

nessed. Why should the Bill be loaded up with such paltry regulations? I move an amendment—

That paragraph (j) be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Objection to this paragraph and to paragraph (1) has been raised by the carters' union, who want it deleted, and who claim that the owners of the teams best know how yoking should be done. But is it likely that any interference would be attempted with the common-sense way of yoking horses? However, on country roads one sometimes meets a dozen or more small ponies yoked in a long string, while at other times horses will be found yoked abreast in such numbers that the road will scarcely accommodate them. The provision is a perfectly sensible one and will not interfere with any man of experience among teams.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am opposed to the provision. My electors will be very much dissatisfied with it and will take an early opportunity of letting me know of their dissatisfaction. It is sheer impudence to dictate yoking methods to a wool teamster, with a team of 30 horses or 50 donkeys.

Hon. P. Collier: There are more than 50 on your roll.

Mr. TEESDALE: The men who yoke those big teams of horses or of donkeys know exactly what is best for their animals. This provision will be accounted a very serious one by my electors, some of whom have to travel 260 miles with their teams. Our roads cost the Government very little. We construct them mostly ourselves, and, when they become too bad to work on, we cut out another. Seeing that we have to provide roads for ourselves, we want to have a small say in their management, and not to be bossed about by a gentleman in the Minister's department as to how we shall yoke our teams.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This clause merely gives power to make by-laws.

Mr. Smith: It is too late when the by-law is made.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, the by-law must be submitted to Parliament, and there is always an opportunity to object to it. Under this measure, the Government may give road boards power to make regulations. I do not think any harm will come from passing the clause.

The Honorary Minister: It is absolutely necessary.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister will be able to confine the application of the clause to certain parts of the State. The Government should have the power, to be exercised if necessary.

Clause put and declared passed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think the member for North Perth moved an amendment that paragraph (j) be deleted.

The CHAIRMAN: No, he did not.

Mr. Smith: Yes, I did.

The Minister for Mines: I object to going back.

The CHAIRMAN: There seems to be a misunderstanding. I did not hear the member for North Perth move that paragraph (j) be deleted. As he says he moved it, I will put it.

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

| | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | .. | 11 |
| Noes | .. | .. | .. | 19 |

Majority against .. 8

AYES.

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| Mr. Angelo | Mr. Locke |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Smith |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. Teesdale |
| Mr. Duff | Mr. Wilson |
| Mr. Durack | Mr. Hardwick |
| Mr. O'Loghlen | (Teller.) |

NOES.

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Mr. Angwin | Mr. Nairn |
| Mr. Broun | Mr. Pickering |
| Mr. Brown | Mr. Plesse |
| Mr. Davies | Mr. Pilkington |
| Mr. Draper | Mr. Roblason |
| Mr. George | Mr. Scaddan |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Johnston | Mr. Willmott |
| Mr. Lutey | Mr. Harrison |
| Mr. Mullany | (Teller.) |

Amendment thus negatived.

The electric light having again failed,

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 30th September, 1919.

| | PAGE. |
|--|-------|
| Assent to Bill | 656 |
| Motions: Trade with Straits Settlement and Java | 657 |
| Explosives Act, amended regulations, to disallow | 660 |
| Bills: Dog Act Amendment, 1r. | 657 |
| Health Act Amendment, Assembly's Amend. | 660 |
| Justice Act Amendment, 3r. | 663 |
| Droving, 2r. | 663 |
| Fruit Cases, 2r., Select Committee appointed | 664 |
| Kidnaping Friendly Societies Investment Valuation, 2r. | 673 |

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, notifying assent to the Crown Suits Act Amendment Bill.

BILL—DOG ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Honorary Minister (for the Minister for Education) and read a first time.

MOTION—TRADE WITH STRAITS SETTLEMENTS AND JAVA.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.37]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House, in view of the necessity for the encouragement of production by the provision of adequate markets, it is advisable that the Government take steps to develop trade and commerce between this State and the Straits Settlements and Java.

I desire to say at the outset that this motion is the outcome of a report made by the Hon. W. Kingsmill some time ago, which report was printed and laid on the Table of the House on the 6th March, 1918. The report dealt with the hon. member's visit to the Federated Malay Straits and Java. The Premier requested that the report should be made available for the benefit of Parliament and it was then printed and circulated. The report has been most favourably commented on by influential and responsible bodies, and many have been the requests by persons engaged in various lines of production that further action should be taken. Considering that the time has arrived when immediate action is necessary if we are to reap the advantages to which the report has directed attention, I have launched this motion. My intention is to briefly outline the principal products of the State suitable for export and the methods of handling them, and to call attention to the many avenues of wealth open to those of our returned soldiers who are prepared to avail themselves of this opportunity. The motion provides scope for wide discussion, and I trust members will embrace the opportunity to speak freely on it, and give the mercantile community the benefit of their views. I propose to deal only briefly with the main headings and leave ample room for free debate while avoiding repetition, and to exercise the right of reply, if necessary, at the conclusion of the debate. First we have to consider the population of the countries with which we desire to trade. On looking into Mr. Kingsmill's report, we find that the population of the Federated Malay States, according to the latest available returns at the time the report was made was 1,037,000; of the other Malay States mentioned on page 5 of the report 899,968, and of the Colony (Singapore, Penang, and Province Wellesley) 714,069, or a total for British Malaya of 2,651,037. This population is spread over an area of 51,725 square miles, which reveals the fact that there is ample room for expansion. There are enormous possibilities for the development of the wealth which the territory possesses as shown by the following industries carried on there:—Rubber growing, tin, gold and wolfram mining, tapioca growing, rice cultivation, and other minor in-

dustries. It may be reasonably expected that the population will greatly increase during the next few years, which will lead to an ever increasing trade for the country that at this juncture steps in and lays a foundation for trade on true and honest principles. By this I mean the supply of goods of the best quality and at a price that is reasonable. Secondly, we have to consider the value of the population from the point of view of trade possibilities, that is to say, the distribution of wealth among the people, and their habits. Here again the report points out that the majority are a well-to-do middle class people, with all the usual desires of moneyed people, and that they and their children have the best of everything procurable. We are told that new houses of ambitious design are being erected in many directions, which is a further proof of the wonderful wealth and progress of these people and shows that there is at present a large market for our goods, a market which is becoming ever greater. The exports of rubber from the Federated Malay States for the year 1916 were valued at £17,240,000, and of tin £7,530,000. In the circumstances it will be seen that there is a magnificent market waiting in a country which is nearer to our State than to the other States of Australia. Among the principal products of this State suitable for export I will first mention meat. The canning industry of Wyndham, which is now in operation, is open for immediate export. Some time ago it was stated that the Government had already made arrangements with a mercantile house for the distribution of the products of the Wyndham freezing works. I have since learned from the leader of the House that such is not the case, and I am indeed pleased to have the contradiction. It seems to me that had the Government committed themselves to a course such as I have mentioned the State would not have reaped from a concern which has cost the country such a large amount of money the direct benefit which we are entitled to expect. I believe—though I am open to correction—that Western Australia has already sent some live cattle to the Malay States, and also a certain number of sheep; but the trade so far has been only spasmodic owing chiefly, I think, to the lack of facilities for the carriage of goods from Western Australia to the countries in question. It will also be borne in mind by hon. members that to Singapore from Wyndham is a voyage of only four days—four days, that is, for a reasonably fast steamer. This fact in itself shows that a trade is waiting for us in the Malay States which would redound very materially to the credit of Western Australia. It is quite true that Queensland has already opened up a trade with the Malay States, and during the last few years has done a considerable volume of business. However, the methods adopted by the Queensland producers leave room for improvement. It is on these grounds I consider Western Australia must stand a very fair chance of competing in that market. Queensland has been exporting meat to the

Malay States in a haphazard fashion only. The Queensland system of trading is not thoroughly organised, and my contention is that the Government of Western Australia should establish a system of trading, which the very fact of its being carried on under the authority and supervision of a Government would be favourably viewed by the people of the Malay States. They are a well-to-do class of people, and the statements in Mr. Kingsmill's report show that they must be possessed of a large spending power. The need is systematic trading under a trade commissioner, as I shall explain presently. It must not be forgotten that these people are desirous of obtaining the best of everything, and only the best. As I stated in opening, they have recently gone in for a better class of house accommodation, and they are prepared to pay a good price for an article which can be guaranteed. In the circumstances it would not only be necessary to appoint a trade commissioner but also, I think, an inspector at this end, to inspect all goods exported, and only such goods would be exported as carried his brand and seal. The Malay States offer a good market not only for our meat but also for poultry. From the report I see that poultry, fowls and ducks, are frequently to be seen on the tables of the people of the Malay States. If such a market were opened, I am sure it would afford a considerable impetus to that increased production which the Government of this State have been preaching for some years past. We have heard from time to time of "Produce, produce, produce," but we have not seen the Government bestir themselves in the direction which my motion indicates, namely, that of providing markets for the goods when they have been produced by our people. I now proceed to the subject of flour. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the Federated Malay States offer a good market for our flour. Flour has already been exported to them from the Eastern States, and according to the report before me that flour has been well received, inasmuch as the brands have been imitated by the Japanese. Unfortunately Japanese flour has been sold there as being of a well known Australian brand, and this can hardly redound to the credit of the Australian article. Another point in the report upon which I desire to touch in connection with flour is that complaints have been made that Australian flour is not a good keeping article. It is said that the moisture which the flour contains prevents it from keeping for any length of time. I do not know whether that moisture was introduced by the methods of milling adopted either in Western Australia or in any of the Eastern States. I sincerely hope that is not the case.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is the climate.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I do not think the climate has much to do with it. If the flour is milled from wheat grown on the dry areas of this State it will have better keeping qualities than flour from wheat grown in the moister portions of the Commonwealth. The

point is one well worth noting. It would also be necessary for us to have regular and frequent shipments of flour to the Malay States. It must be admitted that during the last two or three years shipments to the Malay States and Java have been very irregular, inasmuch as two of the steamers trading between our north-western ports and Java and Singapore have been taken away for Imperial requirements. However, now that the war is over and the "Kangaroo" is or soon will be out of commission, I see no reason why with the return of normal shipping conditions we should not from this day onwards be in a position to supply small quantities of flour in regular shipments. These would be sufficient to meet the immediate demands of the people of the Malay States and would arrive in excellent condition. It is imperative, of course, that stocks should be on the spot, as otherwise America and Japan, which would be in competition with us, would get rid of their stocks on the spot whilst our flour was on the water. Next I desire to call the attention of hon. members to the possibilities of finding a market in the Malay States for our fruit. It will be generally admitted that the fruitgrowers of Western Australia have for the last four or five years been very severely handicapped indeed. The wonder to me is that so many of them have been able to even make a living at the low prices which have been ruling locally. It is admitted on all hands that the fruit grown here—oranges, apples and pears, for instance—are second to none in the world. The absence of an export trade during the past five years, however, has resulted in a glut of fruit on the local market, and prices have been very low indeed. The wonder to me is that the fruitgrowers of this State have not allowed their orchards simply to go to decay. In the circumstances, with the return of normal shipping conditions, it behoves us to get in without delay and make arrangements, as I have indicated, opening up markets for our fruits in the Malay States. I believe most of the steamers trading between Western Australia and the Malay States have cool chambers, and there is also cool storage available at Singapore, so that under the guidance of a trade commissioner the fruit could be disposed of to the best advantage of our orchardists. There is also the question of wines. In the past it is only occasionally that wines have been shipped from here to the Malay States. In this connection I may draw attention to the remarks of a French expert who visited this State some time ago. That gentleman remarked that we had in Western Australia land which was capable of growing wines of a very high quality. Further, there is the fact that we have shipped wines to London and to European ports, where they have been well received and favourably commented upon. Our wine industry opens up a vista of wide development abroad. It is my intention, in dealing with this subject, to outline only the various products which I consider could be immediately exported with

advantage to the State. I want to leave it open, as I have already indicated, to hon. members to avail themselves of the opportunity to deal with the various subjects which I am touching upon, and in that way we may have a full and free debate. Considering that we have at the present stage a large accumulated deficit which is a great burden for us to carry, the opportunities which are presented to us, and which I am outlining, should be availed of. They are the only means by which we can get the ship of State once more on an even keel. When we remember that the output of wines in France is valued at something like 130 million pounds sterling—at any rate those were the figures before the war—it shows to us that the country we have available, and that the opportunities which present themselves for wine growing and settling returned men on the land to engage in that occupation, is one of the golden opportunities which await us. All the returned men cannot be expected to go in for wheat growing, and whilst I am speaking on the subject of wheat growing, I would like to take the opportunity of saying that it was my privilege a few days ago to accompany the Parliamentary party on a business trip through the Eastern wheat belt of the State. I can say that that trip was an object lesson which I shall never forget. It was glorious to see acres upon acres and miles upon miles of magnificent wheat country which would be a credit to any part of the world, and to go mile after mile, as we did by motor-car, and see what can be produced in those dry areas. This shows what wonderful resources we have and what latent resources are still to be dealt with in this wonderful State of Western Australia. I say a wonderful State because it is really that when we consider that it has the comparatively small population of 320,000 people. It seems to me strange that more people have not been brought here from other parts of the world, but I am satisfied from the advertisements such as we have to display to the rest of the world, that we must in the near future reap a large harvest from the efforts being made in the direction of securing immigrants to Western Australia.

Hon. J. CORNELL: You want a good advance agent.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I desire also, whilst touching on the question of wines, to refer to another matter which I feel sure will command a market in the Malay States. I refer to light table beer. Reference is made to this in Mr. Kingsmill's report. He states there is a large demand for light table beer in the Federated Malay States. I feel sure that this article could be produced in Western Australia equal in quality to that mentioned in the report as coming from America, Japan, and elsewhere. There are also many other items which could be exported with great advantage, such as jam, condiments, soap, candles, biscuits, confectionery, and dried fruits. We have during the past year or two exported to the Malay States a certain

quantity of biscuits and confectionery, and I believe those who have been procuring the goods mentioned have been fairly regular in their repeat orders. This clearly indicates that Western Australia can produce biscuits and confectionery at any rate which are capable of competing with similar articles from other parts of the world. I also notice there is a good demand for leather. Western Australia has produced large quantities of this article and it has given general satisfaction wherever used, and I am sure if a market such as I now indicate were opened, the production in this State could be further increased. As regards the methods of handling, I will not deal with those until a later stage, perhaps when I am replying. It may, however, be argued by hon. members that it is one thing to send goods from here to the Malay States but it is another thing to get return freights. I am quite sure that there would be no difficulty in that direction for, as Mr. Kingsmill's report points out, there are many articles that we can import from the Federated Malay States, and also from Java, such as tea, rice, kerosene, and sugar. It is almost a sacrilege to talk about sugar in the Commonwealth. The fact remains that we in Western Australia, and especially those who use that commodity in their industries, have had a bad time. Even so far as the domestic use of sugar is concerned, the people in this State have had to put up with a good deal of inconvenience. We have had what has resembled sand rather than sugar, and I think we could reasonably expect the Federal Government to allow us to import sugar from Java, notwithstanding the existence of that huge combine, the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. It may be argued that it is another avenue for Government control. If that is so, it is an avenue which, I feel sure, will commend itself favourably to hon. members. The fact that there would be a trade commissioner appointed by the Government, who would carry the authority of the Government, and also the fact that all goods packed for export would be packed under the supervision of an inspector employed by the Government—bearing this in mind, it is reasonable to expect that something in the way of a return must accrue. I would suggest that a commission should be charged upon all goods which are exported, to defray the cost of the expenses incurred by the trade commissioner and the inspector. So far I have dealt principally with the Federated Malay States. In regard to Java, we have, first of all, to consider the area of that country. It covers an area of 50,000,000 square miles; it carries a population of 35 millions, and has mountains ranging in height to 12,000 feet. So that there is there a variety of climates. Its imports are of a value of 25 millions sterling, its exports 40 millions sterling. Java has railways running over a distance of 1,700 miles. It will be seen, therefore, that Java contains great possibilities for trade and as it is nearer to Australia than Singapore, it is therefore much easier of access and must be a natural out-

let for many of our products. Western Australia in 1912 exported to Java flour of a value of £17,617. In 1913 the value of the flour exported to Java was £23,966. In 1914-15 the value dropped to £1,787, while in 1915-16 the value increased to £38,538. These are the figures which are given in Mr. Kingsmill's report. It is only fair to mention that the large decrease in 1914-15 was due entirely to the outbreak of war. Western Australia has also been exporting stock to Java—cattle for dairying and killing, as follows:—In 1912 the value of cattle exported was £19,257; in 1913 it was £23,033; in 1914-15, £22,315; and in 1915-16, £20,693. With regard to sheep, the value of exports to Java in 1912 was £112, and in 1915 only £20. It is mentioned in the report that the meat which is consumed there is chiefly buffalo, while sheep are of a very inferior quality. Large quantities of pork are consumed there. I am sure of this, that there is a market in Java for our cattle and sheep, also poultry, as mentioned in the case of the Federated Malay States. We have also exported from Australia to Java a fair number of horses. There are parts of Western Australia which are well suited for the breeding of horses and chiefly in the south-western areas. Mr. Kingsmill's report mentions that some horses which were bred in Australia were used for cavalry purposes and those horses were regarded as animals of a good stamp. During the last four or five years I have met a number of people who have come from the Malay States and Java to Western Australia, and who prior to the war were in the habit of going for their holidays to Europe and elsewhere. I have also seen these people come here a second and a third time. On each occasion those who have visited Perth have been eulogistic in their remarks regarding the climate and scenery, and the benefits they have derived from the change to Western Australia. This indicates that those people would readily and willingly welcome anything in the way of the export of goods from Western Australia to that market. Java also presents a good market for citrus fruits, apples and grapes, and in return would be able to supply us with such fruits as we do not grow in this State, such as bananas and pineapples. That is indicated in the report I have before me. There are also great possibilities for our timber trade with Java. There are, I believe, on the islands large areas of timber already under cultivation, but the conditions under which the Javanese have to get this timber are such that the market is available to us, and would be patronised to a greater extent for Western Australian timbers than the local timber. Experiments have been made in Java with Western Australian sleepers. At the time the report was written experiments were being conducted with powdered sleepers. The result of these was not known when the report was presented. I believe, however, that since that time the news has been received that powdered sleepers, which were sent there for experi-

mental purposes, have been proclaimed good and serviceable and of such a nature that the local people are now open to receive more from the same source of supply. The remarks I have made in regard to the Federated Malay States as to the export of wine and beer apply also to Java. They also apply to biscuits and confectionery which, in common with the other articles I have mentioned, are in great demand. Leather is already being exported from Australia, chiefly from the other States, but there is an increasing demand for leather for boots and shoes. This article is badly wanted. The leather which was sent from the other States was chiefly leather belting. It will be conceded, I think, that the motion standing in my name should meet with the ready response of hon. members. I have touched sufficiently upon various articles to enable hon. members to debate the matter, and give their views, and I trust the motion will meet with the approval of the House.

On motion by the Honorary Minister the debate adjourned.

MOTION—EXPLOSIVES ACT, AMENDED REGULATIONS, TO DISALLOW.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [5.20]: The following motion appears on the Notice Paper in my name:—

That Regulation Paper 73 ("The Explosives Act, 1895") as laid on the Table of the House by the Hon. the Minister for Education on 2nd September, 1919, be disallowed.

At the last sitting of the Council, a resolution was carried in favour of laying on the Table of the House, papers relating to a regulation in connection with the Explosives Act, recently gazetted. Those papers have not, so far, been laid on the Table, and until I get them I cannot very well go on with my motion. If I am in order, and this meets with your approval, Sir, I move—

That consideration of the motion be postponed until Wednesday, 8th October.

Motion put and passed.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Amendments.

Bill returned from the Legislative Assembly with amendments.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [5.22]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Message No. 6 from the Legislative Assembly to be taken into consideration at this sitting.

I always have had a decided objection to any alteration of the Standing Orders, but in a case like this, where it is imperative that it should be done, there is very little option left

but to do so. The present Act expires to-day, and this shows the necessity for moving the suspension of the Standing Orders. I trust that hon. members will agree to the motion.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.23]: Whilst congratulating the leader of the House on the dignity to which he has attained, I think it is very much to be regretted that his first official act is to suspend our Standing Orders, particularly as he has explained, that we cannot do anything else. This is one of the results of the picnic party in the wheat belt. Here is a matter about which the Government have known for 12 months, namely that the Act expires to-day, and they come down 6½ hours before midnight and tell us to put this matter through. We know well what must happen. It should be put through to-night. It is an important matter which another place has to consider—if I understand the position aright—and it is uncommonly difficult to discuss public questions unless one has chapter and verse for everything. I ask the leader of the House if he expects to get through the negotiations with another place before midnight to-night. If he is not able to do that why this indecent haste? One speaks at a disadvantage on the matter because one has not had an opportunity of seeing the position of affairs, or what the amendments are.

The PRESIDENT: The question now is the suspension of the Standing Orders.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Exactly, and I am protesting strongly against such suspension. I say this to the acting leader of the House, that unless he can put through the whole thing before midnight it does not matter whether we postpone it for a week or not, so far as I can understand. Before he persuades us to suspend the Standing Orders the question I ask him is whether he is going to put this through and hand it on as an Act of Parliament by midnight to-night.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East—in reply) [5.25]: All that is necessary is for the House to agree to the amendment sent up by the Legislative Assembly. The Bill will then be returned to the Legislative Assembly and the matter will be closed. The Bill was sent from this Chamber and was amended in the Legislative Assembly.

Question put and passed.

The PRESIDENT: I certify that the motion is passed, as is necessary under our Standing Orders, by an absolute majority of the Chamber. I beg also to announce to hon. members that owing to the continued illness of Hon. J. F. Allen, Chairman of Committees, I shall be obliged to take the Chair in Committee.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 1—Clause 2: Strike out the Clause, and insert in lieu thereof the following:—The amendments to the Health Act, 1911-15, made by section forty-one of the Health Act Amendment Act, 1918, shall continue in force until the 31st day of December, 1920, and no longer, after which date section 242j of the Health Act, 1911-15, as originally enacted, shall again come into operation.

The Honorary Minister: I move—

That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

Many members of the Committee were in favour of the provision when the Bill was last with us. I see no hardship whatever in making the measure temporary, in giving it a further 12 months' trial.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: This is rather a slipshod way of doing business. We have not the amendment in writing before us. It would not have been impossible for those responsible to have provided us with copies of the amendment. I am half inclined to agree with Mr. Sanderson in this matter. Apparently the amendment will limit the operation of the provision to 12 months, whereas when the Bill left this Chamber it was in the usual form of permanency. I disagree with limiting the provision as proposed. The present Government, composed of half a dozen weak members of half a dozen weak Governments, are prepared to placate any noisy section of the community, provided they are permitted to continue in office. The Minister in charge, although previously he vigorously protested against the bare idea of making this provision temporary, now agrees to the amendment in order to placate somebody and quieten the Opposition. If the Government are prepared to stand by this measure, why cannot they say so or, alternatively, throw it into the wastepaper basket? Apparently we are to have this measure up for full discussion every 12 months. The result will be that those who now favour the amendment will point to the time wasted by Parliament in annually reviewing the measure. Not only do I object to the manner in which the business has been placed before us, but I also protest against the extremely weak attitude of the Government in respect of the Bill. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. H. STEWART: I, too, protest against the manner in which the business has been put before us. Since the Bill left this Chamber certain information has been given in reply to a question by Mr. Dodd. On the 9th September that hon. member asked "How many females have been notified other than through a private physician that they must be medically examined?" The answer was "32." The next question was "How many were found to be diseased?" The answer was "23." Practically 30 per cent. of those called up for examination were not diseased. Those figures indicate that there should be some further provision to prevent wrongful information

being furnished to the Commissioner. This amendment coming to us in other than printed form precludes our framing an amendment which would help to provide such a safeguard.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is almost a question of order whether we cannot have these proposals before us. Several times, Sir, when you were Chairman of Committees, you pointed out the importance and desirability of having these amendments properly on the Notice Paper. I am asked to pass this amendment, although without having the matter in writing before me I cannot say definitely what it refers to. It is an utterly impossible way of conducting public business. Protests made against this slipshod way of doing business are fully justified. As far as I understand it, the amendment is exactly what I wanted when the Bill was previously before us; but I must first see it in writing to assure myself on that point. We have only the verbal statement of the Minister as to what is intended by the amendment. I am prepared to join with anybody in stopping this sort of thing; although if I am in a small minority I will bow to force majeure and let it go through, with the strongest protest of which I am capable.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I oppose the amendment. I cannot see any reason why Mr. Sanderson should not follow me in this, seeing that it is identical with the amendment he previously wanted inserted.

Hon. H. CARSON: I support the Assembly's amendment, but I suggest that the Minister should agree to report progress so that we can have copies of the amendments before us.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Unless the amendment is agreed to, to-night, the Act will cease to have effect. I would have liked this measure made perpetual, but I shall not object to its re-enactment for another 12 months. While I hold that business should be placed before the House in a proper manner, if the exigencies of the case demand it, we should be prepared to deal with the amendments provided they are placed before us clearly.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I agree largely with Mr. Millington. This House has been treated with scant courtesy by the Government. They introduced a Bill on the advice of the Commissioner of Public Health, and it was passed by this House and sent to another place but, at the first breath of hot air, the Government fall down. They remind me very much of the walls of Jericho, which fell at the blast of the trumpet. Still, I cannot see any other course than to agree to the Assembly's amendment, because otherwise the Bill will be lost. The particulars supplied to Mr. Dodd as to the number of females examined after information had been given disclose that something like 30 per cent. were found not to exhibit signs of disease. The reason for this discrepancy is because the detection of venereal disease, and especially of gonorrhœa, is extremely difficult in women, and repeated examinations may be

made of an infected woman and still be negative. That explains the discrepancy between the number examined and the number found positive. Those who gave a negative result might have been equally positive if they had been examined at some other time. This is one of the difficulties of administering such an Act. The particulars supplied do not bear the construction put upon them by Mr. Dodd and other members that these women were not infected. In Egypt, public women are repeatedly examined but, owing to the connivance of the native police, they are often provided with facilities for sterilising themselves immediately before examination, with the result that a great number of those really infected escape detection. Especially is detection difficult in the case of a woman suffering from a chronic form of gonorrhœa, unless repeated examinations are made. My explanation may allay the anxiety that a great injustice was done to those who were examined. After all, what is this compulsory examination? A woman is required to go to a lady doctor or other doctor and be examined. I personally think it is a very small thing. Having entered my protest against the way this House has been treated by the Government, I must, against my inclination, accept the Assembly's amendment.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am quite in sympathy with those members who object to the haste in dealing with these amendments but, if the measure is not re-enacted to-day, a new Bill must be introduced. At the same time, I cannot agree with those who state that the Government have been weak and have given way to agitation in certain directions. That is not correct. The Government feel it is better that this section of the Act should be given a trial for another twelve months rather than that any mistake should be made. The error of the application of the figures quoted by Mr. Stewart has been pointed out by Dr. Saw, but even if the figures would bear the construction implied, the remarks of the hon. member should lead him to support the Assembly's amendment. Mr. Sanderson stressed the point that there are a number of members to be considered.

Hon. A. Sanderson: I never stressed the point.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is only one member to consider, and to meet his convenience I move—

That the Chairman leave the Chair until copies of the amendments are prepared.

The CHAIRMAN: I am prepared to leave the Chair until 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I think the only point we have to consider is whether this measure is to remain in force for only twelve months or to be made perpetual. I am prepared to accept the Assembly's amendment, though I would have preferred the Bill as it left this Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: I will put the motion whether it is the Committee's pleasure that I leave the Chair until 7.30 p.m.

Motion put and negatived.

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

No. 2: Title—Amend the Title by striking out the words "repeal Section fifty-four" and insert in lieu thereof "continue the operation of Section forty-one," and strike out the words "and to make Section forty-one of that Act perpetual":

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—

That the Assembly's amendment be agreed to.

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

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILL—JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time, and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILL—DROVING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 10th September.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [6.3]: I regret that I have not found an opportunity of comparing the existing Droving Act with this Bill. However, I observe that some amendments are now proposed. Under the Bill it will be necessary for a drover to give notice that he is travelling a distance of 20 miles or over with stock. Under the existing Act he can travel 40 miles without giving notice to the holders of the runs he is passing through. Probably the Minister in charge of the Bill will be able to tell us whether this new provision is to apply to a drover travelling a distance of 20 miles along a surveyed road. I can understand the necessity for notice being given to the owner of an adjacent run if a person intends to travel 20 miles through it. But in the South-West of this State farmers travel their stock 20 miles to a monthly market. They travel on surveyed roads, not, as in the North-West, through stations. In the South-West this provision would involve an unnecessary hardship. Nothing can be gained by giving notice to a road board of a man's intention to travel stock over a distance of 20 miles along the surveyed roads. Clause 6 of the Bill, I notice, proposes that a drover shall yard his stock when a yard is available within a reasonable distance. But what is a reasonable distance? Who is to be the judge of a reasonable distance in the case of a mob of sheep and in the case of a mob of cattle? Sheep, for example, can be rounded up on the spot and closely examined, whilst that would be impossible in the case of wild cattle. The provision is not definite. In my opinion, the distance should be specified. A reasonable distance to take a mob of

strong healthy cattle would be an unreasonable one to take a mob of poor, drought-stricken cattle, such as may be seen travelling in the North-West at the present time. It may also be unreasonable to ask a drover to take a mob of very fat cattle away out of his route in order to satisfy some inquisitive station owner. There are one or two clauses of the Bill which make the drover responsible, and liable to fine, if in his herd there should be found stock which do not belong to him, or stock other than that of which he has charge. The imposition of a severe fine in such a case is rather unfair, seeing that notice is given to station owners that a mob is passing through their properties. In such circumstances it is the business of the station owner to remove his stock from the stock route. For the information of hon. members I may mention that in the North the stock routes run right through the pastoral country. Those stock routes represent the only outlet the man out back has for getting his stock to market. They are the great arteries through which the stock flows to market, and every consideration should be shown to the outback owner. I think we should be careful in passing any provision whereby a drover, who is found to have in his mob stock not belonging to him, is rendered liable to a heavy fine. It must be borne in mind that the drover has to notify the owner of the station before he enters it. The owner should then send his men to pilot the drover through the station. The station owner stocks the route all the year, and the feed is eaten off it, with the result that very frequently the drover finds but little feed on it. The station owner's stock are bound to be on the route unless he has taken care to remove them.

Hon. J. Duffell: But he would get them out of the way as the result of the notice given him by the drover.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: He should do so; but if he fails to do so, and they are in consequence picked up in the drover's mob, the drover is, under this Bill, liable to fine.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: What about the drover who is out to pick up strays?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I agree that may occasionally be the case but the drover has to give notice to the owner. Personally I have no time whatever for the drover who is out to try and get away with stock from stations. We should be very careful, however, that hardships are not imposed on men who are found with stray heads of stock in their mobs. A few months ago, whilst in the North-West, I found that the stock routes which drovers are compelled to travel are infested with poison. On one occasion a man travelling down with 5,000 sheep left 1,200 of them on a camp on the Ashburton River in one night, as the result of their feeding through about five miles of poison on the stock route. In my opinion the stock routes should be provided out of the best of the country, in order to give the drovers, and the squatters too, an opportunity of

getting their stock to market in the best possible condition. In existing circumstances it is almost impossible for a drover to deviate around a patch of poison that is on a surveyed route, unless his point of destination is off the stock route; then the Act provides that he may leave the stock route and proceed to his destination. There are one or two amendments which I shall endeavour to secure in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—FRUIT CASES.

Second Reading.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F. Baxter—East) [6.12] in moving the second reading said: At the present time Western Australia is the only State in the Commonwealth which has not an Act in force to regulate the size of fruit cases, and the need of one is plainly recognised by fruit-growers, fruit merchants, and sawmillers. The fruitgrowers at their annual conferences have repeatedly urged that a fruit cases Act should be passed by Parliament standardising the sizes which may be used. After the last conference a letter was sent to me urging the matter very strongly and pointing out the disadvantages under which they suffered owing to the want of such a measure. The fruit merchants would welcome finality in this matter; and the sawmillers, knowing that only standard sizes could be used, would be enabled to meet the requirements of growers much more satisfactorily than is possible at the present time. Under the Commonwealth Commerce Act every case containing fruit for export must be branded with the quantity in bushels, or with the net weight. A case having a cubical content of 2,223 inches, such as the "dump" fruit case in common use, will contain one bushel, or 40 lbs., of fruit, and for export is branded "1 bushel." The intention of the Bill is to provide for authority by regulation to specify the particular sizes of all cases which may be used for fruit. These will be of 1 bushel, $\frac{3}{4}$ bushel, $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel, and $\frac{1}{4}$ bushel capacity, and will have to be branded accordingly. Thus anyone purchasing a case of fruit will be enabled to know exactly what quantity is being bought. At present cases may contain anything from 30 to 40 lbs.; yet each case is called, and is sold as, a case of fruit. Provision is made in the Bill to exempt from its provisions dried, preserved, tinned, or canned fruit; fruit sold by weight or number in quantities under 20 lbs., that is to say the retail trade; berries, small fruits, and soft fruits which require to be placed in punnets, trays, etc.; fruit which is sold by weight to jam makers; fruit sold by weight to wholesale merchants in bulk to be repacked for sale in standard cases; and grapes sold to wineries and distilleries. Provision is made in the Bill for a limited use of secondhand cases, aiming at preventing any danger of

disseminating pests while allowing cases to be used again under certain conditions. The secondhand fruit case, and the question of whether its use should be permitted, have been the cause of heated arguments and much heartburning amongst fruitgrowers for many years. Briefly put, orchardists in districts remote from the main markets prefer to use new cases, and object to any use being made of secondhand cases for fear of disease being spread, while orchardists near Perth and other main centres to which fruit is carted by road prefer, on account of cheapness, to use secondhand cases. The matter was thoroughly discussed from both points of view at the fruitgrowers' conference in May last, and a compromise was arrived at, those present asking that a partial use of secondhand cases be allowed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Clause 1 of the Bill provides that the date of the coming into operation of the Bill must be postponed until a reasonable period has elapsed to allow of present stocks being used up. Twelve months from the date on which the Bill is passed would be sufficient. Clause 3 provides for the use of standard cases for fruit both within the State and for export to places within the Commonwealth. It also exempts dried fruit, etc.; allows of fruit being retailed from shops, etc., without being placed in standard cases; exempts berries and small fruit, for which standard size cases would not be suitable; exempts soft fruits sold in trays, for which standard size cases would not be suitable; exempts grapes delivered to wineries and distilleries. These are usually carried in kerosene boxes or casks and are sold by weight. It provides, if at any time it is found necessary, for the exemption by regulation, of any particular fruit; it provides, if at any time it is found necessary, for the exemption by regulation of any particular case; and it exempts under certain conditions fruit sold by weight to jam makers, etc., and fruit sold by weight to wholesale fruit merchants for packing for sale in standard cases. Provision is also made for the receptacles, crates, etc., which contain punnets, trays, etc., to be branded with the name of the grower and the name of the district in which the grower's orchard is situated. The branding referred to is compulsory for fruit cases under a regulation under the Plant Diseases Act which has been in force since 19th March, 1915, and has worked very satisfactorily. The only additional branding provided under this clause, therefore, is the weight or number. Subclause 2 makes provision for prescribing by regulation what shall be deemed to be preserved, tinned, or canned fruit. Clause 4 provides for the standard sizes for fruit cases to be prescribed by regulation. A committee of the executive council of the Orchardists' League, together with the officer in charge of fruit industries, went carefully into this matter and the sizes and shapes to be recommended

for the various cases were agreed upon. Clause 5 provides for the branding of fruit cases with the name of the grower, the name of the district in which the grower's orchard is situated, the name of the fruit and the standard size to which the case belongs. The only additional branding required in this clause, to that which is already in force under a regulation of the Plant Diseases Act, is "1 bushel," " $\frac{3}{4}$ bushel," etc., as the case may be. The name of the grower being shown on the case has been of great assistance to the department and to the industry in enabling infected fruit to be traced to the orchard where it originated, and steps taken to prevent the dissemination of dangerous pests. The good results obtained in this connection are well recognised by growers, many of whom also desire to brand their names on the cases for the sake of the advertisement it gives to their fruit. The extra work therefore entailed in branding the standard of the case is only a small item. Clause 5 provides that exemption in regard to the branding of the grower's name is allowed for, where mixed cases of fruit are made up by packers (wholesale fruit dealers) for consignment. In such instances the fruit in an individual case might have been produced by several growers, and it would be obviously impracticable to brand the case with all the names. It also provides for the registration of fruit brands which may be used in lieu of the grower's or packer's name. The initials of the growers are to be included in the brand so as to facilitate identification of the case by departmental officers. Clause 6 makes it an offence to wrongly brand a case and makes it an offence to alter the shape, size, or measurement of a case, or in any way to tamper with the brands on a case. Clause 7 provides that new cases only must be used, excepting under the conditions mentioned in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c). Any case except those treated as in (b) and (c) which has once contained fruit and out of which the fruit has been taken, is prohibited under this clause from being carried by rail. This will prevent pests from being carried per medium of second-hand cases from one district to another. The removal or defacement of brands may be taken as evidence that the case is second-hand and the railway officials will refuse to receive those cases for consignment. Paragraph (a) of the same clause provides that second-hand cases may be used as open cases by growers who cart their fruit to market by road. Before being so used, the original grower's name must be removed, and the case re-branded to show the present grower's name, etc. If no provision were made for the use of second-hand cases it would mean that any grower who carted his fruit into town, whether a small country town or a large centre of population, and delivered it, could not legally use the cases over again, even though he had merely removed the fruit from the cases at the time of sale without taking the latter from his convey-

ance. This would be a hardship without any compensating advantage, and as there is little danger of spreading pests in second-hand cases provided these are only circulating in districts within distances which are covered by conveyances on roads, the provision made in this subclause will cheapen the cost to the producer. Paragraph (b) provides that, subject to inspection and treatment, cases, bags, etc., which have been sent forward to jam factories, etc., with fruit may be used again for factory fruit only. The reason for this is that jam fruit is often of second quality and the price of the case is an important item. The matter of having the cases or bags steamed at the factories under supervision of an inspector does not present much difficulty, as steaming facilities would be on the premises. Paragraph (c) provides that the tropical fruit cases, which arrive with bananas, pineapples, etc., from overseas may, after treatment at the fruit sheds at the ports, be used again for these fruits or for vegetables. These cases are largely used at the present time as containers for vegetables, particularly in the North-West trade, and this paragraph allows for a continuance of that use. Subclause 2 of Clause 7 provides that any alterations in branding which may become necessary in accordance with paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) may be allowed under regulation. Clause 8 provides for the registration of occupiers and their agents of jam factories, and of premises where fruit is received in bulk for the purpose of being packed for sale in standard cases. After registration, fruit for these may be sent forward in any case, bag, or other receptacle, provided that it has been bought by weight. Registration is to be for a term of one year, renewable at the end of that term for a further period of one year. Every person so registered is obliged under this clause to keep full particulars of the fruit purchased and produce such particulars to an inspector upon demand. Clause 9 defines the powers of inspectors, and provides that no person shall interfere with an inspector in the discharge of his duties, or refuse any information in answer to any reasonable inquiry. Clause 10 gives power to make regulations, and Clause 11 prescribes penalties. This is only a short measure, but it is a very important one from the fruitgrowers' standpoint and from the point of view of the public generally who, when they go to the market to purchase a case of fruit, should be in the position of knowing what quantity or weight they are getting. At the present time we go to the market and we may be buying 30 lbs. or 40 lbs., but under the Bill, after it comes into operation, the standard case will hold a certain quantity of fruit and there will be no room for unscrupulous dealing. I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [7.45]: This is a Bill to hand over to the Government the control of the

sale of fruit in this country. It seems to me very doubtful whether the fruit will be, so far as the consumer is concerned, any better or cheaper as a result of this. When I say it is to hand over to the Government the control of the sale of fruit, I ask hon. members to look through any clause and see how many regulations there are. Let us take the memorandum—

The standards for fruit cases will be fixed by the Governor by regulations.

I should have thought that the Government would have told us what these sizes are to be instead of taking power under the Bill to prescribe any regulations they like on the subject. Clause 3 says—

Any kind of fruit sold in such cases or in such circumstances as the Governor by regulation exempts.

Subclause 2 says—

The Governor may make regulations prescribing what shall be deemed to be dried, preserved, tinned or canned fruit.

Clause 4 says—

The standards for fruit cases shall be . . . prescribed by regulations.

Clause 5 contains the words "Subject to the regulations," and Clause 7 says, "The prescribed inspection and treatment." Not without reason does my hon. colleague ask what that means. I think it is pretty clear that it means more departmental regulations. Subclause 2 of Clause 7 says, "Provision may be made by regulation." Clause 8, which refers to the registration of factory buyers says, "Any occupier . . . may be registered in the prescribed manner." Here are more Government regulations. Clause 9 refers to the powers of the inspectors. These are very considerable powers. The clause says—

Any inspector or police officer or constable may at any time during the daytime enter upon any land or into any warehouse, store, . . . where fruit is or may reasonably be supposed to be sold, or packed, or kept for sale, carriage or export. . . . No person shall in any way obstruct or interfere with any inspector . . . or refuse to give any information or knowingly give any false information in answer to any reasonable inquiry.

One does not want a very intimate acquaintance with criminal law to know that one of the first things a policeman will do will be to warn any person that he need not answer any questions that are going to incriminate him. Here, however, special power is given to any inspector to ask any question, and the person asked will be fined or struck off the list of fruitgrowers, I suppose, if he refuses to give such information or knowingly gives any false information in regard to any reasonable inquiry. Clause 10 deals with more regulations. It says—

The Governor may make regulations prescribing all such matters and things as this Act requires or permits to be prescribed, or which it may be necessary or

convenient, to prescribe for giving effect to the provisions or objects of the Act. I should like to ask the Minister in charge of the Bill if this is to encourage the fruit-grower, or whether it is for the protection of the public, or both, or either, or neither. I feel satisfied that hard and difficult as is the position of the fruitgrower at present, this is going to make it still more difficult. So far as the consumer is concerned, it will make fruit more expensive.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: Send it to a select committee.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not know whether that would be advisable or not. As one who looks at the fruit industry from the point of view of the prosperity of the country, I should say there are quite enough regulations to do with it already. I am aware that certain associations and certain fruitgrowers are in favour of some such Bill as this, and I can understand these people, for they wish to do what apparently every other section of the community is doing, put their industry under direct Government control. I am beginning to reconsider the position. The motion moved this afternoon goes really in the same direction as this Bill. If I understood the motion aright, it had to do with the sending of a commercial traveller to Java, as from the Government, to open up trade there. We have the wheat pool, the wool pool, the butter pool, and we have the Commonwealth Bank and Commonwealth ships, and we are now going to convert ourselves into a big trading concern. If that is the direction in which things are going generally, it is no doubt very right and proper that the fruit industry should come under this heading and be regulated entirely by the Government departments. I cannot see that it is going to make permanently for the success either of the fruit grower or the consumer of the country from any point of view. It is very difficult for me to see, at all events. If the people in the country are determined to conduct their business affairs in this way the few people who disagree with that point of view will have no chance of getting their views carried out, or have any freedom to deal with these matters. There is the crux of the whole question, whether it is the sale of the timber, or whether it is to send a commercial traveller to Java.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is only under consideration.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The object and tendency of the Bill unquestionably are to place in the hands of the inspectors the control of affairs. That I consider will be bad enough, but it is worse than that, because instead of coming down here and saying, "We are going to have a case six by six or two by two, or any shape or size you like," the Government say, "the standards for fruit cases will be fixed by the Governor by regulations." Let us look into the special departments in this fruit industry and into the special departments for the vegetable industry. Let

us take the potato trade which we all know something about, because the papers have been full with columns of correspondence and we are all interested. Let us ask ourselves whether this Government regulation of the potato trade has been of benefit either to the grower or to the consumer. I have a file on the potato business brought up to date. The Honorary Minister has probably read the letter by Professor Patterson of the University. If I were to pick out one letter from this file, that I would commend to the attention of the public, it would be that letter by Professor Patterson. I say without the slightest hesitation that personally I would reject this Bill on the second reading. Hon. members, however, may have a different view and we may get into committee upon it. If we do get into committee are we going to pass these different clauses on the regulations? We will be interested to hear what Mr. Clarke says on the matter, because he is recognised throughout the State as one who is qualified by experience and intimate knowledge to give an unbiased opinion on the subject. He represents a different section of the community. I am representing the consumer. I am quite positive that the effect of the Bill will be to increase the cost of fruit to the consumer. I do not see what else can be expected. We have to pay the salaries of the officials.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: And the administrative expenses.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Yes.

Hon. J. Cornell: The fines will help to pay them.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The pathetic thing about the matter is that the department is really most anxious to stimulate the fruit-growing industry, and is also anxious to see that the inspectors are paid a reasonable salary. The salaries of these inspectors must come out of the pockets of the consumers.

Hon. H. Stewart: Does not the orchard tax pay them?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I thought the hon. member knew better than that.

Hon. H. Stewart: Perhaps it does.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The hon. member needs enlightenment on the subject.

Hon. H. J. Saunders: I thought you represented a fruit-growing constituency, to a large extent.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The hon. member must be asleep. I represent the Metropolitan-Suburban Province, adjacent to his own. He ought to know better than that. The Metropolitan-Suburban Province contains the consumers of fruit rather than the producers. I also represent those occupiers of premises where fruit is received in bulk for the purpose of being packed for sale, etc. I am in close touch with these people, and I think that they will find that the question of the regulations and registration is going

to seriously affect them to the detriment of their business. I wish to give two illustrations on the question of government by hasty regulation. We know that these regulations are placed on the Table of the House from day to day. I am not pretending that I go through all of them, but I try to look at the headings of these regulations.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: You do not miss many.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Anyone who tried to follow closely the regulations in connection with this fruit business would have a very difficult task. Because they are published in the "Government Gazette," and, in the first place, members of this Council do not get the "Government Gazette" sent to them. Then sometimes these regulations appear when the House is not sitting, and so we do not get them until the House is again in session. Therefore it is very difficult to track them up. All hon. members are placed in the same difficulty, for all are interested in one or another industry, and most of us give up the task of trying to follow the thing closely, until some constituent finds to his surprise that he has been caught by one of these regulations. The best illustration I know of is the sheep-killing regulation, showing how unfair these regulations very often are, both in their object and in the way they are carried through. The Government have abattoirs at Midland and, naturally, want to get all the business they can. Therefore they draw lines as large as they dare around a given area, compelling everyone within that area to send their sheep and pigs into the abattoirs for killing. How have they done it? Not with any great skill or care, but by taking a compass and drawing a radius with Midland Junction as its centre. The result has been that they have included places which, on their own showing ought never to have been included, and so it is uncommonly difficult to get permission to kill a sheep inside that radius, owing to the regulation. I trust that if we do get into Committee the Committee will insist on having something more definite in the Bill instead of a series of clauses providing that the whole control of affairs shall be placed under one Minister, who shall be given a blank cheque to control the industry by means of regulations.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [8.5]: The Bill leaves nothing to talk about except regulations. When a similar Bill was before the House I objected to it, because of the amount of shrinkage that was allowed. It was, I think, $2\frac{1}{2}$ per. cent for green timber. It has since transpired that the average shrinkage of jarrah is five per cent., and of karri nine per cent. However, I am bound to vote for the Bill, because I consulted a number of my constituents in regard to it and they had nothing whatever to say. I asked them for suggestions, but I have not heard a word from them, and therefore I have

no option but to vote for the Bill. The point is that it was some Government official who placed in the Bill the allowance of 2½ per cent. for shrinkage, notwithstanding that in one timber the shrinkage is five per cent. and in another it is nine per cent. It shows what can be done by regulations. However, I think we should pass the Bill and see what happens.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [8.6]: I support the second reading on general principles. In view of the way Mr. Sanderson, backed up by Mr. Clarke, has referred to the Bill, I am somewhat at a loss. A good deal of the opposition to the Bill might be likened to the opposition offered to the three-bushel bag as against the four-bushel. I agree with Mr. Sanderson that too much is left to regulation. The Bill is an authorisation for Government officials to make regulations as they will. We know that the regulations will be laid on the Table, but we do not know when. They may be placed there at the end of the session, in which case nothing can be done to correct them until the beginning of the next session. In the mining industry we have the Mines Regulation Act, which gives us the regulations in the form of an Act of Parliament, to be amended only by Act of Parliament. While I support the second reading, I think we should standardise fruit cases. If we did so it would not increase the cost of production, but rather would tend to decrease it, and would give an assurance to the purchaser of fruit that the case contained a certain quantity of fruit. On those principles alone I support the second reading. But I am afraid that what Mr. Sanderson is after will not be conceded, unless a certain course is taken. At the proper stage Mr. Sanderson should ask to have the Bill referred to a select committee. I am certain that we have amongst us hon. members fully qualified to determine the size of fruit cases. Parliament is the proper body to fix the standard size of cases. This would give to the grower a certain confidence which regulations cannot give, inasmuch as the decision would stand for at least a reasonable time, whereas if left to regulations the standard may be altered at the end of a month or so. I am convinced that the size of the standard case should be set forth in the Bill.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [8.12]: The hon. member has put forward a suggestion which I intended to submit for the consideration of those members interested in the measure. During the past five or six years I have been on numerous deputations relative to the standardisation of fruit cases, the use of second-hand cases, and the method of treatment. Even last session, when the Bill was before the House, a great deal of controversy was going on amongst a big section of the fruit growers, and the merchants and the consumers of the State, respecting this measure. In view of the Bill being a Bill of regulations, something definite should be placed in it before the House commits itself

to handing over to the officials who will administer the measure absolute power to do anything at all under regulation. It is to me surprising that so many regulations are mentioned in the Bill, because if there is one thing more than another that has raised controversy in this House it has been the principle of government by regulation. This measure will give to the officials every power under regulation to do anything they choose. I think Mr. Sanderson was quite right. It is going to cost someone something to administer the Bill. I question very much whether it will be of benefit to anyone in the State. It is very nice to talk about the standardisation of fruit cases and protecting the public so that they shall get the correct weight of fruit, but there are very few consumers who go in for more than a few pounds of fruit at a time. This measure will cost a fair amount to administer. Someone will have to pay for that. We are endeavouring to break down the great number of civil servants, and yet such a measure will involve inspectors roving practically all over the State. In one instance a fee of 7s. 6d. is provided for registration. There are many matters in this measure which affect vitally the small growers in and around the metropolitan area. Consider the provision relating to the use of second-hand cases after treatment. It might cost more to treat a second-hand case than to purchase a new one. Added to that we have the question of the transfer of cases from one orchard to another. A select committee could investigate all these matters, and the importer, the grower, the consumer, and the factories should have an opportunity to voice their opinions. The select committee should be composed of representatives of the districts interested, and, after exhausting all inquiries, they should be able to bring in recommendations on which an acceptable Bill may be framed. I should have no hesitation in voting against the measure but for the expression of opinion by Mr. Clarke, who represents an orchardists' district. That member said that the orchardists desire this measure and I do not wish to cast my vote against them. If the Bill becomes law, they will get all the regulations they desire and, if they get something they do not desire, they will have to accept the responsibility for having asked for a measure which consists of nothing but powers to make regulations. This is not a Bill but merely an authority for the Government to frame regulations to administer something or other in connection with the fruit trade of the State.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.19]: I question whether the Bill is in order. The title is "A Bill for an Act to regulate the size and description of cases used in the sale and export of fruit and for purposes incidental thereto." It requires a big stretch of imagination to connect Clause 8 with the title. Clause 8 of the Bill deals purely with the sale of fruit to factories for the purpose of jam or cordial making, or for treatment according as the factory is de-

signed, and not for the regulation of the size and description of cases for export. Without going further I would like your ruling, Sir, on this point.

The PRESIDENT: I think the clause is in order.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I realise it is necessary to have a standard size for fruit cases. It is necessary that fruit for export should be subjected to inspection.

Hon. A. Sanderson: From the State or Commonwealth?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: From the Commonwealth.

Hon. A. Sanderson: That is in, the Commonwealth regulations.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: If this Bill is referred to a select committee, it should be possible to frame a Bill dealing with the size of fruit cases, which this Bill does not do. On a former occasion, the size and description of cases were stipulated, but they are not set out in this Bill. It is imperative that the dimensions of the cases should be set out in the Bill, so that we shall know what they are. No doubt the fruitgrowers' association have advocated the necessity for a prescribed case, but I doubt whether any association has advocated a Bill such as this. It consists of nothing but provisions for regulations and the prescribing of forms from beginning to end. I shall support the proposal for the appointment of a select committee.

Hon. E. ROSE (South-West) [8.24]: I support the second reading for the reason that the fruitgrowers at conferences held during the last two or three years, they have advocated a standard case. At the Bunbury conference last year, members of Parliament were twitted for having allowed the Bill to be thrown out. I told them that nothing of the sort had been done. A resolution was carried that the Bill be again introduced and members were asked to support it. A copy of the Bill was referred to the executive in Perth by Mr. Clarke and myself. The executive have gone through it carefully and have taken no exception to it. The only thing, I think, to which exception could be taken is that so much is left to regulation. As for the other clauses, they are necessary. There should be a standard case, not only for export, but for local trade. In the other States a standard case has been adopted so that, when fruit is sold, a purchaser knows what weight he is getting. I have seen, in our markets, cases containing only about 30lbs. of fruit sold as 40lbs. and the buyer has been taken in. This Bill has the endorsement of fruitgrowers not only in my province but in the province represented by Mr. Sanderson. It is a very necessary measure, and I hope it will be passed.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [8.26]: The more I have heard of the debate, the more convinced I am that no harm would be done if this Bill were referred to a select committee. I hope that if a select committee is appointed, not only representatives

of the fruitgrowers will be present, but also a representative of the consumers in no way directly or indirectly associated with the fruitgrowers. While we are desirous of doing justice to the fruitgrowers, there are other persons to be considered, namely, the consumers and the general taxpayers. We ought to consider whether this Bill is going to add to the expense of government and, if it is, we ought to know exactly how much that will be. In these days, when the cost of government is considerable and the deficit is growing, every increase, no matter how small, should be worthy of our attention. There is a suggestion that inspectors should be appointed. They may be the police or men occupying other positions, and may not involve any additional expense to the Government. The Minister might tell us whether any appreciable increase in the cost of administration will be involved. The Bill refers to imported fruit. Some of the conditions regarding certain classes of imported fruit are unnecessary. All the bananas consumed in this State are imported. During the second half of 1917, bananas to the value of £9,243 were imported. When bananas and pineapples have been imported in prescribed cases, such cases may, after undergoing inspection and treatment, be used to again contain bananas or pineapples or vegetables. Why should a case, which has contained imported fruit, be required to bear the name of the grower, the district, the name of the fruit, and the quantity? This might prove a serious restriction on the importation of fruit which is not obtainable to any extent locally.

Hon. J. Cornell: Bananas come mostly in bunches.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The Bill as it stands almost requires that they should come in a prescribed case. The measure has a number of features of this kind which might be gone into by a select committee, and I think the suggestion put forward by Mr. Cornell and supported by Mr. Lynn is worthy of consideration. I do not think it would seriously delay the Bill, and I do think it might be instrumental in improving the measure considerably. I certainly support the proposal for the reference of the Bill to a select committee.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [8.31]: When a Bill of a similar nature to this was before the House last session, I voted against it, and I think rightly too, because it contained certain features which entitled the Chamber to reject it. The Bill now introduced eliminates some of those objectionable features, but, notwithstanding that I believe the producers of fruit in this State have expressed a desire that a measure of this nature should be made law, I think they can have hardly recognised the full effect which the Bill would have if it became law; for this reason, that the Bill lays down certain regulations with regard to the size of the case which must be used by the grower, while no obligation whatsoever is

placed upon the man who manufactures the case. Reading the Bill at first sight, one would almost think that the grower of the fruit was the maker of the case. That of course is not so. The grower buys his case from a manufacturer, usually a timber merchant. One of the largest of the manufacturers of fruit cases in this State is the State sawmills. Other sawmills are engaged in the business too, and this Bill aims at penalising the fruitgrower for the possible iniquities of the manufacturers of cases. I venture to say that the growers of fruit have not studied the matter so closely as they should have done. Had that particular point been brought clearly before the fruitgrowers' conference, I think they would have asked for some other protection than they now have in this Bill. In view of the provisions of the measure and the non-protection of the fruitgrower for deficiencies of manufacture on the part of the sawmiller, I feel almost constrained to vote against the measure. I have a desire to assist the fruitgrower in every way I possibly can, not because I am in a small way myself interested in that particular industry, but simply because I know it is a very important industry and one which will become still more important. It is our duty as a Parliament to try to afford the fruitgrowers that protection which is essential for the proper development of the industry. If fruit growers as a whole think that the standardisation of cases will be of advantage to them, let them by all means have a standardised case. But when we come to look at the present position, we find that the fruitgrower is not safeguarded as he should be. True, there may be instances of a case now and again coming into market which does not contain the full bushel, the 40lbs. Fruit sent into the local market is usually contained in either the flat case or the dump case. The dump case is as a rule used for export, and there is a recognised size of dump case for the oversea trade. But this Bill refers to trade within the Commonwealth, and not oversea trade at all. In this connection I refer hon. members to Clause 3. We are now engaged in regulating interstate trade in fruit. As regards fruit coming into the local market for sale, the men who attend the markets are expert enough to know whether a full sized flat case or dump case is presented to them. If they see the case is a short one, they naturally do not offer the same price as for a full sized case. There is no deception in that market as regards the size of case. The man in the market knows at once by how much the case is short. As regards cases sold to private consumers, their number is very small. The short cases coming in are few and far between. Sawmills cut cases to a standard size. If I order a number of fruit cases now, I get cases which are cut to a standard size recognised by the Agricultural Department, and I sell in those cases.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The consumer knows quite well what he is getting.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: As a matter of fact, every sawmiller has a standard laid down for size of cases. There is not really as great need for a standard size of case as one might imagine. I was interested in the point raised by Mr. Duffell. I, of course, accept your ruling, Mr. President, with regard to it. In view of the fact that the sawmiller is the man responsible for providing the case and that the fruitgrower is not responsible, the punishment should be visited upon the sawmiller, who is responsible, and not upon the fruit grower, who is not responsible. But under this Bill the fruit grower has not even the protection which is given in the case of the ordinary milk vendor. If I remember aright, a man who buys milk from a dairy farmer in the country has available as a defence this—if he can prove that the milk which he has sold to the consumer is in the condition in which he received it from the dairy farmer it is a good defence. If the poor fruit grower seeks to put up a defence that the case in which he has sold the fruit is of a size which was sold to him by the sawmiller as a bushel case—though it was afterwards found to be deficient—he will have no remedy, absolutely none. Obviously, therefore, it is necessary that some protection should be afforded to the fruit grower in that connection. There are various points which one might labour in connection with the Bill as it stands, and I support the suggestion that it be referred to a select committee. If it is still the desire of the fruit growers to persevere then, I hope they will for their own sakes see that some proper measure of protection for them is inserted in the Bill.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East) [8.42]: I remember a measure somewhat similar to this one being introduced last session. Apart from the Honorary Minister who introduced the Bill, I was about the only friend it had. On that occasion the experts objected to the Bill because it contained definite proposals. The measure sought to set up a standard size of fruit cases. Mr. Sanderson was highly indignant then that anyone should attempt to say in an Act of Parliament what the size of a fruit case should be; and he indicated that he had certain mysterious information which would altogether explode the estimate on which the Bill was based. Now it seems that the Government have at last learned to understand this House. Instead of bringing in a Bill containing a definite proposal, they bring in a measure of 11 clauses containing ambiguous proposals, though I suppose that somewhere in those 11 clauses there is power to standardise fruit cases. Because the Bill has this lucky bag attribute, hon. members support it. They would not support anything definite for which they would have to take responsibility. They have now decided to leave the standard size of fruit cases to be fixed by the Governor by regulation.

Hon. A. Sanderson: When was that decision arrived at?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Now someone suggests that with the assistance of a select committee something definite could probably be arrived at. But unless the select committee make definite recommendations, we shall have to leave the matter to the Government. I do not know that the fruit growers have so very much confidence in the Government or their experts. Mr. Clarke questions even whether one of the Government experts is an expert. It may be found eventually that the Government will act on the advice of that expert whose knowledge Mr. Clarke questions. In order to be on the safe side Mr. Sanderson might now move that the size of a fruit case shall be such and such, seeing that he has means of getting information from those who know. I should be prepared to support such a proposal because then we should have something definite. There is no need to rush the measure through. Having definitely fixed the standard to be adopted, we would soon find out whether the fruit growers of this State objected to it. If on the other hand we pass the Bill we shall merely leave it to the Governor in Council to fix the size. We must also remember the elasticity of the title which says, "and for purposes incidental thereto." If we pass the Bill we shall have only ourselves to blame if a shower of protests comes from all over the State. It would be preferable to make it definite with regard to the standard size of fruit cases, because to-day one talks of a case of fruit, and that has about as much meaning as a piece of string. I should say the better course would be to follow the lines of the last Bill which had the advantage at least of being different. We would then know what we were passing. If we agree to this Bill, all we do is to hand over power to some other person. We say that what we cannot do, we are confident the Governor in Council can do. I would rather support a Bill which would definitely lay down a standard so far as fruit cases are concerned, and we would soon find out whether we were on the right track, because protests would come in if the standard was not in conformity with the desires of the producers and did not meet with the approval of the consumers. Mr. Sanderson agrees that there should be a standardisation of cases and if he moves that we take the responsibility of standardising fruit cases, I am prepared to assist him. Under the Bill we are saying we are not prepared to deal with the matter, and if we continue on that course there will be no end of dissatisfaction. We shall be placing the responsibility on the shoulders of the Government, and we know what that will mean. If the responsibility is on the shoulders of the expert, Mr. Clarke knows what that means. I am prepared to take my share of the responsibility and definitely fix by amendment in committee the standard size of fruit cases.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [8.48]: As a representative of a fruit-growing district, I sent the Bill to the Mt. Barker Fruit Growers' Association, and asked them if they would mark anything in it to which they objected, or in regard to which they had suggestions to make in the direction of effecting improvements. They replied that they thought the Bill was satisfactory. They did say with regard to Clause 5 that it was not necessary to brand the cases three-quarters, half, and one-quarter bushels, because they thought that anyone would know the difference between the cases.

Hon. A. Sanderson: What did they say about the size of the cases?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: They did not mention that. Personally, I think it should be stated definitely in the Bill what the size of the case should be, and I agree with Mr. Nicholson that the men who supply those cases are the men who should be held responsible and not the packer or the grower. I am not enamoured of the idea of having too much done by regulation. I cannot help thinking of the terrible mistakes that have been made in this State, in the Lands Department, for instance, by reason of allowing too much to be done by regulation. It was only to-day that I heard that under a regulation the Lands Department have instructed half a dozen gangs of surveyors to proceed to the South-West to survey a karri forest; I presume to ringbark it. I have also been informed that the same responsible person some years ago spent £75,000 in surveying country, in the same locality, and to-day the survey marks are covered by growth and it is difficult to find them.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about Denmark?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: That is another example of what I am saying is the result of administration by regulation. Another objection to allowing too much to be done by regulation is that the regulations are continually being altered. Officers are dismissed or are moved from one position to another and every new officer who comes along has a different idea. I am afraid unless we stipulate the size of fruit cases we shall have different sizes every year.

Hon. J. Millington: Every time we get a new Government.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Or a change of officers. I am in favour of the Bill on principle. I believe that it will prove good in the interests of the consumer, more so than in the interests of the grower, although the branding of fruit cases will be a grand thing for the man who grows good fruit and a bad thing for the man who sells inferior fruit. A great deal of the opposition that has been offered to this measure has come from people who have been selling inferior fruit and by vendors in the city who have been selling light weight cases. If one takes the trouble to look at the ordinary fruit cases in the markets, he will see quite a number of cases below the ordinary size, but the existing standard size of a case of fruit has

just about as much meaning, as Mr. Mil-
lington put it, as a piece of string. I think
the Bill will have a good effect if we only
embody in it the standard size that cases
shall be and also see that the timber cut-
ters are compelled to cut cases to a standard
size.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What size should the
case be?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I will tell the hon.
member when the time comes.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [8.55]:
I have no desire to cover the ground that
has been traversed by other hon. members.
I am in accord with the view that has been
expressed that the Bill is not sufficiently
definite. I was much struck last year in find-
ing that in New South Wales and Victoria
the measures in connection with the building
of silos for the bulk handling of wheat were
small things of about six clauses which were
contained in one octavo page. It seems as
though they practically left all the detail
work to the department. Here in Western
Australia we are feeling our way, and with
all due deference to the officers of the de-
partment, who are entrusted with the carry-
ing out of this work, we have no desire that
the producers should risk inconveniences
through variations in regulations while the
officials are tentatively seeking the best
means of assisting the industry. Therefore, I
consider that doing too much by way of re-
gulation is an improper procedure. I quite
realise the necessity for standardised fruit
cases. We have a standard case for apples
for export from the Commonwealth fixed
by the Commonwealth Government, and
that case everyone knows contains a fixed
quantity and weight, and a packer can easily
tell that it contains a certain number of
apples of the size stated. The greatest safe-
guard to the consumer and also to the pro-
ducer is in the information which has to
be stencilled on the case. The man who has
a good article to sell knows that it will com-
mand a satisfactory price provided it is car-
ried without damage, but the man who en-
deavours to dispose of an inferior article is
soon marked, and his produce fails to realise
the price that he would like to see it fetch.
I supported the last Bill but not in its en-
tirety. There is undoubtedly the necessity
for standardised cases. So far as the officers
of the department are concerned, although
they may have a knowledge of or-
chard work, their knowledge has not
been such as to enable them to be-
come successful orchardists, and I fail
to see that the experience and knowledge
which they possess will enable them to bring
into operation regulations which will be sat-
isfactory. My colleagues (Mr. Greig and Mr.
MacKenzie) and I represent one of the best
fruit growing districts in the State, the Mt.
Barker district, where the fruit growers have
not found anything to object to in connec-
tion with this Bill. That, however, does not
satisfy me that we should leave too much to
be done by regulation. I can call to mind

the orchard tax which was brought in at
the request of fruit growers in order to pay
the cost of inspectors, who were employed to
see that the orchards were kept clean.
That tax was not in operation long
before there was a call for its with-
drawal. The orchardists as a whole
to-day are very sorry that they asked for
the imposition of that tax, and I think if
this Bill goes through in the form it is in,
and if the orchardists know as much as we
do about regulations which are brought into
operation, they will then be very sorry that
they raised no objection to the Bill
in its present form. I believe, how-
ever, that we can amend this Bill and that we
can evolve from it a useful measure. Be-
cause of that I intend to support the second
reading. The provision of the standardised
cases, and, in general, the provisions of the
Bill will not protect the general consumer.
The wholesaler and retailer are the men who
handle the stuff in the cases that are mar-
keted, and not the consumer. The consumer
generally looks after himself as to the quality
when he buys in small lots from the retailer.
I think this provision will do very little for
the consumer, and that the retailer can pretty
well look after himself.

The HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. C. F.
Baxter—East—in reply) [9.1]: There has
been a great deal of criticism of this mea-
sure, on the supposition that the Government
will cause an extra price to be paid for the
fruit. That is not the position. There might
be a little extra cost for the inspection staff,
but I do not think that any more
work will be entailed under this Bill
than has been the case in the past.
Those who say that there is going to be a
greater cost for the branding of cases have
not quite grasped the situation. Under the
Plant Diseases Act the case has to be branded
with the full brand, according to the Act,
with the exception of the weight contained
therein or the number. That extra brand
will not make any difference to the cost of
the fruit in the cases. Speaking as to the
size of cases, Mr. Nicholson says that it is
quite competent for anyone to go to the
market and see whether they are of full size
or not. People who say that are far better
judges than I am. At times even the expert
buyer is doubtful as to the size of a case,
even when the cases are standing side by
side on the travelling rack on which it is
offered for sale. It is a difficult matter to
say whether a case is an inch or one and a
half inches short of the size that it should be.
The careful housewife always attempts to
buy a case of fruit.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Many of
them will not buy, however, because they are
not sure of the weight they are getting. We
know that in the fruit trade we have a num-
ber of foreigners, and it is known that the
practice amongst a large section of that com-
munity is to cut the cases down and make
them smaller. The Government feel that

they should do something to protect the consumer in the circumstances. As to the fixing of the standard case by Parliament, we should be taking on a fairly large order if we did that.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who is to fix it if Parliament does not?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Mr. Duffell this afternoon spoke about the fresh markets that we should go to. If we look for fresh markets we must be prepared to send cases of sizes to suit those markets. Even at the fruitgrowers' conference which was held at Tasmania, where the whole of the fruitgrowers of Australia were represented, the delegates could come to no decision as to the standard size for a fruit case.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: And who is to do that here?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The only way it can be done is by regulation, framed by expert officers of the department in touch with representatives of the orchardists.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You will not accept your experts' advice.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Reference has been made to the experts and their dealings with the regulations. For the benefit of hon. members who have not a knowledge of the position I would say that the experts have not got complete control of the regulations. It is a matter for the Governor to agree to. All the regulations go through the Governor's hands before they are gazetted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Who advises the Governor?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The experts advise the Governor. If they did not do that there would be no need for them in our Government departments.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is too thin.

Hon. J. Nicholson: How many representatives of Cabinet are experts in this direction?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We have to take the advice of our experts. The matter goes through the hands of the Ministers and through the hands of the Governor, and every check that is necessary is made. Mistakes do occur in every commercial enterprise besides the Government departments. In the event of a mistake occurring I would point out that the regulations are laid on the Table of the House and can be disallowed.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: I expect there is an expert in the Ministry to check the experts of the department.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no such suggestion. Members have suggested that the Bill should be referred to a select committee. I would welcome that, and possibly as a result we might get a better working measure than we have before us at present. If it is the desire of hon. members I will fall in with their wishes in that respect.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Select Committee appointed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [9.5]: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee consisting of the Hons. E. M. Clarke, J. A. Greig, H. Millington, and A. Sanderson, with power to call for persons, papers, and records, to adjourn from place to place and to report on Tuesday, 21st October.

Question put and passed.

BILL—KALGOORLIE FRIENDLY SOCIETIES INVESTMENT VALIDATION.

Second Reading.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East) [9.10] in moving the second reading said: This Bill was introduced by a private member in another place. It has been recommended by the Registrar of Friendly Societies, and also by the Minister in charge of that department. I will set out the circumstances which have rendered necessary the introduction of the measure and its enactment desirable. The Kalgoorlie friendly society is a body comprising representatives of the various societies operating in Kalgoorlie. The chief object of the Friendly Societies Association is to provide medical attendance and medicine for members of the various organisations in the district. For a number of years in Kalgoorlie the Friendly Societies Association has been established, and until 1914 it had an agreement with a local chemist to provide medicine at a certain standard rate to all members of the affiliated organisations or societies. In 1914 the Friendly Societies Association, acting with the consent of the affiliated societies, entered into negotiations for the purchase of a chemist's business, and to take an option over the business of M. Kelly in Hannan-street, Kalgoorlie. The company was then formed to take over the option. It comprised 2,500 shares of £1, and the shares were only issued to affiliated branches and members of such branches. That is in addition to those taken by the Friendly Societies Association. The purchase price of the business was £1,600 or, with interest, £1,750. The actual cash paid from share capital towards the purchase of the business by the Friendly Societies Association was £120, and the other shareholders have paid £680. That is out of a total of £1,750, the actual cost of the business. The balance of the purchase money has been paid since 1914 out of the profits that have accrued from the business. So no complaints can be made that the transaction was not successful from a business point of view. It may be contended that undue profits have been made from this business, whereas it was entered into for the purpose, not of making profits, but of protecting members by securing to them their medicine at pre-war rates. In order to show that no undue charge has been made, but that members themselves have had the advantage of normal prices, I may say that although the prices of drugs have been increased dur-

ing the war period by from 100 to 500 per cent.; the drugs have been supplied to all members of the Friendly Societies Association at the rates ruling prior to 1914.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: They must have been making enormous profits at that time.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The Bill is for the purpose of validating the investment made by the Friendly Societies Association. Under the Friendly Societies Act it would have been lawful for the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association to have entered into a business of this description if they could have purchased it outright. There are precedents in this State. The Perth Friendly Societies Association have a chemist's business. So, too, have the Friendly Societies Association of Boulder. The difficulty that has arisen in this case is that the Friendly Societies Association at Kalgoorlie had not sufficient money to purchase the business outright and therefore they had to call on members of friendly societies affiliated with them to take shares to the extent of £680. For some time the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association and the registrar exchanged correspondence on this subject. The registrar is of opinion that the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association acted illegally in combining with others to purchase a business, whereas they would have been justified in purchasing it outright. The registrar has suggested the passage of the Bill as a way out of the difficulty. The Government have no objection to the Bill. It has been introduced by a private member merely because the Government think that course preferable. No one has any interest in this chemist's business beyond the members of the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association in which, I may add, there are seven lodges. All the lodges operating in that town are affiliated and others still to come will have an opportunity of affiliating. In another place the Attorney General said that he had no objection to the Bill, and that he considered it was necessary to validate the investment made by the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [9.22]: I second the motion. Neither here nor in another place has any effort been made to hide anything in connection with the Bill. The whole of the facts have been placed before hon. members, who, indeed, could not ask for a better guarantee than that the Attorney General is perfectly satisfied with the Bill. The purchase of the chemist's business was made under the misapprehension that it was perfectly legitimate. That was about five years ago. After it had been pointed out by the registrar that there was a doubt as to the legality of the transaction it was decided to have a special Bill passed. Assuming that the Chamber did not desire to fall into line with the Government and with the registrar and the friendly societies, what would happen? There would be something in the nature of a mimic war. The friendly societies, having carried on the bus-

iness for five years under a misapprehension, would have to continue to carry on illegally.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill validates past and future investments.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Millington has pointed out that there are seven lodges affiliated with the Kalgoorlie Friendly Societies Association and that new lodges may be formed, in which event those lodges will be entitled to affiliate. I understand that a petition has been circulated by the Pharmaceutical Society protesting not so much against the Bill as against any extension of the precedent. I am closely connected with Kalgoorlie and with Boulder, yet I have never heard a single protest from any local chemist. The Pharmaceutical Society have a right to protest, but I take it they are protesting not so much against the Bill as against any extension of the precedent, which, of course, would have to be considered on its merits.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill provides for an extension.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Only in the way of further shareholders, in the form of new lodges. That, of course, is only right, for we do not want a close corporation for existing societies. For years past the friendly societies in Perth and in Boulder have had their own dispensaries. In the case of Kalgoorlie the funds would not permit of the association purchasing the business outright. Seeing that the friendly societies have carried on during the period of the war on the basis of pre-war rates, they are worthy of the favourable consideration of this House.

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

House adjourned at 9.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 30th September, 1919.

| | PAGE |
|--|----------|
| Questions: Potato restrictions | 675 |
| Salt Works employees | 675 |
| Butter and Bacon factories, assistance ... | 675 |
| Soldier Settlement, Northern districts ... | 675 |
| Assent to Bill | 675 |
| Bills: Health Act Amendment | 675 |
| Crown Suits Act Amendment, returned from Council | 700 |
| General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Amendment, returned from Council | 700 |
| Justices Act Amendment, returned from Council | 700 |
| State Children Act Amendment, Council's Message | 700 |
| Health Act Amendment, Council's Message ... | 700 |
| Prices Regulation, 2nd, Com. stage | 675, 700 |
| Traffic Com. | 700 |

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