must become more self-reliant. The greatest difficulty in the case of many road boards is to make them strike a rate at all, as is proved by the fact that this clause makes the striking of rates a matter of compulsion. The development of some districts has advanced so far that a maximum rate of 2s. no longer suffices. It should be raised to 2s. 6d. I therefore move an amendment—

That in Subclause (2), paragraph (b), after the words "two shillings" there be inserted "and sixpence."

Mr. Pickering: The general rates now struck do not include sanitary and certain other rates.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have not been 20 odd years in municipal life without learning what a general rate includes. To-day the road boards are borrowing money for work which should be constructed out of revenue.

Mr. Money: Would you increase the rate and lessen the borrowing power?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. It is only since the Government subsidy has been reduced that the boards have had power to borrow at all. It frequently happens that a board strikes the maximum rate and then, finding it has not sufficient revenue, borrows money and strikes a loan rate in addition to the general rate.

The Minister for Works: Two shillings is a fairly large rating.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But not sufficiently large as a maximum. In small areas in particular it is desirable that the local authority should have power to raise 2s. 6d.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I hope the Committee will not accept the amendment. Two shillings is as high as we ought to go. I think it would be foolish to make the road boards rating higher than that provided in the Municipalities Act.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 233 to 252—agreed to.

Clause 253—Discount on rates for prompt payment:

Mr. PICKERING: This introduces a new principle into the financial administration of road boards. I should like to know from the Minister if it is the general wish of road boards that such provision should be made.

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 254 to 340—agreed to.

Clause 341—Charges need not be registered:

Mr. PICKERING: This is a new clause of which I should like an explanation.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The clause simply means that all the charges for which the Bill provides shall be valid and effective against any property without special registration or caveat.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 342 to 356—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 12.21 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 21st October, 1919.

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

SELECT COMMITTEE—FRUIT CASES BILL.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Hon. A. Sanderson the time for bringing up the select committee's report was extended by one week.

QUESTION—WHEAT SCHEME, EXPENDITURE.

Hon. J. MILLS (for Hon. J. A. Greig) asked the Honorary Minister:—1, What was the total amount paid to the members of the Wheat Scheme (other than the manager) for last financial year. 2, What was the total rent paid for the offices of the Wheat Scheme for the year? 3, What was the total of wages and salaries paid to office employees and country inspectors for the year? 4, What was the cost of printing, stationery, and all other expenditure in connection with the office of the Wheat Scheme for the year? 5, What has it cost the Scheme, per bushel, to receive at depot, stack, rebag where necessary, rail to port and ship (excluding cost of railage and demurrage)? 6, What amount has been paid for demurrage?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, £14 14s. 2d., this being for travelling expenses. 2, £515. 3, £10,554 16s. 7d. 4, £1,275 16s. 4d. 5, The average cost to 30th June, 1919, including all services and working expenses, is 1.18d. per bushel. 6, The demurrage paid for the financial year was £1,029 18s. 3d.

QUESTION—BRAN AND POLLARD.

Hon. J. MILLS (for Hon. J. A. Greig) asked the Honorary Minister: 1, What quantity of (a) bran, (b) pollard, has been sold for local (State) requirements each month during the last twelve months? 2, What quantity has been exported to the Eastern States?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: 1, The Wheat Scheme has sold for local requirements during the last twelve months 36,436 tons of bran and 15,946 tons of pollard. 2, It has exported 160 tons bran and 110 tons pollard during the same period.

MOTION—ELECTORAL, METROPOLITAN PROVINCE.

Seat declared vacant.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.33]: I move—

> That this House declares that there is a vacancy in the House for a representative of the Metropolitan Province caused by the death of the Hon. H. J. Saunders.

Question put and passed.

BILL—DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—PEARLING ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Schedule of Four amendments made by the Assembly now considered.

Hon. J. F. Allen in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Insert a new clause, to stand as Clause 13, at the end of Part III.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: When the Bill was before the House a number of clauses in it were printed in italics because they related to the imposing of license fees and fines, etc. It is not competent for this House to initiate legislation of that kind, and none of these clauses was dealt with when the Bill was before the House. The Bill was passed in the Legislative Assembly without amendments. The amendments which appear on the Notice Paper as amendments made by the Legislative Assembly are the italicised clauses which were in the Bill when it was before this House, but which this House was not competent to deal with because it could not initiate legislation of this kind. I move—

> That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 2: Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 15:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

> That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 3: Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 20.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

> That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

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

No. 4: Insert a new clause to stand as Clause 22.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I move—

> That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

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

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's further Message.

The Assembly, having notified the Council that it had agreed to the further amendments made by the Council to Nos. 1 and 10 of the amendments made by the Assembly, but disagreed to the Council's further amendment made to No. 8, the reasons for the same were now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. F. Allen in the Chair; the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

No. 8. Clause 17.—The amendment of the Legislative Assembly was as follows:—Insert at the beginning of the paragraph (c) the following words: "except with the license in writing of the Minister, and subject to such restrictions and conditions as may be therein expressed." The amendment of the Legislative Council to this amendment is as follows: In paragraph (c) of the clause, page 6, line two, before the word "school" insert "church":

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The reason why the Assembly has disagreed with the Council's amendment is that it is not one to the original amendment of the Legislative Assembly, but to another part of the clause. I am afraid there is no course open to me but to move that the amendment be not insisted on. No doubt had the matter been raised at the time on a point of order, there would have been some question as to whether we were not going beyond our rights in moving the amendment. It is obvious it was not an amendment to the amendment of the

Legislative Assembly, but to another part of the clause. I do not know that it matters. In practice the present phraseology "charitable purposes" does not in all cases include charitable purpose, but it would be interpreted as having that effect. I assure the mover of the amendment, Mr. Nicholson, that it is not intended to impose any restrictions so far as other charitable purposes are concerned. I do not think the omission of the word "church" would have any serious effect. I move—

That the Council's amendment be not insisted upon.

Question put and passed.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—TRAFFIC.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 16th October.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [4.44]: After listening to the lucid explanation of the leader of the House the other night in connection with this Bill, I think we might all congratulate ourselves upon having a Bill of this description now placed before us for our consideration. It is time we had a consolidation of all the measures dealing with this subject, and so far as I have been able to read and study the Bill, and after the explanation to which I have referred, I have come to the conclusion that this is a very satisfactory Bill. One of the main principles that I have been able to discover is that all drivers of motor vehicles in future are to be licensed, and they are only to be licensed after examination. This represents a great advance on existing conditions. It has come within the experience of many of us that people of both sexes of immature age are in the habit of driving motor vehicles without that care and experience necessary to public safety. A locomotive driver on a passenger train has to be examined and certificated before he is permitted to drive, even though he drives only on a pair of rails, whereas in the congested traffic in the streets of Perth we find young people of very little experience driving other people about in motor vehicles in a most reckless manner, with no rails to restrict them at all. I have seen several accidents in which people have been almost killed owing to motor-car driving by inexperienced drivers, and I am glad indeed to find that at last these young people will have to be licensed after proper examination. Another advantageous provision is that the speed limit is to be abolished. In regard to this a number of people have exclaimed, "Oh, what a dreadful thing! Drivers will be able to drive as fast as they like." I have replied, "Yes, but only with discretion." The object of having a motor car of power and speed is to get over one's journey in the shortest possible time, and therefore it seems absurd to find a car limited to 12 miles an hour, the speed of a horse and sulky, on an unfrequented road. It is only proper that people should be allowed to go at speed with discretion. It has been asked, "Are they to be trusted to use discretion?" Well, there are two safeguards. In the first place, no person will be allowed to drive a motor vehicle until he shall have been examined and duly licensed; and, in the second place, Clause 15 provides that any licensed driver, after two convictions, shall have his license taken away. This should be a most effective safeguard aginst reckless driving. Probably no Bill was ever placed before Parliament without some objection being raised to it. The chief objections to the Bill before us come from the Perth city council. The two points they object to most strongly are—1, that the administration of traffic in the metropolitan should be taken from the local authorities and placed in the hands of the police; and 2, that license fees in the metropolitan area are to be paid to the Minister and distributed by the Minister to local authorities in such proportions as he may think fit. In regard to the first, I can quite understand the attitude of the city council. I believe in a local authority having entire control of their town or city, and being made responsible for its welfare. Personally, I would vote for the handing over of the trams to the municipality, because I think the municipality should control all such undertakings within the boundaries of the city. In this case, however, the exception may be defended on the grounds, perhaps, of necessity, and, further, that the work can be better carried out by the police than by the city council. Still, I think it is going to unnecessary lengths when such questions as the granting of licenses and the allocation of stands for vehicles for hire, and the general administration of the traffic, are to be taken entirely out of the hands of the city council and placed in the hands of the police. However, I am not going to insist upon my opinion, because I have not had the necessary experience in the handling of traffic to be able to pronounce definitely upon such a question. In London the traffic is run by the county council. There the police have the sole control of the traffic, and they control it splendidly. But whether they have all the power which it is here proposed to place in the hands of the police is quite another question.

Hon. J. Cornell: In England each county has its own police.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I understand it is not on the same lines as obtain here. I quite agree with the police controlling the actual traffic. A fair compromise would be that the city council should make their by-laws and regulations and the police administer them. There may be arguments even against that. The police may be in a better position to judge as to whom licenses should be granted. As I say, with my superficial knowledge, I think that the city coun-

cil should be in charge of the city, and should make the regulations and by-laws, and the police should carry them out. In regard to the second objection, namely, the payment of all fees to the Minister, and the allocation of those fees among the local authorities by the Minister, I am not in a position to give any authoritative opinion, and therefore I shall bow to the presumably better judgment of those who inserted the provision in the Bill, at least unless I hear some convincing argument against it. The width of tires question is a highly important one. In my opinion there should be a minimum width of tire for any wheel carrying freights. In Perth one can often find a load on wheels having tires not more than 2in. wide. Nothing could be better calculated to cut up the roads. I should fix a minimum of 3in. for any wheels carrying freights. I have given the Bill careful consideration, and I find in it a few points to which I wish to refer. First, there is the examination and licensing of motor car drivers, the abolition of the speed limit, and the provision of safeguards against reckless driving. These I have already discussed. Clause 20 gives the Commissioner of Police power to grant and issue annual licenses provided that no license shall be granted until the applicant has proved his driving ability to the reasonable satisfaction of the examiner. The only weak point in that is as to the appointment of the examiner, which is to be left in the hands of the Commissioner of Police. Clause 21 provides that an unlicensed person learning to drive a car may drive that car if accompanied by a licensed driver. That may be all very well for unfrequented streets, but I doubt whether it should be permitted to apply to St. George's-terrace, where it might prove to be rather a dangerous experiment.

Hon. J. Cornell: In unfrequented streets it might be a danger to youngsters.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: That is so. Clause 31 provides that the local authority is not to be liable for damage caused to a traction engine by its breaking through the road, or through a culvert. Surely there is a certain responsibility on the part of local authorities to keep their roads in order! Suppose a culvert is out of repair, will not the local authority be liable for any damage that may result? It seems to me very like an attempt to contract themselves out of the law. The clause, we find, makes an owner liable for damage to a road by a motor wagon or traction engine, but it says nothing about repairs to the road. Clause 34 is a very important one in connection with the width of tires, and had it not been for the proviso it would have proved exceedingly drastic. I have taken the trouble to work that out and I find that on a 6-inch tire, 6cwt. only can be carried per inch of width, and, including the weight of the vehicle, the total comes out at 7 tons 4cwt. If we take off two tons that would leave 5 tons 4cwt. I heard the other day of a team arriving in Carnarvon with 75 bales of wool. That would be a considerable weight. Taking seven bales to the ton, that would give a weight of over ten tons. I have known as much as 12 tons to be carried on six-inch tires. In parts of the State, far from these heavy loads doing damage to the roads, they do a considerable amount of good, because there are no culverts and no bridges, and consequently the heavy weights on the wide tires have the effect of consolidating the roads. There are two points in connection with the clause that perhaps are worthy of consideration. One, as I have mentioned before, is that there is no minimum width of tire. That point is well worthy of consideration. To see very small tires carrying heavy freights, really makes one's heart sick, and it is to be wondered how the roads are maintained at all. The other point is that the owners of vehicles having tires under the regulation size shall be allowed 12 months from the passing of the Act in which to alter their tires. The period of 12 months is somewhat short. In the first place people say there will be so many alterations that wheelwrights will not be able to do the work, and then another reason is that the cost will be so much that people will not be able to rush into it all at once. I understand from the Minister that all the regulations have to be laid on the Table of the House for 14 days and must be disagreed with by both Houses before they can be disallowed. When the Minister replies I would like him to explain the meaning of the last schedule. I have been trying to puzzle out the concluding portion of it. It starts with motor cars not exceeding power weight. I understand that the power weight has to be ascertained by adding the weight expressed in cwts. of the car to the horse power, calculated on the Dendy-Marshall formula. With these few remarks I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Hon. J. MILLS (Central) [5.5]: So far as I can understand the pooling of license fees will apply only to the metropolitan area. There is no provision so far as I can see for pooling to be done by the local authorities anywhere else.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: A blank cheque to the Minister.

Hon. J. MILLS: When the Bill was introduced in another place there was a provision in it for this, but for some reason or other it was deleted. I can give a case in point where I think it is very necessary that such a provision should apply. In the Geraldton district the main road leading to Northampton is about 36 miles in length. It enters the Upper Chapman road district four miles from Geraldton and it leaves it seven miles from Northampton. Thus about 25 miles of road is used by cars going to and from Geraldton, and some of those cars are licensed vehicles for hire and profit. In cases of that kind those cars

which are located in Geraldton or Northampton should contribute fees for using the road in that particular district. It is my intention when the Bill is in Committee to move in the direction of reinstating the clause which was deleted by another place.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5.7]: Having the Bill before us is like meeting an old friend. Its re-introduction goes to prove in one or two instances the deplorable lack of memory which exists amongst some of our friends. The Bill to say the best of it, is what some hon. members here would not accept on a previous occasion. It seems to me that it is entirely a measure of unification. Its object seems to be to take away the statutory power now vested in various bodies throughout the State. It is what we might expect the Federal Government would do to the various States if they had the power. Therefore, it is in a sense a measure of unification, and so to speak symbolical of the direction in which we are drifting. The Bill is essentially one for Committee. There are however one or two features which have a particular interest for me. One is the pooling system, and for the sake of variety I intend to reverse the opinion which I expressed in this House on that question on two previous occasions. I opposed the pooling system on former occasions, and if I change my views now I shall only be doing something in keeping with the action of other members in the Chamber who now propose to support the Bill—the leader of the House for one. That hon. gentleman in his introductory remarks said there was no doubt the House would be taking a serious responsibility upon its shoulders if it rejected the pooling provisions, and if it were to do so, it would be up to us to find some other equitable method of distributing the fees between the different authorities. In one of those retrospective moments which come at all times to all men, I delved back into the past and found that the present leader of the House in 1912 and 1913 appeared to take up the line of least restistance—and that was generally characteristic of him—when he said very little on the pooling clause, but he did much by reason of the fact that he recorded his vote against it on two occasions. Now he tells us we will be taking upon ourselves a serious responsibility if we reject the proposal. How is he going to square the compass? Since so many have succeeded by variety, I feel inclined to do likewise in order to see how I shall get on in the future. The leader of the House is not the only delinquent in that respect. I am anxious to see how other hon. members will shape. I find that in 1912, in addition to the leader of the House, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Hamersley, and Mr. McKenzie, and last but not least our friend Sir Edward Wittenoom, who has just contributed a few potent remarks on this question, declared that they were not in a position to express any opinion, but would vote for the clause.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: There are altered circumstances now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In 1912 we find that was the position. I bear in mind that there are only 15 members in the Chamber to-day who constituted the majority against the proposal in 1911. We turn to the proposal when it was submitted in 1913 and we find that it is identical with the proposal which is before us now. The hon. gentlemen whose names I have mentioned, were consistent inasmuch as they again assisted to throw out the proposal, the voting being 11 to 10. Amongst the 11 votes we find the names of Mr. Colebatch, Mr. Hamersley, Mr. Clarke, and Sir Edward Wittenoom. They were true to the vote they recorded 12 months previously. Mr. Lynn voted in 1913 in a direction different from that in which he voted in 1912. I find that Mr. McKenzie also reversed his vote. That hon. member voted against the pooling proposals in 1912, but he voted for them in 1913. Those two hon. members therefore did not know where they were in those two years, but the other four hon. members tried and true, came out with flying colours. To-day we find the leader of the House telling us that we shall be taking upon our shoulders a very serious responsibility if we reject the proposals, and we have Sir Edward Wittenoom telling us that he is not in a position to do otherwise than to vote for it. I say it advisedly that the facts which presented themselves in 1912-13 were as salient then as they are to-day.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What point are you referring to?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The pooling clauses. There is not one iota of difference in the pooling provisions to-day from what they were when they were submitted in this House before. The leader of the House gave additional reason the other night why we should take the serious step of voting for the pooling provisions, and he went on to say that in view of the number of fatal accidents that had occurred in the city, we should be taking a still heavier responsibility on our shoulders if we failed to carry the provisions. If the proposal of to-day provides facilities which will militate against accidents in the city, I say the proposals of 1912 and 1913 contained the same facilities. That being so, it may be contended that this House is responsible for accidents which occurred in 1912 and 1913. For the sake of variety I feel almost inclined to vote against the clause, and see what the future will bring. I may remind hon. members that consistency should be a virtue of deliberative assemblies. Occasionally I change owing to circumstances, but some hon. members appear to change from choice. I am perfectly satisfied that the leader of the House, if he takes the trouble to reply will, as is customary with him, convince the House that he has a good case and that I have a bad one. But he will not convince me that the position he takes up to-day squares with his position in 1912 and 1913. There is another

part of the Bill to which I entertain decided objection, and which I hope will strike other members as it strikes me and people outside. I refer to Clause 20, which the leader of the House has stated is new here, having been adopted from the English, Victorian, and New South Wales Acts. If the provisions of that clause are new here, I approach them on the broad basis of reasoning that what the clause proposes to do is not being already done by the subsidiary bodies from which the Bill proposes to take away certain powers. Therefore we are on new ground. To use the words of the Minister for Education, in the public interests it is necessary that we should have a standard of competency for motor car drivers. With that I agree. But I do not agree with the statement that the standard of competency of a motor driver should be a basis for the collection of revenue. That is wrong and unsound. If we charge a motor driver £1 for obtaining a certificate of competency, well and good; but let him hold that certificate until it is taken away from him owing to his neglect or misconduct. Say Mr. Brown owns a motor car. He is taxed for owning that motor car, and before he can drive it he must obtain a certificate of competency. Well and good; but I say it is unsound and unjust that he should be charged for the annual renewal of his certificate of competency. Subclause (2) of Clause 30 provides that the driver of a steam locomotive or steam traction engine shall conform to the provisions of the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1904. Such drivers are not asked by this Bill to do more than they are doing today. The driver of a traction engine has to go before a board of examiners, and one of the conditions of the examination is that he must lodge a fee of 10s. If he fails, he forfeits that fee; if he passes, that fee is taken as part payment of the fee for his certificate. He may get a certificate of competency to drive a stationary engine, or a first class or second class winding engine; and in respect of such a certificate he pays a further 10s. or 15s. as the final qualifying fee. Moreover, he has to produce a medical certificate of general health. Having fulfilled those conditions, his obligations cease. His certificate is not viewed as in the nature of a revenue proposition. Once having obtained his certificate of competency, he is not called upon to pay a further fee unless he loses the certificate, when he is called upon to pay a small fee for renewal. That position is sound and logical. As regards the motor driver, however, the Commissioner of Police is to be the tribunal to decide as to competency. Can any tribunal decide whether the driver of a motor car, and particularly one plying for passenger hire, is competent unless he furnishes evidence of physical fitness? I say no. There must be some standard of physical fitness in the case of the driver of a motor car. However, I say it is absolutely wrong and unsound that a motor driver's certificate of competency should be made the basis of an annually recurring charge. Once having obtained his certificate, he should be immune for all time from the payment of further fees. We might as well provide that the driver of a lorry in the metropolitan area, being liable to do some injury to the travelling public, should obtain an annual certificate of competency and pay an annually recurring fee. Let us follow in the case of the motor driver the procedure laid down for 25 years past in the Inspection of Machinery Act regarding the issue of certificates to engine drivers. Again, as regards the driver of a steam tractor, this Bill merely provides for the payment of one qualifying fee under the Inspection of Machinery Act. But in the case of an oil tractor, the Bill requires the driver to pay an annual license fee. In introducing the measure the leader of the House said he did not think it was competent for this Chamber to increase the fees provided by the Bill.

The Minister for Education: But this House can decrease the fees.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes; and if this House lays it down that the fee in the case of the motor driver shall not be a recurring charge, it is within the province of another place to accept our suggestion. I agree entirely with Sir Edward Wittenoom as regards Clause 34. I believe that clause is not now as originally drafted. As it stands now, it is an absurdity. I understand that one of the chief reasons for legislation as to width of tires is that narrow tires are injurious to a road. The view taken is that, as we insist on widening tires, we limit injury to the roads. But Clause 34 contains a proviso which states that the same tonnage may be carried on a 7-inch tire as on a 6-inch, which is ridiculous. I agree with Sir Edward Wittenoom that there should be a minimum size of tire if we are convinced—and we are—that narrow tires are injurious to the roads. But once the minimum size of tire is fixed, the tonnage to be carried should be on the up grade correspondingly with increasing width of tire. To say that a wagon with a 6-inch tire should carry only five tons on any road in this State is to say something that borders on insanity. Twenty odd years ago in the North-West I drove a wagon with 6-inch tires and carried 10 tons. Immediately we depart from the 6-inch tire, the load is unlimited. While a man may carry 5 tons 4cwt. on a 6-inch tire, he may carry 60 tons on a 6½-inch tire.

The Minister for Education: Any weight may be carried on a 6-inch tire.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There is no comparison between the damage done by a 6-inch tire and a 3-inch tire carrying the same weights. While it might be advantageous to grapple with this question in the metropolitan area, the clause as drafted will inflict hardship on the agricultural areas, and any man who has done carrying work will realise how absurd it is. I support the second reading. When the Bill was before the House in 1912-13, it was not considered as a party measure and, on that occasion, I

voted as much against the leader of the House as I voted with him. I intend to follow the same independent line of action on this occasion.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.32]: The local governing bodies in the metropolitan-suburban areas will doubtless welcome this Bill. I am so anxious to expedite its passage that I do not propose to refer to anything with which we can deal in Committee. There is one matter to which reference will be prohibited in Committee, and I propose to deal with it on the second reading. When the Minister was moving the second reading, I asked a question about aeroplanes. It seemed to be treated with some derision.

The Minister for Education: Not by me.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am glad to have that assurance. If the Government had the foresight and the imagination which a Government should have, they would have paid some attention to this matter. It was only a few days after the introduction of the Bill that, in looking through the files of the Melbourne "Age" and the Sydney "Bulletin," I saw references to this very subject, pointing out the urgency of it. In the "Age" of the 10th October, the following appears:—

> Control of the Air. Among the many questions upon which Commonwealth and State authority is divided is the control of the air. The position is so anomalous that an early readjustment is desirable, not only in the interests of aviation development, but for the safety of life and limb in the crowded cities and towns.

It is not necessary to read the whole of the article, although it is interesting and of value. It goes on to say—

> As matters stand, the Commonwealth is a party to the air convention of Paris, the rules of which have been accepted by all nations for the future government of aerial traffic. But it could no more prevent an aeroplane from flying over Collins-street than it could sweep back the Pacific Ocean. The Commonwealth Government, in the exercise of its powers derived from other sources, may prevent flights over forts or arsenals or other military establishments; it may direct aeroplanes coming from a foreign country to enter the Commonwealth only at specific places and land at certain spots for inspection by customs officials; and it can forbid the carriage of mails by aeroplane. But there, under the present division of constitutional powers, its authority ends. The States are nominally the policemen of the air, but they have drawn up no code of rules, no system of permits, and apparently have no intention of exercising control.

That will give members some idea of the position, though I have not read the whole of the article. My conviction is that the only way to handle Western Australia properly is by utilising to the fullest extent modern scientific appliances, so that this question is really an urgent one as it certainly is a traffic one.

The Minister for Education: It is dealt with everywhere else in a separate Bill and not in a Traffic Bill.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The statement here is that it has not been dealt with at all in any of the States.

The Minister for Education: In England.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I did not know that they had a Traffic Bill. I quite realise that the Minister has considerable weight and responsibility in dealing with many important public matters, but I put this to him, that the Public Works Department should, at the earliest possible stage, take this matter into serious consideration and deal with it. The article in the "Bulletin" of the 9th October, a day before the article appeared in the "Age," is headed "Anarchy in the Air." I will not read the whole of it, although it is very pertinent to this question of the regulation of traffic. It states—

> Australia has been called "the greatest flying country in the world," and is, no doubt, in so far as climate is concerned. But in other important respects, it is the most conspicuous laggard of any white man's country.

It is an illustration of the lack of foresight and imagination that characterises the Government. There was an article in the "West Australian" of the 20th October, an interview with Major Brearley, who dealt with the same matter. He pointed out that, in dealing with the proposed flight from Perth to Kalgoorlie, nothing could be done until careful surveys had been made of the roads and landing grounds had been selected. It is very easy to see that, until the matter is considered by the Public Works Department, and until they bring their information up to date, either we shall have nothing at all until there is a serious difficulty or an accident or else we shall be called upon to rush something through in a hurried manner, characteristic of some of the work brought before Parliament.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Has anyone sufficient experience to frame a Bill?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: We are working under the Paris convention at present. I would be the last to claim to be an authority on the question, but I am intensely interested in the matter and am convinced that the way to handle Western Australia is to utilise to the fullest extent these modern appliances such as motor cars, wireless telegraphy, and flying machines. Only by that method shall we preserve Australia white and develop this country as it should be developed. Major Brearley says—

> The inauguration of regular passenger, mail, and urgent freight services between important centres——

I think he has already demonstrated to us that that can be done.

Hon. A. H. Panton: A pretty expensive proposition just now.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not wish to go into that, first because I am not competent to discuss the details and, secondly, because it will prevent us from getting into Committee on this Bill. I urge very strongly that the Minister note this matter for the benefit of the Public Works Department and let us show some foresight in our work. Let the department get to work now and prepare all the ground for a very careful Bill to deal with this matter. If we are to have State trains and State steamers, I am going to vote for State aeroplanes. If it is the decision of the country to have these things under the State to the absolute prevention of private enterprise, although I think it is an unsound policy, still, if I cannot get my way, I shall urge the Government to make the necessary experiments and find out the latest improvements and prices and all the information on the subject.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Would you like the Government to appoint a council to manage it?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I shall read one more extract from Major Brearley's most interesting article—

> Given a climate like Western Australia has, the tremendous distances over unpopulated areas offer ideal opportunities for aviation, with less risk and much greater comfort than other forms of transport can offer. On account of the excellent flying conditions here, I was able to insure my aeroplanes in London against all classes of accident at a very low premium, and now that the public have had a good taste of flying, their doubts have disappeared and it will be a simple matter for me to develop aerial transport, and that is why the company is being formed.

The Minister is quite right in treating this matter with the seriousness it deserves. Regarding the rest of the Bill, the people, my colleagues and I represent are much interested in the details. I do not wish to delay it by speaking on the second reading on half a dozen topics, which certainly demand discussion, but which can be very well dealt with in Committee.

Hon. A. H. PANTON (West) [5.45]: There are one or two clauses in this Bill I should like to deal with, and I hope in Committee to be able to amend them. Clause 13, for instance, is one. It reads—

> It shall not be competent for a local authority to refuse to grant any license under this part of this Act in respect of any vehicle, to an applicant tendering the proper fee or not bound to pay any fee, unless—

Paragraph (f) says—

> In the case of an application for a passenger vehicle or a carrier's license, the applicant is of bad repute, or is not a fit and proper person to be the holder of such a license, or the number of licenses issued has reached the perscribed limit, or the reasonable requirements of the public do not justify the granting of the license.

From this on the Bill requires amendment. The latter portion of this paragraph will place in the hands of the local authorities the right to say whether a carrier, or anyone dealing with vehicles, is to extend his business or not. A man may be running two or three motor cars, and find that he has sufficient work for another. This gives the local authority power to say whether this man can run another motor car or not. I propose, in Committee, to ask hon. members to strike out the latter portion of this paragraph. Clause 34 deals with the width of tires, about which a good deal has been said. I do not profess to know much about the driving of wool wagons in the North-West, but I do know something about the driving of tip-drays about the metropolitan area. Those people who are contracting, carting bricks, stone, or building material, and wood carters, must now have on their wheels tires of a width in accordance with the size of the axle. Quite recently I have been shown tires which have just been placed on the vehicles. If this clause is passed as printed, limiting to each wheel of the vehicle a total weight of 6cwt. for each inch of width of bearing surface of the tire, practically every brick dray in the metropolitan area—there being several hundreds of these—must either have a lighter load placed in them or new wheels put on. A brick dray will carry about 35cwt., and each one is able to load 500 bricks. This load is so arranged as to obviate the necessity for counting the bricks on and off. A man can load 500 bricks without counting them because the dray is built for that purpose. If this clause is passed the body of the dray will have to be altered, or new wheels will have to be put on. It may be said that the owners or users of these vehicles will be allowed 12 months in which to wear out the tires. I am informed on good authority, however, that these tires will not show a great deal of wear within that period. It means, therefore, that these alterations will have to be effected.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What is the width of the tire now?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: It is 4½ inches.

Hon. J. F. Allen: What is the weight of the bricks?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Five hundred bricks weigh 30 cwt. This would give a total weight, including the cart, of 65cwt. If it is first provided that the tire must be according to the size of the axle, and then altered so that it must be according to the weight, no end of inconvenience will be caused to those who own these vehicles. This does not only apply to brick drays. There are many drays used by wood yards in the metropolitan area which will be in the same position. I propose, in Committee, to move that the word "six" be altered to "ten." Clause 38 also requires amendment. It says—

> Every person in charge of a vehicle shall, if required by a member of the police force, or an inspector or other offi-

cer of the local authority, forthwith cause such vehicle with the load (if any) thereon to be weighed at the most convenient weighing machine erected or recognised by a local authority within two miles of the place where the requisition is made.

One can imagine a policeman asking a man with 2½ tons in his vehicle to go back for two miles because there is some dispute as to the weight behind his horse. I think if this word "two" were altered to "half" it would be quite sufficient. If I were sitting behind a horse and someone wanted me to go back two miles, possibly over a rough road, I am sure I should suffer the penalty of £10 rather than submit. That would be the position of most drivers. Paragraph (j) of Subclause (1) of Clause 40 should appeal particularly to country members. It says—

Regulate the manner in which horses or other animals in teams shall be driven, yoked or harnessed.

The man most capable of knowing how to yoke his team is the driver himself. The paragraph is a ridiculous one. It may be necessary, in the opinion of the driver or owner of the vehicle, to drive his team in tandem or in some other way. It is quite possible that there would be a traffic inspector or policeman who knew nothing about horses or any other animal, trying to dictate to a man who has been driving horses or other animals all his life, as to how he should yoke up his team. In Committee I propose to move that this paragraph be struck out. I support the clause dealing with the pooling of license fees. I have in mind a piece of road of five miles in length in the province I represent. On a Sunday afternoon between 40 and 45 motor cars pass along that road, but the road board responsible for that piece of road has never collected any of the license fees paid for these particular motor cars.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It it a main road?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Yes, and the road board is responsible for its maintenance. It is only fair that this local authority should receive some part of the revenue that is paid. Clause 8 will relieve a situation which has existed for some time. I understand that licenses issued in any part of the State will be operative, if this Bill becomes law, throughout the State. In the metropolitan area there are many taxi-car drivers and owners. Some of these are living in South Perth, but have to take out a license and pay a fee, although they have to pay another license fee to ply for hire in another municiality. Almost every driver on the rank in front of the General Post Office has to pay two license fees, one for South Perth and one for Perth. One of these drivers challenged the right of the Perth City Council to charge a second fee in view of the High Court ruling, but he had to pay up. I take it that this will not be possible in the future, and that one license taken out in any part of the State will operate over the whole State. I notice in the Bill that all the penalties are definite. Here and there it says that the penalty shall be £10 or £50, as the case may be, whereas in other Bills the penalties are set out in such a way that they are not to exceed £10 or £50. I should like to know if this will give the authorities the right to make these the minimum penalties, or whether the words mean what they say in the Bill. With the exception of the amendments I intend to put forward later, the Bill meets with my approval.

On motion by Hon. J. Nicholson, debate adjourned.

BILL—JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that the amendment made by the Council had been agreed to.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [5.57] in moving the second reading said: This is only a short measure to extend the Wheat Marketing Act, with certain amendments. For the past three years there have been Wheat Marketing Bills before this Chamber. They have been thoroughly discussed, and I do not, therefore, intend to dilate on the matter this afternoon. Last session a Royal Commission sat for some time on the Wheat Marketing Scheme of this State and made reports, and after dealing fully with our Wheat Scheme, and spending considerable time upon it, they have furnished us with a report for which they are entitled to every credit. Their efforts extended right to the inner workings of the Scheme and are appreciated by all. They are to be commended that they put a different complexion on the state of affairs in regard to wheat handling in Western Australia. As Minister in charge of the department, I must express my appreciation of the good work which was done by hon. members who comprised that Commission. The present Bill is to approve of the further acquiring of wheat for the year 1919-20, and to approve of the handling agreement with the agents who have been handling it for the past two years, namely, the Westralian Farmers Ltd. Although this agreement has received consideration, it cannot come into operation until it has been ratified by Parliament. The agreement has been accepted by the company and after ratification by Parliament will be proceeded with. The cost of wheat handling in this State has been very low and the position generally has been very satisfactory. The handling was carried out last year for 1.⅜d. per bushel. This

is something that we have reason to be proud of. The terms and conditions of the agreement for handling are the same as those under which we were working last year. Last year's operations were very satisfactory indeed. Of course there were some small anomalies such as always exist in a scheme of this magnitude, but the workings between the scheme and the agents were highly satisfactory, and the wheat was well cared for by both. In addition to the agreement in the matter of extending the acquiring powers, provision is also made to advance against corn sacks. This was found to be very successful last year, and it enabled the farmers to save 5½d. per dozen on their purchases of sacks. The financial position in regard to wheat in past years has been fairly satisfactory from the point of view of the wheat-grower. For the season 1915-16 the grower has been paid 4s. 4½d., less freight. We have now none of that season's wheat on hand. For the 1916-17 wheat 4s. was paid and we have 375,200 bushels of that wheat still on hand, some of it slightly damaged. That was the season when most of the States suffered from floods, from mice and from weevils. For the 1917-18 wheat 4s. was paid, and there is on hand 1,912,466 bushels, all of it in good order. For last season, 1918-19, 4s. 4d. has been paid and we have still on hand 6,462,000 bushels.

Hon. J. Mills: Is that price net or less freight?

The HONORARY MINISTER: All those payments were less freight. When the Premier introduced the Bill in another Chamber, he said the guarantee was 4s. 4d., less freight. That statement was quite correct, but since then it has been agreed to increase the guarantee to 5s. net at sidings. It is anticipated that this season will leave something like 12,000,000 bushels on hand. There is every prospect of a good harvest in this State, but unfortunately such is not the case in the Eastern States. I and the officers of the department feel grateful to the Railway authorities for the splendid way in which they handled the wheat during the past year, and I trust that their plant will enable them to do everything that is required this year. The Government expect to run a lot of the wheat straight to the boats instead of to depots.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Is the agreement on the same lines as that of last year?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is exactly the same. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom, debate adjourned.

BILL—SLAUGHTER OF CALVES RESTRICTION.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [6.5]: This is another short measure. It contains only one clause. Since 1912 the slaughter of heifer calves in the metropolitan area has been engaging the attention of the departmental officers and, at a later stage, of the metropolitan dairymen themselves. They tried to devise some scheme by which to save the heifer calves. Early in 1917 they attempted to secure a suitable tract of country but, after consideration, it did not appear practicable, and they gave up the whole question. In the early part of this year the Government purchased a number of heifers, but they were for the soldier settlement scheme and are now at Yandanooka. The Bill applies mainly to the metropolitan area, but hon. members will see that power is taken by regulation to make it apply to any part of the State where required. It would be a difficult matter to set down in the Bill a complete list of places where it may be required. Although we have good dairy stock in the metropolitan area, a very large number of calves are slaughtered each year. More especially was this so during the past 12 months when meat was realising high prices. The Bill will not impose any hardship on the dairymen, because while they will be forced to keep their heifer calves up to the age of six months, after that time the calves will fetch a much better price than would have been secured by sending them to the butcher when only a month old.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What is the idea of preventing the slaughter?

The HONORARY MINISTER: If we save the calves for six months they will bring a much better price from the farmer who wants milking cows, than they would from the butcher at an earlier age. Another thing: a six months calf is fit to travel long distances, whereas when it is, say, only three months old, there is a certain risk of losing it on the road.

Hon. J. Cornell: It means better prices, but not better breeding.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That is not so. It will rest with the purchasers to see that the calves purchased are from good stock. Not all the cows in the metropolitan area are first class, but they are all of fair average. The dairyman is not going to keep a cow of no value as a milk producer. A large majority of the calves are well worth keeping for milking, and it is desirous that we should prevent their slaughter. In South Australia they have a scheme for saving the calves, notwithstanding which slaughter still goes on there to a large extent.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is hoped to preserve dairy stock.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, to preserve the calves for dairy stock. We have 5,000 head of dairy stock in the metropolitan area, and during the past six months 851 calves were slaughtered within that area, probably 50 per cent. of them being heifer calves. I admit that the slaughterings have been rather abnormal on

account of the high price of meat. The measure does not need much comment. I move

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. MILLS (Central) [6.10]: The Bill is a most useful one and should give excellent results. It is regrettable that it was not introduced many years ago, because to my knowledge for a long period some of the best milking cows from the Eastern States have been brought here. It is not the business of the dairymen to consider whether it is in the interests of the State that the calves should be kept. He thinks only of the cow, and so the State loses the calves. Almost invariably calves are sold for from 20s. to 25s. per head, whereas if kept for a few years they would be worth that many pounds as dairy cows. It explains one of the reasons why we have to import so much of our butter. I hope the districts in which the Bill is to operate will not be confined to the metropolitan area, but will be extended to include all towns where they have dairy herds. When the Bill is in Committee I intend to move a new clause as follows—"Only bulls of a milking strain shall be mated to cows in a milking area." Then purchasers would know that the calves were of a reliable strain, whereas at present the dairyman may use any bull, the question of breeding not appealing to him. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st October, 1919.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE BOARD INSURANCES.

Damage by Hail.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Johnston) asked the Minister for Industries: 1, Has the Industries Assistance Board decided not to pay premiums for insurance against hail on crops this year? 2, Have not the losses from hail been very heavy during some past seasons? 3, What is the reason for this change of policy?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, No. The Board will insure against hail at the written request of the settler. 2, The losses have not been unduly heavy, considering the large areas under crop. 3, There is no change in policy.

Insurance against Fire.

Mr. PICKERING (for Mr. Johnston) asked the Minister for Industries: 1, Is the Industries Assistance Board only insuring wheat crops against fire at the rate of 3s. per bushel this year? 2, In view of the price of 5s. per bushel for wheat at sidings, is this rate high enough to protect the Board for the risk involved?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES replied: 1, Insurance has been fixed at 3s. 6d. per bushel. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. HICKMOTT asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that considerable dissatisfaction exists among the returned soldiers owing to the action of the Central Board in turning down many places recommended by the local committee? 2, Is it a fact that a returned soldier has been allotted a block of land on the Jelcobine estate, priced at 48s. per acre? 3, If so, why has a block in the same district, well improved and recommended by the local committee, price 16s. per acre, been turned down without inspection? 4, Is he aware that two farms in the Pingelly district, recommended by the local committee and turned down as unsuitable for returned men, have since been sold privately at a considerable advance in price? 5, If so, what is the use of local committees?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. The Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Board is the responsible authority dealing with applications, and the final decision must rest with it. 2, No. Two applications have been made by returned soldiers for land in this estate, but have not yet been finalised. 3, If the hon. member will specify the case, inquiries will be made into it. 4, No, but if such is the case it does not necessarily imply that they were suitable for soldier settlement at the prices asked. 5, Answered by No. 4.

QUESTION—HAMPTON PLAINS, ROAD FROM BOULDER.

Mr. LUTEY (without notice) asked the Minister for Works: Are the Government in