

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE**  
(Hon. F. J. S. Wise—Gascoyne—in reply)  
[10.53]: The Leader of the Opposition has just suggested that since I am a member of a country constituency, I should understand the requirements of country school children. I would like to stress that point by saying that the distance between two schools in my electorate is 204 miles and there are many difficulties of transport.

Hon. C. G. Latham: Is that between Carnarvon and Yankee Town.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:**  
No, that is between Carnarvon and Shark Bay; so I fully appreciate the difficulties confronting country children. Most of the points raised to-night represent simply a matter of money.

The Premier: That is no trouble at all.

**THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION:**  
And however easy the attaining of money may be so will be the answering of their desires. It is not a question of what we wish to do, but simply what we are able to do. The member for North-East Fremantle (Mr. Tonkin) said that we cannot afford not to do it. But the fact remains that within the best of our financial capacity we cannot afford to do it. In connection with minor matters such as power points for wireless, I should like to advise members that if they will let me know where their parents and citizens' associations have made available to the schools wireless installations, I am sure the Premier will agree that the points for the coupling of those services will be provided. We desire to assist parents and citizens' associations in those directions where they exhibit such interest to further the education of the children. I should like to refer to one point mentioned by the member for Mt. Marshall, and to stress the fact that the Government are neither unaware of the conditions in the country nor unsympathetic to the children concerned. It was the present Government that instituted the payment of a bicycle allowance to children in country districts. We are quite aware of the conditions obtaining, and everything that can possibly be done to afford facilities for children to reach the schools is being done. I suggest to the member for Murchison that if he writes to the department on the requirements where there are eight children, no doubt a teacher will be supplied for an assisted school. I have listened attentively to the speeches of members, and will consider

the matters mentioned by them, and where they are within the compass of the Treasurer's supplies, their requests will be attended to.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Police, £226,805—agreed to.

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported.

*House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 20th November, 1935.*

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

### BILL—LOTTERIES (CONTROL) CONTINUANCE.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**HON. G. W. MILES** (North) [4.35]: I support the second reading, and am glad the Government are renewing the measure for one year only. I understand that the Lotteries Act was brought into force to control gambling, and to a certain extent it has done so. It was also supposed to control street collections, but these go on almost as badly as ever.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You are exaggerating.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The hon. member is not in Perth very often. Nearly every week some collections are taken up in the streets of Perth.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I do not think the Act was designed to control street collections.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Hospitals Act was, but the collections go on just the same. The Government should bring down regulations to restrict the number of street collections. I never advise anyone to buy a ticket in a lottery, attend a horse race, or buy shares. These are practically the only vices I have not got.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You must have lots of others.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That may be so. It is impossible to stop gambling, but the State lotteries constitute a form of control. The commission paid for the sale of tickets is too high. A rate of 5 per cent. would be sufficient. I do not think the reduced amount would make any difference to the sale of tickets. People will still go on gambling when the lotteries are advertised, and will buy their tickets. I do not know whether the Government would advise the Lotteries Commission on this subject, but it seems to me that 10 per cent. is too high a commission to pay. In most cases the business constitutes a side-line. Tobacconists and other shopkeepers sell these tickets, and I do not think a reduced rate of commission would affect sales. Mr. Clydesdale referred to money being devoted to the building of a hospital if the Act were extended for a period of three years. I think that money could be arranged for now. A sum of £20,000 a year could well come out of the fund for the building of a hospital in the metropolitan area. The whole State would benefit by the provision of decent hospital accommodation. The Commission have £50,000 to distribute to other hospitals and charities in Western Australia. I support the second reading.

**HON. C. H. WITTENOOM** (South-East) [4.40]: I support the second reading, and congratulate not only the present Commission but the previous Commission on having given every satisfaction. I have not forgotten the state of affairs that existed prior to the passing of the Act. We used to hear all kinds of rumours about scandals connected with lotteries and sweeps.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There was reason for them all right.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: There is no doubt about that. Since the Act came into

force there has been no suspicion of a scandal. Nothing is going to stop gambling amongst Australians. Apparently it is in the blood. It does not matter whether they are elderly or young people, they all seem to be tied more or less to gambling, and are particularly fond of it. If they cannot gamble in one way, they will in another. If we cannot stamp out gambling, the best thing to do is to allow it to take place in the least harmful manner. At all events, we can allow it to go on in a way that will at least achieve some good. It is questionable whether this sort of gambling does very much harm from the pecuniary point of view. Very seldom does a person buy many tickets in a lottery. I suppose a man with only a fair income would only buy one ticket. That is nothing compared with the amount the average man would spend on horseracing and other forms of gambling.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Or on beer.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: Not many people spend as little as half a crown on a horse-race, and bookmakers would be surprised if they were asked to take a bet for that amount. This form of gambling does not do the average man much harm. Widows and orphans have been referred to, as well as the wives of men on low wages. I think as a rule such people would only put into a lottery about half a crown a month.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: If they stopped at 2s. 6d., not much harm would be done.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: I do not think many people buy more than one ticket. I am opposed to extending the Act for three years. It is all right to allow it to continue from year to year. I cannot see that any good object would be achieved by extending it for a longer term. If the Act comes up for review from year to year, it will mean that we shall have something in the nature of a compulsory debate. We had a debate for several hours yesterday, and have resumed the debate this afternoon. In Western Australia a State lottery is a comparatively new form of gambling. I am wholly in favour of continuing the Act only for one year because as time goes on we may get new ideas from the experience we have gained. Members of this Chamber do not see eye to eye on this matter. Most of us have

had some experience of the old form of lottery or sweep that was permitted before the present Act came into force. We can recollect that the cost of running these sweeps was claimed to be somewhere between 30 and 50 per cent. of the proceeds. We know that the Government have refused in the past to grant any refund of taxation in respect of entertainments when the expenses have been more than 50 per cent. of the receipts. Of course anything of the sort would be utterly absurd applied to the lotteries. It has to be recognised that, comparatively speaking, the costs of the Commission's activities are low and represent about 15 per cent., which includes the 10 per cent. commission paid to the sellers of tickets. I am entirely opposed to reducing the commission to agents. Certainly some have earned large amounts, but surely that has been due to their energy, the work they have put into it, and the business methods they have adopted. I do not think the agents should be prevented from advertising. The high rate of commission was paid to them to enable them to go in for advertising.

Hon. L. Craig: Why should they advertise?

Hon. W. J. Mann: Why should Boans advertise?

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: If the agents did not advertise, there would not be so many tickets sold, and then there would be less money for the hospitals.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: We should not exploit the weaknesses of the people.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: At the same time, if we do not advertise, there will not be so much money available for our hospitals and charitable institutions. It was suggested during the debate yesterday that while some agents received large sums in commission, others did not earn the basic wage. I think that very few of the people who sell small parcels of tickets look upon the transaction as other than a side line.

Hon. L. Craig: That is what it is supposed to be.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: Very few of the agents regard the sale of tickets as their means of livelihood. In my opinion the objective before us in agreeing to legislation regarding the lotteries is being achieved. We country members, who tour the outer areas more than city people do, appreciate what good has resulted from the operations

of the Lotteries Commission. Hospitals have been helped in many directions and X-ray plants have been provided that otherwise could not have been procured. Then, again, the various charitable homes and other movements have been assisted greatly. Yesterday Mr. Thomson commented on the proposal that £20,000 should be handed over for the erection of a hospital, and criticised the idea. I agree with his remarks. The local governing authorities in and around the metropolitan area should be expected to subscribe something towards the cost of such an institution in the city. While something has been done for country hospitals, the procedure adopted in that respect should apply to the metropolitan area as well. When we have asked for financial assistance, we have received small amounts, and it has generally been suggested that we should ask the local people to subscribe a like amount. I support the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. W. J. MANN** (South-West) [4.50]: I intend to support the Bill. During the last two days we have heard much criticism regarding lotteries generally and the methods employed by certain people who have been making a lot of money. After all, that is quite natural. When a man begins to make a success of his business, there are usually other people who become envious and say all manner of things about him, some of the remarks being often far from the truth. I have no brief for those persons who are making money out of the lotteries, and I refer to one individual in particular. Nevertheless, we must be fair and give credit where it is due. If I had my way, the man who has been making most out of the lotteries would not be allowed to have a permit to sell tickets. At the same time, I must recognise him as a good business man. While I do not altogether admire some of his methods, I must give him credit for the most lucrative business he has built up. To criticise the position regarding all agents simply because one man, or half-a-dozen men, have been making a lot of money, is not quite fair. Mr. Clydesdale dealt effectively with that phase of the problem yesterday. I went a little further to-day in that respect. I have investigated the position in Hay-street and learnt that between Milligan-street and just east of Pier-street there are 27 persons who hold permits entitling them to sell lottery tickets. Out of that number six only are making more than

5s. a week or £1 per month. Who can cavil at that? Who can say that the commissioners are too exacting in their requirements? I understand from some of those who have been earning less than £1 a month that, rather than return a book with two or three tickets unsold, they purchase them themselves and so hand in a full book. I am also given to understand that unless an agent sells a complete book during the month, the Commission give him to understand that it is hardly worth while his continuing. That is because a certain amount of bookkeeping has to be carried out, and it is hardly worth while regarding those who sell a mere handful of tickets. Probably there has been some criticism from people who have purchased lottery tickets but have not won a prize. I believe one man indicated recently that he would withdraw his patronage because too many prizes were going to purchasers in the Eastern States. Criticism of that description is absurd. People in this State are very glad to win prizes in lotteries carried out in the Eastern States, and the more the merrier. If people in the East subscribe to our lotteries, good luck to them if they are successful in winning prizes. Criticism has also been voiced with regard to the money spent on newspaper advertising. Members smile when I say that, but I contend that not half enough is spent in that direction. The latest lottery for which we have the finalised accounts, No. 32, shows that the total revenue amounted to £16,598, quite a respectable sum, and of that amount a paltry £169 was spent on newspaper advertising.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Right throughout the State.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is so.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It isn't fair!

Hon. W. J. MANN: Of course it is not; it ought to be much more. Members will see that there is nothing to complain about in that expenditure. What would happen if the lotteries were not advertised? Quite a lot of business would go elsewhere. Irrespective of that phase, if the Commission did not make a success of the lotteries, they would be blamed. Surely we must give them credit when, by judicious advertising, they can build up the sweeps to the point of success that has been obtained for some time past. I think that disposes very effectively of the complaint that money has been wasted in advertising in the newspapers. There is one form of advertising, however,

on which I suggest the Commission should keep their attention focussed. I refer to what has been done occasionally by certain agents, who claim to have sold tickets they did not dispose of at all. Thereby those agents gull the more superstitious of the investing public. I believe the Commission have taken heed of complaints received along those lines. My suggestion is that any man who would descend to such tactics should have his permit withdrawn.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: You have told us what the Commission have spent on newspaper advertising, but what has been spent by the agents in that direction?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I cannot say; that is their own business. Every wise man advertises. Even solicitors place their names at the bottom of advertisements, but they make someone else pay for them.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: But the solicitors also charge the clients for allowing their names to appear at the bottom of such advertisements.

Hon. W. J. MANN: And that lends an air of respectability to both parties. As to the commission paid to agents, I am given to understand that it is on much the same basis as that operating elsewhere, and therefore there is not much to complain of in that respect. When it comes to a matter of securing £100 a week in commission from a sweep, I do not know what can be done in that regard, unless the Commission were to decide that one man could purchase a given quantity of tickets only.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That would never do.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Such a proposal would give rise to much debate, but I think that is the only way that position could be dealt with.

Member: Unless the Commission opened shops themselves.

Hon. W. J. MANN: And we do not want that. During the past year the Commission have carried out excellent work. One step they took was highly commendable. I refer to the prohibition on the sale of quarter and half-share tickets. The sale of those part tickets was becoming quite a menace and I am glad the Commission adopted a firm stand on the matter. Here again I believe that some quick-witted gentlemen have an idea of starting clubs or some other activity to overcome the difficulty. Naturally I presume someone will make an attempt to circumvent the regulations, but I feel sure that

the Commission will be able to meet that position when it arises, and perhaps decree that one person only shall be able to purchase a ticket and one person alone shall be permitted to collect any prize won in his name. I agree with some of the speakers who said yesterday that something should be done in the way of reaping a little revenue from some of those starting price shop keepers. The State gets a lot of revenue from the registered bookmakers, and those other persons who are a menace should be made to contribute something towards the revenue. We should have some legislation to tune them up and compel them to contribute straight out and not through the Police Court.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: The magistrate trims them up every week.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, but there are complaints from them that some enjoy a little more immunity than others. I know that the question of State control of gambling and betting is not a very popular subject, but I believe the time is rapidly approaching when we shall have to take some action in the direction of control. The best phase of the lotteries, and I think everyone will agree with me, is the fact that they are forcing a lot of people to contribute to charity, people who never contributed before. There are tens of thousands of people in the State who never would do anything in the way of straight-out giving, but who through the lotteries are assisting charities. For that reason alone we can commend every lottery. The proportion of money that is handed back to those who are fortunate to win prizes is not as much as I would like it to be. It could be larger, but I am given to understand that that percentage is much the same as the amount paid in the Eastern States. If that be the case then we have no complaint to make. I intend to support the second reading of the Bill.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [5.3]: I do not intend to oppose the Bill, but I think we are liable to lose sight of the objective Parliament had when this legislation was first introduced. As I understand it the objective was to absorb the money being used for gambling purposes in this State, rather than let it go somewhere else. It seems to me that to-day we are making a business of this, and that I think is wrong. It was never the intention of

Parliament that the Government should make a business of gambling. I agree that the lotteries are doing very good work in the way of providing large sums of money for hospitals and other charities, but it seems to me wrong in principle that we should broadcast at picture shows and in the newspapers that tickets are available for sale. I am not objecting to the actual money spent on advertising, but I am objecting to the inducements that are offered to the public to purchase lottery tickets. The same thing applies to the commission that is paid. I am not objecting to the amount of money spent in this way, but to the amount that is paid which enables the agents to advertise widely and so induce people to take tickets in the lotteries. We ought not to do that. I admit it is necessary to conduct the lotteries, but the original objective should be adhered to, and that is that there should be an office or offices where the tickets could be purchased. Then if it were known where it was possible to buy the tickets we could leave it at that. It seems wrong to me that the Government should compete, as they are competing, with starting price bookmakers in the business of gambling. That is not very dignified, and it is certainly wrong to have innumerable agents scattered throughout the country making a living out of the sale of lottery tickets.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: They are not making a living out of it or anything like it.

Hon. G. Fraser: And it is only in the country where they are doing that.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is part of their livelihood.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: All the other States are doing it.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I understand that in New South Wales, at any rate in the metropolitan area, no commission at all is paid.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: There is no necessity to pay commission there.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They have the population.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is all rubbish. If they can conduct lotteries in New South Wales without paying commission, we should be able to do the same here. I admit we have not the population, nor are our lotteries as big as those of New South Wales.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: There are queues waiting all day long to buy tickets at the lotteries office.

Hon. L. CRAIG: If the head office of our lotteries were, say, in central Hay-street I have no doubt the sale of tickets would increase tenfold.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And what would the rent of the premises be?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Perhaps twice what is being paid now.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Ten times as much.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: We tried Hay-street.

Hon. L. CRAIG: If there were a main office in Hay-street we should soon see what would happen. At least, that is my opinion. I repeat that I am not objecting to the principle of lotteries. I know that lotteries have to be conducted, and I think they are being conducted on right lines except that we are entering into the business of gambling, which is *infra dig.* for the Government to do. I shall not vote to throw out the Bill, but I think the Government should be careful as to the type of business they enter upon. I repeat it is undignified for the Government to encourage gambling.

Hon. G. Fraser: The people do not require much encouragement.

**HON. J. J. HOLMES** (North) [5.9]: So much has been said on the Bill that very little remains to be added. We have had a lot of conflicting ideas. The first chairman was Mr. Clydesdale who established the business on sound lines. It is one thing to establish a business, and quite a simple matter to carry it on. When the lotteries were first established we were told by the Government that without Mr. Clydesdale the lotteries would not succeed. Yesterday the Honorary Minister said, "We have a new chairman, the ideal man, whose appointment met with public approval." As far as I understand the Lotteries Commission was established to curtail and control gambling, and yet we find that since its establishment the public of this State have subscribed no less a sum than £600,000. How much have they had back?

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: How much have they contributed to charities?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: An amount of £240,000 has gone to charities, and that

would leave £360,000. Some of this has gone into prize money, some in advertising, while some has gone also in the payment of commission, and some goodness knows where.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And instead of the money going to the East it remains here now.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The point is that the object was to curtail and control gambling, and yet we have the statement of the former chairman of the Commission that it was necessary to advertise and to advertise freely, because as soon as they curtailed the advertisements the sale of tickets fell off. If the main object of the Lotteries Act had been adhered to, the members of the Commission would have cut out advertising altogether, and in that way carried out the desire that Parliament and the country had, and that was to suppress gambling. There is really a funny side to it when the former chairman states "We had to advertise to push the sale of tickets." We are told that the agents get £1,500 out of every lottery.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And it is badly wanted by some of them too.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Every time I pass that big office occupied by the Lotteries Commission in St. George's-terrace I imagine that no corporation excepting one like the Swan Brewery Company, which occupied it before the Lotteries Commission, should be in possession of it. Every time I pass there—and I do so twice a day—I am annoyed to think that the three commissioners and their staff should occupy such expensive premises.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: The cheapest in the city.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the Lotteries Commission are not going to sell tickets at their office, a room upstairs anywhere else would be good enough for them.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You have no idea of what takes place.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: A room upstairs for the commissioners at £1 or so a week where they could allocate the proceeds of the lotteries—because that is all it amounts to—would be quite good enough.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And what about the staff?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They could be there too. The Lotteries Commission could rent a whole flat in some of the new build-

ings about Perth for a few pounds a week and there would be accommodation for all.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: They pay £11 a week for those offices, the cheapest in the city.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We had a statement from the ex-chairman that an office was opened in Hay-street for the selling of tickets and a failure was made of it. Now he wants to question my business capacity and my knowledge of these matters. It is not surprising to learn that the Commission, in their out-of-the-way premises in St. George's-terrace, sell so small a number of tickets. When I was in New South Wales years ago, a lottery had been established by, I think, Mr. Lang. Bad and all as he is reported to have been, he made the public come to his office to buy the tickets, and he did not pay any commission on sales. I have seen the people on Saturday mornings streaming into the Government offices to purchase tickets. Mr. Lang said, "The public provide the money; let them come and buy the tickets. We are not going to send out agents, or advertise, to lead the public on to buy tickets."

Hon. T. Moore: Did not he have agents in this State?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is only one other point I wish to deal with—the three-years period. It is suggested that the Commission should be allowed to carry on for a further period of three years instead of one year. I know from expressions of opinion given in this Chamber last year, and also from the Conference between Houses of which I was a member, that the Government would be well advised to continue the system from year to year and not try a three-years period. I do not think either the country or this House wants the latter. Mr. Clydesdale told us yesterday that £70,000 a year is distributed by the Commission at its own discretion. A Commission of that description, distributing to the public £70,000 annually at its own discretion—

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: I said, subject to conference with the Minister. I qualified it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Even subject to conference with the Minister—and I understood the Minister has nothing to do with it—

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: The Act provides for the Minister to be consulted.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: In the circumstances I do not think it is asking too much that the measure should come up for consideration each year. Without casting any reflection upon anyone, least of all on the ex-chairman of the Commission or the present commissioners—some of whom I know, while others I do not know—without casting any reflection whatsoever on any person, I consider we have to bear in mind that we are dealing with the gambling element. That element might easily become a menace or a scandal. Therefore the safest course is to have the Act brought up for review each year. We heard Mr. Clydesdale—who must be accepted as an authority—say he hoped the Government would see that £20,000 was set apart annually for the erection of a new hospital. As I understand the functions of government, the first function is to look after the health of the indigent sick. If we are to depend upon a Lotteries Commission to provide the necessary accommodation for them, then our system of government has fallen to a low ebb.

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: Follow Queensland's example, and you will not make much of a mistake.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I do not know what Queensland has done in regard to hospitals; but in other directions that State has done many things which I consider Western Australia should not imitate on any account. In conclusion, I hope the Government will not take any further notice of the three-years proposal. Let us have the Act up for review every year. Because the renewal proposed is for one year I support the Bill. If the period were longer, I would oppose the measure.

**HON. C. B. WILLIAMS** (South) [5.22]: Once again I support a measure relating to State lotteries. I have listened with amusement to some of the speeches made on the Bill, and I read with amusement some of the speeches reported in this morning's "West Australian." In voting for the principal Act, I did so not with any idea of reducing gambling but because I knew the measure would prove of value in harnessing up money going out of the State, for use within the State. I wonder whether Mr. Angelo, member for the North Province, opposed the gift of £250 made by the Lotteries Commission in August last to the Wyndham hospital? I

bet he did not. Did goldfields representatives object to the money grant by the Lotteries Commission to the Laverton hospital? You, Mr. President, and Mr. Cornell and I represent a Province which does not get anything out of the Lotteries Commission despite the support which this legislation has on all occasions received from me. I do not know whether the grants to the Laverton and Wyndham hospitals are a sort of bribe to members for the North Province, by way of inducing them to support this legislation. I shall have to appeal to the Commission to give something to my Province.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Tell the Commission that!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: No. I cannot go back on the principle of a lifetime. Lotteries represent the only chance the working man ever gets of a lift. We cannot all be storekeepers or hotel-keepers. We join together and each put a bob in and say the winner shall take the lot, though I do not forget that the Government take 33 per cent. of the total. The Government ought not to tax lotteries to that extent. However, there is nothing to force any person to buy a ticket in a lottery either here or anywhere else. All the various Governments in New South Wales and Queensland and Western Australia, no matter what their political complexion, have refrained from any attempt to stop State lotteries. The Nationalist Government in Queensland did not drop the Golden Casket. When the Stevens Government took over from Mr. Lang in New South Wales, they had promised to drop the lotteries. Did they carry out that promise? The Minister turned to the wowsers—as I have said here previously, and got the cane for saying it—and told them, “I will give you a month to suggest some other means of raising the amount of money that is being paid out of the lotteries to the charitable institutions in New South Wales.” What did they raise? Nil. And so the Nationalist Government of New South Wales let the lotteries go on. Upon a change of Government in this State, the same thing happened. Hon. members have their tongues in their cheeks when they oppose a measure of this kind, which is of so much benefit to their constituents. Take the places mentioned by Mr. Holmes—Kalgoorlie and Boulder. The business people

there, and the councillors and the road board members, have been arguing about the raising of the three or four thousand pounds to build a hospital; but they have not done it. They have not raised one pound. Then they took on the Chamber of Mines and called that institution all sorts of harsh and ugly names. Eventually the Chamber of Mines put up £3,000 for a hospital for Kalgoorlie. Yet the representatives of the North-East Province who pretend they do not want this system, and whose constituents have not suffered from the depression at all, will not give directly. What is the use of members opposing the Bill when their own constituents will not contribute voluntarily?

Hon. R. G. Moore: I object to the system.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: But the hon. member's constituents would not put in a bob. No more will mine. Such is the position. Mr. R. G. Moore and Mr. Angelo are opposed to State lotteries, but I do not know that they have written objecting to contributions from the Lotteries Commission to the Laverton, Wyndham and Kalgoorlie hospitals. It is odds on that the people on the goldfields say, “We have £3,000 from the Chamber of Mines, and that is enough.” There has been agitation and argument and fighting there for three months over the hospital question, and not a shilling has been put up: that is, by the people. The Chamber of Mines have put up £3,000, and there is to be a contribution from the Lotteries Commission, and a pound for pound subsidy from the Government. Members are supporting the Bill because for once in a while they have got their own way. I see no real objection to the measure. An Eastern Australian paper published this week states that the South Australian people are agitating for a system of State lotteries. Every Friday in the year, 52 times a year, Adelaide has a button day of some description for the purpose of raising money for charity. As Mr. Mann has said, “Some people give all the time, and some give never.” Under the State Lotteries system there is voluntary taxation, and there is a chance for some person to get out of the ruck and enjoy decent clothes and decent food and decent housing by virtue of having invested half-a-crown in a lottery. I have an invitation to an afternoon tea party on Fri-



day to welcome a one-time Governor of this State and Mr. de Bernales. Mr. de Bernales says, "Put yo'ur pound in, and I will take a fraction and you will take a chance." He has organised a huge gamble in mining. Out of that gamble the State gets its share by way of employment. He also gets his share.

Hon. T. Moore: Does he get 10 per cent.?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am not prepared to answer that question. I fancy, though, his percentage is far bigger than that. If we float a loan, we do not expect the agents to do the work for nothing. I am not well versed in high finance, but I think the agents get a fair quota. It may not be 10 per cent., but it is a pretty good cut. They are getting a cut all the time they are borrowing our own money for us. It is all a gamble, so why worry about the commission paid to ticket-sellers? If the sweeps are going to be carried on, they must be made a success; if not, why run them? Those who say that the commission paid to agents should be reduced do not want the sweeps to be a success. If the sweeps are to be successful, they must be advertised. When one looks at it that way, he sees that the newspapers must be getting something out of the lotteries through their advertising account. If we give the selling of tickets to agents, those agents, of course, have a great incentive to make a business of it, and so they advertise whenever they sell a winning ticket. One man in particular, we are told, makes a good thing out of it, but I say good luck to him. I do not agree with the cutting out of quarter shares and half shares. Some men are luckier than others, and so people are ready to couple-up with a lucky man who is more likely to pull them out of the fire and help them to win a prize. That is how I view it. I think quite a lot of people buy quarter shares and half shares for the reason that their own luck is not very noticeable, and so they pair-up with someone more lucky than themselves. How many people, when playing two-up, bank with the chap they know to be lucky? So, too, when you send a fellow to the races you first select a lucky man, and then you give him some money and say, "I am in the bank with you." Probably he will be lucky, and so will return with a dividend. Anyhow, I am pleased to see that there is very little opposition to the Bill on this occasion, as I said at the outset, although Mr.

Miles declares that I am not often in Perth to see the cadging that goes on.

Hon. T. Moore: It was the other Government that started these lotteries.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Yes, and they were well caned for it, although they did stop the awful cadging that was then going on in our streets.

**HON. H. TUCKEY** (South-West) [5.34]: The Lotteries Commission have certainly been of tremendous assistance to hospitals in the South-West. The accommodation of some of those hospitals has been doubled within the last couple of years, which would not have been possible but for the financial assistance rendered by the Lotteries Commission. We have heard quite a lot about the evil of lotteries, but I say we cannot have it both ways, and I am convinced that excellent work is being done in providing hospital accommodation in country districts, thus rendering it unnecessary for unfortunate people to come all the way to the city to enter the Perth Hospital. If there be anything wrong with the business, it is the amount of commission paid to the ticket sellers. However, I am quite satisfied to leave that to the commissioners, who, I think, have given general satisfaction.

**HON. T. MOORE** (Central) [5.35]: I notice that, after all, whilst there was a certain amount of doubt when the original Bill was introduced in this House, the idea of running a State lottery is now supported by a large majority of members, who are favourable to its being carried on. It goes to show that no fault is being found with the Lotteries Commission, except on trivial points as, for instance, the 10 per cent. commission which is being paid to agents for the sale of tickets. But when we take into consideration the aggregate results we are getting, those who represent country constituencies know that if it were not for the good work of the Lotteries Commission, many hospitals in the State would not have X-ray plants, which have been so useful in rendering it unnecessary for unfortunate people to be brought all the way to Perth for X-ray examinations. When we know that the Lotteries Commission have brought about that change, we must agree that if the lotteries constitute an evil, it is a very necessary evil. If we take into consideration these facts, we must see that the Lotteries Commission have done good work, and very

little harm, if any. Before the State lotteries were initiated, it was an awful position to be seen in the city streets where men, women and children were buying lottery tickets all up and down the City of Perth. That was not right, and it has since been removed by the Lotteries Commission. As to the rate of commission paid to agents, it seems to me that all the criticism has been directed against one individual, whose stand is wonderfully well situated for the sale of tickets. But that is not to say that the remainder of the agents are making a good thing out of the sale of tickets. In this regard the country agents, I am sure, are not overpaid, and I am aware that quite a substantial sum of money comes into the sweeps from country districts. Those who criticised the Commission on the score of what is paid to agents were, I think, looking for something to criticise. They did not deal generally with the position of the agents, but singled out one individual for their criticism. It is pleasing to note that there is no criticism at all levelled against the Commission. It is remarkable to think that these commissioners have the distribution of £70,000 per annum and yet no criticism is heard. It seems that they have done wonderfully well, for there has been no protest at all against their allocation of large sums of money. One would have thought that this would give plenty of room for criticism, but, as I say, there has been no criticism on that score. We in our district have had excellent results from the working of the Commission, and I hope that that work will go on. I am sorry the extension of time for the Commission is not to be three years, because I should like to see built in Perth the modern hospital we have heard spoken of. I was at the Perth Hospital this afternoon, and I may say that whenever I go there I am astounded at the overcrowding of that institution. There are any number of country people to be found in that hospital, so we in the country have a particular interest in it. If the Government are not in a position to levy more taxation, or raise the necessary loan—

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: And have to meet interest on the bill.

Hon. T. MOORE: I say if the Government cannot do that, then it is time some private persons set about considering what is to be done to build the required hospital

in the City of Perth. I will support the Bill.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

# **BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT ACT, 1899, AMENDMENT (No. 2).**

## *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.40]: Mr. Holmes's speech on the Bill inspires the thought that it is never wise to set our standards too high in reviewing the faults of our opponents, and that we should be careful lest the code of exactitude we lay down for others does not, sooner or later, catch us in its toils. Mr. Holmes, a week or so ago, fumed with indignation because some information I had given the House in all innocence, had not been entirely in accordance with fact. The hon. member, while exonerating me in connection with the matter, reverted to the subject and stated that an attempt had been made to mislead the House and the country.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Not by you. I exonerated you.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** In his speech on this Bill, Mr. Holmes has shown that he is not impeccable in a similar respect. Quite unwittingly, I admit, he has committed an offence which he seems to regard as unforgivable in others. In a word, he has, quite unintentionally, misled the House and the country. As well as that, he has placed the select committee responsible for this Bill in a false position before the public of the State. All this has not been done through lack of intelligence, but through failure to give that close attention to the measure which its importance demands.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you believe in the Bill?

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** I do.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: In some of it.

**THE CHIEF SECRETARY:** Mr. Holmes says "the Bill proposes that members of Parliament shall be permitted to act as members of a Royal Commission and be paid for their services, as well as receiving their expenses." May I assure Mr. Holmes

that the Bill does nothing of the kind—it does not go so far. It does not make provision for members of Parliament, who sit on a Royal Commission, to be paid for their services. It merely provides that they shall be paid the actual ascertained or ascertainable expenses necessarily to be incurred by them in the course of rendering such services. That has been the case ever since the present Constitution Act was placed on our statute book. Members of Parliament have been appointed, from time to time, but, so far as I know, they have never been asked to pay their own board and lodging accounts while fulfilling these functions. Yet there has been some doubt as to whether or not the acceptance of travelling expenses from the Crown, while acting in such capacity, would be a violation of the Constitution Act.

Hon. J. Nicholson: And the Bill makes the position clear.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But, if the opinions given over 30 years ago by two of the soundest legal minds the State has had can be accepted without question, there is no doubt at all that, if a member of Parliament accepts an office on a Royal Commission, where provision is made for the payment of fees, he is guilty of holding an office of profit and committing a breach of the Constitution Act. And he is so guilty, even though he himself does not draw a penny from the Crown in the way of remuneration. The amendment to which Mr. Holmes objects—objects because he has misunderstood its import—is designed to get over this difficulty. That there is a necessity for it, there can be no question. It has happened in the past in a matter of special importance that when a select committee, appointed to make investigations, has not had time to complete its work by the end of a session, it has been appointed a Royal Commission.

Hon. J. Cornell: I have been on a few and have not received anything.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Would anyone say that the actual travelling expenses of such a Commission should not be paid? I do not think even Mr. Holmes would. Mr. Holmes has been a member of more than one of those Commissions—in some instances he has been chairman—and the information he gave the House subsequently was of a valuable character. If the recommendations

had been accepted, the country would have been saved an immense amount of money.

Hon. J. Cornell: If notice had been taken of the reports on the Peel and Bateman estates, millions of pounds would have been saved.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am referring to that particular Commission. It was an outstanding piece of work at the time I returned to this Chamber and was impressed upon my mind. No remuneration was paid, but I dare say that travelling expenses were paid. I assume that no Government would allow a Commission to pay their own travelling expenses.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not suppose that Commission cost the State £10.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: All we desire to do by this Bill is to make safe the seats of members who undertake such services. Mr. Holmes raised the point that members of Parliament should not be allowed to trade with the Agricultural Bank. Many of them were doing so for years and I am not aware that any scandal has arisen in consequence. From the earliest stage, no loan could be granted by the Government without the recommendation of the manager, and now the Bank has been removed absolutely from political control. The members are fixed in their positions for seven years, and are subject to removal only by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament. Mr. Holmes dealt with another aspect when he referred to paragraph (iii) near the end of the Bill. This enables the Government to secure the services of a member of Parliament and remunerate him for those services, provided the payment and amount thereof have been approved and authorised by a joint committee consisting of three members of the Legislative Council and three members of the Legislative Assembly, to be appointed and maintained by both Houses for the purpose of determining every such case on its merits.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If we pass this Bill, members of Parliament may serve on Royal Commissions and be paid.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Without the paragraph, they might serve but they could not be paid. Of course there might be differences of opinion as to whether this provision should be accepted. A member of Parliament might have special professional qualifications of which the Government might desire to avail themselves, and the amendment

would permit him to be employed if the joint committee considered there was good reason for it and that the proposed remuneration was fair in the circumstances.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not think it would be workable.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Corruption lurks in the dark. It does not love the light of day, and, where a transaction was such that it could stand the test of representatives of both Chambers, it is difficult to see that anything in the nature of corruption could occur with the safeguards proposed.

Hon. G. W. Miles: What about a Minister going up for re-election. Are you going to reply to that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Mr. Holmes found fault with the provision regarding a member of Parliament who, previous to his election, held an office of profit under the Crown, but resigned from such office within 14 days after the declaration of the poll.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Have you ever been on a fishing expedition?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is nothing in that provision with which to find fault. Even the most vivid imagination could not find fault with it. I thought I explained the position clearly when introducing the Bill. It is an improvement on the existing law. Under the present Act, he could still hold his office of profit until he was sworn in, and that might be many months after his election. In other words, it would be possible for him to draw his parliamentary allowance, and, if the salary from his office of profit was greater than the allowance, he could also draw the excess. The amendment allows him 14 days after the declaration of the poll to sever his financial connection with the Crown.

Hon. T. Moore. Members of this House are usually elected in May and a member could draw until the end of June.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Not merely until the end of June but until he was sworn in. If his salary was £1,000 and he was getting £600 from the State, he could receive an additional £400 from the Government. The amendment is designed to relieve that situation. Resignation will be required within 14 days of the declaration of the poll. Mr. Holmes said he might be

wrong, but it seemed to him that the position of a Minister of the Crown was not considered an office of profit under the Bill. The hon. member is evidently of opinion that the repeal of Sections 31 to 38 will have that effect. At first glance one might be inclined to come to that conclusion. The proviso in Clause 2, Subclause 1, paragraph (h) of the Bill has apparently deceived Mr. Holmes. But he will find a similar provision in Section 37 of the present Act. Section 37 was repealed, but it was found necessary to preserve the principle in the proviso to that section and insert it in a slightly amended form without effect on its meaning. Section 43, Subsection 1, of the Constitution Act, 1899, is the vital section which obliges Ministers to go to their electors after their appointment. It reads—

(1.) There may be six principal executive offices of the Government liable to be vacated on political grounds, and no more.

(2.) The said offices shall be such six offices as shall be designated and declared by the Governor in Council, from time to time, to be the six principal executive offices of the Government for the purposes of this Act.

(3.) One at least of such executive offices shall always be held by a member of the Legislative Council.

This was amended in 1927, and the number of portfolioed Ministers was increased to eight. As that section is not touched by this Bill, it will continue to remain operative.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They will have to submit themselves for re-election.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Mr. Hall does not know why a minister of religion has been deprived of the right to be chosen as a member of Parliament; and he wants me to enlighten him on this and other phases of the subject. I must plead similar ignorance, and I am afraid that, if I attempted to lead Mr. Hall into the mists of antiquity, I should prove a false guide.

Hon. J. Cornell: It has been there as long as Mr. Hall has lived.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: To assist Mr. Hall and, incidentally, to improve my own scanty knowledge, I have approached men distinguished for their familiarity with all great constitutional movements down to the dark ages, and though all could conjure up arguments, either for or against, with remarkable facility and with a supreme disregard for relevancy, each failed dismally

to throw light on the two important points at issue—the origin of, and the reason for, the ban. As Mr. Hall suggested, the select committee might have given the question their attention, but, rightly or wrongly, they confined their labours mainly to parts of the Act which had aroused criticism in the House. If the Bill goes beyond the second reading stage, the opportunity will come to Mr. Hall to test the feeling of the Committee on the question.

Hon. J. Cornell: Any minister could resign the day before nomination and nominate.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Hall might at least seek to make more worthy the position allotted to a clergyman in the order of precedence of the disqualified. As things are now, the man of God is indelicately sandwiched between the sheriff and the alien, with the gentleman, or lady, attainted of treason, as a very close companion.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The late Archbishop often commented on that.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I think he appeared between the sheriff and the bankrupt, while the position now is close to the alien with the gentleman who has committed treason alongside. This Bill may not give entire satisfaction. It does not touch the case of a member of Parliament who conducts, say, a country store from which an officer of the Government might purchase, on behalf of the Government, perhaps a small article necessary to enable him to carry on some work on which he was engaged. While such might be a technical breach of the Constitution Act, I think it would be the duty of Parliament to see that that member was not victimised over a paltry matter of that kind, if anyone were to take action against him in the Supreme Court.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: If the question arises I hope the House will make a better job of it than it did when dealing with Mr. Clydesdale's position.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But it would be difficult to frame an amendment to cover the position without leaving loopholes for gross offences to be perpetrated against the Act. Nor would that Bill cover the case mentioned of a member of Parliament who was interested in a blacksmith's business,

and who wished to tender for the shoeing of police horses. And I do not think it should. If we were to allow a member of Parliament to tender for Government work, we should undermine the sounder side of the Act.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Quite right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There would be the danger that a member of Parliament, through his political influence, might be able, if his tender were accepted, to supply goods, or perform work, of a quality not up to the standard laid down in his contract. In the first place there would be competition in regard to the tenders, but the member of Parliament, because of political influence, might be able to carry out the job in an unsatisfactory manner.

Hon. J. Cornell: Politicians do not do that sort of thing to-day.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: On the other hand you allow a man to buy from the State Trading Concerns.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have not finished yet. With regard to a newspaper owned by a member of Parliament, it seems to me ridiculous that it should be an offence to insert a Government advertisement received in the ordinary course of business. I can speak freely on that point, because I am no longer a newspaper proprietor. In the past, the owner of a newspaper, who was also a member of Parliament and who wished to feel secure, was obliged to resort to the evasion of forming an incorporated company with more than 20 members in order to take Government advertisements with safety. I discussed the point relating to the storekeeper with the Solicitor General some days ago, and he stated that the principle enabling him to be protected was already contained in the Bill, and that paragraph (iii) of the proposed new section 34 could, with further amendment, be extended so that the Joint Committee of both Houses could be given the power to determine such cases on their merits. Anyhow, this Bill is too valuable to be treated with indifference by members of Parliament. I will give one instance now of the perils threatening them. Every person who sends goods by a Government railway has to sign a consignment note. He makes, not merely a verbal contract, but a written contract, with the Crown and, if he is a



Hon. J. CORNELL: If it is the intention of the Committee not to restore Subclause 1 of Clause 18, this sub-paragraph will have to be deleted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That subparagraph (iii) of paragraph (c) of Subclause 1 be struck out.

As the clause stands, the proposal is to give half-blood aboriginals a vote for the Legislative Assembly, not for the Legislative Council. Considerable objection was raised to this sub-paragraph in the Assembly, with the result that the proviso that appears at the end of it was inserted. During the second reading debate, I drew attention to the undesirability of having a half-blood aboriginal who was an elector for the Commonwealth but not for the State or vice versa, and I suggested that the furthest we could reasonably go was to provide that the half-blood aboriginal who was qualified as an elector for the Commonwealth should be also qualified as an elector for the State. If that were decided upon, we would have uniformity. On the other hand, as matters stand now, there will be two different bodies deciding whether a half-blood aboriginal shall be an elector for the Commonwealth and for the State respectively. That is highly undesirable. The sub-paragraph should be struck out and an intimation conveyed to the Legislative Assembly that our reason for doing so was that we did not want two classes of aboriginals voting on the basis of adult suffrage. If uniformity is to be achieved, we can have an opportunity, when dealing with a Bill I propose to introduce shortly, to consider the advisability of providing that the half-blood aboriginal who is qualified as a Commonwealth elector and as an elector for the Legislative Assembly shall also, if he possesses the other necessary qualifications, be an elector for the Legislative Council.

Hon. G. W. Miles: There are half-castes who are electors now.

Hon. J. CORNELL: This question received a good deal of consideration before the Royal Commission and actually the decision as to whether a half-blood aboriginal can secure the franchise for the Commonwealth largely rests with the Commonwealth Chief Electoral Officer following upon a High Court ruling under which the predominance of white blood constitutes the

main consideration. If white and black blood is mixed on the basis of fifty-fifty, the aboriginal will not secure the vote. In a way, I am loth to move the amendment as it does not affect the Council, but I have done so with a view to enabling the Assembly to formulate an alternative amendment that will make for uniformity.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot agree with the contention advanced by Mr. Cornell. I should imagine that a resident magistrate or stipendiary magistrate would be in a far better position to arrive at a decision than the Chief Electoral Officer for the Commonwealth. If we are opposed to half-castes having the vote, it is a different matter entirely. There are a number of half-castes in Western Australia who are well educated, reputable in the districts in which they live, and quite capable of looking after their own business.

Hon. J. Cornell: I agree with all that.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Some of them are more entitled to the vote than others I could mention. In support of his amendment, Mr. Cornell suggested it would be well to leave the decision in the hands of the Commonwealth Chief Electoral Officer because all necessary inquiries would be made by him and it would just depend on which blood predominated, whether the half-caste would secure the vote. The only construction I can place on that suggestion is that the Chief Electoral Officer would not be prepared to give the vote to half-castes at all. If a person is a true half-caste, there can be no preponderance of either black or white blood. In any event, we are protected in that no half-blood aboriginal can secure the vote unless he receives a certificate from a magistrate that he is a fit and proper person to exercise the franchise. Is not that much more simple than the process suggested by Mr. Cornell? We have a half-caste problem in this State that the Commonwealth have not, and that problem is becoming greater year by year. A large number of half-castes are growing up and receiving a better education than they ever had before and there will be an increasing demand for the franchise. I do not think we should debar their exercising the franchise so long as they can satisfy a magistrate in accordance with the law. I therefore prefer the clause in the Bill, and will vote against the amendment.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am opposed to the inclusion of these people. We are try-

ing to keep Australia white, and I have before me a letter from Broome, the last paragraph of which only I need to read, and it is, "Let us hope our politicians will reconsider the proposal to amend the legislation for the future security of the whites." In Broome there are two towns, white people residing in one and coloured people in the other. I have had an opportunity of going to the pictures at Broome—it is the only place where I do go to pictures—and there I have seen the whites and the blacks segregated. The whites will occupy one area, and the coloured people dare not go into that area. The aborigines occupy another area. I do not know where the half-castes go, but presumably the more authority you give them the more they will consider themselves white, and probably they will want to push in with the whites. I believe these unfortunate people whom nobody wants ought to be kept to themselves and not encouraged to think they are full-blooded whites and therefore entitled to the advantages the whites enjoy. The proposal in the Bill is preferable to the Commonwealth legislation, which leaves it to the Chief Electoral Officer to decide, whilst the amendment places it in the hands of the magistrate, who comes into personal contact with these people.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In the course of the inquiry by the Royal Commission, Mr. Bandy, the Federal Chief Electoral Officer in Perth, quoted the opinion given by Sir Robert Garran, which was that half-castes were not aboriginal natives within the meaning of the Constitution, and that they were not disqualified, while a person in whom aboriginal blood predominated was disqualified. The position, according to the Commonwealth dictum, is that a true half-caste is eligible to vote; but if aboriginal blood predominates, he is not eligible.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The opinion quoted by Mr. Cornell was given some 30 years ago. Since then the half-caste problem has increased in this State from a mere handful to many thousands, and it is becoming a bigger problem each year. The problem cannot be gauged by the position in Broome. The position there is entirely different from that which exists in any other part of the State. In Broome there will be found coloured people of all nationalities. The Bill deals with aboriginal half-bloods, and I suppose in the South-West there are several thousand who would come within that category. So it is a ques-

tion likely to affect a large number of persons in the course of the next few years. In many cases these people are living the life that white people live, and in some instances they are highly desirable people. I am only concerned about giving the half-caste in that position the opportunity of feeling that it is not *infra dig.* as far as he is concerned, to be a half-caste.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Are not half-castes debarred from entering licensed premises?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Many of them get exemption, and then they have the same rights as a white man. Of course, if they do not behave themselves, the exemption is withdrawn.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Lately I have been visiting a number of shows in the country, and at several of them I was struck by the splendid appearance of half-castes attending those shows. I know a lot of half-castes to-day who are employed on farms and by road boards, and all are good citizens. In our schools in the country we educate quite a number of half-castes alongside white children. Discussing this matter with a schoolmaster from Wagin the other day, he told me that some of the finest pupils he had at the Wagin school, and who were taking a great interest in their work, were half-castes. The time has arrived. I think, when these people, who are prepared to live and work like the whites, should have the opportunity to vote. I shall support the clause in the Bill.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: The position in the North is different from the position in the South-West, as told to us by the Honorary Minister. With the exception of Broome, where there are a number of half-castes, the greater majority of half-castes in the North-West are on stations. How is a magistrate to ascertain whether they are desirous of exercising the franchise? They will have to apply, and they will not do so until the last moment. If they fill in the forms within a day or two of the roll closing, how will it be possible for a magistrate to determine whether the applicants are suitable people or not? I am not in favour of the half-caste having the vote, and I shall support Mr. Cornell.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: In the South Province the blacks are practically extinct and the half-castes number very few indeed. Under our licensing legislation the half-blood is classed as an aboriginal. I fail



to see occasion for giving him the franchise. In some special cases the privilege might perhaps be extended, but generally speaking there is no need for it.

Hon. R. G. MOORE: I fail to see that much harm can result from leaving the clause as it stands. In order to obtain the franchise the half-caste must apply to a magistrate. If that restriction applied to white people, hundreds of them would be disfranchised, because they would not take the trouble to call on the magistrate. Half-castes sufficiently educated to desire the vote and to incur the trouble of visiting a magistrate should be given the franchise. The White Australia policy does not apply to Australian aborigines, but only to coloured people coming here from overseas.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The line must be drawn somewhere. I am absolutely opposed to the suggestion of conferring on half-castes the greatest privilege of the white, thus putting the half-caste on the white's level. The provision, if adopted, would apply to the North as well as to the South.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I see no great harm in the clause, which does not give the half-caste the vote but enables the magistrate to give it to him if qualified to exercise it. The aboriginal of the North is utterly different from the aboriginal of the South. A magistrate would use his judgment. In the South some half-castes are educated. They have attended school with white children, as Mr. Piesse has stated, and many of them therefore will have the white standard of education. But even that is not sufficient. The half-caste must prove to the magistrate that he is fitted for the franchise. In the North the half-caste consorts with natives, and lives in the native camp. No canvasser would have the audacity to try to put on the roll a half-caste living in a native camp.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: I have known it to be done.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I cannot conceive of any magistrate venturing to give a half-caste of that type the franchise. I support the clause as it stands.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill draws no line of demarcation between the North and the South, but applies to the whole State. How is the magistrate to decide whether the aboriginal appearing before him is a half-caste, a three-quarter-caste, or a quart-

er-caste? To begin with, there is no marriage certificate. I may mention that in the Jewish persuasion no child of a Jew can be considered Jewish unless the mother is a Jewess. In New Zealand I saw a case which I have never been able to forget. An officer of an Irish regiment married a Maori princess, and the progeny, though half-castes, were fine specimens of manhood. One of them I knew particularly well; and that fine strapping half-caste married an Auckland girl as fair as a lily, and the progeny were four full-blooded Maoris. What this provision asks the magistrate to do cannot be done.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: I have always understood that in the progeny of white and aboriginal the colour gradually becomes lighter as more white blood is infused, and that there is no throwing back. Therefore the magistrate should have little difficulty in deciding whether an applicant is a half-caste or a three-quarter-caste.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The point has been missed that under the provision the half-caste will get the vote by regulation. He will not get the vote by virtue of the provision, which represents only the machinery whereby regulations will be set up. Those regulations would be a standard to the magistracy throughout the State. There is no machinery by which the magistrate will estimate the proportion of aboriginal blood in an applicant. If there is no line of demarcation laid down for magistrates, what is to guide them? Conflicting decisions by magistrates will result in the absence of some definite rule. The rule will be contained in regulations which will have to be laid on the Tables of both Houses. Even if the provision is adopted, I doubt whether there will be sufficient time to give half-castes the vote at the next general election.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It is easy to raise objections to the clause and to imagine how detrimental it may prove, but let us look at the other side of the picture. The words "prescribed manner" as appearing in the clause refer only to the method by which application shall be made by the aboriginal to the magistrate. The magistrate will determine by any means he thinks fit whether the applicant is a fit and proper person to exercise the franchise.

Hon. J. Cornell: For everything else coming before magistrates there are rules of guidance.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We have sufficient knowledge of what is a fit and proper person according to our standard to trust any resident magistrate to interpret the intention correctly. Numbers of half-castes live with white people and have never associated in any way with aboriginals besides having in some cases received a better education than some white people who have the franchise. These half-castes are admitted, in the districts where they reside, to all social functions they desire to attend. So long as the Act is complied with and the resident magistrate is prepared to issue the necessary certificate, that applicant should have the vote. Is not that far better than saying straight out that no half-caste shall have a vote?

Hon. J. Cornell: It was originally the one man who did the job.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There may be some argument in that, but I would leave it to the magistrate operating in the district. I am sure he would have no difficulty whatever in certifying as to whether the applicant was a fit and proper person to exercise the vote. I am not concerned as to whether it would be possible to have regulations framed in time for the next elections; this Act is not being amended for the next elections, and it may be many years before it will be again amended. But meanwhile there are thousands of half-castes in the State, and as the result of efforts that have been made to bring them up to the standard of the whites with whom they mix, there is an increasing number of them who should be entitled to exercise votes. I know the general opinion is that with even the slightest trace of aboriginal blood, they should be tabooed. I do not hold with that. I know the problem they have had in Broome.

Hon. L. Craig: The half-castes live as the natives do.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But some of them up there do not live with the natives. Relatively few half-castes are in the North, except perhaps, in Broome.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: How many aboriginal mothers are there in the South?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Not very many.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then where do the half-castes come from?

The HONORARY MINISTER: In the opinion of many people these half-castes

are not entitled to a vote, but I think that is most unfair.

Hon. J. Cornell: Has it not been said that the only good Indian is a dead one?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I have heard that said in this House about our aborigines and half-castes. I do not believe in it. I will support the clause.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Three or four years ago we had a half-caste boy near Boyup Brook. He was a splendid citizen, and when he died he left £1,000 to the hospital at Kojonup. Surely that man lived up to the standard of a white man. Again I know of a half-caste in our district who has a farm and is producing excellent wheat and carrying out all the duties of an Australian citizen. There are many other such half-castes. Our magistrates could make inquiries of the Police Department when a half-caste came along and claimed a vote, and incidentally the required information could be secured from the Aborigines Department.

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

Ayes .. .. .	9
Noes .. .. .	15

Majority against .. .. 6

#### AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell  
Hon. J. J. Holmes  
Hon. W. J. Mann  
Hon. G. W. Miles  
Hon. A. Thomson

Hon. H. Tuckey  
Hon. C. B. Williams  
Hon. H. J. Yelland  
Hon. E. H. Angelo  
(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter  
Hon. L. Craig  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. C. G. Elliott  
Hon. E. H. Gray  
Hon. E. H. H. Hall  
Hon. V. Hamersley  
Hon. W. H. Kitson

Hon. J. M. Macfarlane  
Hon. R. G. Moore  
Hon. T. Moore  
Hon. H. S. W. Parker  
Hon. H. V. Piesse  
Hon. C. H. Wittenoom  
Hon. G. Fraser  
(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

The CHAIRMAN: I draw attention to the fact that in view of Clause 18 having been struck out it becomes necessary to insert certain words after "elector" in line 2 of Subsection 1 of this clause.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That Subclause 2 be struck out.

This subclause provides that Section 17 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, 1899, shall be repealed. We do not want that repealed.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The position now is that a half-blood aboriginal may be enrolled as a Legislative Assembly elector, but, even if he has the necessary qualification, he may not be enrolled as a Council elector. Now I say the onus rests on those members who brought about that state of affairs to rectify the constitution of the Council by extending to the half-blood what is extended to him as an Assembly elector.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They have brought it on themselves.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The disqualification is not to apply to any half-blood aboriginal of Australia who obtains a certificate in the prescribed manner from a magistrate that he is a fit and proper person to exercise the franchise. A magistrate might grant it to one and not to another.

Hon. L. Craig: That is not likely.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Some people might think that a certain individual was entitled to the franchise and a large majority might not agree with them.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Committee have decided the point.

Hon. A. THOMSON: There is not even provision to object.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: If the great majority think he should not vote, will he get to the poll?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Brick-bats are not thrown here as they were in the recent election in the Old Country.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: On a point of order, what is before the Chair?

The CHAIRMAN: I allowed Mr. Thomson to proceed with his explanation thinking that he might enlighten the Committee, but he is quite out of order.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Postponed Clauses 82 and 83:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That the consideration of Clauses 82 and 83 be further postponed.

Motion put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: On behalf of Mr. Seddon, I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 55:—"The Registrar of Titles during every month in each year shall forward to the Chief Electoral Officer a list in the prescribed

form of the transfers of titles and caveats lodged against titles of land which have been effected during the preceding month together with the names of the transferee and transferor."

Hon. G. W. Miles: Is that necessary now?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, it deals with the compilation of rolls and the idea is that the Registrar of Titles every month shall forward the information to the Chief Electoral Officer. I understand that the Chief Electoral Officer now consults the Registrar of Titles, but there can be no harm in making this provision in the measure.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: If the new clause be inserted, the net result will be a considerable amount of work for the Titles Office with no benefit to the Electoral Department. All the information is available to the Chief Electoral Officer at any time. What is the use of having sent to the Chief Electoral Officer a list of people who lodge a caveat to claim as equitable mortgagees, seeing that they have no right to vote? The Chief Electoral Officer would receive a huge list every month, and he would simply put it aside because it would be of no value to him. He would have a tremendous task to conduct a check in that way, instead of taking the claims to the Titles Office and checking them there. It might be said that the duty of the Chief Electoral Officer is to take people off the roll and he can do that only by systematic work. He cannot do it by checking the monthly returns in the Titles Office. If it is going to be of any value to him he must keep some elaborate system of index, which the Titles Office already possesses. He would also require large premises in which to keep his records. His staff would be continually attending the Titles Office, because at that place things are checked as they come in. The scheme would be useless to the Electoral Department and constitute a great burden to the Titles Office.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose the amendment. There does not appear to be anything wrong in the principle, but the Registrar of Titles does not possess all the means of securing the necessary information. Many persons buy land under contract of sale, and do not bother to lodge a caveat. The Chief Electoral Officer may have no information of the sale. He would

not know whether it had been completed, or whether the registered proprietor had lost all interest in the land. The amendment would entail considerable trouble and expense to the Titles Office with very little practical result. I made a check last year on the arrangements with regard to matters of this kind, and I found that the department were very prompt in dealing with persons who were disqualified by disposing of their property.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: If the new clause is persisted in, I should like to move an amendment to strike out the words "during every month in each year," and insert "shall on or before the seventh day in each month after the passing of this Act." This would ensure that the reports were made early in each month.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not press this clause. The proposal is not going to be of much use. I know that if the Electoral Department are informed that probably some elector has lost his qualification, an inquiry is immediately set on foot. I will withdraw the new clause.

New clause, by leave, withdrawn.

New clauses:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I have on the Notice Paper a number of new clauses to stand as Clauses 78 to 86. The Committee has already agreed to delete the proposed new provisions for postal votes, with a view to restoring the old provisions, with certain modifications. The new clauses are contained in the old Act, and were drafted by Mr. Sayer.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have read the new clauses. As the Committee has already agreed upon the principle of the old method of postal voting, except as to the officers, etc., I shall offer no opposition to the insertion of these particular clauses.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That the following new clauses be inserted to stand respectively as Clauses 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85 and 86:—

*Postal vote books.*

78. It shall be the duty of the Chief Electoral Officer to supply postal vote officers with postal vote books in the prescribed form.

*Directions.*

79. The following directions for voting by post shall be observed:—

- (1) The elector shall sign and declare before the postal vote officer the declaration contained in the prescribed form.

(2) The postal vote officer shall then—

(a) write on the counterfoil—

- (i) the name of the Province or District for which the elector claims to vote;
- (ii) the christian name, surname, and address of the elector; and
- (iii) the date of issue of the postal ballot paper; and

(b) sign and require the elector to sign the counterfoil.

(3) The postal vote officer shall then—

(a) indorse on the ballot paper—

- (i) the name of the Province or District as on the counterfoil; and
- (ii) the date of issue; and

(b) sign the indorsement.

(4) The postal vote officer shall then hand the ballot paper and an envelope to the elector and complete and sign the certificate indorsed on the declaration.

(5) The elector shall then—

(a) write on the ballot paper, in the manner prescribed by section eighty, the name of the candidate for whom he votes, but so that the postal vote officer shall not see the vote;

(b) fold up the ballot paper and, in the presence of the postal vote officer, put it in the envelope; and

(c) fasten the envelope and hand it to the postal vote officer.

Provided that where an elector satisfies the postal vote officer that he is blind, or that his sight is so impaired, or that he is otherwise so physically incapable that he is unable to vote without assistance, or is unable to read or write, such officer may, and at the request of such elector shall, mark on the ballot paper, according to the instructions of the elector, the name of the candidate, and enclose the ballot paper in the envelope.

(6) The postal vote officer shall then write "Ballot paper" on the envelope, and place the counterfoil in another envelope and fasten it and write "Counterfoil" thereon, and shall forthwith send both envelopes, enclosed in an envelope marked "Electoral ballot paper only," by post or otherwise, addressed to the Returning Officer of the Province or District in which the elector claims to be entitled to vote, or to a Presiding Officer at any polling place within such Province or District if the postal vote officer is satisfied that the vote taken by him cannot in the ordinary course of post reach the Returning Officer before the close of the poll.

*Mode of marking ballot paper.*

80. An elector recording his vote by means of a postal vote ballot paper shall do so in the following manner:—

- (1) At elections where there are only two candidates, the elector shall insert in the postal ballot paper the surname of the candidate for whom he votes.

- (2) At elections where there are more than two candidates, the elector shall insert in the postal ballot paper the surname of the candidate for whom he votes as a first preference, and he shall also insert in the ballot paper the surnames of and give further contingent votes for all remaining candidates.
- (3) The voting under subsection two shall be as follows:—The voter shall first write on the ballot paper the surname of the candidate for whom he votes as a first preference, and he shall mark the numeral 1 against such name, and he shall then write on the ballot paper the surnames of all the other candidates, and he shall mark the numerals 2, 3, and so on, against each name respectively in the order of his preference.
- (4) In the case of more candidates than one having the same surname, the elector shall also insert in the ballot paper the christian names of such candidates.
- (5) A postal vote shall not be invalid by reason only of the name appearing thereon of a candidate who, after nomination day and before polling day, has withdrawn his nomination; but effect shall be given to the preference shown on the postal vote according to the arithmetical sequence of the marking after the exclusion of the number set against the name of the candidate who has withdrawn his nomination.

#### *Inspection.*

81. At any time when called upon in writing by the Chief Electoral Officer, or by a Registrar, a postal vote officer shall transmit to the Chief Electoral Officer or such Registrar, for inspection, his postal vote book.

#### *Postal vote officer not to visit electors.*

82. It shall be unlawful for any postal vote officer to visit any elector for the purpose of taking his vote, or to take any elector's postal vote in any other place than such postal vote officer's ordinary place of living or business. But this section shall not apply to electors entitled to vote by post under paragraph (b) or (c) of section seventy-seven.

#### *Duty of Returning Officer in regard to postal votes.*

83. The Returning Officer or Presiding Officer, as the case may be, upon the receipt of any postal votes, shall retain them in his possession and—

- (a) during or immediately after the close of the poll, in the presence of the scrutineers, proceed to open them; and
- (b) is satisfied, by comparing each counterfoil with the roll, that the person named is entitled to vote, shall, as he takes out each ballot paper from its envelope, without unfolding it, deposit it in the ballot box.

#### *Mistakes.*

84. No postal vote shall be rejected by reason of any mistake in spelling where the elector's intention is clear.

#### *Officer to decide.*

85. The decision of the officer conducting the count of the votes as to the allowance or disallowance of any postal vote shall be subject only to review by the Court of Disputed Returns under Part V.

#### *Applicant not to vote otherwise at election.*

86. Any person who has applied to a postal vote officer for the purpose of voting by post, and has complied with the provisions of this Division of this Part of this Act relating thereto, shall not be entitled to vote otherwise at the election, although the said envelope may not have been sent to the Returning Officer or Presiding Officer, as the case may be, or although they have miscarried.

New clauses put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move—

That a new clause to stand as Clause 87 be inserted as follows:—

#### *Qualification of postal vote officer.*

87. No person other than any of the persons hereinafter mentioned shall be appointed a postal vote officer, namely, the Chief Electoral Officer, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, Deputy Returning Officers, Presiding Officers, registrars and officers and magistrates (as defined by this Act), officers permanently employed in the Commonwealth or State Electoral Departments, postmasters or postmistresses, or postal officials in charge of post offices (the term "Postal officials" includes a "free mail bag holder"), head teachers employed in the Department of Education, members of the police force, mining registrars, clerks of court, railway station masters who are permanently employed in the railway service of the Commonwealth or State, permanent way inspectors and road masters permanently employed in the railway service of the Commonwealth, honorary Commonwealth and State electoral agents, town clerks and road district secretaries, mail contractors, Agricultural Bank district branch managers, accountants, and field inspectors, State battery managers, mining inspectors, station owners, station overseers, legally qualified medical practitioners, matrons in charge of public or private hospitals.

This new clause is in conformity with my recommendation to restrict the field of choice for postal vote officers. The basis is the Commonwealth Act. The new clause speaks for itself. I also include registrars and officers and magistrates.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is a justice of the peace a magistrate?

Hon. J. CORNELL: A magistrate includes stipendiary magistrates, resident magistrates and justices of the peace authorised by the Government to hear and determine electoral appeals. If the Government consider a justice of the peace

competent to deal with electoral appeals, he should be competent to act as a postal vote officer. Then there are officers employed permanently by the Commonwealth and State Electoral Departments, postmasters, postmistresses and I have also included postal officials who may be free mail-bag holders. There are parts in some provinces where mail contractors are recognised by the Postmaster General as authorised to receive mail bags, distribute the mails, collect them and so forth. We should encourage that type of individual and I know that many of them have acted as presiding officers at elections. Head teachers, of course, mean the teachers in charge of country schools. I have included railway station masters who are permanently employed in the railway service of the Commonwealth or State, as well as permanent way inspectors and road masters in the Commonwealth Railway Department. Those people are necessary in order that people along the Trans-Australian railway shall have an opportunity to vote. I understand that the Commonwealth have honorary electoral agents and the State have adopted that system, too. There is no gainsaying that in the past a number of people have been appointed as postal vote officers, who had no right to the position. It did not matter how they acted under the lap, or what snide things they did, their actual semi-public positions of trust were not affected. I have not included justices of the peace or commissioners of declarations. I have recollections of how some justices of the peace were appointed, and I have known of some adopting a course of action that did not redound to their credit. I understand that there are about 3,000 postal vote officers in the State and I regard that as 2,000 too many. In Boulder there are about 18, whereas the officer in charge of the police station, the town clerk, the clerk of courts or the registrar, and perhaps a doctor or two, would be quite sufficient. A welter has been made of the system in that electorate. While I am not opposed to the postal voting system, I want the field restricted so that there will not be so much abuse as in the past.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Mr. Cornell has included in his amendment Agricultural Bank district branch managers, accountants and field inspectors. While it is perfectly obvious what he intends, the amendment as

it stands might be construed to mean that it refers to all chartered accountants.

Hon. J. Cornell: Of course that is not what is meant.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I take it that farmers in the outback can still be appointed as postal vote officers.

Hon. J. Cornell: No.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Then I will oppose the proposed clause.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I am not fussy whether I vote for the new clause or not because it will get short shrift when the Bill reaches another place. In fact the consideration of the Bill has developed into a farce, and I should have long ago moved the Chairman out of the Chair. I have been a postal officer myself, and I know enough about the business. I certainly take exception to Agricultural Bank accountants, managers and officers, being postal vote officers. If there is anyone who could intimidate the poor old man on the land if he did not vote as they desired, it is the Agricultural Bank officers. If the farmer does not vote as the officer wants him to vote, then Lord help the farmer when reports go in about his operations.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is not right.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I know this game pretty well. I know that that sort of thing does happen. Then there is the position regarding the railways. Fancy the position of an inspector dealing with a navy 30 or 40 miles away from any centre in the backblocks. Think how he can intimidate a poor old navy if he does not vote as is desired. Be he ever so honest, the postal vote officer knows how the individual intends to vote.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: You have been at the game.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: And the hon. member understands it too. We know how postal vote officers act, some of them are not Labour men, and will not stand for Labour under any circumstances. With them Labour would be left high and dry. In my opinion no boss of any gang of men should be appointed a postal vote officer, because he holds the whip over them. Mr. Cornell objects to Justices of the Peace, but those men hold a commission from the State, and if they do anything that is wrong the commission can be withdrawn. The same applies to commissioners of declarations. Yet Mr.

Cornell says that those people are not fit to be postal vote officers.

Hon. J. Cornell: If the hon. member chooses to move to include them, I shall not object.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: It is not possible to have non-partisan postal vote officers, because every man has his political beliefs. Perhaps there is only one available in the district and if he so desires he need not agree to take postal votes. If we are going to have postal voting system, let it be an open go for all. The man who is really an employer has no right to be a postal vote officer. When my time comes for election I want to see that I am not lost in the rush of postal votes. I object to the appointment being restricted to employers.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: As the amended clause reads, a great number of station owners in the North-West will be deprived of their votes. Mr. Cornell has included station owners as well as station overseers, but very few of the station owners are down here. The result will be that the station owner being a postal vote officer, will not be able to take his own vote. In the Gascoyne we had 90 odd stations, and 70 of the station owners would have been deprived of their vote had not the Chief Electoral Officer agreed to the appointment of a second postal vote officer at each station, and in most instances there being no overseer at the station the owner's wife was appointed. That is an objectionable way of doing things, and not effective. In 1925 when we were discussing an amendment of the Electoral Act, I moved an amendment in the Assembly which was supported by every North-West member and accepted by the Minister. That amendment was incorporated in the Bill as it left the Assembly, but it was thrown out in this Chamber, and consequently was not embodied in the Act. This was the amendment—

*Postal Vote Officer enabled to vote in absence.*

(1) If any person appointed as a postal vote officer is himself an elector having the right under this subdivision to vote by post, and there is not a magistrate or postal vote officer before whom he can conveniently attend to vote by post, he may, for the purpose only of enabling his own vote to be taken, delegate by writing under his hand to any other elector his power and duty as a postal vote officer.

(2) For the purpose of taking such vote the delegate shall be deemed a postal vote officer by the Minister, and when signing his name on the counterfoil, endorsement or otherwise, and

in taking the elector's declaration shall describe himself as "deputy postal vote officer appointed under Section 91A."

(3) Every postal vote officer delegating his authority pursuant to this section shall forthwith report the matter in writing to the Chief Electoral Officer.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. member will move that as a new clause.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am only drawing the attention of the Committee to something about which probably they are not aware, and that is the difficulty of getting votes of the far distant station people. Here is a simple method which would apply to most parts of the State. I do not like the inclusion of the mail contractor who is tearing round with postal votes perhaps hundreds of miles.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is not intended.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I know that many drivers have been appointed postal vote officers and have taken books round with them, and that has been permitted by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I realise that Mr. Cornell is striving to patch up the old postal vote system, but I am afraid he will not succeed. We shall have the same corruption that has been practised ever since the measure has appeared on the statute-book. I remember on one occasion I was the victim. The only time in my life when I attended the count at the Central Province chief polling place, I noticed that about 110 postal votes which were against me were in two different handwritings, an excellent writing it was too. I reported the matter to Mr. Stenberg who was then Chief Electoral Officer and he made an investigation. He discovered that 112 of those votes were just as I had depicted. About two-thirds of the number were in one writing and the other third in another handwriting. Fortunately my majority was able to stand it but if action had been taken the election would have been upset. Even my opponent could have upset the election if I had had a narrow majority. Those votes were illegally cast; in fact they were frauds. The Chief Electoral Officer told me he could certify to the character of the postal vote officer and I took no action. However, those are the facts. Now I begin to think of it, I am certain, as I was at the time, that corruption had been practised, and that these men had been employed solely for the purpose of fraudulently pre-

paring ballot papers against me. There was in Perth an organisation not of the best type, and I believe that through the medium of that organisation and the employment of those two men this thing was done. No doubt it has been done ever since, and probably had been done before.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: Yes, hundreds of times.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I daresay that is so.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I have gone carefully through the names listed, and I fail to see what chance an outback farmer has of being appointed under the amendment. In a district 35 miles away from the railway, what earthly hope will a farmer, with perhaps 1,000 or 1,500 acres, have of being appointed a postal vote officer? As regards the driver of a mail coach, a postal vote officer cannot take his book about with him and obtain votes. The average postal vote officer in the country plays the game, and carries out his job in the manner prescribed.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Yes, on behalf of his party; and well you know it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: In reply to the Chief Secretary, it seems to me that the hon. gentleman made out a case for restriction of postal vote officers as suggested in the Bill. The old voting system was quite right in itself; it went wrong when the men appointed postal vote officers were of a type that never should have been appointed. That is the reason for the failure of the system. Because one or two utterly unsuitable individuals were appointed postal vote officers, corruption crept in. The main object of the provision is to limit appointment as postal vote officers to men known to be suitable.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There seems to be a misapprehension that I want to restrict the field to one party. I desire nothing of the sort. Under the Federal voting system, and under the voting systems of Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia, one of these persons must sign the application as a witness in order that a ballot paper may be obtained.

Hon. G. FRASER: Or a justice of the peace.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Authorised witnesses are restricted. I would not object to the inclusion of justices of the peace. I only wish to provide that the field from which

postal vote officers of the future shall be chosen shall follow substantially the lines of the Federal system, under which an authorised witness is necessary for the obtaining of a vote. Under the provisions of the Bill, as under those of the Federal Act, enterprising canvassers may go round and obtain applications for absent votes ad lib., and afterwards go round and get the persons to vote. Though the hero of a few electoral battles, I can conscientiously affirm that I have known of but few cases of abuse. Undoubtedly thousands of persons are disfranchised under the Federal system, and undoubtedly thousands of persons will be disfranchised under the system here proposed. In the 3,500-farms area there are farmers 50 and 60 miles from a polling place; but in the interval between nomination and polling day those farmers will have been in and out of various centres, and so there would be no bar to their voting. The same remarks apply to voters along the Esperance Railway.

Hon. T. MOORE: I have known Mr. Cornell for a quarter of a century, but never before have I known him to put up such a weak argument as he has put up this evening. In the past postal vote officers have carried out their duties well. Those of our farmers who have been postal vote officers for years are now to be told that they do not know the job. Is there something wrong with farming? Is the objection that farmers are down and out to-day? They may be rich again. Mr. Holmes said that the abuses of the last few years have occurred because of an alteration in the men appointed as postal vote officers. I hold that there are honest men in all trades and callings. It will be a sad thing if this Chamber declares that a certain class are not likely to be honest as postal vote officers and that therefore postal vote officers must be selected from other classes. In that regard, if we start along this line we shall have to go right on. I repeat that there is character amongst the whole of our people. I do hope that this proposal will be dropped, for otherwise we shall be a laughing stock when we go out amongst the people of the country.

Hon. A. THOMSON: No doubt Mr. Cornell's object is a good one, but I am afraid the result of this provision would be prejudicial to quite a large portion of the outback areas of the State.



Hon. J. M. Macfarlane: And in the metropolitan area as well.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I have in mind places many miles from a railway. If you were to ask the department to appoint a justice of the peace to any one of those localities, you would be laughed at. In many parts of my province, unless the Electoral Department prepared to provide a greater number of polling booths than they have provided in the past, hundreds of electors will be disfranchised. The postal votes are for the benefit of people seven miles from a polling booth. Many electors in the outback parts of my province have not seen a polling booth for years, and I cannot visualise their coming in to vote unless someone goes out and brings them in. I am afraid this provision will mean that hundreds of people in country districts will not have an opportunity to vote. If it be intended to retain the old postal voting system, let us embody the whole of its provisions.

Progress reported.

*House adjourned at 9.51 p.m.*

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*Wednesday, 20th November, 1935.*

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

### "HANSARD" REPORTS.

MR. SPEAKER [4.32]: I desire to make a statement in regard to a question which arose yesterday evening. During the dis-

cussion on the Education Estimates last night, I understand that the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr Doney) stated that he had been incorrectly reported by "Hansard" in being represented as having said that he could name a hundred smaller schools that were urgently needed in the farming areas. I have here the reporter's transcript in which the passage is clearly typed, as follows:—

I question whether it [a school at East Perth] was as urgently needed as I dare say are a hundred smaller schools I could name in the farming areas.

That is as the hon. member's speech appears in "Hansard" of the 14th August, page 217. The same page of the transcript bears a couple of slight alterations elsewhere in the hon. member's own handwriting; so evidently the hon. member not only made the statement, but passed it as correct when he perused the typescript. I have also seen the shorthand note and the "hundred" is recorded plainly in figures. The "West Australian" of the 15th August reported the passage thus—

He . . . . . thought the money was more urgently needed for 100 smaller schools he could name in farming areas.

As Chairman of the Printing Committee, which controls "Hansard," I thought it only fair to state these facts to the House to show that the reporter in this instance was not at fault.

MR. DONEY (Williams - Narrogin) [4.35]: Am I permitted to make a reply, Mr. Speaker?

The Premier: Yes. Apologise.

Mr. DONEY: I must express my surprise that this matter should have been deemed of sufficient importance to be brought up; but I have to defer to your decision, Mr. Speaker, on that point. Perhaps, despite holding that opinion, I may say I appreciate the jealousy of the "Hansard" staff, or of the particular member of the staff making complaint, for the undoubtedly fine reputation the staff have achieved for themselves in the matter of correctness of the reports which they put up. I think, too, that I will be the very first to concede that not only do they report the words of hon. members, but that they also contrive to preserve the sentiments which hon. members desire to convey. I am supposed to have said "one hundred," whereas in an explana-