report should be in the building, it might be made available to enable us to learn what was done on that occasion. Then, after reading it, we might get an idea as to why the matter has been allowed to remain in abeyance for so long. A conference of electoral officers should have been responsible for something tangible in the way of recommendations. After having studied the plan, I suggest that the House should proceed very cautiously. There is a proneness at times to view any action by the Commonwealth to assume a State function with some degree of suspicion, and I am not yet able to convince myself that the proposal to have joint rolls and give the Commonwealth some control

in the fixing of our boundaries would be the best thing for us. I am loth to give away any power of that kind. A better course would have been to hold back this measure until the State Parliament had adopted a redistribution of seats, and then the Commonwealth could have been asked to accept the boundaries thus fixed. I feel sure that once we agree to this proposal, it will be a question not of being asked to accept the Commonwealth boundaries, but of being compelled to do so. For that reason the Bill should be subjected to considerable investigation before it is passed. At present we have 50 rolls for the Legislative Assembly, but since I have studied the plan I conclude that 14 or 15 additional rolls will be required. I hope it can be shown that I am wrong, but it seems to me that under this measure 65 rolls will be required instead of 50 as at present. I am quite in accord with the speakers who have stated that our electoral officers are doing the best they can with the facilities at their disposal. While saying that, I admit there is plenty of room for improvement; still, I have nothing derogatory to say of the work of our electoral officers. The Commonwealth system is a fairly efficient one, and the habitation scheme of enrolment might be kept well in mind for future consideration. But I have one grave objection to the Commonwealth system. The Minister for Justice when speaking recently, referred to the practice of the Commonwealth authorities to depute postmen and postboys to have names placed on the roll, and to report that certain names should be removed from the roll. For a long time I have been at a loss to understand why certain people, who had lived continuously in the district in which I reside, should, on going to the polling booth, find that their names were not on the roll. A gentleman of 93 years, who is in full possession of his mental faculties, and with one exception has not been out of the district for more than a fortnight—the exception was when he took a trip to the Old Country—found, when he went to vote, that his name had been removed from the roll, although he had never been absent from the district for more than a few days. I have no hesitation in mentioning the name of the man; it is Mr. Richard Gale, who is well known in the district, he having been a justice of the peace for many years. That is one of several instances I could quote.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Was that the State or the Commonwealth roll?

Hon. W. J. MANN: The Commonwealth roll. The delegating of such work to postmen may seem all right in theory, but I contend that it is open to grave abuse. The majority of postmen, in the city at any rate, are men of mature years and their veracity is unquestioned. In the country, however, it is not unusual for the postman, as he is termed, to be practically a boy. One can quite understand a young fellow, full of zeal for a particular phase of politics, thinking he might do a good turn for his side by keeping a sharp lookout for people going to or leaving the district. Probably without any ulterior motive he could make a mistake that would have the effect of disfranchising people.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Do not they get so much for each name?

Hon. W. J. MANN: On the authority of the Minister for Justice, I understand they receive 1½d. for each name that through them is put on the roll, but no amount was stated as the payment for names removed from the roll. I have no objection to payment being made for service rendered, so long as it is reasonable, but it is unjust and wrong to allow postmen the right to tamper with the sanctity of the franchise. After all, a man's vote is sacred, and any undue action that may be taken to deprive him of it should be safe-guarded against to the fullest possible extent.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Would not that be more likely to happen with a man specially engaged to do that sort of work?

Hon. W. J. MANN: If so, the selection would be a poor one. I hope whoever was responsible for making the selection of such a man would show better judgment than Mr. Gray suggests. Reference is made in the Bill to the transfer of officers. I daresay other members have noticed that as soon as the Federal Government get their finger into any State function, there is a reshuffle of positions and someone from the East is sent here to assume control. Possibly there have been occasions when such changes were beneficial, but there have been occasions when men who had given valuable service to the State were gently pushed aside to make room for someone from another part of the Commonwealth.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Not always "gently."

Hon. W. J. MANN: Perhaps so, but I shall be charitable and say "gently." I hope

the Government will see that no opportunity is given to the Commonwealth to do that sort of thing. I believe the work done by the State electoral officers has been quite as good as could be expected considering the difficulties under which they have had to work, and I hope for that reason special care will be taken to see that our officers are safeguarded in every way. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but I trust that in Committee some of the safeguards I have indicated will be included.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.25]: I was sorry to hear Mr. Mann say that he would support the second reading of the Bill. I agree with his remark that we should proceed very cautiously. I could give instances of the removal of names from the Federal roll that have been quite unjustified, and the excuses given by the department were hard to understand. If the State, as a result of the adoption of this Bill, were laid open to similar treatment, many of our electors would be placed in a very serious position. I regard the duty of adding a name to an electoral roll as of the utmost importance. It is a right that should be carefully guarded, and no outside authority should have opportunity to remove a name from the roll without most rigid inquiry. When the electoral law was passed some years ago it was felt that we were adopting a very risky innovation by giving district electoral officers the right to strike names off the roll. Prior to that no name could be struck off the roll unless objection had been made to it before a court of revision in the district concerned.

Hon. J. Cornell: That applies to the Legislative Council still.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: But not to the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. J. Cornell: Well, that does not concern us.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Great wrong is done from time to time by electoral registrars who do not inquire sufficiently into the merits of objections. Names are struck off unwarrantedly, and frequently, too, names appear on the roll that we feel should have been subjected to a little more scrutiny. If we allow control to pass from the hands of the State officials to Commonwealth officials, we shall be treading on dangerous ground. I do not at all like the idea of ceding control to the Federal authorities. Therefore we should proceed warily before approving of the Bill. I cannot believe that under the measure any great saving will be effected,

because we shall still require State officials to take charge of the roll of the Council and conduct its electoral affairs. It would be a greater benefit to the State if it controlled the Federal rolls. That departure would be in a much better direction than the departure which is proposed.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But we have no hope of that.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Possibly not. However, the Commonwealth refrains at every turn from considering the interests of the State. A case in point is the starting of the Commonwealth Savings Bank. The Commonwealth authorities jumped in on the claim of the State to run such an institution. Without considering the State in the slightest degree, the Federal authorities started a savings bank of their own. Thereupon Western Australia had to appoint its own savings bank officers and inaugurate its own savings bank system. We have never found reason to regret or alter that decision. I feel that the State must continue to run its own savings bank. The question of electoral rolls is just as important as the savings bank question. Mr. Mann mentioned one or two people whose names were taken off the rolls at the whim and pleasure of some postal official in one of the hon. member's districts. I could mention half a dozen cases of the same nature. I know the difficulties to which people have been put in various parts of the State owing to their names having been taken off the Commonwealth rolls wantonly. The unfortunate thing is that the moment a name has been removed from the roll—and removed without any reference to the person—that person is liable to a fine of £2.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But a notice is sent.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The hon. member says so.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But that is done.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The departmental officers say so. Who receives the notice? The person struck off the roll?

Hon. E. H. Harris: The notice is sent to the last known address of the individual. You are quite wrong.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The hon. member seems to know all about the matter.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I know something about it; I will not say, all.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I can produce to-day a man who tells me he has never yet been able to vote at a Federal election.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then he has never been on the roll.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes. He has been to see that his name was on the roll before every Federal election.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He went too late.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: He went too early.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Perhaps he is not eligible.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: He is eligible. Strangely enough, he has never been absent from a Federal election, and has always driven a car bringing in numbers of people to the poll.

Member: He must be a very careless person.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: He has been most careful to see that his name was on the roll, but on election day he has always found that his name had been struck off. The Bill suggests the handing over to the Federal authorities of the control of our State rolls. If that is done, the Federal authorities will strike names off the rolls. I personally have had in my employment men whose names have been struck off the Federal rolls, and I have personally written protests on their behalf because the men had never left my employment during the preceding two years. Yet their names were struck off the rolls. I have known them to vote at the local polling booth at one Federal election, and at the very next Federal election their names have been off the roll. I can vouch for it that one of those men never had a notification card sent to him. The apology of the officials who struck his name off the roll was thrown in the wastepaper basket. The names in question are names which had been on the Federal roll; I do not refer to any name which was never on that roll. The power to take names off the roll should not be granted to officials, not even to the extent obtaining under our State law. Once a person has his name on the roll, the position should be as that of the holder of a title deed; the greatest care should be exercised before interfering with it. I fancy some payment is made to boys in the post office in respect of all names put on and also in respect of all names taken off, and I also fancy that when the boys feel that a little extra cash is necessary they get particularly busy on the rolls.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I think you are doing them an injustice.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I have no wish to do anyone an injustice; but there have been times when I have thought that the youths in question had been particularly busy, and I wondered what the reason was. I can quote cases of people who, as Mr. Mann mentioned, have been known in their centre all their lives, and have never changed their places of residence, and yet have been struck off the roll. I am referring to property holders who went away on a holiday of three weeks or six weeks to Albany or Bunbury. Without any intimation whatever their names were struck off the rolls. Other people similarly circumstanced have been notified of the intention to remove their names from the roll, and they have had to go in person and protest that they have been away only for a few weeks and that their names therefore should not be struck off. In my own family circle such things have happened. I have sometimes had the greatest possible difficulty in securing the retention on the roll of the name of a member of my family who had been absent for a short while. There being no necessity for that kind of thing, I feel highly sympathetic towards the action of the Government in declaring that it was necessary for people to be enabled to sign cards stating that they were nomads, that their principal centre of abode was so and so, and that their names should be retained on that roll. My own feeling is that the change proposed by the Bill should not be made without our walking very warily. I am not inclined, from what I have heard in the course of the debate, to agree to the change, and therefore I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. W. J. Mann: By way of personal explanation I wish to say that it is evident Mr. Hamersley did not quite catch my remarks referring to Mr. Gale. I did not say that Mr. Gale's name, or that of anyone else, had been taken off the roll at the whim of some postal official or other. What I said was that I have been unable to find out how the names of some people had come to be taken off the rolls. I discovered that such action by postmen and postboys had been in operation, and I said that I thought they should be relieved of any such work in order to remove any temptation. I do not for a moment believe that Mr. Hamersley wilfully misquoted me, but I wished to make it clear that names had

actually been removed from the roll by some post office official.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing debate adjourned.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.41]: The Chief Secretary has introduced a Bill which apparently assumes the role of a hardy or sturdy annual. No doubt the necessity for the measure arises from the addition recently made by the Act passed in 1924 regarding the re-growth of sandalwood. That addition also limited the application of the funds in question as suggested to the period of one year. If it be the will of the House that the power given by the Act of 1924, should not be thus limited to the mere re-growth of sandalwood, the amendment sought by the present Bill is reasonable, because it will give the Forests Department, under our very able Conservator, an opportunity of promoting the development of the sandalwood industry in Western Australia. We know that the Conservator and his officers have been endeavouring to advance the department's interests, and we cannot but recognise that good work has been done. I did notice recently a suggestion that the whole of the forest areas of Australia should be placed under the control of the Federal authorities. While inclinations of that kind exist—as is evidenced by the last Bill discussed—on the part of State Parliaments, it must be recognised by every State Government that there are certain State rights which cannot and must not be yielded to the Commonwealth. Beyond question the rights relating to forests are essentially a matter of domestic policy or State policy, and we should yield nothing to the Federal Government in connection with them.

Hon. J. Ewing: Who said we should?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I saw the suggestion in the Press some time ago. Beyond the remarks I have made in support of the proposed amendment, I only desire to offer my congratulations to the Conservator and his officers on their excellent work. I support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.45]: I cannot allow the Bill to pass the second reading stage without some comment. Hon. members will recognise the necessity for the Bill. Just before the Legislative Assembly elections in 1924, the Mitchell Government were responsible for framing the sandalwood regulations under which the royalty on the selling price was more than quadrupled, compared with the amount previously received. That action has proved an important factor in the conservation and preservation of the sandalwood industry. The Labour Party, who were then in Opposition, condemned the regulations from Timbuctoo to Darwin. There was nothing too hard that they could say in opposition to them. There is no gainsaying this fact, however, that they were able to pick up sufficient votes in a couple of electorates, as the result of their sandalwood campaign, to enable Labour to secure the reins of office.

Hon. E. H. Harris: There is no doubt about that.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Not the least.

Hon. E. H. Harris: They put the joke over the people very well.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Before the hot air that had been spread about the electorates during the election had ascended and the atmosphere had really cleared, the new Premier, who had condemned the regulations so strenuously, brought down a Bill to grab the whole of the revenue that was derived under the new regulations.

Hon. E. H. Harris: He did that apart from the regulations, too.

Hon. J. CORNELL: He wanted the whole of the revenue. Strange to say, the then Leader of the Opposition, who had been supplanted by the present Premier, agreed to the proposal. I shall not say that he connived at it. There have been some memorable happenings in connection with the affairs of this State and that is the most memorable that I remember in connection with that particular election. When the measure was dealt with in this Chamber, we adopted the attitude that years before a reasonable Forests Act had been placed on the statute-book and we considered that the Government were not entitled to pursue the course they suggested. I think it was on your initiative, Mr. President, that the Bill was agreed to in

an amended form, under which a certain proportion of the revenue was to be devoted to the reforestation of sandalwood, the balance of the money going into Consolidated Revenue. Had we not adopted that course but agreed to the Government's proposals, we would have created a precedent that, if followed later, might have resulted in the Government taking the whole of the revenue derived from our jarrah and other forests and left no funds at all for reforestation. That is one of the reasons why this House amended similar Bills, so that they would have to be introduced year after year. I think that was a wise step to take. The Government have not been faced with any grave difficulties because we insisted upon the legislation being re-enacted annually.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Government promised to make the forests a State industry when they were on the hustings.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They promised many things, but I am prepared to let that die. During the rush election the whole of the sins of commission and omission on the part of the Government were thrashed out and the electors saw fit to return the present Government. At the time I said that, for my part, the sandalwood getters could stew in their own juice, seeing that they had adopted that course. I shall support the proposed amendment set out in Clause 2 by which the words "regrowth of sandalwood" will be deleted and "improvement and reforestation of sandalwood reserves and the development of the sandalwood industry" inserted in lieu, for I believe the section, with the amendment included, will provide much wider scope for the departmental activities. I have the highest admiration for the work of the Forests Department and for the Conservator of Forests. The only complaint I have to make is that not enough is being done in connection with reforestation and the preservation of our forests. That is no fault of the Conservator or the Department. I am satisfied the Conservator is fully alive to the possibilities of the industry and to the prospects for the future. My objection is not against the Conservator, but against Parliamentarians, governments, and others who are too often desirous of living from day to day oblivious to the necessities of the future. I hope the desires of the Conservator will be

given effect to in an ever-increasing measure in future years, particularly during the term of office of the present Government. We cannot do too much in connection with reforestation so as to provide for the future. In our Conservator of Forests (Mr. Kessell) we have a good officer who is capable of doing much in the interests of the State if only Parliamentarians will cease to be parochial and will have regard to the future.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.53]: I regret that I was not present when the Chief Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill. I am in accord with the proposed amendment so far as it relates to the improvement and reforestation of sandalwood reserves, but I would like to know the meaning of the balance of the proposed amendment which refers to the development of the sandalwood industry. Is it the desire of the Government to establish another form of State enterprise by embarking upon the extraction of sandalwood oil? If this amendment deals merely with the development of the sandalwood industry itself, without any suggestion of embarking upon such a State enterprise as I have indicated, I shall support the Bill. I trust the Chief Secretary will tell us whether it is the intention of the Government to go in for the extraction of sandalwood oil.

HON. J. EWING (South-West) [5.54]: I have endeavoured to secure a copy of the annual report of the Forests Department, but I have been unable to get one. I shall support the second reading of the Bill in the hope that the Minister will be able to present the Conservator's report to us before we deal with the Bill in Committee. I do not think Sir William Lathlain need worry about the sandalwood oil suggestion he made. I do not believe the proposed amendment refers to anything of that description. I consider the Government are doing good work in connection with reforestation, but I hope to be able to peruse the Conservator's report in order to ascertain exactly what has been done in connection with not only sandalwood, but the timbers of the South-West. My only reason for speaking was to urge the Minister not to deal with the Bill in Committee before we have read the report of the Conservator before us.

HON. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.55]: I support the remarks of Sir William Lathlain and I shall ask the Minister for an explanation as to what the latter part of the amendment really means. Until I get that explanation I am not prepared to say that I shall support the Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: There is no nigger in the wood-pile; it is merely a half caste.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I am not too sure about that. We know the sandalwood industry has been developed and its conduct at present is all that we could desire. That question was thrashed out some years ago and Mr. Cornell has outlined the position. The regulations that were introduced by the Mitchell Government have certainly had a beneficial effect in connection with the sandalwood industry. At the time it was thought that the Government were making a great mistake, but experience has proved that they were right. In fact, their actions represented one of the most business-like transactions taken by any Government in connection with any asset at the disposal of the State. In my opinion that course could have been taken many years before. If the Chief Secretary furnishes us with an explanation as to what is meant by the amendment I will then be able to say whether I shall support the Bill. I shall do so, provided there is no question of another State enterprise being contemplated.

On motion by Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.