fee I receive, to do it for me. I consider it is perfectly necessary that someone, in the face of the dangers from infectious diseases, should have the power to order a post mortem. I believe no one has the power at present.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And such a provision is for the benefit of the public as a whole.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: It is quite possible to start an epidemic raging in this State and in these circumstances the health of the community should be taken into consideration.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Have you ever known cases of relatives refusing permission to have post mortems conducted?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I have known of cases but, in the great majority of instances, the relatives, on representations being made to them that on the ground of public health a post mortem is necessary, have given their consent in 99 cases out of 100. It is entirely from the standpoint of the public health that I brought this subject up under this Bill.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I hope that neither Dr. Saw, nor any other medical man will believe that I regard them as anxious to conduct post mortems. We are discussing the measure as it is presented to us and I have no ulterior motive in opposing this clause appearing in the Coroners Bill. I have strong feelings against compulsion in matters of this kind. When we consider the number of infectious diseases, and what this may lead to in the future, if such a clause is inserted in the Bill, we certainly have good grounds for opposing it, quite apart from whether it is relevant to the Bill. For my part I think it is not relevant. I should like to know whether any medical congress has carried any resolution regarding such a matter.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Such a proposal has never been before us.

Hon. J. E. DODD: If the matter is of such importance, it should have been considered before now by a medical congress, and in any case it should not appear in the Coroners Bill at the present time

Amendment put and passed; the new subclause added.

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

House adjourned at 6.17 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 28th October, 1920.

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

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR, DREDGING.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: In view of the possibility that the large dredge, which goes to a depth of 40 feet at the Cockburn Sound Naval Base not being required by the Commonwealth Government for some time, will he make representation to the Commonwealth Government for the loan of the dredge to enable the dredging of the Fremantle Harbour to a greater depth to be carried out with more expedition for the accommodation of deep draught vessels?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The large dredge employed by the Commonwealth authorities at Cockburn Sound is not suitable for work being carried out in deepening entrance channel, Fremantle, where the nature of the material dredged is rock.

QUESTION—SHIPWRIGHTS' DISPUTE.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Works: 1, When are the Government going to bring to an end the shipwrights' dispute at Fremantle by meeting their employees as do private employers and semi-State departments? 2, Is he aware that the shipwrights employed by the Public Works Department at Fremantle are the only shipwrights with whom any dispute exists?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, The matter has been dealt with to-day. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, BROWN HILL LOOP LINE.

Mr. LUTEY asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the need for shelter sheds on the Brown Hill loop line? 2, If so, will shelter sheds be erected at the sidings known as Maritana Street, Victoria Street, Robert Street, Coombe Street, Half-way, Hainault, Finiston, and Horseshoe?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, No. 2, As this section is run as a tramway, the provision of shelter sheds is not considered necessary.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS.

Report of Select Committee.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Bill.

Report received and read.

On motion by the Minister for Mines, report and evidence ordered to be *printed*, and the Bill, as amended by the select committee to be recommitted to a Committee of the Whole for its consideration at the next sitting.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [4.44] in moving the second reading said: The Bill, which provides for an amendment of the Mining Act, has been sought for a considerable time. It deals with two questions affecting mining in this State. One is the question of mining for oil and the other the conditions surrounding tributing and tribute agreements on leases. It may be questioned whether it was wise to provide for these two matters in an amendment to the Mining Act, or whether it would not have been better to have had separate Bills for each of these different purposes. I think hon. members will agree that mining for oil, as well as tributing, are essentially parts of our mining operations, and that they should not be detached from our mining laws, but brought together so that the legislation may be easily available to those who desire to know the conditions under which they should operate. With regard to oil, it will be noted, when hon. members have had an opportunity of reading the provisions of the Bill, that quite a number of things are mentioned wherein the lessee of an oil lease must comply with certain provisions of the Mining Act. The same thing applies to some of the tribute provisions, wherein it states definitely that certain provisions of the Mining Act shall be complied with or may be varied to meet the provisions of the Bill. In the circumstances it would be inadvisable to have separate Acts dealing with each of these matters, for we would probably have to restate in separate Bills conditions already provided in the Mining Act. The first section of the Bill deals with the question of prospecting and mining for oil. I hope we are not beating the air in making provision for an Act of this kind. There are quite a number of persons who consider that they have excellent prospects of discovering oil in payable quantities in Western Australia, and so long as we have even one person who feels he has some prospect of obtaining oil, we ought to have on the Statute-book provisions for the purpose of enabling him to operate with some security of tenure. On the other hand, there are many people who are sceptical about the possibilites of oil being found in this State. Most of these sceptics are men who, we would be entitled to say, were best able to judge, namely, some of our prominent geologists, but we have had so many varieties of opinion expressed by our scientific men affecting the geology of Western Australia that, although not as optimistic as many people are, I am sufficiently optimistic to say that even in this direction perhaps our geologists may not be entirely correct. For many reasons I hope that this will prove to be the case. The position as regards the oil requirements of the Empire is a serious one. It was suggested some time ago, at an Imperial conference held in London, that the Dominions in which there were any prospects of oil being discovered should make provision by Act of Parliament for the proper working and control of such oil in the event of its being discovered. It is not an easy matter to frame a Bill which will meet all the conditions that are desired by those who are interested, and at the same time protect the interests of the State. Probably there are some hon. members, and those who have sufficient faith in the possibility of oil being discovered, who will object to some of the provisions of this Bill. I have to take the view that if an Act is to be placed on our Statute-book it should be on the basis of what should be done in the event of oil being actually discovered. I have, for the purpose of an Act of Parliament, to lose sight of the question of the giving of facilities and encouragement to people to discover it, and rather provide the definite conditions under which, in the event of oil being discovered in payable quantities, these discoveries shall be worked. I have to endeavour to frame a measure which, while not discouraging discoverers of oil, will at all events protect the interests of the State. At present we have no such provisions on our Statute-book, except possibly under our Mining Act, into certain clauses of which there may be read powers conferred upon the Government to do certain things affecting the prospecting for oil. But there is nothing definite about it, and there is not that feeling of security which should exist amongst those who are prospecting for oil. All that we have been able to do up to date is to provide by regulations that persons, companies or firms, who desire to prospect for oil, may take up large tracts of our country, and in the event of their discovering oil must take the risk of whatever Parliament may feel disposed to do in the way of granting them a permit and setting out the conditions under which they may operate. That is an unsatisfactory position. The method of prospecting for oil is entirely different from the method used in prospecting for gold and other minerals.

After all, gold and other minerals do give some indication of their being in a certain place, by their actual presence being discovered, but, in the case of oil, people only get an indication which may or may not lead to the actual discovery of oil. Indications have frequently been found that oil is somewhere in the vicinity of the place in question, and people have had to spend a large sum of money for the purpose of following up that indication in order to test the ground for oil in payable quantities. No individual or company in this State, however, would put up large sums of money for this purpose unless they were first of all satisfied that in the event of the discovery of the oil they would have some security of tenure. That is where we have been handicapped in the past. I have had quite a number of samples submitted to me, taken from certain prospecting areas, and these unquestionably disclose the presence of oil, but whether that is oil of a nature which will turn out to be payable is a matter which requires a good deal more expenditure of capital before proof can be forthcoming. A fair percentage of the holders of these samples assert that they contain indications of oil, but they are not making much progress in their actual operations or in the way of prospecting the areas concerned, because of their feeling of insecurity of tenure in the event of oil being discovered. I have brought with me certain plans in order that members may appreciate what we have done in the direction of setting apart these areas that have been granted as temporary reserves for prospecting for oil. I have brought them also for the purpose of explaining that sometimes there is a feeling that we are restrictive in what we are doing, rather than of assistance to those interested in the discovery of oil. When I tell hon. members that some of these areas, which have been granted—that is on Crown lands—to certain individuals, amount to 62,000 square miles, they will appreciate the fact that we are giving them a fair opportunity of prospecting. I propose to continue the practice in this Bill of providing that a certain area may be granted under license in which prospecting may be carried on, and when that has been granted it is on the basis that the prospectors will undertake definite prospecting work. I have said before that as far as I can judge from the information I have received, most of the prospecting up to date has been done by prospectors, who claim to be geologists, walking over our land, taking particulars of certain formations, and collecting data in places where there is any possibility of oil being discovered. Most of the prospecting has, however, been done in the direction of prospecting for capital. I appreciate the fact that it is impossible to do very much work of any value unless a large sum of money is available. When I say a large sum of money, I mean it is useless for any company to start boring operations until they have in hand a capital large enough to enable them to continue the operations. I am satisfied that if an individual or company were to commence boring operations with a limited capital they would only be able to proceed far enough, probably without discovering anything of absolute value, to work out their capital and leave the concluding stages to someone else who by spending an additional amount of capital might obtain the reward which should have gone to the first prospectors. Some confusion may arise out of the use of the word "prospector," because of the general idea as to what it means. A prospector is generally considered to be a man who has a team and a turnout, certain provisions, a billy-can and a few tools, and who goes out into the country collecting data and prospecting for minerals. So far as oil is concerned it is entirely a different proposition. The prospector must have a knowledge of geology. After that he has to get his data with regard to the nature of the rock and the surrounding country. He has also to look for indications which will enable him to recognise the possibility of an oil basin being in that particular area. The greatest amount of prospecting in connection with oil is of a scientific nature. Then the prospectors have to find the capital to secure the necessary plant to prospect at some depth. There has been in one case a shaft sunk about 130 feet in the hope of oil being found, and it is reported that the people concerned have put a bore down some few feet below the bottom of the shaft and have struck something in the nature of gas and have had to leave the job. Many members will know that it is not unusual to strike gas of an injurious nature in any part of the country when sinking operations are in progress. We provide in the definition of "mineral" that—

> "Mineral oil" means petroleum and other mineral oil occurring in a free state, and which may be obtained by boring or wells; the term does not include mineral oil which can be extracted from coal, shale, or other rock by some industrial process.

Then we provide, in the event of oil being discovered on private property, what shall be done. This may easily be misunderstood by members of the legal fraternity. It is frequently looked upon as an act of repudiation or confiscation to suggest that the Crown, having granted a title of land, which includes all that is in that land at any depth, should recover something from the land without compensation to the owner. So far as land containing precious metals or minerals is concerned, it has long since been provided, under the existing Mining Act, that under certain conditions a person may go on to private property and mine for minerals and precious metals. We are not changing that policy. I do not suppose anyone in the

community has selected land, particularly under the early titles, in the hope of being able to discover oil. If the oil is there I claim that it actually belongs to the Crown.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You may claim that, but it has never been the practice.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is so in this case. Under the Bill, as it is now introduced, we have definitely made provision that the oil contained in any land does not belong to the holder of the land, but to the Crown.

Mr. Gardiner: Would not the assumption be that if you made a certain reservation as to minerals in any land, everything else belonged to the man who had purchased the land?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In the early titles that were granted in Western Australia no reservation was made in regard to minerals and other precious metals.

Mr. Gardiner: Only so far as gold and silver are concerned.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In 1899, I think it was, the titles that were issued made provision for a reservation as to gold and other precious metals and minerals. They belong to the Crown. Even since then we have provided that notwithstanding where an old title declared that the mineral belonged to the owner of the land, we can go on the private property and mine for that mineral. I only mention that to show that what we propose is not an innovation. It is the procedure that is adopted everywhere. The Imperial conference at which the Imperial Government were represented, averred that where any legislation is provided for the purpose of controlling the obtaining of oil within the Empire, the oil shall first of all be reserved to the Crown, in order, of course, that we shall have proper protection from many points of view which it is not necessary to mention here. The difficulties experienced by the Empire during the progress of the recent war, and also the difficulties that were encountered owing to the interests which were held by foreign companies in connection with the production of oil in different parts of the world, we know had a detrimental effect on our operations.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They might send two or three millions this way to permit of the prospecting for oil as they did in Persia.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I think we could suffer that, and no one would be more pleased than ourselves.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If they want to reserve the oil to the Crown they should spend money here.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I believe that would have been arranged through a company in which the British Government held about a two-thirds interest. That company were prepared to undertake prospecting throughout the whole of Western Australia, but that was after temporary reserves had been granted to individual companies, and after those companies had made certain investigations and had supplied evidence of the existence of oil. In my opinion it would have been unfair then to have allowed another party to come along. I pointed out that we had already granted licenses to certain persons and companies who had already made investigations, and had brought the subject prominently before the public, and that therefore I was not in a position to say to those people that they were not to get any advantage that might accrue from any discoveries which they might make. I have seen samples of oil which it is alleged have been discovered in different parts of Western Australia, and they are a fair indication of the possibilities of discovering oil in payable quantites. There is unquestionable evidence of oil being found in different parts of Western Australia. What I propose to do is to provide for a continuance of the temporary reserves. Large areas have to be given, over which prospecting operations may be conducted, and in the event of the discovery of indications of oil, the prospectors must immediately report to the Minister, and he will then have an examination made by the Government Geologist, who will then declare that a certain area is likely to contain an oil basin. Then that area will be excluded from any of the permits, whether it be the one on which the discovery was made, or even if it should extend beyond that.

Mr. Gardiner: Is oil found in a basin, or does it drain through strata?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is found in a basin. If it floated through strata it would soon be lost. I will show later the possibilities in regard to the operations under other than scientific methods in order to prove that it is necessary to have the powers which are provided in the Bill. The basin will be excluded from the area and the person who makes the discovery will have 30 days in which he may take up a reward lease. That period is only for the purpose of getting him to apply himself to the work of fixing the point that he wants to operate on until he has located the actual basin. The lease will consist of 640 acres; the object is that the discoverer of the oil shall be able to select that area at any point of the basin so that he may get the full advantage of the discovery. He may have to bore to ascertain that. The whole of the basin is reserved then by the Crown, and the discoverer alone will be able to work on that basin until such time as he selects his 640 acres. We do not mean that he shall go on indefinitely holding up the basin during operations, but we give him a fair opportunity to continue his work until such time as he has selected the 640 acres from which he can best extract the oil.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is not that a small area?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. That being the case, we also provide that having selected 640 acres on the basin he shall be able to select two additional areas of 48 acres each, and the balance will be reserved to the

Crown, or it may be granted to other persons or may be operated by the Crown. Mining for oil is entirely different from mining for other minerals. The area of 640 acres may be thought to be small, but it may contain the whole of the basin. There are many basins that do not exceed 640 acres, so that a person may get for his reward the whole of the oil discovered in the basin. I can produce authorities to show that there are many oil fields which have produced thousands of tons of oil and which did not exceed 640 acres in extent, and that on this area there were bores everywhere. The whole area in fact is a network of bores. If we were to give a bigger area or permit other leases to be taken up, we probably would cause a tremendous loss to the State as well as treat unfairly the man who made the discovery.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do all the extra bores belong to different companies?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: In many cases they do. All the authorities I have been able to consult show that the areas granted as oil leases vary from two acres to 640 acres.

Mr. Gardiner: Which is the largest field known?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some of them extend over many miles, but generally speaking it is found that there are many oil basins adjacent to each other. In most cases they do not extend over many miles. As I have already stated there is a considerable difference between prospecting for minerals and prospecting for oil. A prospector for gold will do loaming and other work and discovers traces and follows them up, and then he will peg out a lease. If he does not do that someone else may do so, but he takes up what he thinks is the likeliest country. Hon. members know that most of our discoverers of gold fields did not locate the richest spots. For instance, the discoverer of Hannans did not discover Boulder and he did not get any benefit from it. In connection with the prospecting for oil we allow the prospector, after having located oil, to go on until he has located the actual basin; then we give him the right to take up 640 acres.

Mr. Gardiner: And how long do you give him?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Thirty days with the right of an extension.

Mr. Gardiner: If he has to put a bore down 2,000 feet how will he locate the basin in thirty days?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When they have pierced the ground to any extent with bores, and located oil, they can read the underground structure almost as well as the surface can be read. They have progressed so far where oil is concerned that when they get certain data it is possible to map it almost after one bore has been put in the ground.

Mr. Pilkington: Surely the first prospector would not have done enough work for that mapping?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not suggest that.

Mr. Pilkington: Thirty days strikes me as being short.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Bill provides—

> In the event of mineral oil being discovered in payable quantities by a licensee under this Act, and the discovery being duly reported by the licensee to the Minister, the licensee shall have the right for thirty days and such further time as the Minister may, in his discretion, allow, to apply for and obtain, under and subject to this Act and the regulations, a mineral oil reward lease of six hundred and forty acres and two ordinary mineral oil leases of forty-eight acres each.

The position that arises is that he is granted an extensive area over which he may prospect and where he may discover indications of oil. The Government Geologist may then reserve that and any adjacent area for the purpose of enabling that prospector to continue his prospecting efforts until he locates payable oil. Then he is given 30 additional days for the purpose of selecting 640 acres as a reward claim, the idea being that the person who makes the discovery shall have the right to select 640 acres on the basin where he may recover payable oil, he, and no one else shall be entitled to get that reward.

Mr. Gardiner: Are you satisfied from what you have been able to gather that 640 acres is generous?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Mr. Pilkington: Is that the area that is shown as being granted to prospectors in the authorities you have quoted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No; we have given up to 62,000 square miles.

Mr. Pilkington: That is for prospecting, but for any prospector who has discovered oil, what is the area allowed to him?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They vary. Some are an acre or two up to a square mile.

Mr. Pilkington: That is, an acre or two on a known oil field.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, we give the right to the successful prospector to fix his area where the wealth is situated, and in addition two 48-acre blocks. That gives him over 700 acres.

Mr. Pilkington: I am not questioning the action of the Minister.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We are doing that when the field is not proved. It may prove to be one of the wealthiest oil fields in the world, and still the successful prospector will have his 700 odd acres. He is under certain obligations including payment of rent, although the rent for the first five years will be a peppercorn one. Then he has to pay certain royalties on the oil recovered. But if the field proves to be permanent and rich, the Crown may be disposed to grant him only the smaller area, and at the same time may enter into an agreement with the company to work the balance of the area. My own view is that it should be worked on

the profit-sharing basis in order that the community may benefit from the presence of oil in the State. In a place like Roumania they get a much smaller area; they only get sufficient to put down their plant and whatever is necessary in addition to enable them to carry on. In the circumstances I think the proposal that we have made in the Bill is a generous one, so far as the reward claims are concerned. I want to emphasise this point, because there are some who think that the area is too small. One local company has been consulting with the British company with a view to the latter taking over their prospecting rights here. The British company have put forward a suggestion that a maximum of 100,000 acres should be granted if oil should be discovered, and I have been approached accordingly.

Mr. Underwood: Why not take the lot?

Hon. P. Collier: What about giving them the whole State?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is what I say. I want to know where the State is to come in. There are, of course, one or two big concessions which may be quoted in support of such a large area. As an instance, there is the case in Trinidad, where the British Crown, in order to get oil, gave over practically the whole of the country to one company to prospect it. There is no suggestion anywhere that I can find of a larger area being given for an oil lease.

Mr. Pickering: What is the area in Trinidad?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is 100,000 acres. The position is different there. They practically have the whole of Trinidad. But the company there have had to find huge capital in order to carry out the prospecting, and if they made a discovery, they got up to a maximum area of 100,000 acres. I do not think that anyone would suggest that in Western Australia we should, in order to prove whether oil is present, give away huge tracts of country. We must not sell our birthright, as it were, in order to secure oil here. My own view is that the area suggested in the Bill to which I have already referred is quite an adequate reward for any company coming here and discovering oil. There are some who think that, for the benefit of having oil discovered in the State, the company making the discovery should have rights to the exclusion of everyone else. I do not propose to ask Parliament to allow anyone to monopolise oil discovered in Western Australia. The person discovering oil in Western Australia would have the benefit of the bonus arranged by the Commonwealth Government and he would have the reward claims that I have indicated, and other considerations as well. I believe that that is the most that he is entitled to get. The prospecting license proposed to be granted is not to exceed a period of ten years. The provision so far has been for a license for 12 months only. That, of course, is unsatisfactory, because if we are to have the State prospected satisfactorily for the purpose of finding oil, large sums of money must be expended, and it is certain that no company would face such an expenditure on the security of a 12 months license only. The suggested period of ten years will be the maximum one, and the Minister would be guided in granting a license for any period up to ten years, from the standpoint of the operations of the company undertaking the work. If we give a large area to one company there must be a guarantee of a certain definite amount of work each year, and the company securing such an extended license should be prepared to enter into a bond seeing that they have the security extending over such a period. Such a position would not be satisfactory if the license were confined to one of 12 months only.

Mr. Gardiner: You could not get the machinery there in that time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, it could not be done; in fact, that period would be entirely unsatisfactory.

Mr. Hudson: But the license could be renewed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. Such licenses could be renewed, but the companies are not likely to raise large sums of money if they are operating on a license giving them security for 12 months only.

Mr. Hudson: That is not exactly so under that proposition.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is correct, of course, that there have been extensions, but the position of the State would not be safeguarded under such an arrangement. From a State point of view, it might be inviting if a big company came and offered to do the whole of the prospecting throughout the State and gave a bond to expend large sums of money. A Minister might be tempted to cancel existing licenses and hand the State over to such a company. But these conditions could not arise under the proposals of the Government. If a company desired to get a prospecting area of, say, 30,000 square miles, and agreed to spend £10,000 per annum for ten years, the Minister might think of granting the licence for the full period. Should the company not be agreeable to spending so much over that period and indicate that they would spend, say, £5,000 or £6,000, I personally would not grant the extended period, but would reduce the term of the license to, say, five or six years. In this authority from which I am quoting—A. Beeby Thompson on Oil Field Development—the author states—

> In undeveloped or partially developed British possessions like Burma, Trinidad, and Egypt, there has long been a disposition to grant first short-termed exploration licenses for conducting a flying survey and geological examination, followed by a prospecting license granting greater facilities over less extended areas, with definite obligation for a certain period within which

a development lease must be applied for over some prearranged maximum proportion of the prospecting licence. Under such conditions the square mile unit is convenient and adopted, but authorities would be well advised to retain alternate plots or groups of plots until the true worth of the area has been conclusively demonstrated by fairly extensive operations.

This book was not known out here when the proposals embodied in the Bill were framed. The only variation from the suggestion of the author is that, instead of taking alternate blocks, we propose a different method. Any person securing a license has to commence operations within 30 days of the securing of their license, and the Minister may grant extended periods for work which will be carried out in distant places. If this provision is not complied with the Minister is empowered to forfeit the license. They must report any discovery or indication of oil as soon as such discovery is made. A penalty is provided for neglect on this score.

Mr. Foley: Is any period fixed?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They must report the discovery or the indication of oil within seven days. The main purposes of that stiplation is that there is any amount of evidence that oil fields have been lost and destroyed because the methods employed by prospectors have not been up to date. Through ignorance or a desire to get on to the market quickly and float the field, millions of tons of oil have been wasted. We do not want those conditions to prevail here, and we must take notice of what has happened in other parts of the world. We provide that the discoverers of any oil field shall notify the department within seven days, and when this is done, we can then control the development work. It may appear to be something in the nature of a stringent restriction, but when members realise the waste that has taken place they will not object to those powers being retained. Thompson further says—

> Negligent or unskilful development of a single plot may imperil a whole field by admitting unexcluded water to the oil sands.

There has been an instance where an oil well which had been discovered was destroyed and the cause could not be ascertained for some years. It was then found that a prospector at some considerable distance had caused the destruction of the oil field because he had allowed water to enter the well.

Mr. Foley: Would not that apply to a great extent on the smaller lease?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It would apply everywhere, irrespective of whether it was a large or a small lease. We must take necessary precautions to see that there is no waste. This authority states—

> Only in recent years has the leasing of oil lands been admitted to the application of special regulations, framed to meet exigencies that never occur in metal mining. The public dangers and irretrievable losses arising from unrestricted oil-field operations compelled authorities to formulate stringent, though not aggressive legislation, to regulate the conduct of lessees of both private and public oil lands.

Again he points out—

> In no commercial operations has there probably been greater unjustifiable waste of the resources of nature than in oil-field development. In other mining operations, wasteful methods or processes do not entail permanent loss to mankind as picked mines or discarded dumps may enable work to be repeated with advance of science or improvement in value of products. Initial operations in new oil fields, where uncontrolled work was allowed to proceed without criticism has led to hundreds of thousands of tons of petroleum being lost by fires, evaporation, or dissipation amidst surface beds from which it can never be recovered. Millions of barrels of oil have been deliberately burnt as the most economical way of disposal, and many millions of tons of oil could have been saved by simple and obvious remedies, at the time considered unworthy of serious attention. . . . Improvements include more strict legislation about lights, fittings, and smoking, also the increasing use of iron derricks or wooden derricks protected by non-inflammable material. Flowing wells are now better controlled, either by restricting the flow of oil, or diverting it in a way to ensure safety from fire, and diminution of losses. In some of the important oil-fields indications of a possible flow are sufficient pretext for prohibiting further drilling operations until approved provision for the collection and disposal of the oil is made.

It may be necessary, when indications of oil are discovered, to direct that the prospector shall not proceed further until he has on the ground all that is necessary to properly obtain the oil in the event of there being a discovery. Members doubtless have seen pictures of what are termed gushers.

Mr. Pickering. That would be necessary.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The man who goes out prospecting for oil is not the party who is going to take the oil for the market. He wants to discover oil and to sell the right to work it to someone who has capital. Having disposed of his right, he gets out. The prospector in his desire to obtain a fortune, however, might easily put down a bore producing a gusher and have no means to cope with the flow, with the result that millions of tons of oil might run out to sea because of the lack of means to recover it.

Mr. Robinson: Do you propose to have machinery of that kind handy?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. If a prospector gets an indication of oil and the Government Geologist thinks that pre-

cautions should be taken, the prospector must discontinue boring until those precautions are taken. Such precautions would not necessitate the provision of thousands of pounds worth of machinery, but they would necessitate the provision of proper appliances, so that if a gusher were struck, it could be dealt with. We hold that the State should have the right of control to this extent in order to avoid possible waste. This authority goes on to say—

> About the years 1890 to 1900 it was no uncommon occurrence for wells yielding 10,000 to 15,000 tons (75,000 to 112,500 barrels) daily to burn for days or weeks, and the author has himself seen three great eruptive wells burning contemporaneously in the Baku fields. Enormous losses have been sustained by Roumanian producers before stringent regulations were imposed on operators; and in Mexico the loss of oil from the famous Dos Bocas well was estimated at 1,000,000 tons (7,000,000 barrels).

The same thing applies to the loss of the lighter products of the oil by evaporation. The Minister should be empowered to restrict operations in order to ensure that there shall be no waste consequent on the desire of the prospector to discover payable oil, sell his right and get out. It might be claimed that a provision of this kind is unnecessary at the present stage, but I might mention for the information of members that there came to see me the other day a gentleman who said that he had obtained such indications of oil that he was a bit nervous as to how to proceed. He said, "All I have is the ordinary boring plant; I can put a hole in the ground, but if I do so, I might strike a gusher."

Hon. P. Collier: He is an optimist.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He was not trying to sell me an interest in the show, either.

Mr. Foley: Have all your colleagues gone after him? You are the only Minister in the House.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When boring for water it is necessary to have proper casing and head gear to cope with the flow. In the circumstances we do not propose that there should be power to restrict oil-boring operations except so far as is necessary to properly protect a discovery. It is one thing to allow men to prospect for oil and it is another thing to ensure that any oil discovered shall not be wasted.

Mr. Robinson: Will that be done by regulation?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, the Bill provides for that.

Mr. Robinson: The Bill does not say how it shall be done.

The MINISTER FOR MINES. We could not possibly set that out in the Bill. The experience of oilfields the world over has been that it is impossible to make regulations to satisfactorily apply to even two leases operating in the one basin. Such regulations have to be varied to meet the particular circumstances of each, and for us to attempt to frame regulations to govern all would be impossible.

Mr. Robinson: That is why I said you will need regulations.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, to confirm what is laid down in the measure. The Bill provides—

> Every licensee shall furnish to the Minister monthly reports of the work done in searching for mineral oil, and if he discovers mineral oil, or any indication that renders the presence of mineral oil probable, he shall immediately report the discovery to the Minister. On any such discovery being made the Minister may direct the future working by the licensee, and such directions when given in writing by the Minister to the licensee shall be observed and carried into effect by him. If a licensee makes default in the observance of this subsection in any respect, the Minister may cancel the license.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That contains very wide powers.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It does.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Too wide.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We shall be able to discuss that point more fully in Committee, but I hold strenuously to the view that the powers granted are not too wide.

Mr. Pickering: Who is to be the deciding factor?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is an essential power. In our anxiety to help people to discover oil, we must not be led into the error of neglecting to apply proper conditions. If an oilfield were discovered and the waste which has occurred in other parts resulted here, we would be asked why we had not taken the necessary power to prevent it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You cannot appoint one man to legislate, and that is what this measure means.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No, it does not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But it does.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Even some members representing mining constituencies are not aware that, under the Mining Act, the Minister may issue directions with regard to the manner in which a mine shall be worked. This is an essential power. The oil in the ground, just the same as minerals and precious metals, belong to the Crown, and the Crown is entitled to take sufficient power to direct operations and protect the interests of the community. We do not want to give people the right to delve into the earth and take of its riches regardless of the interests of the whole of the community. Would the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) suggest that a Minister would deliberately use his power to stifle the operations in connection with the discovery of oil?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It might cut the other way.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The people would never tolerate a Minister or Parliament who would permit the enforcing of directions such as would lead to the closing down of an oilfield. If an oilfield were discovered and, through lack of foresight on our part, the Minister had no power to control the operations, the whole of the oil might be lost.

Mr. Foley: That would have to be done by regulation.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Provision is made that the Government Geologist shall immediately report on such a discovery. He will say what steps are necessary to protect the oil likely to be in a particular basin.

Mr. Pickering: He may know nothing about the working of an oilfield. It is a business that requires specialists.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is a point I wish to come to. I know of nobody in Western Australia who has any knowledge of oilfields, but most of us know that we have not in the State appliances for recovering oil by boring. We should not permit operations which will result in waste; we are here to guard against waste. I see no danger whatever in conferring these powers on the Minister, who, after all, represents Parliament and the people in the exercise of control to secure this wealth from the earth. If members will take the opportunity to read the remarks of the authority whom I have quoted—it is the most up-to-date authority I have been able to discover—they will realise the need for this power. The author has had lifelong experience in oilfield management, and he emphasises the necessity for the authorities having power to direct operations to prevent waste. Such power would not be used to the detriment of the State's interests. Some of the directions given might be wrong, but they would be given after conferring with those best qualified to express an opinion. Some oilfields have been practically depleted of their resources simply on account of the desire of the discoverer merely to put down a bore and then to sell out. By the time the people with the capital were ready to recover the oil, millions of tons of it had been lost. While I do not suggest that there are any possibilities of oil being discovered in such quantities in Western Australia, we ought to have power to protect the interests of the community in the event of a discovery being made. While we grant a license to prospect to a definite company for a definite area of Crown lands to the exclusion of everyone else, difficulties will probably arise. I desire to provide that the person who locates the oil shall obtain the reward. The holder of one license may discover evidence of oil on the boundary of his permit area, and when this is reported, as it must be, it may be found that the oil basin is really located on the adjoining area. In such a case the man who makes the discovery should be entitled to the reward claim. If we do not make such provision in the event of oil being found in these circumstances, the prospector may cover it up and say nothing about it, because he would be disinclined to report a discovery which would benefit not himself but someone else. As such areas would be only casually defined on the plan, I take the view that the man who makes the discovery on his own holding is entitled to get the reward, although it means excluding an area from the adjoining permit area. Provision is made in the Bill to meet cases of this kind.

Mr. Robinson: On what conditions would the reward claim be granted?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: On the condition that the claimant made the discovery of oil.

Mr. Robinson: Would the oil actually have to be brought to the surface?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He must discover payable oil, on which point the Bill provides—

> "Payable" as applied to mineral oil means mineral oil of such quantity and quality that it can, under ordinary circumstances, be worked with profit.

Mr. Robinson: Have you made provision with regard to shale?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Bill excludes shale.

Mr. Robinson: Would shale come under the Mining Act?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. The Bill says—

> "Mineral oil" means petroleum and other mineral oil occurring in a free state and which may be obtained by boring or wells; the term does not include mineral oil which may be extracted from coal, shale, or other rock by some industrial process.

So soon as a discovery has been made, the Government Geologist will define what he considers to be the oil basin. On that basin the 640-acre reward lease would apply. The Bill does not provide a reward lease of 640 acres for merely the first discovery of payable oil, but a reward lease of 640 acres for each discovery made; and then there are the two additional 48-acre leases.

Hon. P. Collier: Are not some oil basins very large?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. Some of them extend over miles of country. In other cases they do not extend over any considerable area—for instance, a basin in a crevice. The term of the proposed lease will be 21 years, and the rental 6d. per acre, which rental, as compared with that of mining leases, may seem small. However, we take power to prescribe royalty by regulation. The revenue to be derived by the State from future oil fields will be principally, not by way of rental, but by way of royalty on the oil obtained. It would be absurd to attempt to fix the royalty in the Bill, because a royalty which would be too small on one field might be heavy enough to cripple the industry on another field. The measure provides that no foreign company shall hold any interest

in a Western Australian oil lease. I think hon. members will agree that this provision is essential, and will accept it without question. Further, the Bill provides that the Governor may pre-empt any oil taken from an oil field. The restriction may appear unnecessary; but even Trinidad, which has granted more extensive leases than any other community, reserves power to pre-empt all the oil gained on its oil fields. Some countries restrict the power to pre-empt to the state of war; but my view is that the State, so long as it pays adequately for the oil, should have full power to pre-empt.

Mr. Robinson: As regards the exclusion of foreign companies, it will not be of much use to do that unless foreign persons are excluded as well.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We can exclude the foreign person also, if the hon. member so desires. Clause 23 provides—

> (1) The Governor shall have the right of pre-emption of all oil produced by the lessee from any land held under a mineral oil lease and of all products of such oil, and in the event of the exercise of this power the lessee shall do all things reasonably in his power to facilitate the delivery of the oil or products in accordance with the directions of the Governor. (2) The price to be paid for the oil or products shall, if the price is not agreed upon, be fixed by arbitration.

The covenants set out in the Bill are additional to those contained in the Mining Act. Clause 14 states—

> A mineral oil lease shall be subject to Division (4) of Part V. of the principal Act, and shall contain the following further reservations, covenants, and conditions:—(a) A reservation of power to authorise mining on the land for any purpose other than mineral oil; (b) A covenant by the lessee to pay the prescribed royalty on the gross value of all crude oil obtained from the land; (c) A covenant by the lessee to work the land in accordance with the regulations in force for the time being, and to the satisfaction of the Minister; (d) A covenant by the lessee to refine all crude oil produced by the lessee in the State or in some part of Australia approved of for that purpose by the Minister; (e) A covenant by the lessee not to ship or export any crude oil to any place outside Australia, without the consent of the Minister; (f) A covenant by the lessee to observe and comply with the provisions of the Act and the regulations for the time being in force; and (g) Such other reservations, covenants, and conditions as are prescribed.

Hon. P. Collier: The lessee has no right to any other mineral than oil?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I do not think I need say more on this phase of the Bill, except to urge that while, on the face of it, the measure may not appear to meet all the demands of those interested in prospecting for oil, yet it will not in any way restrict their operations, but will serve the best interests of the State while giving that security of tenure which is so essential for raising the capital required for oil prospecting. One other point to which perhaps I may refer is that for the purposes of royalty the lessee must make monthly returns and make his books open to inspection. As regards resumption of land in this connection, the Bill provides for compensation as under the Public Works Act, the conditions of which are well known to hon. members. However, this Bill contains the further provision—to my mind an essential one in connection with all land resumptions—that where it is shown to the satisfaction of the court that the resumption of any portion of land, being a severance of one portion of a holding from another portion, will render the remainder of the land practically valueless to the holder, the whole of the land shall be resumed. The Minister for Works knows that there have been gross cases of hardship inflicted on owners of land by partial resumption, the unresumed portion being valueless or unprofitable to work. Accordingly the present Bill provides that in such cases the entire holding shall be resumed, and that compensation shall be paid according to the value of the land, but not from the point of view of oil contents. That is all I have to say at this stage regarding the provisions dealing with oil. The other part of the Bill deals with tributing, and I know that many members are more concerned with that phase of mining than with oil discoveries. First let me say that tributing in mines, as known at the present time, consists in an individual or a party entering into a voluntary agreement with the mining lessee to take over a portion of the mine, allowing the lessee a tribute or royalty in respect of any gold recovered from that portion. Under the Mining Act a lessee cannot underlet any portion of his lease without the permission of the Minister. After all, in that respect a mining lessee stands in the same position as any other lessee to the landlord. The landlord is entitled to conserve his best interests by prescribing the conditions under which his tenant shall remain in possession. Up to the present the State has not adequately conserved its interest as the landlord of the mining lessee. That refers especially to the conditions under which tributing has been conducted. Undoubtedly those conditions have had the effect of injuring the State, because their nature is such as practically to compel the tributer to leave in the ground a large amount of wealth that he might take out if the conditions were not so restrictive. A report made by an inspector of mines at Kalgoorlie points out that while there are many good arguments in favour of tributing on a large scale, that system also has many drawbacks, inasmuch as on an ex-

amination of hauling, carting, breaking by compressed air, and crushing charges, cost of stores, etc., it is apparent that sulphide ore under 14dwts. does not pay. This report refers to a particular mine, and it goes on to state that ore below the value of 14dwts. is being left in the mine in considerable quantities. The mine is one which previously was working on a few dwts., and certainly ought to be able to carry on at 7dwts. Thus the tributer is compelled to gouge out the rich patches in his block, and leave the other portion, because the conditions are so hard that it will not pay him to take out any ore of less than 14dwts.

Mr. Munsie: The tributer is lucky if he can work 14dwts.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The State as landlord grants the mining lease to the lessee for the definite purpose of recovering the wealth that is in the ground. Therefore the State is entitled to require that that wealth shall be recovered not only for the advantage of the lessee, but also for the advantage of the owner, that is to say, the State. Though to some people it may appear contrary to the recognised practice of British communities to interfere with a title once granted, I say we are entitled to prevent the State's tenant from pursuing a course of conduct that is injurious to the property of the State. We know there are plenty of landlords in Western Australia who would not tolerate conduct on the part of the tenant of a dwelling house or a shop such as would damage the property. They would compel the tenant either to leave the dwelling or the shop, or to occupy the dwelling house or conduct the shop in a proper manner. I contend that the State is entitled to make exactly the same demand on mining lessees, or mining tenants. Under existing conditions, however, the State does not possess that power; and the result is that to-day there is being left in the ground an enormous amount of wealth which would be recovered if the State were able to exercise proper control over the conditions under which tributing is operated. I want hon. members to understand that we now have certain regulations dealing with the conditions under which tributing shall operate. But most of those interested in mining, particularly at Kalgoorlie, know that they are honoured rather in the breach than in the observance. Quite a number of tributes, I am advised, exist to-day on the Golden Mile which have never been drawn up in the form of agreements and registered. They are merely existing on the goodwill of the management, which is a breach of the covenant, because they have practically underlet. I propose to provide that they shall not underlet any portion of a mine without a definite agreement, duly registered before the warden, who shall have power to approve of the conditions and to review them. I know it will be claimed by some that we ought to set out in the Bill the conditions under which tributing shall be let. But I have to look at the question from many standpoints. I know of many conditions which, in my opinion, it may be desirable to set out in an Act of Parliament. But when I view it from the standpoint that the conditions would then have to apply in all districts alike, I say that it would not be satisfactory. Therefore we have had to make the conditions just as broad as possible. When, recently, a deputation of tributers waited on me in Kalgoorlie, one said that if the conditions applying in a certain mine on the belt were made general, he and the others would be quite satisfied; but he had scarcely finished speaking when another tributer said that if those conditions referred to applied in the mine in which he was working, he would not be at all satisfied. The difficulty will be seen of getting a set of hard and fast rules which would satisfactorily govern the conditions in all the mines in all districts. I am endeavouring to get over the difficulty by providing, first of all, that an agreement shall be made and registered, and that the warden shall satisfy himself in regard to all the conditions. I then provide that the warden may vary those conditions on application by either party, even after the agreement has been made. It may be urged that if an agreement has been voluntarily made between two parties nobody else should intervene. But in addition to the two parties to the agreement, the lessee and the person to whom he sublets, there is another interested party who, under existing conditions, is not consulted; and I say that the warden, as representing the Crown, is entitled to vary and review those conditions in order to protect the interests of the Crown. Therefore the agreements must contain equitable provisions, even in regard to the terms and conditions of the use of plant and machinery. I make provision that if the warden refuses to register such agreement either party may appeal to the Minister, who may then register it. Of course hon. members will understand that it would have to be a pretty strong case to induce the Minister to vary the decision of the warden. The main essential of the Bill is that it provides for the block and time system, which is preferable to either the block system alone or the time system alone. But although we have made provision for extension, even that might not be equitable. We provide that a block of ground, sublet to a tributer, shall be definitely set out in an agreement and that it shall be let for not less a period than six months. But we provide that the tributer, on application to the warden, shall have the right to renew the tribute from time to time, subject to the block not having been worked out. If we give a lease of a definite piece of ground for 21 years we say, "You can work it for 21 years subject to your complying with certain conditions, and after the expiration of 21 years you shall have the right of renewal for another 21 years." Some tributers claim that even that is not sufficient security of tenure for mining in-

vestors. Others claim that the tributer who gets a part of that lease should have the right for only six months' operations, no matter what may happen, no matter if even for five months he was without success and, towards the close of the sixth month, came on something good. According to such persons the lessee should then have the right to step in and say, 'No, I cannot allow you to continue your operations. You must get out and I will carry on from where you leave off.''

Mr. Lutey: I have known tributers stopped on the minute.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I hold the view that the lessee should not put the individuals to whom he sublets a portion of the lease in any worse position than he himself may be in regard to the whole of the mine, and that until the tributer works out that part of the block the right of extension of time should be granted by the warden in the event of the company refusing to extend it. During the first six months the conditions affecting the mine might alter, and so I make provision that if the lessee or the tributer applies to the warden for a variation, the warden may agree to vary it and the parties must accept the warden's variation. I did at first consider the desirability of providing a board of reference for these cases, with the warden as chairman, assisted by representatives of the parties; but those with whom I discussed it said that the company would naturally oppose any alteration, while the tributers would, equally naturally, stand for a revision, and therefore the warden would have to decide between them and, in consequence, the warden, acting alone, would be quite satisfactory. Then we deal with the question of development work. The companies claim that they are entitled to some recompense for the development work carried out by the expenditure of their capital. For instance, they may have put down a shaft and provided proper plant and then let part of the mine on tribute. The tributer gets the advantage of this development work, and therefore the company claims to be entitled to receive payment in consideration of the development work. If that holds good in regard to the mine owner or the lessee, it should also hold good in regard to the tributer, and therefore if the company set out in the agreement that certain development work shall be done by the tributer, they must pay the tributer in respect of the work; but where the men voluntarily agree that certain development work shall be done the warden, if they cannot arrive at a fair assessment, will fix the value of such development work. We must remember, after all, that the mine must be worked from the point of view of safety. Under the Mines Regulation Act we can compel the mine to be worked from the point of view of safety of the miners; but we should also consider the safety of the mine. We provide in the Bill, therefore, that in the event of the company wanting the mine worked one way, while the tributers want it worked another way, the inspector of mines shall be called in to decide; and if the parties still disagree, the warden shall be called in to give a final decision. We make provision to safeguard the interests of the tributer if the lase should be forfeited. There are many means by which the lessee may get out of his obligations. Under existing conditions, in the event of the lease being forfeited, the tribute would be cancelled; but the Bill provides that, so long as the block is not worked out, although the lease may be forfeited or abandoned the tribute shall continue, and the Minister shall occupy the position of lessee in relation to the tributer. I know that hon. members will suggest that all sorts of other conditions should apply. The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) is keen on making provision that no royalty shall be payable until each member of a tributing party has earned the ruling rate of wage in the district. I have attempted to compromise on a basis which, I think, will be satisfactory. I have not gone quite so far as the hon. member. Under the hon. member's proposal, a tributing party might lay themselves out to earn only the local rate of wage. That, of course, would be unsatisfactory from the point of view of the mine owner. I have provided that each tributer shall receive at least £3 per week before the royalty becomes payable. Under these conditions it will not be worth a tributer's while to stop when £3 per week is earned; he will prefer to go on and earn much more. The £3, I may explain, is net, after the payment of all costs, and until this has been earned, the company cannot recover any royalty.

Mr. Munsie: Does that apply only providing the tributer is fulfilling the labour conditions?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. I am taking the view that until he earns £3 a week, which will merely enable him to live, the company shall not take any royalty.

Mr. Munsie: Irrespective of the number of men employed in the mine?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so. I do not wish to put into an Act of Parliament such restrictions as would cause companies to refuse to let tributes, or to let only such tributes as were absolutely essential to hold the ground; therefore I have tried to meet the difficulty in a way fair to the tributer, while fairly protecting the lessee. I also make provision to meet a difficulty which may arise. In some cases the tributers have sleeping members, business men who pay half wages to the rest of the tributing party. I have provided that that £3 a week shall include any payment which may be made by any other party.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Before tea I had almost completed my references to the

Bill, but there is one point I wish to emphasise, namely, the basis upon which the tributing clauses of the Bill are intended to operate. I wish members and those people engaged in mining operations to understand that the Crown is possessed of the land. The Crown is the landlord. The lease is granted to an applicant for purposes defined by Act of Parliament, and the lessee has to comply with conditions laid down by Act of Parliament, its amendments or regulations framed under the Act. The lessee is under the obligation not to sublet without the permission of the Minister. We provide that he may sublet, but that it shall be with the consent of the Minister subject to being under a form of agreement with a tributer, and that the agreement be ratified by the warden and registered. I emphasise this in order to make it plain there are three parties interested in the operations on a mining lease, and not the least of these three is the Crown as landlord. It might be said that the restrictions imposed on the methods of operating tributes will be detrimental to the mine owner, and that this will adversely affect capital invested in the industry. I do not think it can be fairly claimed that any of the provisions will have that effect, in view of the fact that there are no mandatory conditions to permit a Minister to disturb the operations on a lease; but a judicial officer such as the warden should have the right to review the terms of an agreement in order to meet any change in conditions. In mining, as in all other operations, conditions change, and in order to continue an equitable arrangement between the three parties, although one is not directly concerned in the agreement because the land is leased, there should be a judicial tribunal to consider and revise all the conditions of the agreement. Those who might be inclined to complain should remember that the conditions for the protection of the tributer are not so stringent as they might be. The tributer is the third party. We are interested in his welfare firstly as a citizen of the State and secondly from the point of view of the effect that the conditions applying to him may have on the operations of the mine, which is land leased from the Crown. If the effect is detrimental in that it reduces the amount of wealth produced, the Crown is entitled to impose conditions to see that this state of affairs is altered. If I asked that the Minister, himself or by regulation, might impose conditions without any provision for review by a judicial authority, it might then be fairly said that, while protecting the interests of the tributers on the one hand, I would really be doing them injury because many of the tributes would be closed down. The Perseverance has apparently arrived at a stage when it can be operated only by tributers, and such a mine might reduce the number of tributes to the bare number requisite to comply with the labour conditions.

Mr. Munsie: The staff is there.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Perhaps there is something in the statement of the leader of the Oppositon about the staff being connected with the tributes.

Mr. Munsie: I mean that the number employed on the staff would man the lease.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Probably more than enough are employed at present, but the staff would be useless unless mining operations were being carried on. I wish it to be understood that the Crown is entitled to impose conditions which would meet a contingency of that kind. One mine manager stated that if any additional restrictions were imposed or if any alteration were made to existing conditions applying to tributing, he would not let any more tributes. Largely to see how it looked in cold type, I drafted a provision which would have met such a position. The only way out of the difficulty would be to follow the Tasmanian example. There is a section in the Tasmanian Act relating to a small radius in Zeehan, giving power to the Minister to enter any lease and prospect for minerals. This may be done either by the Minister's agent or his workmen. In the event of the discovery of payable mineral the management is given a period within which to commence mining operations to recover the wealth, and failing action on the part of the management, the Minister may let it to be worked. This is an example of the power and right of the Crown to intervene with regard to its own property in order to obtain the wealth in the event of the lessee not operating. I resolved, however, that we should not anticipate action by the mine owner without first giving him an opportunity to become acquainted with the new conditions and to accept them in the spirit in which they are promulgated, or adopt an attitude of defiance. If hostility were shown I would have no hesitation in asking Parliament to provide the necessary legislation to protect the interests of the Crown. Meanwhile, I am satisfied that the provisions in the tributing section of this Bill will not be detrimental to the mine owner, except that some of his profits, which in my opinion are exorbitant, will be curtailed. I refer to what mine owners extract from the tributers and extract very unfairly. The Bill will give us better control, and, from the point of view of equity, it will not be detrimental. If any hostility is displayed I would ask Parliament to agree to an amendment to enable any portion of a mine not being worked to be worked under a tributing agreement, provided that such operation did not interfere with the work of the mine. A mine might be working at depth, but some of the surface workings might be worth taking up, and if the mine owner refused to grant a tribute, that wealth would probably be lost to the State. By the time the deeper levels were worked out there would be no opportunity to work the other portion as might be necessary through the main shaft, and the whole mine would be closed down. In such circumstances the warden should be em-

powered on the application of the Minister to permit a party to operate portion of a mine which otherwise might be closed down permanently. I mention this to show that I am not ignorant of the possibilities which may result from the passing of this Bill.

Mr. Lutey: In the Great Boulder there is a lease which has not been worked for years.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When a company is doing all that can be considered to be equitable we are not entitled to permit someone else to go in, just because the company does not happen to be working a particular portion of its lease at the time. I would not object to the insertion of a provision that it shall be sufficient answer if the company undertook to work such portion of the lease within reasonable time. Then, if the company failed to do so, the Crown, as the landlord, would be entitled to give notice and to arrange for someone else to work it under tribute conditions. I believe this measure will be accepted by the tributers as an honest effort to hold the scales equal between the two parties, not forgetting the interests of the third party. The existing tributing conditions in many respects are unfair, and stand in need of revision. Many agreements are made because of a keen desire on the part of applicants to get tributes under almost any conditions. These could not be regarded as voluntary agreements. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) might regard them from a legal standpoint as voluntary agreements, but in the ordinary sense they are not. These agreements are generally a gamble; a man believes there is a prospect of making a good thing and undertakes to accept almost any conditions. When it is shown that the conditions are such that the tributer cannot operate successfully and that the State is losing the benefit which would result from successful operation, a judicial officer should be able to step in and say that the conditions, though voluntarily accepted, are unfair to the first party, the Crown, and to the third party, the tributer. In such circumstances the lessee could not fairly complain, because he has entered into a compact to accept the Act, together with any amendments and regulations. All I am attempting by this Bill is to provide a fair method to settle the difficulties which have arisen and which are becoming more pronounced as the depths of the mines increase, because the companies work out the richer shoots and thus leave the mines only partially worked, though more effective operations are possible. I believe that the conditions here applied will unquestionably alter in many respects the position of the tributer, to his satisfaction, without in any way unduly restricting the lessee, and at the same time protect the interests of the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Munsie the debate adjourned.

BILL—RAILWAYS CLASSIFICATION BOARD.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [7.45] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is for an Act to provide for a board for the classification of the salaried staff of the Government railways. The salaried staff of the Railway Department, in common with the wages staff, are entitled to approach the Arbitration Court for the settlement of disputes which may exist between the salaried staff and the Commissioner of Railways. But the Arbitration Court, in much the same way as with the civil servants, is unable effectively to deal with the differences which may exist between the Commissioner and his staff. After careful consideration it was thought desirable to provide a more satisfactory method of adjusting such differences. If this Bill becomes law and such a classification board is established, the railway officers will not then be entitled to approach the Arbitration Court. It may be just as well to admit that there are certain phases of the classification of railway officers that do not come within its jurisdiction, and even if they did, it would not be a satisfactory method to provide for the classification by the Arbitration Court. The State of Victoria has recently established a classification board as affecting the salaried staff of the railways of that State, and this Bill is drafted on the lines of the Victorian Act. It provides for a board consisting of accredited representatives of the Commissioner and the salaried officers, with a chairman, who shall be a magistrate, appointed by the Government. With the board will sit two assessors, one of whom shall be appointed by the Commisssioner and the other by the salaried officers. The assessors will not have any say in the decisions of the board on any questions considered by the board. Once the representatives on the board have been selected by the Commissioner and the salaried officers, they become definite members of the board to hear all cases. The desire is that we shall have sitting with the board, assessors or persons appointed by each of the two parties concerned, that is the Commissioner and the officers. These should be men who will have some technical knowledge and experience in the particular section in connection with which the case arises. We have a branch of the service under the Ways and Works, which deals with one class of the operations of the Railway Department; we have the engineer for Existing Lines branch dealing with an entirely different class of work, and we have the Traffic branch. Each of these departments would require to have someone from that branch for the purpose of keeping clearly before the board from time to time the different points that may arise as affecting that particular section. That is one of the weaknesses of our Arbitration Court. In the case of the Arbitration

Court we ask that one man should be able to come to a decision, not only from hearing the evidence and from the fact that he may move amongst the people with whom he comes in contact during a few hours, but that he should possess the knowledge that another man may have gained from actual experience in any particular calling throughout the whole of his life time. There must be anomalies created when a man in that position is asked to do what amounts to the impossible. The method by which we propose to get over this difficulty is to provide that the Railway Commissioner, as well as the railway officers, shall be represented permanently on the board—I mean for the purpose of hearing any case that may arise affecting the system, for a definite period. The members of this board, as I have said, will have sitting with them an assessor from each of the sections of the railway service in which the claim may arise.

Mr. Willcock: Will the board then consist of five members?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The board will consist of three members, but there will be two assessors sitting with them. They will be there to give technical advice while the matter is being considered by the board and the case is being heard. The object of this is to ensure that all matters which arise shall be properly placed before the board, with all the detailed information that is available, by some technical officer, who is termed an assessor, always sitting with the board.

Mr. Willcock: Will they have the right to cross examine witnesses?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, they are there to assist in every way. In the hearing of a case they have all the powers of a member of the board, but have no power to come to a determination, which is entirely different from that of assisting in the hearing of a case. For some time past the railway officers have asked that a board of this description should be appointed. The provisions of this Bill do not go as far as the salaried officers have asked. They have made requests to which we are not prepared to ask Parliament to agree. We hold the view that whilst it is desirable that we should have a method by which differences existing between the men employed in our railway system and the Commissioner may be amicably and satisfactorily settled, there are certain things which Parliament must control through its executive. The Commissioner is the person responsible to Parliament and he should be the man in control. The request that has been made by the officers is that this board should not only deal with the classification of officers, and their promotion from the minimum to the maximum in their grades, but that all promotions made by the Commissioner should be subject to review by the board. This is a matter which can be discussed by hon. members if desired. If we have a Commissioner for Railways wholly responsible for the conduct and operation of our system we must place upon him the responsibility of selecting the best officers available to fill the positions that become vacant, even if that means that he has to go beyond a number of officers to select the one he considers best fitted to fill a higher position. I told the representatives of the officers, when they saw me, that I considered it was bad public policy to permit a question of seniority to unduly influence our responsible officers in the making of appointments to fill higher and more responsible positions. The first essential is ability in any man who is selected to fill a position. If we get away from that principle, we shall be in danger of breaking down our system. Many of the difficulties which occur amongst our public officials are due to the fact that men imagine that, when they have held a position for a long time and behaved decently and have no record against them, they are entitled to promotion. Members are frequently approached by people who claim to have grievances, and who say that they have not had a single mark against them for a period of 20 years, but who show no special ability for any higher position. There was one officer in particular whom it took two years to get rid of. He was filling a position in one department and applied for another position at a higher salary. The permanent head of his department, knowing his work in the other position, recommended him for the new post, but it turned out that he was unable to fill the new position satisfactorily either to himself or his permanent head. This officer was subsequently declared to be incompetent, and after some time he was obliged to relinquish his position.

Mr. Davies: What happened to him?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Inquiries were held and finally we got rid of him. I only mention this to show the unfortunate impression that gets abroad that, if a man remains long enough in a position and has nothing against him, he is entitled to promotion for that reason alone. The basis of promotion should be the ability and proficiency shown by an officer in the position that he already holds. If an officer does show such ability for promotion he should be encouraged and given the promotion to which he is entitled. If we arrive at the position when we have a board not only to deal with the classification of officers, but to have the right to review the decisions of the Commissioner with regard to promotion, we shall be adopting a bad public policy. That is practically the only point that remains in dispute. There is, however, one other point. This classification board has been asked for, but the officers of the railway service also want any decision that may be arrived at by the board to be accepted as final by all parties without question. In view of the fact that our railway system is responsible for probably more than 50 per cent. of our total revenue expenditure, I do not think we should hand over to anyone, completely outside Parliament, the control of all matters affecting our operations, including wages and salaries. After all, we have to maintain in our

Executive and in Parliament, and thus in the hands of the people, the control of our big trading concerns. Otherwise no one will be responsible. The Government might turn round and say, "The board have decided the question, and the money will have to be provided." That would mean that we should lose popular government. Even the Commissioner of Railways is a servant of the State, and, like every other public servant, has no objection to claiming an increase of salary if he considers himself underpaid. We can hardly get any person to sit on such a board as this who is not directly or indirectly interested in obtaining better pay and better conditions of employment for those in the State service. Even a person who is entirely outside the Government service, who is in private employment, views the matter largely in the light of his own position. But the Government require to take a view with respect to the interests of the whole community. The Executive, while dealing fairly with State employees, must protect the interests of those who have to find the money to carry on the State business undertakings. In the circumstances, without introducing any innovation but merely adopting the provision of the Victorian Act, we declare that the award shall operate when approved by the Governor-in-Council. On the face of it that may appear to be giving the board power and then taking it away from them. But one must admit that no Government could refuse to accept an equitable award arrived at by a board of this kind. If the Government did so, they would be answerable to Parliament for their refusal, and thus they would risk losing their political lives. However, suppose it was not a question of merely an equitable award, but a question of an award that was absolutely absurd on the face of it. Then the Government, representing the people, should take the responsibility of saying whether such award is to be accepted in its entirety or with modifications. If that condition is not established, I am afraid we shall lose the grip of everything essential to the carrying on of public affairs in Western Australia. In that regard let me add that this Bill does not give the right of appeal from a decision of the Commissioner as regards classification, but actually gives the board power to make the classification. Under existing conditions the Commissioner may appoint his principal officers. The classification board go through the railway service and finally decide that officers holding certain positions shall receive certain minimum and maximum salaries. The Commissioner then approves or otherwise. If a salary fixed by the board exceeds a certain amount, then, under the Railways Act, the approval of the Minister is required. Otherwise it is a question of the approval of the Commissioner. But now we propose to change the position entirely, and to provide that the board shall in the first instance make the actual classification of all officers in the railway service. That is the reason why we desire this power as a safeguard. It may be argued that the safeguard is unnecessary; I believe there is some force in that argument. It is not to be supposed that the Government would take up such a ridiculous attitude as to refuse to accept a fair and equitable award. However, the provision is necessary as a kind of safety valve. In view of the fact that this Bill makes a violent change in the method of fixing salaries and conditions of employment in the railway service, we ought to still retain the responsibility of the Executive, who in the final analysis are responsible to Parliament, and through Parliament to the people.

Hon. T. Walker: Would the magistrate have to go round with the board to assess salaries?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

Hon. T. Walker: It will take him all his time.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is so; but, after all, this work will not occupy the magistrate during the whole of a twelvemonth, or during every twelvemonth for the remainder of his official life. The first classification will no doubt require extended consideration by the magistrate; but after that it will be largely a question of changed conditions which might occur from time to time, and which would have to be reviewed by the classification board. After the first classification the job would not be very onerous. Changes will no doubt take place, but even then they will not need to be reviewed until after the lapse of six months. Therefore the magistrate is not likely to have his time occupied at any length by any classification after the first one. Next as regards the powers and jurisdiction of the classification board. Clause 15 provides—

> (1) The board shall have jurisdiction (a) to classify all salaried positions in the service of the Government railways, except heads and subheads of branches; (b) to create classes, and to provide the minimum and maximum salaries of all positions in any class; (c) to prescribe the method by which officers shall be advanced from the minimum to the maximum of the salary assigned to their positions, or from class to class; (d) to hear and determine any appeal by any officer or class of officers in respect of the classification, reclassification, or salary of such officer or class of officers, or his or their office or offices. (2) The board may determine (a) the maximum number of hours to be worked daily or in any period; (b) the maximum number of hours which a shift may extend; (c) the minimum interval for rest between shifts; (d) the maximum number of shifts to be worked weekly or in any period; and (e) what payment or allowance (if any) shall be made by reason of any condition of employment affecting remuneration (but

not including payments of allowances in respect of accidents) such as payments of allowances to be made (i.) for overtime or emergency work; (ii.) for Sunday, holiday, or night work; (iii.) for travelling time; (iv.) for relieving expenses; (v.) for travelling or incidental expenses; (vi.) for relieving in higher position; (vii.) for district allowances; (viii.) for work performed under special conditions; (ix.) for youths living away from home; (x.) for sick pay, annual and long service leave; and may make awards with respect to any of the matters referred to in this subsection.

I do not think that clause omits much. In my opinion it provides a board that will represent an easier, simpler, and less expensive tribunal, and one with better technical knowledge available, than any Arbitration Court in existing conditions could possibly be. The board will be available whenever required for the purpose of settling disputes between the Commissioner of Railways and the railway officers, except as to promotion, which matter should remain where it is now, namely with the responsible officer, the Commissioner of Railways.

Mr. Willcock: Will promotion be subject to appeal?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: A request to that effect has been made. In theory the appeal is all right, but in practice it will undermine the essentials of popular government. In the absence of the Minister for Works, I may point out that we are extending Government operations in many directions; and that is all the more reason why we should continue to centre in our responsible officers the duty of selecting those best fitted for promotion. Assuming for the sake of argument that the Commissioner of Railways should make a promotion purely as a matter of favouritism and without consideration of merit, then the papers could always be called for in Parliament, and questions could be asked, and motions could be moved, and the Commissioner could be called to account and could even be dismissed. In the circumstances there is not very much danger of favouritism. I doubt, however, whether the Commissioner can make even an appointment of an office boy without the Railway Officers' Association making a protest on the ground that some other boy feels he is entitled to the position. The association never seem to consider that when taking up the case of one person they are attacking some other person.

Hon. P. Collier: I believe once there was nearly a strike over the appointment of a call boy.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I believe so. After all, we must centre responsibility somewhere, and we cannot centre it in the members of a board who are not concerned with the operation of the railway system after they have arrived at their decision. Their responsibilty ends the moment they give a decision. They walk out then, and somebody else has the responsibility of working a huge department that accounts for half our expenditure and half our revenue.

Mr. Willcock: Would you not give the board power to make recommendations with regard to promotion?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Personally I see no serious objection to giving the board the right to make recommendations to the Minister in this connection. But the point is the difficulty of proving to a board or a tribunal that Jim Smith is a more capable officer than Tom Jones. I think that if the hon. member interjecting were operating a business, and I will not say a business of anything like the same magnitude as our railway system, he would insist on the right to fill any vacancy with the man he considers best qualified for it.

Mr. Willcock: But if Tom Jones were stationed at Leonora, I would not know anything about him.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But the hon. member's officers would be able to inform him regarding the abilities of Tom Jones.

Mr. Willcock: That is where favouritism comes in.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not know about that. If there were a right of appeal, how would that right operate? Before a board Jones, of Leonora, would probably be able to make out a very good case for himself: "Not a black mark against me although I have been in the Government service for 20 years." But Jones, of Leonora, may never have held a position where he could be sufficiently tried to prove himself either a success or a failure.

Mr. Johnston: And therefore Jones, of Leonora, is left.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Positions of any monetary value in the Railway Department are filled by officers who have been tried out in acting appointments. That is where the test comes in. As a fact, for ten years there has not been much positive complaint with regard to promotions in the Railway Department. At one time we had a Chief Traffic Manager of pretty strong personality.

Mr. Willcock: And of strong language, too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That Chief Traffic Manager used to make it a point—or so it was said—to promote those who gave him the least worry, those who showed the least prominence. For what reason that is stated I do not know. Recently the officers themselves have told me that, as regards promotions latterly, they could unhesitatingly pronounce them to be satisfactory; this notwithstanding that men of junior rank had been placed in senior positions. The officers have not protested against these promotions simply because they themselves felt satisfied with them. But, almost in the same breath, the officers suggest that senior-

ity shall be the rule to guide the Commissioner in making promotions, that the question of merit shall not come in until after seniority has been considered, that if Jim Smith has been 25 years in the railway service, then, no matter what he has done, he must have preference over Tom Jones, who has been in the service only 24 years. Failing preference to Jim Smith, they say, there must be an appeal. That is the only point actually remaining in dispute, and it is not a point which affects salaries or conditions of employment. This matter of promotion may be left for future consideration. In fact, it is not a matter which should be dealt with in a Bill of this kind, providing for classification of the service and all matters arising out of the classification. The question whether the Commissioner shall be responsible to a board as regards the promotion he makes, should be dealt with under the principal Act. Therefore, I repeat, that matter may be left for future consideration. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Willcock debate adjourned

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second reading.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [8.16] in moving the second reading said: On two occasions during the life of this Parliament I have endeavoured to secure an amendment of the Constitution Act, with a view to broadening the franchise for the Legislative Council. I am sorry to say that those attempts failed. In the belief that by persistent efforts the merits of the proposals will be recognised, both by members in this Chamber and by those in another place, I am now making a third attempt. The Bill is a small one, consisting of three clauses only. It is exactly similar to the one I introduced in 1918. Although I secured a majority of the members voting in this Chamber, the Bill failed to pass on that occasion because it did not obtain the necessary statutory majority. In the Constitution Act Amendment Bill which was introduced by the Attorney General last session, an attempt was made in a similar direction, and although I failed to obtain that measure of liberalisation which I think is necessary, some restrictions which exist to-day respecting the Legislative Council franchise were removed. When the Bill went before the Legislative Council, however, it was lost by the narrow majority, I think, of two. This Bill repeals Section 15 of the Constitution Act Amendment Act, 1899, which sets out the qualifications for an elector for the Legislative Council. Briefly, those qualifications comprise freehold estate in possession of the value of £50, a householder occupying a dwelling of an annual value of £17, a leasehold of an annual value of £17, or a holder of a lease or license from the Crown, valued at £10. I propose to strike out the whole of these qualifications with a view to inserting what is known as the household franchise. That is the popular term applied to it. It will provide that any person who is a householder or who is an inhabitant, occupier as owner or tenant of any dwelling house, irrespective of whether it be a mansion or a humble cottage, shall be qualified as an elector for the Legislative Council. The Bill is not what I would wish it to be. Even as it stands, while broadening the franchise somewhat, and admitting a considerable number of people who are to-day excluded, it will not extend the franchise to a large and important section of the citizens of the State. The section I refer to mainly comprises single people who are lodging in boarding houses and so on. They are not occupiers and so will not be admitted to the franchise, even if the Bill be passed as I submit it.

Mr. Robinson: It will exclude those who live in their parents' homes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I was going to add that point. All those will be excluded.

Mr. Johnston: What about the wife of an occupier?

Hon. P. COLLIER: She is not included, because the Bill does not provide for a joint occupancy. The husband will be the occupier of the house and the wife will be excluded. This fact will ease the mind of some members opposite who usually display concern when any attempt is made to interfere with the bulwark of our Constitution. I merely give that assurance in order that such members may realise that there will still be a very large section of our citizens deprived of the franchise. I do not agree with that principle at all, but there seems to be in the minds of some members of this House, and of people elsewhere, that there is some virtue in a franchise which leaves a very considerable section of the community unprovided for. I would like to achieve what I attempted on a former occasion and that is, to wipe away all restrictions, so that actual manhood and womanhood shall be an all and sufficient qualification for Legislative Council franchise. Without going to another place where the members are supposed to be jealous of their rights and privileges, I could not secure a majority in favour of such a proposeal even in this democratic House, which represents the adult population of the State. Being forced into the position of taking one step at a time, I am bringing in this Bill, which will take us half way.

Mr. Robinson: What about the people already on the roll; will you disqualify them?

Hon. P. COLLIER: If those people are not qualified under this Bill, their names will be removed.

Mr. Robinson: Would you allow those already on the roll to remain there? For in-

stance, sons and daughters of many electors are qualified and are on the roll.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There are a number of people qualified because of the property qualification. Those people would be removed from the roll because I do not believe in the property qualification. Although this Bill would have the effect of removing some of these people from the roll, it would only mean the removal of those who have no right to be there other than because of the property qualification. If anyone wishes to prevent this happening, they should go with me and say, "We will abolish all restrictions whatever so that every man and woman over 21 years of age shall be entitled to the franchise." I would like to abolish the property qualification. I recognise it is hopeless to attempt to do so in a Parliament constituted as at present. As it is, this Bill will admit thousands, and probably tens of thousands of deserving and useful citizens to the franchise for the Legislative Council. We are behind the times in Western Australia in matters of constitutional reform. There has not been any amendment of the franchise for the Legislative Council since 1910. I believe, in that respect, we occupy a unique position. The war has altered the point of view of most people in this world and, in consequence, great strides have been made in constitutional reform, chiefly in the direction of admitting the inherent right to citizenship of the great bulk of the people of those countries, a right which was not previously recognised at all. In New South Wales and Queensland they have nominee chambers. Even that system is more democratic than the one in vogue in Western Australia. Although the people have no voice in the direct election of the members to the nominee chambers, they have an effective voice in an indirect way because, if any Government is returned to power pledged to carry out a certain definite policy, and they find that their legislation is blocked in the Upper House, they can nominate a sufficient number of members to the Legislative Council in order to pass the legislation desired. That has been done in Queensland.

Mr. Robinson: Are they unlimited in numbers?

Hon. P. COLLIER: There would be no object in appointing a greater number than would be sufficient to give the Government of the day the majority they require. Undoubtedly it is a more democratic system than ours in Western Australia with its restricted franchise.

Mr. Davies: They are appointed for life?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but if a succeeding Government should have their legislation blocked, they can provide for the appointment of further members.

Mr. Davies: And in the course of time——

Hon. P. COLLIER: Some die.

Mr. Teesdale: Otherwise they might all be councillors.

Hon. T. Walker: They do the same thing in the House of Lords.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is nothing new about it. It was done in New South Wales 30 or 40 years ago. I challenge members opposite to show that, in the period of its history, the Legislative Council in either of the States I have mentioned, have been made unwieldy by reason of the numbers being increased to such an extent as to render the process a farce. We have the spectacle in a so-called democratic community such as this, of 160,000 electors qualified to vote for the Legislative Assembly and only 52,000 on the rolls for the Legislative Council, even less than one-third. The fact that there are 52,000 names on the Council roll must not be taken to imply that there are 52,000 electors; because a considerable number of the electors are registered for a number of provinces. Some of them are entitled to vote for every one of the ten provinces. Consequently, that 52,000 can be reduced by thousands.

The Minister for Works: Not by thousands.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, by thousands. On the goldfields there are any number of blocks owned by men resident in Perth or in other parts of the State.

Mr. Munsie: At least one third of the electors of the South Province are absentee voters.

Hon. P. COLLIER: On two occasions in recent years a candidate in the West Province, although securing a majority in the resident votes was nevertheless defeated by the absentees' votes. No doubt this has happened in other provinces also.

Mr. Johnston: You are going to stop a lot of those people from having any votes at all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I will only stop those who do not occupy a dwelling, men who are single, like the hon. member. Under the Bill the hon. member would not have a vote; but he can easily become qualified. The time has gone by when we should tolerate in a democratic State a condition of things under which 52,000 people have the right to veto the will of 160,000. We are the only country in which this state of affairs has not been altered. Even in the Mother Parliament during recent years the franchise has been altered to such an extent that no fewer than 12 million additional voters, of whom seven million were women, have been placed on the rolls. Not that I say they have advanced beyond our present Act——

Mr. Robinson: They are not up to it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, but it shows that the point of view has been altered, that men's minds have been broadening with the process of the suns, that the old standpoint has been entirely shifted. And if in the past we have been in the forefront in this respect, are we now content to lose that distinction? The fact can be established that the old conservative House of Lords itself is more amenable to the will of the people in England than is our Legislative Council amenable to the will of the people of this State. There is no comparison.

The home of privilege for a thousand years and more has in recent years seen such a complete change effected in the Constitution that to-day it is responsive to the will of the people to a greater extent than is our Legislative Council; because, after a certain process has been gone through, the House of Lords, whether they like it or not, have to pass Bills sent up from the House of Commons. Will hon. members here be content to drift along in the wake of the conservative House of Lords? Are we to say that the members of another place can defy the will of the people? I ask those who are opposed to the broadening of the franchise for this Chamber if they are prepared to stand up before any audience and declare that they will abolish the franchise for the Federal Senate and substitute therefor a property qualification. I cannot understand the inconsistency of men who will fight to the last against any liberalisation of the franchise of our own State House and appear to be content with an adult franchise for the Federal Parliament.

The Minister for Works: We never can get anything from the Federal Parliament.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is not because of the franchise of the Senate. Any disabilities this State may have laboured under as the result of Federal legislation have been due to the House of Representatives, where the real power lies. Is the Minister prepared to say that he would go back to a property qualification for the Senate?

The Minister for Works: I would go back to anything that would secure for us better treatment from Federation.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has nothing to do with the franchise of the Senate, with which I am dealing at present.

Mr. Johnston: We might want to give you household franchise, but not to take away the vote from thousands of farmers' sons, as the Bill proposes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Because of their property qualification? That matter can be considered in Committee. Personally I do not believe in the property qualification. It is all very well because of a farmer's son who would be qualified under the hon. member's proposal——

Hon. Sir H. B. Lefroy: He has to hold land.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, and in the eyes of some members that is the whole qualification.

Mr. Johnston: But he has land without a house.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member will look at the definition of "dwelling-house" he will see that it will not prevent the farmer's son from getting on the roll; because a cheap structure which can be erected in a few hours will come under the definition of "dwelling-house."

Mr. Teesdale: But he has to inhabit it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course. I believe in the principle. He has no right to vote, otherwise. Of course the hon. member is still sticking to the property qualification. I say the principle is wrong. It is not the possession of property that makes the man. There are in the city to-day men who have votes by virtue of owning slum property. Even if a man happened to be a university professor or an artist, a man amongst the best and rarest of our citizens, unless he possesses the necessary property qualification he is not on a level with the owner of a slum property.

The Minister for Works: Would he not require a house of a greater value than £17 per annum?

Hon. P. COLLIER: He may not; he may be living at the Grand.

Mr. O'Loghlen: All the people at Jarrahdale, where the Minister comes from, pay a rental of 4s. weekly. They are not qualified.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is amazing that some hon. members should refuse to open their minds to anything except the rights of property. What was the value of their property when the nation was in danger? Was it property that saved the nation when tens of thousands of young men, embarking at Fremantle, went to the other side of the world to fight for the preservation of property in this State and in other parts of the Empire? When the would-be recruit walked into Francis-street he was not asked the nature of his property qualification. No one demanded to know whether he had a block of land worth £50, or a house worth £17 per annum. No. He was a hero, possessing the true spirit of British manhood. If he was good enough to encounter all the dangers of war, regardless of his possession of this world's effects, is he not good enough to be admitted to the inherent rights of citizenship and exercise a vote for both Houses of the Legislature?

Mr. Johnston: This House passed it last session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Passed it because it was patriotic and popular. The hon. member says that this House passed it. But this House, while agreeing to give the vote to members of the A.I.F., would not agree to give the vote to the fathers and mothers who had trained those young men, unless they possessed the necessary property. Would the hon. member say that the fathers and mothers who reared the boys are not equally entitled to a vote for the Legislative Council?

Mr. Robinson: Probably they all have it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If so, how does the hon. member account for the discrepancy between 52,000 voters for the Council and 160,000 for the Assembly? There are 110,000 men and women in this State who have a vote for this House, but no vote for another place.

Mr. Robinson: Because the household cannot be divided; there can be only one representative of a household, whether under existing legislation or under your Bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The fact remains that there is a difference of 110,000 voters.

Mr. Davies: Probably there are in the metropolitan area thousands of electors who, although entitled to vote for the Council, are not on the roll.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so. Is it surprising, when we see only something like 15 per cent. of the electors on the roll bothering to take part in a by-election? Is it not proof that the electors are taking no interest in it? They are taking no interest in it, because of its narrow and restricted franchise. If we wish to create interest in and popularise any concern, we must broaden the basis, give everyone a say in it and get everybody interested in it. Then we shall get a better percentage. On an average about 60 per cent. of the people exercise their vote at the Assembly elections. The percentage who voted has been as high as high as 80, so that a substantial majority of the people of this State do take an interest in the election of members to this Chamber; but at the elections for another place, we find that only some 13 or 15 per cent. bother to go to the poll. The time has gone by when we can call ourselves a democratic institution if we are going to preserve these restrictions upon the exercise of the rights of full citizenship. It is manhood that counts. Does the fact that a man is possessed of wealth, lives in a palace, or possesses certain property, make him a better man than he who is not possessed of these worldly goods? Frequently the man possessed of riches is much inferior to the man who possesses none, but the latter is debarred while property counts every time. It was not property that saved civilisation—if civilisation was saved—in the war. It was the bodies of the men of the nation, those who were engaged in the war, and it did not matter much whether they owned the wealth of Croesus or all the palaces or all the sheep runs; these things did not count in the war. In the real crisis men alone count. Men alone count in the development of the country. Who is doing the work of this State? We are told that the crying need is production, and still more production. Who is going to increase our production? Not the men who own fine houses or broad acres. The men who to-day are producing the wealth and developing the country are what might be termed the common people—members will understand the sense in which I use this term—the men and women who are not possessed of much, if any, of this world's goods. It is the men who go down into the mines in thousands and produce the gold, the men who go into the coal mines and dig out the coal which is so necessary to the life of any nation, the men who go into the factories and work shops and into the fields, these are the men who constitute the nation. It is these men and women who do the work of the world. When the war broke out those who governed England quickly found out that what counted were the men and women, people who in pre-war days were practically regarded as being unworthy of citizenship, the great mass of the people who had no voice in the government of the country and who possessed none of the wealth of the country. A few years ago General Booth said that one-tenth of the population of England was living below the bread line.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Campbell-Bannerman said 12 million people in England were living below poverty line.

Hon. P. COLLIER: These men saved England in her crisis—not the men who live in their halls and ancient castles, though I suppose they did their share the same as other units of the people, but they could do no more than the humblest citizen of the land. This fact has been recognised in other countries, in America, in Great Britain, in fact everywhere else. We hear much about the causes of unrest. If we wish to minimise the causes of unrest, those charged with the responsibilities of governing the country must recognise that the whole of the people are entitled to the rights and privileges which were enjoyed by only a limited section in pre-war days. Point to me to-day countries which have been autocratic and where the rights of the masses of the people have been denied, and I shall name them as the countries where there have been revolutions.

Mr. Teesdale: Do you think the mass of the people are very interested in this matter?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am certain they are.

Mr. Teesdale: Look at the polling lately at the different elections.

Hon. P. COLLIER: For the Legislative Council?

Mr. Teesdale: For both Houses.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Does the hon. member realise that the paucity of the polling for another place is due to the fact that the masses have not a vote for it?

Mr. Teesdale. The polling for this House, too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That averages about 60 per cent., as I have already explained, which is a very high percentage. It has been as high as 80 per cent. How can the hon. member expect 110,000 men and women who have not a vote for another place to be interested in the elections for that place?

Mr. Teesdale: You will not qualify them all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, because the hon. member will not go with me. The hon. member will not even go with me to the extent of this measure. Surely he will not oppose the Bill because I ask him to include some of the 110,000 people. He cannot surely oppose the Bill because I do not include the lot.

Mr. Johnston: Some would be excluded.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have the record of the vote of this House previously, and the hon. member amongst others voted against the Bill, not on the ground that it did not go far enough, not on the ground that it would not include all, but because it was going too far.

Mr. Griffiths: Cutting a lot out.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Cutting a lot out!

Mr. Griffiths: That is the objection which was raised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would include them all. Would the hon. member vote with me? The hon. member is not sincere; neither is any other member who raises that objection sincere. I want to nail members down. It is of no use the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) attempting to defend himself—and he is pretty agile at defending himself—on the ground that the measure will exclude some who already have votes. That reason will not be sufficient. It was not the reason why the Bill was lost on the previous occasion. Every one of those members voted against the second reading. Had they been sincere in their suggestion, they would have voted for the second reading and moved to amend the Bill in Committee. That was the proper course for them to adopt.

Mr. Johnston: Will you accept an amendment to that effect?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I shall leave that to the judgment of the House. Any hon. member who believes in household franchise is not entitled to vote against the second reading, simply because it will take the vote from some who now enjoy that right.

Mr. Johnston: Will you support that amendment?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know from long experience that members are pretty clever in putting forward for outside consumption every reason or explanation except the real one for voting against the Bill. It is called camouflage. Subsequently, when they get on the platform, when the details of the Bill are not known to the audience, they explain that they voted against the Bill, not because it would extend the franchise, but because it really took the vote from a number of people who already had it. The audience not knowing the details, swallow that kind of thing, especially in rural districts like Williams-Narrogin.

Mr. Johnston: That is not fair, because I have supported this franchise every time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I believe that is so. I have listened to speeches in this House, and I will not say that those who made them resorted to subterfuge but they were speeches for public consumption, urging all kinds of explanations except the real one. One of the most common of these was that the Bill did not go far enough. If members desire to broaden the franchise for another place and extend the vote to every adult in the State, they can vote for the second reading of the Bill and, in Committee, move an amendment to give effect to their wishes. I should be only too glad to accept such an amendment. If this Bill is defeated on the second reading, it will be defeated because those responsible for its defeat believe in retaining the present restricted property qualification for the electors of another place. That will be the sole and only ground for its defeat. I want the people outside to know this; I want them to know that, while all the world has been moving forward since the war is over and everything is safe for democracy, these members are content to sit back in the same old groove and say to the masses of the people, "Go ye slaves and produce more wealth, but do not interfere with our rights and privileges in another place." That is the attitude of many members. It was stated that another place is the bulwark of our Constitution. The member for Moore (Sir H. B. Lefroy) adopted that attitude when the Bill was before us previously, but I shall say this for the hon. member that he adopted a frank, open, honest attitude. He expressed his sentiments quite frankly, and opposed the Bill because he did not believe in the principle. In that respect he differed from some other hon. members who voted against the Bill. I hope this will not be the case with the present Bill.

Hon. Sir H. B. Lefroy: Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am satisfied that if the hon. member and myself had only the good luck to be sitting on the same side of the House, we would so influence each other's ideas——

Hon. Sir H. B. Lefroy: I believe we would.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That perhaps we would both broaden and benefit——

Hon. Sir H. B. Lefroy: And attain perfection.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know about perfection, but at least we would get nearer to it than we are at present. I must express the hope that, in the interests of the people of this country, the Bill will be passed. I speak as one with some knowledge of the feelings of the masses of the people, especially in the industrial centres, a knowledge gained in a quarter of a century of the sentiments and aspirations of the men and women who year in and year out have to toil for a living. These people have nothing but scorn and contempt for men who are well placed with regard to this world's goods, or who are placed in high and responsible positions, when they read of the views expressed that it is their duty to be content with their lot, to work harder and produce more wealth, and that then all their troubles about the cost of living will end. That is not their point of view, and they are right. We have to recognise that times have altered. Men are not going to be content with the limitations upon their rights such as they were content to submit to in former times. I believe that all this unrest of which we read, and other troubles, are due to a combination of factors, of which the franchise of the Legislative Council is one, which amounts to a denial to the people of the right they ought to possess as men and women who are really the bulwark of the nation's wealth and prosperity.

Mr. Teesdale: A lot of them will not exercise it when they have the right.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is impossible to get perfection. About 60 per cent. of them do exercise it. After all one cannot be dis-

satisfied when one secures a majority. The majority decides all things in this world. If we can get 60 per cent. of the people to exercise the franchise there is not much to complain of.

Mr. Teesdale: I thought 60 per cent. was too high.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The percentage may not be so high in the hon. member's electorate where the difficulties are great, but in the towns where there are reasonable facilities from 60 to 70 per cent. of the people exercise their vote. We shall not improve that position by still retaining the restrictions in connection with the Legislative Council.

Mr. Davies: If this measure became law would it increase the number of electors for the Legislative Council?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am certain it would.

Mr. Davies: That should be our object.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would have no object in introducing a Bill which would not admit to the franchise a considerable section of the people, who are to-day excluded from it.

Mr. Teesdale: You are excluding a lot of them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, because I think they should be excluded.

Mr. Teesdale: Are you putting in enough to take their places?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am excluding these, because they have not now a dwelling house. I am also excluding them because hon. members will not join with me in admitting them. I introduced a Bill during this very Parliament to give a vote to every man and woman over 21. I could not go further than that. There could be no objection to such a Bill as that on the score that someone was excluded. A number of members raised the objection that a considerable section of the people would be excluded by the Bill.

Mr. Johnston: That is the objection.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is not a sincere objection, because I gave the House an opportunity of passing a Bill which would admit to the franchise everyone over 21, but the House refused to pass it. I do not believe I received support from one member now sitting on the other side of the House.

Mr. Johnston: Why not consent to the existing franchise plus the household franchise?

Mr. Davies: I think that is the weakness.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Munsie: Partly because you do not believe in plural voting.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The existing franchise plus the household franchise! The existing franchise provides for plural voting.

Mr. Griffiths: Cut that out.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then it would not be the existing franchise. At all events, I am cutting out some of the foolish points hon. members are raising.

Mr. Griffiths: There is nothing foolish about having that cut out.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not objecting to the interjections, but I suppose they are disorderly. I do not believe in the property qualification, or in retaining the provisions which allow for plural voting. If we retain Section 16 as it is and merely add the household votes, we shall retain all those anomalies in the way of plural voting that I have outlined. Those who own a block of land worth £50 will be entitled to exercise 10 votes on election day, whilst the householder may have only one vote. I want to equalise matters. I do not want any person who is qualified to vote to have more votes than any other person. Although this Bill does exclude a number of persons, all those who will be entitled to be enrolled will be placed on an equality. They will be entitled to one vote and one only. Every one who is a householder will have a vote, and no one will have more than one vote. If the Bill reaches the Committee stage I shall be glad to hear the views of hon. members upon any amendments they may move in the direction indicated by their interjections. At all events, their proposals do not represent a sufficient reason for voting against the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Works debate adjourned.

BILL—GUARDIANSHIP OF INFANTS.

Second Reading.

Order of the Day read for the resumption from the 15th September of the debate on the second reading.

Question—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Munsie in the Chair; Mr. Rocke in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—On death of father mother to be guardian alone or jointly with others:

Mr. JOHNSTON: What alteration does this make in the existing law?

Mr. ROCKE: This means that if the father dies and leaves a will in which he appoints a guardian for his child, the mother will act as joint guardian with the person appointed by the father. This clause merely gives the mother that measure of justice to which she is entitled.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—The case of separation deed between father and mother:

Mr. PICKERING: Will the hon. member explain this clause?

Mr. ROCKE: The language of the clause is so simple that it needs no explanation.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 9 to 12—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—PRICES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT AND CONTINUANCE.

Second reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [9.16] in moving the second reading said: This is chiefly a continuance Bill, with one or two slight amendments designed to meet various difficulties which have arisen since the Prices Regulation Commission were appointed.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Quite a number of difficulties have arisen.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Some of those difficulties cannot be met by Act of Parliament, but such as can be dealt with we provide for in this Bill. The first thing to consider is whether the position has changed sufficiently to warrant Parliament in refusing to continue the operation of the Prices Regulation Act and therewith the activities of the Prices Regulation Commission. I think most hon. members will admit that we have approached somewhat near the normal as regards trade and commerce within the State. The world's market, however, is still so disturbed that it would be extremely inadvisable for us, who are chiefly an importing country, to remove that restriction on trade and commerce whereby prices are controlled where that is necessary in the public interest. I doubt whether most members of this House have read the report of the Prices Regulation Commission, but from that report it is evident that the Commission have done a fair amount of useful work, if not so much in the matter of reducing prices, still in preventing some abnormal prices. Even with a Prices Regulation Act operating within the State, we have not that measure of control which is essential in respect of many commodities. We can only control prices within the State, and as regards goods imported from the Eastern States and from overseas, we have only the basis of landed cost to go on. Notwithstanding that, however, our Prices Regulation Commission have been able to take effective action in regard to many imported commodities as the result of correspondence with similar bodies in the Eastern States, and thus have been able to disregard the landed cost, which is frequently controlled by merchants without regard to local conditions. Probably most members would agree that control of prices should be continued, though there are people who insist that the law of supply and demand will meet the position.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The law of supply and demand has gone by the board.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think that while demand is so much in excess of supply, anyone can fairly argue that we should not retain some control over prices. The report of the Prices Regulation Commission shows that the operations of that body have been fairly extensive. The Commission can claim to be a representative tribunal. The chairman has had vast commercial experience.

Mr. Munsie: Have you had the housewives' opinion of the Commission?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The housewives may be prejudiced. I prefer to view the Commission from the broader aspect of the general interests of the community. It must be borne in mind, too, that the Commission cannot operate without having regard for business interests as well as other interests. It is unfortunate that in Australia as a whole, and particularly in Western Australia, Government activities are being so largely extended. For the purpose of maintaining those activities on a basis which will enable them to be operated successfully, it is necessary to control prices, and to exercise a greater control in that matter than would be the case if so large a number of our people were not dependent upon Government activities. We have got into the habit of asking for something more and saying "Pass it on." Thus we proceed in a vicious circle, and are unable to "pass it on" without its coming back. The result is that we do not make very much progress. It is as though we had a bladder with a small dent in it, and proceeded to blow the bladder up more, for the purpose of removing the dent. The effect is not only to remove the dent, but to increase the size of the whole bladder. The process has gone on until there is reason to doubt whether, with all the increases in salaries and wages that have taken place, prices of commodities have not increased to such an extent as to leave us no better off than previously. Of course that condition of affairs exists elsewhere also. Australia probably produces as much of its own requirements as any community in the world, and far more than most other communities. We consider that we are entitled to the world's prices for our products if the world requires them.

Mr. Robinson: But not for local consumption.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member were producing a commodity which he could sell outside Australia at a price greater than that obtainable in Australia, he would be very dissatisfied if he were compelled by Act of Parliament to dispose of his commodity in Australia at the lower price. When we require a commodity, we demand it at the cheapest possible price:

but when we have a commodity to sell, we look for the highest possible price. Most of our prices, I may say, depend largely on the price of wheat. I believe the price of wheat to be the basis of our prices generally. I still consider that had we, at the time when it was opportune to do so, taken control of our wheat for the purposes of local consumption, no one in Australia would have been the poorer for it. Even the farmer would have been the richer for it, because the effect of it would have been to keep down the prices of other commodities, commodities which he needs. However, the farmer's costs of production have increased in every direction, and naturally he wants a higher price for his wheat. The member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) apparently takes the view that if we want a commodity we should have it given to us. The man who is able to carry on under existing conditions without looking for good profits is doing fairly well.

Mr. Robinson: But some people want considerably more than a good profit.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Prices Regulation Commission are there to prevent anyone from obtaining more than a fair profit.

Mr. Munsie: The Commission will not do much good until their sittings are held in public.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Commission undoubtedly have done good work.

Mr. Munsie: They would do considerably more good if they sat in public.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think the hon. member would feel the effects.

Mr. Munsie: I would like to see public sittings given a trial.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member's attitude is really one of want of confidence in the members of the Commission.

Mr. Munsie: No, it is not.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister might just as well argue that we have no confidence in our Supreme Court judges because we insist on public trials.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not the position at all.

Mr. Munsie: It is just the same position.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No. The Prices Regulation Commission is made up of a chairman of great experience in the business world, and of two other members who are likely to look after the interests of the general consumer.

Mr. Munsie: I have the fullest confidence in the members of the Commission, but they cannot do what they should do, unless their work is done in public.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member may argue in that way, but he must realise that in commercial life it is frequently impossible to transact business in public, not only from the point of view of the business man making profits but from the point of view of the consumer, who gets the benefit of the business man's placing a commodity on the market. Very frequently what are termed the cunning operations of a business man result in benefit to the consumer.

Mr. O'Loghlen: It is a remarkable thing that the worker in the Arbitration Court must give the minutest details of his expenditure, must expose his poverty, while trade and commerce are sacred all along the line.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The two positions are entirely different. When the worker makes his case before the Arbitration Court, he states definitely the cost of the commodity he requires and on that basis he demands the return for his labour; and frequently the court awards him as wages, not the value of his labour, but the cost of the commodities he requires.

Mr. Davies: Did not the South Australian Commission sit in public?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Notwithstanding the fact that our Commission sit in private, they have kept down the cost of living more effectively than any other Commission in the Commonwealth.

Hon. P. Collier: You cannot make that comparison.

Mr. Munsie: Do you think the case of the oil companies would ever have been taken up in Queensland and been the subject of legislation there, if the Queensland Commmission had not sat in public! The oil companies defied the South Australian Government.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When our Prices Regulation Commission first got to work, they had in many cases to agree to the prices demanded by traders because a disagreement would have meant a famine in an essential commodity.

Mr. Munsie: That is the unfortunate part of the business.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Public hearings would not have affected those cases in the slightest degree.

Mr. Munsie: Would a public hearing have affected the price of beer, for instance?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If we attempt to maintain under the existing abnormal conditions what might be termed the normal course of business, the effect may be detrimental on business affairs in this State for many years to come. I have no hesitation in saying that many things which we have considered detrimental in private, secret trading, have resulted in advantage to the consumer, for this reason, that a business man, by looking round, can often obtain a commodity at a price which will enable him to sell it on the local market at less than the ruling price; and the very fact of his proposed importation becoming known causes other traders to reduce their prices in order to retain their trade. Many commodities are being sold in this State to-day at less than cost price for the purpose of maintaining business. I do not think the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) would suggest that we should compel all business to be done openly merely in order that everybody may know what is being done. It has yet to be proved that anything done in the Eastern

States has had the effect of securing better control than obtains in Western Australia.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Six commercial travellers arrived at Albany in one day and there was no variation in their quotes.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That may be so.

Mr. O'Loghlen: There must have been some honourable understanding.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I admit that in some cases there may be such a thing as an honourable understanding, but it must be remembered that instances are known where traders have broken faith with each other and departed from the honourable understandings when it suited them.

Mr. O'Loghlen: It is the only hope the consumer has.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not believe that at all. There is another point which should be borne in mind, and for which we make provision in the Bill. Sometimes traders' stocks become short and they have to buy on the market at existing rates, while others carrying larger stocks are able to take advantage of the position and increase their prices, thus compelling their less fortunate fellow traders to replenish stocks at the advanced rates. That has occurred in many cases, and the Commission propose that they should be given powers, not of confiscation exactly, but of taking any commodities that are held in excess of actual requirements by one firm in order to distribute them among other traders until stocks are levelled up.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The cost of distribution is added to the price of commodities.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That must happen. Those costs must be added to the charge to the consumer. A trader cannot make profits on the one hand and pay them out on the other without charging the cost of distribution. Unfortunately, a good deal of the difficulty regarding essential foodstuffs is due to the rather haphazard method of distribution in operation. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Brown) will appreciate the point when I mention the number of bakers' carts which are serving houses in one street. Then there are the butchers and the milkmen, as well as others, and how we exist under such conditions it is difficult to imagine.

Mr. O'Loghlen: That is what Blatchford discussed many years ago.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have not found the solution of the difficulty yet. The only other method by which we can prevent an earlier rise than is desirable in many cases, is to permit the commissioners to take stocks over and distribute them. It may have the same effect as a great many other provisions in our legislation. It will not be required to operate it perhaps, but it will have the effect on those who hold stocks of inducing them to distribute the stocks before any one trader has to buy at the existing advanced prices.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Have you had any protest from the Chamber of Commerce against the continuation of this Act?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not heard of any.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Well, they must have something to say about it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There are people who objected when this measure was introduced in the first place and they will continue to object. No doubt from their standpoint they are right. Naturally the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loghlen) would object if we were to take exception to the utterances from time to time which he makes in the interests of his constituents, although at the same time such a system might be for the general good.

Mr. Piesse: Will you exempt grain held for seed purposes?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That would all depend. If it were held for a farmer's personal use, presumably it would be exempt but, if held in order to take advantage of a shortage so as to secure the benefit of increased prices which would have to be paid by a man less fortunate than himself, the Commission would probably step in.

Hon. P. Collier: This position will not interfere with the world's parity, I presume?

Mr. O'Loghlen: The Commission would find difficulty in fixing the price of different grain for seed wheat. One wheat is worth twice as much as another for this purpose.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The Commission have not made any suggestion at present to indicate that they propose to deal with that phase of the question. Should the necessity arise, the commissioners possess sufficient business acumen to deal with it.

Mr. Robinson: They have the power in the existing Bill.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: They have that power. This simply means that when one firm holds large stocks and will not sell, and another trader has to buy at excessive prices, notwithstanding that huge quantities of the commodity are in store, the commissioners will have the right to commandeer so much as is required for the purpose of distribution among the other traders, without loss to the original holder. Of course I admit that the transaction will represent a loss to him, inasmuch as the trader will not be permitted to take advantage of the rise and secure the greater profits anticipated. We desire to make a fair adjustment.

Mr. Robinson: The trader is not allowed the increased price on such commodities. He cannot sell on replacement values.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That may or may not be correct, but I know a case of a number of traders who bought a commodity at the same time. Subsequently an increase in price occurred. All the traders with the exception of one secured their supplies at the earlier price and the other got his consignment at the increased price, and naturally got permission to sell on the basis of the increased

price. The other traders were supposed to sell at the lower figure. The result was that all the traders sold at the increased price because, they said, they did not want to hamper the operations of the other trader.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The poor consumer suffered.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The trader who secured his delivery last should have been able to get the goods at the same price as the others. The community would have received the benefit and no one would have been the loser. I admit, however, that that does not prove anything. All the Commission ask is that when the market is bare they shall have the power to take the necessary proportions of goods held and even up stocks.

Mr. Robinson: That is to say, some foolish, improvident trader will benefit by the brains of the trader who has secured his supply.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There may be something in that, but these things are not always brought about by brain power. They frequently happen by the application of purse power. That is entirely a different proposition.

The Minister for Works: At the same time, even that requires brains.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Under existing conditions, there is no trader worth a "twopenny dump" who cannot foresee a rise or fall in the market for essential requirements, and if his purse is big enough, he can purchase sufficient to hold in stock until he can benefit from the higher price. That has happened more than once.

Mr. Robinson: Not with these necessary commodities.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No?

Mr. Robinson: The Commission do not allow it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Let me suggest such an instance as the following: the supplies required by the State in a certain commodity, we will say, amount to 1,000 tons. One firm can secure 500 tons, and ten other firms can only secure 500 tons between them. The stocks held by the ten traders will be exhausted more quickly than those held by the firm having 500 tons at its disposal.

Mr. Robinson: But it is sold at the same price.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But when these ten traders buy on the rising market, they must get their goods only at an increased price from the other trader.

Mr. Robinson: That trader cannot sell at an increased price. The Commission do not allow it. You do not understand the position. The Commission would make that man sell at the old price, and they would be quite right too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is the statement made by the hon. member; but it does not work out in practice.

Mr. Robinson: It does.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It does not. I have mentioned a case where it did not work out.

Mr. Robinson: That was due to the stupidity of some Government official.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The fact remains that it does not work out as the hon. member suggests.

Mr. Robinson: You cannot make a general rule from a specific instance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: This alteration in the Bill has been suggested by the Commission, not by Ministers. If the hon. member's contention were correct the commissioners would be asking for something which it is not necessary to give them. Let me read a minute from the Chairman of the Commission—

> In the opinion of the Commission the powers to be conferred by Clause 2 of the Bill are vital to the successful administration of the principal Act, for the following reasons:

There is no question about the point of view of the Commission. These powers are vital for successful administration. The Chairman gives the following reasons:—

> (a) The provisions of the Federal Commerce Act fix unrestricted free trade as between States. (b) Federal Statutes obtain precedence to State enactments. (c) During the past few months a serious shortage of offal existed in the State in spite of the fact that the mill output was increased, the shortage due to large shipments from the State, which the powers invested in the Commission were unable to prevent, and these shipments at prices in excess of proclaimed rates—in some instances 50 per cent. higher having been secured, no portion of such increase benefiting the primary producer. Other instances can be cited where commodities imported into the State for consumption in Western Australia have been re-exported to other States at prices in excess of rates proclaimed by this Commission. Commodities thus transferred to other States can be re-imported at enhanced rates to the disadvantage of the whole community. This condition has actually occurred in the case of offal, orders having been placed at increased prices in the Eastern States during the past fortnight.

Mr. Robinson: No one objects to Clause 2.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: What are you objecting to then?

Mr. Robinson: I object to your argument; it is outside Clause 2.

Mr. Johnston: Will that file be laid on the Table of the House?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member should differentiate between files and minutes. These are notes prepared for me in connection with this Bill, and in any case I have given the whole of the information I have. I must have misread Clause 2 if the hon. member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) says that my argument is beyond the scope of that portion of the Bill.

Mr. Robinson: The clause says that you can only use those powers when a trader refuses to sell at the fixed price. You did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If I did no say so before, I say so now. If I did not make it perfectly clear before, I did so when I made the point regarding one trader holding half the supplies of a commodity for the State while his less fortunate fellow traders had the balance distributed among them and consequently had their stocks dispersed more quickly, necessitating purchase on a rising market.

Mr. Robinson: You cannot do that; it is an offence under the principal Act.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member has heard what the Commission said about it. The Commission point out that owing to the prices here not being acceptable, some merchants have exported commodities to the Eastern States. As a matter of fact the Commission said that some of the commodities imported into the State have been re-exported to the Eastern States and re-imported at an enhanced value. If the Commission could seize the goods before they were re-exported to the Eastern States they would prevent that rise, which is of no value to the primary producer and is prejudicial to the consumer.

Mr. Johnston: Will that clause apply to breweries?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: All I can tell the hon. member is that the Commission have proclaimed beer as a food and, I understand from the chairman, in all parts of the State, including Wyalcatchem; so the hon. member's interests ought to be fully protected. Other members of the Commission have put up their opinions, among them Mr. Burgess, the workers' representative, who submits one or two facts in support of Clause 2. This is what he said—

> On the 21st May the Commission found it necessary to proclaim the retail price of jam at 14s. per dozen. Jams held by the trade had been purchased at a price of 11s. 9d. per dozen and less, but owing to the sharp rise in the price of sugar future purchases had to be made by the trade at 15s. 5d. per dozen. In view of the fact that contracts had been made by traders for the supply of jam, which contracts were completed by the manufacturers, stocks of jam were available to satisfy the requirements of this community for many months ahead, and a subsequent census of stocks supported the decision of the Commission. We find, however, that in certain proclaimed areas some storekeepers' stocks are completely depleted, while others still have large supplies on hand, and it is usually the trader who continues to make sales on previous basis of his trade who runs out of stock first, and the man who shows a tendency to hold back in the hope of an increased price being obtainable who has the stock. We are of the opinion, as a Commission, that the power to acquire stocks from those holding large supplies and make the same available to those whose stocks are depleted, will have the effect of all traders running out of stocks at the same time, and would be of a decided advantage to the community as a whole, besides assisting the Commission in their efforts to fix an equitable price. The same position applies to butter. At the present time we have evidence that some traders have ample stocks of butter to supply the requirements of their customers for some time ahead, whilst others can only purchase at a very much increased cost. Had the Commission the power to make available to each trader supplies at the old cost, this obviously would be a decided advantage to the great majority of the people concerned; whereas we are faced with this position: at the present moment we must allow an all round increase in price which would enable those holding stocks at the lower price to advance on the new basis of purchase, or else we must refuse to grant an increase which is going to penalise the genuine trader who is out of stock. We could quote further instances of the desirability of having the power asked for, but think this is sufficient to impress those responsible with the necessity for retaining the clause.

That, I think, answers the member for Canning.

Mr. Robinson: Your Clause 2 does not go as far as that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Then we will consider the question of amending it.

Mr. Robinson: The clause is all right as it is.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Then I want to know what the hon. member is complaining of. I am trying to show that the clause was inserted at the expressed wish of the Commission. The clause is taken from the Acts of New South Wales and South Australia. The amendments contained in Clauses 3, 4, and 5 are consequential on Clause 2. Clause 6 is taken from the Victorian Act. Clause 7 is intended to facilitate the fixing of prices by agreement with the merchants. At present the price can only be effectively fixed by proclamation. We now suggest by this amendment that the Commission may fix a price with the consent of the merchants. Clause 8 is to correct an error in the existing Act. The balance of it is set out in the report of the Commission, which is before hon. members, and which will be sufficient evidence of the fact that it has been to a great extent effective, and that it can be made more effective if these amendments are agreed to. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—ARCHITECTS.

Second reading.

Debate resumed from 5th October.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [10.52]: I scarcely expected that the second reading would have been continued this evening; and most certainly I did not think I should be called upon to speak to it, for I expected the wealth of opposition that would be offered to it by members on that side would have been sufficient to carry on the debate till the adjournment. In the absence of the Attorney General, who moved the second reading, I assume that the Bill is now in charge of the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering). I propose to oppose the Bill from the first clause to the last. We were informed by the Attorney-General that the Bill had been introduced for the protection of the public. This session seems to be peculiarly devoted to legislation framed in the interests of the general public. First we have this Architects Bill, which has been designed entirely in the interests of the unsuspecting and unsophisticated public who might require the services of architects. Then we had the Dentists Bill, introduced solely in the interests of the public who might require the painful attention of a dentist; and I read in this morning's newspaper that it is proposed to introduce during the present session an Opticians Bill to protect the interests of those people who have need of the services of those professional gentlemen. So, if we succeed in placing on the statute-book these three measures, there will be very few people in the State who cannot feel that they have been protected in some measure or other during this memorable session of this memorable Parliament. The member for Sussex who, as I say, is presumably in charge of the Bill, adopts an amazing attitude. If there is one member in the Chamber who has always stood out for what I might describe as freedom of contract, for freedom of trade, for free commercial relations between nation and nation, free relationship between employer and employee, for freedom, in fact, in its broadest sense, it is the member for Sussex. Yet I find he is championing provisions in the Bill which are the very antithesis of freedom, provisions which stand for restriction, special privileges, special rights, to a degree which I have never known in any Bill previously introduced. I am amazed at the inconsistency of the hon. member. There is to be no world's parity in respect of fees for services rendered by architects.

Mr. Pickering: That is true; they are much below it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But if the Bill becomes law and the board has its way, those fees may speedily be placed very much above world's parity. The hon. member used up a whole volume of notes in opposition to the world's parity for services rendered by architects, whereas I understand he has another volume of notes ready in support of world's parity so far as it relates to the price of wheat. I am pointing to the inconsistency of the hon. member.

Mr. Pickering: You have not succeeded.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I think I have. He faces due north on the Architects Bill and he will attempt to travel due south on the question of the world's parity for wheat.

Mr. Pickering: That is only a bald statement.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But its truth is self-evident to every other member of the House.

Mr. Pickering: You say that I am standing for world's parity for the architects, and also for the farmers.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I said the hon. member is not standing for world's parity for the architects. The hon. member would fix the fees that architects may charge. Take Japan, where fees are low. Even if I could get the services of a Japanese architect, the hon. member would deny me the right to obtain such services. The hon. member should allow me to obtain the services of an architect at the lowest fee available.

Mr. Pickering: I have never advocated scabbing in the House.

Mr. Green: Why, you have been anti-union ever since you have been here!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am glad to know that the hon. member has at least acquired the use of the phrase. That very fact shows that the hon. member is coming on. I have known him to be horrified when members on this side of the House have used the phrase.

Mr. Pickering: No, I have enjoyed it exceedingly. I am surprised that you should advocate anything of that nature.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am at a loss to know whether I should address myself to the Bill or to the amendments submitted by the hon. member. I would like to know whether it is the intention of the Government to accept the amendments. If I knew that the Government were prepared to accept the long list of amendments—119 I think—submitted by the hon. member, I would not waste time in opposing many of the provisions of the Bill. I am surprised at the member for Sussex. He does not believe in preference to unionists. This is one of the principles which has been abhorrent to him so far as it applies to the ordinary industrial unions.

Mr. Pickering: I do not know that I have ever expressed myself upon it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member's attitude to this question is well known, but he is prepared to fight for preference to unionists when the unionists are architects. Preference to unionists is all right for the men of his profession, but it is altogether wrong for industrial workers. How does the hon. member justify the provision which stipulates that all that is required to secure registration is that a man should be a member of the W.A. Institute of Architects, with-

out regard at all to any qualifications. I understand that anyone who to-day sets himself up and practises as an architect can become a member of the W.A. Institute of Architects. I am not sure as to the qualifications.

Mr. Pickering: The Bill goes further than that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know it does, but the applicant for registration has not to produce any qualifications as to fitness.

Mr. Pickering: The member for North-East Fremantle denied that.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Has the institute an examining board?

Mr. Green: Are the members of the institute prepared to pass the examination which they are going to set?

Hon. P. COLLIER. No. If a man happens to be a member of the institute to-day he can continue to practise so long as he lives.

Mr. Pickering: So can any practising architect.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is provided he has been practising for 12 months. One of the reasons for the Bill is that there are men practising as architects who are not qualified, who in fact have had no professional training, men who are builders and who call themselves architects, and the Bill seeks to protect the public against that class of men. Yet it proposes to register anyone who, for 12 months prior to the passing of the measure, has merely been practising as an architect.

Mr. Pickering: Would you advocate the contrary?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am pointing out the inconsistency, always bearing in mind that the Bill has been introduced solely in the interests of the public.

Mr. Pickering: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Purely to protect the public against incompetent men who may be practising as architects; but so long as a man happens to have been 12 months at the game, taking down the public as it were for 12 months prior to the passing of the measure, he might continue to take them down for the rest of his life. This is what the member for Sussex stands for. In other words, all those who have been practising as architects for 12 months, regardless entirely of qualifications, may continue to practise, but once this Bill is passed, having put a ring fence around their little selves, they will take jolly fine care that no one else comes in to compete unless he possesses the highest qualifications.

Mr. Pickering: No, unless he possesses the standard for an architect.

Mr. Johnston: And has worked for an architect for some years.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am sure that point will go home to the member for Williams-Narrogin. This is one of the provisions for which the member for Sussex stands. Where does the protection to the public come in? If a man has been taking down the public in the past, he is to be permitted to continue in future.

Mr. Pickering: You know that I cannot answer you except by way of interjection, and that it is not fair.

Mr. Green: You are doing very well.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Sussex has already had an opportunity to address himself to the subject of this Bill.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not sure what the Standing Orders lay down, but I assume that now the member for Sussex has taken charge of the Bill, he will have the right of reply.

Mr. Pickering: Do not forget that you conferred that distinction upon me.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is no one else in charge of the Bill. The Honorary Minister would not put himself forward as an authority on the Bill. The Bill provides that anyone who has been a member of the Institute of Architects or of some institute of equal standing, may practise as an architect for the rest of his life.

Mr. Pickering: Those provisions apply to every measure of a like nature, and you know it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Those provisions have not applied to any measure of a like nature with regard to a man having a limited experience of 12 months.

Mr. Pickering: What about New South Wales with regard to the medical profession?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Similar provisions may apply to architects in other States; I do not know, but judging by this Bill the architects of Western Australia have been more daring in their requests than any other profession or occupation I know of. In some callings men who have practised for a number of years prior to the passage of legislation setting up a standard of qualification have been allowed to continue. That was the case with engine drivers when the Machinery Act of 1904 came into operation. They were granted service certificates without sitting for an examination, but I venture to say that any man who had only been around an engine for 12 months was not entitled to a service certificate. The same thing applies to every other calling. We are told that the profession of architects is a highly trained and shall I say, skilled and technical one which, according to the provisions of the Bill for subsequent admissions, requires a very high standard of qualification, for in addition to having to pass examinations which are prescribed and which I presume will be of a high standard, includes also service and practice extending over some years. Would the hon. member say that the House would be justified in registering any person who possessed no other qualifications or experience than that he happened to have set himself up as an architect for 12 months prior to the passing of the Act?

Mr. Pickering: Remember that he must have had the experience.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, if he has been practising for 12 months, he may be registered. If the hon. member stipulated that a man must have been practising for five years, it would be nearer the mark. One would require more than 12 months practice to build Steele Rudd's "Shingle Hut." Five years' experience and practice would be some justification.

Mr. Pickering: If we stipulated five years the same objections would be raised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Bill is designed to preserve to the architects now practising in Western Australia for a generation or two the sole right to practise, except in the event of a few highly qualified men who may come from other parts of the world, which would not be very likely. It is a Bill which seeks to set up special privileges, and I take it that the Attorney General, in moving the second reading, merely repeated the arguments advanced to him. Those responsible for the measure have the audacity to say it is introduced in the public interests. The board to be constituted, a board of architects who are going to be the judges in their own case, offer no suggestion to submit to an outside and impartial tribunal, such as the Arbitration Court, the question of their remuneration. If the unfortunate wage earner desires an increase in wages, he has to go before the tribunal constituted for that purpose.

Mr. Pickering: He has to go?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes; before he can obtain it under any statute law he has to go before an impartial tribunal.

Mr. Johnston: But the increase in architects' fees will be another lever which he can use.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member would be the first to insist upon outside employees or workers going to such a tribunal. I know of no one in this House who condemned more strongly than did the member for Sussex, both on the floor of the House and in the columns of the "West Australian" newspaper, the action of the civil servants and teachers in going out on strike. They went on strike because, it can be argued, they desired to fix their own rates of remuneration.

Mr. Teesdale: They came out in the open over it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member was horror stricken at this attitude.

Mr. Green: He did not consider it in the public interests.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But he is prepared to say that the profession of architects shall have the sole right to fix their own remuneration. There is no need for them to strike, because the board, comprised of men of this profession, have the right to decide their own fees. The hon. member stands for this in the Bill. To use the hon. member's words, if any member of the profession should do any work at a fee lower than that fixed by the board, he will be guilty of misconduct, and can have his name removed from the register.

Mr. Troy: Not deported?

Mr. Pickering: There is an amendment in my name to strike that out.

Mr. Troy: These are later thoughts.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They over-reached themselves, and the hon. member hastened here at express speed to submit a list of amendments. What does this House think of a body of men who take to themselves the sole right of deciding by statute law what fees they shall fix? If anyone else should accept a lesser amount he would be described as a blackleg, and deprived of his means of livelihood for the rest of his days. I do not know how far the hon. member agrees with this clause dealing with misconduct. Anyone touting for work will be committing an offence. Since when has it been an offence for any man to seek employment? And yet if any member of this profession does so he will be guilty of misconduct and be dealt with by the board. It is a matter of dignity. It is not in the interests of the public that he should tout for work. The whole thing from beginning to end is such that the House would not be justified in passing one clause. I cannot imagine for a moment that the Attorney General was responsible for the drafting of the Bill in its present form. No doubt a draft of it was presented to him by the architects before he finally adopted it, and yet we are asked to believe that the whole thing is in the interests of the public. It is wasting the time of the House to discuss it.

Mr. Pickering: The Bill is based on existing legislation in South Africa and New Zealand.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It may be based on that, and there may be some underlying principles which also obtain in other countries, but I venture to say it varies very considerably from the legislation to which the hon. member refers.

Mr. Pickering: If you had read it you would not think so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would not be surprised to learn that legislation similar to that provided in the Bill exists in other countries. In those countries the Parliaments may be dominated by the privileged and influential classes. Bills that become law give special privileges to certain sections of the community, those who have professional, commercial, or money influence.

Member: You would not say that of New Zealand.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know any country outside Great Britain that has gone backward to a greater extent during the last 10 years than New Zealand. In the days of Seddon it was considered a progressive and democratic country, but of recent years it has developed into a country of reaction. There are certain sections of the people in

it who have sufficient influence to secure the passage of legislation which will confer upon them special privileges which are denied to the great majority of the people. I am not going to be influenced in my attitude towards this Bill because it may be similar to the law in some other country. Parliaments have been engaged for too long a period in legislating for the few to the disregard of the many. This Bill represents one of the most glaring instances I know of. It seeks to set up statutory rights for the architectural profession, and to confer privileges and powers upon a section of the community. I venture to say that if it was sought to apply the same thing to the general masses of the people it would not be listened to for a moment. A more impudent proposal than that in regard to the fees I have never heard of. I could understand the board reserving to themselves the right to fix their own fees, if at the same time any member of the profession was allowed to accept a lesser fee if he chose. If I as an architect dared to do any work for one penny less than the amount prescribed I would be guilty of misconduct, and be liable to have my name removed from the register.

Mr. Pickering: I am glad to hear your views in this regard. I did not think you would take up that stand.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. P. COLLIER: I did not catch the interjection.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Something about undercutting the others.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member would starve them into submission. It is also proposed, in order to make it more exclusive, and shut out competition, to create a rich pasture upon which the architects in Western Australia may browse for the rest of their lives. There is a provision which says that anyone who has had experience in Western Australia may be registered subject to certain conditions, but if any unfortunate person happened to have experience in an architect's office in some other part of the world, he would not be admitted under this particular provision. He must have had experience in Western Australia.

Mr. Pickering: That is not true.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is true; the Bill says so.

Mr. Pickering: No, it is not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is another limitation to which I object. I object to the whole Bill and desire to register my protest against the time of Parliament being taken up with it. Unless it can be amended in Committee from the first to the last page, I shall avail myself of every opportunity within the rules of the House, to see that it does not become an Act of Parliament.

On motion by Mr. Mullany, debate adjourned.

BILL—STALLIONS REGISTRATION.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. F. E. S. Willmott—Nelson) [10.27] in moving the second reading said: This Bill has come to us from another place. Representations have been made from time to time during the last 13 years for a measure of this kind. The Royal Agricultural Society have repeatedly urged it, and their requests have been supported by kindred societies and most of the prominent breeders of horses in this State. It is not a new line of legislation, as we find similar legislation already in existence in Great Britain and the other States. The use of unsound stallions for stud purposes has had a markedly bad effect upon the class of horses being produced here to-day. If there was a heavy demand for remounts at present I do not think that Western Australia, with all its vast areas of fine grazing land, would be in a position to supply it. It costs no more to feed a good animal than a bad one. There are thousands of horses in this State eating good feed, but are quite unfit for sale as remounts. If they were put into the market they would not bring sufficient money to pay for their freight to the Midland Junction sale yards. Hon. members who travel through the country districts know that this is the case. The number of "scrubbers" to be seen running about is simply deplorable. In the early days of Western Australia great care was exercised as to the class of stallion imported. The result was that in the past we had here some of the best horses to be seen in Australia. The Arab strain, and other excellent breeds, were introduced here by the pioneers; and the blood can be traced to-day on many of our stations. The Bill proposes the appointment of a board to administer the measure. The board in their turn will appoint examining authorities, who will report to the board; and the board, if they think fit, will issue certificates. Clause 16 provides that an uncertificated stallion shall not be used on other stock than that belonging to the owner of such stallion. It is not proposed by this measure to prevent a man from using any stallion for his own stock, but the Bill does propose to prevent him from charging fees for the services of that stallion to any of his neighbours. If a certificate for a stallion is refused by the board, the owner is given a right of appeal. The board will have power to cancel a certificate if the stallion in the course of time shows unsoundness. Certificates can be granted either for one year or for life, and therefore it is necessary that there should be power to the board to cancel the certificate in the case of a horse developing unsoundness as time goes on. A list of certificated stallions will be gazetted annually. Hon. members will see from the Bill that every care is being taken to facilitate the work of the examining authorities. The district agricultural societies are prepared to

help in every way in the administration of the measure. The Bill also contains provision for the appointment of the board, the appointment of the chairman, and members' term of office. The board is to be constituted of a veterinary surgeon and two thoroughly competent men. The Bill has been considered very carefully in another place, where, as we know, there are many horse-breeders and pastoralists; and the fact that the measure has met with the approval of hon. members elsewhere is in itself a certificate of fitness for it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Green debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 2nd November, 1920.

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

QUESTION—WYNDHAM MEAT WORKS, EMPLOYEES.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it a fact that the Government have engaged engineers or mechanics from Queensland for employment at the Wyndham Meat Works? 2, Is it the intention of the present Government to man the Wyndham Meat Works next season with men brought over from Queensland?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Last season, out of 395 men engaged 25 were brought from Eastern States because of special knowledge and experience. 2, The manager and the union will confer in regard to the agreement for next season, and the policy of preference to qualified Western Australians, when available, will be adhered to, consistent with the necessity for securing efficiency of working and safety of plant and meat.

QUESTIONS (2)—IMMIGRANTS FROM OVERSEAS.

Period from 1st September, 1920.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many immigrants have arrived in Western Australia from overseas for period 1st January, 1920, to 1st September, 1920? 2, How many came from (a) the British Isles, (b) other countries, and what countries? 3, How many were—(a) married men, (b) married women, (c) single men or widowers, (d) widows or single women, (e) children? 4, How many were discharged soldiers, and in what forces did they serve? 5, How many were nominated? 6, How many paid their own fares? 7, How many had their fares paid by—(a) the British Government, (b) other Governments, (c) the Western Australian Government? 8, Are there any records that show the aggregate amount of capital possessed by each immigrant on landing in Western Australia, if so, what are the approximate amounts? 9, Did any land without capital, if so, how many, and how many were married men with wives and families? 10, Was any monetary advance made per immigrant by the British or other Government, if so, to how many, and what is the approximate amount? 11, Are there any records that show the various avocations given by each immigrant, if so, what are they and can they be verified? 12, Do representatives of organisations, other than Government representatives, meet immigrants on arrival at Fremantle, if so, what organisations, and for what purpose? 13, How long are immigrants housed and cared for by the Government after arrival, and what is the approximate cost per head? 14, On arrival in the State or on discharge from the receiving home, does the Government only take the responsibility of placing immigrants in employment on farms or elsewhere; if not, does any outside organisation do so, and if so, what is the name of the organisation? 15, When placing immigrants in employment in country districts, are they supplied with railway warrants, if so, are all such warrants issued by a Government official, if not, who has been given this authority? 16, When placing immigrants in employment in country districts or employment elsewhere, is every precaution taken to ascertain that the wage paid is a fair remuneration and commensurate with the ruling rate? 17, Have any immigrants selected land for period 1st January, 1920, to 1st September, 1920, if so, how many, and what is the approximate acreage? 18, Have any immigrants purchased improved or virgin farms from sources other than the Government for period 1st January, 1920, to 1st September, 1920, if so, how many, and what is the approximate acreage? 19, What are the conditions other than those set forth in the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act, under which immigrants are asked to select land, and are they given any special consideration not allowed to the ordinary land