State that no alteration should be made in our present franchise.

Hon. M. L. MOSS: I move—

That the debate be adjourned until Friday next.

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

Ayes	.. .. ..	14
Noes	.. .. ..	12
Majority for	.. ..	2

AYES.

Hon. T. F. O. Brimage	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. R. W. Pennefather
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. C. A. Piesse
Hon. S. J. Haynes	Hon. G. Randell
Hon. W. Kingsmill	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. R. Laurie	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. E. McLarty	*(Teller).*
Hon. M. L. Moss	

NOES.

Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. W. Oats
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. W. Hackett	Hon. S. Stubbs
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. G. Throssell
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. J. M. Drew
Hon. J. W. Langsford	*(Teller).*
Hon. R. D. McKenzie	

Motion thus passed, the debate adjourned.

(Sitting suspended from 5·58 to 7·30 p.m.)

On resuming,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said: I had expected that we would have received some Bills from another place, but they are not forthcoming.

House adjourned at 7·32 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 15th December, 1909.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Lands: Report on the Operations of the Agricultural Bank to 30th June, 1909.

QUESTION — RAILWAY FACILITIES, MADDINGTON.

Mr. GILL (for Mr. W. Price) asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Was a petition received asking that railway facilities be provided at Cattenham-street, between Cannington and Maddington? 2, Upon the occasion of the Minister's recent visit did he inspect the site suggested by the residents signing the petition? 3, Is he aware that the petitioners were not informed of the visit? 4, Did the Minister on that occasion visit Kenwick, the land in the vicinity, which is held by an absentee corporation? 5, Before deciding finally, will the Minister visit the proposed site for a station at Cattenham-street, as petitioned for, or will he afford the petitioners and residents an opportunity of placing their views before him?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, No, the petition was presented on the occasion of my visit, namely, 24th September last. 4, I understand that the petition was presented at or near Kenwick. 5, I will be only too pleased to afford the resi-

dents every opportunity to lay their case before me.

QUESTION—RAILWAY TRAFFIC, BOULDER.

Mr. BATH asked the Minister for Railways: Has any decision been arrived at *re* the request of the deputation from the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Belt that passenger trains should be run to the Boulder Block and the Boulder lease?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: No decision has yet been arrived at; the matter is still under consideration by the department.

QUESTION—MINERS' PHTHISIS, ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. HEITMANN (without notice) asked the Premier: Can the Premier give the House any information in reference to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into phthisis?

The PREMIER replied: It has been decided by the Government to appoint the Commission, but the gentlemen who are to comprise the Commission have not yet been decided on.

QUESTION—STIRLING ESTATE, RETURN.

Mr. HEITMANN (without notice) asked the Minister for Lands: When will the Minister lay on the Table the return ordered by the House in reference to the detailed expenditure on drainage at the Stirling estate?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: I remember consulting with the hon. member when the return was made out, and I understood it had been laid on the Table. I will look into the matter.

COHNEY COMPENSATION CLAIM.

Report of Select Committee.

Mr. Swan presented the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Cohney compensation claim.

Report received, read, ordered to be printed, and to be taken into consideration at a later date.

BILL—COMMONWEALTH ENABLING.

Introduced by the Premier and read a first time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Troy leave of absence for one fortnight granted to Mr. A. A. Wilson on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL — METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY, SEWERAGE, AND DRAINAGE.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of nine amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

No. 1—Clause 33: Strike out all the words after "district," in line 3, down to the word "buildings," inclusive, in line 8, and insert the following:—"Provided that the mouth of every such shaft, pipe, or tube shall be at least six feet higher than any window or door situate within a distance of thirty feet therefrom; and also to make use of the chimney of any public building or of any factory, or of any tramway building as a support for ventilating shaft or tube."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some doubt was cast upon this clause as we passed it as to whether it conveyed the meaning we intended. As it was somewhat ambiguous the Colonial Secretary had had this amendment inserted in the Council to make the meaning clearer. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2—Clause 41, Paragraph (c): Strike out all the words after "land" in line three:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment had caused some debate when we were passing the measure through Committee. It was as to whether a person who neglected to pay his rates should

have the water supply cut off from any other land which belonged to him. The Legislative Council suggested that the clause should not apply to "other land." He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was surprising to hear the Minister move that the amendment be agreed to. It would mean that the person who had vacant land could defy the Minister for an indefinite period or until the Minister could lease the property, or if he could not lease the property, to sell it five years afterwards. The amendment would mean that an increased rate would be charged to the properties which were occupied. In some of our streets there were vacant lands which were being held solely for the purpose of increased increments, and from which there was no likelihood of getting revenue for years. It was to be hoped that the Minister would not agree to the amendment. It would be merely playing into the hands of those who owned vacant land, and it would mean an increased burden on those who had to pay when the rate was struck.

Mr. BATH: The amendment made by another place was a good one. It would cover the case which he had mentioned when the Bill was previously under discussion, that of an occupier of premises on which the rates had been paid and from which the supply had been cut off because the rates were owing on another property. It was his intention to support the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was full power to recover by a process of law.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 3—Clause 74: Strike out Subclause 2 and insert the following:—"(2.) A sum equal to the estimated full, fair average amount of rent at which such land may reasonably be expected to let from year to year, on the assumption (if necessary to be made) that such letting is allowed by law less the amount of all rates and taxes, and a deduction of twenty pounds per centum for repairs, insurance, and other outgoings; or."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment had been made with the approval of the Government, and it was in order to bring the matter of rating into line with the Municipalities Act. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 4—Clause 74, Subclause (3): Strike out "seven pounds ten" and insert "six pounds":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amendment proposed to make the annual value at the option of the Minister to be an amount not exceeding six pounds instead of seven pounds ten per centum on the capital value of the land in fee simple. This was the rate which was to be imposed in the new Municipalities Act now before the House.

Mr. Angwin: And which I hope will never pass.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It might require a little amendment but it would certainly prove a good measure. The Roads Act of 1902 provided that the amounts should not exceed 5 per cent. The Municipalities Act of 1906 provided for not less than 4 per cent. on improved or occupied land and not less than 7½ per cent. on unimproved. It was all a question of what was a fair percentage to decide upon. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. ANGWIN: This was another attempt to relieve the man who owned vacant land by increasing the taxation of those who had built on their land. For years £7 10s. per cent. had been the rate, and in fact a little while ago an alteration was made to give the municipalities power to increase it. Unfortunately the wording of that Act was such that lawyers decided it would not be legal to do so. But it was clear what the intention of the Act was. People who had built small homes were not able to get an adequate water supply because others who had bought land in the vicinity for the purpose of holding it for a rise were not improving that land but were allowing it to lie vacant. Those persons who had built homes for themselves should be protected against the ow-

ners of vacant land. To enable these people to obtain a sufficient water supply it would be necessary to impose a fair tax on the vacant land.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In our anxiety to see that no undue burden was placed on the owner of improved property we should not lose sight of the fact that even the owners of unimproved property were entitled to justice at our hands. In the Municipal Act of 1900 the valuation for rating purposes for unimproved lands was fixed at seven pounds ten shillings per cent. Since that date money had become cheaper, and by adopting six pounds per cent. to-day the Committee would not be lifting any burden from the shoulders of the owners of unimproved land. The argument used by the member for East Fremantle would apply equally against reducing the valuation of improved properties in the various localities. When the depreciation in the value of money in the State was borne in mind it would be seen that the proposed reduction was fully justified.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This was only one of three courses open. The Minister had the right at option to fix the annual value at the current value of the local authority, at the yearly rental with certain deductions, and, thirdly, at this six pounds per cent. on the capital value. The third course would be very seldom taken: before ever it was taken the other two would be exhausted.

Mr. Bath: Under what circumstances would the third course be taken?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: On the spur of the moment he could not conceive of any circumstances under which it would be used.

Mr. BATH: There was a good deal in the contention of the member for East Fremantle, if the third course was likely to apply to unimproved lands. It seemed to him that the third course would be the one utilised for vacant lands. Only to-day he had received complaints of the unfairness with which small holders were valued as compared with large holders. He would oppose the amendment to reduce seven pounds ten shillings per cent. to six pounds per cent.

The HONORARY MINISTER: For the occupation of the owners houses were frequently built which would be unlettable at any rent calculated to compensate for the capital employed. For instance, it might be a large house in a district where large houses were not in demand. In the proposed amendment the valuation would be taken on six pounds per cent. of the capital value—a proposition perfectly just and fair.

Mr. Angwin: Subclause 2 as already agreed to would deal particularly with vacant lands.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, that will apply to improved properties.

Mr. ANGWIN: In his opinion it was not intended to apply to improved properties. In that Subclause 2 provision was made to get over the very difficulty instanced by the Honorary Minister. The State should be protected against the owners of vacant land, who should be expected to contribute fairly towards the revenue. He wished to protect those persons who had built homes for themselves; persons who, living on the outskirts, could not secure a water supply until they had guaranteed a certain amount of money against the cost of the mains. This imposition was necessary for no other reason than that there was a number of vacant blocks in the locality, the owners of which had no use for the water mains. From these blocks very little revenue was derivable and now it was proposed to reduce even that little. Again, if the proposed reduction were to be accepted, it would most certainly be used as a precedent. If the properties had decreased in value so had the rates. It was to be hoped the amendment would not be agreed to as it would be placing a burden on those who had improved their properties to relieve those who were holding lands for the unearned increment.

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

Ayes	.. .. ..	20
Noes	.. .. ..	19
Majority for	..	1

Ayes.	
Mr. Brown	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Butcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Carson	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Draper	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Gregory	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Layman	(*Teller*).
Mr. Male	

Noes.	
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Bath	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Swan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gill	Mr. Troy
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Horan	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. McDowall	(*Teller*).

Question thus passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 5—Clause 74: Strike out the last two lines:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The two lines were unnecessary as they had been included in a previous amendment. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Question passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 6—Clause 75: Add a proviso at the end as follows:—"Provided that this system shall not be used in the district of any local authority which is at the time levying the rates on the estimated annual value of the land."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause gave power to the Minister to adopt in any district a general system of valuation on the basis of the capital unimproved value of the land instead of the valuation as prescribed by the preceding clause. The proviso was that the Minister should follow the local authority rather than lead. When the matter was being discussed in Committee it was pointed out that it was not the intention of the department to take the initiative in altering the method of valuation but that it was desired to have power to adopt the method of assessing on the unimproved value when municipalities or roads boards had adopted that princip He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. ANGWIN: If this question ha been considered 10 months ago the might have been reason for the Minist to claim that unless a proviso were i serted a second valuation might be nece sary as many of the municipalities d not value on the unimproved values sy tem. Since then, however, under t Land Tax Assessment Act valuers a pointed by the department had go through the metropolitan area fixing t unimproved values of the land in the Sta for the express purpose of taxatio While many roads boards adopted t unimproved values the municipalities ha not obtained that power yet. There w nothing now to stop the Minister fro adopting that principle right through, the values of all the lands in the Sta had been obtained by the Governme valuers, and it would be very easy to ra the metropolitan area on the unimprove value. There was no reason why w should allow another place to tie th hands of the Minister in this matte The amendment prohibited the Ministe from rating on the unimproved valu say, in Perth and Fremantle. This wa undesirable, and it was to be hoped men bers would not agree to the amendment.

Mr. BATH: We would be doing wron to accept the amendment, for the obje of the clause was to secure, if possibl the rating on a thoroughly equitabl basis. As the previous speaker ha pointed out, values had been made i connection with the land tax, therefor the Minister would be independent, as t his valuations, of a local authority. Th Minister controlled the scheme independ ently of the local authorities, therefor there was no need for this deference t the method adopted by them. There wa no necessity for the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Th question as to the method of valuatio involved a very big principle which Par liament had not yet decided upon. Thi principle should not be dealt with in measure of this description, which wa only a machinery Bill, but should b

threshed out in the Municipalities or Roads Board Acts. If the system were altered at present there would be a tremendous loss to the revenue to be derived from properties in Perth. He did not for one moment propose that the department should take the initiative in exercising power as to the method of valuation in connection with the administration of the scheme. Certainly there was nothing to prevent the department from adopting any system. If the local authorities adopted the unimproved values as the correct system then the Government could follow suit, but until it was actually adopted by the local bodies they would not value by that method. Immense difficulties would be created if the alteration were made.

Mr. TAYLOR was surprised at the statement of the Minister. The Bill gave power to the Minister to rate on the unimproved value, and it must have been the intention of the Government to rate on the unimproved value irrespective of the rating powers of the local governing bodies.

The Honorary Minister: The Bill gives power to rate on the annual value.

Mr. TAYLOR: Yes; and on the unimproved value. The Government would be in the position only to rate on the unimproved value in a roads board area, and in those localities where the local authorities taxed on the unimproved value.

The Minister for Works: That is what the amendment asks.

Mr. TAYLOR: That was what objection was taken to.

The Minister for Works: That is what I said before.

Mr. TAYLOR: The language of the clause was clear, giving the Minister power to tax on the unimproved value irrespective of the taxation adopted by the local governing bodies. The local authorities had two forms of taxation, and if we passed the Legislative Council's amendment the Minister would only have power to tax on the unimproved values where the system was adopted by the local governing bodies. When the Bill was drawn it was found necessary in the metropolitan area, and in areas controlled by municipalities to give the Minister power to tax on the unimproved value, and it was plain that it was uppermost in the minds of the department although it might not have been the desire of the Minister.

The Minister for Works: There would be much less revenue under the amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: If there were wider areas of taxation then it would increase the revenue. It was to be hoped the Committee would not accept the amendment.

Mr. OSBORN: There was no need for the amendment. The Government of the day should have all reasonable power placed in their hands. The clause gave them all the power necessary, but the proviso from another place was intended to debar the Minister from exercising a right which he should have. The Government would do what was just and right to the community at large; therefore, he would not tie the hands of the Government by inserting this amendment.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Personally he would not have objected if the clause went further than it did. In his opinion the rating generally should be on the same basis throughout, or there might be a tendency to differentiation in the various localities. Were it practicable to give perfect equity in rating we should adopt the same practice throughout a locality. He agreed that the unimproved tax was the most equitable, but he did not believe in inserting a provision in the Bill that would allow the application of any different principle of rating in a district from that already prevailing and was in force by the local authorities. The provision had been inserted in the Bill because for years past municipal conferences had passed resolutions in favour of this system of rating. He had always believed that municipalities should have the opportunity of rating on the unimproved value, but as a matter of practice, for expediency, we should have to follow the system prevailing in the different districts. The Minister would find if he wished to deal equitably he would have to adopt this principle.

Mr. Swan: Then let the Minister adopt the unimproved system throughout.

The HONORARY MINISTER: What did that mean? We were to force the Minister to go to untold expense because the rating at the present time was on the other principle. It was advisable we should follow the rating of the local authorities. There was very little roads board area within the scope of this Bill, and very little rating would be done in a roads board area, and that very exception proved the rule. The bulk of the rating would be under municipal control and the Minister, in municipal areas, would have to deal with the rating under the same methods as the municipality dealt with it.

Mr. JOHNSON: The Bill as it left the Assembly gave discretion to the Minister to adopt whatever system was best in his judgment; and as the Council's amendment limited this discretionary power he opposed the amendment.

Question put and a division called for.

Mr. Johnson: I would like to know whether the Speaker is voting. I raise the point for the reason that the Speaker is now occupying a Chair which was occupied the other night by a stranger.

The Chairman: There is no point of order. Any hon. member sitting on either side of the Chairman or Speaker must have his vote recorded in a division.

Mr. Walker: Behind the Speaker's chair is technically out of the House.

The Chairman: Any member on either side of the Chair must be recorded on division.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	.. .. ..	20
Noes	.. .. ..	19
Majority for	..	1

AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Monger
Mr. Butcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Draper	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Gordon	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Layman
Mr. Male	(*Teller*).
Mr. Mitchell	

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Bath	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Bolton	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Collier	Mr. Swan
Mr. Gill	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Horan	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Ware
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Keenan	(*Teller*).

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 7.—Clause 98, line 1. After the word "payable" insert "half-yearly":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This amendment provided for the payment of rates half-yearly instead of yearly. He had previously opposed this because of the labour and cost that would be entailed. Seeing that it was the desire of the Council and of many members of the Assembly to have the rates paid half-yearly he now offered no objection and moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. BATH: It would be foolish for the Minister to accept the amendment because it would mean that anyone willing to pay the rates in one instalment would be prevented from doing so.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was nothing in the Bill to prevent a man paying two half-yearly instalments in advance in one sum; but the experience was that only the half-yearly moiety would be paid, as was the case in municipalities. There seemed to be nothing against a man paying two years in advance, and of course he would get the advantage of the discount provided for.

Mr. BROWN: The amendment was a wise one. It was all very well for a multi-millionaire like the leader of the Opposition to expect that the Minister would be rushed with payments, but people would not pay in advance for these services, any more than they would pay in advance for groceries. The trouble was the leader of the Opposition and his party were prepared to put every impost on the land, and to harass the unfortunate tenant out of existence. In the City and suburbs it now took people all their time to pay their present imposts. He hoped the Government would adhere to the amendment.

Mr. TAYLOR: The amendment would make it imperative for the Minister to accept payments half-yearly. The Legislative Council's amendment was purely in the interests of the property owners, and the member for Perth in airing himself at the expense of the Opposition only showed his breadth of knowledge in regard to the legitimacy of taxation. The hon. member for Perth had not been taught anything as far as carrying on the affairs of the country was concerned. He was not yet out of his swaddling political clothes where taxation proposals were concerned, and he (Mr. Taylor) would not allow any member to accuse him, or the party to which he belonged, of having any desire to institute taxation otherwise than in the interests of the country. Why should people who were unable to bear a tax be called upon to pay further taxation? The hon. member with his cheap sneers was becoming unbearable and he (Mr. Taylor) was prepared to fight him if only the hon. member would put forward his views. The hon. member, however, had no views; his was merely blind prejudice against a certain section of the people. He (Mr. Taylor) had been informed that the hon. member had received his early tuition from the National Women's League but there was no intention on his part to attack that league; all that he desired to do was to discuss the question of the payment of this tax by yearly or half-yearly instalments. The Minister should not be ready to accept the suggestion of the Legislative Council. Before the Bill went to the other House there was a burning desire on the part of the Minister to secure everything he could get; the Committee gave him the powers he asked for, and now because the Legislative Council desired to curtail those powers the Minister was willing to accept that curtailment. What was the reason for it; was it the hot weather? What had made the Minister so pliable? The Bill had been dealt with on non-party lines and now we found the Minister acquiescing in everything that had been sent down from another place, a place that knew no politics except party politics. He (Mr. Taylor) would not accept conditions that would embarrass the Minister; he had too much respect for the Minister to allow him to be bulldozed by the Legislative Council. He desired to give the Minister every freedom in the administration of this department.

Mr. BROWN: It was interesting indeed to hear the champion from Mt. Margaret arguing with regard to the question of the payment of these rates. The Legislative Council had taken a right view of the situation and the members for Swan, North Fremantle, East Fremantle, and Balkatta, would not face their electors, and go into heroics as the member for Mt. Margaret had done and shout to their constituents that they had opposed a Bill to relieve the people of the burden of taxation to the extent of allowing amounts to be paid in half-yearly instalments. The Legislative Council had acted wisely and well in relieving the small property owner not only in the suburbs of Perth, but of Fremantle, by making the burden lighter, knowing too the troubles that they had laboured under for some time past through ever increasing taxation.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was true that the half-yearly payments were the best. The objection raised was that this amendment by the Legislative Council was a compulsory one and the Minister would be forced to accept half-yearly payments. It seemed that the Minister was prepared to take anything from the Legislative Council. The whole tendency of the amendments made by the Legislative Council had been in the direction of relieving large land holders from a fair share of taxation. The burden of the amendment would fall on those who had to pay the larger rates, and it was necessary to make some provision so that these half-yearly payments should not be compulsory; that point should be made clear. There were many persons who could not afford to pay their rates in one instalment, though it would be an advantage to the department to get the rate in one instalment. The House, however, should agree to the amendment because it was the only one of all which was worthy of consideration.

Mr. BATH: The member for Perth was like a political gramaphone and about the only record that gramaphone contained was a diatribe against the

Labour party. The objection he (Mr. Bath) had to the amendment of the Legislative Council was that it would make it incumbent upon the Minister to take these rates half-yearly, even though the taxpayer desired to pay them yearly. The member for Perth was very solicitous about those who would find it difficult to pay their rates yearly, but only on the previous day he acquiesced in the passage of the Land and Income Tax Bill which provided for that tax being paid in one instalment, and there was not one word from him on behalf of those taxpayers who might find it difficult to meet their liabilities. It might be advisable to alter the amendment of the Legislative Council so as to make it optional whether the rates were paid yearly or half-yearly.

(*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*)

Mr. BATH: On reading the clause during the dinner adjournment he had ascertained that if his amendment were carried it would mean that the Minister might make a by-law providing that the rates should be paid yearly. That would defeat the desire prompting some members that the rates should be paid either half-yearly or yearly. In the circumstances, therefore, he would not press his amendment. The proposal of the other place was absurd, for it provided that rates should only be paid half-yearly.

Question passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 8—Clause 146, Subclause (3), line 2: Strike out "before or":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause related to the control of artesian bores sunk either before or after the passing of the measure. The amendment of another place was to provide that the control should only apply to bores sunk after the passing of the Act. In other words, anyone having bores now could not be deprived of the use of them. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. ANGWIN: Surely the Minister did not want to give away the right to control bores sunk before the passing of the Bill. The amendment should not be passed. If the Minister thought a certain bore was deterimental to the health of the community, or it became a nuisance, he should have power to control it. The amendment should not be agreed to.

Mr. BATH: If it were desirable that the Minister should regulate and control bores put down after the passing of the Bill, there should be no discrimination made against others put down prior to the passing of the Bill. The amendment was not justified and should be struck out. Either that or the Minister should strike out the clause altogether.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Power was given to prevent any bores from being put down in the future except with the consent of the Minister. That power was given so that the artesian supplies might not unduly interfere with bores used by the department. There were, however, bores in the metropolitan area which had been put down for some years and which consequently had become vested interests, and they should not be interfered with. The engineers of the department had advised that the existing bores were not detrimental to the Government supplies and need not be interfered with. If in the future an application were made to the department to put down a bore, and it was thought advisable that permission should be allowed, the Government would always be able to control that bore, but it was never intended under the Bill to hamper bores already in existence. His position was to accept amendments from another place provided they were not detrimental.

Mr. Bath: To accept them whether detrimental or not.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amendments sent down were such as we could accept, and having that opinion he proposed to accept them if the House were with him in that idea. It would be childish to oppose amendments simply because they were sent down from another place, for the Legislative Council existed for the purpose of suggesting amendments which they might think would improve a Bill. He proposed to accept the amendment, as he believed the striking

out of the words would not be detrimental to the administration of the department.

Mr. OSBORN: Several bores had been in existence in the metropolitan area for many years. Unfortunately some of them had already been closed by the department to the detriment of the municipalities owning them. There was no reason why the department should have the power to compel persons who had put down bores at considerable expense to close them up and take the water they required for the purpose of irrigation from the scheme. There were two such bores in Guildford. They had been put down at great cost for the purpose of irrigating the lands there, and it would be most unfair to the owners if the Minister were allowed to order them to be closed. It was a different matter as to bores to be put down in the future for those doing the work would know they were taking a chance of having them closed by the Minister at any time. He would support the amendment because it would protect the interests of more than one community within the metropolitan area. In many cases the bores were being used for irrigation purposes and those using them would have to forego their cultivation if they were compelled to use scheme water instead.

Mr. ANGWIN: The statement by the Minister for Works that he (Mr. Angwin) expected the Minister to reject an amendment simply because it came from another place was absurd. But after hon. members had heard the Minister declare that it was necessary that the scheme should be a financial success and, consequently, that the Minister should have full control—after having heard this, and then finding the Minister submitting to amendments brought forward by the Legislative Council, although such amendments had a tendency to make the scheme unfinancial and to take away the control of the Minister, what were hon. members to think? The amendment under consideration would certainly take away the control of the Minister. In respect to several of the amendments suggested by the Council, he (Mr. Angwin) had voted in favour of the Minister when the unamended clauses were being put through previous to being sent to another place. Consequently, in opposing these amendments he was acting consistently with his former attitude.

Mr. BUTCHER: It was difficult to conceive how an hon. member with any degree of fairness, could refuse to accept the amendment. Such hon. members could have no idea of the injustice they would be inflicting on the community by allowing the Minister to control and shut down at his sweet will private bores in the Guildford district. These bores had been sunk at great cost at a time when no other water was available in the district, and to prohibit the use of these bores now and compel the owners of the bores to use scheme water would be an act of grave injustice. Surely hon. members opposing this amendment did not understand the position. The Minister should not be given control of these old-established bores which for so long had been relied upon by those who had sunk them.

Mr. BROWN: If only because of the treatment the members of the park board had received from the Government, he would support the amendment. Years ago when Mr. Johnson was Minister for Works and votes to various public institutions were being cut down, the park board were told by the then Minister for Works that if they did not hand over their own water scheme to him he would further reduce the subsidy. This clause would give the Minister for Works power to close the bores at the Association Cricket Ground, and at the Perth Racecourse, and compel the trustees of those grounds to take the scheme water at any price he might like to fix. At no time had Perth been worse off for water than at present, and in view of this nothing should be permitted to curtail the private supplies.

Mr. BATH: The arguments advanced as to what the Minister might or might not do under the clause could be used against the whole of the Bill. None in opposition contended for a moment that this provision in the Bill would be utilised by the Minister for the purpose of closing down the bores.

Mr. Brown: I would not trust him.

Mr. BATH: The hon. member, it seemed, trusted nobody, and probably that accounted for the comprehensive way in which that sentiment was reciprocated towards him. It was absurd for the Minister to declare that hon. members expected him to disagree with the amendments merely because they had come from another place. Hon. members expected nothing of the kind. But when first the Bill had come before the Assembly the Minister had objected to amendments advanced by hon. members, and had declared that all the powers he was taking were necessary. The Minister had strenuously opposed amendments.

The Minister for Works: Not this one.

Mr. BATH: Perhaps not, but certainly the Minister had objected to others. Now, however, that the Council had made amendments calculated to curtail the powers of the Minister, the Minister illogically desired to accept those amendments. As to saying that the Minister could not be trusted with such power he controlling these bores, if the Minister could not be trusted wtih such power he could not be trusted to administer other more important portions of the Bill.

Mr. George: He may not always be there. You might have another man.

Mr. BATH: That argument also would apply to other powers given to the Minister under the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Surely the leader of the Opposition would recognise that a person who put down an artesian bore before an adequate water supply obtained in that particular district deserved consideration different from that which should be applied to a person sinking a considerable amount of capital in providing a bore where an adequate water supply already obtained. He (the Honorary Minister) quite agreed with the amendment sent down from another place.

Mr. GEORGE: Bores were sunk when there were no water supplies, and it would be unfair for the Minister to shut them up when they were being used for gardens and orchards. It would throw a number of people out of work. It would be as unfair as it would be if the Minister compelled persons to close down their wells or to pull down their rain-water tanks. It would be an unwarranted interference with the rights of individuals and with the rights of property. We might as well bring in a Bill to confiscate the rights of property owners. It should not be within our province to make laws to crush the rights of individuals.

Mr. ANGWIN: There was nothing in the clause giving the power to the Minister to close bores. The clause simply gave the Minister power to control the bores. If the amendment were carried that power would be confined to the future, but greater power should be given to the Minister. The Minister should be able to control the bores in existence. Therefore, we should oppose the Council's amendment.

Question passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 9—Clause 162, Subclause (1), line 3: Strike out "six" and insert "twelve":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This clause limited the time in which action could be taken against the Minister and his officers. The Council proposed to extend the period from six months to twelve months. It was a reasonable period. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. ANGWIN: In a small area we should not allow twelve months for action to be taken after an act was committed. Witnesses who could give valuable evidence for the Crown might have left the State in that period. Surely six months was sufficient time? Of course the Government had been trying to get this Bill through for some years, but unfortunately the amendments suggested by the Council were detrimental to the best working of the scheme.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must discuss this amendment.

Mr. ANGWIN: This was above all other amendments the most dangerous. It would be unfair to an officer of the department to have a thing hanging over his head for twelve months.

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

Ayes	.. .. ..	34
Noes	.. .. ..	7
Majority for	..	27

AYES.

Mr. Bath	Mr. Layman
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Male
Mr. Carson	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Davies	Mr. C. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. George	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Gill	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Gordon	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Gregory	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Swan
Mr. Heitmann	Mr. Troy
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Johnson	(*Teller*).
Mr. Keenan	

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Brown
Mr. Monger	(*Teller*).

Question thus passed: the Council's amendment agreed to.

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

STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT —LAPSED BILLS.

Mr. SPEAKER presented the report of the Standing Orders Committee dealing with Message No. 6 from the Legislative Council with reference to Bills which had lapsed.

Report received and read, and ordered to be considered at the next sitting.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

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

Clause 4: Strike out the proviso at the end of paragraph (*d.*) and insert the following:—"Provided that subject to regulations made under this Act such machinery shall be deemed to have been manufactured in Western Australia, notwithstanding that certain parts thereof were imported. Provided also that employees engaged in the manufacture of such machinery are paid the ruling rate of wages":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment suggested by the Legislative Council was merely an alteration of the words "prescribed wages" to "ruling rate." The alteration did not make any material difference to the Bill. "Ruling rate" would mean with him (the Minister) the wages prescribed by the Arbitration Court. He took it also that the ruling rate meant the wages prescribed by that court.

Mr. Collier: Why was the amendment made?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member would have to ask someone else that question. At any rate, the alteration was not a material one. It was his desire that the men connected with this industry should be paid the minimum rate which was prescribed by the Arbitration Court. It might be argued that the wages might be prescribed by the Minister or the trustees of the bank. If it rested with him he would see that the men received the ruling rate of wages. He moved—

That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr. BATH: Adopting his usual attitude the Minister for Lands would have the Committee agree to this alteration on the ground that there was no harm in it, and that the proposal was exactly the same as that which had been submitted in the Bill when it was before the Legislative Assembly. If it meant the same thing why did another place insert the alteration? The contention was absurd. The proposal contained in the amendment meant something entirely different from the provision which the Legislative Assembly passed, and it nullified what was the intention of the Committee when it sent the Bill along to the Upper House.

with the proviso stating that the prescribed rate of wages should be paid. What was the ruling rate? It would be the rate paid by the manufacturer for the time being. It might be any sweating rate. It was to avoid any occasion arising by which the Agricultural Bank would be used practically to subsidise local manufacturers, and enable them to sweat their employees as they pleased, that this provision was inserted in the Bill as sent from the Legislative Assembly. If the Minister accepted the amendment he would defeat the point. The Minister stated his interpretation of the proviso as sent from the Legislative Council was that it should be the rate of wages as laid down by the Arbitration Court; but as he (Mr. Bath) had pointed out, in a matter of this kind, if that were the interpretation the Minister intended to place on it, it would compel all employees, no matter how few they might be, to go through all the formula and preliminaries necessary to placing a case before the Arbitration Court in order to secure an interpretation of this simple matter. It was not necessary in the case of Government contracts for those desirous of protecting themselves to go to the Arbitration Court in order to secure protection from any form of sweating. If the provision which was usually inserted in contracts were clear he thought hon. members should rely on it as a means of doing justice to the employees. There would be no other course necessary than to transfer that clause and have it inserted in this Bill. As a matter of fact it had been found that the provision in contracts which was supposed to protect employees had been evaded time and time again, and the Minister had confessed more than once his inability to enforce the provision. That being so, it was deemed necessary to have something more specific, and so it was laid down that we should have a prescribed rate of wages. That might be an award of the Arbitration Court, it might be an industrial agreement arrived at without reference to the court, or it might be the rate of wages fixed up by an interview, which might be carried out in an hour between the representatives of the manufacturers and the representatives of the employees and which the Minister could embody in the schedule prescribing the rate of wages. That was all that was asked. He would not like to see the Minister confine himself to an award of the Arbitration Court, or to a registered industrial agreement, for that would mean that employees would be forced to go through all the procedure necessary to obtain an award. All we asked was that before the House was asked to utilise the Agricultural Bank as a means of encouraging local manufactories we should ensure that that assistance should also extend to those employed by the manufacturers. It was to be hoped the Committee would not endorse the proposal of the Minister to accept an amendment which made a very material alteration in the provision sent from this House.

Mr. JOHNSON: The amendment was absolutely useless. The ruling rate was the rate that would be paid by the manufacturer.

The Minister for Lands: Fixed by the Arbitration Court, surely.

Mr. JOHNSON: The Minister asked us to subsidise a manufacturer of machinery but paid no attention to the needs of the workers. If the employees desired to get fair wages they would be forced to create a dispute before they would have power to go before the Arbitration Court. That was a distinctly unfair proposition. His idea in bringing the original proposal forward was that manufacturers should be able to meet the employees and arrive at a settlement, and that the Minister would then prescribe that agreement in the regulations in connection with the subsidising of the works. The amendment would merely compel the men to go to the Arbitration Court; it was to be hoped that the Minister would not agree to the amendment.

Mr. GORDON: It was quite immaterial whether the amendment were inserted or not, provided that the idea was that the workers should get a fair wage. Under the clause as originally passed it would be left to the Agricultural Bank to say if the wage was a fair one. That did not bind the employer to pay such a wage.

Mr. Johnson: Then he would not get the subsidy.

Mr. GORDON: The Agricultural Bank would be still in the position to say "You are not paying a fair rate of wage and we shall not subsidise the work you are doing."

Mr. Taylor: That will not be so if you carry the amendment.

Mr. GORDON: The whole thing rested with the Bank as to whether they were satisfied that the employer was paying a fair rate of wages or not. If the rate of wages were not a fair one the Bank could still refuse to subsidise the manufacturer. It was just the same in the original clause and whether that clause, or the clause as amended, were agreed to, the result would be the same.

Mr. TAYLOR: If the Legislative Council who sent the amendment here knew what the interpretation placed on it by the member for Canning was, they would certainly not be pleased with themselves. They would say "How dare the member for Canning interpret our wisdom in such a manner." The proof of that was in the language of the amendment, which showed they desired that the manufacturer should pay the ruling rate of wages, even if that ruling rate of pay was a starvation rate. The ruling rate was the rate current in the locality at the time. The amendment meant that if the men were dissatisfied they must create a dispute before availing themselves of the Arbitration Court. The work of that Court had been much complicated of late through the decisions of the High Court and it was not so easy for the employees to reach that Court now as it used to be. There must be a pretty stiff grievance now before the men could present a case to the Arbitration Court. It was absurd for Parliament to allow the people's funds to be given to any employer unless they were satisfied that the rate of wages to be paid was satisfactory.

Mr. George: Is there not a clause in the contract?

Mr. TAYLOR: There was a clause in Government contracts dealing with the question, but from his experience he knew that the clause referring to the rate of wages was not always adhered to. When controlling a department that let contracts he found that the employer on every occasion would attempt to ignore the clause. Then again, the Perth Hospital Board, of which he was a member, recently let a contract and found they were being beaten by the successful tenderer. The board had not only their own knowledge to guide them, but the expert knowledge of the Public Works Department, and yet the contractors hoodwinked them. Once a man had an experience of that kind he realised how necessary it was to put legislation on the statute books that could not be overridden. The contractors would break through any barrier unless members were very careful. He would not sanction an amendment giving an opportunity for the employer to force his workmen into the Arbitration Court. As to that Court, he might say he was not wholly wedded to it as he was eight or nine years ago, for he found now it was impossible for the Arbitration Court to be administered properly when those in power were unsympathetic towards the worker. That unsympathetic hand was present now. He could detect in the amendment what was in the minds of those passing it. Anyone mixed up with a labour movement could readily understand what was the intention of those who framed the amendment. The Council were there for the purpose—that was what that branch of the legislature existed for—of sending down amendments of this character and to get this House to accept them if they would. Members of another place recognised that when they had a spineless Minister in charge of a Bill they could send down amendments which the Government would adopt without murmur, they counted heads and knew that it was safe to send such amendments along. It would be unfair for the Government to subsidise the employers with the people's money unless they took steps to see that the employees received a fair rate of wages. The employees should not be placed on the same footing as the employees of men who did not receive subsidies from the Government, yet that was what was being done by the amend-

ment. It was forcing the men into a position where they had to use their industrial organisation, the Arbitration Court, and other means in order to get the ruling rate of wages. The amendment really meant that the employees engaged in the manufacture of this machinery would be placed on the same footing as other employees in that they would have to avail themselves of the Arbitration Court to get the ruling rate of wage. The Government should see that the prescribed rate of wage was given.

Mr. George: Who is to prescribe the rate of wage?

Mr. TAYLOR: The Minister and the employees. The Minister would fix the rate of wages before the people's money was handed over to the manufacturers. He (Mr. Taylor) had been dealing with this "ruling rate of wage" for nearly 30 years. It was probably thought that the bitter experience he had had of employers had prejudiced him in matters of this kind. He was only sorry that some other hon. members had not had a taste of the fire that had singed him. If it had been so they would think twice before accepting an amendment of this nature.

Mr. GEORGE: Having been through the fire probably before even the member for Mount Margaret, and having worked for sweating wages he knew something about this matter. The difficulty might very well be met by adding to the proviso words which would secure that the wages paid to the blacksmiths employed on this agricultural machinery would be not less than the wages paid to the blacksmiths in the Midland Junction workshops; and so too with the wood workers employed on this machinery, that their wages would be at least equal to wages paid to the wood workers at Midland Junction.

Mr. Horan: That is absurd on the face of it.

Mr. GEORGE: Possibly it was absurd, but at the very least his attempt to find a solution of the difficulty was an honest one. Personally he preferred "ruling rate of wage" to "prescribed wage," but if it would satisfy the hon. member he would be quite prepared to add to the provision words which would secure the effect he had already referred to. As for the word "prescribed," who was going to prescribe the rate of wage? It had been said that the Minister and the employees would fix it up. Where would the employers come in. Would they be given any say in the matter at all?

Mr. HUDSON: The member for Mount Margaret had suggested that the cause of the trouble lay in the attitude of the Legislative Council. No doubt that body came in for a good deal of criticism, and deservedly so, but on this occasion the criticism should have been thrown in the teeth of Ministers of the Crown; because in the history of this alteration Ministers of the Crown had been guilty of a breach of faith as far as the Assembly was concerned in their dealings with the Bill in the Council. When the Bill was first in the Assembly an amendment had been agreed to at the instigation of the member for Guildford, and accepted by the Minister for Lands. That amendment had provided for the payment of "prescribed wages." The acceptance of the amendment had been taken as an assurance that the Government were prepared to accept the term "prescribed wages." In the Legislative Council it had been pointed out that the clause, as it then stood, might operate with regard to ringbarking and other matters upon which the Agricultural Bank were authorised to lend money, and the provision had thereupon been confined to the manufacture of agricultural machinery. The Minister in charge of the measure had agreed to the words "prescribed wages" being inserted in the Bill before it left the Assembly, but his colleague in the Council, without any request from the Council, had had the temerity to amend the provision imposed by moving to insert the words "ruling rate of wage." In these circumstances the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill should give the House an explanation of what, apparently on the face of it, was a distinct breach of faith.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment proposed simply made the situation clearer. It had been said by the member for Guildford that he (the Mini-

ster for Lands) should be a sort of arbitrator to decide between the men and the employers as to the wages. Another suggestion had been that he should confer with the men as to the wages. He did not know what his position would be if he had to travel round the country discussing these questions at every workshop throughout the State. It would be an impossible position to take up. He was perfectly willing to safeguard the interests of the men employed in the manufacture of the machinery. The proposed advance had been referred to as a subsidy; it would be nothing of the kind. It would be simply an advance made for the purchase of agricultural machinery, and the bank would see to it that the purchase was made at the lowest possible price. The machinery made for the Agricultural Bank with money advanced under the Bill would be sold to the farmer more cheaply than the farmer could buy it now. The idea that it was to be a subsidy to the manufacturers was wrong. His anxiety was that the men should be paid a fair rate of wage. He understood there were awards in connection with the timber workers, the wood workers, and the iron workers and moulders, all the trades represented in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. That information came from a member of the Opposition.

Mr. Johnson: Then the hon. member was misinformed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was understood there were awards, and they would set up the ruling rate of wages in the industry. In accepting the amendment and providing that the ruling wage should be paid we would do all that was necessary. It was intended the manufacturers should be registered, and when a manufacturer applied to be registered the trustees of the bank would require from him the rate of wages he was paying. The power given in the amendment was quite sufficient to enable the Minister and the bank to see that fair wages were paid in the industry. The amendment seemed to make the matter clearer than the proposal originally put in the Bill at the instance of the member for Guildford.

Mr. SWAN: The majority of members of the Legislative Council were those whose interests were directly opposed to the interests of the workers, and the Council was to be complimented on framing an amendment that made it more possible to exploit the workers. It was true the Minister asked him whether there were any awards dealing with the iron and wood trades, and he had told the Minister there were, but now he understood those awards had expired.

The Minister for Lands: But the wage set up is still the ruling wage.

Mr. SWAN: But that was not worth anything to the workers who would be eventually employed in this industry. There was no one employed in the Midland Junction workshops whose wages would be taken as an indication of what would be a fair rate for those employed in the manufacture of agricultural implements. There were private firms who did not pay the ruling rate in regard to moulders. He had asked the Minister for Works to protect the workers from the sweating tactics adopted by some private employers, but the Minister for Works, being a straight-out supporter of private enterprise, had no sympathy in that direction. Private firms were paying from 10s. a day downwards for moulding work. One firm carrying out Government contracts in connection with the sewerage works paid no higher than 10s. a day for work which was legitimate moulding work. They paid from 10s. down to 6s. and 7s. a day. If we passed this amendment a firm would spring up that would undertake the manufacture of agricultural implements, and look to the Agricultural Bank for assistance, and set up a wage to suit the industry. That would make the ruling rate for the industry. If McKay Bros. started here there would be no men employed in their factory who would come under the heading of any legitimate trade now in existence in the State. The whole process of manufacture was so specialised that no man employed by this firm would be considered a tradesman. He would not come under any heading of any legitimate trade now in existence. He would be simply a worker

in the agricultural machinery industry. The outcome of a special arbitration case was that the rate of wage for any trade could not be applied to the manufacture of agricultural machinery. No man engaged in the manufacture could be considered an engineer, a turner, a blacksmith or anything else. When the Minister had spoken to him on the question he had not given the matter any great consideration. He believed the Minister was anxious to give fair treatment to the men. If we adopted the amendment we would never be able to control the industry. The only way it could be done would be by creating a dispute and approaching the Arbitration Court for an award. This work would be so specialised that it could not be considered as coming under recognised trade headings. No fault could be found with the Upper House for doing this. It was what the members of that House were returned for; they were not returned to protect the interests of the worker, but it was to protect the interests of the worker that he (Mr. Swan) was sent to Parliament, and he would raise his voice against the proposal made by the Legislative Council. If the amendment were adopted we would be placing the manufacturers in the position of exploiting the workers in that particular industry.

Mr. W. PRICE: The previous speaker had appealed to the Minister to give the workers fair consideration. What was the good of appealing to the Minister, when we found that he could be guilty of a breach of faith to the Legislative Assembly through his colleague moving in another place to defeat the aims and objects of the Legislative Assembly. It was to be regretted that the Minister for Lands could not give the House an assurance that he was not responsible for bringing about the nullification of the object of the Legislative Assembly. We should have had some assurance from the Minister, and in his absence he (Mr. Price) was at a loss to know how far he could go in accepting an assurance at any time from the Minister for Lands. When the proposal was put forward by the Legislative Assembly to provide for a prescribed rate, if that did not meet with the approval of the Minister it would have been more honourable if he had told the House so. Members in another place had provided for a ruling rate. He (Mr. Price) had before him a document showing that in a certain Government contract, where the ruling rate was supposed to be paid, that rate was as much as 4s. below the ruling rate obtaining in the industry affected. He referred to moulders, and while the ruling rate was 11s. a day, on the Government contract in question the men were being paid from 7s. to 10s. If it was found that the ruling rate could be so flagrantly ignored in such a case, what guarantee could we have that the ruling rate would obtain in connection with the manufacture of agricultural machinery? He had yet to discover any basis upon which the ruling rate in connection with that industry could be fixed. The fact was that at the present time there was practically no manufacture of agricultural implements in the State, and what had been done had been carried on by small employers in a small way. There was not in the State a ruling rate of wage governing the employees who were engaged in the manufacture of these implements. It would be an easy matter, however, to bring this about. He would instance the works which were carried out in connection with the water and sewerage scheme. There was a prescribed rate of wages there which operated with every class of employee who was engaged, and that prescribed rate had been fixed by the Minister. The same thing could well be done in connection with the manufacture of agricultural implements. If it were found that the employees were not receiving what was considered to be a fair rate, instead of appealing to the Arbitration Court, or bringing about an industrial dispute, what had been done in connection with the water and sewerage works could be followed. The Minister would do what he considered right and just, and fix that which would be recognised as a prescribed rate. He (Mr. Price) had more faith in decisions of Ministers of the Crown, after hearing

both sides, and he regretted to say this, than in decisions of any arbitration tribunal existing in the Commonwealth. Unfortunately for the workers, it had been proved that they could not rely upon arbitration courts of the Commonwealth; therefore, this simple and effective method of protecting the interests of the employees should be taken. With regard to the failure of the Arbitration Court, it was only necessary to refer to the award given in connection with the timber workers' dispute. Not a person, outside a few speculators and money grabbers, was satisfied with the award given in that case, and in the circumstances was it any wonder that the workers hesitated about approaching the court. Members should refuse to accept the amendment put in at the dictates of the Ministry. They should not allow a representative of the Ministry in another place to flout the wishes of this House.

[*Mr. Taylor took the Chair.*]

Mr. WALKER moved an amendment on the amendment—

That in line 10 the word "ruling" be struck out and "prescribed" inserted in lieu.

This would make the second proviso read—"Provided also that employees engaged in the manufacture of such machinery are paid the prescribed rate of wages." One was bound to admit that in redrafting the clause from what it was before leaving this House an important step had been made by the Legislative Council in this respect. Under the clause as sent to that Chamber the prescribed rate of wages could be made to apply not only to the manufacture of machinery but also to ringbarking, fencing, clearing, etcetera: so to make it clear that this proviso related only to the manufacture of machinery the clause was redrafted in the other Chamber, and was now as submitted by the amendment. In so far as that was done there was an improvement, but in that redrafting the essential element of this debate was also altered, and the Council had substituted for "the prescribed rate of wages" the words "the ruling rate of wages." The Minister must be convinced from the debate that the ruling rate of wages was the most indefinite phrase that could possibly be used. It meant nothing. Whether the ruling rate were just or right, or equivalent to the work done or not, that did not matter, for it was still the ruling rate, and the words meant "pay what is being paid," and no more. It conveyed no meaning. We had an assurance from the Minister that he wanted a fair rate of wages to be paid, there was an assurance by certain spokesmen of the other Chamber that they desired to have in payment for this manufactured article a fair rate of wages. If that be so what objection could there be to the word "prescribed" instead of "ruling." He understood there was a difficulty as to what the Minister had to do in order that there might be a prescribed rate. There need be no trouble. If the rate were decided by the Arbitration Court the Minister had his prescription ready. If there were a necessity for comparison between the rates ruling and the rates paid elsewhere, then, in order to be just to our citizens, the Minister might have to make some inquiries and say that such a rate was to be the standard rate for such work done under the conditions existing in Western Australia in comparison with the same work done elsewhere. That was supposing it was a new kind of work. An agreement between the employer and employee, all the circumstances being known, would also be a guide to the Minister. There was no difficulty in the Minister coming to a definite conclusion and prescribing the rate that should obtain. He felt confident that if that were done there would be a just prescription. If "ruling" meant just, and "prescribed" meant just also, why should not one word be used instead of the other? The word "ruling" carried with it a wholesale objection.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government intended to see that a fair rate of wages was paid. Members knew that under the Act the Government would be licensing manufacturers approved of by the trustees. Where there was an Arbitration Court award that must stand,

but where there was none he undertook to see that a fair rate of wages was paid. He would undertake by regulation to set out what was to be considered a fair rate of wages—a ruling rate of wages in connection with this industry. That should satisfy members, for that was what they wanted him to do. All they asked was that such a course should be followed under the Bill. As was suggested by the amendment, the clause would refer to a ruling rate of wages, but members opposite desired the word "prescribed" to be inserted. Members must surely admit that the effect would be exactly the same if the clause were left as it was and his promise were carried out. The position members desired would be arrived at as effectually as if the word "prescribed" were substituted for "ruling." The Government were most anxious that fair conditions should apply to the workers not only in this but also in every industry. All members asked for he could and would do under the clause as it stood.

Mr. JOHNSON: If the Minister were likely to go on for ever he would be quite prepared to accept the assurance. The position was this: If there were an Arbitration Court award the Minister would have to prescribe nothing, for the award would set out the conditions of employment in that particular industry. Where there was no award the Minister said he would be prepared to prescribe one. That was all members wanted; but the difficulty was this: The Minister might be out of power inside the next 12 months, or something might happen that would necessitate his resignation before then, so that there would be the position that the next Minister might say he did not give that promise and would not carry it out. If the Minister could guarantee that his successor would carry out his promise members would ask for nothing more, but of course, that guarantee was impossible. The amendment only embodied exactly what the Minister now promised. The Minister appeared to think members were asking for something else which was hidden in the amendment, but he could honestly assure him there was nothing but what the Minister had promised to give.

The Attorney General: The new Minister could repeal the regulation and make a fresh one.

Mr. JOHNSON: Then we would have the power in the House to discuss his action. As an illustration, it might be mentioned that the Government had given a concession to a private firm manufacturing Monier pipes, stipulating that the ruling rate of wage should be paid. The wages that should properly be paid for this particular industry were plasterers' wages, which happened to be 11 shillings. But the manufacturers had claimed that it was not ordinary plasterers' work, that it was of a special nature, and because of that they had paid a special wage which seemed to them fair; and immediately they had prescribed that wage it became the ruling rate of wage, because they were the only manufacturers of these pipes in the State. In going through those works recently with the Minister for Works, he had noticed a man manufacturing the pipes at a bench, and on his asking the Minister for Works what he thought the wages of that man might be the Minister had promptly replied "perhaps 12 shillings a day." Inquiries made revealed the fact that the man was only getting 9 shillings a day. This of course was due to the circumstance that the provision made had become a dead letter, and the wages paid was the ruling rate of wages instead of the prescribed wages. By this the Committee would see that there was all the difference in the world between "prescribed wages" and "ruling rate of wages." Hon. members were asking the Minister for Lands to do what the Honorary Minister when Minister for Works had done in respect to the sewerage contracts in the metropolitan area. The ex-Minister for Works had prescribed the rate of wages after the employer and employee had agreed upon them. Now it was asked that the Minister for Lands should do precisely the same thing. Hon. members had no desire to drag out the debate, but there was a big principle at stake, and members were asking merely for what had already been conceded by the Government.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If the proposal of the Minister for Lands were

accepted, there was nothing whatever to prevent the same arrangement being carried out as had been made in respect to the sewerage works, and referred to by the member for Guildford. It would be quite competent for the employees and the employers to come together as in the case of the sewerage works and arrange the rate of wage, after which the Minister would prescribe that rate. Surely it was sufficient that the Minister was willing to give an assurance, and indeed had given an assurance, that that would be done.

Mr. Johnson: But the Bill will go on after the Minister has departed.

Mr. Walker: The Minister cannot assure us that he is immortal.

[*Mr. Daglish resumed the Chair.*]

Mr. McDOWALL: So far as could be seen there whas no reason whatever why the Minister could not at once accept the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna. There was nothing in the words——

The Minister for Lands: If there was nothing in the words, why change them?

Mr. McDOWALL: It might with better reason be asked, why had the Minister changed them? Hon. members had already provided that employees should be paid the prescribed wages, but when the Bill went to another place "prescribed wages" was changed for "ruling rate of wage." It had never been the intention of the House to make the provision apply to ringbarking and the like. It had been intended to be applied only to the manufacture of agricultural machinery. In view of the Minister's assurance that he was prepared to see to it that the rate of wage was duly prescribed, why could he not accept the amendment? Why all this obstinacy?

Mr. GILL: Surely the Minister would see the necessity for accepting the Bill as it had left this Chamber on a previous occasion. What objection could the Minister have to accepting the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna? There was no ruling rate of wages for the manufacture of agricultural machinery in any of the country towns of the State, nor was there any award of the Arbitration Court that applied to such work. It would be a long time before an arbitration award was obtained for this industry. Very few of the establishments would employ 15 persons in any trade for many years to come. Therefore, it was necessary to have the rate prescribed. There would be no objection in another place to the use of the word "prescribed." Apparently the insertion of "ruling" was due to an oversight. If we now reinserted the word "prescribed" it would not endanger the passage of the Bill. There should be no trusting to luck; it was no way to pass legislation to take the Minister's word for a thing.

Mr. WALKER: However anxious we might be to trust the Minister there might be an occasion when the interpretation of the section would be submitted to the Courts; and we knew from our experience in regard to the electoral law that the Court took no account of explanations and assurances given by Ministers in Parliament. The Court would interpret "ruling" to mean the customary or existing rate of wages, whatever was being paid, whether fair or unfair.

The Attorney General: What do you take "prescribed" to mean?

Mr. WALKER: What the Minister prescribed. The Minister would take good care not to fix the rate beneath a fair and reasonable standard. If there was an award the Minister would prescribe the rate fixed.

The Honorary Minister: What guarantee is there that he will not exceed the award.

Mr. WALKER: Only the Minister's commonsense, his responsibility to Parliament, and his knowledge that everything he did would be subject to criticism or censure in the House. Members were bound to fight for the great principle contained in this matter, and they could not lightly allow it to pass. There should be no hesitancy in reinserting the word "prescribed" as it had already passed the Assembly, and there was every probability another place would accept it just as they had accepted the word "ruling."

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As it would be necessary later on to increase

the capital, another Bill would probably be before Parliament in six months' time, and if the clause was not working satisfactorily he promised to assist in amending it to make it read in such a way that the result members desired would be brought about. However, it seemed the clause gave the Minister all the powers desired. The manufacturers would have to apply for a permit to sell to the borrowers from the bank, and unless the conditions of the operatives were fair no permit would be granted. There was ample safeguard to enable the Minister to do all that members desired to be done.

Mr. BATH: When the amendment was submitted by the member for Guildford there was little discussion on it, because the Minister accepted the amendment willingly. Certain members in the Legislative Council, however, were of opinion that it might apply to other forms of work than the manufacture of machinery, and the representative of the Government in the Council moved for the postponement of the clause. When the Minister again dealt with the clause the amendment agreed to by the Minister in the Assembly was altered, and the word "prescribed," which had a definite meaning, was struck out and "ruling" was inserted. "Ruling" could mean any sweating wage in force. Without reinserting the word "prescribed" it would be class legislation, it would be a provision giving special consideration to the manufacturers of machinery, while not giving consideration to the workers employed in that manufacture. We were here to give a fair deal all round. This was a form of protection to these people and we had a reasonable right to ask the Minister to carry out the undertaking, and also to give a further measure of protection to the workers. If he agreed to the amendment the matter would be embodied in the Bill. How did we know under what circumstances the measure would be discussed next session? The obligation was on the Minister to make sure that the undertaking which was given when the Bill was under discussion on the previous occasion was carried out.

Mr. SWAN: During the course of his lifetime he had experienced many disappointments, but one of his greatest disappointments was the Minister for Lands. He had never thought that the Minister would support anything in the shape of low wages, and if he desired to prove that the contrary was the case and desired to secure something in the shape of fair wages he should not oppose the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna. It was his desire to see that the worker in this industry was protected before he gave his support to a measure such as this. He had said sufficient to satisfy the Minister that there was a necessity for the amendment, but he was disappointed that the Minister had not seen his way to agree to it. It was his intention to do everything possible to prevent the clause which had been sent from another place being passed

Mr. ANGWIN moved—

That progress be reported.

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

Ayes	.. .. ..	18
Noes	.. .. ..	23
Majority against	..	5

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. O'Loghlen
Mr. Bath	Mr. W. Price
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Swan
Mr. Collier	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gill	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Holman	Mr. Walker
Mr. Horan	Mr. Ware
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. Johnson	*(Teller).*
Mr. McDowall	

NOES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Male
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Carson	Mr. Monger
Mr. Cowcher	Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Davies	Mr. S. F. Moore
Mr. Draper	Mr. Nanson
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Osborn
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Hayward	Mr. J. Price
Mr. Jacoby	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Keenan	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Layman	*(Teller).*

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. ANGWIN: It was to be regretted that the Government did not see fit to report progress. In moving to report progress he thought that if the Minister was given the opportunity to sleep over the amendment moved by the member for Kanowna he would agree it to on the following day. Of all industries which were established in Australia the lowest wages were paid in connection with that for the manufacture of agricultural implements. Only a few weeks ago it was pointed out that in many instances the first arrivals in the State secured employment in this industry and were paid a very low rate of wages. He (Mr. Angwin) was one of those unfortunates, and being a stranger he was taken in. When he first arrived in Australia he secured employment in connection with the manufacture of agricultural implements so that he could say he knew something about what took place at the implement works. As soon as the opportunity occurred he got out of it and took care never to go back again. The agricultural implement workers did not get anything like a fair wage. Before the passing of the Excise Tariff of 1906 the Sunshine Harvester Company employed fitters at £2 11s. 6d. a week of 48 hours, and joiners at £2 11s. 3d.; and the system in vogue in connection with these agricultural implement works was that only a few men were kept on during the season which was not busy. When it was necessary for them to fit up the machines for the harvesting season a rush took place, a number of outsiders were brought in, new chums, if any were available, and for three months it was perfect slavery. On Christmas Eve they sacked all the new chums. That showed that there was no harder work anywhere than in the fitting up of agricultural machinery.

The CHAIRMAN: The question was that the word "ruling" be struck out with the view of inserting "prescribed." The hon. member must adhere to that question.

Mr. ANGWIN: The necessity was to show, if possible, why a prescribed rate should be inserted. He was speaking from his own experience in agricultural machinery works in Victoria and wanted to show members how necessary it was, owing to the small rate of pay the workers received, that the Minister should accept the amendment of the member for Kanowna. Blacksmiths were paid £2 9s. 6d., and tinsmiths £2 11s. 3d.

The CHAIRMAN: Such information did not relate to the amendment.

Mr. ANGWIN: The wages existing in connection with implement works elsewhere might be considered as the ruling rate here; certainly they would not be sufficient for the maintenance of persons engaged in that industry in Western Australia. The Minister should take into consideration the disadvantages in Western Australia as compared with other places. He had thought it was the intention of the Minister to have agricultural implements manufactured in the State, but it now appeared from what had been said that the Minister thought it necessary to go to various parts of the State to find out what was the ruling rate of wages. This showed that the Minister had no intention of providing for the manufacture of the larger class of machinery now being so largely imported. The Minister should realise the necessity for providing for our own workers and agree to the amendment.

Mr. COLLIER: It was not to the credit of the House that some two hours should be wasted on a matter of this kind. The Minister agreed to the object sought to be achieved by members and said the meaning of the two words was exactly the same. He gave us to understand that the amendment made in another place was introduced as the result of a mistake, and yet he held up the House for two hours over a matter which he said he was quite agreeable to. That casual way of dealing with matters was not the best means to finish the business of the country if Parliament were to be prorogued this side of Easter, let alone Christmas. The Minister had given no reason why he was opposed to the amendment, and, therefore, there must be some underlying reason for the amendment inserted in another place. If not, why was the Minister so stubborn in resisting the amendment to the

amendment. Surely if members were right originally to insert the amendment they were right to stand by that amendment now. Were we to accept an amendment simply because it came from another place, and was it sufficient for the Minister to say in a casual way that the proposal would do no harm? Reasons should be given to the Committee for these amendments but, so far, the Minister for Lands had given no reason whatever, having simply contented himself with, as usual, treating the House in the most casual way in life. If the Minister was prepared to prescribe a reasonable rate of wage, what objection could he find to hon. members giving him the power to do it under the Bill? The Minister had been the cause of a considerable waste of time over this amendment.

Mr. BOLTON: It would have been wiser for the Minister to have taken a glance at the record kept of the discussion in another place. Had he done this he would have found that the point was raised by a member in another place asking what "prescribed" meant; and he would have found further that, unfortunately, the Minister then in charge of the Bill was unable to give the necessary information.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not discuss what had taken place anywhere else.

Mr. BOLTON: The remarks being made were nothing more than surmises.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not surmise what had happened in another place.

Mr. BOLTON: Supposing that the information had been given him by a friend?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not discuss the proceedings of another place.

Mr. BOLTON: Surely an hon. member might at least say what he thought. He (Mr. Bolton) thought that the Minister in another place was unable to give the information asked for. He thought too, that had the Minister been able to supply that information the amendment would not have been necessary. Further than that, he thought also that permission had been given in another place to report progress on the matter in order that it might be inquired into. It was his opinion that if a consultation had taken place between the Minister for Lands and the Minister in another place the amendment would not have been necessary. He was of opinion that from information received that there was not the least objection in another place to re-inserting the words struck out. It seemed to him that the Minister for Lands had succeeded in wasting a lot of valuable time this evening, seeing that the Minister agreed that the word "prescribed" would fit just as well as "ruling," and yet he had refused to accept the word. Apparently the Minister had thought that it would take less time to agree to the amendments made by another place than to disagree with this particular one, even though he knew that there was no objection in another place to conforming to the wishes of the Assembly. If the Minister thought that he would thus be saving time, he was making a serious mistake. Yet what other reason could the Minister offer for refusing to accept the word "prescribed"?

Mr. BATH: Evidently the Minister for Lands was labouring under a misapprehension. The Minister was apparently afraid that he would be called upon to enter into all the details as to what should be the rate of wages. That was not the case. The Minister would be expected merely to register what would be determined upon either by the Arbitration Court or else by agreement of the two parties. Probably it would very rarely be necessary to appeal to the Court, for the employer and employee would be able to arrive at an agreement and submit it to the Minister for registration. Hon. members did not want the Minister to be an arbitration court and go into all the details of the respective cases. All that was required of him would be to register the rate of wages arrived at.

Mr. KEENAN: If the member for Kanowna would permit it he desired to move an amendment to strike out the word "ruling" and add the words "approved by the Minister." This would make it read "Wages approved by the

Minister." He believed the Minister would accept that amendment and that it would be acceptable to the Committee.

Mr. WALKER: That was exactly what members had been fighting for, and if the amendment was more acceptable than his, he asked leave to withdraw.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. KEENAN moved an amendment—

That in the last line of the proposed amendment of the Legislative Council the word "ruling" be struck out and "approved by the Minister" added after "wages."

Amendment passed.

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

Resolutions reported, the report adopted; and a Message accordingly returned to the Legislative Council.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day.

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

Clause 7—Lands Purchase Board to report:

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment had been moved to strike out "may" in line 2 of Subclause 2, and insert "shall."

Mr. UNDERWOOD hoped the amendment would be accepted. It was reasonable the board should not recommend the purchase of an estate without having seen it. Did the Minister accept the amendment?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Amendment passed; clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 20—agreed to.

Schedules, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1909-10.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 11th December; Mr. Daglish in the Chair.

Agricultural Department (Hon. J. Mitchell, Minister):

Vote—*Agriculture Generally*, £19,145:

Mr. UNDERWOOD moved—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The most important thing he desired to refer to was that under these Estimates we were providing for the expenditure of loan money for agricultural development. It did not appear to him that it was possible to pursue a more ridiculous or more cowardly policy than to spend loan money on the development of agriculture. If we considered the question of agricultural development it meant that by spending money as we were doing under this vote we were providing means to sell the assets of the State. Every penny expended under this vote should mean an increase in the selling value of the Government land of Western Australia. That being so, it appeared to him as it should appear to everyone, that that money should be fairly taken from the proceeds of land sales or land grants. We were parting with the assets of the State, and to get an increased price for these assets we were spending certain moneys and that money undoubtedly should be charged against land revenue. We had this position, that we were spending loan moneys to advertise our lands, and were selling land and booking the result up to general revenue. He could not conceive a more dishonest or unfair proposition than that of expending loan money on the development of agriculture. It must appeal to all that it was wrong to spend money to increase the selling value of the land, and then to take the money we got from those sales as revenue. Nothing could be more improper than to charge another part of the expenditure of this department to loan account. We were parting with our assets and leaving a debt in their place. The course the State was following was bound to lead to disaster. There were several matters of

subsidies which were supposed to be for the advancement of agriculture, with which he could not altogether agree. We provided subsidies to the extent of £1,000 for agricultural shows, and although these shows might conduce to the advancement of agriculture he was of opinion that under this system we were not receiving full value for the money. expended. Every two-penny half-penny town in Western Australia had its agricultural show which received a subsidy from the Government, the money sometimes being found from Loan Fund. There were too many shows, and their close proximity to one another resulted in miserable exhibits. The Royal Agricultural Show was subsidised to the extent of £575, but the time had arrived when we could fairly and reasonably cease to pay that subsidy. Almost all the prize-winners at the last Royal show were men who were able to do without charity or subsidies. Among those prizewinners were some of the wealthiest men in Australia, as they included Wedge, Roberts, Gooch, Quinlan, Wilding, Edgar, Connor and Doherty. Did these men require such assistance? Those men had done well in Western Australia and had been done well by by the State, and it was going too far that they should require these subsidies. After all, those who exhibited stock and other products did so with a definite idea of gaining an advantage. The reason for trying to obtain a prize was to add to the selling price of their particular stock. That was why they exhibited. These men had the cream of the land of Western Australia, and they should fairly be allowed to pay their way. They were well recouped for any expense they might go to in exhibiting at the show by being able to sell their stock afterwards to the struggling farmer. The society had a very excellent ground which was let out to all sorts of athletic and sports associations, and to demonstrations of all kinds, and those men, Wedge, Roberts, Gooch, Quinlan, Wilding, Connor and Doherty paid £1 a year to become members of that society, and for that were admitted to every demonstration and sports gathering held on the ground.

Mr. S. F. Moore: By paying for it.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The member for Irwin was under a misapprehension.

The Honorary Minister: You are under one this time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The information he had given was the result of inquiries he had made. In making an agreement for the eight hours demonstration a condition was inserted to the effect that every member of the Agricultural Society should be given free admission to the grandstand.

The Honorary Minister: You cannot become a member without paying.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: The members could go to any demonstration they liked for their subscription of £1. There were about 52 demonstrations and sports gatherings held there during the year and they were all free to members, and yet these members came to the Government for a subsidy.

Mr. George: I do not think a member can go in without paying.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: What he had said was quite correct. We were told that on one day of the last show there was an attendance of 40,000 people. The total money received for admission for five days was set down as £1,700. Seeing that, if every one of the 40,000 people paid 1s. entrance the receipts for that day alone would have been £2,000. These figures showed clearly what a very large number of "deadheads" there were. Considering that Western Australia needed a great deal of development, and as there was no money to throw away, we assuredly could not afford to pay £575 towards the admission of "deadheads" to that ground. The Minister should determine that one show at least—the Royal—should do without the charitable subsidy. The hon. member had suggested that he (Mr. Underwood) should join the society; but perhaps if he were to allow himself to be nominated black balls would be used in order to block a Labour member. Again, in respect to these shows, it was found that the subsidies varied considerably. Thus at Wanneroo £13 was paid, at Wellington £150, at Northem £250, while Twenty Mile Sandy got nothing.

Another matter that should be considered by the Minister was the admission to shows of horses with docked tails and hocked manes Owing to a fatal lack of inventiveness Australians who went home to England and saw horses there with their tails docked, came back and imagined that the proper thing to do in Australia would be to dock the horses' tails. There could be no greater cruelty shown towards a horse in a country where flies were prevalent. He would appeal to the Minister to stop all subsidies to societies that permitted a horse with a docked tail to go within a hundred yards of their grounds.

Mr. Collier: How can you expect a Minister who wears a top hat in our climate to be with you in this.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Firm steps should be taken to put down this practice of docking horses' tails and manes in Australia. Another thing desirable in Australia was to breed in that which had been bred out of the horse, namely the forelock, which would allow the horse to brush the flies from his eyes. We had been breeding along wrong lines and we should set about correcting our glaring mistakes. A provision of £1,000 had been made for the destruction of marsupials. From information received it would seem that the Government charged those desirous of obtaining kangaroo skins a license of £1 a year. Further than that, it was said on good authority that many of the pastoral lessees in the North-West prevented kangaroo shooters from going on their runs. In the course of a discussion that had taken place on the Game Bill in 1907 he (Mr. Underwood) had expressed his intention of supporting the second reading, because it was desirable to preserve the Australian game as much as possible. At the same time he had pointed out that the Bill gave considerable powers to the Minister, taking consolation, however, in the fact that the Minister could not go very far wrong. He had been a very young member of the House when he made a statement of that sort, and this should be accepted as his apology. Experience had since taught him how young and innocent he must have been. He had gone on to point out that in the whole of the North-West part of the State kangaroos were a pest. When in Committee on the Bill the then member for Geraldton (Mr. Brown) moved an amendment to provide that licenses should not be charged in the Northern portions of the State. It was argued that licenses should not be charged for killing what was considered a pest. The Minister said the desire was to protect the native game in the South-West, and not to deter people from destroying kangaroos where they should be destroyed, and he would frame a regulation to prevent it. The member for Gascoyne considered the Committee would be safe in allowing the clause to pass after the assurance of the Minister, but he was strongly opposed to charging licenses to kangaroo-shooters in the North. On the assurance of the Minister the amendment was withdrawn but no regulation was framed, and the license was still charged in the North. A subsidy of £1,000 was provided for the destruction of marsupials, yet squatters in the North prevented shooters from going on their runs. At the same time they collected the skins from the natives who were allowed to kill the animals for their sustenance. As the Game Act provided that no person could shoot kangaroos for profit without being licensed why should not these squatters be licensed? Were they preventing white men from entering their runs to shoot the kangaroos with the idea of allowing the animals to breed in view of the prospective subsidies. However, he trusted the Minister would look into the matter, though from his experience of the Minister's previous assurance he did not anticipate getting a great deal from the Minister's consideration.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11·38 p.m.