

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Council
and read a first time.

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD.

Message from the Governor received
and read, recommending the Bill.

House adjourned at 9.56 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 9th September, 1920.

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

BILL—HIGH SCHOOL ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [4.37] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of the Bill is to amend the High School Act of 1876, increasing the number of governors and providing that the additional governors shall be elected by the Old Boys' Association. Under the existing Act six governors are provided for, all being nominated by the Government. For many years the High School was subsidised by the Government to the extent of £1,000 per annum. Six years ago a Bill was passed, under which that subsidy ceased after an interval of three years. The cessation of the subsidy has created an entirely different position in regard to the control of the school. Yet the fact that the land, valued at £34,000, occupied by the school buildings is the property

of the Government, gives the Government the right to exercise over the school practically the same control as before. The Old Boys' Association desire that they shall be empowered to elect a certain number of members to the board of control. Up to the present, 1,700 boys have passed through the school. Prior to the war the Old Boys' Association had a membership of 400 but, owing to the number of enlistments, the Association practically lapsed. It is now being revived, and has a membership of 200. The present governors of the school are Mr. Battye, who is acting chairman, Sir Edward Wittenoom, Dr. Saw, the Hon. T. P. Draper, Sir Walter James, and Mr. W. T. Loton. The Bill provides for nine governors, three of whom shall be appointed by the Governor in Council on the nomination of the Old Boys' Association.

Mr. Underwood: Who are the old boys, anyhow?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Boys who have had their training in the school.

Mr. Underwood: Are they paying any more taxes than is anybody else?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No, but they have an interest in the school. The Bill provides that if the membership of the Old Boys' Association should fall below 200, the Governor in Council shall have the right to appoint the three additional governors. Under the Act, two of the governors retire each year, but under the Bill three will retire annually, including one of those nominated by the Old Boys' Association. That is really the whole purpose of the Bill. I do not think it contains anything of a controversial nature. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin, debate adjourned.

BILL—TIME OF REGISTRATION EX- TENSION.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [4.33] in moving the second reading said. The Bill is purely a formal matter. The public servants were on strike from 11th July to 29th July, during which period it was quite impossible either to get stamps or to register documents requiring registration. The Bill is intended to extend the time for the registration of documents by a period equivalent to the time during which it was impossible to get stamps.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: On what day did the public servants resume work?

The PREMIER: On the 29th July.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then a longer time than that will be required. All the documents that were held up could not have been registered in the one day.

The PREMIER: No. The Bill extends the time for the registration of those docu-

ments by a period equal to the time lost in consequence of the strike. The Bill is necessary in order that those documents should be properly registered, documents such as bills of sale, mortgages, and the like, which have to be stamped and registered within a prescribed time. The Bill is intended to validate the belated stamping and registration of those documents which were held up.

Mr. Lutey: Will the extension of time be sufficient?

The PREMIER: The period has been extended by the exact number of days during which it was impossible to lodge and stamp documents and no one could be entitled to greater consideration than is provided for in the Bill. I am sure the House will agree that no one should suffer any disadvantage in consequence of the reasons which I have explained. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.46]: Doubtless this Bill is necessary, not only to permit of the registration of documents, but to enable the Government to secure the revenue from those documents which have to be stamped. Unless we make provision such as is laid down in this Bill, some people may try to evade payment of the duty due to the Government, and no doubt some lawyers would be prepared to argue that, owing to the cessation of the operation of the form of government in Western Australia at that time, they were unable to comply with the statutes requiring lodgment and registration of documents and the payment of stamp tax. The Bill should be passed as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—CORONERS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd September.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [4.51]: This Bill appeals to me as being one which can be effectively dealt with in Committee, but there are one or two principles to which I wish to refer before the second reading is passed. The Attorney General, in moving the second reading, told us that the principal alteration to the present system was the granting of power to coroners to hold inquests without juries. After perusing the Bill, I agree with the Attorney General that this is the most important alteration, but I trust the Bill will be amended in that respect. Probably in the case of hundreds of

coronial inquiries each year a jury is unnecessary, but we shall be going a little too far if we empower a coroner to conduct an inquest without a jury in the case of a fatal accident. The Attorney General told us that we would be quite safe in accepting this principle, inasmuch as the coroner himself could empanel a jury if he so desired, and that anyone could request the Attorney General to authorise the inquiry to be held in the presence of a jury, but provision of this kind is not made in the Bill. I quite realise that a coroner would have power to empanel a jury and that certain persons could request the Attorney General to direct that a jury should be empanelled, but anyone would not be able to make this request. I hope this point will receive consideration, because we shall be placing too much power in the hands of coroners if we permit them to hold inquests without juries in cases of fatal accidents. I stress this particularly in connection with mining accidents. The Bill provides that where a jury is to investigate a mining accident, the men summoned to serve on the jury shall have a knowledge of the industry. It is quite possible that a coroner might have absolutely no knowledge of mining; yet he would have power to conduct the inquest without a jury. I hope members will see the necessity for having a jury to inquire into every fatal accident.

Mr. Underwood: How would you define a fatal accident?

Mr. MUNSIE: A man killed in a mine or run over in the street.

Mr. Underwood: Supposing he fell out of a sulky?

Mr. MUNSIE: In all cases of fatal accidents, a jury should be empanelled. The Bill contains a provision from the Tasmanian Act that, when an inquest is held touching the death of an infant in the care of a person licensed under the State Children Act, the coroner shall inquire not only into the immediate cause of death but also into all the circumstances of the treatment and condition of the infant during life. I do not agree with that provision; I consider it is unnecessary. Without that provision, it would be the duty of a coroner to inquire into such circumstances attending the case as he deemed fit. He has sufficient power at present, but the Bill seeks to invest him with special power to go back to the very day when the child was placed in charge of the foster mother and inquire into all the conditions which prevailed during the child's life. There is no need for a coroner to pry into the private affairs of a person of that description.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The foster mother must be approved by the department.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes, and she has to be registered. From my experience—and it has been a fairly long experience on the Commission inquiring into the State Children and Charities Department—I can say that, in visiting dozens of homes of foster parents

in the metropolitan area, I was very pleasantly surprised to find the splendid conditions under which State children are living. One or two other amendments should be made to the Bill. If the measure is passed, it will not be necessary for the coroner or the coroner and jury to view the body. I agree with that, but I would point out that the clause gives the coroner or the jury the right to view the body. In dealing with a fatal accident on a mine, the sections lifted from the Mines Regulation Act give the coroner power to view the scene of the accident if he so desires. Provision is made that, when an inquest is held by a coroner with a jury, the coroner and jury shall view the scene of the accident if the coroner deems fit. I contend that the jury should also have a say in the matter irrespective of the coroner. Provision is made for the coroner to do certain things by himself, and then for the coroner and jury to do certain things, but it is also provided that the coroner may veto the will of the jury in other directions, which is not correct. Our legislation is very definite in laying down the fees to be paid to the medical profession when their services are required on inquests, but the members of a jury and witnesses are limited to Supreme Court fees, which in my opinion are absolutely inadequate. I trust the House will realise that when we come to deal with the Bill in Committee. The sum set down by the Supreme Court is too low in these times for fees to witnesses and jurors in connection with coroners' inquests. There are other small matters which I will endeavour to have amended in committee.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [5.2]: I hold the same views as does the member for Han-nans (Mr. Munsie). In all fatal accidents there should be a jury, more especially in connection with mining fatalities. That jury should be a jury of practical men, and be able to inspect the workings at the scene of the accident. Under the present Act it is left to the police to arrange for the jury, and in nine cases out of ten juries are made up of business people. I have seen jurors of this kind object to serve on juries for the reason that they did not possess the necessary practical knowledge, but all the same they have been made to serve. There is also room for improvement in the direction of the workmen's inspector also being present at an inquest, as well as the Inspector of Mines. If there is a demand made by the Miners' Union of the district concerned the workmen's inspector should also be enabled to view the scene of the accident and make a report upon it, as well as have the right to cross examine witnesses, just as the Inspector of Mines has.

Mr. Davies: They have that right now.

Mr. Munsie: No, the workmen's inspector is prohibited from going there at all.

Mr. CHESSON: There was a case at Youanmi where the workers' inspector was asked by the Miners' union to view the

scene of the accident and put in a report, but he was prevented from doing so by the Inspector of Mines. I hope that when the matter is being dealt with the same power will be given to the workmen's inspector as has been given to the Inspector for Mines.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—CARRIERS.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: The main object of this Bill is to limit the liabilities of common carriers. No carrier can be liable for the loss of any parcel exceeding in value £10, unless the value above that amount has been declared. Hon. members will notice that if a person wishes to send a parcel by a common carrier he must declare the value, if it is a higher value than £10, and pay the charges imposed according to the increased value. The Bill also provides that in the event of a parcel being lost, the value of the parcel may be recovered, but it will be necessary for the sender of the parcel to prove its value.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Commissioner of Railways will be safe as usual. He is the biggest offender.

The PREMIER. Yes, otherwise parcels will not be carried at all. If senders like to pay for the additional risk they can have their parcels sent at Commissioner's risk. I do not know that people would appreciate an all round increase in the rates in order that the Commissioner for Railways might assume responsibility for the carriage of goods.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He should take more responsibility than he does now.

The PREMIER: I do not think it would be wise to increase the responsibility of the Commissioner for Railways. He can be made responsible by a slightly increased payment. There are many unattended sidings in the State where control of parcels must be lost after delivery has been made. It is also provided that no common carrier can limit his liability by the publication of any notice whatever. It will be possible for a carrier to enter into an agreement for the carriage of goods. He can make what agreement he likes with the full knowledge of both parties. There is no intention to prohibit the making of such contracts under this Bill. The main clause of the Bill is that which limits the liability of a common carrier. The Bill ought to be passed. I do not know why it was not brought forward long ago. Each of the other States has an Act similar to this, and the Imperial Carriers' Act has been in operation since 1813. This Bill should be quite satisfactory and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin debate adjourned.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. T. Broun—Beverley) [5.9] in moving the second reading said: This is only a small measure, although it is rather an important one. It provides for conferring upon friendly societies the right of foreclosure on properties as mortgages. Under Section 15 of the Friendly Societies Act the properties and funds of registered societies are dealt with, and the trustees are given power to invest the funds of the society. A society, however, has no power of foreclosure as a mortgagee. The amendment to Section 17a of the principal Act provides that although a society has power to require the production of books it has no power to require the production of certificates, with the result that the audit officials cannot certify to the accuracy of the books. They are able to go through the books of the society, but there is no power to force the officials to produce either the documents or the certificates. These amendments are necessary. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.11]: I support the second reading of this Bill, but I think friendly societies should be put in exactly the same position as any other society when it lends money on property. I have known of one or two cases where there has been difficulty through friendly societies being unable to collect their interest, and also being unable to foreclose on a property. This Bill will enable friendly societies to carry on their business much more beneficially to themselves than heretofore. The funds of a benefit society belong to the workers, and there are times when it is necessary to put out funds in such a way as to be to the advantage of the whole. If persons borrow money and cease to pay their commitments, and there is no power to foreclose on a mortgage, the society is in an unfortunate position as to its funds. I offer no objection to the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—PUBLIC SERVICE APPEAL BOARD.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 7th September.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [5.17]: I must admire the optimism of the Attorney General if he really believes that the mere pass-

ing of a Bill of this nature is going to have the effect of preventing unauthorised cessations of work on the part of public servants, as the title of the Bill expresses it. The Attorney General explained that the constitution of the proposed appeal board would follow the lines of that our present Arbitration Court, that a judge of the Supreme Court would be appointed chairman of the board, to sit with a representative of each party to the dispute as his colleagues. The Attorney General further said that this principle is not new. We know that well, and our experience of the Arbitration Court thus constituted has been that it works badly. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) spoke at some length on this point. He referred to some of the disabilities under which a judge labours when asked to carry out the duties of president of the Arbitration Court, his training and all his environment tending positively to unfit him for such a position. I believe the member for Pilbara was on the right track. The great weakness of our Arbitration Court as now constituted is that it is not an impartial court. The same weakness will be found in the appeal board proposed by this Bill. In the Arbitration Court there are two partisans sitting with the judge. The very method of appointment of the representative members of the Arbitration Court proves this. Whilst the State pays the two representatives their salaries, they depend for their appointment upon the employing section and the employed section of the community respectively. Let hon. members ask themselves what would be the position of either representative if during his term of office—and he has to be re-appointed every three years—he showed a desire to tell those whose nominee he is that they were not acting reasonably? What possible chance would he have of reappointment then? It follows that the judge has no one to whom he can look for assistance in solving the problems presented to him. He cannot ask either of his colleagues for assistance, because he knows, as they themselves know, that they must do the best they possibly can for those by whom they were nominated, and that they are not permitted to express their personal views as to whether those who have nominated them are acting rightly. Another interesting point with regard to the position of the Supreme Court judge on such a board as this is brought out by the report of the first meeting of the Public Service Appeal Board. I shall quote from this morning's "West Australian." After reporting the preliminary proceedings, that journal states—

The President said that the board would adjourn till Monday, at 10.30 a.m., when he would deal with the question of immediate relief. If by that time a number of appeals against the classification had been lodged, it would probably proceed to deal with them next. Appeals against classification could be more readily dealt with in the absence of the regulations. The organisations should instruct their members regarding what appeals could be

made, and, in each case, the section under which the appeal was lodged should be stated.

Mr. Stevens said that the trouble was that they had not even an Act to go on at present. Judging by the tone of the debate in Parliament on the previous night, the Bill was likely to be considerably mutilated. Even His Honour might be deprived of his seat on the board.

The President: I will yield up my seat with the greatest pleasure. Do you hold out any hope?

There is a remark from Mr. Justice Northmore, at the very start of his functions as president of the appeal board, clearly proving that that gentleman is dissatisfied with the position in which he has been placed. Can we expect any man, I care not who he may be, to give good and efficient service if he sets about his work in that frame of mind? I think the House will do good work if, in Committee, it substitutes some other method for that proposed as regards the constitution of the appeal board.

Hon. T. Walker: Will another place agree to it if we do?

Mr. MULLANY: We know that another place disagreed previously, but in view of the experience gained since that time members elsewhere may have become convinced of the desirableness of what I suggest. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) in speaking on the second reading dealt somewhat exhaustively with the recent public service strike, or cessation of work, or whatever one may be pleased to call it. The hon. member took strong exception to two clauses of this Bill, and he treated the House to one of his political flights into the clouds with regard to the industrial situation and the light which the recent public service cessation of work had thrown upon that situation. He referred at length to the sight of the section whom he termed the kid glove section—evidently wishing to infer that they kept their hands soft—of the public servants, the departmental heads, who wore good suits of clothes, going as an industrial body to seek the support of the horny-handed grubbers of the Trades Hall. The member for Kanowna said this was a glorious thing, and that it showed the progress of democracy in Western Australia. But I consider we are entitled even from an idealistic dreamer like the member for Kanowna to a sufficient grasp of practical, everyday affairs to realise that the public servants, when they approached the Trades Hall, did so not as a body of industrialists seeking in their time of trouble the support of their fellow workers, but as a body of workers dissatisfied with their conditions, seeking to get in touch with the political organisation which is controlled by the Trades Hall, seeking the support of that organisation at the time they were on strike.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Those members are no more controlled by the Trades Hall than you are.

Mr. MULLANY: I have my own opinion on that point, and I have a right to express it here.

Hon. T. Walker: I think you are the idealistic dreamer.

Mr. MULLANY: That is my opinion, whether it pleases my esteemed friends opposite or not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You know they are not controlled by the Trades Hall.

Mr. MULLANY: We know they are so controlled, and the hon. member interjecting knows they are.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not.

Mr. Jones: They would be wiser if they were.

Mr. MULLANY: That point may be debatable.

Hon. T. Walker: Your assertion is very debatable.

Mr. MULLANY: However, that point does not affect what I wish to emphasise, that the public servants did not go as industrialists to the Trades Hall, but went there to get in touch with the political section connected with that organisation; or I may correct myself and say that no doubt an honourable understanding, unwritten of course, was arrived at that any help the public servants got then would be repaid at the next general election.

Hon. T. Walker: Is not that dreaming? It is worse than a dream; it is a nightmare.

Mr. Jones: That would show their wisdom.

Mr. MULLANY: The public servants on this occasion merely followed the practice that they have adopted for the past 20 years in this State. Under the present distribution of Assembly seats the public servants, massed as they are in the metropolitan area, have a strong influence upon the atmosphere of State politics. Take the two great parties in existence up to a few years ago—the Labour party and the Liberal party. In the metropolitan area the public servants have been in a position to elect either one of those parties to conduct the administrative affairs of this State. There can be no doubt about that. Not only can the public servants of this State say, but they did actually say at the time of the strike, or some of the heads said it, "Why should not we be better paid?" I am not suggesting that they should not be; I am not going into the rights and wrongs of the dispute. But the stand taken was this, "We are really the Government; we are there at all times; we have to do the practical work of administration; we do not change; it is Ministers who come and go." From that aspect the public servants are very largely the rulers in point of administration. The great majority of them live in the metropolitan area, and are able to sway elections at Subiaco, Leederville, North Perth, Canning, and probably Guildford.

Mr. Davies: No fear!

Mr. MULLANY: The public servants exercise a very strong influence in each one of those electorates. They have used it re-

peatedly. The Scaddan Government got into power in 1911 largely by reason of the dissatisfaction of the public servants with the administration of the Wilson Government. The Scaddan Government had been in power only a very short time when the public servants, finding that they could not get all that they considered they were entitled to from the Government, were waiting upon members of the then Opposition. The public servants of Western Australia have followed that line of action for the last 15 or 20 years. Every individual member of Ministries which have been in existence during the last nine years has complained bitterly about the existing Act. Each one has declared that it was impossible to carry on effective administration under the provisions of that Act, and that amendments were necessary. Yet we find this absolutely weak-kneed Bill introduced, a Bill which half apologises to the service for having caused them inconvenience. Hon. members expected, and the country also expected, that quite a different kind of board would be appointed, that the board would be expected to inquire not merely into the grievances of the members of the service, not merely to adjust anomalies which it is said exist, but a board which would be representative not only of the service and the Government, but the taxpayers and the general community. The time has arrived when a board of men with experience in conducting large businesses should be appointed to investigate the methods adopted in the various departments, and make recommendations in the direction of effecting improvements.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The business of the Government departments is entirely different from that of outside concerns.

Mr. MULLANY: We know that, but hon. members also know that better methods could be employed, methods which at any rate would have the effect of preventing overlapping. The hon. member knows that the civil service—I am not including the Education Department—especially in the metropolitan area, is overmanned to the extent of 20 per cent. I would like to give an illustration of the kind of thing that takes place. The Royal Commission which is investigating the management of the State Children's Department examined a witness named McCaw the other day. McCaw is employed in the office of the clerk of courts at Fremantle, and he deals with the distribution of relief to needy people in the district of Fremantle. He was asked a question as to what was the procedure in cases of urgent distress, and this is the reply that he gave—

In cases of urgent distress, applications have to be forwarded to Perth. They go through a whole rigmarole with about a dozen endorsements on different files. One clerk hands the application to the secretary, who hands it to the chief inspector, who hands it to the district inspector, who visits the house, puts his remarks on the application, and forwards it to the chief

inspector, who refers it to the business manager, who puts his remarks on it, and then forwards it to the secretary of the department, after which it is forwarded to the Colonial Secretary for his approval. Hon. W. C. Angwin: That must have taken place only very lately.

Mr. MULLANY: I am only quoting what the witness stated took place. The witness was next asked how long the files took to go that round, and his answer was, "Two or three months." Hon. members must not forget that it was an urgent case that was being dealt with, and what I have quoted was related as sworn evidence.

The Colonial Secretary: It is not true.

Mr. MULLANY: I know the Colonial Secretary will say that it is not true. Of course if anyone interested himself in a particular case, the Charities Department would probably put an application through quickly. But if this is the routine that is adopted when urgent cases come forward, we can imagine how long it would take an ordinary appeal for assistance to be dealt with.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That, no doubt, would then be the routine that it would have to go through.

Mr. MULLANY: I feel disappointed that the Government have not displayed greater backbone in dealing with the civil service. It appears to me, however, that they are afraid to do anything that will offend the civil servants, and in that respect they are no different from their predecessors in office. They complain that under the Act as it exists they cannot get proper administration, yet they are afraid to appoint someone to make an investigation into the conduct of the affairs of the various departments. With regard to Clause 14, I express surprise that the Government have gone so far as to say that no public servant shall be prejudiced by reason of the recent simultaneous cessation of work. I really wonder that the Government have not asked the House to agree to a clause apologising to the public servants for any inconvenience that they may have been put to, because of the inability of the Government to grant them all their requests at the time of the strike. The Government want Clause 14 to become law. What will be the position ten or 15 years hence? Do the Government flatter themselves that the civil servants are so simple as to think that this clause will protect them if anyone tries to victimise them? Of course we hope that there will not be any victimisation. I understand a promise has been made that there will not be any victimisation, that no bitterness will be shown towards those who remained at work. If such a promise was definitely made, where is the necessity for making ourselves look ridiculous by placing a clause in the Bill, a clause that will remain on the statute-book for all time as the law of the State. In the interests of the administration of the affairs of the State and in the best interests also of the community and of the members of the service,

we should forget everything about the recent unfortunate occurrence. I am sure the Government have no desire to victimise anyone, and that the last thing they would wish would be to perpetuate in an Act of Parliament a remembrance of the incident of a few months back. It would be a supremely foolish thing to do: I intend to support the second reading of the Bill, but when we reach the Committee stage I shall move in the direction of deleting Clause 14. We are told that a judge of the Supreme Court is to be the president or the chairman of the board, and that he will have two colleagues, one to represent the Government, and one to represent the civil service, and that the fees to be paid shall be as prescribed. Before we are asked to pass the clause dealing with the fees, I consider that the amount of the fees should be definitely stated. The probability is that a civil servant will represent the Government, and the Civil Service Association will appoint someone to represent the service, which I think is entirely wrong. The principal objection I have to offer is in regard to Clause 15, which prohibits strikes. That is merely a pious wish. The Government know perfectly well that they had the power to do what they are now asking Parliament, through the clause, to enable them to do. I think, however, the Government were quite right in taking into consideration the abnormal times we are going through, and the fact that the men were led away. It would therefore be cruel to deprive them of their rights because of what had happened. This clause, as well as Clause 14, can well be deleted from the Bill. We should be satisfied to make the Bill merely one to provide for the appointment of a board to endeavour, if possible, to adjust the anomalies that exist, and to remedy the grievances which the members of the service say they have. I again express my regret that there is no provision in the Bill to give the board wider powers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.40]: I think in the first place that the title of the Bill is wrong. It is "An Act to establish a Public Service Appeal Board, and to prevent the unauthorised cessation of work on the part of public servants." It should have been "A Bill to confirm an agreement entered into by the Government and the Civil Service," and it should have been made to apply entirely to the dispute which exists at the present time. There is no doubt that an amendment of the Public Service Act is badly needed. In 1904 the Government were not carrying on so many trading concerns as they are doing at the present time; they did not construct their own railways, nor all the public works, as is being done to-day, and the staffs in those days were principally clerical and professional. To-day, owing to the extension of the services of the Government, the staffs are very much bigger, and it would be a

matter of impossibility to carry out the clause in regard to the duration of work even as provided in this agreement. We cannot look on the Bill except as an agreement arising out of the strike. It is nothing more nor less, because as the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) mentioned, if the Government had not entered into an agreement with the members of the service, it would never have been introduced. In all probability if the Government had had their way they would not have introduced the Bill at all. There had to be something done definitely and distinctly, in regard to certain matters before an agreement could be arrived at, and the Bill before us is the agreement which was arrived at to restore some form of Government. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) the other night endeavoured as far as possible to make out that this was a political affair. My opinion is that the civil servants made a mistake in going on strike.

Mr. Davies: I think he said that their going to the Trades Hall for assistance was a mistake.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the hon. member meant it in that sense, he failed to realise that they went to other bodies as well. The Trades Hall, who take an active interest in the welfare of all workers, were the only body that rendered any assistance.

Mr. Munsie: The Nationalist Labour party did not render much.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Trades Hall were following out their principles in tendering advice, as the other bodies appealed to should have done. Because the Trades Hall were the only body that rendered advice, we are told that it was purely a political matter, and that the Trades Hall wanted, if possible, to retain certain seats in the metropolitan area.

Mr. Davies: It is now suggested that Mr. Mann should stand for Claremont.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was not in their capacity as a political body that the Trades Hall were approached by the public servants. At all their meetings the public servants endeavoured to impress the public that they had nothing whatever to do with politics. I am convinced that even at the next election a large majority of the public servants will support the party that my friend opposite represents. We on this side do not expect to get any support as the result of anything that occurred in respect of the strike. I know a few public servants in my own electorate, and I know also that they will not vote for me. However, that is by the way. Practically all the public servants are Liberals, and if in the Old Country would be Tories, in their political belief. Their every action shows that. In the offices they have openly declared against the policy of the Labour party. If it was only from a political point of view that they asked the Labour party to assist them, what must they have had in mind when they asked the Farmers' and Settlers'

Association for assistance? Hon. members who came into the House on the votes and with the assistance of the Labour party, and who but for that assistance would never have been here, have spoken of "control by the Trades Hall." I emphatically protest against that. I will never allow any man to interfere with what I think is right in respect to the promises I have made to my electors.

Mr. Davies: But you are of independent spirit.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: All on this side are of the same spirit; if they were not, their electors would soon throw them out. It is not the Trades Hall, located in Perth, who elect members on this side, for the Trades Hall have no votes in any of our electorates. If those sitting on this side of the House did not carry out the wishes of their electors, they would soon go out, and hon. members on this side are under much closer scrutiny than are some on that side. The member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) will bear me out in that. The man who represents Labour is at the beck and call of everybody, is much closer to everybody. Why, if Billy Angwin went and had a drink to-morrow morning, it would be in the evening paper to-morrow night; and someone would write to the paper and declare that Angwin was going to the dogs. It is about time this cry of Trades Hall control ceased.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They know it is not right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course they do. It is like the term "official Labour party," it is a slur on hon. members. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) declared that the Scaddan Government had been the means of bringing about the strike, that it was they who had stopped the increments and the appeal board. I remind the hon. member that when the increments were stopped it was with the sanction of everybody. It was not compulsory, but voluntary. All were agreed that, owing to the outbreak of war, something had to be done. But since those days there has been a considerable increase in the cost of living, which affects all sections of the community, and which has been the principal cause of the dissatisfaction existing in the public service. If the public servants could live as cheaply to-day as they did in 1914, there would not be that dissatisfaction which led to the strike. It was the abnormal condition of things, for which neither the Government nor anybody else in the State was to blame, which set up that dissatisfaction. I attended a meeting at Fremantle which public servants were addressing. They painted all members of Parliament black; they dealt with the Labour party more severely than with any other party.

The Minister for Works: They were fairly impartial in their all round condemnation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At that meeting language was used which might better have been avoided. I draw no distinction between public servants and policemen; they are both employees of the public.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The only difference was that the policemen got their rise.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At that meeting one speaker said "I suppose everybody knows Baby Green, the big policeman. He is earning so much, while we are not earning nearly so much." If remarks like those were intended to convince the public of the justice of the action of the public service, I think they were ill advised. The public servants were hasty in going on strike. The strike could have been avoided and an agreement fixed up. But, given the strike, I think its duration could have been reduced by the Government accepting the offer made by the men, namely, to work overtime, and to waive their holidays.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is what will happen even now.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Having regard to the time lost during the strike it was scandalous to close our public schools last week. How are the children to pass their examinations in November? If they do not pass those examinations, they will have to remain in the same classes for another 12 months, not because they themselves have neglected anything, but because they were refused permission to pursue their studies.

Mr. Davies: And there was time lost through the visit of the Prince.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Notwithstanding which another week has now been lost. And it makes not the slightest difference to the Government, for they have to pay the teachers' salaries just the same. I think the Government were wrong in not granting the payment demanded at the time of the strike. I was a Minister of the Crown for six years, during which I had no idea that we had a relieving staff in the public service. The first I ever heard of it was during the strike. When I was a Minister it was hopeless to go from one department to another for the loan of an officer to take the place of another officer absent from duty. There were no men to spare; they were all busily engaged. As far as I know, there never has been a relieving staff. The position is that our public works have fallen off. The loan works have not been proceeded with, and those officers now said to constitute the relieving staff were previously paid from loan money.

The Minister for Works: That does not apply to the Metropolitan Water Supply Department.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They have been transferred from one department to another. Even in the Metropolitan Water Supply Department the work has been decreased. In 1912, in response to an agitation, we passed a Bill containing this provision—

For the purposes of this section persons temporarily employed shall be deemed to be already in the public service.

That made every person in the clerical division at that time—I am not sure about the general division—a public servant, and put him on the staff. Since then the temporary staff has been again built up. Is it better to take a man on for 12 months and sack him, when with special permission one could keep him for another 12 months, or to keep a man on temporarily for a few years or for as long as there is work for him? Incidentally it is impossible under existing conditions to guarantee permanent employment in some of our State institutions. Under the Bill before us, if a man is employed in the service for five years his job becomes permanent. Take the sawmills, take the implement works—

The Minister for Works: They should not be under the Public Service Act at all.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I agree with that. Take the steamship service, take many of the other trading concerns we have; how is it possible to say that after the fifth year there will be plenty of work to keep those men employed? Whether or not the work is there, the temporary hand is to be made a public servant, unless indeed they make of him an excess officer and get rid of him in that way. The system is wrong if we wish to do any trading. In the altered conditions of the public service, it is necessary that the Act should be amended, and the sooner it is amended to fit the conditions existing to-day, the better it will be. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) referred to the opposition of the Labour party to the appeal board. I think the Labour Government did a good thing for the country by abolishing that board, because the appeals which were being heard before the judge were the laughing-stock of the State. It was not a matter of classification altogether or of salary, but day after day the court sat to decide whether one man should be senior to another, or whether his position should be classed somewhat differently. For a week or more the board was held up by one case from the Education Department, and the board would never have got through the work in the course of a lifetime. The board provided for under this Bill will be a permanent board; members need make no mistake about that. If we intend to continue the Arbitration Act, it will be far better to put the public servants in exactly the same position as is every other employee in the State.

Hon. T. Walker: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let us have one court to deal with the lot. Several public servants will be able, through a representative, to appeal as a class. If they are not satisfied with the decision of the board, they will be able to appeal individually and the court will be kept sitting almost continuously until a decision satisfactory to them is given. This Bill should have been introduced as a temporary measure to overcome the difficulty which exists at the present time. The member for Claremont (Mr. Duff) expressed surprise because the Ministers will have the right of appeal. If it

is fair for one party to have the right of appeal, it is equally fair for the other. Suppose an officer, good at his work, is transferred to work for which he is entirely unsuitable; according to the member for Claremont, no one would have a right to appeal against the appointment under that classification. The argument is nonsensical and should not be entertained for a moment. The member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) dealt with the question of dismissal. He said the Minister should have the power to dismiss an officer. As the hon. member is well aware, certain powers are given under the Public Service Act, but there is not the least doubt that those powers of dismissal, though in existence, have very rarely been availed of, irrespective of whether an officer was qualified for his position or not, simply because his immediate head was afraid to lay a charge against him. The immediate head is in this position: if he laid against an officer, a charge of being unfit to carry out his work, and adduced evidence in support of the charge, he would be liable to be condemned by his fellow officers in the service. When I was a Minister, I asked one head, "Why do not you lay a charge against this man seeing that you state he is continually making mistakes and is useless?" The head replied, "Who will go through the ordeal of a trial before the Public Service Commissioner in the manner prescribed by the Act, and then receive the condemnation of his fellow officers for trying to get a man put out of the service?"

The Minister for Works: What would you say the Minister should do if he has incompetent public servants?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government ought to amend the Bill.

Mr. Mullany: The position seems to be that because a man is a public servant, you must keep him.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the head of the department will not take action, the Minister can do nothing. The under secretaries in the various departments seem to think they have nothing to do but to sit in their chairs and attend to work that a junior clerk could do, instead of acting as managers of their departments.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It would pay the country far better to employ a junior to do the correspondence for the under secretary, so that the under secretary could act as manager of the department, continually going around, seeing that officers were carrying out their duties and were qualified for the positions assigned to them.

The Minister for Works: Someone should do that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If an officer is not qualified, the head of the department should lay a charge to that effect.

Mr. Mullany: Does not that prove the necessity for a board having wider powers than the board provided for under this Bill? No Ministry that I have ever seen would do that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the Government appointed an outside board for a few months to re-organise the departments, I do not think any improvement would be effected. Only those who have been trained in the public service know the work. They are the only men who can effect improvements in the departments. The man who should know the requirements of each department is the under secretary.

The Minister for Works: I had an under secretary who told me that if I was there for ten years, I could not effect a re-organisation.

Mr. O'Loughlen: When W. D. Johnson was Minister, he put three of them out.

Mr. Mullany: We want a Ministry with a bit of backbone.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In 1904 I told one of them to give up his office work entirely to a junior, and to get around and see what his men were doing, but he was afraid that, if he left his office, the whole State would go bankrupt. It is an impossibility to get them out of the groove in which they have been trained. The only chance of getting a better public service in which every man would be qualified for his work is by insisting on the under secretaries acting as managers of their departments. It will never be accomplished while the under secretaries sit at their tables doing secretarial work.

The Minister for Works: And the under secretary should be completely protected against the caprices of a Minister and against the vengeance of those he has to deal with. You want a man with backbone and would have to pay him well.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: One man would be of no use.

The Minister for Works: He should not be a sort of glorified office boy.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) said I was aware that the service was over-manned to the extent of 20 per cent. I am not aware of anything of the sort and, until some officer who understood the service made an investigation, it would be impossible for anyone to know whether the service was over-manned to that extent.

Mr. Mullany: I have heard you say it often, and I have heard many others say it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have never said the service was over-manned. I have said that I had heard such was the case, and I have also said that some of those in the service should be got rid of. The general belief that the service is over-manned is the outcome of the old saying that a man who won't work gets into the public service.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Government stroke.

Mr. Mullany: The service is not organised effectively.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Two days before the strike commenced, I was travelling to Fremantle by train and, in the compartment was a public servant fairly high in the service. The compartment was full, and he was

discussing the likelihood of a strike taking place. I told him that I did not think there would be a strike, as I believed the Government would come to some arrangement with the civil servants. He replied, "Some of the offices are over-manned." I said, "If that is so, it is your duty as a public servant to report the fact to your Minister." After that he did not have anything more to say about the offices being over-manned. No doubt that is how these statements get about. Occasionally it might appear that certain offices are over-manned. If members go to Boan Bros. they will see many assistants behind the counters apparently having nothing to do. On another occasion, it will be necessary to wait for half an hour in order to get served.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That applies to the Lands Department.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That applies to the public service. One might go into a certain department and, on one occasion, have to wait to be attended to. On another occasion the officer would be found waiting for someone to call; but, because we see him waiting and apparently with nothing to do, is it for us to say that that office is over-manned? It is the duty of many of these officers to wait on the public, but the trouble is that we do not regard the public service in the same light as an ordinary business. We do not look at it fairly. We have had it drilled into us from youth about the over-manning of the public service and about the Government stroke, and we are too apt to accept statements of this kind as established facts. Whether we take private or public employment, there are always some men ready to loaf on their work, but if we take the great majority of the public servants of this State, I think they are a class of men of whom the State should be proud. I believe they endeavour as far as possible to carry out their duty, but there are sure to be drones in every hive. No doubt there are some drones in the public service of Western Australia, as there are in every private establishment in Western Australia and, this being so, we are apt to be too harsh in our judgment of the public service. The service might be over-manned, but the only way to ascertain whether it is or is not is by insisting upon the under secretaries daily visiting every office under their control.

Mr. Harrison: Could the under secretary do that in addition to his present work?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He could dictate a lot of the work to a youth.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have little to add to what I have already said. I do not think the Bill will get over the difficulty so far as the civil service is concerned, although no doubt it will do for a time. I have a certain amount of sympathy for the Government in this matter. A cessation of work occurred; the Government wanted to get the

wheels of industry going again; but that could only be brought about by a certain amount of compromise on both sides. No doubt the Government did the best they could in the circumstances, and entered into the agreement with the civil service which is embodied in this Bill. By our votes we are to say whether we intend to back up the Government in this matter or not. From what I can gather through the Press almost every line of this Bill has been discussed by a committee of the civil servants and the members of Cabinet, and an honourable agreement has been entered into which the Government at the time thought would be satisfactory to this State. There are some portions of the agreement with which we do not all agree. There are some words in it which, as the member for Menzies has stated, might have been left out, but they were put in to give satisfaction for the time being to the committee who were negotiating with the Government. They could not take the word of the Government but wanted it in black and white. These words have, therefore, been included, in much the same way that occurs almost weekly in respect to other employees. The Bill represents an honourable agreement entered into and it is our duty to stick to it. Immediately this Bill is passed, however, the Government will be faced with a difficulty in regard to their trading concerns. The trading concerns should have been exempted from the five years' provision. A number of officers may be employed in these trading concerns for five years and the work may fall off. When work does fall off owing to want of money, or for some other reason, the officers employed will have to be dismissed, because there will be no work for them. We cannot keep on people unless there is something for them to do. In the general offices the nature of the work is recognised and it goes on almost continuously, but in the Public Works Department, or in our trading concerns, such a thing is almost impossible. Does any hon. member think we could keep on in the Public Works Department to-day the same staff that we kept when we were spending about three million pounds a year, instead of, as at present, only one million and a-half? We cannot do it. We cannot spend three millions of money now because we cannot get it at a reasonable rate. In all probability, therefore, there will be a number of officers who have been in the department for five years, during which we had money to spend, who will have to be retained as permanent officers under this Bill, notwithstanding that there is not nearly the volume of work that previously existed. If a man is working as a navvy on the railways and has been been working continuously for five years, and the time comes when there are no more railways to build, his employment ceases, but if a man is working as a clerk in the engineer's office, and is doing work similar to that being done by other persons in that office, when the railways are completed he must still be kept

on the staff, whether there is any work for him to do or not. This shows clearly that it is not wise for us to adopt the principle thus set forth in the Bill. Again, there would be a dispute immediately some member of the board was unable to sit on it. The chairman has power to appoint a deputy, any person he likes, and the civil service have agreed to this. If, however, the chairman appoints as the deputy some person of whom the service does not approve, there will be a complaint lodged by the civil service. Seeing that the service have agreed to this, I do not know that it is necessary for us to raise any objection to the procedure. There will be no improvement in the civil service until we first appoint either the under secretary or manager of each department to be the boss over that department. That official should be able to go round his offices at any time and see that his men are working, and are qualified for the duties in which they are employed. In all complaints lodged against an officer, the under secretary or manager should first deal with them, because of the knowledge he should possess of each officer under him, before they go to the Public Service Commissioner. I believe in an appeal board for the public service. A public officer does not take that personal interest in those under him that a private employer takes. A private person is more considerate towards his employee. A man may do something wrong, but, if he is working for a private person, the employer takes into consideration the services rendered by that man in the interests of his business, and would look upon the matter as one of pounds, shillings, and pence, and estimate the value of that man's services to him. In many instances the private employer would overlook any discrepancy, perhaps, with a reprimand, and things would go on as they were before. Possibly, too, there would be an improvement in the work of the employee concerned, because he would realise that he would have to go if he did not improve. In the case of the public service, the officer who is over another takes no personal interest whatever in him, and is likely to deal more harshly with him than is the private individual. The officer would not value the past services of the man under him. With an appeal board, however, this man's case could be reviewed. Complaints should be lodged by the under secretary or the manager, and not by the head of some small department, in which only two or three men are working, who would have to bear the brunt of everything that took place and be the butt for the other officers working near him. If this could be brought about a great improvement in the service would be effected.

Mr. Smith: Would you give the under secretary power to dismiss an employee?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He has that power now, but a man can appeal against his dismissal.

Mr. Smith. He can lay a charge.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The under secretary can lay a charge and the appeal board can dismiss the man. At present he has to rely principally upon some understrapper, who has no personal knowledge of him, to fight his case. The under secretary or person in control should have a personal knowledge of all the officers under him. As the member for Moore (Sir H. B. Lefroy) has said, we shall not have a great improvement in the public service until we get new offices. We want larger rooms for our public servants, to replace the rabbit warrens in which several officers are housed together. The public servants must be kept under supervision, for we know what happens if a body of men is not supervised. There is no doubt that one of the first things we require is better housing accommodation if we would place our public service in efficient working order. I support the Bill, and do not think it would be a wise thing, seeing that this agreement has been entered into, for the House to make any drastic amendments to it.

Mr. ANGELO (Gaseoyne) [7.43]: Like other hon. members, I feel somewhat disappointed with this Bill. It appears to me that it is a Bill which is being added to other Bills dealing with an unsatisfactory system. Members have acknowledged that the civil service is being conducted in an unsatisfactory manner. The public say so, and even members of the civil service say so. What is needed is a drastic reorganisation of the whole service, not only as to salaries and personnel, but particularly as to system and method. I regret to some extent that when the civil service strike was on the Government did not seize the opportunity to put into effect that necessary reorganisation. No retrenchment would have been necessary. The civil service had gone out on strike, and this afforded an excellent opportunity for the Government to completely reorganise it. The "Bulletin" said the other day that if we had had a George Turner in Western Australia he would have seized the opportunity to carry out the reorganisation. In my opinion Western Australia has many public servants who are considerably underpaid, and others who are paid all that they deserve; and I think a third of the total could well be got rid of. The member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) claims that we have too many public servants by 20 per cent. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) says that we are not overstaffed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not say that. I said I did not know that we were overstaffed.

Mr. ANGELO: For the last three years, while I have been representing the Gaseoyne electorate, I have had to visit nearly every department once or twice a week; and my candid opinion is that we have a good number of drones in the service. Just

let me give one little incident. Some time ago I went to a Government office where I was not known, and I had to wait about 45 minutes before I could interview the head. There were six typistes sitting in the room where I had to wait, and for the whole of that time not one of those typistes touched the keyboard of a machine. During those 45 minutes I heard more about jazzing and dancing than I had ever heard before. The room was superintended by a male clerk. During the time I was there he filled his pipe once or twice and looked at two invoices, but he did not put pen to paper. I have been to other departments where there are public rooms, and have seen five or six clerks there—one or two of them attending to four or five of the public at one time, whilst the other clerks were doing heaven knows what—walking about, or possibly discussing the political situation. A business man has only to go into some of the public departments to realise that there is something wrong. If one goes to see a Minister, one sees him at a table surrounded with files. Go into the Under Secretary's office, and he is very busy and surrounded with files. Go to the understrappers, and they also have their tables cumbered with huge files. In connection with the little irrigation scheme which I have suggested once or twice in this House, the departments have built up a file two feet high. They have grown more in paper than the Gaseoyne has grown in bananas, within the same time. Compare such methods with the methods of business firms. Go into the office of one of the banks, or interview the manager of a huge firm like Dalgety's. His table is always clear, and he is ready to attend to the customer. There must be something wrong in the Government service, or there would not be all the circumlocution on which the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) has commented. Before starting in business on my own account I managed a bank, and for some time I was connected with a branch bank employing 40 or 50 men. Its half-yearly balance would not be nearly as thick as the report of one of our small sub-departments. The whole of the business of the Government is done in a very minute manner. For even a trivial thing the departments build up huge files. A considerable amount of time and a great deal of energy must be required for so much writing, and I want to know whether it is necessary; I do not think it is. I know that a good many of our officers attend to their work conscientiously and are always at their posts. But many of them do not give the time they should to the service of the State. One need only watch some of the offices occasionally to know that. Go in and ask where is Mr. So-and-so, and it is found that he is away for half an hour having morning tea or afternoon tea. Such a thing would not be heard of in a business firm. I would like to see the attendance books in the de-

partments properly kept. In banks and other business institutions, unless a man is at his post five minutes after the time fixed, he finds that he has to sign his name below a red line ruled across the attendance book. That book is sent to the head of the office, and the man who is late, before commencing work, has to explain to the head the reason of his being late. If that were done in Government offices—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is done in Government offices.

Mr. ANGELO: Then it is not carried out properly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is done every morning and every afternoon.

Mr. ANGELO: Going into the city in the morning I nearly always catch a tram at 20 minutes past nine, and that tram I have found invariably crowded except on the day that the public service strike began. On that morning the tram was nearly empty. I asked the conductor, "Where are your passengers?" He said, "Oh, they are civil servants, and they have all gone down earlier this morning." That was the tram conductor's explanation on that particular morning. Let me say also that I have found a considerable difference between the conduct of the Federal departments and that of our State departments. The system adopted by the Federal public service is much preferable to our State methods. In the Federal service the men seem all to be at work continuously. In that regard I am prepared to admit the correctness of the contention of the member for North-East Fremantle, that the Federal public servants have better offices to work in than ours have.

The Premier: They have very different departments to run—Taxation and Post Office.

Mr. ANGELO: I have been many a time at the Repatriation Department, and there I have never seen even a single man slack; they all seemed to be busy. But of course they are under the eye of the head; and that, I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle, is very proper. Our State offices are not so built as to tend to the giving of the best service. I presume the strike is going to result in a considerable increase of pay to the public servants—I understand about £100,000 or £150,000 extra for the current year. Can we afford to pay another penny to our public servants?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, while food continues to go up.

Mr. ANGELO: I say, no. I say we are paying quite enough. Unfortunately, however, the right men are not being paid the right amounts; the money is not being distributed in an equitable manner. If by a reorganisation of the State service we can get rid of 25 or 30 per cent. of our public servants, and if then we distribute the amount so saved among the men who deserve it, Western Australia will benefit considerably. Public servants are now allowed to rise to £252 per annum by auto-

matic increases. That system is quite wrong. Of two men joining the public service one may be a good man who does his utmost to earn his salary, and the other may be a slacker. The slacker, knowing that he must get his automatic rises, is not going to push himself more than necessary. Thus the State loses by the slacker. Then the other man, though a good worker, will say to himself, "This fellow is being paid the same as I am, and why should I work harder than he does?" And so the State again loses. In banks and other business houses a youngster of 16 or 17 who is taken on is given automatic rises for a couple of years, and that only. By that time the heads are able to judge whether he is going to prove a satisfactory employee. If satisfied with his work, the heads push him on, irrespective of any maximum salary. If they are convinced that the youngster is not going to make good, they inform his father or guardian, or perhaps the boy himself is told, that it will be better for him to get into some other line of life. Automatic increases are utterly wrong. Payment should be according to merit, and according to merit only.

The Premier: Hear, hear! I agree with that.

Mr. ANGELO. The member for North-East Fremantle says more power should be given to the permanent heads. I quite agree with him. I would like again to refer to a system that I know, the system adopted by a chartered bank. The directors control the policy of the bank, but to carry out the work of the bank they appoint one man and make him responsible for the working of the whole of the staff, which may consist of 10,000 men. This one man appoints sub-general managers for the various divisions of the bank—one for Western Australia, one for South Australia, and so on; and each sub-general manager is responsible for the work of his particular division. In his turn he appoints the managers of the various branches, and they are responsible to him. The clerks of course, are responsible to the various managers. Thus responsibility is put on all the men employed, from the man at the top down to the lowest paid, and it is to each man's interest to do his utmost for the service that is paying him. And what is the consequence? What other commercial pursuit is carried on in so satisfactory a manner as the chartered banks and the large financial institutions like Dalgety's? In that connection let me mention another point. Dalgety's have a number of branches—a stock branch, a shipping branch, a goods branch, and so on. But they have only one accountant's office. On the other hand, what has the State? The State has an accountant's office for every one of its departments. It is true, however, that amalgamation of these accountants' offices is proceeding. Still, if one has an account against one department for £1 and against another department for 6d., one has to get a separate cheque for each amount.

I suggest that the Government should as speedily as possible set about a reorganisation of the public service, and appoint a board for that purpose. If possible they should secure the services on that board of some well-known business man—the head of Dalgety's or the head of a bank—to assist the other members of the board in devising a better system. As I have said, we shall probably be asked on these Estimates for more than £100,000 extra on account of increases in public service salaries; but before I agree to give my vote for any increase I want some assurance from the Government that the public service will be reorganised. Another thing that I consider should be done, and done almost immediately, is to make all permanent heads and all executive officers throughout the service sever their connection with the Civil Service Association.

Mr. Willcock: Why?

Mr. ANGELO: I will tell the hon. member why. If there is a union, all the workers in the industry are allowed to belong to that union. But suppose one of those workers rises to the position of manager: then he has to sever his connection with the union. Is not that so?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If he is an employer.

Mr. ANGELO: Or if he is a manager. I think the kind of thing we saw during the recent strike is utterly ridiculous. The head of the Education Department had to go along to one of his teachers to ask permission to go back to his office. Is it not a ridiculous position? The permanent heads are supposed to be responsible to the Government and they were led by a lot of understrappers, because after all the strike was largely the work of the understrappers. It was the temporary hands principally who were responsible for the resolutions that were carried.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was a ballot and the decision was almost unanimous.

Mr. ANGELO: But it was not a secret ballot. I have been told time after time by civil servants that if the ballot had been a secret one, the strike would never have taken place. It is my opinion that the permanent heads, as well as the executive officers, should be instructed to sever their connection with the Civil Service Association. Let them form an association of their own if they so wish, but they should not join up with the rank and file.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And if they went on strike, the others would take their place.

Mr. ANGELO: I suppose they would. The time has arrived when a guarantee and provident fund should be established in connection with the service. The need for such a fund makes itself manifest in times of stress, when it is perhaps necessary to retrench, and get rid of the older hands. What happens now if any retrenchment is made? Probably an allowance is given which amounts to over two or three years

salary, whereas if a guarantee and provident fund existed, an allowance could be paid from that. Such a fund should be built up so that out of it pensions and retiring allowances might be paid. Some of the bigger private firms have such funds in existence, and the employees pay 2½ per cent. or some similar contribution towards those funds, and the employers subsidise them up to the amount considered necessary by an actuary. The sooner the State does that kind of thing, the better it will be for the officers in the service. Furthermore, it would act as a guarantee fund and do away with the necessity for the payment by many officers of large sums for assurance. With regard to the personnel of the board, I agree that a judge is not the right man to fill the position of chairman. A judge does not come into contact with the lower grades of the service nor the working man.

The Premier: He can take evidence.

Mr. ANGELO: That is the trouble. If we depend on evidence we shall never get to the end of the appeal. We want as chairman a man who is respected by all classes of the community, one who comes into touch with every section. Such a man should be the deciding factor between the Government representative on the one hand and the representative of the service on the other. A good business man who comes into touch with all classes of the community would be preferable to a judge of the Supreme Court. I suppose we shall have to vote for the second reading of the Bill because it is too late to do anything in the way of reorganisation. If such be possible, however, I would urge the Government to put the matter in hand straight away. We have the opinion of a man like the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) who, with Mr. Glyde, investigated the conditions of the service. Mr. Gardiner has informed us that the methods adopted in the service are wrong and that in addition the service is over-manned. I have discussed the matter with several heads of departments in the service, and each has said, "You are quite right, the service is over-manned, but my particular department is not over-manned." The next man will probably say the same thing. We want to know to what extent the service is over-manned and the sooner the Government appoint a board to go into the matter thoroughly and see what really is the condition of the service, the better it will be for everybody. The investigation should also show us whether the service is giving the State a fair deal. In the meantime, as the Government have promised the appeal board, I of course must vote for the second reading of the Bill.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [8.7]: I intend to say very little on the second reading of the Bill; I do not propose to discuss its provisions because that has been done very ably by the Attorney

General. The cry of the last speaker was retrenchment and reorganisation. It may be possible in some instances, but I would like the hon. gentleman to remember that we have heard so much about reorganisation that it is like that blessed word Mesopotamia, and means about as much. We know that we should have an efficient service; we know that a great deal of the ordinary life of the State depends to a large extent upon the work of the civil service. In a new country like this a great many of the activities of the people centre more or less in the government of the country. So far as I know, we have a very capable lot of men in the service. Of course there may be some who are incapable or undesirable, but they are certainly very few. I have had a considerable number of years in office and I am in the position to express an opinion.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And your term is drawing to a close now.

The PREMIER: The hon. gentleman has told me that on many occasions, and it has not happened yet. Neither do I believe that my political end is within measurable distance. At any rate, I am perfectly willing to take my chance. I would like the House to remember that the public demand that they shall be well served by the civil service. We have heard something from the member for Gascogne about the shortcomings of the civil servants, but I doubt whether things are as bad as he has described them. I believe the great majority of the members of the service carry out their duties satisfactorily. I should like the hon. member to believe with me that a State civil servant is quite equal to the Federal civil servant.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Federal civil servants are better paid.

The PREMIER: In many cases our men are paid better; at any rate, they work as well. I would like the House to realise that we have set up the methods of administration and it is here that the trouble arises. The methods are cumbersome and we blame the service for something they are not in any way responsible for. The work of Government departments in every part of the world is cumbersome. We pass Acts of Parliament every session, and each Act means work. There must, of course, be reform, and that reform will have to be in the methods adopted. Everything connected with the service is cumbersome. Take for instance the papers that are laid on the Table of the House. Anyone could spend a long time reading a file from top to bottom. The file system we all know is very cumbersome; it lends itself to eating up time, to delays and trouble. I agree that the civil service should be well paid, and that it should be efficient. I believe it can be well paid and be made efficient, and that it should cost the country less than it does at the present time. We should have to make some amendments to the Act; it might be necessary to pass a small Act to give the Government the right to make regulations to declare how the work had to be carried out, particularly in connection with the accounts that have to be kept. We have

provided a way, and naturally that way has to be followed. I would like to tell hon. members that the work of Government departments has increased rapidly. The late Attorney General will admit that the work of the Land Titles Office has almost doubled in the last few months.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Since you extended the trading concerns.

The PREMIER: The Lands Department has a great deal more work to do, and in the Mines and other departments there is also increased activity. The additional work has been performed by the same staff. There may have been an increase in the staff of the Agricultural Bank due to the additional work arising from the settlement of soldiers on the land, but that is all. I believe, however, we can improve our methods. I believe also that the service should be properly housed. It is just a question of how much would be needed to provide accommodation, but I believe that even in these times it would be money well spent. There is no need for the Government offices to occupy such a valuable frontage in Barrack-street. We could get a good revenue from that building, and that would go well towards paying interest and sinking fund on the cost of a new building.

Mr. Smith: And you would get increased efficiency.

The PREMIER: The whole question will be looked into and I hope next session or during next Parliament to be able to make a definite proposal.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Every Government for the last 20 years has said the same thing.

The PREMIER: I am not responsible for what previous Governments have promised. Of course, it is a matter that is not simple of achievement, and particularly in these times when money is not too easy to obtain. Of course amalgamations of certain departments are required. There is an unnecessary number of departments. Some saving could be effected in this direction. Something has been said about the methods to be followed in the re-organisation of departments. I agree with the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) that the under secretary is the manager of his department. The under secretaries have been requested to put up proposals for the better management and more efficient working of their respective departments. Not all depends upon the board appointed to hear appeals, for we are conducting the affairs of the country as if the strike had never happened, and are rectifying anomalies in the service from day to day. The under secretaries have been given a chance to effect needed reforms. If they do it, so much the more to their credit. If, after they have had a try, it is found that a board is required to do the work, that board will be appointed. There are some very capable men at the head of the public service. I hold that reform must be from the top. If the managers of the service are not, through their officials, conducting the work of the departments as it should be done, they are to blame. At all events, I can see no

good in any reform which does not begin at the top. It has been said by the public servants themselves that there are far too many officers in the Government departments. If there were fewer they could be better paid.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You gave the Director of Education a rise of £100 per annum, but you did not consider the men lower down. It is that sort of thing which causes discontent.

The PREMIER: I do not know of any discontent which has arisen from the giving of a rise to the Director of Education. Every man in the service has had a rise during the past 12 months, most of them more than one. I do not say that they are magnificently paid even now, but certainly their pay is very different from what they once had. Very soon after taking over the Premier's Office I told the public service that I would look after the men under £300 per annum, but that for the time being I could do very little for the men above that grade. Since then we have done something for both classes. However, we need not discuss that to-night. I told the member for North-East Fremantle that the board was promised before the public servants went on strike, and that they were told they could discuss the details of the Bill with the Attorney General while the Bill was being drafted.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not raise any objection on that score.

The PREMIER: No, but as I say, they were told that they could discuss the Bill with the Attorney General.

Mr. Smith: How many times were they promised that before?

The PREMIER: I am not responsible for promises made before my time. The board has been established, and the Bill is before the House. Employees generally throughout the world have some board to go to. Our public servants have a little better chance than the men who have to go before the Arbitration Court, because since 1904 they have had a Public Service Commissioner whose duty it is to reclassify the service from time to time. As a matter of fact, a board of commissioners has been at work for some time, and I hope that the reclassification will be finished in the course of the next few months. And for any man dissatisfied with that reclassification, there is an appeal to this new board. There always has been an appeal to a board, but it was a board of limited jurisdiction. In that respect the position is now vastly improved. I know that many public servants believe that there should be some reform of the service, that it should be placed on a different basis. Let me say that reforms have been made, and are being made to-day, and that the work will be followed up. We have in the Public Service Commissioner a capable and fair man. He, with Mr. Munt and another, is now at work on the task of reclassification, after which,

as I say, there is the new appeal board. Surely the public servants will get what is their due from one or other of those tribunals. The country is entitled to be efficiently served, and I believe that if it is not efficiently served it is because of the methods employed in the conduct of the departments.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The trouble has arisen over the delay consequent upon the methods you followed.

The PREMIER: Not the methods that I followed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Well, your Government.

The PREMIER: No, not my Government.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Well it happened seven or eight months ago.

The PREMIER: Seven or eight years, probably, or even more. Personally, I have seen more of the public service in deputations in my office than has any previous Premier, or even all of them put together.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Too many deputations, not enough cash.

Mr. Green: Did you not try to bluff them too much?

The PREMIER: No, unlike the hon. member I do not try to bluff anybody. I have always been perfectly frank with the public service, and in this House in season and out of season I have defended them against attacks. The country is entitled to have value for its money from the public service, and the country can have that value if the methods adopted in future are right methods. I am not going to say that there are not public servants who are not competent, but I stoutly affirm that the ability of the public service as a whole is quite equal to the ability of those doing similar work outside the service.

Mr. Green: And a bit better, because the public servant has to pass an examination and a physical test also.

The PREMIER: I am glad to know that the hon. member is perfectly satisfied with the public service.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Like you, some of them take long walks in King's Park in the early morning.

The PREMIER: I have never met the hon. member in the Park in the early morning.

Mr. Munsie: No, he is more likely to be there at night.

The PREMIER: However, I am not going to discuss the Bill any further at this stage, although probably I shall have something to say in Committee. Unfortunately, the Attorney General is not here to-night to reply to the debate, for the reason that he is ill in bed, but I hope that next week we shall be able to put the Bill through all its stages.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [8.25]: I feel it would be scarcely fair—

Hon. T. Walker: Are you speaking in reply for the Government? Will your remarks close the debate?

Mr. Munsie: Are you the Minister in charge of the Bill?

Mr. PICKERING: I feel it would be scarcely fair if I were to allow a Bill of this importance to pass without comment.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Hear, hear!

Mr. PICKERING: I must say something on the measure, seeing that I took a prominent part during the strike.

Mr. Green: You tried to get them back to work.

Mr. PICKERING: I did.

Mr. Green: Yes, and without any rise.

Mr. PICKERING: With an assurance that I would do my utmost to see that they got justice. I congratulate the Government on having brought down at so early a stage in the session this measure in fulfilment of their promise. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) took exception to the title of the Bill, and said he thought it should be styled an Act for the Fulfilment of an Agreement arrived at between the Government and the Public Service. No matter what the title may be, it is undoubtedly a Bill in fulfilment of the pledge given by the Government. Exception has been taken to the constitution of the board. But it must be remembered that the constitution of the board is that which was agreed upon between the Government and the Public Service and that it would be a breach of faith on the part of the Government if the board were not to be constituted as agreed upon.

Mr. Munsie: It is only a temporary board.

Mr. PICKERING: Perhaps so in the first instance, but I hope the lines laid down in the Bill will be followed in the constitution of the permanent board.

Mr. Munsie: I hope not. I hope the men will have the right to appoint their own board.

Mr. PICKERING: In the constitution of the board we have a Supreme Court judge, a member representing the Government and another representing the public service. For questions exclusively affecting the Education Department we have a similar board, and when subjects under discussion are common to both sections of the public service the two boards are to act in conjunction. I see a difficulty in the definition of what questions are common to both services. I agree that it is necessary to have up to date offices for the accommodation of the public service. Until we have modern offices we cannot hope to have effective administration. Take the Lands Department, the Titles office and other departments: they are more or less rabbit warrens, and it is with the utmost difficulty that the general public can find the officers they require, while it is quite impossible for any head of a department to carry out effective supervision over so many small rooms as are to be found in the departments I have instanced. It seems to me that the General Post Office building will, at an early date, revert to the State and, if that building in conjunction with the Town Hall were converted into public service offices, a

good many of the departments could be adequately housed there. The building would be central, and it could easily be converted into up to date offices. In a very short time, the amount which would be saved from the non-expenditure of rents on offices occupied under a tenancy, and the additional efficiency which would result from the proper housing of the staff, would more than compensate for any expenditure incurred, and the money required to bring about this revolution in the housing of our civil service—

Mr. Green: Steady with that word!

Mr. PICKERING: It is a dangerous word, I admit, but I repeat that the revolution in the housing of the civil service would speedily prove of benefit to the State. I agree with other speakers who contend that the civil service is considerably over-manned. I do not hesitate to make that statement publicly. The saving which could be effected by a reduction of the service would approximate the amount of the increased remuneration sought by the civil servants, namely 33½ per cent. This is rather a familiar fraction, not only to civil servants but to members of Parliament. The way to ascertaining the extent of over-manning in the service would be by appointing special expert boards to go through all departments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: All the experts are in the departments.

Mr. Smith: How many more boards do you want?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The head officials are the only ones and they say they have not time to go through the departments.

Mr. PICKERING: I am of opinion that it would be possible to get outside men to do this work. Take the member for Kanoona (Hon. T. Walker). He could go through the Crown Law Department.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There are only one or two officers in that department.

Mr. PICKERING: I am only instancing the Crown Law Department. There is no reason why architects should not be appointed to go through the Public Works Department. As I am a member of Parliament, I would be prevented from accepting a position on such a board because I should certainly desire to be remunerated if I had that duty thrust upon me.

Mr. Smith: You could accept it in an honorary capacity.

Mr. PICKERING: Unfortunately, I could not. Without making myself an instance in that regard, there are many architects who could go through the Public Works Department and probably place it on better lines than is the case to-day. There are other departments which require expert men to go through them if they are to be brought to a state of efficiency. There is no reason why the heads of departments, if they are so efficient as the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) believes, should not assist or form part of separate boards to go through each department. Take the Accounts Department: surely it would be possible to get qualified

accountants to put that department on to lines of efficiency.

Mr. SPEAKER. Order! If the hon. member confines himself to the Bill, he will get on better.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret if I have trespassed on your generosity, Sir, but this matter has been referred to by the Premier and by other members, and I thought I was merely following on like lines. I wish to say that I have every confidence in the manner of treating the civil servants as the Premier has indicated and, following on that suggested treatment, he did point out that it would be absolutely necessary, if we were to get an efficient service, that certain retrenchment and alterations would have to be made.

Mr. SPEAKER: Those references were made in general terms, whereas the hon. member is dealing with each department.

Mr. PICKERING: Then I shall confine my remarks to general terms. One thing for which we should strive in the civil service is efficiency. That should be the main, if not the sole, claim for advancement in the various departments. Such things as seniority and favouritism should not prevail in any of the departments. The main factor for advancement in position and remuneration should be efficiency.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then you will have to alter human nature.

Mr. PICKERING: We shall have to try to do our best in that direction. That, however, applies not only to this measure but to other measures. It is out of a desire to alter human nature that we pass many Acts in this Parliament. Whether such legislation has the desired result in every instance has yet to be proved. It is essential for the proper working of the departments that efficiency should be the main factor for advancement and for increased remuneration. That also should be a very great factor in determining the status of the heads of departments. To contend that, because a department is a large one, this should be the main reason for increased remuneration or greater dignity is absurd. The correct principle to adopt is to give reward and credit to the head of a department who can run his department most economically and efficiently. I trust that when the reorganisation of the civil service is being taken seriously in hand, the first section of the service to be attacked in the work of reformation will be the heads of departments. It is necessary that the heads of departments should be brought to a state of greater efficiency, more so than the minor officials, because, if the heads, like the managers of large businesses, are not efficient, the department as a whole cannot be efficient.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I see that your business is advertising for a manager at £1,000 to £1,200, whereas the Government are giving only £700. Can they expect efficiency?

Mr. PICKERING: My business?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are not you one of the directors of the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.?

Mr. PICKERING: No; I wish I were.

Mr. Brown: You ought to be.

Mr. PICKERING: No doubt.

Mr. Maley: His chance is coming.

Mr. PICKERING: Without doubt there is scope for retrenchment in the civil service. I have been in personal contact with officers of various departments, and most of them are prepared to admit that there is room for retrenchment. There are certain departments in which there is no room for retrenchment. In such cases it might be the business of the board to provide for an increased staff, but I venture to think that, in the great majority of instances, that will not be the case. The Education Department should be placed on the same basis as the civil service with regard to efficiency. Efficiency should be the standard for advancement, and I think it generally is. There is scope in the Education Department—not in the teaching but in the administrative section—for some reorganisation. It has been alleged that the Education Department is extravagantly run. If that is so, it is surely necessary that those controlling the administrative phase should come under the purview of the board in the first instance. I sincerely hope that hon. members will favourably consider this measure. In Committee it may be necessary to effect minor amendments; but, on the whole, this Bill is a fulfilment of pledges made by the Government, and one which they could not very well escape. It is framed on fairly liberal lines, and should meet with the general approval of the House. I support the second reading.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [8.40]: Unlike the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering), I cannot congratulate the Government on having kept their promise by introducing this Bill. While I admit that they have kept the promise so far as the introduction of a Bill is concerned, they certainly have not kept their promise with respect to the contract entered into with the civil servants and teachers as regards the nature of the Bill. There is no question that the intention of the Government, and I believe the intention of the civil servants and teachers was, that when this Bill was introduced and the board was established, the board should be to the civil servants and the teachers what the Arbitration Court is to the industrial unionists of Western Australia. That being the case, the civil servants and teachers' organisation naturally looked forward to enjoying the same rights as trade unionists enjoy. The Bill does not give them such rights. There is no doubt in my mind, and I fail to see how there can be doubt in the mind of anyone, not even in the minds of members of the Government, as to what the intention at the outset was. The Government issued a notice in the "Government Gazette" of the 23rd

August, pointing out that an Order in Council had been issued for the appointment of the board which is now in existence. The notice stated that the board was constituted as follows:—"His Honour Mr. Justice Northmore shall be the chairman thereof, and if the appeal relates to matters with which the teaching staff of the Education Department is not concerned J. M. Drummond, hereby appointed by His Excellency the Governor, and E. A. Mann appointed by the Civil Service Association of Western Australia, shall be the other members of the board; but if the appeal relates to matters with which the teaching staff of the Education Department only is concerned, the Rev. G. N. Dods, hereby appointed by His Excellency the Governor, and M. F. Darcey appointed by the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia, shall be the other members of the board." Now what is the principle laid down in the Bill? Clause 3, which deals with the constitution of the board, shows that the Government have not kept the promise given to the two organisations, and I trust the Government will agree to amend the Bill and stick to the promise contained in the "Gazette" notice and given to the organisations prior to their members returning to work. The Bill provides quite a different method for the election of the board. It provides that the representative of the civil service shall be elected in the prescribed manner by the public service, not by the Civil Service Association as promised.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are not all members of the public service in the association?

Mr. MUNSIE: Unfortunately they are not. I believe that about 98 per cent. of the civil servants belong to the Civil Service Association, but all of them are not members.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They ought to be.

Mr. MUNSIE: I admit that, but the fact remains that all of them are not members. The same thing applies to every industrial organisation in the State. All men working in a particular industry should belong to the organisation connected with the industry. The Bill also provides that the representative of the teaching staff shall be elected in the prescribed manner by the teaching staff, whereas in the "Gazette" notice it was distinctly stated that the School Teachers' Union should elect the representative. Clause 5 of the Bill provides for the appointment of a deputy in the event of the representative of the civil service or of the teachers becoming ill, or of the appeal directly affecting the representative. But we find that the conditions under which these appointments were to have been made have been completely departed from. In Clause 5 we find that the deputy is to be appointed by the chairman. I do not think that will lead to much satisfaction to the board, or give much satisfaction to the organisation. There are one or two other points in the Bill which I believe can

be rectified in Committee, particularly as to the wording of certain clauses, but the matters I have referred to are principles contained in the Bill. I have gone to the trouble of endeavouring to ascertain from all the authorities I could discover the exact procedure in connection with trades unions and members of the Arbitration Court. Section 44 of the Industrial Act of 1912 provides that each industrial union may, within one month after being requested so to do by the registrar, recommend to the Governor in the prescribed manner the name of one person, and from such nominees the Governor shall elect two members, one from the persons recommended by the industrial union of employers, and one from the persons recommended by the industrial union of workers. I was anxious to find out what the regulations were governing that appointment, but so far have not been able to find them. If only one gentleman is nominated by the trades unions of Western Australia, will it be compulsory for the Governor in Council to appoint that man? From my reading of the Act I think it would be compulsory, but the regulations do not carry one much further on that point. Regulation 380 says that a request by the registrar for a recommendation by the industrial union under Section 44 of the Act shall be in the form No. 37 in the schedule thereto, and shall be signed on behalf of the industrial union by the president and secretary of it, or as prescribed by the rules of the union. There is also the prescribed form, which sets out the manner in which the nomination is to be made of the person desired to be nominated by the trades union. I hope when the Bill is in Committee that the Attorney General and the Premier will agree to revert to their "Gazette" notice, which contains a distinct promise given to the teachers and the civil servants. The Bill as it stands is unfair to these organisations, more particularly as it concerns the appointment of a deputy. Clause 5 of the Bill gives power to the chairman of the board to appoint a deputy. About 95 per cent. of the teachers are members of the teachers' union, and there are, therefore, five per cent. who are not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I suggest that the Premier should not increase their salaries.

Mr. MUNSIE: I should like the Premier to refuse to employ them if they are not members of the teachers' organisation, which has done a great deal for them, and for which they ought to do something in return.

The Colonial Secretary: The appointment of a deputy is only a temporary expedient.

Mr. MUNSIE: That may be so. Suppose that the permanent man appointed by the organisation remained there for six months, and a deputy was then appointed to take his place. Possibly the judge might appoint someone who is not a member of the teachers' union or of the civil service. The Gov-

ernment have the right to appoint their members on the board, and surely the teachers and the civil servants have a similar right so far as the appointment of their representative and his deputy are concerned. I hope the Government will give them that right.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [8.50]: Although the member for Haunans (Mr. Munzie) has touched upon many of the points with which I intended to deal, I cannot refrain from traversing some of the ground covered by him. I agree with that hon. member inasmuch as I believe the Government have broken faith with the civil servants with regard to the personnel of the board.

The Premier: I daresay Mr. Darcey says so.

Mr. GREEN: I regret that the Premier should make that innuendo.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Mr. GREEN: I regret that the Premier should cast an innuendo upon a member of the teachers' union. It is unworthy of him, and I trust we shall not have a repetition of it.

The Premier: You probably will.

Mr. GREEN: The Premier is keen to take to task a member of this Chamber for saying that which he may consider not to be right, when some hon. member is speaking about other people, and I trust he will take a dose of his own physic now, and show the House, as its leader, that he can conduct himself with a certain amount of dignity. Mr. Darcey has just as much right as anyone else to express his opinion.

The Premier: I do not say he has not.

Mr. GREEN: Because he is a member of the teachers' union, and perhaps, therefore, not as free to express his opinions as I am as a member of Parliament, it is my duty to give his point of view in this Chamber, and I intend to do it. The Government have broken faith with the civil service before they have actually got them to the Board. The Premier must agree that under paragraphs (a) and (b) of the clause dealing with the subject, the election of members of the board must be in the hands of the Civil Service Association in the one case, and the teachers' union in the other. There are 96 per cent. of the teachers in the W.A. Teachers' Union, and the number of civil servants in the Civil Service Association is quite 98 per cent. Surely, therefore, these men are to have the same rights as workers in other avocations to put their case through their respective organisations.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have the right to go to the Arbitration Court just as anyone else has.

Mr. GREEN: If the teachers on their side, and the civil servants on the other side, have not the right to take their grievances to their respective organisations before they go to the Government, this Bill will be useless. It will never deal effectually with the difficulties it will be asked to solve. The Railway Association is an organisation al-

most analogous to the Government bodies we are now dealing with. If we were to take up the grievances of the different members of that association—there are always a certain number of individuals who suppose they have grievances—instead of their first going through the organisation concerned, the whole of the time of this Chamber would be taken up in discussing them. I have here a copy of a circular from six or seven members of the Railway Association, and other hon. members of this Chamber also have copies, asking us to take up a certain matter on their behalf. Our intention is to write back and ask them if they have put their case through their union, and if so what the union think of it. Most of the cases that come before the unions are carefully sifted before the Government are approached, because in many cases it is found that grievances cannot, after investigation, be substantiated. There is a certain amount of selfishness in mankind which causes some persons to think they have grievances when, in actual fact, they are getting a fair deal. In these circumstances the Government would be wise to allow the teachers and civil servants to have some say in the constitution of what is to them practically an Arbitration Court.

The Premier: You say they have in their union 95 per cent. of their number.

Mr. GREEN: Yes. There are certain members of this organisation who do not always pay their just dues for benefits received, and betray the weakness in human nature which is found in almost all walks in life, namely, a desire to dodge their responsibilities. To use the words in the Bill, if different members of the teachers' staff and different members of the staff of the public service are able to derive certain benefits from this Bill, benefits that had to be fought for—I doubt if the Bill would have been here without that fight—they should certainly support those organisations which have been the means of bringing about these benefits. If, however, they can get these benefits without that support the percentage of members of the unions will fall considerably. I cannot expect the Premier to have any sympathy for the association, but if this Bill is to be effective it will be necessary for the Civil Service Association on the one hand, and the Western Australian Teachers' Union on the other, to sift all grievances before they are brought before the board. With regard to Clause 17, and the preparation of rolls of public servants and teachers entitled to vote, the original understanding with the association on the one hand and the union on the other was that these matters were to be dealt with by the organisations concerned. The Premier will not deny that. I trust the mistake will not be made of carrying the Bill as it is printed in that regard. Clause 15 says—

If after the commencement of this Act any public servant takes part in or does any act, matter, or thing in the nature of a strike, he shall be guilty of an offence, and on conviction shall forfeit the privileges which otherwise he might have en-

joyed under any Act or regulation relating to his service, including the Superannuation Act.

If that is so, no matter which Government may be in office, he has to forfeit the right of a free man to cease work, otherwise he will be robbed of everything.

The Premier: Oh, no!

Mr. GREEN: The civil servants were not aware of the liberty they were bartering away, alongside of which this Bill is a mess of pottage. Men who are prepared to accept that have no idea of industrial economics. I am going to vote against that clause. In this age of freedom, to ask the civil servants to forfeit rights enjoyed by the rest of the community, is expecting too much of them, and smacks of the dark ages. I trust the Premier will see that that clause is deleted. I do not fear the public servants' striking, as far as that goes; nor do I fear the teachers' striking; but the clause is an insult. It is a case of harking back to the days when this State was a colony, and men had gyves on their wrists, and were asked, "Bond or free?" If this clause is passed, the public servants in contrast to the rest of the community, and indeed in contrast to their fellow officers in the Railway Department, will be debarred from exercising the right to strike. I trust that a certain degree of honour, of gentlemanly understanding, as between the members of the teachers' association, a high profession, and the members of the civil servants' association, another high profession, will obviate any necessity for striking. If they get justice, they will not strike. It is remarkable that Western Australia should be the only State in the world where the members of such professions have been compelled to strike in order to get their rights. Several speakers have referred to the "laziness" of public servants. From discussions in this Chamber one would imagine that the public servants were a class apart, an inferior class of different clay from the rest of humanity. I have been a public servant for 17 years, and if I got out of Parliament next March—which is extremely unlikely—and were offered my old position in the Federal Public Service, with all the accumulation of so-called rights and privileges attaching thereto, I would prefer to break stones in Hannan-street. I thought so much of my job and its rights and privileges that I resigned after 17 years' service, when another three years' service would have entitled me to six months' leave on full pay. When experiencing open competition with other men in the outside world, after resigning from the Federal Public Service, I felt like a bird that had been let out of the cage. Let me point out, too, that the public servants are under semi-military rule. I know a lady—my own sister, in fact—who was discharged from the Education Department because she happened to be an anti-conscriptionist. Not that she ever mentioned the matter in the school; she never had a word to say about

it to the children. But because in some village she heard some bone-heads putting up the case for conscription, and because she expressed her belief that conscription was against the best interests of Australia, she was dismissed from the Education Department. I got busy, and made that a special case, and she was put in again when I had finished. But what would have been the position of a woman who had not a member of Parliament to see justice done in her case? Thank God, the days of oppression that we experienced during the war are passing away! The day of freedom is again dawning. I may connect these remarks with the Bill by pointing out that the measure is intended to control the public service, and that derogatory remarks have been made against public servants in this Chamber. I am attempting to show that under this Bill public servants will have perfect freedom provided this obnoxious clause is deleted.

The SPEAKER: The clause is not under discussion. The hon. member had better refer to it in Committee.

Mr. GREEN: I am just dealing with the clause in a general way. A good deal has been said with regard to departmental files. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), who has had banking experience, said the matter of files could be managed very simply, just as it had been managed in his bank, where the manager appointed two sub-managers, and the sub-managers appointed the clerks, and they all had to look to each other, "and there you are, and why cannot you have a public service like that?" In every country of the world the working of the public service is a problem. We all recognise that bureaucracy naturally creeps into a large public service, where there is one man at the top with numerous subordinates scattered all over the country. In such circumstances it is not possible to adopt the word-of-mouth method by which, say, the member for North Perth (Mr. Smith), sitting in his office, conducts his business. We know that in a large State service there must of necessity be a large number of files. But if there has been any circumlocution in this State, we as a Parliament, and not only the present Government but preceding Governments as well, are to a large extent responsible. Let me point out the number of offices we have in this State. In order to get to the Mines Department, one has to go to Murray-street. Nobody knows that better than a member of Parliament who wants to pay a morning call there. If he wants the Agricultural Bank, he has to go to Hay-street. If he wants the Lands Department, he has to trip around to Cathedral-avenue. In the meantime, he makes every post a winning post by taking the tram wherever possible, since members of Parliament are favoured in that respect. If he wants to go to the Treasury, there are two offices in Barrack-street. If he wants to interview the Premier, he goes through a rabbit warren of offices, and if he has been out of town for a

month he very likely forgets the way and has to ask a boy to show it to him. If he wants to go to the Public Works Department, presided over by that genial genius the present Minister for Works, he has to go to the head of St. George's-terrace. If he wants to go to the State Brick Works, he trips to the corner of the grounds of Parliament House. If he wants to visit the State Taxation Department—Heaven preserve us from unnecessary visits there!—he has to go to Wellington-street. If it is the Water Supply Department he wants, he must go to James-street. Unfortunately, members of Parliament have frequent occasion to visit the Charities Department on behalf of constituents who find themselves in a sorry position owing to certain unfortunate causes; and for that purpose one has to go back to Hay-street. If one wants to see Mr. Mann, the revolutionary public servant and, by the way, an excellent analyst, one has to go to Wellington-street. The solution of the problem was stated by the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering). A previous Government proposed that all the offices of the State departments should be in the one block bounded by Hay-street, Barrack-street, St. George's-terrace, and Cathedral-avenue. We should, if necessary, put up on that block a building 15 stories high, with modern lifts; and in that building the chief of each department should be installed on each floor in a central office surrounded by glass, so that every public servant in his department could be under his survey, not necessarily for the purpose of watching him, but in order to be in touch with him. Under such conditions I am sure the number of public servants we have to-day would suffice for the next 20 years, without increase. So we could do away with the interminable telephone ringing, the endless carriage of letters and files by messengers, and the countless delays, and have a rapid service throughout the departments. The present position of affairs is absolutely chaotic. No other capital city in the world with which I am acquainted—and I have seen a few—has anything to parallel the circumlocution that is necessary because of the rabbit warrens in which our public servants are scattered over the whole of the metropolis. That scattering of offices is responsible for a large proportion of the heavy cost of upkeep of our State service. That scattering about is the result of our lack of foresight, of our lack of courage, of our stupidity. We should have erected proper buildings, with shops underneath if necessary; and in that way the State would have derived all the interest and all the sinking fund on the money required to provide adequate office accommodation. The building would have paid for itself as things went along, and would be an everlasting benefit to the community. If anyone is in doubt about the average public servant's position, he need only pay attention to the appearance of one who has been in the service for years. The

average public servant has a care-worn look. One great trouble in public services is that a subordinate, no matter how high he may be, as long as he has a man above him, is almost afraid to make a suggestion. The fellow higher up is afraid to accept a suggestion from below for fear the other man will be credited with knowing something that the higher man ought to have known. That goes on right through the service. The fact is that the public servants are not able to act on their own initiative. I recognise there are a thousand and one obstacles to prevent them from doing so. The same system should be applied to the public service as should be applied to all industries. The problem before us is to allow the workers in an industry to control their own industry as much as possible. That cannot be done with a wave of the hand, but that is the line upon which the future of industry depends, whether it is the industry of public servants or of workers toiling with their hands. That is the line of organisation which is necessary in order that a man may get the best out of himself, out of his own initiative, and out of his own individuality. Such a system will, I believe, be devised, and will ultimately make for the good of the public service along with all other branches of industry.

On motion by Mr. Jones debate adjourned.

BILL—BUILDING SOCIETIES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd September.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.14]: This Bill is, really, purely a machinery measure. Since the second reading was moved, I have taken an opportunity to consult various people connected with building societies. They have perused the measure, with a view to ascertaining whether it contained anything detrimental to the working of the societies. On the whole they are well pleased with the Bill, though they consider that there are one or two minor details in which improvement might be effected. Those are matters which can be dealt with in Committee. I quite agree with the Attorney General that the time has arrived when this State should have legislation to control building societies, which are springing up in various directions. It is urgently necessary that there should be legislation adequately controlling the actions of people who form societies designed to attract the funds of the public. One matter to which I may draw the Premier's attention at this stage is that of collateral security. This Bill provides that in the event of the security offered to a building society for an advance for the erection of buildings not being sufficient, the society may take other security as collateral security to cover any advance which may be made. All that they

require is that there shall be permission to discharge the collateral security as soon as the ordinary security is sufficient to meet the advance which has been made. There are also one or two other matters in the Bill which can be better dealt with in Committee.

On motion by Mr. Brown, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOCAL AUTHORITIES SINKING FUNDS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 7th September.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [9.20] This is a useful measure and I entirely approve of it. The object the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) has in view is to permit sinking funds of local authorities to be invested in war gratuity bonds. The hon. member explained when introducing the Bill that in some cases local authorities were employing returned soldiers and they were anxious to have the right to invest their sinking funds in the war gratuity bonds of their employees. The Bill merely extends the right to invest beyond the ordinary State security. I have no objection to the Bill and I hope it will become law.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Hon. W. C. Angwin in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Power to invest sinking fund contributions in war gratuity bonds:

Mr. PICKERING: I would like an explanation of the words "or, other board authorised."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Those words apply to any board which is authorised to issue debentures and has to set aside an amount for a sinking fund.

Clause put and passed.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—WESTRALIAN MEAT WORKS.

Second Reading.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.23]. This is practically a formal Bill. The object is to rectify an error which was made in placing in the company's memorandum of agreement the number of shares to be obtained. As will be seen from the preamble, after the taking up of 80,000 shares the company would proceed to allotment. Every effort was made to get the 80,000

shares, but without success. It is generally felt throughout the Geraldton district, however, that it does not require anything like that amount of capital to start the operations of the company. It was only the optimism of the directors that led them to fix that number of shares. They thought there would be no trouble in disposing of that number of shares, and consequently that figure was placed in the memorandum. A general meeting of shareholders unanimously agreed to amend the memorandum, but it was found impossible to do that without passing a Bill through Parliament. The number of shares applied for is 80,000, and it is now proposed to go to allotment with that number. There are 500 shareholders in the company, and if the figures 80,000 are deleted from the memorandum, the allotment will start immediately. There is every assurance of the company's success and the establishment of the works will be proceeded with immediately.

Mr. PICKERING: What was the number originally?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The number was 150,000, but it was stipulated that the company would go to allotment when 80,000 shares had been applied for. Similar undertakings have been started in various parts of Australia with considerably less capital. I have the balance sheets of several companies operating in Victoria. One is the Golden Valley Industries Coy.—a company similar to ours. It has a capital of £40,000, with only £27,000 paid up, and last year it made a profit of £23,946. Another company is the Wimmera Meat Works, with a capital of £60,000 and £42,000 subscribed. That showed a profit of £13,006 last year. When the inaugural meeting of the Westralian Meat Works, Ltd., was held, Sir Henry Lefroy, who was then Premier, was present at it in Geraldton. There were 500 or 600 people at the meeting, and a promise was made that the water scheme would be proceeded with immediately. Had that scheme been successful there is no doubt that the whole of the capital required would have been subscribed.

The Premier: The Geraldton water scheme has been responsible for a lot of trouble.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It has. Most of the people in the Geraldton district when asked to take up shares in the company declared that the meat works would not be a success until water was provided for industrial purposes. However, we have disposed of a sufficient number of shares and it is proposed to go on with the works, notwithstanding the fact that to date the water scheme has not been carried out. There has not been any objection raised to the proposals set out in the Bill. The directors, however, felt that it was important that their action should receive legislative endorsement; they preferred to put the matter on a proper footing, because some shareholder, with a bee in his bonnet, might at some time cause trouble if that were not done. There is no

need to stress the importance of works such as these. We now have in the State over six million sheep, or an average of 20 sheep per head of the population. The average consumption is only nine, so that there must be an outlet found for the surplus. If they are not exported we will have to do what has been done in the past, that is, allow them to die off after the wool has been taken from them. The establishment of the works will enable the surplus sheep to be dealt with; if they are in good condition they can be sent to the freezing works and if they are in poor condition they can be sent to the canning works. I do not expect any opposition to the Bill. It is only a formal measure, and nothing but good can come from the establishment of the works. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Mitchell—Northam) [9.31]: I have no objection to the Bill. It will be a very good thing for the State when the meat works become an accomplished fact. If the House can do anything to expedite the erection of those works we ought to do it. Personally I think more than £60,000 will be required but, after all, that is the concern of the shareholders. There is in the Geraldton district a large number of enthusiastic men willing to back the works, and there is up there a vast area that can well produce the sheep necessary to keep the works going. Further than that, Geraldton is 300 miles from Perth. In the circumstances I am sure no hon. member would wish to delay the erection of the works for one day. It is necessary that the Bill should be passed, because, unless we legalise the proposed allotment, the company will have to wait until 80,000 shares have been applied for. Alternatively, any shareholder could demand his money back. I am glad to know that the works are so near to being started. For many years I have thought that Geraldton ought to have such works. Of course I know that the hon. member will attribute all the trouble and delays of the past, and even the possible hitches of the future, to the want of water at Geraldton.

Mr. Willcock: It certainly has had a considerable effect on the enterprise.

The PREMIER: I think the water scheme will be there long before the works are erected.

Mr. Willcock: I hope so.

The PREMIER: I hope so, too, notwithstanding that the people of Geraldton are very energetic. It will be quite useless to build the works without the water supply. The hon. member need have no fear as to the determination of the Government to provide a proper water supply for Geraldton. I have no opposition to offer the Bill, indeed I have pleasure in supporting it.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough) [9.35]: In supporting the second reading, I should perhaps

explain that I am a shareholder in the company, notwithstanding which, I do not think I am abusing my privileges as a member of the House. The Westralian Meat Works, Limited, was launched before either the works at Carnarvon or the works at Fremantle. Were it not for the fact that some of the large pastoralists on the Murchison supported the Fremantle venture, the Westralian Meat Works would have had no difficulty whatever in securing the full amount originally determined upon. There is plenty of room in the State for these three ventures. Of the three concerns our company has the largest number of individual shareholders. I join with the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) and the Premier in asking the House to pass the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

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Tuesday, 14th September, 1920.

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

QUESTION—ROYAL TRAIN ACCIDENT.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has an inquiry yet been made into the cause of the railway accident in which the Royal train was concerned? 2, If so, will be cause the finding to be laid upon the Table of the House?