as workable a measure as it can be made in passing through Committee in this House.

HON. W. PATRICK (Central): Considering the far-reaching effect that will be likely to result from the passing of a measure of this great importance, I think the wisest course will be, as suggested by Mr. Randell, to refer it to a select committee.

THE PRESIDENT: We cannot refer the Bill to a select committee until after the second reading is passed.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I am not prepared to go on with this Bill, and I find other members in the same position. I move that the debate be adjourned.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half-past 5 o'clock, until the next Tuesday afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 7th December, 1904.

MR. SPEAKER took the Chair at 3·30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND LABOUR: 1, Papers relating to the appointment of Railway Inspectors Gatherer and Gregg, on motion by Mr. A. J. Wilson; 2, Return showing saving effected by transfer of railway men from Southern Cross, on motion by Mr. Horan.

By the PREMIER: Flour-milling industry, Report moved for by Mr. Nanson.

QUESTION—SHOP HOURS, FRUIT AND COOL DRINKS.

MR. A. J. WILSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is he aware that the police have been informing certain fruit and cool-drink shop proprietors that they must close their shops on Sundays? 2. Has such action been taken by the authority of the Government? 3. Does he intend to insist upon all such shops being closed on Sundays in the future?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1. Yes. 2. No. 3. I have no intention of making any change in the existing practice. I may inform members that the Early Closing Act is administered by the Minister for Labour.

QUESTION—COMPACT BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND INDEPENDENT MEMBERS.

MR. RASON asked the Premier: 1. Does he intend to disclose to Parliament and the country the nature and terms of the compact entered into between himself and the four formerly Independent members, namely the hon. member for West Perth, Mr. C. J. Moran; the hon. member for Dundas, Mr. A. E. Thomas; the hon. member for Gascoyne, Mr. W. J. Butcher; and the hon. member for Kimberley, Mr. F. Connor, who have so recently joined his party? 2. If so, when?

THE PREMIER replied: If this question relates to the conference which took place on the 29th ultimo between the honorable members named and myself, the full particulars thereof were published in the Perth morning papers on the 30th ultimo.

SUPPLY BILL (No. 4).

SUPPLY BILL (£250,000), introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

MOTION (PAPERS)—RAILWAY SIDING, WYLEY'S.

On motion by MR. NANSON, ordered that there be laid on the table of the House all papers connected with the

closing of Wyley's Siding on the Walkaway-Geraldton Railway.

MOTION—KOOKYNIE LOCK-OUT PROSECUTION.

COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION TO DISAPPROVE.

MR. C. H. RASON, without notice, asked for leave to move that the consideration of Message No. 21 from the Legislative Council be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House. He said this motion should have been moved yesterday, and the message considered to-day. For the default, no blame was attachable to the Premier or to himself. It had been understood that the House would adjourn immediately after passing the Education Estimates.

MR. SPEAKER: This being a motion without notice, if any member objected, leave would not be given to move it. If there was silence, the question passed in the affirmative.

Question passed; leave given, and the order made for the next sitting.

BRANDS BILL.

SECOND READING.

Resumed from the previous day.

MR. R. G. BURGES (York): For my part, this Bill can at once go into Committee, where we can thresh out some of the clauses which would bear rather hardly on small stock-owners. I will not now refer to them, as we cannot discuss them on the second reading, and it would be useless to speak on the Bill without referring to the clauses. I hope the Minister who has introduced the Bill will tell us why it is required. I believe that a private member is answerable for its introduction. Two years ago a similar Bill was passed by this House towards the end of the session, and another place had not time to consider it. I suppose we shall have the same result this session, the Bill having been introduced so late.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): The Colonial Secretary, when introducing the measure yesterday, said practically all that was necessary. This Bill has been introduced at my instigation this session, as was the case two years ago, when unfortunately, owing to the late stage of the session, another place had not time to give it the necessary consideration, and with many other measures it went into the waste-paper basket. I am much afraid that if any time is wasted this year, the Bill will probably meet with the same fate. However, a select committee of the last Parliament having exhaustively considered the measure and obtained much evidence, I think I am justified in saying that the measure now before the House is very complete, and one which I certainly desire to see passed this session if possible, because it largely affects many if not all the settlers in the northern portion of this State. There is no occasion to discuss the matter now, so I shall say nothing more; and I hope sincerely that other members will leave debatable matters until we get into Committee. I am pleased that the Government have brought in the measure, and I trust the result will be more satisfactory than on the previous occasion.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; the COLONIAL SECRETARY in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2, 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Interpretation:

MR. BURGES: The definition of "cullmark" was given as "a mark to be prescribed by the registrar, and which may be used on sheep by the registered owner of any brand when culling out sheep." Where was the cullmark to be used? If on the ear, there might be six or seven marks on a sheep's ear.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: An owner would put in an application for the registration of a brand. If the brand had already been registered for another owner, the registrar would suggest some brand for the new applicant. It would be impossible to allow an owner to select his own brand.

MR. BURGES: How much of the ear would be left with seven niches on it?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This interpretation existed in other Acts.

MR. GORDON: How many different classes of earmarks might be used on two ears?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill provided for that farther on.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Description of brands:

MR. BURGES: It was provided in this clause that a firebrand should be burnt on the face or horns. Presumably this applied to horses and cattle. It would be unsatisfactory to apply a firebrand to cattle unless one desired to start cancer on the animals' faces. He understood the practice of putting firebrands on faces had died out in the North.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This portion of the clause dealt with sheep. There was no other place on a sheep to apply a firebrand than the face or horns.

MR. BUTCHER: The member for York was either ridiculing the Bill or showing gross ignorance. It was absolutely impossible to find any other part of the sheep where a firebrand could be put. Members who were inclined to see this Bill passed should not be led away by the member for York, who had opposed the Bill when it was previously before Parliament.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in imputing motives to the member for York.

MR. BURGES: The Bill was never discussed in the Legislative Council, a member for a northern province having, on account of the lateness of the session, moved that the Bill should not be touched, so that settlers in the North might have an opportunity of discussing its provisions. Members were entitled to information. Because the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Butcher) had brought about the introduction of the Bill, it was ne reason why members should not have what information they desired. He (Mr. Burges) would ask any question he liked, whether it suited the member for Gascoyne or not.

MR. GORDON hoped the member for Gascoyne would not take offence because members not so well acquainted with stock as the hon. member now sought information. It was provided in this clause that an earmark should be made on the near ear for female sheep and on the off ear for male sheep, and not otherwise. This referred to cullmarking also. One ear was allowed for cullmarking on the different sexes. How many earmarks could be made on one ear?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It largely depended on the size of the ear. The member for Canning knew something about stock, and could say how many cullmarks would be used on a sheep on a station.

MR. GORDON: The Colonial Secretary showed ignorance of the Bill in answering one question by asking another. This did not apply to cullmarks on one station, but meant that every different farmer or stockowner must have one cullmark. The question was how many cullmarks could be put on one ear?

MR. BUTCHER hoped the Committee would not think he wished to avoid answering questions and stop any fair criticism of the Bill; but the question that had been asked by the member for York was most absurd. There was only one place on a sheep where a firebrand could be put. It had been found absolutely necessary to have one ear of a sheep for a station mark only, the other ear being left free for cullmarks and age marks at the discretion of the owner.

MR. GORDON: The clause contained the words "An earmark shall be made on the near ear for female sheep, and on the off ear for male sheep, and not otherwise." The hon. member said they reserved one ear for the station mark. What was the other ear for? That was not stipulated in the Bill.

MR. BUTCHER: The hon. member would see if he read on.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Same brand for horses as for cattle:

MR. CONNOR did not object to the clause, but wished it to be clearly understood that where what was proposed had not been done in the past on a station, it should not be compulsory in the future.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill made no provision to deal with existing brands. When owners of existing brands expired, the brands expired also and could not be sold. They must then come under the provisions of this Bill.

MR. RASON would like to be very clear on the point. He understood from the reply of the Colonial Secretary that the station brands now registered would only hold good so long as that station remained the property of the existing owner.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was right.

MR. RASON: A station could be sold or transferred, and then that brand would cease to be the existing brand.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was right.

MR. CONNOR: There would be complications.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill did not attempt to interfere with existing brands. Only when the owner of a brand came under the provisions of this Bill would he be compelled to brand his horses and cattle with the same brand, as in Clause 5.

MR. RASON understood that certain brands in stock had a recognised market value. If this measure became law, a man might be able to sell his cattle station, but not be able to sell his brand with it, for the brand would cease.

MR. CONNOR: One could not sell a station without a brand.

MR. RASON: No transfer of brand was allowed, so that when a certain station with a well-known brand was transferred to another owner, that owner would have to register a new brand. It seemed to him that would interfere with the value of the station property.

MR. HARPER did not think that what had been referred to would affect the value of the brand. If a man wished to sell his stock, he would say to the buyer or agent "These were the old so-and-so A2 brand;" so he would carry on just the same as was done in the case of a licensed house, where a new firm always said "late so-and-so."

MR. GORDON: Supposing the sale of a station were about to take place and it had a noted brand on the stock, a man owning adjoining property might make application for the brand already in existence at that station. Provision was made here for transfer to be made on the sale of the station, and the man who made the first application for a certain brand was entitled to that brand. Directly a station was sold, the new owner had no right to the brand, but had to make application for a new brand. Therefore any other man who wanted to snare this brand would make application before the sale of the station took place, and, being first applicant, would be entitled to it.

MR. MORAN: One was entitled to appear before the registrar.

MR. GORDON: Did this Bill entitle a man to go before the registrar of brands in Queensland? We were in Western Australia, and this Bill did not make allowances for transfer.

MR. HARPER: If a station were sold, the purchaser would buy the stock with that brand on it, and he could claim under that brand, but he could not go on branding. So long as that stock was left with the brand, nobody else had any right to that brand, but when he started to brand his young stock, he must put a new brand on.

MR. MORAN: Was it correct that this Bill did not provide for transfer of a brand? He had not read the Bill through, but was told it was pretty well a copy of the Queensland Act. [Interjection.] Clause 25 provided for transfer.

MR. CONNOR thought the wording of the clause wrong. It said that every proprietor possessed of both horses and cattle should use the same brand for horses and cattle, and it did not specify if it should be so whether that had been the case before or not. However, the matter could be dealt with on recommittal.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The member for Kimberley said he had not read the Bill closely. If the hon. member found there was any necessity for recommittal to protect station holders who had a different brand for cattle from that for horses, he (the Minister) would have no objection to recommitting the measure, if it would meet the wishes of the cattle-raisers in this State. The Bill had been carefully considered by the member for Gascoyne. There had been a select committee consisting of agriculturists and squatters, who made recommendations to the Chamber. We had had the value of these recommendations, and were of opinion that the Bill was the most suitable measure that could be placed on the statute-book to suit the cattle-raising section of the community.

MR. GORDON asked members to place no value on the opinion of the member for Gascoyne. In Clause 5, not only was there no arrangement for a transfer of brands, but transfer was actually prohibited.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

MR. GORDON asked the Minister to read Clause 5.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should have discussed that on Clause 5.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was provision dealing with transfers.

MR. GORDON: We should be careful in going through this measure.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Part IV. dealt with transfers and cancellations.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—Size of brand:

MR. GORDON: The clause provided that every brand used for horses and cattle should not be less than an inch and-a-quarter long. There ought to be a maximum as well as a minimum. There might be a three-inch brand which would smother the other brands.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill made provision that the brand should not be smaller than a specified size, leaving it to the good sense of the owners not to use brands so large as to be offensive to the eye or injurious to the hide of the beast. In horses there was nothing so objectionable as a very large brand. Anything over $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches would be too large. The minimum in the Bill was $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches. If the Committee thought a maximum necessary, let it be prescribed, though that might well be left to the owners. Those likely to use on stock big brands to obliterate small brands could more readily achieve their object, as in the old days, by using a fryingpan out of the fire.

MR. GORDON: The Bill was to protect the honest stock-raiser against the dishonest.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This State had now a very haphazard or go-as-you-please system of branding. In Queensland anyone marking a beast with fire otherwise than as prescribed in the Brands Act was liable to a penalty. In this State he had seen hot wire used to produce unregistered brands identifiable by none but the owner.

MR. GORDON: The stock-raisers of the country were perfectly capable of using the right size of brand. But protection was needed against the user of an illegal brand; hence there should be a maximum as well as a minimum, so that one man's brand should not be smothered by another's. Smothering was an old method of fraudulent obliteration. He had seen what was called a "spectacle" brand turned into a "bit" brand.

MR. HARPER: One practical difficulty in the last speaker's suggestion was that if a young animal, say a calf, was branded with a 2-inch brand, when it was five years old the brand would have reached a size of six or eight inches. Was the owner to be prosecuted for exceeding a maximum? We might prescribe a maximum if the brand did not increase in size on the beast.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill prescribed the portions of the beast on which successive brands should be placed. The original breeder would brand on the near shoulder, the next brand would be on the off shoulder; the following brands on the two quarters. Hence the second brand could not, in order to deceive, be put over the first. Though the brand of a young beast did not always "run" or increase in size, it frequently happened that a 3-inch brand on a calf ultimately increased to 5 or 6 inches, and the younger the beast the more likely was the brand to grow.

MR. GORDON: Everyone knew that brands increased in size; and if a man branded a young calf with a 1-inch brand, everyone knew what size the brand would be by the time the animal was 6 years old. A man was not obliged to use a maximum. Nobody could confound an old brand with a new one. The argument of the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) was convincing to inexperienced men like the Colonial Secretary; but all who knew how a brand altered in appearance as the beast grew older, would be satisfied that provision for a maximum could do no harm.

MR. CONNOR: There was much in what the preceding speaker said. The larger the brand the less valuable the hide. The present tendency in cattle countries was that the registration of brands should be made easy for owners, and that the brands used should do the least possible harm. This was a more serious question than some members imagined. There ought to be a maximum. An unduly large brand diminished the value of the hide. The absence of a maximum would encourage "duffing," as a D could by doubling be turned into a B. To prescribe a maximum would

tend to prevent this. In the far North, some stock-owners were not too particular as to whose cattle they branded. In East Kimberley, within the last four years, 20 or 30 station-holders had started without cattle, and many were now sending good cattle to market. What was the use of a Brands Act which encouraged this? If there was no limit to the size of brands, illegitimate alteration was invited. He suggested 3 inches as an absolute maximum.

MR. HARDWICK: There ought to be a maximum. Branding on the ribs should be prohibited. The State would lose thousands of pounds by the destruction of such hides.

MR. HAYWARD: Branding on the ribs should be prohibited. If a brand three inches long were put on the ribs when a beast was young, by the time it reached four years old the brand would have extended to six inches.

MR. HARPER: The tendency of stock-owners in branding was to make the brands small in order to save the hide; therefore it was not necessary to put a maximum in the Bill, as owners would use small brands in preference. To put a maximum in the Bill would only be protecting one thief against another thief.

MR. BUTCHER would not object to limit the size of a brand, and he believed an amendment to that effect would be accepted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY did not object to a limit in size, and he was the discussion was confined to those glad members who were interested in stock-raising. When we specified that a brand should not be smaller than 1¼ inches, that would be perfectly safe; and as to the maximum, that could best be left to stock-owners. A large brand injured the hide of a beast, and injured the sale of a horse. This fact would be a safeguard against brands being too large. He hoped a maximum would not be fixed, but that it would be left to stock-owners to decide for themselves.

MR. BURGES: For the protection of owners of cattle, it would be better to have a brand of a certain size.

THE MINISTER: Then move that a size be inserted in the Bill.

MR. BURGES moved an amendment:

That after the word "inch" there be added "and not more than three inches."

MR. LAYMAN: Most brands, in his experience, were over three inches in length. He moved an amendment on the amendment:

That the maximum be four inches.

MR. BUTCHER: The object of using a small brand was to allow for the animal growing in size, and nothing could be more unsightly on a beast than a large brand.

MR. LAYMAN: A small brand was more liable to be blotched than a large brand. Those who, in his experience, used small brands had far more blotched brands than those who used large brands.

THE MINISTER: That was because they burnt too deeply.

MR. BURGES accepted the second amendment.

Amendment (four inches) put and negatived.

MR. LAYMAN moved:

That the maximum be 3½ inches.

MR. BUTCHER: This clause was taken from the Queensland Act, where cattle-raising was carried on upon a much larger scale than in this State, and this provision had never been altered. He hoped the clause would stand.

MR. CONNOR objected to the statement that the cattle industry in Queensland was so much larger than in this State. There were stations in this State as large as any in Queensland. He understood that brands previously registered would not be affected.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: All brands registered could continue to be used so long as the owner desired to do so, or a stockowner could register a brand under this Bill.

MR. CONNOR: The owner of an existing brand should have the right to sell that brand.

Amendment (3½ inches) negatived.

Amendment (not more than 3 inches) negatived.

Clause passed as printed.

Clause 10—Person first branding may imprint a numeral:

MR. BURGES: Was it compulsory to brand on the cheek to denote age? Surely an owner could brand a horse on the face?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Owners might brand on the cheek if desired, but it was not compulsory. On

every horse station in Australia a numeral was used showing the year in which the animal was branded, as indicating age. The same provision was in this Bill, to allow owners to do so if they desired.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11, 12—agreed to.

Clause 13 — Registrar and deputy registrars:

MR. GORDON: What would be the additional cost of these registrars?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was already a department administering the Brands Act, and the Bill would not cause additional cost in administration.

MR. GORDON: On the Estimates there was an extra amount for this Bill.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The present Act was almost obsolete.

MR. GORDON: The expenditure in the past had been useless. We were only now going to administer a Brands Act.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Mode of obtaining brands, Third Schedule:

MR. BURGES: This clause required a person to pay 10s. for a brand for horses, 10s. for a brand for sheep, and 10s. for a brand for cattle. This would be very hard on the small man, though not on squatters. These squatters were always anxious to wipe out the small man, and Labour members should recognise it. The Bill would prove very troublesome, and the man with one horse, one cow, and one sheep would be compelled to pay 10s. for each beast.

MR. GORDON: Let it be reduced to 5s.

MR. HARPER: The fee could be made the same as a miner's right.

MR. BUTCHER: Under the existing Act the fee was 10s.

MR. BURGES: No; it was 7s. 6d.

MR. BUTCHER was not wedded to the fee of 10s. In fixing the fee at 10s. he had considered the revenue. He was sorry he had not considered the constituents of the member for York, but he was quite willing to have the fee reduced to 7s. 6d.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was not usual for people to register a brand unless they had a fair number of stock. People with a few cows did not go in for a brand.

MR. BURGES: They must.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Small people did not keep a brand to brand a calf. The calf was branded by some friend and was sold to them with the other brand on.

MR. BURGES: No.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY had seen it done hundreds of times in Queensland and New South Wales.

MR. GORDON: It was evading the law.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. It only occurred where a person bought for milking purposes a cow carrying a calf. It was not too much to pay 10s. for registering a brand, since the payment was for all time.

MR. BURGES: The owner was compelled to have two brands.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member knew that the owner did not have to pay for the registration of a tar brand, but it would not hurt stock-raisers to pay £1 for two brands which would serve for the rest of their days. It was necessary to raise sufficient revenue to pay for the administration of the law.

MR. LAYMAN supported the remarks of the member for York. We should encourage small stockowners to register brands, and the only way to do it was by making the fee as low as possible.

MR. GORDON: And giving no excuse not to have a brand.

MR. LAYMAN: It cost 10s. to get a brand, and it would cost 10s. to register, which would inflict a hardship on small people with one or two head of stock. People always felt safer when they had their own brands. The fee should be 5s. He moved an amendment:

> That the word "ten" be struck out and "five" inserted in lieu.

MR. GORDON supported the amendment. There was no provision in the Bill to compel a man owning a certain number of stock to register a brand. Was it not compulsory to have a brand?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We could trust the stockowners.

MR. GORDON: Was it necessary for any stockowner to have a brand if he did not want one?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no compulsion.

MR. GORDON: Then the Bill would be useless.

MR. KEYSER: The stockowner branded in his own interest.

MR. HARPER: A man was not bound to put a lock on his door.

MR. GORDON: We should reduce the fee to 5s. and compel every person owning stock to register a brand. In New South Wales that was, he believed, the law, people with a certain number of stock being compelled to register brands.

MR. HARPER: What about the poor man with only one cow?

MR. GORDON: If the poor man liked to run the responsibility of losing the cow, let him do so. We could fix the limit at five, if necessary.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no desire to compel people to have brands. They would have them for their own protection. By compelling every person owning stock to register a brand we would work a hardship. He would accept a reduction of the fee to 7s. 6d., which was the law at present; but he had never heard complaints about the fee being too high.

MR. N. J. MOORE supported the amendment. We should encourage the poor man to keep a few head of stock. Many small owners did not brand at all.

MR. LAYMAN would not accept the proposal for a fee of 7s. 6d. Surely the object was to encourage the branding of stock. Unbranded stock over a certain age could now, if at large, be claimed by the Crown.

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

Ayes	...	...	... 14
Noes	...	...	... 23
Majority against			... 9

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Brown	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Burges	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Carson	Mr. Butcher
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Connor
Mr. Foulkes	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Ellis
Mr. Harper	Mr. Gill
Mr. Hayward	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Hicks	Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Layman	Mr. Holman
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Horan
Mr. Rason	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Frank Wilson	Mr. Lynch
Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Needham
	Mr. Nelson
	Mr. Scaddan
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Thomas
	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Watts
	Mr. F. F. Wilson
	Mr. Heitmann (*Teller*).

Amendment thus negatived.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause could not now be altered; but to meet the wishes of members favouring a reduction in the fee, he would consent to recommit the clause with a view to inserting "7s. 6d."

MR. RASON thanked the Minister for his magnanimity. It was regrettable, however, that the reduction of this fee should be made a party question, which it was, judging by the division.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 19—agreed to.

Clause 20—Registered brands to be gazetted quarterly:

MR. GORDON: Did this mean that all brands registered must be gazetted every quarter?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not registered but published, together with cancellations.

MR. CONNOR: All registered brands were to be gazetted quarterly.

MR. GORDON: An unnecessary expense. Why not gazette only the new brands registered during the quarter, and have an annual publication of all brands?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: By the quarterly publication of all brands, anyone desiring to register a brand could ascertain whether it was a duplicate of one previously registered.

MR. GORDON: Far better let the department keep lists obtainable on application.

MR. SCADDAN: Surely the intention was that only new brands should be gazetted quarterly. By the next clause a brands directory was to be annually gazetted.

MR. HARPER: A yearly list of brands should be gazetted; but surely there was no need to gazette the whole list four times a year. He moved an amendment:

That the words "during the quarter" be inserted after "registered," in line 3.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the words were inserted as proposed, the whole sense of the clause would be taken away. As the Bill would have to be recommitted he would see that the clause was put in proper form.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. LAYMAN: Were brands ever cancelled?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the owner of a brand desired it to be cancelled, provision was made for cancellation.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 21 to 25—agreed to.

Clause 26—Order of imprinting brands:

MR. CONNOR: It was compulsory that brands should be placed on certain portions of the beast. If the brand were placed on the portion mentioned in the schedule the commercial value of the hide was reduced by 3s. 6d. One of the biggest owners of cattle in this State branded on the cheek, which was a source of wealth to the country. There was a good market in France for hides which were branded on the cheek or neck, but if the brands were placed on any other portion of the animal the hide had no commercial value in France. In America this question had been studied, and the tendency was to brand on the cheek and neck so as to give full value to the hide. When the Bill was recommitted he intended to move an amendment to the effect that where the owner of stock had a brand already established, and sold his property, there should be the right to transfer the brand to the purchaser of the station.

MR. GORDON: The available space on one portion of the hide had to be used before the brand could be imprinted on the next portion. Who would say when the space was filled up? There might not be sufficient space on one portion for two brands.

MR. CONNOR: Sufficient combination could not be made with two characters.

MR. HARPER: This matter had been threshed out to see how many combinations could be made out of two or three characters. In regard to the question raised by the member for Kimberley as to branding on certain portions of the hide, this was one of the difficult points in regard to branding. The schedule in the Bill was copied from the old Queensland Act; but Queensland had established a rule since then of branding in a different position in consequence of the brand depreciating the value of the hide. The only way to get over the difficulty was to strike out the words "shall be" and insert "may be" instead, in which case the owner would take the risk. Some owners would sooner run the risk of losing 20 or 30 head of cattle than have brands all over their beasts.

MR. CONNOR: At present there were herds running on both sides of the border between Western Australia and South Australia, and the owner used the same brand in both States.

MR. GORDON moved an amendment:

That in paragraph (*d*) of Subclause 1, the words "the available space on one portion shall be used before any brand is imprinted on the next portion" be struck out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was to be hoped the Committee would not strike out the words. The decision as to whether there was room for a second brand on any one portion was left with the owner, and there was no fear that the owner would do anything that would depreciate the value of the hide or the beast. The clause as printed was sufficient protection to the State. It was easy to decide whether there was room for a brand to go on one portion, and if there was not room, the next portion mentioned in the Bill had to be used.

MR. BUTCHER: There was no clause in the Bill more necessary than this one. It applied more to horses than to cattle. If the purchaser of horses was compelled to brand his animals on the first portion, the second owner must brand on the second portion. By that means it was quite possible to trace the ownership of that horse right back to its breeder, if it had had seven or eight different owners. It was found in other parts of the world of great value to stockowners, and it had the greatest possible effect in stopping horse-stealing; more so than anything else.

MR. GORDON: It was ridiculous to insert words which could not be enforced. For instance, as to available space there might be space for using an inch-and-a-quarter brand, but not a three-inch brand.

MR. BUTCHER: Then it was not available.

MR. GORDON: We could not enforce the provision. We did not provide any penalty, nor did we provide what size space there should be before one branded elsewhere for the next portion. He agreed it was most important that every portion should be used consecutively as described in the measure; but who was going to compel it?

MR. CONNOR: In Queensland necessity had been found for this.

MR. GORDON: We were in West Australia.

Amendment negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 27—Earmarks to be made by punch or pliers only.

MR. BURGES: Was this clause the same as in the Queensland Act?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

MR. BURGES: If this was to be carried out, time should be given to allow people to get these punches or pliers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There was no intention to work harshness on anybody. Sufficient time would be given to the stock-raisers to equip themselves with brands and with punches or pliers to comply with the Bill.

MR. LAYMAN: Was there any provision in the Bill for limiting the size of these punches or pliers?

MEMBER: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 28, 29—agreed to.

Clause 30—Power of inspectors to enter on runs and other property;

MR. CONNOR: The power provided for in this Bill was rather a sweeping one to give to an inspector. An inspector who did not know much about stock might be appointed. One would like to know from which Act paragraph (*c*) was taken.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was necessary that an inspector of stock should have power to go on to a run to search for stock without being blocked by the owner of the land. An inspector who did not show sufficient discretion in executing his duty would not be kept in the position. It was not the desire of the Government to harass anybody in that particular, and he did not think there would be any hardship worked in any way.

MR. LAYMAN: At certain seasons of the year one could not see the brand, the animal's coat being long.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: An inspector would not go on to a man's run to look for unbranded stock unless there had been some complaints and it was necessary to investigate. As to small areas, there would be hardly any necessity to go on to a man's run at all. In the larger districts there might be complaints from neighbouring squatters or stock-raisers, and a stock inspector might have to go on to a run; and this Bill gave him the power. It was not intended to work hardship on the stock-raiser at all.

MR. GORDON suggested that after "person" in paragraph (*d*), "or persons" be inserted. One man was not always sufficient assistance.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: One could employ 100 under this Bill if he liked.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 31—agreed to.

Clause 32—Justice may grant permit to hunt for stock:

MR. GORDON: This seemed a most drastic provision.

MR. BUTCHER: It was in force at present.

MR. GORDON: That was no reason why it should be kept in force. Supposing a man had a grudge against a squatter, he might say that his horse was amongst the squatter's horses. If a man hunted the squatter's horses, would there be any penalty for so doing?

MR. SCADDAN: Did the hon. member know of any instance of the kind that had taken place?

MR. GORDON: We were providing for what might take place. He did not want to see any squatter harassed by a station-hand who had left him. Might not some addition be made so that a penalty could be inflicted on a man who, without justifiable reason, went on another man's ground and hunted horses?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY thought this provision was in every Brands Act in existence. He realised that it might work hardship, but no one but a justice of the peace or resident magistrate could grant permission to hunt for stock. Supposing a man applied to be allowed to hunt for stock, and the opposing stockowner said, "My objection to a gentleman hunting on my run is that he would hunt for stock where my mares are just about foaling, and if they were disturbed in any particular that would injure me and injure the stock," the justice of the peace would have sufficient sense — otherwise he would not be a justice—not to allow permission to hunt under those conditions unless some great reason were shown.

A searcher would not be allowed, without strong reasons, to go among fat stock to frighten and chase them about, as that would lessen their market value; but without some provision for searching we could not have a workable Brands Act; and this provision was reasonable. A similar section appeared in every Brands Act. Someone must be authorised to grant permits, and justices or magistrates would be proper persons, though there must always be isolated cases of hardship.

MR. LAYMAN agreed with the member for the Canning that the clause might cause much annoyance and loss to stockowners. It was truly said that people with a grudge against the stockowner might get permission to enter on his land in order to disturb the stock. Even a justice had sometimes a grudge against other people. The power to authorise searching should be vested in resident magistrates. The majority of country justices were stockowners. Neighbours often fell out; and a justice could annoy his neighbour by allowing another man to invade the neighbour's paddocks.

MR. BUTCHER: The member for Canning showed only one side of the case. Suppose a traveller had only one horse, which he knew to be on a settler's run. If the settler refused permission to search for it, the traveller must proceed on foot unless someone were empowered to authorise a search. There was no fear of a vexatious use of the permission.

MR. GORDON: It was delightful to hear the Colonial Secretary taking the part of the squatter. The Minister had changed considerably. A poor man should be safeguarded; but a justice might prevent a man from looking for his horse on the justice's own station. An appeal to a brother justice might be useless; for the brother justice was often a brother squatter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause provided that any man, poor or rich, could apply to a justice for permission to search for cattle reasonably believed to be on another man's land. It was no use the preceding speaker's ridiculing him (the Minister) for supporting squatters. The object was to pass a Bill in the interest of the people. The taunts of the hon. member were in keeping with his usual attitude in such discussions.

MR. GORDON: There was no wish to make the Colonial Secretary look otherwise than as he was. The Minister fully conformed to the description of what a man ought to be.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 33, 34—agreed to.

Clause 35—Duties of persons impounding stock in private yard:

MR. BUTCHER: Subclause 2 might be improved by compelling the justice to advertise in a paper circulating in the district the notice which the person impounding was compelled to post up.

Clause passed.

Clause 36—agreed to.

Clause 37—Property protected if proof of proprietorship given:

MR. RASON: The clause dealt with strayed stock, including sheep; and provided that where such stock were impounded privately, and the owner gave, before sale, satisfactory proof of ownership to a justice, the owner could recover the stock subject to the payment of certain fees and expenses of keep to impounder, and a sum of £1 per head to the consolidated revenue. Surely such stock would be lost for ever to the owner. However much the Minister might wish to increase the revenue, the Committee would hardly consent to so heavy a fine. What possible claim could the consolidated revenue have on a strayed sheep?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member was right in drawing attention to this charge. For all stock impounded there was a certain poundage fee in addition to travelling expenses and keep in the pound. But this fee was exceptionally high, and might well be reduced to 5s.

MR. RASON: Even 5s. would amount to confiscation in most cases. Store sheep would not be worth 5s. If that was the charge, why should the money go into the consolidated revenue? There would have to be a sliding scale, so much for horses, so much for cattle, and so much for sheep; but the 5s. would be too large an amount for sheep. The clause might be dealt with on recommittal.

MR. LAYMAN: The fee was ridiculously high. If a man's herd ran into

the pound, it was lost to him for ever. Under the present Act the poundage fees were 1d. per head for sheep and 3d. per head for large stock.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This charge would only be made after the cattle had been impounded and had been advertised for sale. There was a specified time in which the stock would remain in pound, and during which time they were advertised for sale. As it was desirable that the clause should be dealt with on recommittal, there was no objection to this course.

MR. BUTCHER: If stock were impounded the owner had to pay all the expenses, which was not right. He suggested as an amendment that all the words after "stock" be struck out.

MR. HAYWARD: The Government had no right to increase the revenue in this way.

Clause passed formally.

Clause 38—Impounded stock may be sold:

MR. GORDON: An auctioneer was not required to sell impounded stock.

MR. BURGES: There never had been such a provision.

MR. GORDON: That was no reason why provision should not be made now. The Treasury took £25 from every auctioneer; therefore an auctioneer should be given an opportunity of making what money he could. It was necessary in the interests of the stockowner that a qualified auctioneer should sell, so as to get the full value. Horses from runs were put into a pound and advertised. The constable came along and sold them. Probably the owner of the lease was the only person present at the sale in addition to the policeman. The man who owned the stock received 50 per cent. or 75 per cent. less than the value of the stock. An auctioneer would take good care there were plenty of buyers present at the sale.

MR. HARPER: Would an auctioneer travel 20 miles to sell a brumby?

MR. GORDON: It was not necessary to make it compulsory that an auctioneer should be engaged to sell impounded stock, but where obtainable an auctioneer should be engaged. He moved an amendment:

That in line 2 after "license" the words "only in cases where an auctioneer is not available within 20 miles" be inserted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was to be hoped the Committee would not take the member seriously, as he was an auctioneer and perfectly justified in trying to advance his business. The amendment would be forced to a division, and of course the member for Canning would not participate in that division, being interested. If the amendment were carried, in a large portion of the State it would have no effect. It should be possible to dispose of cattle impounded without having a licensed auctioneer to dispose of them.

MR. WATTS: The clause did not provide who was to sell the stock. If it was open to anyone to sell, we had a right to object to the clause.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Did the hon. member hold an auctioneer's license.

MR. WATTS: Yes. Possibly auctioneers gave a little thought to these things, having some knowledge of the subject. He had frequently seen sales conducted by police in which the articles sold were knocked down at any price; often at ridiculous prices. Seeing that auctioneers paid license fees they ought to be protected in regard to sales of stuff. In all probability an auctioneer would raise more by a sale than would represent the poundage fees.

MR. HARDWICK had seen the advantage of this particular clause on the goldfields and in Perth. Often old crocks put into the pound were not worth the amount of poundage fees. If this amendment were carried it would mean that a poundkeeper might have to send to a neighbouring town for an auctioneer.

MR. HARPER: The member for Canning should explain the word "available." Within a radius of 20 miles of a pound there might be only one auctioneer, who might have other business to attend to when a sale was necessary.

MR. GORDON: The auctioneer would not then be available. If an auctioneer did not attend a sale he lost business. Many times auctioneers conducted sales at a loss, but they looked for farther business.

MR. KEYSER opposed the amendment. If passed, it would prevent a sale taking place should an auctioneer decline to attend, and it would be absurd to call in an auctioneer to sell one sheep or an

old back. It was suspicious that the only two members supporting the amendment were auctioneers.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. GORDON: Should there not be some provision by which auctioneers would be compelled to keep records of the brands of stock sold?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This was not the proper place to put in such a provision.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 39—agreed to.

Clause 40—When stock impounded, notice to be given to owner:

MR. BURGES: It was provided in in this clause that notice must be put in the *Government Gazette*. Notice to be of any value should be published in a newspaper circulating in the district where the stock was impounded.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: To put advertisements in any other publications but the *Government Gazette* would entail expense on the owner of the stock.

MR. KEYSER moved an amendment:

That the following words be added after "*Government Gazette*" in Subclause (*b*), "and in a newspaper circulating in the district."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The preceding subclause provided that the owner of the stock should be notified. If the brand was registered the owner could be found by the registrar; but if the animal was not branded there would be no use advertising that a beast without a brand had been impounded. The provision for notifying the owner and publishing in the *Government Gazette* should be sufficient. Where the bulk of the stock was raised there were no newspapers in which to advertise.

At 6·30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.
At 7·30, Chair resumed.

MR. KEYSER: Having listened to the arguments by the Colonial Secretary in favour of this clause, he was still convinced that the object sought would not be gained if the clause remained as printed. Would it not be better to advertise in papers circulating locally that particular brands had been impounded? He did not know what objection could be taken to that, except the expense; but this was not a good reason why owners should not have an opportunity of finding out whether some of their particular cattle were impounded. The present procedure was most clumsy, and would only operate effectually in such places as Perth and Fremantle, where there existed easy means of communication, so that one could either by telegraph or by post communicate with the registrar in Perth. But how would it act in the inland parts, where communication was not so good, where people would have to send by coach to the registrar in Perth? The Bill provided that after only 12 days cattle could be sold. How many places were there, however, more than 12 days distant from the registrar in Perth?

MR. HAYWARD: It would be better to strike out "*Government Gazette*" and insert "in a local paper." He did not think one stock owner out of a hundred read the *Government Gazette*.

MR. BURGES: The present Act, he believed, stipulated that an advertisement must appear in two papers. If we did away with that provision, and under this Bill provided that the advertisement should only be put in the *Government Gazette*, that would, in his opinion, be one of the most serious blots in the measure, and would very soon have to be repealed, because there would be an outcry against it. Instead of helping the people to recover their stock it would be the cause of lots of people losing stock.

MR. WATTS: In the case of cattle being impounded an advertisement should be inserted in a paper circulating in the district. Many settlers throughout the agricultural districts lived perhaps some little distance back from the railway line or a township, and not many people in these districts ever saw the *Government Gazette*.

MEMBER: Nor the local paper.

MR. WATTS: Yes; most people took the local paper, or if they did not take it themselves some neighbour did so, and these people knew one another's brands. If in the case of cattle being impounded the fact were advertised in the local paper, the owners would have the chance of knowing where the stock was. It would be ridiculous to insert the advertisement only in the *Government Gazette*.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The insertion of an advertisement in the local paper would not, he thought, achieve the object sought. Where animals had been

disposed of by the owner—this applied more to horses than to anything else—and got away into another part of the State and were impounded, the original owner, if notified in the *Government Gazette*, would know by his books that the animal was disposed of, and he would have no farther concern. The owner who had purchased the animals might not even be in the district where they were impounded. He would be just as likely to see the *Government Gazette* as the local paper. He (the Minister) did not know whether it was so in this State, but it was the custom in every other State in the Commonwealth that when stock were gazetted in the *Government Gazette* the local paper in every instance published in the news columns that there was to be a pound sale, for they were glad to get something to publish in a small town. He failed to see the necessity for farther expenditure unless we were going to get something in return. He hoped the clause would be passed as printed. His desire was that the Bill should meet the requirements of the State. Members here who represented the largest stock-raising areas would say there was not a paper within hundreds of miles of them.

MR. WATTS: They were not concerned as farmers were.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: They were concerned in this way, that this was a Brands Bill dealing with stock, and if it did not benefit the area where the stock-raising was done, whom would it benefit? It would benefit the farmer; but the benefit to him would be inconsiderable compared with the benefit to the large stock-owner. There seemed no need to substitute a local newspaper for the *Government Gazette*.

MR. HARPER: A considerable area of country north of Geraldton could not for this purpose utilise either a local paper or the *Government Gazette*. A notice affixed to a post-office would be preferable.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY agreed to insert a provision for posting a description of the colour and the brands of the beast at the police quarters or at the post-office, in addition to the *Gazette* notice.

MR. BURGES hoped this proposal would not be accepted. How were people 30 miles from the post-office to see the notice? They did not get the *Gazette*. Police quarters were in towns. East of the Great Southern Railway were no police quarters at all. Dishonest impounders would thus be encouraged to defraud stock-owners. In what respect would the clause be an improvement on the existing law?

HON. W. C. ANGWIN: Clause 34 provided that as to impounding stock the Cattle Trespass Act of 1882 should, subject to this Bill, apply to all stock however impounded in a public pound, thus providing for additional notice to the owner. The present clause farther provided that the owner should have notice in addition to the advertisement provided in the Cattle Trespass Act, and that a description of the stock should be published in the *Gazette*.

MR. RASON: Why should the Minister object to an advertisement in a newspaper circulating in the district? Every possible notice should be given the owner. The odds were 99 to 1 that the owner would not see the *Gazette*. Few people saw the *Gazette*, and fewer still read it. Let the notice be given in the *Gazette* and a local newspaper, and by posting on some public building. A newspaper notice, though useless in the North, might be useful elsewhere. The Minister said the registrar would send notice to the owner, and that the brand would identify the owner; but the Minister said previously that it was not customary for small stock-owners to brand their calves, but to get the neighbours to brand them. Hence brands could not be taken as proof of ownership. Better pass the amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The argument as to owners not branding their calves did not convey the meaning ascribed by the preceding speaker. A man who had only one calf was not likely to lose it; while a man with 10,000 head of cattle ran great risk of loss. However, the discussion had done good by eliciting the opinions of members interested in stock-raising. As they pressed for advertisement in a local newspaper, he would accept a provision for advertising in the newspaper published nearest to the pound. There would only be time to have one advertisement inserted before the sale; therefore he accepted the amendment

that an advertisement should appear in the nearest newspaper to the pound.

MR. NEEDHAM: Where the *Government Gazette* circulated the local Press circulated, but the *Government Gazette* also circulated where there was no local Press.

Amendment passed.

MR. KEYSER: A notice of the advertisement should be exhibited on the poundage post.

MR. RASON moved an amendment that the following be inserted as Subclause (*c.*):—

Post a description of the impounded stock, together with their brands and earmarks, at the nearest police station.

Amendment passed and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 41, 42—agreed to.

Clause 43—Stock on which brand has been altered or blotched to be deemed unbranded:

MR. CONNOR: On big stations where stock were branded in a primitive fashion it was not easy to decipher some brands. Stock were not recognised in the North by the brand but by the earmark. The Bill was brought in to prevent "duffing." Brands were only taken into consideration as an additional proof of the ownership of stock. Cattle were not drafted by the brands but by the earmarks. The clause provided that if a person could not prove the brand the stock was confiscated. That would not do.

MR. HARPER: Any animal, after the passing of the Bill, which had a blotched brand on it would be considered unbranded.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill would only affect stock after they had been branded with brands registered under the Bill. Existing brands would not be affected.

MR. BURGES: How could the clause be carried out in regard to sheep which were earmarked?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Unless a person was registered under the Bill his stock would not be affected because they would be already branded.

MR. BURGES: Earmarked, too?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The Bill would only be enforced in regard to people who were registered under it. The hon. member, in common with other members, had been successful in getting measures dealing with brands thrown out of Parliament in the past.

MR. BURGES: That statement was incorrect.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The contentious portion of previous Bills was that dealing with existing brands. Stockowners had urged upon him the necessity for this Bill to bring the law into line with the Acts of the Eastern States.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 44—Offence of having unbranded stock in possession:

MR. RASON: All along he understood the Minister to assure the Committee that the branding of stock was not compulsory but purely optional. According to the clause, if any person had unbranded stock in his possession he would be guilty of an offence against the Bill in respect of every head of stock, and the penalty for an offence under the Bill was £50.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: After two years of age.

MR. RASON: It was stated that members did not understand the Bill; but that was excusable, seeing that the Bill was brought down only yesterday. It seemed, however, that the Minister was not very well acquainted with its contents, having repeatedly assured the Committee that branding was not compulsory.

MR. SCADDAN: It was claimed by the Minister that registering brands was not necessary.

MR. RASON: There was no question of registering brands in this clause. Surely the wording was plain enough.

MR. SCADDAN: The hon. member claimed that the Colonial Secretary had misled the Committee.

MR. RASON: The Minister all along said it was not compulsory to brand stock.

MR. SCADDAN: No.

MR. RASON: The Committee could judge whether his (Mr. Rason's) statement was right or wrong. It was not desirable to impose a penalty of £50 on a person for having unbranded stock in his possession.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: When speaking earlier in the evening he had spoken of brands. Perhaps there was some confusion on his part, but

what he had intended to convey was that there was nothing in the Bill to compel a person to register a brand. Perhaps the hon. member had thought that he (the Minister) was dealing with stock. It was necessary to have a clause to protect stock under a certain age, and to provide that they should be branded. If stock under two years of age were left unbranded, owners would soon be left without stock. In Queensland and New South Wales it was generally understood that anything that could not be mothered could be branded; the only opportunity the owner had of identifying a calf being the recognition of the calf by its mother.

MR. GORDON: It was a pity the Minister earlier in the debate had not taken notice of the remarks of those who knew something about the matter. It was contended by him (Mr. Gordon) that all stock should be branded, and he had informed the House that branding was compulsory in the other States. The Minister had said that he would not dream of making it compulsory.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: For a dairy cow.

MR. GORDON: Yet the Minister would fine the man for having an unbranded dairy cow. Was this a trap to get people fined with a view to increasing the revenue? The whole thing was a money-making concern. There were many unbranded horses in Perth, and it would be a pity to disfigure them by branding them. The limit should be fixed at five head of cattle and 50 head of sheep. Persons owning more head of stock should brand them.

MR. SCADDAN: That would defeat the whole object of the Bill.

MR. GORDON: It was done in the other States.

MR. HARPER: Perhaps the members for Guildford and Canning were thinking of fire brands.

MR. GORDON: No; any brands.

MR. HARPER: According to this Bill an earmark was a sufficient brand.

MR. GORDON: Horses were not earmarked.

MR. HARPER: Why not?

MR. GORDON: If horses were earmarked, he (Mr. Gordon) would retire from the debate altogether.

MR. HARPER: It was not usual to earmark horses; but the hon. member had quoted a horse. It would appear that the hon. member did not judge an earmark to be a brand. If an earmark was a brand, it was a simple thing, and it would be no hardship to earmark stock; so that the point raised by the member for Guildford was not so serious after all.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Bill was to deal with the large stock-owners of the State.

MR. GORDON: It applied to the small stockowner as well.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Five head of stock would be too many to exempt. There were many cattle-raising districts where one could find from a dozen to 50 head of unbranded cattle on one run, no matter how carefully the herds were looked after. It was an unfortunate position to try and bring down a Bill of this description to meet the case of the man owning one beast. The least we could do was to stipulate that the limit should be two or three head of stock. The man with five horses, five cows, and five sheep would have quite a number of stock for a small man.

MR. GORDON: Make it three head of big stock and 10 head of sheep.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY had no objection to an amendment fixing the limit at four head of horses or cattle and 10 head of sheep.

MR. HAYWARD: Owners of racing studs who kept their horses in paddocks would strongly object to having to brand their stock, and it would be useless to compel them to do so.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Those who had studs in the Eastern States always branded. But this Bill gave them the opportunity of putting on a very small brand—1¼ inch. It was by the brand that racehorses were known, and if we removed the necessity of branding we increased the opportunity of running cronk horses. When horses changed their names they could not change their brand. He liked horse races, and wished racing to be as clean as possible. He hoped members would not exempt more than four head of cattle, including horses. He did not know whether it was necessary to include sheep.

MR. BUTCHER hoped the Colonial Secretary would not make this alteration, for if he did, it would defeat the object of the Bill altogether. We were trying to bring in a measure to prevent people from stealing horses, cattle, or sheep, and if we were going to exempt anybody holding one, two, or three head of stock from the operation of this Bill it would mean that a man could steal three horses and not be prosecuted. Clause 44 had as far as he knew been in operation since the old Brands Act was passed many years ago, and he did not think the measure had acted harshly to any section of the community.

MR. KEYSER: The clause as it stood was too drastic. The Colonial Secretary invariably stated that he was not going to make any alteration, and then no matter what the majority seemed to wish the hon. gentleman gave way. He (Mr. Keyser) objected to that. The Colonial Secretary should either come here having fully considered these clauses and prepared to fight for them——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not discussing the clause.

MR. KEYSER thought he was quite within the rules of fair criticism, but bowed to the Chairman's decision. He moved an amendment that the following proviso be added:—

Provided such section shall not apply to owners having less than four head of stock and ten sheep.

MR. RASON: As to Subclause (*c*) of Clause 30 affording some relief, that was hardly the case, because the clause provided that if unbranded stock were found in the possession of anyone, that person was liable to a penalty. The clause should be moderated in some respect. We should be likely to have a clause that would protect large owners, and at the same time small owners, if we could farther amend the construction of it; and he suggested to the Minister that we should recommit this clause.

MR. HARPER: Apparently Clause 44 was put in for the purpose of catching the thief. If he could not claim and prove his claim to the unbranded beast by some means or other, he would be under suspicion at once, and the inspector could seize that stock and say, "You have to prove that, or stand an indictment about it."

MR. GORDON: If cattle were not branded, would not the person who took them quickly put a brand on them?

MR. HARPER: He might not have time. A man might miss some clean skins off his land, and know by the tracks where they had gone to. One might put an inspector on the track, and that inspector might follow them and catch them on the run. One could not see that there would be any hardship upon the man who could prove his ownership.

MR. GORDON: Whether the animals were branded or unbranded, one could track them to another man's property and take them.

MR. HARPER: A person would not take stock if they were branded.

MR. GORDON: Was it likely that a man would get four head of cattle and drive them together to his own property? He suggested that the word "any," in line 1, be struck out, and "more than four head" inserted in lieu.

MR. HARPER: Then the thieves could take them away.

MR. GORDON did not wish to see poor people who unknowingly had a cow unbranded fined £50. A person who had a valuable carriage horse not branded would be liable to a penalty of £50, or he would have to blemish the horse.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Let the hon. member read Clause 30.

MR. GORDON: If we had Clause 30, why should we have Clause 45? He would either support the amendment by the member for Albany, or the member for Albany could accept his (Mr. Gordon's) amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The object of the member for Canning was to prevent duffing. If there were no cattle duffing in this State, there would be no necessity for this measure. He (the Minister) desired during the passage of this Bill through Committee to hear members representing stock-raising areas in this State, and to accept their help. When he found members raising barriers where there was no necessity, and where it was simply a matter of trying to create delay——

MR. GORDON objected to those words.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY withdrew the words. Clause 30 protected the legitimate owner, whilst Clause 44 shot at the thief. He had no desire to help

any member to pass legislation to help thieving. While Clause 30 gave ample protection to the legitimate stock-owner, Clause 44 was necessary. If we accepted the amendment we should frustrate the object of the Bill, and enable the cattle duffer or the horse thief to steal at least four unbranded animals per annum.

MR. RASON: The Minister, after assuring the Committee that he would accept an amendment permitting a man to keep a few head of unbranded stock, now said he would not accept anything. He (Mr. Rason) had thought he was assisting the Minister by suggesting that the clause be recommitted, and by pointing out an admittedly serious defect in the Bill; but if the Minister continued to treat the Committee as he treated them on this clause, he (Mr. Rason) would take no more interest in the Bill.

MR. KEYSER: The Minister said that by Subclause (*c*) of Clause 30 a man was entitled to keep unbranded cattle provided he could give a good reason. Then why object to his retaining four head of cattle? The Minister said that the man who had stolen the cattle could not give a good reason for having them. Then the thief would be liable for breaking the Act. The Minister said the amendment would induce men to steal. How? To protect himself, a large stock-owner would brand his cattle; but people in outlying districts, with only three or four head, would be protected against proceedings.

MR. HARPER: Anybody could ear-mark.

MR. KEYSER: This clause referred particularly to branding stock.

MR. HARPER: An ear-mark was a brand, according to the interpretation clause.

MR. KEYSER: An ear-mark would not do for cattle or horses.

MR. WATTS supported the amendment, provided the reference to 10 head of sheep was withdrawn, for it was somewhat ridiculous. Few men ran flocks of 10 sheep. Clause 30 seemed to be misunderstood by some members, particularly by the Minister. It allowed an inspector to seize and impound unbranded stock; and the owner, no matter how good his reason for not branding, was liable to a penalty of £50 per head for having them unbranded. The reason for the Minister's statement that this proviso would not apply to the owner of a small number of stock was not apparent. The provision was too powerful a weapon to place in the hands of an inspector. The Minister urged that it would prevent cattle-stealing, that the owner could identify the cattle and thus prove ownership. But so could the thief. After agreeing to accept the amendment, the Minister withdrew his acceptance, being apparently at the beck and call of one or two pastoralists.

MR. KEYSER withdrew his amendment to allow the member for Canning to move his.

Amendment withdrawn.

MR. GORDON moved an amendment:

That the word "any," in line 1, be struck out, and "not more than four head of" inserted in lieu.

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

Ayes	...	10
Noes	...	25
Majority against	...	15

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Keyser	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Layman	Mr. Butcher
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Daglish
Mr. S. F. Moore	Mr. Ellis
Mr. Quinlan	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Rason	Mr. Harper
Mr. Watts	Mr. Hastie
Mr. Frank Wilson	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Gordon (*Teller*).	Mr. Heitmann
	Mr. Henshaw
	Mr. Hicks
	Mr. Holman
	Mr. Horan
	Mr. Johnson
	Mr. Lynch
	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Needham
	Mr. Nelson
	Mr. Scaddan
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Thomas
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gill (*Teller*).

Amendment thus negatived, and the clause passed as printed.

Clause 45—Unbranded cattle:

MR. BURGES moved an amendment,

That in line 2 the words "one year" be struck out, with a view to inserting "fifteen months."

On motion by the MINISTER, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL
(JETTIES, ETC.)
SECOND READING.

Resumed from the previous day.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson): In moving the ad-

journment of the debate on the last occasion, I did so because I knew that some members who were absent desired to speak on the Bill. I understand now that they do not wish to speak on the second reading, and I have no desire to speak on it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

DISTRESS FOR RENT RESTRICTION BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; MR. A. J. WILSON in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Sewing machines, typewriting machines, and mangles, exempt from distress in certain cases:

MR. RASON: The object of the clause was to protect from seizure for rent any machine or instrument used by a female for earning a livelihood. But it should be obvious that many females earned their living by giving music lessons with a piano, and indeed some of the most deserving females were maintaining themselves in this way, a young family being thus maintained in some cases. If it were desirable to protect from seizure for rent the instruments mentioned in the clause, it was equally desirable to protect a piano from seizure in cases where the piano was necessary as an instrument for enabling a female to earn a livelihood. A "mangle" was mentioned in the clause, but that was apparently for creating sympathy, because there were few mangles in Western Australia. [LABOUR MEMBER: Chinaman's mangle.] Well, if the object of this legislation was to protect Chinamen who used mangles, that would be a new position. If all these instruments were to be protected in the way proposed in the clause, where was this protection to stop? [Interjection: A perambulator, for instance?] A perambulator was hardly an instrument by which a person could earn a living. There were other occupations followed by women which might be mentioned, and all such cases were equally deserving of protection, if this kind of legislation was necessary. It did not look well to have such legislation brought in; although if the Bill was to be insisted upon, he must move an amendment that the word "piano" be inserted as one of the instruments to be protected from seizure in the case of a female using it to earn a living. He moved:

That the word "pianos" be inserted after "machines."

MR. KEYSER suggested other instruments which might be included, such as painting requisites, phonographs, organs, cooking utensils, and jews-harps.

MR. GORDON: It was a shame to criticise a measure of this kind in such a light manner. He rose to point out that a mangle was to be protected under the clause, but a washing machine was not. Members would know that a washing machine must go before a mangle, because a mangle would be of no use without a washing machine.

[MR. QUINLAN took the Chair.]

Amendment (pianos) put and passed.

MR. GORDON moved an amendment—

That the words "washing machines" be inserted.

MR. A. J. WISON deprecated the despicable attitude adopted by some members in connection with this Bill.

MR. RASON: Could the hon. member accuse other members of adopting a despicable attitude?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must withdraw.

MR. A. J. WILSON withdrew the word "despicable." He would term it the extremely able and admirable manner in which members were treating the Bill, particularly the member for Albany, who was expected to be serious sometimes. That hon. member's attitude to-night had been almost idiotic.

MR. KEYSER: Was the hon. member in order?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must withdraw the word.

MR. KEYSER insisted on a withdrawal.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member need not insist. He (the Chairman) would see to that.

MR. A. J. WILSON withdrew the word "idiotic." The attitude of the member for Albany had been captious in the extreme. It was about time the hon. member adopted a sensible attitude in discussing measures.

MR. KEYSER: Could the hon. member insinuate that a member's attitude was not sensible?

THE CHAIRMAN: That was no point of order.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The amendment was unnecessary. Washing machines were used only in factories. The object of the Bill was to protect women who were unfortunate enough to have to provide for themselves, and in all probability for families. In washing, the only utensils used in a home besides a mangle would be a washing board and bars. Many people sent clothes washed at home to be mangled outside.

MR. F. WILSON: Where was that done in Western Australia?

MR. A. J. WILSON: If the hon. member was familiar with Perth, he would know of many cases where it was done. No section of the community was more deserving of assistance from Parliament than the women who took in washing and whose battle was always hardest because the odds were always against them. Yet we found these women treated in a most ungenerous manner by members. We found members of the Opposition bringing down Bills for a big combine, but in dealing with a Bill giving assistance to a deserving portion of the community they were captious and indifferent, and almost adopted a tone of levity which did not tend to the dignity of the Chamber. The member for Canning (Mr. Gordon) should not insist on the amendment. At any rate it was incumbent on the hon. member to give some justification for it, and to show that its object was to give relief to people entitled to relief from this House.

MR. GORDON: There was just as much reason for protecting washing machines as for protecting sewing machines. Washing machines were used by poor women to earn a living. Could the member for Forrest deny that washing machines were used in Perth?

MR. A. J. WILSON: They were only used in factories.

MR. GORDON: It was possible for a woman to purchase a washing machine, and she might be hounded down for the value of any goods that might be accidentally destroyed while in her hands. The sewing machine companies were sufficiently secured under the hiring system. Now they wanted to be secured to prevent anybody else from taking away sewing machines when they were nearly paid off. He would insist on the amendment.

MR. KEYSER supported the amendment. He would not refer to the member for Forrest in language such as was used by that hon. member, but the member for Forrest was always at the call of anybody who buttonholed him in the street.

MR. A. J. WILSON: And had the brains to discriminate.

MR. KEYSER: The hon. member might, in his own opinion, have the brains, but that was a question for members to decide. Many ladies earned their living by painting; and if it was just to protect sewing machines it was equally just to protect painting implements. Some women earned their living by cooking and in other ways. Where were we going to stop? The member for Forrest might be perfectly honest in trying to put these three implements of trade on the statute book, but they were not sufficient. The principle should be extended to protect the tools of trade used by all women in earning their living. If the amendment were not carried he (Mr. Keyser) would propose others, as the Bill was a ridiculous one, which he opposed, and which he hoped at any rate would be rejected by another place.

MR. A. J. WILSON: As to this measure affecting the interests of sewing machine companies, it would be hard if protection were not afforded to, say, tailoresses or women making up shirts. There was the grossest and vilest sweating going on in connection with shirt-making. Women were making up shirts at about 2½d. each. These women were unable to pay down £13 or £14 for a sewing machine, but could get the article on the time-payment system, and it would be hard if, after struggling on for 12 months and perhaps paying £6 or £6 10s., the landlord could take away the machine because they were behind in rent, thus depriving them of their means of livelihood. Notwithstanding the seizure of the machine, their liability as far as the machine company was concerned would still remain. His object was to secure them in the continued possession of those articles which were in many

cases the only means whereby they could earn their living.

Amendment negatived.

MR. KEYSER moved an amendment that after "mangles" the word "organs" be inserted. Why should not organs be included as well as pianos? If some ladies earned a living by teaching the piano, others earned a living by teaching the organ.

Amendment negatived.

MR. DIAMOND: Although the word "organs" was not inserted, "harmoniums" should be. The harmonium was used largely by private people; it was a more ancient instrument than the American organ, and should have a place in the clause. He moved an amendment that the word "harmonium" be inserted after "mangle."

Amendment negatived.

MR. NEEDHAM moved an amendment, that the following subclause be added:—

> It shall not be lawful to distrain for rent the tools and implements of trade of any person up to the value of £25.

This was a fairly reasonable way out of the difficulty that evidently presented itself. He regretted the levity which had been exhibited in dealing with this matter. Apparently members of the Opposition could not get down to this subject.

MR. GORDON: What about the hon. member's own side?

MR. NEEDHAM: Members of the Opposition could not get down to it simply because it affected a portion of this community which perhaps in their opinion was not worthy of consideration.

MR. RASON: There were many things the Opposition members could not get down to.

MR. NEEDHAM: Perhaps the hon. member was so high in his own estimation that he could not come down. He (Mr. Needham) would include in this category a member on his own side, and he was surprised that this hon. member followed the lead given him. The value fixed in the subclause was rather below the amount which ought to be fixed; but it would appeal to members of the Committee as being at least reasonable. The member for Forrest, who was actuated by the best motives, should accept the amendment. If we confiscated tools or implements of trade with which persons earned their living, and by means of which they desired to liquidate their debts, we should be denying them the chance to be honest. There were times when people were put into rather strange positions, when, although they desired to be honest, they could not at the time prove it; but they might have a chance of doing so if they could retain their tools and implements of trade, and they would prove not only to their creditors but to the community at large that they were desirous of being honest.

Amendment passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from the previous day; MR. QUINLAN in the Chair.

MINES DEPARTMENT (Hon. R. HASTIE, Minister).

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I shall not at this hour go into details regarding the Mines Department, because I hope before the close of the session to have a farther opportunity of considering the general question. I shall content myself, after a few observations, with trying to point out to members the differences between these estimates and those of last year. Briefly, I would remind members of the changes which, within the last few years, have taken place in this State's gold-mining industry. We all remember the great mining boom. While it continued, a large area of ground was taken up ostensibly for mining. But much of that area, instead of being used for mining, was occupied chiefly for speculative purposes. In those days a great portion of the goldfields was held by companies. Since that time a striking change has taken place. Areas of mining ground cannot now be easily floated in London and other centres; so instead of depending on the foreigner, a large section of our goldfields residents are busily engaged on their own account in looking for and winning gold. At the close of the great boom we were met by a large reduction of the area of mining ground

held under lease; and as a result the number of holdings was considerably reduced, and so to some extent was the income of the Mines Department. Since that time, and more especially during the last 18 months, altered conditions are apparent; and we are now on the upward grade, at least with respect to the area of ground held for mining. In this connection, the first feature brought to our notice is the gold yield; and on that question I should like briefly to say a word or two. Although the quantity of ore produced, put through the battery, and generally treated for gold during last year has been increasing, yet the gold yield this year does not equal last year's yield; principally for the reason that for many years in this State we had a large accumulation of what is known on goldfields as tailings, or stone that has been put through batteries but has not been otherwise treated. Till about a year ago, and for two previous years, it was customary throughout the goldfields to re-treat that stone by the cyanide process; and for that reason there was during last year and the previous year a very large quantity of gold produced, but not from stone taken out of the ground during those years. By the end of 1903 nearly all the tailings reserves were treated; and few of those acquainted with the circumstances expected that we should not now be able to chronicle a gold yield such as that obtained last year. This remark applies not only to the goldfields generally, but more especially to the public batteries of the Mines Department. Last year those batteries treated a large quantity of tailings, and by that yield the State was enriched by several thousand pounds. We shall not during this year, nor I expect during succeeding years, get anything like a repetition of that windfall. Yet it is peculiar that, although the nominal quantity of gold produced this year will not exceed that produced last year, yet the dividends paid, especially by companies mostly foreign, have not diminished but have to a small extent increased. For the expired portion of this year there has been about as much paid in dividends as was paid for the corresponding portion of last year; and we know that before the Christmas holidays are over the amount paid during the whole of last year will be exceeded. One other peculiarity I should like to mention. During the last six or nine months there has been in certain portions of the State an extraordinary revival of gold-mining, especially in portions where people had given up hope of new mines and new miners. I refer particularly to such centres as Southern Cross. I refer to Kalgoorlie, meaning the town of Kalgoorlie itself and the immediate vicinity. I refer to Leonora, to Nannine; to another old centre supposed to be worked out—Pingin; and to a centre partially prospected—Black Range. We have recently had considerable developments at Mulgabbie and at Yarri. Most people believed that Southern Cross, Kalgoorlie, Leonora, and Nannine had long since reached their zenith; but experience gained during the last few months shows that to be a mistaken idea. Gold-mining in Southern Cross is in a far better condition to-day than it ever was previously. The same can be said of Kalgoorlie proper, leaving out Boulder, because the Boulder district is always on the up-grade. Leonora, during the last few months, has shown for an absolute certainty that in the near future it will be one of the best mining centres in the State; and the same can be said of some of the other places I have mentioned. Coming to the Estimates, I would point out to members that there is an increase in the general vote to the extent of some £87,000. But if members will look at the revenue columns in these Estimates, pages 8 to 10, they will observe that the revenue is expected to increase by about £95,000. In other words, by the increased expenditure I feel quite certain that we shall get an increased revenue of £95,000. Before I sit down I shall speak of the principal items in these Estimates; but I now wish to refer for a few minutes to a matter of great importance. Especially during the last 18 months the cost of mining has been most wonderfully reduced. I do not say there are not mines in other countries where the cost of mining is lower than in Western Australia; but generally, if you take the twenty chief mines in any other country and compare them with the twenty chief mines here, I believe I am correct in saying that the cost of mining is lower in Western Australia than in any other mining country. [MR. HEITMANN:

Decidedly not.] I have made a statement, and I hope the hon. member will be able to show us figures in contravention of that statement; that he will cite particular instances, and not make general statements. I was pointing out the moral of what I was saying. On all parts of the goldfields, especially near the rich chutes of gold, there are immense bodies of ores which for many years were not at all payable. But now that the mines have been developed and can be worked at a low cost, many such bodies of ore are being treated. That is especially the case in Kalgoorlie, where many ore bodies are now being worked which during the past eight or ten years no one ever expected to be made payable. One of the reasons for the reduction in cost, especially at Kalgoorlie, is the now bountiful supply of water. A few minutes ago I mentioned that the area of ground under gold-mining leases had greatly increased; and I will quote figures which may not be altogether uninteresting. On the 30th July, 1903, there were held 2,026 leases containing 27,044 acres; while on the corresponding date of this year there were 2,146 leases containing 28,350 acres, or a total increase of 120 leases. About a fortnight ago there were in existence 2,304 leases—an increase since last July of 158. Those figures are a substantial proof of my statement that mining in this country is continually on the up-grade. I shall try briefly to summarise the principal features of these Estimates. Under the heading of "Mining generally," which includes all officers employed in administering the Mining Acts—the Under Secretary for Mines, the officers in the correspondence and accountant's branches—there is a gross increase of only £112 in salaries and £1,150 in contingencies. Here, as generally throughout these Estimates, no officer with a salary exceeding £200 a year receives an increase. That, I candidly admit, seems to me very regrettable. Like any other man who has held a Ministerial position in this State, I recognise the great merit of many public servants whom I should like to reward with salaries commensurate with what they could earn outside the service by doing similar work. However, the understanding now is that increases will not be granted to officers receiving over £200 a year until the Public Service Commissioner is able to advise the Government. Members will notice that provision is made for two new clerks—one in the accountant's and another in the correspondence branch. These clerks are absolutely necessary if we are to continue to keep abreast of present requirements. Other items are the reward of £300 provided for a discovery at Black Range, and an item of £650 for the purchase of 5,000 copies of a work entitled *W.A. Mining Industry*. These items make a substantial increase in the Estimates; and were it not for that increase the portion of the Estimates to which I refer would show a substantial decrease.

MR. SCADDAN: Why did you need those 5,000 copies?

THE MINISTER: The work is a special issue of the *West Australian Mining Standard*, and is devoted entirely to Western Australia; not so much for the benefit of those in the State as for the benefit of persons outside the State. The number is extensively illustrated, and is far and away the best volume ever published dealing with the mining industry in Western Australia. When the member who interjected sees the volume, he will be convinced that there has not been a bad bargain made in assisting in its publication. It will advertise the gold resources of this State, and I know of no publication that will give a better idea of the stability of mining in Western Australia than this volume does.

MR. SCADDAN: You have not told us what you intend to do with these copies?

THE MINISTER: I informed the House just now that these were not intended for people within the State, but for people outside the State. A large number of these copies will be sent to persons outside the State as well as to people within it. I do not think we shall require to get additional storage accommodation for these copies, as seems to be suggested. Under the head of "Mining Schools" it will be noticed there is a decrease in the amounts voted. The School at Coolgardie, as mentioned by the Premier in introducing the Education Estimates, is now converted into a technical school, and the expenditure of the previous year is so much reduced; but on the other hand there is a fair increase in the amount for the Kalgoorlie

School of Mines, the increase amounting to £1,132 in salaries and for various other matters connected with that school. We have passed the stage now when we can expect that the old rule-of-thumb practice of mining will dominate in this State. Practically all our large mines are conducted to a great extent on scientific principles, and are directed by persons who have had a scientific as well as a practical training; and in order to get men of that stamp we have had to send to the Eastern States, to America, and elsewhere for persons possessing scientific education in mining. Until the Kalgoorlie School of Mines was established there was no opportunity in this State for studying science as connected with mining; and the opportunities now available are better than can be obtained in any other country. It is our duty to give to our young men who desire it the best chance of learning sufficient science connected with mining. Under the head of "Purchase of copper ore at Phillips River," I recollect hearing with surprise some remarks by the leader of the Opposition; and I expect we shall get more from him on this subject when the item is dealt with. He may have something to say about this as well as the matter of the Cue-Day Dawn water scheme. I may say in regard to the purchase of copper ore at Phillips River, there is an increase of £15,075 over last year's vote. Last year there was a sum of £14,000 on the Estimates for this purpose. This has been spoken of as a trading concern. I may remind members that it was resolved upon long before the present Government came into office, when it was thought—and I was not one who doubted the wisdom of it—that the best thing to do for the development of the copper industry at Phillips River was to purchase, under certain circumstances, the copper ore that these miners had and which they could not make use of; and, after sufficient development, to see whether the field there was likely to be good enough for a smelter to be erected. That smelter is now at work, and has been the means of keeping a large number of men employed at Phillips River, and in order to do that it has been necessary to ask Parliament to vote certain amounts of money. I know no one who is acquainted with the matter who has suggested that extravagance has been shown. The only criticism I have heard is that the previous Government and the present Government have not shown sufficient business faith in that field to erect a very large smelter. It has been resolved, in the first place, to erect a comparatively small smelter, and work it for some time to enable us to see if we can really go into the work on a very large scale. It has been pointed out that in connection with this money, instead of putting it in the ordinary way on the Estimates, we should have placed it in a trading account. [DR. ELLIS: Hear, hear.] I wish I had had the hon. member's advice when I was trying to make up the Estimates, so that he might have pointed out how this could be done. I have tried to do it and have failed, and I am sure if the hon. member had tried he would not have been able to solve the difficulty. [MR. SCADDAN: He can produce figures to prove anything.] If we do regard it as a trading concern, Parliament must in the first place vote the money. We should have to earmark a certain amount of money, and treat it under the head of a trading account. It should be remembered that we have two years in which it is necessary for a certain sum of money to be voted by Parliament, and that is what we are now asking Parliament to do. It was considered necessary last year, and I am sure it is necessary this year even after the new Audit Act has been passed. Another matter mentioned is that it has been said we proposed to spend over £70,000 last year and this year, and for that expenditure we expect to gain only £75,000 this year on it, with something like £1,000 profit. But I may point out that this is scarcely a fair statement of the case. Some members seem to think that you can conduct the smelting of copper ore as you would conduct an ordinary battery; that you can bring your stone to the battery and treat it at once, and do not require to have any reserve nor anything in that direction, as is done with a smelting furnace. But I may point out that no furnace can exist unless there is a large amount of ore on hand, and in addition a large amount of coke and many other things which are required; and if at the end of the year we start to make up our account, we calculate we must have £14,000 worth of material waiting on

hand; therefore it will be apparent that in addition to £1,000 on the Estimates we must also have at least other £14,000, I may remind members that this smelter has not been going on for any length of time. Members will know there was some doubt as to whether the smelter was in good condition or not, and I have tried my best to find out the exact position of the case. About a month ago the most expert gentleman having knowledge of smelters, and probably the best authority on smelting in Australasia, Mr. Klug, the manager of the Fremantle Smelting Works, was specially requested to visit Phillips River and report on the smelters and the prospects of the mines generally. Mr. Klug has returned, and has given us as satisfactory a report as I could expect. He points out that the arrangements at Phillips River are on a small scale, that they cannot be conducted in a cheap style; and in the meantime he considers that under the circumstances the smelter is working fairly satisfactorily. He points out that the prospects of the field are most encouraging. The only difficulty is that in order to keep the smelter going there must be a large quantity of development ahead. On the mines, the people not having too much capital, have neglected somewhat the developments; but after a few changes that may take place, I have every confidence that Phillips River will be one of the best mining districts. Then under the head of "State Batteries" members will notice there is an increase both in salaries and wages, also that contingencies amounting to £11,000, because we are continually adding to the number of our public batteries, and as we add to them we naturally require to pay more money in salaries and wages. We have over 20 batteries at work in the State at the present time, and I need not inform members of the immense amount of good they have done. It is well known that in many places in the State the public batteries have given crushing facilites that under other circumstances would not have been obtainable. Then under the head of "Steam boilers" there appears an increase of £456; but I shall be able to explain this in detail when we come to the item, and show the absolute necessity for the increase. One or two new appointments have been made because of the increase in the work, and also for the reason that shortly before the Estimates of last year were made up there was a considerable retrenchment made among officers on the goldfields; not only those connected with steam boilers, but also ordinary wardens' officers, and in various cases an effort was made to see if one officer could do the whole work. In one or two cases that was found impossible. The old conditions to a small extent have been reverted to. As members will remember, when passing the Machinery Bill through this House I pointed out that in the first place there would be slightly increased expenditure because of the large amount of new machinery to be inspected. For that reason it is necessary to employ one new man. Under the heading of Mines Water Supply there is a decrease in salaries and wages of £110 and an increase for contingencies of £15,222. This is fully accounted for, I think, by the item of the Cue and Day Dawn Water Supply Scheme. This scheme was started by the late Government—[MR. RASON: Hear, hear]—and indorsed by the last Parliament. The member for Guildford introduced a Water Boards Bill, and pointed out that it would provide for the establishment of a scheme to supply water to Day Dawn, Cue, and other places. It was done openly, and no member of the House opposed it. Although I did not like the manner in which the scheme was inaugurated, I am bound to say it is likely to turn out one of the best commercial undertakings ever entered into in any part of this State. The objection has been brought forward that we should treat this scheme as a trading concern, and I hope we will be able to do so as soon as possible. The State undertook to supply a water scheme to Cue and Day Dawn; and the reason, so far as I can recollect, that animated this rather unique proposal was that the people of Cue had done more to supply themselves with water than any other community in Western Australia. They bought one or two shafts, laid down several miles of pipes, and spent many thousands of pounds in trying to give Cue a good supply of water; but all attempts proved to be unsatisfactory, and they came, to a large extent, to the end of their resources.

MR. N. J. MOORE: Did not the Government have an officer of water supply there for years?

THE MINISTER: Yes; but the Cue people did not depend on the Government. They assisted themselves until their funds were practically exhausted and until it became apparent that, unless there was an expenditure of a large amount of money, water could not be easily obtained to supply the people of the town. It was then represented, and I believe very fairly, that we had given Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie, and Boulder a good supply of water without taxing the people in those places specially, and that we should assist the people of Cue. Various schemes were discussed; and it was decided that the best and cheapest way to supply the people of Cue with water was that the Mines Water Supply Department should spend a considerable sum of money in making this pipe connection, and that after the work had been completed it should be handed over to a representative board, the board then borrowing money to the extent of the money spent, handing it back to the Government and becoming responsible for the scheme.

MR. N. J. MOORE: What is the distance of the source of supply?

THE MINISTER: About 12 miles from Cue; and on to Day Dawn, four miles from Cue, is also reticulated. The summer is coming on there and many mines are applying to get connected with the scheme. I am assured that the Great Fingal Mine at Day Dawn was willing to guarantee the consumption of a larger amount of water than the scheme could supply. All the fresh water in the neighbourhood was practically exhausted at the time the scheme was inaugurated; and had the scheme not been undertaken, people who could not buy condensed water at a considerable expense would have had to leave the district. I need not at this time defend the scheme. I do not think that any person will find serious fault with it. The only objection likely to be taken is regarding the particular bookkeeping system adopted. This Water Supply Branch on the goldfields, besides looking after the wants of Cue, has been looking after nearly every locality in the goldfields. It is the duty of the officers to see, wherever there is a fair number of people in any locality, if they can get water for those people conveniently, if possible by boring or by sinking comparatively shallow shafts. By so doing thousands of people have been able to live and prospect ground on the outskirts of the present goldfields. Under the head of "Development of Mining" no increase appears, but it is proposed to provide a farther sum on the Loan Estimates, this being required under the provisions of the Mines Development Act. Under the head of "Geological Surveys" there is an increase of only £10 in salaries, this increase being given to one clerk whose salary is less than £200. In making up the Estimates I overlooked one item, otherwise I should have advised that an increase be given to the Government Geologist, who is not very well paid. This gentleman has been in the State for a large number of years, and on all hands he is believed to be one of the best geological authorities in Australia. Members of the last Parliament will recollect that during 1902 Mr. Gregory, who was then Minister for Mines, brought forward and discussed the case of Mr. Maitland before the House, and pointed out that the arrangement between the Government Geologist and the Mines Department was that Mr. Maitland was to get a gradual increase until his salary was raised to £800 a year. Mr. Maitland received an advance that year of £25, and Mr. Gregory asked the House to agree to it on the understanding that if the House gave the increase it would be binding that Mr. Maitland should get an increase of £25 every year until £800 was reached. Unfortunately, when the Estimates were being prepared Mr. Maitland was in the Pilbarra district, and I overlooked this matter until the Estimates were in print. I mention this so that in future the compact honourably made in the circumstances I have recorded should be kept. The expenditure in our Geological Survey work errs, if anything, on the side of moderation. It is only £5,890 and we have a large auriferous territory. Though the staff is very efficient it cannot perform impossibilities. If we compare this State with what is done in other States we find that in New South Wales the expenditure during 1902-3 was over

£8,000, and that in Victoria, a small State indeed, the expenditure was over £6,000. Members will see that we have not been particularly extravagant in this State. Under the head of "Explosives and Analytical" there is an increase of £510 in salaries, and also of £1,315 for contingencies. During the last two years we have made new arrangements with reference to explosives. We have shifted the old magazines and put up a number of new magazines in Fremantle, and we have done the same in Kalgoorlie. New regulations govern explosives; but the country has not lost any money thereby. It has increased the revenue; but in order to see that the work is efficient it is absolutely necessary that we should to some extent increase our vote. The increase is caused largely because of the absolute necessity to shift two of the magazines. It is a great difficulty on the goldfields to find out what ground contains no gold. At Menzies we have only now discovered that the magazine is in the midst of a good auriferous belt. The same thing occurs at Coolgardie. The magazine is too near the town, and it has also been found lately that gold exists within the reserve. Therefore we are bound at an early date to take measures to remove it.

Mr. Scaddan: A lot of the brands of explosives should also be removed.

The MINISTER: A Commission, containing very able and efficient men, some of them scientific and experienced men, has been putting practically all brands of explosives used on the goldfields to a test, and it has been found that there is scarcely such a thing as a deficient cartridge of explosive material. It has tried by all means possible to find bad explosives, and cannot find them. We know that occasionally bad explosives will be met with, but no one yet has pointed out how we can make that discovery. I do not think that there is on the goldfields anything like a large amount of bad explosives. Practically all the explosives condemned in Western Australia are condemned when examined at Fremantle. Every box arriving at Fremantle is examined, and 3 per cent. of every box is taken indiscriminately and tested. Explosives are put to the same test here as in any other part of the world; and considering the immense amount of explosives used throughout our goldfields, the small number of explosive accidents is really remarkable; because we know that a large number of explosive accidents must be caused not on account of deficient explosives, but on account of how they are handled on the goldfields themselves. Anyone with the same experience and observation as I have had, and as the member for Ivanhoe has had, regarding the treatment of explosives on the mines themselves, must be astonished at the small number of accidents. There is not always the same fair handling of explosives on the mines as one would like to see. I would not like to detain the House longer, but will simply point out that on item 19 there is a very considerable increase. The item is for temporary clerical assistance, draftsmen, relieving officers, deputy mining registrars, etc. The reason for the increase is that the amount provided for last year was found to be very deficient. This is a useful and necessary item, for it is much better where there is a rush of work in outside offices to employ temporary hands, than to send relieving officers from Perth or engage persons who would very soon be classed among the permanent servants of the State. In conclusion I hope members will really discuss the Mines Estimates. I shall be very glad to explain to them any items they may wish information on, and any other matters I have omitted now I shall be glad to add after other members have spoken.

On motion by Mr. Rason, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 33 minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next afternoon.