

New clause put and passed.

Bill again reported with further amendments.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Lake Brown - Bullfinch Railway.
 - 2, Government Railways Act Amendment.
- Received from the Assembly.

BILL—WIRE AND WIRE NETTING.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendment made by the Council.

BILL—STATE INSURANCE.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had disagreed to the amendments made by the Council.

House adjourned at 10.43 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 2nd December, 1926.

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QUESTION—FRUIT DRINKS.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Honorary Minister (Hon. S. W. Munsie): 1, Is he aware that so-called fruit drinks are being sold in Perth without any guarantee or statement being provided that the drinks are actually made from or flavoured with fruit? 2, Will he take steps to ensure that drinks so sold are analysed and that in accordance with the Pure Foods Act the contents and flavouring are clearly stated on the containers?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: 1, Action is being taken by the local health authorities to ensure that all drinks comply with the provisions of the food and drug regulations and that they are labelled in accordance with the requirements of such regulations. 2, Samples are analysed from time to time as considered advisable.

QUESTION—POLICE MOTOR, FREMANTLE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Police: 1, Is it the intention of the department to provide the Fremantle police with a motor conveyance during the summer, so that they can effectively deal with motorists infringing the traffic laws? 2, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR POLICE replied: 1 and 2, No. The arrangements with regard to motor vehicles are made taking the whole metropolitan area into consideration.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC BRIDGE, FREMANTLE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Public Works: 1, What amount has been spent on the Fremantle traffic bridge during the last three years? 2, What amount is estimated to be spent per year on the bridge until a new one is provided?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, £1,649 10s. 2, Approximately £4,000 for re-decking, and £2,000 on the understructure this year and £500 per annum thereafter.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BRIDGE, FREMANTLE.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, What is the total amount that has been spent on the Fremantle railway bridge from the 1st July, 1926? 2, What

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

amount is estimated to be spent from now to the end of the financial year on the same bridge? 3, What amount is estimated to be spent per year after that to keep the bridge in safe working order? 4, Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House the report on the bridge by the Engineer for Railways, and also of the diver who inspected the bridge?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, £10,300. 2, £13,000, of which £11,500 is required to reconstruct broken portion of bridge on the "up" side and putting remainder of bridge into a fit state for traffic, and £1,500 to complete work on bridge on "down" side and general maintenance. 3, £2,000. 4, No special report has been made on this bridge by the Chief Engineer Ways and Works since the failure in July last due to the floods, nor has a written report been received from the diver.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, University Colleges.
- 2, Loan £4,370,000.

Introduced by the Premier.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Government Railways Act Amendment.
- 2, Lake Brown-Bullfinch Railway.

Transmitted to the Council.

BILL—WIRE AND WIRE NETTING.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Council's amendment. Clause 2—Insert after "1898" in line 7, the words "or of freehold land."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

This is in accordance with the promise I made to the member for Gascoyne to include freehold land in the interpretation.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [441] in moving the second reading said: This is merely a one clause Bill. In 1917 an amendment was made to the Land Act, providing for the appointment of appraisers to fix the maximum rentals on all pastoral leases. The minimum rental was fixed by the Land Act itself, and in consequence the appraisers in some cases have not been able to appraise the land at what they considered to be its true value. In the Kimberley division 248 appraisements were made. In 244 instances the appraisements were at the minimum of 10s. per 1,000 acres; in 13 instances the figure was 11s.; in six it was 12s., in two it was 13s., in one it was 14s. and in two it was 15s. It has been thought by some leaseholders that the minimum fixed in the Act is unfair, and that the appraisers should have the same freedom in fixing the minimum as they have in fixing the maximum. The Bill is merely to give the appraisers that power. Section 30 of the Land Act of 1917 provides "that such rents shall not be less than the rents prescribed by the principal Act for pastoral leases in the several divisions of the State." This merely proposes to strike out the proviso. Other portions of the Bill provide that the appraisers can reappraise land and fix the rentals necessary, and place their recommendations before the Minister, and if a reduction is made in the rent such reduction will take place on the 1st January next. These are all the provisions of the Bill. Members will have seen from the Press that there have been agitations with regard to some of the leases far away from the coast on the ground that the rentals are excessive.

Mr. Teesdale: The principal one occurred about four days ago.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This has been going on a long while by petition and in other ways. The matter has been under consideration for some time. It was not thought advisable to limit the operations of the Bill only to the Kimberley division.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You limit it to all land appraised at the minimum.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, you do.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We do not limit it. The Bill does not limit the powers of the appraisers in any way.

Hon. G. Taylor: It gives them more power.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They have power to say in any division what shall be the maximum rental. The Land Act provides what shall be the minimum in each division.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is 10s.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It varies.

Hon. G. Taylor: In most cases.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In some places it is 3s. 6d. The power is placed entirely in the hands of appraisers to fix the minimum as well as the maximum.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: If they fix the rent above the minimum, they cannot re-appraise under this Bill.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I admit that. It is a matter for them to decide. They would not do it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: They could not do it under this Bill.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You create an anomaly there.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member valued land at 30s. per 1,000 acres and he raised it above the minimum, there would be no monopoly created.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I said it was an anomaly.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no anomaly. The appraisers have power to appraise the maximum but not to appraise the minimum. Part 2 of the clause gives them full power. If any reduction in rent is made it will date from the 1st January, 1927. There is no limitation as to the appraisal. The old Act provided that the minimum rate should be 10s. When the stocking conditions were increased to double, the rent was reduced to 5s. In 1917 Section 100 was repealed, and the stocking conditions were included in the 1917 Act. We do not interfere with the stocking conditions, but we say that the appraisers shall have the right not only to say what the maximum charge should be but what the minimum charge should be. The Bill provides for nothing else.

Mr. Teesdale: Are the appraisers going to make reappraisements all over the country?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is not necessary. I saw the chairman of the

board this morning. He said that from the information they have, most of these reappraisements can be made in the office.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: All of them?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: He said most of them.

Mr. Teesdale: And the applications will merely be sent in?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No doubt applications will come in.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The board possesses full reports and plans.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. Most of the work can be done in the office.

Mr. Teesdale: To what parts in the North will the Bill apply?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Complaints have come particularly from the Kimberley division.

Hon. G. Taylor: And it will apply to the Eastern Goldfields?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will apply to every division. Section 30 of the Act says—

Provided that such rent shall not be less than the rent prescribed by the principal Act for pastoral leases in the several divisions of the State.

We propose to strike out those words. The other portion of the section gives the appraisers power to reappraise, and they can reduce the rentals if desired. The Act provides that unless an appeal is made within a certain time the appraisers cannot deal with the matter. This was our trouble.

Hon. G. Taylor: The reappraisements will take effect from the 1st January next?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. I have had several applications from individuals appealing against the rent charged. It is possible that many of these people, owing to postal conditions, have as yet failed to send in appeals.

Mr. Sampson: Is there a widespread desire for the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is in the Kimberley division. I do not know what the effect will be, but it cannot amount to a great deal.

Hon. G. Taylor: A widespread desire was emphasised about five days ago.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, by deputation.

Mr. Coverley: It has been going on for a long time.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The matter has been under consideration for a good

while, and inquiries have been made from various places up there.

Mr. Teesdale: We had it under consideration but could not go through with it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We hope to get through with it this time. I move—
That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell debate adjourned.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [4.52] in moving the second reading said: I assure members that although there are eight clauses in the Bill, there is only one principle at stake. The majority of the clauses are consequential upon this one principle.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a good principle.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The principle is to give the local authorities power to borrow money for the installation of the septic tank system.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is this some relief to the Government?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is to assist municipal councils, road boards or health boards, which have no power at present to borrow money for this purpose. Many requests have reached the Health Department for the right to instal these septic tanks. Any private individual, with the consent of the Commissioner of Public Health, can carry out this work, but the local authorities want the right to enforce the use of the system if they so direct. When a local authority has borrowed the money, as provided by the Bill, they can instal the septic tank system and collect the repayment over a period, in the same way as was done in the case of the deep sewerage system installed by the Government in Perth. Anyone could apply to the department for sewerage installation and the department would do the work, collecting the repayments over a period of six to seven years. The Bill provides that the local authority must lend the money to the householder at the same price as they obtain it. We do not fix the price at which the money is to be lent; but that must not exceed the price paid for it. This protects the householder.

Mr. Sampson: The administrative costs will then fall upon the local authority.

Mr. MUNSIE: The plans and specifications for the installation of septic tanks must be approved by the Commissioner of Public Health or the Health Department. After the Health Department has given written approval, the plans and specifications must also receive the approval of the Engineer-in-Chief, who desires to be satisfied that the fittings put in will apply later to the deep sewerage system if it is installed in any district, and that such fittings will therefore not require to be altered.

Hon. G. Taylor: That means an increase in the cost.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am told that it will not mean an increase. The cost in the districts where the system will be first put into operation, namely, Cottesloe and Claremont, will not be as great as the cost of house connections with the deep sewerage scheme in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Sampson: That condition would apply only where it is insisted upon by the Engineer-in-Chief?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It will apply everywhere. I do not want to give anyone the right to introduce any kind of system. The safest method is to ensure that the plans and specifications shall first receive the approval of the Health Department, and then of the Engineer-in-Chief.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is all right so far as the septic tank system goes, but if you want to make the fittings apply to the deep sewerage system you will increase the cost of the septic tank system.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That may be so, but it will prove cheaper in the long run by the time the deep sewerage system is installed. It will be optional for a local resident to do the work himself by contract or otherwise, or he can borrow the money from the local authority for the work.

Mr. Teesdale: It would be rather rough on the householder to scrap the septic tank system, and put him to the extra expense of connecting with the deep sewerage system.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am sure that every district in which the septic tank system had been installed would willingly scrap it if the opportunity came of connecting up with the deep sewerage system.

Mr. Sampson: They may be ruined in the meantime.

Mr. Teesdale: It is rather rough on the small householder.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am assured that the cost of installing the septic tank system will not be as great as the cost of making the house connections with the deep sewerage system in the metropolitan area. That request has not come only from the metropolitan area. According to the files, Bunbury has been asking for the same right during a period of many years. The Bunbury Municipal Council renewed the request recently, having no knowledge that this Bill was about to be introduced. The measure is not limited to Claremont and Cottesloe, but will have a State wide operation, subject to the approval of the Health Department. A local authority will not be able to instal a septic tank system if in the opinion of the Health Department and of the Engineer-in-Chief the locality is unsuitable for septic tanks. There are places where the soil is not suited for the purpose, and where it would be difficult to instal numerqus septic tanks if the houses were close together. The Health Department should certainly have a say in the matter.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Just now it is raining Bills.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Possibly, but I do not see why this measure should not pass.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It is a pity the Bill was not brought down earlier.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: If I had not, unfortunately, been ill for three months, the measure would have been brought down early in the session. However, I cannot help that.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Certainly not.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: A representative deputation from Claremont and Cottesloe interviewed me regarding the sanitary depôt at Osborne. I agreed to inspect the site, and notified all the local authorities concerned. All four bodies were represented on the occasion. Personally I consider that sanitary depôt a disgrace. In the interests of the community it should not remain any longer than is absolutely essential. When I visited the district, some of the local authorities had not agreed to the principle of the septic tank system. I told the representatives that if all the local authorities agreed to adopt the system, I would favourably consider the introduction of the necessary Bill. They have since conveyed to me that they are unanimous, and this Bill represents the fulfilment of my promise. I see no reason why the Bill should be re-

stricted to Claremont and Cottesloe when other districts are asking for the same right.

Mr. North: The Bill is only permissive, not compulsory.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: It is not at all compulsory.

Mr. Sampson: It will be subject to the locality having an efficient water supply.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: These localities have that. The Bill merely gives an opportunity to adopt the septic tank system if so desired. No one is placed under any compulsion by the measure. The only compulsion involved in it is that if a property owner in a district which agrees to adopt the system fails to instal a septic tank, the local authority will have power to instal it for him.

Mr. Sampson: Does the Bill require the taking of a vote before a decision is reached?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: That is provided for in the Health Act and in the Municipal Corporations Act. A vote will have to be taken before money is borrowed for the purpose of installing the septic tank system, just as a vote must be taken before the borrowing of money for any other purpose.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am glad you are getting even with the Minister for Works for taking your job from you the other day.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—LUNACY ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: This is a very small Bill, which has already passed the Upper House.

Hon. G. Taylor: That is no recommendation.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In this case it is a recommendation. The Bill is a much smaller measure than other Bills introduced by the Government for the purpose of giving State employees an appeal board. The reason is that under the Lunacy Act provision is already made for an appeal board, together with the necessary machinery sections. The appeal board, however, con-

sists of the official visiting committee; and that is not satisfactory. The three Bills of this nature which have been introduced during the current session give the employees the right to have representation on the appeal board. The object of the present measure is to substitute for the visiting committee as an appeal board, a board constituted of a person nominated by the Government, who will be chairman, a person representing the Inspector General of Insane, and a person representing the employees.

Mr. Sampson: Are the powers of the visiting committee to be reduced?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes. During the time they have possessed the power to act as an appeal board, they have not heard one appeal from an employee.

Mr. Sampson: What happened in the case where an employee was alleged to have received frozen meat?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The visiting committee were not the appeal board in that case.

Mr. Sampson: You will remember that employee was reinstated.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Yes.

Mr. Sampson: Someone must have decided that.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The hon. member, having been Chief Secretary at the time, should know that the man in question, according to the terms of his employment, was illegally dismissed and had a right of action against the Government. Upon this being discovered, the Minister immediately reinstated him.

Mr. Sampson: No. You reinstated him. He was not reinstated by me.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I say he was reinstated by the hon. member while Chief Secretary.

Mr. Sampson: You are quite wrong.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I am not wrong at all.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is this to be a permanent appeal board, or will the appointments be for a term?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: I think they will be only for a term. In fact, I am sure of it, because the representative of the employees is to be elected by ballot, and his appointment, therefore, would not be permanent, but for a term. I cannot, however, say how long a term.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I want to look into that point.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: The Bill merely brings the Lunacy Act into conformity with the Education Act as amended by a Bill passed during this session, and creates an appeal board on exactly the same lines. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC WORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 63:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This clause was debated at considerable length last night, and it is, of course, the Bill. While it is right to guard against people making bogus sales, the Minister might have achieved that object without declaring that land resumed in December shall be valued at the figure which obtained in the previous January.

The Minister for Works: The provision may cut either way.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, and that admission shows that injustice is possible. A great deal can happen in 12 months. I do not agree that the clause is right.

Mr. LATHAM: The clause has a tendency to be unfair to the person from whom land is resumed. The resumption of land for the purposes of a public work automatically increases the value of all the land adjoining, but the person who hands over his land to the Public Works Department is by reason of that very fact prevented from benefiting by the enhancement of values.

The Minister for Works: That is so under the existing Act.

Mr. LATHAM: But under this clause the position will be worse. In my opinion the clause will not prevent bogus sales.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—DENTISTS ACT AMENDMENT.*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from 24th November.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [5.15]: No objection can be raised to the measure. The objects are simple; they aim at the establishment of a dental hospital or clinic. It is not usual to establish a dental surgery in connection with a general hospital, and in this respect the Bill makes provision in what is considered in medical circles a very proper direction. For a considerable time past a separate dental hospital has been desired. It is an acknowledgment by the fraternity of dentists and by the public generally that the importance of dental treatment is becoming more and more recognised. In some of the big industrial works in America and the Continent, dental clinics have been established. It has been found that where this has been done, the percentage of sickness has materially decreased. In all communities, after consideration has been given to this question and dental treatment has been provided, the health of the people has improved. In the Eastern States this has been recognised for a long time past, and in Melbourne, Adelaide, and Sydney dental hospitals have been established for as long as 40 years.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The dental hospital in Melbourne has been in existence for 40 years.

Mr. SAMPSON: And I believe the Adelaide hospital has been in existence for about the same period. In this State the facilities have been restricted to children of school age, and even then the service has been limited to a large extent to the city. That is very unsatisfactory, because there is a wide variety of diseases that arise from the insanitary or septic condition of the mouth. That may sound rather remarkable language, but it is the wish of the medical profession and of all those who take an interest in preventable diseases, that greater opportunities should be given to people regarding dental treatment. Owing to the need for a proper system of dentistry, infection is bred, and consequently the health of the community suffers. The Dental Board has shown a generous attitude respecting the establishment of a dental clinic, and the Odontological Society has also rendered assistance. I understand that the funds necessary for the establishment of the dental clinic, will be provided on the basis of £1 by the dental society and £1 by the Government. This will

mean that an opportunity will be available for the dental treatment of all, irrespective of their financial standing. It is intended that charges will be made to a limited extent but where a person is unable to afford the payment, the treatment should be provided without charge. That has not been definitely stated, but it is an essential procedure in every hospital, whether it be a general, a maternity, a dental, or a hospital of any other description. I understand, too, that the hospital movement will go further, and that the medical men, who will be giving their services in an honorary capacity, are prepared to extend their services to the different orphanages. The whole proposition is an admirable one. A building has been leased, but not purchased, as was stated by one newspaper recently. There is no reason why the work of the hospital should not be started immediately. I could hope it would be possible to extend the service of the dental clinic not only to the people in the metropolitan area and to those who can come to Perth for treatment, but also to the children of the schools throughout the country. I know the Public Health Department is doing good work in making known the importance of keeping the teeth in good condition, and of securing a clean mouth. Unfortunately, unless there is a practical demonstration of this work, we shall not make that progress we would like to see.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: The dentists have agreed that if the hospital will supply the materials necessary, they will do the dental work free in any country town, provided they have the authority of the school medical officer.

Mr. SAMPSON: That applies to the children in the country schools.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Yes.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is a very fine thing, and it is another indication of the debt we are under to medical men in connection with the health of the people. The opinion has been expressed that, given proper teeth hygiene, many of the diseases to which human beings are subject will be eliminated. Terrible conditions are to be found in the mouths of some people, irrespective of what class they may belong to. That state of affairs is entirely the result of ignorance. People do not recognise the importance of mouth hygiene and, in common with the Minister for Health I hope that the result secured following upon the establishment of the dental hospital will be

all that could be desired. I am satisfied that the State as a whole must benefit. We should be animated by feelings of gratitude to the medical profession for the generous, if not altruistic, manner in which they have viewed the position. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—JETTIES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 24th November.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.27]: We are being asked to deal with a vast number of Bills this session. It is true that many of them are small Bills. The Government may be likened to a fruit tree whose roots have extended into salty ground. Before it dies it throws out blossoms and forms fruit, but does no good. We have had a great crop of Bills during this, the eleventh hour of the session. The Bill now before us is one that can best be dealt with in Committee. I presume that most of the provisions already apply to jetties to-day, including the jetties in the far North and at the outports, and also to the jetties in the Swan River. Some of the proposals are rather drastic. The Bill provides that the Government may undertake, construct and provide any jetty. In other words, we are asked to give statutory authority to the Government to do as they please regarding jetty construction. I do not think for a moment that the House will agree to allow the Government to provide jetties without the authority of Parliament. Some jetties cost a considerable amount of money.

The Premier: Some might not cost very much.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We shall be told by the Minister that this provision is required because of the ferry traffic on the Swan River. The authority that the Government require is merely to construct boat jetties and landings, but this measure will give them power to construct large jet-

ties. A Government might decide to erect a jetty at Albany that would take the traffic away from the town, not the present Government of course, but a Government that might come later. I think this power should be confined to river jetties. There are some private jetties in shallow waters and they are necessary, because most of our waters are shallow. Such jetties will come under the measure. All private jetties will come under the measure and must be licensed, and of course a license might be refused if the Minister thought fit. I hope that the jetties that do not affect people other than their owners will be allowed to continue. The member for Bunbury, and to a lesser extent the member for Albany, will naturally look into the matter as it affects their electorates. I wish we had sufficient water in all our electorates to float boats and render the provision of jetties necessary.

Mr. Withers: There is a lot of water inland from Bunbury.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This measure will enable the Government to regulate and control the working of jetties in every detail. They will be able to prescribe charges for berthing, wharfage and handling—in fact, charges of all kinds. The Government exercise similar powers at present, but they require power under this measure to fix charges and make regulations for the control of jetties. After the Bill becomes law I do not suppose there will be many changes. The Bill, however, contains one extraordinary provision. Not only are jetties included but reference is made in Clause 12 to “any public jetty or bridge.” That is the only place where the word “bridge” appears. Seeing that the measure is designed entirely to control jetties and that the title shows that it refers to jetties only, I cannot see why the word “bridge” should have been introduced. Under the measure the Governor may make regulations for the prevention of injury to any public jetty or bridge and may impose a penalty not exceeding £20 for any breach of such regulations. I daresay some explanation can be offered for the inclusion of the word “bridge,” but it is a little unusual to mix jetties and bridges in an Act of Parliament. One can understand its being necessary perhaps to apply the provision to Fremantle where there is not only a traffic bridge but a railway bridge across the river. Perhaps the Minister will explain that he requires some power to deal with those

bridges. I hope that in Committee members who have some knowledge of the working of jetties and the requirements of a Bill of this kind will give consideration to the proposals. I cannot see that the position at the outports will be changed at all, though possibly alterations will be made under the power to be conferred by this measure. I shall not oppose the second reading. I am sorry that this and other Bills were not brought down earlier in the session so that we should have had an opportunity to get full information. Of the working of these public utilities, we cannot be expected to possess knowledge of our own.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Definitions:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suggest that if the Minister wishes to assume control of bridges he should insert a definition. The clause contains a definition of "jetty" but not of "bridge." If it is necessary to control the bridge at Fremantle, it should be stated.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This Bill will not apply to the Fremantle bridge, which is under the control of the Fremantle Harbour Trust.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Well, a bridge of that sort.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The power conferred under the existing Act is not sufficient to enable us to control the various jetties with their increased trade. The measure is simply designed to control jetties.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister cannot dismiss the point quite so airily as that. He should read Clause 12. Perhaps the word "bridge" has slipped in by accident.

The Minister for Lands: I know there is no accident about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But we do not know. I feel sure it must refer to Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We require power regarding the riverway so that large vessels may be prohibited from passing through the piers of a bridge when they are

likely to cause damage. A large barge passing through the Fremantle bridge swung around and only by a stroke of luck was damage avoided.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is not the place to make provision for that. This measure deals with jetties. If a definition of "bridge" is not inserted, we shall strike out the reference to "bridge" in Clause 12.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—Power to make regulations:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Under legislation of this kind, regulations must be made to fit each port. According to Clause 4, however, the Minister controlling jetties will take over a responsibility of the Minister for Police. Regulations may be made to preserve order on jetties, regulate the traffic thereon, and prescribe the means of transport. Is it necessary to give such power? The Minister controlling jetties could appoint a special police force.

The Minister for Justice: Beadon is a big jetty and we want someone to control it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is the job of the Minister for Justice to preserve order. Why should we give similar power to the Minister controlling jetties?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: On every jetty controlled by a board, the board have that power. This Bill will apply to jetties controlled by the Minister and he requires similar power. At Beadon, for instance, a policeman is not always available.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It will be impossible to preserve order without giving authority to use force.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Minister will indicate what authority is to be given to a person controlling a jetty. The existing Act has been in operation for many years and a lot of the regulations are ultra vires.

Mr. Teesdale: If a wharfinger were appointed to preserve order, would he have power to arrest?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It would depend upon the power given under the regulation, and the regulation must first have received the approval of Parliament.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It seems extraordinary to take such power. I hope this power will not be used, because the police are the proper people to preserve order on a jetty and elsewhere. The Minister mentioned special constables. If he

intends to appoint them to take charge of a jetty, then the power sought in the Bill will not be necessary. I notice also that it is intended to make regulations to impose on intending shippers of goods from any public jetty an obligation to furnish full and true accounts of the goods intended to be shipped.

The Minister for Lands: That is necessary.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I should imagine it would be difficult to give such notice to intending shippers.

The Minister for Lands: Intending shippers will give notice to an officer.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I could understand such a provision where the cargo consisted of explosives or something equally dangerous.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Application of regulations under this Act:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I imagine that regulations of this sort applying to our coast should be uniform. Paragraph (c) provides that regulations made under the Bill shall not apply to jetties forming part of any Government railway or under the control of the Commissioner. Instead of exempting such a jetty from the provisions of the Bill, I should have thought it would be convenient to let the Bill apply. The Railway Department, we know, is a law unto itself and makes its own regulations, but in this respect uniform regulations would be better. It will be a question of the Railway Department administering this law in one place and another department administering it in another place.

The Minister for Railways: This is necessary in the case of jetties controlled under the Railways Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Why have several Acts controlling jetties along the coast? It will mean that when a shipping master comes to our coast he will be given the Railway Act, this Act and a few others to study.

The Premier: Things are pretty slack on that part of the coast and he will have plenty of time to study the various Acts.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move an amendment—

That in line three of paragraph (d) the figures "14, 15, or 16" be struck out, and "13, 14, or 15" be inserted in lieu.

This is merely an error that it is desired to rectify.

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

Clause 6—Construction of jetties:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Now we come to a serious provision to which the House must object. We say without any authority other than this Bill that the Government may authorise the Minister to undertake, construct and provide any jetty. What powers are we giving to the Government when we say they may construct a jetty?

The Premier: You have constructed jetties costing tens of thousands of pounds.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No.

The Premier: Yes, out of Treasurer's Advance you constructed a jetty in the North-West.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No fear, that jetty at Beadon Point was authorised by this House.

The Premier: It slipped through and we woke up to find that it was there.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister for Works agree with me when I say that if a jetty is to be constructed the engineers of the department must construct it? I want to know why this provision has been inserted.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Leader of the Opposition knows as well as I do why this clause has been inserted. The Minister himself will not construct a jetty; he will employ some person to do so when it is required, and when a vote for the work has been provided on the Estimates. The work will be done with the approval of Parliament.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is the duty of the Works Department to construct jetties. There is no need to make such a provision in a Bill like this. It is also provided that the Government may authorise the Minister to acquire any private jetty from any person who is entitled thereto. It seems to me that what has happened is that we are mixing up deep sea jetties with river jetties, and we are giving powers that may be used by the Minister well beyond the requirements of the river. I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (a) the word "construct" be struck out.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What is the use of taking power to regulate jetties if you do not build them?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If it applied only to river jetties, it would be another matter, but it is a general power. I do not know why these wide powers should be required. This has nothing to do with what the Bill provides for, namely the management and control of jetties.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If I thought the hon. member was sincere in his amendment, I could understand it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows that the Minister never constructs anything of the sort. Parliament would first have to approve, and then the Minister would instruct someone to do the work for him.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think the Government should have power to construct important expensive jetties without the approval of Parliament.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member built the Beadon jetty under these very powers, and without a vote of the House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No fear.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But he did. The power is already in the Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But we are not amending any Act. The clause gives the Government power to acquire any private jetty. Of course there is no private jetty of any consequence, and so that does not matter; but when the clause provides that the Governor may authorise the Minister to construct any jetty, it means that the Minister would be able to construct a large and expensive jetty.

The Premier: He would have to get the vote of Parliament first—except in a case like that of the Beadon jetty.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister might even undertake to build a Beadon jetty under this clause.

The CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in the Bill about the Beadon jetty.

The Premier: The hon. member undertook it without any clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I first got the sanction of the House. Under the clause, that would not be necessary. I do not know why the clause is here, and the Minister does not seem to know, either. The Bill is based on the Victorian Act, but this provision is quite new. I will withdraw my

amendment.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I want to know whether this clause applies to all jetties. If the Minister desired to do anything to any jetty, could he do it under this clause?

The Minister for Lands: Of course.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The Chairman of Committees would not allow the Beadon jetty to be mentioned. Does the Bill apply to jetties in the North-West?

The Minister for Lands: The Bill applies to all jetties not controlled by the Railway Act.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Then we can discuss any jetty in the State. That is all right.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

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

Ayes	22
Noes	12

Majority for .. 10

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Millington
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munroe
Mr. Collier	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Heron	Mr. Troy
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Withers
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lamond	
Mr. McCallum	

(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. North
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Lindsay	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Maley	Mr. Latham
Mr. Mann	
Sir James Mitchell	

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 7 to 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Responsibility for injuries to jetties, No. 49 of 1912:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: On the second reading the Minister said the Fremantle bridge was used only to be knocked about by boats. This clause provides that where any injury is done by a vessel to any public jetty or bridge certain things shall follow. Why does the Minister want to control bridges under a Bill for the control of jetties?

Mr. Davy: Well, if one end of a bridge falls down, what is left becomes a jetty.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose there is some reason for having the word "bridge" here, but it seems to me it has got in by accident.

The Premier: Well, it will do no harm.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That was originally the Premier's remark; I merely adopted it.

The Premier: I give you credit for having originated it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will the Minister strike out this word "bridge"?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TEESDALE: When any injury is done by a vessel to a bridge or jetty the owner is to be liable, or the master, as the case may be. As a result of bad luck, a vessel may do damage to the extent of £2,000 or £3,000. It would be rather rough upon the master if he were held responsible when he is only a servant of the owners. Would the owner be responsible if the second or third officer were on the bridge and not the master?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The clause is very clear. If it were proved that the damage was caused through the wrongful or negligent act of the master or owner, either would be held responsible according to the facts of the case.

Mr. Teesdale: The Government have taken this very principle out of the Railway Bill, and are not showing consistency by including it in this one.

The Premier: In the Railway Bill we are only giving employees the right of appeal.

Mr. DAVY: Why is this provision necessary? If any person negligently injures the property of another, he is liable under the law as it stands.

The Premier: In that case the clause will do no harm.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have put through too much legislation on that plea.

Mr. DAVY: I take more exception to the imposition of an absolute liability upon the owner, whether he is responsible or not.

The Minister for Lands: That has been in existence for years.

Mr. DAVY: If that is so, there is no necessity for the second portion of the clause either. I do not know whether the word "bridge" should appear in this Bill.

Mr. Withers: The Government may have in mind their new Fremantle bridge.

The Premier: Sometimes a bridge is a jetty and a jetty is a bridge.

Mr. Teesdale: I think Tilly's launch must be in the Premier's mind.

The Minister for Lands: That was not a launch.

Mr. DAVY: This is not the proper place in which to legislate for bridges. One should know where to search for the law on any particular subject. It would not occur to a person to look in a Jetties Act for any legislation relating to bridges.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Is the damage referred to here, damage done by a ship?

The Premier: The clause says so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: If that is quite clear, there is no further need to discuss the clause.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is quite conceivable that in some parts of the State a bridge may serve the purpose of a jetty. That being so, it is necessary, as a safeguard for public property, that bridges should be included in this Bill in the way set out.

Mr. SAMPSON: I do not object to the principle contained in this clause as it relates to vessels, but I am sure it would not be found in any of our workshops. Any attempt that might be made to secure damages through the wrongful or negligent act of a tradesman, would be highly unsuccessful.

Hon. W. J. GEORGE: I fail to see why this provision is included in the Bill, though it appears in the 1912 Act except for the word "bridge." When eventually vessels come up the Swan to Perth, if any damage is done to bridges which will then cross the river, the owner of the vessel will have to pay. In such circumstances the vessel would at once be served with a notice and impounded—if that is the right word—until the case was settled or security given for payment of damages. Why the master should be brought into the matter I do not know. The master is responsible to the owner, and if found guilty of negligence he will probably lose his certificate and certainly lose his employment. Probably the insertion of the word "bridge" is due to the idea of opening up the river and permitting vessels to come up to Perth, when there will be other bridges across the river.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—ALBANY HARBOUR BOARD.*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [7.50] in moving the second reading said: For some years there has been an agitation for the establishment of a harbour board at Albany. Indeed, it may be said that the agitation started as long ago as 1907. Since then various Governments have expressed a desire to fall in with the wishes of the Albany people. Accordingly it was thought advisable to introduce this Bill now. In 1907 the Wilson Government authorised the preparation of a Bill, but did not proceed with it. At that time there was some difference of opinion as to fixing the value at which Government property should be transferred to the proposed board. It was maintained by some that the whole of the Government expenditure in connection with the port of Albany should be chargeable to the board, though a considerable proportion of the assets on which public money had been expended were non-existent. Owing to this conflict of views, the Wilson Government's Bill was left in abeyance. The present measure provides that the assets to be handed over to the board shall be appraised upon the inauguration of the board; that is, the board are to be charged with the value of the assets at the time of taking over. I do not think it necessary to point out at any length that Albany is becoming one of the principal ports of the State, and that with the construction of additional railways leading southward through the Great Southern district it will become even more important in the future.

Hon. G. Taylor: I never heard you say that up to now. Surely you must be leaving this State.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: During the last 20 years I have consistently said in this Chamber that the nearer the producer can be brought to a port, the better.

Hon. G. Taylor: You are slowing down on Fremantle.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This Bill will not make any difference to Fremantle. If it would, I might take another view of the subject. The nearer one can bring the producer to the sea, the better, no matter in what part of the State the port may be situated. The establishment of a harbour board, it is considered, will have a tendency

more effectively to advertise to shipping interests the advantages of Albany than has been the case while the harbour has been under the control of the Railway Department.

Mr. Mann: Do you think the mail steamers might be brought back to Albany?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is a point to be considered later. According to the Commonwealth Statistician, Albany ranks as the fourteenth port of Australia in point of tonnage. The tonnage which entered it for the year 1923-24—the latest year mentioned in the 1925 edition of the "Official Year Book"—was 516,091 tons. There are many ports ranking considerably below Albany. The other day we were told that Bunbury was the seventh port of Australia, but according to the Commonwealth Statistician it is the twenty-first. Fremantle appears sixth on the list.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But that is according to the size of the ships.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; according to tonnage entered.

Mr. Withers: Not according to export, though.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I have seen three ships totalling 150,000 tons.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am speaking of tonnage of ships. I shall not be led astray on that point.

Mr. Sampson: Bunbury leads in point of export.

Mr. Mann: Albany gains because of the South African steamers calling for coal.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The figures show that Albany is not in such a distressed position as some of our friends living in its neighbourhood would have the people of Western Australia believe. For many years the citizens and business men of Albany have been of opinion that if they had the control of their port they would be able to provide better facilities for shipping. On that score complaints have been heard for many years, and they continue to the present day. It is said that the Railway Department will not provide the facilities necessary for quick loading and quick despatch of ships. Albany people are of opinion that if the matter was placed in their hands, more shipping would be attracted to the port. As I indicated just now, the opening of new railways such as the Boyup-Cranbrook, Pemberton-Mt. Barker and Nornalup-Denmark lines will provide additional traffic and additional

work for the port of Albany owing to the increased production of the southern part of the State. That being so, the Government confidently ask the House to give Albany at last its heart's desire.

Hon. G. Taylor: Just to stop the whine!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The control of the port to-day rests with the Railway Department and the Harbour and Light Branch. While those authorities discharge their obligations in what they believe to be the best interests of the State as a whole, the people of Albany hold that they themselves would be able to finalise matters more expeditiously if they had control of the port, and that they would be able to avoid what they term the circumlocution inseparable from the existing system of supervision.

Mr. Teesdale: They are plucky.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: During the year ended on the 30th June, 1924, 148 vessels of 817,132 gross tons entered the port, as against 183 vessels of 1,083,424 gross tons for the previous financial year. The decrease is attributable to the reduced number of vessels calling at Albany for bunkers. The decline was in respect of wheat vessels proceeding overseas from the Eastern States, and was due mainly to the British Seamen's strike. During the year ended on the 30th June, 1924, eight vessels called for fruit and loaded 116,052 cases, as against eight vessels loading 118,000 cases during the previous season. Three vessels lifted part cargoes of wheat during the season, the quantity shipped being 43,407 bags. Twenty-five steamers called for bunkers only, and shipped 14,358 tons, as compared with 63 vessels loading 18,000 tons for the previous period. As hon. members are aware, several lines of oversea passenger steamers still call at the port of Albany—the Blue Funnel, the Aberdeen, and the White Star. Some of the steamers make Albany their last port of call homewards, and some of them make it their first port of call outwards. The Albany figures of revenue and expenditure are not high. The earnings of the two jetties at Albany under the control of the Railway Department during the last financial year amounted to £7,660, as against £9,667 for the previous financial year. The expenditure for the same periods totalled £4,231 and £4,648. The Chief Harbour Master reports that his

department collected for pilotage, etc., £345 during the year ended 30th June, 1926. The clauses of the Bill are almost identical with those of the Bunbury Harbour Board Bill, and therefore I need not deal with them in detail.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There are 74 of them.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, but they are largely administrative clauses. In fact, they are exactly similar to those of the Bunbury Harbour Board Bill, with the exception that this Bill provides that the control of explosives at the port of Albany shall be placed under the Chief Inspector of Explosives. There is nothing in this legislation dealing with the Bunbury Harbour Board regarding explosives. The only other departure from the Bunbury Harbour Board legislation refers to the sectional representation as set out in the Bill. It is unnecessary for me to inform hon. members that when we are considering the Bill in Committee, I will move for the excision of that particular reference. It was not in the Bill when it was introduced originally. Appointments of this description should be left to the Government of the day, no matter who they may be. I am pleased to notice that the products of the district have been increasing, although, unfortunately, most of those products have been shipped from other ports. The production of wool last year increased by over 1,000,000 lbs., but that proportional increase has not been carried to other avenues of production as well. At the same time the wool increase shows that the sheep in the district I refer to have been augmented considerably. The wheat crop maintained a fair average. In 1923-24 it reached 342,309 bushels; in 1924-25, 514,177 bushels; and in 1925-26, 531,637 bushels. A considerable quantity of that wheat was used locally, and the shipments from Albany fell short of the total for the previous year by approximately 2,000 tons.

Mr. Sampson: Will it be possible to improve the facilities for shipping fruit at Albany?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is as much fruit shipped from Albany as from any other port in the State.

Mr. Sampson: I was referring to fruit-cooling facilities.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: In 1923-24 the apples produced in the district amounted to 180,002 bushels; in 1924-25 to 288,004 bushels; and in 1925-26 to 219,879 bushels. In 1923-24 the year's produce re-

presented 15,020 bushels; in 1924-25, 24,275 bushels; and in 1925-26, 22,478 bushels.

Hon. G. Taylor: Was that in the immediate vicinity of Albany?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, in the district surrounding Albany, which, of course, is the port for the Mt. Barker district. The area under fruit there is increasing considerably and with the advent of other railways in the wheat areas in that part of the State, Albany will secure a large proportion of the wheat for shipment. I do not know that it is necessary for me to say any more. The Bill will be brought into operation by proclamation and it gives power for the creation of a corporate body in the same way as other similar bodies are dealt with. I feel that if the Bill is agreed to by hon. members it will remove one of the grievances that Albany has possessed for over 20 years.

Hon. G. Taylor: But do you really think the trade of the port warrants the creation of a harbour board?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think so. The local people will be able to take a greater interest in their port and will see to it that Albany gets the trade it is entitled to. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—WAR RELIEF FUNDS.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [8.6] in moving the second reading said: This is another small Bill, but nevertheless a very necessary one.

Mr. Mann: There has been a perfect hail-storm of Bills!

Mr. Teesdale: But this is very important, no doubt.

The PREMIER: The Bill has to do with the disposal of moneys that were collected for war purposes during the period of hostilities. It will be within the knowledge of hon. members that during that period many funds for various purposes associated with the war, were established in almost every town and hamlet throughout the State. Many of those funds have been wound up. In other instances there remain on deposit in the banks some of the funds that were raised for war purposes, and the committees or persons controlling those funds have disap-

peared, or perhaps no longer exercise control over the money. In some instances the amounts were fairly small, and they have been eaten up by the bank charges alone. In 1923 this House appointed a Royal Commission to investigate this question. In the report of that Royal Commission recommendations were made which, it was considered, would be in the interests of all concerned. The Bill is based entirely upon the recommendations of that Royal Commission. Briefly the measure proposes that the Government shall appoint a council of three, one of whom shall be appointed on the nomination of the central executive of the Returned Soldiers' League and another on the nomination of the Ugly Men's Association.

Hon. G. Taylor: Where do they come in?

The PREMIER: That was one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The motive that actuated the Commission was that this organisation had been responsible for raising a very large sum of money for war purposes, more perhaps than any other organisation in the State at the time.

Hon. G. Taylor: Did they give that money to the people you speak of?

The PREMIER: Yes, it was distributed amongst them for various purposes.

Hon. G. Taylor: Some of the money they collected is in question now.

The PREMIER: Yes, some of the funds still in existence represent money that was received as the result of the efforts of the Ugly Men's Association. The Royal Commission, therefore, considered that that organisation should have representation on the council. The council will have power to decide in what city, town or district any war relief fund was wholly or mainly collected. If a fund was wholly or mainly collected in any particular town, the council will have power to appoint a committee in that town to control that particular fund. That committee will consist of people nominated according to the wishes of the citizens of the town and also of the executive of the local branch of the Returned Soldiers' League.

Mr. Heron: If there is a committee in existence, that body can be endorsed.

The PREMIER: Yes. The council will have power to appoint such a body as the district committee in the event of the funds having been wholly or mainly collected in that particular town or district. That will be done in order that the fund may continue to be used and administered by the

people of that town or district, for the benefit of the returned soldiers or their dependants for whom the funds were raised originally. Where the funds were raised in several districts extending over a large area, they will be controlled by the council itself. Obviously, it would be difficult to have local control where the funds were collected from various centres extending over a large area. There may still be standing on deposit in the banks various moneys belonging to several of these funds, and the council will have power to amalgamate those funds. In other words the council will have power to take possession of those moneys and amalgamate them in one fund. That, it will be admitted, is very desirable. The council will have power to collect and receive any war relief fund which it decides was not wholly or mainly collected in any particular city, town or district. Regarding local committees, the funds with which they will be particularly concerned will be vested in them and will be under their sole control. The Bill sets out that the council have power to order that any war relief fund deposited in any bank or under the control or in the custody of any trustees or any person shall be handed over to the committee in whom it is vested under this Act, or to the council in case it is not vested in any such committee: to administer and apply, in such manner as the council shall think fit, for the relief of necessitous soldiers and dependants, such war relief funds as are not under this Act to be administered by any committee.

Mr. Brown: Will that do away with local repatriation committees?

The PREMIER: Not necessarily. If there are local committees and they are handling war funds, they may be appointed to continue under this measure.

Hon. G. Taylor: Those funds will come under the Bill.

The PREMIER: Yes, the funds raised for war purposes.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you know what the total amount is?

The PREMIER: I do not think any such return has been prepared. Since the war terminated it has been nobody's business, and funds that were collected for war purposes have remained in the banks. Many of the funds, of course, have been applied in accordance with the judgment of those

concerned in conformity with the purpose for which they were raised.

Mr. Sampson: In some instances I believe no charge was made by the banks.

The PREMIER: I believe that is so; in any case, the charge would be small. I am not aware that any information has been collected as to the total amount of the funds. I am not reflecting upon any of the controlling bodies, but funds have been disposed of, perhaps for a good purpose, but not in conformity with the purpose for which they were raised. I have in mind one fund of more than £500, and only a month or two ago it was handed over to an organisation that is doing good work, but it is possible that the money could have been used in a way that would have better conformed to the ideas of the people who subscribed it, namely the relief or assistance of necessitous soldiers or their dependants. As time goes on we may expect that the funds will disappear in one direction or another.

Mr. Davy: Or lie useless.

The PREMIER: Or lie useless, as the hon. member says, while there is need for them in many directions. The local committees shall be composed of residents in the city, town or district, and members of any branch of the Returned Soldiers' League that may be operating in the locality. The Bill will give a local committee full power. It is provided they shall have power to administer the war relief fund vested in them, and apply the fund for relief in such a manner as the committee shall judge to be best in the interests of soldiers or dependants who are resident in or in the vicinity of the city, town or district for which the committee were appointed. I regret that we have delayed so long in making an effort to consolidate these funds for the benefit of the people for whom they were raised. Two of the three members of the Royal Commission were returned men, and the Bill is based entirely on their recommendations. Therefore I do not think it will meet with any objection. I hope that, as a result of the passing of the measure, the money will be consolidated into one fund, and will be used for the purpose for which it was subscribed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

BILL—STATE INSURANCE.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of four amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 2, interpretation of "Workers' compensation insurance business."—Delete the words "or otherwise" in line five and insert the following words:—"and at common law for compensation to employees engaged in mining or quarrying or stone crushing or cutting, or to employees of the State Government or of any State trading concern."

The PREMIER: The effect of the amendment is to confine the Government insurance business to men employed in mining or quarrying or stone crushing or cutting, or to Government employees. I do not propose to cover the ground that was so thoroughly traversed when the Bill was before us. Every aspect was then debated at considerable length and I do not suppose that any member of this Chamber has changed the views he held regarding the principle of State insurance or this clause. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Mr. DAVY: I confess that I was unable to predict what attitude the Government would adopt to the amendment. In view of the expressions of opinion that came from members of the Government at an earlier stage of the discussion, I should have expected them to accept the amendment. The original move towards State insurance took place some considerable time ago, and it synchronised with the statement made by the Minister for Works in which he outlined the attitude of the Government. Almost the concluding paragraph of his statement was to the effect that the Government were not at all anxious to go into this kind of business. He said that the Bill had been introduced to validate the action of the Government and to obtain power to continue the business, and he emphasised that it was only with reluctance that the Government had entered the business.

Mr. Lambert: You are referring only to miners' phthisis.

Mr. DAVY: No; I am referring to the attitude of the Government on the question of embarking upon workers' compensation

insurance. The general statement was that the Government had not been at all willing to embark upon the business. It was further stated, either at the same time or subsequently, that it was realised the insurance of miners would be a losing proposition. Even in the original statement I think that was made clear, and the excuse of the Minister for Works for entering the business against the wish of the Government was the necessity of the miners. The excuse for going further than merely covering the miners was that it was not fair to ask the Government to run what it was thought would be a losing proposition, without being able also to undertake profitable business in order, to use a vulgarism, that they might pick up on the roundabouts what they knew they would lose on the swings. I pointed out early in the argument that the logical conclusion of that contention was that the Government proposed to make employers, who were not mine owners, pay the loss which was going to accrue from covering the miners. I emphasised that the result would be that the farmers and the manufacturers would carry some of the burden that the legislature had said should be carried by the mine owners, and I maintained that that would be grossly unfair. I quoted what had happened in Queensland where the cover for mine owners in respect of miners' diseases was run at a dead loss; in fact, the Queensland department were transferring from the other branch of workers' compensation sums up to £10,000 a year to make good the loss. In the end the Minister for Works departed from his attitude; in fact he accused me of telling a deliberate falsehood. He said the Government had no such intention. The only conclusion therefore was that the Government had adopted a different attitude and that they then proposed to pay the loss that they would suffer on miners' business out of Consolidated Revenue, a very proper thing to do. It is not fair to ask any particular class of employer to make up a loss that another class of employer incurs in insuring himself against a risk that the legislature said he should bear. The Government, having arrived at that point of view, could no longer claim any necessity for being permitted to insure other than that particular class of business. All the time members on the Government side were interjecting, "What are you going to do for the miners if you do not pass this Bill?" If another place had thrown out the Bill on the second reading,

no doubt we should have heard from the Government and their followers screams from one end of the country to the other that another place had deliberately let down the miners.

Hon. G. Taylor: Do not you think they would have been justified?

Mr. DAVY: Perhaps they would have been, but members in another place did not throw out the Bill; they have given the Government what they really asked in the beginning. They have conceded to the Government the power to do what the Government said was necessary and what the Government said had driven them into this business against their will.

The Minister for Lands: The Government's request is embodied in the Bill.

Mr. DAVY: Of course. But the Government from first to last made the point that they had to have this Bill; otherwise the miners were let down. Their original excuse for urging the necessity for being prompted to enter into the business other than the miners' business has vanished, and if they had any complaint against the other House, it vanished when that House passed the Bill to give the Government power to meet the only emergency which they now say drove them reluctantly into this class of business. Another place has given to the Government all that the Government, on their own showing, were entitled to ask for.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: In your opinion.

Mr. DAVY: I am giving my own opinion.

Mr. Hughes: I think you are voicing the insurance companies' opinion.

Mr. DAVY: That is the hon. member's opinion, and he is welcome to it. The insurance companies apparently wanted the Bill thrown out altogether. I suspect that to be so.

The Premier: Had they wanted it to go out, it would have gone out all right.

Mr. DAVY: I do not think the Premier believes that himself.

The Premier: I do, every word of it.

Mr. DAVY: At any rate, I am not concerned with what the insurance companies want or what they do not want. I take up the attitude that I think is right, and what I say is that the Government, by rejecting this amendment, will put themselves in the wrong, and I believe they will be very sorry for having done so. It is waste of time to ask members to defeat the proposal of the Premier. Nevertheless I think that is what the House should do. The passage of the

Bill in its present form will relieve the Government of one portion of the business; at the same time it will protect the miners, and that, after all, is the only point of importance.

Mr. Panton: Who is going to pay for the miners?

Mr. DAVY: Who should pay for the sick miners? Only two classes of persons—the mine owners, and if they cannot afford to pay, then it must be the whole community.

Mr. Panton: That will include farmers and manufacturers.

Mr. DAVY: And also the idle rich who do not employ anybody. If the Government were to attempt to make good their losses on miners' diseases insurance out of the profits made from other classes of employers, then I would get off scot-free. The member for Toodyay, for instance, would pay heavily. When I challenged the Minister for Works with that intention, he accused me of telling a deliberate falsehood.

Mr. Panton: Why will the member for Toodyay have to pay more than he might be paying at present?

Mr. DAVY: If the Government are going to run the insurance business, and though they may not be permitted to make profits out of one class of business because they are going to make a loss out of the other—

Mr. Hughes: Tell me one business that does not offset bad business against good.

Mr. DAVY: How many businesses deliberately embark on undertakings which they know will be a serious loss from the start, and which must always be a loss for some time to come?

Mr. Panton: The member for Toodyay could insure with the Government.

Mr. DAVY: No.

Mr. Panton: Tell me how he is going to pay heavily?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. DAVY: The position is quite clear. If it is of importance for the Government to enter on another kind of insurance business because they are going to enter one which is going to prove a loss, it must be because they intend to make up the loss of one out of the profits of the other. Having realised the impropriety—I do not like that word—or the lack of logic about such a proposition, and having admitted that the excuse for entering into any kind of insurance business except to cover these particular

diseases, has vanished there can be no reason why the Government should not accept the Bill as amended.

The PREMIER: I want to assure the member for West Perth that the Government have made no excuses whatever, as he suggests we have done. The Government made a candid statement of fact with regard to this Bill from the very beginning, and I want to repeat that the Government did reluctantly enter into the business, notwithstanding the emphasis that the hon. member placed upon the word "reluctant." We did it because there was no possibility of the mine owners effecting insurances otherwise. The Government were driven into the action they took. There was no escape from the position. The hon. member seemed to think that he got hold of a great point when he declared that the Government were going to extract profits from the member for Toodyay, whom he mentioned, and other employers in the State to pay the losses on miners' compensation. Would the member for Toodyay or anybody else in the State get a lower premium from the insurance companies than could be obtained from the State Insurance Office? Is it not a legitimate, fair and honest thing for the Government to do when forced into insurance, to see that that phase of the business which may and does return a profit is embarked upon, and that the profit goes into the coffers of the State instead of into the pockets of the insurance companies? If the companies were going to give lower rates to the employers, then it might be said that the member for Toodyay and others would benefit. If the hon. member were insuring with the State, he would not be charged rates any higher than those the companies would charge. It is a million to one that with the State out of it, and no competition, he would have to pay a higher rate. In the whole of my experience I have never known a Bill to receive such backing and support from the newspapers, day after day, as has been the case with this particular measure. I have never before known a measure to be so exhaustively debated in another place, and to be so fully reported in the newspapers, remembering too that during the course of the debate in this House columns were devoted to what was said here. It is very seldom that we find a newspaper repeating at length its reports of the proceedings in another place after

having given extensive reports to the debates in this House. Unlimited space was made available to the publicity officer of the insurance companies. No Bill that has come before Parliament has ever had such publicity given to it in the Press. I say again that this amendment has been made in the interests of the profits of the insurance companies to the detriment of the taxpayers of the State.

Ministerial Members: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: There is no question about that; it is a fact. Another place says, "Clean it up for one year, and then get out." Then when it reaches a profitable stage they want the insurance companies to come in. The State, having been forced into insurance against its will—there were no other means of effecting insurance—is it a proper thing for Parliament to deny the State the right to compete in the open market for compensation business, or to confine the operations to a class of work which may mean considerable losses? Of course it does not matter how much the taxpayers of the State may lose so long as the profits of the insurance companies are not affected! That is the position to-day; there is no escape from it. I assert now that this amendment meets with the approval of the insurance companies. Had the insurance companies wanted the Bill to go out in another place it would have gone out for a certainty.

Hon. G. Taylor: Another place recommitted it two or three times.

The PREMIER: Yes, in order to get exactly the amendments the insurance companies wanted. Amendments were drafted by the legal advisers of the insurance companies and after they were carried on the first occasion it was found that a mistake had been made in the drafting. Then the Bill was recommitted in the interests of the insurance companies and the redrafted amendment submitted. That is the indictment that stands against another place. I do not often make an attack on another place, but I say that the members responsible for this amendment, and the emasculation generally of the Bill, have acted in the interests of the insurance companies to the detriment of the taxpayers of the State. There is no question about that. They propose to limit the operation of the Bill to a year, after which we are to get out. If we are forced, as we have been forced, to take on this business, why should not the

State have the right to do other compensation business, some phases of which may show a profit? Where would that profit go? Towards lessening the loss on the mining insurance business that the taxpayers would have to make good. If we have to take the unprofitable business it will show a loss, and any profit we might make on other phases of the business would go to reduce that loss. But instead of that, members of another place declare it must not go towards reducing the loss on the mining business, but towards swelling the profits of the private insurance companies. That is what this amendment declares. I repeat that the Government had no desire to embark on a State trading concern. Had we wanted to launch out on this business we should not have waited till the last session of Parliament. Members of another place are not all consistent. In one day one member made two speeches, the one upon this Bill, in which he declared himself opposed to the extension of State trading concerns; and half an hour afterwards he made another speech strongly supporting the Metropolitan Market Bill. What is that Bill but a Bill for a State trading concern? It is just as much a Bill for a State trading concern as is this Bill, except that the insurance business will be run by one commissioner, while the marketing concern will be run by three.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I think the Premier is wrong.

The PREMIER: I am not wrong. The Metropolitan Market Bill from beginning to end is for a State trading concern. It is to set up a market. Controlled by whom? By a trust.

Mr. Mann: Appointed by the State.

The PREMIER: Appointed by the State and controlled by the State.

Mr. Brown: Do they anticipate any profits?

The PREMIER: I want to know where is the consistency of some of the hon. member's colleagues, who welcome the Metropolitan Market Bill because they think it is going to benefit those whom they represent, and on the same day object to the State Insurance Bill?

Mr. Sleeman: And what about the Wirrington Bill?

The PREMIER: I do not put that in the same category. I hope that before the Metropolitan Market Bill emerges from another place some of the members responsible for amending this Bill will show their con-

sistency by treating the Metropolitan Market Bill in exactly the same way.

Hon. G. Taylor: There will not be the same propaganda work behind that Bill.

The PREMIER: Of course not. There will not be a publicity agent paid £500 and given a free run of the columns of the newspapers; nor will there be compliant members in another place willing to move amendments drafted for them in the interests, not of the taxpayers, but of the private insurance companies.

Mr. Sampson: Is it not straining a point to say the Metropolitan Market Bill is for a State trading concern?

The PREMIER: Of course it is for a State trading concern, controlled by a trust consisting of nominees of the Government.

Mr. Sampson: One is to be a representative of the producers and another—

The PREMIER: Who but the State is going to carry on the business? The State will raise the necessary money. Will anybody lend money to a trust to carry on markets? Of course the State will have to back the trust with public funds, the markets will be built with public funds, and carried on and maintained by public funds operated by men appointed by the Government. What more thoroughly effective State trading concern could we have than that?

Mr. Sampson interjected.

The PREMIER: It would be difficult for the hon. member to reconcile the attitude of members of another place who support the one Bill because it will benefit those whom they are supposed to represent, while of course the other Bill does not matter. The Government cannot accept this amendment. We are consistent in rejecting it. In the interests of the taxpayers of this country we are entitled to enter into competition in business with the insurance companies. In order to balance the loss that will result from miners' insurance business, we are entitled to a share of the other work as well. Those who deny that attitude say it does not matter how much the State may lose, we must not take any action likely to diminish the profits of the insurance companies.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I don't know that I should have spoken had not the Premier compared the provision of markets with State insurance. As a matter of fact, the markets are merely for the convenience of traders. The Government are not going to trade in the markets. They are to pro-

vide markets, just as they provide abattoirs where stock is killed. If they were going to buy and sell vegetables in the market—

The Premier: That is trading.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But you are not going to do it. What the Government are to do is to provide facilities for trade carried on by other people. They are to become landlords there, just as they are in the abattoirs. That is a totally different thing.

Mr. Mann: In the abattoirs they trade and make quite a decent profit.

The Premier: The markets are a trading concern all the same.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, they are not. They will be a public utility, like any other public utility. The Government will provide the building and, as landlords, let the space. The Premier made it quite clear that the only reason for bringing down the Bill was to provide cover for people denied cover. The Premier has rightly said that both Houses passed a Bill making insurance compulsory, but that nobody would insure the miners. Because of that, because of the accumulated liability due to the fact that the miners were without cover for a long time, something had to be done. The House not being in session at the time, the Government had to provide cover, otherwise the mines must have shut down. For Parliament had said that the employer must not take the risk himself, but must take out a policy before employing any man, failing which he would be fined. No one can have a man in a back yard cutting wood for half an hour, without first insuring him. Cover has to be taken before one can employ anybody at all. The miners could not get cover, and so the Government took the risk. They were perfectly right in doing so until they consulted Parliament. We have all agreed that the Government had to take the risk that accumulated, because nobody else was willing to take it. I do not agree with the amendment that the Bill should be limited to 1927 any more than does the Premier, but I say the Premier ought not to reject this right to cover men working in the mines; because after all, but for those men we should not have been called upon to deal with this at all. The Bill as introduced provided that the Government should have a monopoly. The Premier, rightly, wiped that out. The workers throughout the State will not be better served by a Government insurance office than by the private companies;

neither will the employer, if the premiums be the same. The unfortunate thing is that owing to the extraordinary risk in respect of the miners, and Parliament agreeing that the Government must take the risk, the Premier thinks that if he had the right of general insurance he would pick up some of the losses that must be made on mining insurance. I doubt if he would, without increasing the premiums. It cannot be contended that other employers should accept the losses on the mining insurance; it would be wrong to single out the employers.

Mr. Lambert: Are they protected to-day?

The Premier: If we charge them the same rates and on those rates show a profit, would it not be right?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I say they should not be made to bear any share of those losses. When a monopoly was proposed, that was suggested.

Mr. Lambert: On this class of business? The Government ought to have had a monopoly of the lot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think the Premier wants very much more State trading.

Mr. Lambert: This is not State trading; it is only writing the receipts once a year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not think any Minister wants more State trading.

Mr. Lambert: You have never suggested getting rid of the Savings Bank.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am certain the Premier does not want any more trading concerns. I think the House ought to insist upon this amendment being accepted; because unless the miners are covered by insurance they cannot continue at work. Another place has said there shall not be a State general insurance office. It may happen that it will be possible to insure men engaged in some calling other than mining, in which case something further would have to be done. The Bill was brought down only to deal with diseased miners, and under this clause they would have the protection necessary.

Mr. LAMBERT: I was pleased to hear the fine protest registered by the Premier against the action of another place. Only to-day I had an illustration of the hungry methods employed by the insurance companies, when for a comparatively small risk a temporary insurance of three months cost about £170. I should have been pleased if I had thought that this money was going towards relieving the taxpayers of the

liability for the miners. In this State there is a combine of insurance companies. If I thought that my Leader would accept the Council's amendment, I would not support him. I regret that when the Bill was brought down the opportunity was not taken to indulge in insurance in a more comprehensive way.

Mr. Lindsay: The Bill did create a monopoly.

Mr. LAMBERT: If there is a particular monopoly that is fleecing the public, it is that comprised by the insurance companies, guided by the underwriters in the Eastern States. They are exacting from the farmers, the employers generally, the manufacturers, all that they wish to exact. If the competition was free no doubt this House would take a more lenient view of this type of business. As things are the Underwriters' Association in the Eastern States fix the rates here.

The Premier: There are 54 companies all in one.

Mr. LAMBERT: I would not care if there were 100 companies so long as the competition was free and open. Would the Leader of the Opposition like to go to the country on this issue? Would he like the people to register their protest against the extortionate demands that have been made by the insurance companies during the last 25 or 30 years? This may be regarded as a State trading concern, but it would be no more so than is the State Savings Bank. Should we hand our State Savings Bank over to private enterprise? A State insurance office would act as a policeman against the extortionate demands of some of these foreign insurance companies. The profits accruing from it would provide a sum of money each year with which to carry on the development of the State, in the same way as is provided by the State Savings Bank.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Has it been shown that the charges imposed by the companies are extortionate?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes.

Mr. Davy: The Premier did not allege that.

Mr. LAMBERT: Everyone who insures knows that the charges are high as compared with those in the other States.

The Minister for Lands: Lloyds cut them down a bit.

Mr. LAMBERT: The member for West Perth knows that, when some years ago some of the companies broke away from the

Underwriters' Association, the rates fell about 75 per cent.

Mr. Davy: No.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member adopts a pained attitude, but that is the case.

Hon. G. Taylor: That was in 1906.

Mr. LAMBERT: Insurances of suburban houses were being effected at 2s. 6d. per cent., and business was being written five years ahead. The Government are not to be allowed to create an insurance office, but foreign companies are to be allowed to fleck money from the taxpayers. Most members of this Chamber desire to protect the revenue of the State. If there is an adjunct to banking, it is insurance. The two institutions run side by side. I was pleased to hear the Premier's spirited defence in support of the retention of the clause. I hope there will be no compromise so far as we are concerned.

Mr. MANN: I urge the Premier to accept the Council's amendment, which contains a good deal more than he has mentioned. It gives him an opportunity to open up business with 10,000 or 15,000 policies—a very advantageous beginning. Victoria has a State Insurance Office which covers Government concerns and Government employees only. I understand the office has worked satisfactorily and made a profit. I acknowledge, of course, that the Victorian office does not suffer from the drain which miners' diseases represent in this State. The amendment empowers the Government to issue workers' compensation policies covering all State employees—3,000 railway employees, 4,000 works and water supply employees, 1,000 lands and surveys employees, and about 2,000 sundry employees.

The Premier: Most of whom we are covering at present, of course.

Mr. MANN: Surely that is a reasonable amount of business to start with.

The Premier: But all this wonderful business is to be given to us for only one year.

Mr. MANN: I am not committing myself to that. That is a point on which I may be with the Premier. What avenues did the Premier expect to get trade from besides the avenues mentioned in the amendment? Did the Premier expect old clients of the insurance companies to rush to his office?

The Premier: If no other business was to come to us, why were the companies so keen to prevent the possibility of this busi-

ness coming to us, and why are they so afraid of open competition from the State Insurance Office?

Mr. MANN: I know nothing of what the insurance companies have in mind.

The Premier: Then you are the only "innocent abroad."

Mr. MANN: Under the amendment the Premier will get a fair share of the compensation business. Probably another place did not think it was leaving so wide an avenue.

The Premier: Another place is very innocent about insurance, having had no tuition or schooling on the subject.

Mr. MANN: For the first year or two the Premier will probably have to draw on revenue to meet claims for miners' diseases.

The Premier: You clean up the business and then go out of it and leave it to the companies!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not agree with that.

Mr. MANN: Later on the Premier will have a profitable business such as has been done by the Victorian office. In open competition with the companies the Premier could not make sufficient profit to meet the mining claims.

The Premier: I do not expect to.

Mr. MANN: In any event the Premier expected to call on revenue to meet mining claims. He will have to do that under the amendment, but it leaves him certain avenues of trade which, after the cleaning up of the mining claims, will represent a profitable business.

The Minister for Mines: If it is going to be profitable business, why do not the insurance companies take it on?

Mr. MANN: I said it would not be profitable for the first year or two. The Premier would be wise to accept this amendment and contest the other one.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I support the Premier's motion, and fail to see why another place, or any business which has been well established for years, should fear open competition from the Government. An Act of Parliament compels employers to insure their employees, and the Government have told us repeatedly that the insurance companies will not take the mining risks. By the Bill the Government propose to take those risks. In its original form the Bill was monopolistic, and therefore objectionable; but I fail to see why there should be any fear of open competition from the Government.

Rarely if ever have I seen so much propaganda work in connection with a Bill before Parliament as in connection with this measure.

Mr. Marshall: The Licensing Act Amendment Bill was nearly as bad.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: That is a different proposition altogether. Some of the propaganda put up to members in typewritten form was far from being accurate. When the Premier was introducing the Bill, I interjected that the insurance companies fought most of the cases. The companies say they have fought none. They try to prove my statement false, and to shelter themselves, by saying that the only cases which they consider as having been fought are cases which go before the courts. In hundreds of cases which have never been before the courts the insurance companies have resisted the claims. In some they have given way, or partly given way. In others they have not given way, and the claimants have let the matter drop. The insurance companies contend that these cases were not contested. In my opinion the companies have contested too many cases. A member of another place who has been gallivanting all over Europe and the Empire returned when the Bill was at the third reading stage, and secured an adjournment of the discussion until he could find something to say in favour of the insurance companies. When he discovered that the Bill was almost workable and reasonable, he said, "I will now allow the Bill to pass."

Mr. Marshall: He would?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Those are the hon. gentleman's words, unless I have been very badly informed by those who heard him.

Mr. Marshall: Has he been touring in Italy?

Member: Mussolini!

Hon. G. TAYLOR: The hon. member in question opposed the increase of salaries a year or two ago, but he leaves the State and does no work for practically a session.

The Minister for Mines: He is a director of an insurance company.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I am amazed that the companies are afraid of the Bill.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: What have the companies got to do with the Bill?

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Does my chief think I was horn the day before yesterday or came down in the last shower? Who paid for the propaganda work in connection with the

Bill? The Bill represents a legitimate proposition for the Government to put up. To talk of it as establishing another State trading concern is all moonshine. We should not leave employers, who are compelled to insure, to the mercy of companies which put up premiums out of sight.

Mr. SAMPSON: I consider that the attitude of the Government right through the piece has been largely a wrong attitude. They said to the insurance companies, "Here is the business, and you must take the risk. We cannot tell you what you are up against. We cannot give you particulars regarding miners' diseases. If you do not insure at the rates we fix, we will put you out of business." The Bill provided for a monopoly.

The Premier: It is an absolutely incorrect statement to say that we told the companies "Do the business at the rates we fix or we will put you out of business."

Mr. SAMPSON: That was what the Government stated in effect.

The Premier: Not in effect. After all the discussion you do not know the ABC of it.

Mr. SAMPSON: That seems to me to be what actually occurred.

The Premier: It is not what occurred at all. There is not a word of fact in what you are saying.

Mr. SAMPSON: I claim absolute truth for what I say. The Bill provided for a monopoly.

The Premier: That is not the point. Now you are switching off to another point.

Mr. SAMPSON: All others were to be forced out of the business. I pointed out that the co-operative insurance which the Chamber of Manufactures provided could not be carried if the Bill were passed. To-night reference has been made to the Metropolitan Market Bill, and it was urged that it represented a State trading concern. I contend it cannot be considered a trading concern in the general acceptance of the term. I regret that any analogy has been attempted between that measure and the State Insurance Bill.

Mr. Panton: In fact the Premier had no right to mention it!

Mr. SAMPSON: In this instance the attempt to establish a monopoly was open to the gravest criticism.

The Premier: Is there not enough in the amendment to discuss without going on to that point?

Mr. DAVY: It seems to me that most of the discussion has been rather wide of the

point and really not relevant to the amendment with which we are dealing. The question of extortionate charges has nothing to do with the point. The question of the conduct of their business by the insurance companies and their commercial morality has nothing to do with it. I accept the Premier's statement, repeated to-night, that the Government entered into this business with reluctance. Their sole motive was the necessity to protect the miners. There is no dispute on that point. The Bill, even in its present form, will protect the miners. If the Bill is thrown out the miners are where they would have been if the Government had not entered into the insurance business. If it be passed the miners will be just as well off as if the Government entered into all forms of workers' compensation business or any other form of insurance business. The miners themselves will not benefit to the extent of one farthing. The Bill as it is will give them everything they require, whether the Government enter into the insurance business or not. It appears to me that if the Government insist upon rejecting the amendment to the bitter end, it will mean the loss of the Bill. It may then justly be said that it was the Government in the last resort who abandoned the miners.

The Premier: I am content to leave that phase to the public.

Hon. G. Taylor: And it will be in safe hands, too.

Mr. DAVY: If it is put fairly and clearly to them, I do not see how anyone can get away from that position.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for West Perth said that if the Bill were rejected the miners would be no worse off, and if the amendment be agreed to the miners will be no worse off either.

Mr. Davy: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member said that if the Bill is accepted in its present condition the miners will get as much—

Mr. Davy: As if the Bill went through in its original form.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and the miners will lose nothing. There is no getting away from the fact that the object is to make the State carry the burden. Is the hon. member concerned regarding the interests of the State, or is he concerned regarding those of the insurance companies?

Mr. Davy: I say that the treatment of miners' diseases is the responsibility of the State.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The question is whether the State should be called upon to carry the whole of this obligation instead of being able to recoup themselves from some of the good business of the insurance companies. That is the point, and the member for West Perth has side-stepped it. It is absolutely deplorable when we consider the actions of the Legislative Council regarding miners' insurance. In 1912 the then Labour Government brought in a Bill to provide for compensation for industrial diseases. It was defeated in the Upper House by one vote and the same type of men who defeated that Bill are in that House to-day. They are men with the same outlook and with the same objectives. They held then that the mining companies could not pay the premiums, but since 1912 the mining companies have paid out £5,000,000 in dividends. It should be understood that £100,000 invested in 1912 would have met the whole of this liability. The same people who did that in 1912 are those who are taking up this attitude to-day. Now they say that it is too late to ask the mining companies to pay what they will be called upon to shoulder, and the State must bear the whole of the burden. The Government resist that point of view. We say it is the responsibility of the employers to pay some share of this insurance. They refuse our request when we say that we can arrange a scheme of insurance under which some of the better class of business will help us to pay the loss on the miners' diseases insurance.

Mr. Davy: Let someone else pay a share of it.

The Premier: Not by paying higher rates.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The member for Mt. Margaret was correct in his contentions when he referred to considerable propaganda that has gone on regarding this question. We know that a reporter went to the goldfields to get a hostile opinion regarding this measure. He interviewed some people on the goldfields whom he knew were against the present Government. He did that in order to secure their hostile views regarding the Bill. One of the persons he approached was the secretary of the Prospectors' Association. That gentleman was reported in the "West Australian" as having condemned not only the State Insurance Bill

but the Miners' Phthisis Act as well. When I, as Minister administering the Miners' Phthisis Act, wrote to him and asked him to verify the statements, he replied that the reporter was a rotten liar. I sent that statement to the "West Australian," but they have never published it.

Mr. Teesdale: I do not wonder at that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not wonder at it either. This propaganda was all prearranged, and the insurance companies are behind the whole business. The most deplorable thing is that in the Legislative Council there are hon. members who do not deny that they are directors of insurance companies, who are interested in conserving this business for themselves. That is the worst feature of it.

Mr. Mann: And did they speak and vote on it?

The Minister for Works: Certainly they did.

The Premier: They are doing that sort of thing every day on all kinds of measures.

Mr. Davy: There are one or two in this Chamber who are interested in various industries and voted on the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is a shocking feature about the whole thing. Those members have personal interests that are affected regarding this question of insurance. The country has been flooded with propaganda. They seek to make the Government carry the responsibility for the human wreckage of the mining industry. That has been the attitude adopted by members of the Upper House, and it has been supported by some hon. members here. The Labour Government in 1912 prepared a scheme of industrial insurance and it was rejected, and I have already pointed out that since then the mining companies who, it was said, could not undertake the financial burden, have paid £5,000,000 in dividends. Now it is asserted that the companies cannot accept the responsibility and the Government must accept the whole liability and clean up the wreckage of the goldfields. It is a shocking proposition, and no member who has any regard for the interests of the country should support that attitude.

Mr. Davy: What a thing to say!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course that is so.

Mr. Davy: Because they disagree with you, that is what you say of them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They can disagree with me, but the member of Par-

liament who says that the Government should not have an opportunity to get other insurance business to help them shoulder the loss that must be incurred regarding miners' complaints, is doing something which means that the Government must make a raid upon the revenue of the country.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A raid!

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. What else could it mean? It amounts to this, that we shall have to use revenue for purposes that must be met from some source.

Mr. Davy: Why don't you start a grocer's shop to help you bear the loss?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is ridiculous! It is an absurd argument.

Mr. Davy: It is quite logical.

Hon. G. Taylor: Why, we started butchers' shops without a ripple.

Mr. Corboy: And closed them without a murmur.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In order to assist us to meet the liability the Government asked to be allowed to have a share in the other branches of insurance business. We offered to enter into fair competition with insurance companies. We did not insist upon a monopoly but merely for a share of the business, yet hon. members say we must not get that fair share. Some hon. members who are interested in the business say that we cannot compete with private enterprise, but immediately the Government make an effort to compete they take the strongest exception to our attitude.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are not going to desert the miners, because the Upper House will not give you all you want?

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Get off that tack. It is too thin.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Too thin!

Mr. Davy: That is the point.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Surely the hon. member's attitude is that he will not desert the insurance companies?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you mean to say that I represent the insurance companies?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: What did the hon. member ever do for the miners?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We did more than you.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Did the hon. member bring in a scheme for industrial insurance? Did his Government ever attempt that?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No.

Mr. Mann: But his Government passed the Miners' Phthisis Act.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: And never proclaimed it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The less the Leader of the Opposition says about the Miners' Phthisis Act the better.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Because I know how far the and his Ministers dealt with it. The other evening I showed just how far the Miners' Phthisis Act had helped, and how the present Government had to amend it in order to meet the situation. All this talk about deserting the miners is beside the question. The Legislative Council are concerned with the insurance companies. The same men who in 1912 rejected the Government's proposals are responsible for the action taken on this occasion. Now we find them supported by hon. members here.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The same men are not in the Upper House now.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some of them are, and some are in this House too. All this talk about deserting the miners will not help at all, because the whole business is in the hands of the insurance companies.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I am anxious to help only the Government and the miners.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In 1912, gone by the hon. member's Government made no attempt to provide one penny for the miners under the heading of industrial compensation. Now when the Government pass legislation to provide that assistance for the men, we are told that we want to desert the miners. The whole intention of the Upper House was not to desert the insurance companies. The Government would be untrue to their trust—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would not be the first time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: —if they allowed the workers of the country to be exploited by leaving the whole field to the insurance companies, leaving the Government merely to accept the whole liability for miners' diseases. I do not think any Government could do that, and the Government therefore are justified in resisting the Council's amendment to the utmost.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I will not stand by and be accused by the Minister for Mines of representing the insurance companies or any other body. I do not know what the member for Mt Margaret

knows about it, but people have come to me and discussed the position. What we do know is that this movement was started in a mistaken fashion by the Minister for Works. If he had come to the House and said that in the interests of the workers the Government wanted to do insurance business, it would have been different.

Mr. Panton: You would have tumbled over yourself to allow them to do so!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Everyone knows that the workers will not benefit one jot whether the Government do the insurance business or not.

The Minister for Works: Won't they?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Not one penny more than if the business were done by the insurance companies. The point we have to consider is how to protect the miners. Undoubtedly Parliament has passed a law enacting compulsory insurance and the miners cannot work unless they are covered. The men working on the mines have to be insured. This House passed the Bill, and if another place has exercised its undoubted right to amend the measure, the Premier has exercised his undoubted right to refuse to accept the amendments. Do not let members think they can fool the country. The people know full well how much this Bill would mean to the workers if passed in its entirety. It would not be worth to them a snap of the fingers. The Premier admits that the cost of insurance would not be reduced, but he would get profits from the people insuring if he had the right to run a State Insurance Department. That may be so. In Queensland the people are not saved money because of a State Insurance Office there, and that State does only some of the business.

The Premier: It does the whole of the compensation business.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But only some of the general business. We had a copy of the report of the Queensland office.

The Minister for Mines: The rates there are the cheapest in Australia.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They are not; fire and crop insurance rates are higher than in this State. That, however, is getting away from the point. When the Minister for Mines says the insurance companies are speaking in opposition to the Bill, it is just a cheap sneer on his part.

The Minister for Mines: Who undertook all the propaganda against the Bill?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister for Works was engaged in wrangling with the insurance companies.

The Minister for Works: I did not engage in it. I knew that they were paying a man £500 to take it on and I was not going to help him.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister engaged in a controversy with him; there were miles almost of newspaper print. Every member is entitled to express his opinion. Some people believe in State trading; they would run butchers' shops and bakers' shops and all sorts of things. Others do not believe in State trading and are entitled to say so. If members want State trading let them show where benefit will be derived from it. It was not decent of the Minister to say that we were here representing the insurance companies, simply because I suggested to the Premier that we had better accept the right to cover the miners since the miners cannot work unless they are covered. I know that the public will not believe what the Minister for Mines has said about our representing the insurance companies. I am here to do justice to all sections of the community, no matter what their occupations may be. Because we do not agree with members opposite, they have no right to hurl these insults at us. Still I do not think the public will be deceived. I should be sorry indeed to suggest that the Minister for Mines was influenced by anyone outside to get the measure carried. Yet it would be as fair for me to suggest that he is influenced as it is for him to suggest that we are influenced.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

The Minister for Mines: I strongly resent the attempt made to compel the State to bear the whole of the responsibility.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is mere humbug and political clap-trap.

The Minister for Mines: So is your statement.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is an attempt to deceive the people; it means nothing at all. There may be profit or there may be loss from insurance; I do not know, but I do know the Premier has stated that he has no intention of putting up the rates. He would accept the rates being charged by the companies. I do not think the companies' profit can be very great, and

I doubt whether it would compensate for the loss that would be incurred by insuring the miners. I do not intend to argue the matter further. I merely rose to resent the accusation levelled against members on this side of the House. I suppose we were all included; that is, all who dared to disagree with the Government.

The Minister for Mines: With the exception of the member for Mt. Margaret.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: He will be delighted to hear that. If he always agrees with the Minister he will not always be speaking facts. The Minister is not the judge and cannot be the judge. The question is how we can best deal with this Bill to insure the miners. That is what the Government have to consider, seeing that insurance has been made compulsory.

The Minister for Mines: It was not considered when you were in office.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Cannot the Minister keep quiet. What has he done since he has been in office? Three years in office before making a move!

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must speak to the amendment.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister talks of what was done before he came into office, but he has had three years of opportunity to do things. If he would only keep quiet we should get through the business much more expeditiously. He should at least be able to deal with the matter without hurling accusations and trumped-up charges against other members. The Premier has to consider how he is going to cover the men in the mining industry. That is what we set out to do when the Minister for Works found that cover had to be provided for those men. But for that I am sure he would not have started an insurance office, although prior to last election he said State insurance would be part of the policy of the Government.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 4, Subclause (3).—Delete "seven" in line two and insert "one."

The PREMIER: The Bill provides for the appointment of an insurance commissioner for a term of seven years. and another place has struck out the word "seven" and inserted "one." That of course is in conformity with a later amendment that seeks

to limit the operation of the measure to a period of one year. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 12, as follows: 12. This Act shall remain in force until the thirty-first day of December, 1927, and no longer.

The PREMIER: The amendment seeks to limit the operation of the measure to the 31st December of next year.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I hope you will wipe that out.

The PREMIER: I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Title.—Insert after "business" in line two the words "as herein defined."

The PREMIER: This is consequential to the other amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

A committee consisting of Messrs. Collier, Mann, and Millington drew up reasons for disagreeing to the Council's amendments. Reasons adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—MT. BARKER - MANJIMUP RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [10.0] in moving the second reading said: This railway is very closely related to the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook line, in fact the Advisory Board, as I stated earlier, advise that the three lines—Boyup Brook to Cranbrook, Pemberton to Denmark, and the line now under discussion—be constructed to serve that huge tract of country between the Great Southern Railway and the sea. The board's report deals with these three propositions. The board estimate that with these three lines constructed, the whole of that part of the State will be well served. The line in question will be about 100 miles in length. The board were very much impressed with

the class of country to be served, especially in respect to its possibilities for closer settlement. The total area of country between Manjimup and Mt. Barker, outside the 12½-mile radius from existing railways, and exclusive of that to be served by the authorised Pemberton-Denmark railway, is about 1,800,000 acres, the greater proportion of which is Crown land. The board assume that 800,000 acres will not be available for agricultural settlement, it being either not suitable for that purpose or required for permanent timber reservation. There remains an area of about a million acres of land suitable for settlement consisting of first class land and second class land that can be turned into valuable pastoral country. This will require railway facilities before it can be properly developed. On a basis of 400 acres per settler it should provide for 2,500 holdings. The board have given the matter the fullest consideration and are of the opinion that the opening up of the district by railway is well warranted. When the three lines are built, they will be approximately 25 miles apart, and no portion of that district will be more than 12½ miles from a line.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Then that will open up the whole of the South-West.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, and it will provide facilities for the whole of that part of the State. The position will be that if we can get through with these three lines, it will then be possible to open up the whole of that part of the State. The line under discussion has been talked of for many years.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Over 20 years.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are settlers who have been out there for many years.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Four generations.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I had the privilege a little time ago of meeting the third generation. There is no doubt about it that it is splendid country and only awaits development. An important feature is that there is still a big area of Crown land there that will be available, and from the very commencement it is anticipated that the timber in that part of the State will enable the line to meet expenses. There is not much more to be said. Full particulars of the board's findings were given in connection with the other two lines when the Bills were submitted. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

BILL—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 12 amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1. Clause 2—Delete all words after "by" in line 2 and insert the following:—"The deletion of all words following the words 'number of' and the substitution of the words 'sheep, shorn or to be shorn during the current or approaching shearing season, does not exceed 6,000.'"

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The effect of the amendment is really to change the basis upon which the Bill was framed, from shearers to sheep. It will be remembered that when I brought down the Bill I had it based on the number of sheep. The member for Pilbara pointed out that a team of shearers would take a whole district in their stride, that there may be a few thousand and sheep at one station, and several thousand at another, and the same number of men would work at one station and then go along to another. That appealed to me so forcibly that I agreed to the alteration. I have looked into the matter further and it appears to me that, under the system that prevails now, a contractor engages men and takes whole districts, irrespective of the number of sheep on the stations. I think that the amendment made by this House was the correct one. Therefore I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 2. Clause 3—Insert after "overseer" in line 4 the following words:—"And by the insertion of the words 'at which the number of sheep shorn or to be shorn during the current or approaching shearing season is more than 6,000.'"

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is a consequential amendment. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 3. Clause 4—Delete Subclause 2:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This deals with air space and the amendment really brings our Act into line with the Queensland Act. Our own now provides for 360 cubic feet and the amendment for 480 cubic feet. I do not know of any reason why shearers in this State should not be accommodated as well as the men in Queensland, more particularly as we are not asking that the existing accommodation be converted. The change will apply only to new structures. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 4. Clause 4, Subclause 3—Delete all words after "food" in line 2 to the end of subclause:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause was copied from the Queensland Act and it applies in the other States. When I went through the North-West a little while back, I found that the kitchens were well away from the huts. I do not feel inclined to disagree with the amendment because what I saw myself appeared to be the accepted design in the North. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 5. Clause 4, Subclause 4—Delete the words "including artificial illumination":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment provides that we strike out of the Bill all provision for artificial illumination and all provision for cleaning and fumigating quarters once a year. I cannot see that we are asking for anything exceptional when we ask that the place be lighted and, once a year, disinfected. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Will the Minister explain how far this artificial illumination goes.

The Minister for Works: Merely a hanging lamp.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Well we ought not to agree to that being struck out.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 6. Clause 4, Subclause (4).—Delete all words after "ventilation" in line six down to end of sub-clause.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I dealt with this when dealing with No. 5, for it has to do with the fumigation. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 7. Clause 4, Subclause (6).—Delete all words after "kitchen" in line four down to and inclusive of the word "inspector" in line six.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This deals with the provision for fly-proof doors in the dining room, and for proper and sufficient drainage. We may leave it to the shearers themselves to see to the drainage around the place, so I will not insist upon that, but I do think the dining room should have fly-proof doors. To effect this I move an amendment on the Council's amendment—

That "kitchen" be struck out, and "dining room" inserted in lieu thereof.

That will provide for fly-proof doors to both the kitchen and the dining room.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment as amended, agreed to.

No. 8. Clause 4, Subclause (6).—Delete "workers" and insert "shearers" in second and fourteenth lines of proposed new paragraph (xiv).

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is to overcome an error, the word "worker" appearing instead of "shearer." I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 9. Clause 7—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is the crux of the whole Bill. If Clause 7 be deleted the Bill will be useless, for the clause is there simply to make the existing Act workable. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 10. Clause 8.—Delete all words after "hereby" in first line down to end of clause and insert the words "amended by the deletion of the words 'two justices' and the insertion in lieu thereof of the words 'police or resident magistrate.'"

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The same thing applies here, for Clause 8 is supplementary to Clause 7. Both deal with the ad-

ministration. Without Clause 3 the Bill will be of no value. I move—

That the amendment be not agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment not agreed to.

No. 11. Clause 9—Delete.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know how to achieve my object here. The Bill provides a penalty of £50, whereas the penalty in the existing Act is £5. The amendment is, in effect, to strike out the £50 and leave the existing £5. I would accept a compromise of £25. Perhaps the better way would be to amend the amendment before us. I move—

That "delete" be struck out.

Question put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added:—"Strike out £50," in line two of the clause, and insert "£25" in lieu thereof.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment, as amended, agreed to.

No. 12. Clause 10.—Delete the first three lines and insert in lieu thereof the words "A new section is hereby inserted in the principal Act, after Section 16 thereof, as follows:—"

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Here the Council have effected an improvement. Throughout the debate the Council, especially the North-West members, insisted on offences under the Act being tried before a police or resident magistrate.

Mr. Teesdale: Some of them have been so far in the North that it is not to be wondered at.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We debated the same question here, but there was a divergence of opinion. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a committee consisting of Mr. Angelo, Mr. Lamond, and the mover, appointed to draw up reasons for not agreeing to certain of the Council's amendments.

Reasons adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it insisted on amendment No. 4, and giving reasons for not agreeing to the amendment made by the Assembly to amendment No. 3 made by the Council, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Minister for Mines in charge of the Bill.

No. 4. Clause 12.—Insert after the word "only" in line four of Subclause (2) the following:—"Provided that nothing in this subsection shall prevent any person acting as general manager of two or more mines, if each of such mines has in charge thereof a certificated manager who is not engaged in the management of any other mine."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I opposed this amendment on the ground that it was superfluous. The Bill makes no reference to general managers, and nothing in it precludes a company from appointing a dozen general managers or financial managers. Rather than lose the Bill, however, I move—

That the amendment be no longer disagreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment no longer disagreed to.

No. 3. Clause 8, Subclause (4).—Delete the words "general secretary of the Miners' Union" in lines thirteen and fourteen, and insert in lieu thereof the words "the accredited representative of any industrial union of workers who are engaged in the coal mining industry, and whose wages are determined on the basis of the tonnage of coal raised."

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This was the amendment submitted by the Council, to which I moved an amendment to add the words "registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912-25." The Council disagreed with our amendment on the ground that the Act in question provided for the amendment I desired. I move—

That the further amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and passed; the Assembly's amendment not insisted upon.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILL—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Message.

Message from the Council notifying that it proposed an alternative to its amendment No 1 disagreed to by the Assembly, in which alternative amendment the Council desired the concurrence of the Assembly, now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Council's alternative amendment—Add a proviso to Subclause 1 of proposed new Section 20, and re-insert proposed new Subclause 7 as Subclause 6, as follows:—"Provided that in the case of beer (ale, porter and stout) the undermentioned vessels shall contain not less than the quantities stated in the following schedule:—Hogshead 52 gallons, barrel 35 gallons, halfhogshead 26 gallons, kilderkin 17 gallons, 10-gallon keg 9½ gallons, 9-gallon keg 8½ gallons, 5-gallon keg 4½ gallons. (6) This section shall not take effect until the expiration of six months from the commencement of this Act":

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Clause 6 proposes a new section, to stand as No. 20, dealing with sale by net weight or measure, and the first subsection of that proposed section reads—

No person shall sell by retail any article by weight or measure unless by net weight or measure.

The Council now suggest that the proviso contained in the alternative amendment be added to the subsection in question. There is an important difference between this alternative amendment and the amendment first proposed by the Council. The first amendment said that the vessels should be deemed to contain the standard measures. The alternative amendment merely amounts to a proviso that the vessels shall contain not less than a minimum quantity, and of course shall be charged for accordingly.

Mr. Davy: This Bill does not deal with charges, does it?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. Had the original amendment been accepted,

then, if an inspector of weights and measures stopped a cart containing barrels of beer and found that the barrels contained 52 gallons, it would have been all right and there could have been no prosecution. Under the alternative amendment, the invoice would show that the barrel contained only 52 gallons, and the purchaser would know that he was getting only 52 gallons. Thus the principle of the Act would be maintained. I move—

That the alternative amendment be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's alternative amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Friday, 3rd December, 1926.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—WORKMEN'S INSPECTORS OF MINES, ELECTION.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Why have not the biennial elections for workmen's inspectors of mines (due in November, as provided under the Mines Regulation Act) been held? 2, On what date is it proposed (a) to call for nominations for these positions, (b) to hold the elections?