

Mr. Heron was a friend of all of us and of everyone with whom he came into contact. A large-hearted, good-natured, good-tempered man, he thought only well of people, and never ill of them. We cannot afford the loss of such a man. He was with us for the past eight years, and during the whole of that time he invariably displayed the utmost good-temper in the most trying circumstances. This occasion, I believe, is the first on which anything of the kind has happened within the precincts of Parliament in this State, although it has happened many times in other States. I do not know what there is in public life that takes so much out of members, but there is something—perhaps suppressed excitement or irritation—that is harmful to some natures. I agree with the Premier that we shall miss Mr. Heron, and that we shall all remember him for a very long time. He did his duty loyally by this country and the people of this country. We mourn his loss, and we deeply sympathise with his family.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.37]: It is my sorrowful duty also to support the motion moved by the Premier. The sudden death of our highly respected colleague should remind us all of our inevitable destiny. Tom Heron in his passing from us, might be said to have died at his post. We all desire to extend to his loved ones our sincerest and deepest sympathy and trust for consolation they will be able to lift their eyes above to Him in whose hands alone are the issues of life and death, and to whose mercy the bereaved can look for help and consolation.

MR. SPEAKER [4.38]: Hon. members will pardon me if I add briefly to the kindly words uttered by the Leaders of the parties in this Chamber. I feel that personally I have suffered a loss by the decease of the hon. member. From what has been said and from what we all know, the deceased was a loyal comrade to all his fellow-legislators in this Assembly. He was an earnest citizen and, may I say, a conscientious politician, a kindly father, an affectionate husband, a man amongst men. We all feel his loss, and if we feel it so keenly, what must they feel who mourn for him to-night? I ask members to carry the motion by standing in their places.

Question passed; members standing.

House adjourned at 4.10 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th October, 1928.

	PAGE
Questions: Mining, crane at Comet Vale	1094
Lead ore, railway freights	1094
Motion: Main Roads Board administration, to inquire by Select Committee	1095
Bills: Forests Act Amendment, Report	1100
Railways Discontinuance, 2R.	1100
Fertilisers, Com.	1107
Dried Fruits Act Amendment, Com. Report	1109
Abattoirs Act Amendment, 2R., Com.	1111
Adjournment: Royal Show	1116

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

QUESTION—MINING, CRANE AT COMET VALE.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, On what date was a crane erected at the Comet Vale railway station? 2, As the Gladstone and Sand Queen Gold Mines Limited recently re-organised, issued fresh capital, and resumed mining operations at Comet Vale, what prompted the Government to remove the only crane available at that centre? 3, What is the estimated cost of damage to the crane by the explosives used in dismantling it? 4, Is it proposed to re-erect it after effecting the necessary repairs? If so, where?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, 11th November, 1912. 2, There is no use for the crane at Comet Vale. 3, The cost of damage, if any, is not yet known. 4 (a) Yes. (b) Salmon Gums.

QUESTION—LEAD ORE, RAILWAY FREIGHTS.

Hon. E. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Having regard for the low price of lead, and in an effort to assist lead mining operations throughout the Northampton mining areas, will the Government favourably consider the desirability of reducing the railway rates on lead ore from Ajana and other stations to Fremantle? 2, Is the Chief Secretary aware that the present rate charged is 26s. 10d. per ton from Ajana, whereas if departmental regulations were complied with, and ore were sent in trucks which would otherwise return empty, the rate would be 16s. per ton?

3, Cannot instructions be given that during the winter months the cheaper rate will operate until the price of lead enables the men engaged in the industry to make a living and pay the higher rate?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, It would not be possible to reduce the present rates, which are non-paying. 2, The rate charged when trucks have to be supplied from Geraldton is 21s. 7d., and 16s. per ton if truck is loaded in to Ajana. 3, Unless the trucks are returning empty the low rate could not be charged.

MOTION—MAIN ROADS BOARD ADMINISTRATION.

To inquire by Select Committee.

HON. H. STEWART (South-East)
[4.35]: I move—

That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the provisions of the Main Roads Act, 1925, and the administration thereof.

Prior to May last the Main Roads Act had been in operation for barely two years. That was about sufficiently long to enable one to form an estimate as to how the provisions of the Act operated and how they had been administered. At that time the Main Roads Board made allocations under Section 30 of the Act of the proportion of the expenditure on main roads that was to be borne by the local authorities on the basis of the benefit they would receive. This stage was marked by an outcry from the local authorities concerned, by letters and requests to the Press, and by protests and resolutions from the local governing authorities against the contributions they were called upon to pay for those benefits. Furthermore, the road boards called district conferences and also passed resolutions of protest. There were also condemnations of the administration of the Main Roads Board and charges of wasteful expenditure. The outcry seemed universal, and came from all who were chiefly concerned. I have read them all and have copies of all the resolutions and other matters that were published. They form quite a bulky amount of printed matter. That outcry has been attributed by the Government to political propaganda for electioneering purposes. I have been unable to find any evidence in support of that view. My first intimation that this Act, which had been

treated as a non-party measure, was being used as a factor in party politics was the report of the speech by Mr. C. W. Hammond, a candidate for the Metropolitan Province. In the "Daily News" of the 21st May last Mr. Hammond is reported as having said—

The Main Roads Act of to-day was a distinct product of the Legislative Council, being formulated by Mr. Stewart, M.L.C., and a select committee of six, and it is this product of the Upper House that is responsible entirely for the protests that are being made and wrongly placed to the responsibility of the Government.

If the legislation is bad, the select committee is primarily responsible, but if the evils complained of arise not so much from the legislation as from the administration, then the board, and the Government who appointed and supervise them, are responsible. From the many and extensive complaints through the Press prior to Mr. Hammond's statement I will quote only one as an illustration. This was published in the "West Australian" of the 23rd April of this year and is as follows:—

Within the last week conferences of local authorities have been held at Bridgetown, Beverley and Geraldton, and all have passed resolutions strongly critical of the administration of the Main Roads Act.

Mr. Robert Briggs, chairman of the Armadale-Kelmscott Road Board, said that there seemed to be State-wide dissatisfaction with the manner in which the Main Roads Act was being administered. His board had interviewed the Main Roads Board, but had been unable to get any satisfaction.

The local authorities, he said, had been promised preference when road construction contracts were being let, but they had been disappointed.

"About 400 men," he said, "were dumped on a stretch of road near the Narrogin Inn on January 5, 1927, just in time to qualify for votes at the last Legislative Assembly elections. After some delay they commenced work, and in May we received notification from the Main Road Board that it intended to declare the stretch a main road. Under the Act, the board was not entitled to enter our territory without first giving 30 days' notice. When my board met the Main Roads Board I pointed out this breach of the Act to the acting chairman (Mr. R. J. Anketell). Mr. Anketell admitted the breach and said, 'We were forced into it.' He made this admission and statement in the presence of all the members of my board.

Mr. Anketell should have an opportunity to explain that he was forced into this position. In connection with the administration of the Act many things require to be cleared up from the point of view of the

local authorities as well as of the board. The Act provided certain facilities whereby the Main Roads Board could utilise the services of the local governing authorities. Because of the lead given by this House on the recommendations of the select committee, these facilities were made available, but the services of the local governing authorities have not been utilised by the Main Roads Board. This is a matter that concerns no particular party, not even the Government. It is essentially a matter that concerns the Main Roads Board. Members of that board particularly should have the opportunity either to justify their actions, or being shown in what way they have been remiss, and how they can profit by the experience and mistakes of the past. The road in question was started on the 5th January. Work was discontinued and months elapsed before it was resumed, and when photographs were taken it was shown that stinkwort was growing between the foundations 2ft. 6in. in height.

Hon. H. Seddon: When was the work resumed, do you know?

Hon. H. STEWART: The quotations I have made come from a great number of statements that have been published in the Press. I suggest that those statements fully warrant an inquiry into the administration of the Main Roads Board, so that it may be ascertained whether this has been reasonably good and in accordance with the Act. At the present moment the board is building the Canning-road from the Causeway to Fremantle. I understand the money is coming from loan funds, and that the cost of the road will be £16,000 a mile. I also understand that £140,000 will be required to complete the work. It is desirable that this also should be investigated, and that we should know how it is that such big expenditure has been incurred, and what parts are being played respectively by the Government, the Main Roads Board, and the local authorities. Considerable confusion of thought has been displayed in what has been written and said concerning the actual provisions of the Act. For instance, protagonists of the Government contend that all the outcry and dissatisfaction arose because of the amendments made in the Government Bill on the unanimous recommendations of the select committee. It has even been said that the Government never intended to collect the whole of the

traffic fees from the licenses and registrations, that this was never embodied in the original Bill, Clause 27 of which, as it passed the Legislative Assembly, expressly provided for amendments to the Traffic Act of 1919, to take from the local governing authorities those fees which amounted to over £100,000 for the financial year ended the 30th June, 1927. There has been no provision whereby either the public or Parliament may know what is the position in connection with the Main Roads Board administration. The main outcry from all sources has come from the road boards, because of the assessments under which local authorities have been called upon to contribute. This was put into the Bill on the recommendation of the select committee, and at the express request of the 1924 road board conference. The resolutions carried at the conference were before the select committee when the recommendations were drawn up. As a representative of the select committee, I would point out that what has been provided in Section 30 was inserted at the request of and on the evidence of the road board conference and other associations. Section 30 is that which provides for the local authorities to be called upon to contribute half of the loan money that was spent by the State Government in the provision of main roads, under the heading of "construction costs," and also one-half in regard to the cost of maintenance. That was in accordance with a recommendation embodied at the request of the road board conference at that time. We shall have a good deal to say about Section 30, so I want hon. members to understand what the position really is. Some people say that the road boards are asked to pay for their roads out of revenue and that the State has been doing the same thing. That is not so. The contributions I refer to come from loan funds. The local authorities are not asked to pay half the actual amount expended in any year, but to pay $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest on the capital expenditure for that year, under the heading of "construction costs." The basis on which the road boards or local governing authorities are asked to contribute is the Main Roads Board's dictum as to the extent the respective road boards benefit because of work done on a main road, whether that road goes through the road board's territory, or passes some distance away from it.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: The road may be a hundred miles away.

Hon. H. STEWART: That is so. The Main Roads Board can assess the benefit that, in their opinion, accrues to the road board as the result of the construction of the main road. The local authorities have the right of appeal against the Main Roads Board's decisions. One of the troubles that have arisen is that the members of the Main Roads Board have admitted they made preliminary assessments to ascertain how they would be received, in consequence of which they have not really received appeals, but rather protests and repudiations. The main outcry has been on account of Section 30, which was embodied in the Act on the recommendation of the Road Boards Conference, of the Good Roads Association, and of other similar bodies. Another cause of the outcry has been the alleged wasteful expenditure on road construction. Dealing first with the outcry against the contributions required from local authorities, the latest information I have at my disposal shows that the local authorities have been assessed on the amount expended as at the 30th June, 1927, for the payment of interest on £20,000. That represents an outlay of £1,300 per annum. That is for a period of 30 years. During that period, on the recommendation of the select committee, local authorities will have received £100,000 from traffic fees that would not have come into their possession had the Government's original Bill been adopted in its entirety. Then again, the statements made from time to time by Ministers have really camouflaged the position. Do the people really understand that as against the outlay of £1,300 by the local governing authorities, they have to offset the £100,000 that they will receive from traffic fees? Really £114,000 has been spent in making those two main roads up to the 30th June, 1927, and that represents a burden upon the local governing authorities of £1,300 per annum. I do not say that £1,300 per annum is not more than the local governing authorities can pay, but I do say that the great majority of the people of Western Australia and of those interested in road matters, do not realise the position that arose as a result of the actions taken by the select committee and by the Legislative Council, which have been held up to ridicule and opprobrium on this particular question. They do not appreciate the fact

that as against the penalty of £1,300 that was imposed at the request of the road boards and on the recommendation of the select committee, they benefit by the return to the local authorities, of traffic fees amounting to £100,000. Thus hon. members will realise that as an offset against the burden of £1,300 that was recommended by the select committee, by the Road Boards Association and other similar bodies there has to be taken into consideration the recommendation of the select committee that secured a return to them in traffic fees to the 30th June, 1927, the large amount I have already mentioned. Then again, that amount will increase from year to year as the number of motor vehicles increases. In a statement that appeared in the "West Australian" of the 4th May last the Premier, replying to considerable criticism of the Main Roads Board's operations that had been appearing in the Press for about a week, said—

If the Bill as introduced had been passed, the local authorities would not have been called upon to pay interest and sinking fund on half the loan moneys which the State has to find for main and arterial roads—

I wish to draw attention to the Premier's importation of the word "arterial" into the discussion. That word is quite foreign to the whole subject. I have not found it anywhere in connection with the main roads legislation. I suggest, therefore, that we take no notice of that word, unless we can get the Government to construct arterial roads and regard them as national roads, thus relieving the local authorities of an additional burden—

—nor would they have been required, as they now are, to find half the cost of maintenance.

I have already pointed out that the Government's Bill, as it came to us originally, provided that they would keep the traffic fees themselves. Those fees amount to more than 23 times the total contribution required from the local authorities under the provisions of Section 30, not for one year but for the period to date. In a reply furnished by the Premier to a question asked in the Legislative Assembly, he indicated that that was the position to date, which I take to be up to the 30th June of this year. The Premier indicated that the local authorities of the State had been assessed to the extent of £4,500 under that heading. In one year the traffic fees they received amounted to 23

times the total allocation for the contribution claimed from local authorities towards the construction of main roads. It has been remarked that the statements by Ministers and others have reflected upon the select committee and upon myself. If hon. members thoroughly examine the position in the light of the actual facts, they will ascertain that no reflection can be cast upon us regarding the exercise of bad judgment or the taking of wrong action. Continuing the Premier said—

The State would have been under an obligation to find loan money to meet that cost and to maintain the roads without assistance from the local authorities.

Quite so! The Premier's statement is true in substance, but it does not convey the proper impression. The Premier does not fairly place before the public the proposals that were embodied in the Government's original Bill. To place a proper interpretation upon the words, "the State would have been under an obligation to find loan money to meet that cost" to support the Premier's contention, it would mean that the Government would have received £100,000 a year and more as time went on. On the other hand, the Government do not receive that amount under the Act as it stands now and as it was amended at the instigation of the select committee. The Government would have kept traffic fees amounting to that figure. The evidence of the Under Secretary for Public Works, when he was before the select committee, showed that it was intended, in addition to retaining the traffic fees, to impose an additional land tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the pound without exemption, and that extra tax was estimated to bring in a further £60,000. It is now known that that amount would have represented more like £75,000. This was the generosity of the Government towards the local authorities and the land owners. The amount to be taken from the local authorities would have been over twenty times more than they were subsequently assessed for contribution under Section 30, on top of which the Government proposed to take away an additional £75,000 from the land owners. So much for that camouflaged speech. Then I would instance the attitude of the Chief Secretary when he spoke on the Address-in-Reply. Neither by intent nor by inadvertence did I convey that the work of the Main Roads Board had

been brought under political influence by an amendment passed by the Legislative Assembly. The Chief Secretary said in the course of his speech—

There was no warrant for Mr. Stewart's statement that the board had been brought under political influence by an amendment passed by the Legislative Assembly.

I made no such statement. Again, the Chief Secretary said—

It was very unfair, therefore, for Mr. Stewart to say that Cabinet was blameworthy—

I did not state that Cabinet was blameworthy. Mr. Hamersley interjected and I replied that a certain amendment had allowed to creep into the Bill the possibility of political influence. I did not apply that to main road construction or to the construction of developmental roads when I referred to that amendment. I wish to assure the Leader of the House that I am not mentioning this point in a spirit of antagonism, but merely in an explanatory sense. A misunderstanding has arisen between the Chief Secretary and myself and that misunderstanding is on paper. I do not cast any aspersion at all. I believe, if the Chief Secretary were to carefully read through my statement, he would agree with me. I fully acquit the Chief Secretary of any intention to misrepresent me. I know full well the Leader of the House would not do such a thing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But he sometimes puts up things to knock them down.

Hon. H. STEWART: In the statement made by Ministers, there has been no misrepresentation of facts. The statements have been absolutely correct to the letter, but the statements have been such as to invite inferences that have been quite erroneous. The statements have left people to draw their own inferences, and Ministers' utterances were such that the inferences likely to be drawn were favourable to the case put up by Ministers. Then the Chief Secretary continued—

—To lead the public to believe that the protests that had been received by local authorities had to do with developmental roads was an extraordinary statement for the chairman of the select committee to make.

I know that the Chief Secretary is a busy man, but if he carefully reads my remarks, he will acknowledge that I made no such assertion, neither did I seek to create any such impression. I feel confident that any fair-minded man, after carefully reading

my remarks on the Main Roads Act—and those remarks will be found reported in "Hansard," pages 83 and 84—will come to no other conclusion than that the Chief Secretary's statements were not justified. I acquit the Minister of anything in the nature of misrepresentation. I know that his time is very fully occupied, but I feel sure that if he had had the opportunity to carefully peruse my speech, the misunderstanding would not have taken place. As chairman of that select committee, I felt it my duty to defend the committee and also the Legislative Council by answering the statements and charges that appeared in the Press. In doing so, I endeavoured to refrain from making anything in the nature of an accusation of political interference with the board. Mr. Becher, Chairman of the Harvey Road Board, in a communication to the "West Australian" of the 31st August, said :—

I note Mr. Drew's remarks, published in the "West Australian" of the 25th August. Surely he is speaking in ignorance of the facts when he says, "In the Government Bill the cost of construction and maintenance of main roads was a financial responsibility of the Government and of no one else. Traffic fees were all the Government asked in return." Section 30 does better than this. Does Mr. Drew know what traffic fees amount to? To put it shortly, the Government would take away only five per cent. to ten per cent. of our roads, but would take 66 per cent. of our revenue."

Mr. Becher's letter, after dealing with other phases of the matter, concludes—

We have not advanced a step by recent conferences or debates in the House, and the country is anxiously awaiting a statement from the Premier as to the future policy.

That is the statement by the chairman of a local governing body, and many such were made. It seems to me, considering all that has been written, that the concluding statement in Mr. Becher's letter indicates the need for the appointment of a select committee to investigate the existing position, and to make recommendations in the event of its being proved that there has been anything wrong either in respect of the provisions of the Act or the administration. At the annual special conference of the South-West Road Board representatives, extending from Pinjarra to Manjimup, the Collie delegates were successful in carrying a motion that the Forests Department should contribute to the local authorities where that department was making use

of the roads. That seems to be a reasonable provision to suggest; something should be done in the way of making provision from forestry revenue towards the maintenance of roads instead of paying the whole of that revenue, such as royalties from sandalwood, into consolidated revenue. In dealing with the Main Roads Bill of 1924, the select committee recognised that the Bill made provision for certain stated classes of road work and for administration and finance. For some years there had been a growing public demand for better roads. The Road Boards Association had, as stated by Ministers and myself in recent months, requested in no uncertain terms that there should be legislation on the lines embodied in the amendments recommended by the select committee. That committee held 14 sittings in the country and 10 at Parliament House. Witnesses were freely invited by advertisement and in other ways to give evidence before the committee. The officers of many local authorities—country, suburban and metropolitan—as well as Government officials, were examined. Ministerial statements have insinuated that the amendments made at the instance of the select committee were responsible for trouble. The only definite amendment of the Act which was the result of public outcry is that the contributions required by Section 30 be reduced. In Victoria, where the legislation was what ours is, it has been necessary to classify a number of the roads as State highways, and reduce the local governing authority's contributions for maintenance of main roads from one-half to one-third. The State pays half the cost of construction and the whole cost of maintenance of State highways, and the local authorities pay the other half of the cost of construction. If it has been necessary in Victoria to grant financial relief to local authorities, then it would seem that amendments of our Act in a similar direction are needed. The select committee had to review the Bill and its objectives, and in accordance with the evidence submitted to it, suggested the amendments that were thought necessary. At that time there seemed no weight of evidence for, and no reasonable prospect of Government acquiescence in the provision of State highways. From casual observation while travelling, it has seemed to me that main road construction being carried on in this State is far more elaborate and expensive than is the case in

connection with State highways in Victoria, highways such as the Prince's Highway, which carries many times the volume of traffic borne by our main roads. Section 11 of the Main Roads Act of this State provides for the publication and making available for general information of the results of all surveys and investigations on (a) What shall be main roads; (b) resources of material for road construction; (c) most effective methods of road construction and maintenance for the whole or any part of the State, and (d) deviations in existing roads. I doubt whether anything has been done in this respect during the period of the operation of the Act, now about 2½ years. Road engineers in the other States have been looking for the report of the Chairman of the Main Roads Board on his world tour. Section 18 provides that the board shall report to the Minister at least once a year on its operations. I do not think any information at all has ever been made public. I will not make the definite statement that this information has not seen the light of day, but I draw attention to that portion of the Act which provides for the presentation of reports. I doubt very much whether the spirit of the Act has been observed. The Chairman of our Main Roads Board was, I think, about the fifth engineer to make a tour of the United States and Great Britain in connection with road construction. So far, however, we have heard nothing of the result of his observations in other parts of the world. Parliament should receive such reports. Certainly Parliament should have an annual report from the board and a provision in the Act to that effect should prove a safeguard to the board as well as affording it an opportunity to suggest amending legislation. The Act also provides for the making of regulations. The only regulations that I have been able to discover as having been laid on the Table of the House related to level crossings. One of the most important matters, however, is the provision that the board shall report to the Minister at least once a year on its operations. The select committee endorsed that part of the Bill when it was under consideration, but it appears that an amendment is necessary because the board is well into its third year of existence and I am not aware that Parliament has received any report to show what the board has done. The board cer-

tainly has spent far larger sums of money than at the time of their appointment it was thought they would have the opportunity to handle. Parliament should receive reports annually and such a provision making it imperative on the board furnishing an annual statement should prove a safeguard to the board as well as affording an opportunity to suggest amending legislation. The attitude of the "Worker" newspaper also indicates that it is desirable a select committee should be appointed. In its issue of the 4th May last, it stated—

The Government have been asked to intervene and abolish the board. The board are simply administering what is, in effect, a Country Party measure. The abolition of the board could only be accomplished by the Government introducing a Bill to amend the Act and the Country Party undertaking a complete somersault on its principles.

That is a reflection on the select committee that dealt with the Bill, since two of its seven members were associated with the Country Party. There was a good deal more in the "Worker" written in a similar strain, but I have no intention of labouring the question. Everything that I have said stresses the importance of having a select committee to inquire into the position at the present time. The former Honorary Minister, in his manifesto to the electors, when he was contesting the Central Province election last May, showed that he failed to realise the true position of affairs. Without trespassing on the time of the House at this stage, and without imputing any unworthy motives in connection with this Act, which has been considered, and I contend is, a non-party measure, I have, I think, established a sufficiently good case for the granting of a select committee to inquire into the provisions of the Main Roads Act and its administration.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

BILL—RAILWAYS DISCONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 3rd October.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.19]: I find that there are included in this Bill two railways which are practically goldfields railways. There is, however, a distinct dif-

ference between this measure and that which was introduced a year ago. The present Bill provides that the railways shall "cease to be Government railways, and the cost thereof, as charged to the Government railways capital account, may be omitted from the accounts prepared under Part 4 of the Government Railways Act, 1904." Last session's Bill provided that the railways should cease to be Government railways and that the material therein might be used in the construction of any authorised railways. The question arises whether this Bill is simply an attempt to make an adjustment of the railway finances, or whether the intention is to carry out the full scope of the 1927 measure and take up the lines. If the latter is the intention, we should combat it, because I consider that those railways have not had a chance of demonstrating their usefulness during the last 12 months. I make that statement because of the fact that in each case traffic has been prevented from running: the points have been spiked. So that if there was any chance of developing traffic, it was effectually prevented by the action of the Railway Department. Apparently the material in the lines is worth taking up, although the contention was that it would need a relatively enormous expenditure to bring them up to Government standard. The fact remains that up to the introduction of last session's Bill the lines were being satisfactorily used. The argument then was that it was unsafe to use them.

The Honorary Minister: Quite correct, too.

Hon. H. SEDDON: In drawing comparisons between Government railways and private lines, one finds the results all to the disadvantage of the Government railways as to traffic operations. By way of illustration I may point out that the White Hope line, which was being used by a firewood company and was taken over by the Government, carried trains of 300 tons' load while in private hands, and that as soon as it was taken over by the Government the load was reduced to 70 tons. That is just an illustration of the difference in cost of operations between Government railways and private railways. An explanation is required from the Government of the great disparity shown in the haulage power of locomotives under private and under official management. I repeat, these railways have not had a fair chance

during the last 12 months. Before the proposal for their discontinuance was re-introduced, an attempt should have been made to see whether traffic was offering. By way of interjection I addressed to the Honorary Minister an inquiry as to the taking up of the Sandstone line. I would like to know the exact amount of traffic which has passed over that line during the last 12 months, as compared with the amount of traffic available on those two goldfields lines during the time they were open for operation. I contend that if it is justifiable to take up these two lines, it is equally justifiable to remove the material now in the Sandstone line. If the Government are actuated by motives of economy, they should carry out that policy consistently and adopt the same method in connection with all railways now being run at a loss.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.23]: I am grateful to Mr. Harris and Mr. Seddon, who represent an adjoining province, for the resistance they have offered to the passing of the Bill. I hope that that opposition, extended by two members for the North-East Province, will be supplemented by Mr. Brown and by members for the East and South Provinces, and possibly by members for the South-West Province. With adjoining provinces we have much in common, and one never knows when a helping hand may be needed. I know it is needed just at present, and I hope it will be forthcoming. The Honorary Minister's argument would lead one to believe that a justification for the taking up of the Kanowna line is that its capital cost was £54,510 and that its annual interest bill amounts to £2,300. I do not wish to be in any way disrespectful to the Honorary Minister, but I ask him to tell that to the marines. The Kanowna line has repaid its capital cost a dozen times.

The Honorary Minister: That might be so.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Not "might be so." It is so. I accept the Honorary Minister's figures as to capital cost and annual interest, assuming that there is anything in the way of capital cost owing by the Kanowna line. The case which the Honorary Minister has tried to make out is that the figures of capital cost and annual interest quoted by him constitute a reason for the pulling up of the line. Anyone who knows old

Kanowna will accept my statement that the line in question more than paid for itself in the first three years of operation. Mr. Brown, who knows the Kanowna district pretty well, will bear me out in that, I believe. For years the Eastern Goldfields railway, including the Kanowna, Leonora, and Laverton lines, carried on its back practically the whole of this State's railway system outside the metropolitan area. To-day it is argued that the Kanowna line should be pulled up because it is unsafe to work and because a large amount of money would be needed to put it into working order. I do not ask that the line shall be worked, or that the expenditure necessary to put it in working order should be incurred; but I do argue in all sincerity that the State ought to take into consideration that the line might well be left in position for a little longer, since it is, in the words of the Honorary Minister, hardly worth pulling up. The hon. gentleman said that the only use to which the rails could be put was the construction of sidings. We know that the sleepers could not be used for any other purpose, and we know that the Railway Department are not likely to remove the ballast. Now, it is a well-known fact that there is more gold latent in the Kanowna district than has ever been taken from it. The only trouble is the method of treatment. That has not yet been solved as regards the Kanowna pug. Men who know accept the statement that in the pug deposit at Kanowna there are great latent possibilities if a solution can be reached as to treatment. I do not wish to disparage one part of the State as compared with another, but I call to mind that I supported the Bill for the construction of the Wiluna railway. As regards solution of the treatment question, Wiluna ores are as much in the air to-day as is the Kanowna pug. Still, we are permitted to build a railway to Wiluna. Here we have a derelict line, 12 miles long, which has paid its way over and over again, and that line is to be pulled up because it is unsafe to work and because the present volume of traffic does not warrant the expenditure required to put the line into working order. The rails are fit only for use in sidings.

The Honorary Minister: That applies to the other line.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Even if the material in the Kanowna railway were suitable for an agricultural line, the railway itself is

only 12½ miles long. It is not a very good advertisement for the goldfields that it should be proposed to pull up these lines. Nor is it a good advertisement for the present Government, who promised to do so much to revive the gold mining industry, that they should now turn round and pull up railways in the auriferous areas. For those areas have as big a possibility to-day as they ever had in point of gold yield, if only a satisfactory treatment can be discovered. Now I come to the Lakeside line, which was purchased from the Lakeside Firewood Company during the Hampton Plains revival. The Minister, in his own words, explained that since the purchase of that railway, which was really an old wood line, all that has been lost on that proposition is some £2,000. The Minister says the rails and fastenings are bordering on the derelict stage. I venture to say that, even in the huge Hampton Plains area, there are still to be found attractive mining possibilities. This should be kept steadily in mind when we consider a proposal to pull up the railway serving that locality. For the good of the goldfields, I am very reluctant to be a consenting party to the total removal of railway lines right in the heart of the best gold mining district in Western Australia, perhaps in the world. It is anything but a good advertisement for our mining industry.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would the pulling up of this line discourage any men from going out prospecting?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It would not discourage them from going out. But bad and all as the railway may be, if there were any revival at the mines in the Hampton Plains area, or if any solution could be discovered for the treatment of the Kanowna pug, the railways are there with the earthworks and ballast, and it would then be well worth while to restore them to running order. But if once the lines are taken up, there will be nothing left to be utilised for the encouragement of the industry. The only railway line to the pulling up of which I agreed was the Lake Clifton line. The removal of that railway, we were told, was absolutely essential to the building of the Newdegate line, for which the material was required. Consequently, it was fairly easy to decide that it was better to have a number of prosperous settlers afforded railway communication for the transport of their wheat, than to have a railway lying idle.

Unlike the Lakeside line, or even the Kanowna line, the Clifton line was one that could be pulled up and transported elsewhere. I am not going to refer to the leaving out from this Bill of a short railway line that was included in a similar Bill last session, other than to warn the members representing the South-West that although they have escaped this time, probably their turn will come round again at a later opportunity. I will oppose the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. R. BROWN (North-East [5.35]: I cannot see any sound reason for the removal of these lines, especially the Kanowna line. During the last 12 months the Kalgoorlie mines have revived, and we never know when there will be a distinct revival in the Kanowna district. As long as a line is there, or even a water pipe, it is useful, for it enables prospectors to get out a few miles beyond it. It has been said that the Kanowna line is out of repair and that no trains could be run over it without a considerable expenditure on the work of restoration. Let me tell the House that if a woodline company had that railway, they would not hesitate to run loads of 300 tons over it at 30 miles an hour, after having put a few sleepers into it. I have had practical experience on the Kurramia wood line, where we used to rattle along loads of 300 tons, and even stand ready to jump in case the engine left the rails. However, it never happened, for the train always succeeded in hanging to the rails. These ballasted roads are not as good as the old bush tracks, which gave to the load, like an old gate swinging on one hinge for many a day. It is the desire of the people in my constituency that both these railways included in the Bill should be retained. I think the lines should be retained a little while longer. The Kanowna line in particular is doing no harm and, since it is only 12 miles in length, it cannot be of much use to the department. Even if the material were taken out of the road, probably it would be stacked away somewhere for another five or six years. The line, while it remains, will always be an inducement to prospectors to go out another ten miles beyond the end of it. For while the line is there the prospector can say, "If any new development occurs, I can always cart my stuff into Kanowna." And if he finds ore of sufficiently high value, the department

will very soon put the line in order for the running of trains.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What is the value of the rails in that line?

Hon. J. R. BROWN: I cannot say, but I know they are 60-lb. rails, very much heavier than are used on the wood lines, where the rails are never heavier than from 30 lbs. to 46 lbs. I hope the Kanowna line, and the Lakeside line also, will be left where they are, at all events until next session.

HON. J. EWING (South-West) [5.40]: A Bill of a similar character was introduced last session. It included the Bunbury racecourse line. I congratulate the Government on their conversion to the necessity for keeping that line where it is. As for the Bill before us, I hold it to be a wrong policy to take up any existing goldfields lines. I have a very vivid recollection of being in Kanowna 25 years ago, when the rush was on. More gold was then being taken out of Kanowna than out of any other place I have ever seen. We have been told this afternoon that the pug at Kanowna is very excellent, and naturally we infer that there is plenty of gold in it. The only difficulty seems to lie in the working of this pug, which is of a somewhat refractory character. Possibly at no distant date this line will be required. I recollect the purchase of the Lakeside line. The present Government were in favour of it, and I think the Mitchell Government had something to do with the purchase of it. The policy of pulling up these lines is altogether wrong. If the goldfields are going ahead, as I believe they are, the policy should be to leave them all the facilities they have. On these grounds, I cannot vote for the Bill. I can quite understand the Government wanting to have those rails for other purposes, although I believe they have lots of rails in stock and so 12½ miles of rails cannot be a very burning question with them. I sincerely ask the Minister to reconsider this question, and avoid doing something that may be opposed to the future development of these goldfields localities. I do not like to oppose the Bill, because it looks like economy on the part of the Government, a desire to save money. Still I cannot find it in my heart to vote against the continuation of existing railways. To suggest that our goldfields are going down is a very bad advertisement for the State,

and I hope the House will thoroughly consider the position before agreeing to the second reading. Mr. Cornell referred to the pulling up of the Lake Clifton line. That line should never have been taken up. It was a great mistake. Left where it was, the line would have been of great value to the development of that part of Western Australia. It is bad policy for us to build lines and then pull them up.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.43]: I am not opposing the second reading of the Bill, but I desire some information upon the point raised by Mr. Seddon. I should like to know from the Minister whether it is the intention, if the Bill be passed, to pull up this line. I notice that in the Bill of last year it was provided that the lines to be pulled up should cease to be Government railways and the material might be used for the construction of any other authorised railway; whereas in the Bill before us it is provided that the lines shall cease to be Government railways, and the cost thereof, as charged to the Government Railways capital account, may be omitted from that account. So this may be intended to be really a bookkeeping Bill to wipe out the capital cost of the railways and let the material stand as it is. If that is the intention, no harm will be done by passing the Bill. In the Bill of last session the Government asked that the material might be used in the construction of any other authorised railway. I presume there was real necessity for putting that provision in the Bill, that the department wanted the material. But in this Bill all that they ask is for authority to exclude the cost of the lines from the capital account of the Railways, to write it off. They do not ask for authority to use the materials elsewhere. If there was necessity to ask in the Bill of last session for the authority of Parliament to use the material elsewhere, surely there is necessity to-day to get the authority of Parliament for the use of the material in the lines contained in the Bill before us. But if this is merely a bookkeeping Bill, then do not let us ask the Railways to carry the cost of these lines: for there can be no harm in granting the authority asked for by the Government, since it does not include authority to remove the material.

Hon. H. Stewart: But will they not take away the material and use it and then bring down a validating Bill?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We cannot help that. I should like the Minister to make clear the point whether the Government are merely asking to exclude this line from the railway accounts or whether they intend to use the material.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.45]: I am always ready to commend the Government for any indication of intention to practise economy. Every member, I am sure, will hail with appreciation anything of the kind that may be done by the Government. I have endeavoured to follow closely the arguments for and against this particular Bill, but the question that presents itself to my mind is, "What are the prospects of the district that has been served by this particular line." Undoubtedly the railway would not have been constructed in the first instance had there not been sufficient evidence of gold in the district.

Hon. J. Ewing: Kanowna was one of the most famed places.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is so.

Hon. E. H. Harris: You are about 20 years behind the times. The Kanowna line was one of the most profitable railways on the eastern goldfields.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am aware of that, and I thank the hon. member for reminding me of the fact. I can well recall that, during the boom in gold mining many years ago, whenever a property was put before the public that had its situation in or near Kanowna, it was regarded as a much-favoured centre, and mines floated there received a large measure of support from investors. That was the cause of the railway being built to Kanowna. Now, because of a slump in the gold mining industry, it is proposed to remove the line. I do not for a moment think that Kanowna has seen the last of the fame that it gained in former years.

Hon. G. Fraser: That is said about all other goldmining towns.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It may be said of many goldmining towns, but Mr. Cornell has reminded us that Kanowna pug has been undergoing a good deal of experiment.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: The main thing is to secure Kanowna mugs.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: While the particular form of goldmining peculiar to Kanowna has been undergoing a considerable

amount of experiment, we cannot say that the town has seen the last of its fame. I am rather hopeful of seeing what I am sure the Government desire, and that is a revival of our goldfields, and I am more than apprehensive that if they start to remove a railway from a centre such as Kanowna—

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: How many inhabitants are there in Kanowna to-day?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I admit there are very few, but I am inclined to view the matter in this way: The rails have been in the ground for a great many years.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Would you extend that line to Perkolilli?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If circumstances justified an extension, I would be agreeable to its being extended wherever the hon. member may suggest. Before deciding to close the line and do what the Bill suggests, we might take into account the possibilities of the district. What does the Bill suggest? It suggests that this line shall cease to be a Government railway. Mr. Holmes has compared this Bill with the measure presented to and rejected by this House last year, and has directed attention to the point that provision was made in the Bill of last year for the Government to use the rails for any other purpose.

Hon. J. Ewing: Could they not do so if this Bill were passed?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I think it might be argued that those words in the Bill of last year were more or less surplusage, for the simple reason that if we once pass the Bill the effect will be to close the line for all time.

Hon. J. Cornell: It will repeal the Act authorising the railway.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Precisely, and the Act that authorised the construction of the line will no longer exist. The line was authorised a good many years ago, and once it ceased to be a Government line, the Government might, without any special authorisation, do as they pleased with the rails and materials in the line. If goldmining in the district should be revived, it would then be necessary to introduce another Bill authorising the construction of another line to Kanowna.

Hon. J. Cornell: A line would be necessary for firewood, if for nothing else.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I hesitate to support a Bill asking us to declare that the line shall cease to be a Government railway.

While I appreciate any efforts on the part of the Government to economise, they should consider the fact that the rails are very old and are not of any considerable value, and also the loss of prestige that would result to the State from the discontinuance of the railway.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Take the cash and let the credit go.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is one way of looking at it, but I do not wish to see this State suffer in an industry that has done so much for Australia as a whole. Therefore I shall oppose the second reading.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East): [5.54]: I support the measure. The two railways have been mentioned on several occasions, and I am sure the Government know what they are doing in proposing their discontinuance. No doubt they will make good use of the rails.

Hon. J. Cornell: They will probably use them for the Kulja line.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Any private company finding that it has no use for a certain structure or service in one place does not hesitate to utilise it somewhere else. In private business it is usual to scrap things that are of no immediate use, with the idea of replacing them if they should be required again later on. We know how difficult it is to get rails for lines that are immediately needed, and doubtless the Governor consider it will be cheaper to take up those rails and use them in some other district. I believe the Government know what they are doing and are working on sound lines.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAI (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.56]: I shall support the Bill. One would need a great deal of faith to believe that all will come to pass that has been predicted by member who oppose the measure. The Government should be aware of the prospects ahead of the places in question as well as anyone else, and they desire to use the rails and fastenings elsewhere. By a peculiar coincidence, Mr. Harris asked a question as to the date a crane was erected at the Come Vale railway station, and whether it was proposed to re-erect it after effecting necessary repairs. From the Chief Secretary's reply I understand the crane has been erected at Salmon Gums. If a crane is o

no use in one place and can be utilised in another place, it is sound business to move it there.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But it was moved just as the Comet Vale mines were re-started.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: In listening to the dirge-like and doleful speeches on the Bill one would almost feel that he was attending a funeral ceremony. I hope the Government will take up the rails and make better use of them in the agricultural areas.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.58]: I support the Bill. Most of the opposition to the measure has been based on sentiment, and it is somewhat unusual to find sentiment associated with anything connected with a mining constituency. While Mr. Harris was speaking the other day I asked, by way of interjection, what the population of Kanowna was, and the hon. member replied that if I had not been so interested in the races when I was on the goldfields recently, I might have gone to Kanowna and discovered what the population was.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It is about the same as the attendance at a ratepayers' meeting in Perth—two men and a dog.

Hon. G. FRASER: While in Kalgoorlie I made inquiries about Kanowna, and the advice given me was, "It is of no use going out to Kanowna; you will not see anyone when you get there." I was on the goldfields for about 11 days and of that time all I wasted in going to the races was two half days. The remainder of the time I devoted to getting as much information as possible about the goldfields, and comparing the present-day working of the fields with what I knew of the Eastern States goldfields 20 years ago. However, that is beside the question. We should realise that the Cabinet includes two or three representatives of goldfields constituencies, and we can depend upon it that if there was any prospect of an improvement in the Kanowna district, they would have used their influence to prevent the introduction of such a Bill.

Hon. J. Cornell: You never know what is ahead of the pick.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: A truer word was never said.

Hon. G. FRASER: That may be so. Even those who are opposing the Bill have told us that the whole of the trade from

that area can be coped with by motor transport. I venture to say that even should a revival in Kanowna take place, motor transport will be capable of coping with any increase in development there.

Hon. J. Cornell: Not in the matter of firewood.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Bill will receive the support of this Chamber.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [6.0]: After listening to the debate I am inclined to oppose the second reading. Perhaps, however, it would be wiser to support it, and attempt to amend the Bill in Committee, in order to bring it into line with the Bill proposed last session.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Do you mean to include the Bunbury line?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: This seems to me a means of writing off the capital cost of these lines from the Railway Department. In times gone by the department has had the profits from these lines, and has practically had the capital repaid to it out of profits. Under this Bill it is proposed to write off the capital cost to the railways, and charge the writing off to the general taxpayer, leaving to the railways the profits which had accrued on the capital cost. That is neither a sound nor a good business proposition. If it were intended that these rails should be used for other purposes, I would support that, because it is no use leaving them to lie idle. They should, however, be a charge upon the Railway Department. In Committee I propose to move an amendment to the effect that these lines shall cease to be Government railways, and the material thereof may be used in the construction of any other authorised railway.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I thought you were going to propose to reintroduce the Bunbury line.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: No. What I propose is to leave the debit where it ought to be, against the railways. They have had the profits. They may be allowed to use the rails, and can pass through a book-keeping entry accordingly.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The Bill of last year stated that the line in question would cease to be a railway.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: This Bill goes further, and provides that the charge may be omitted from the accounts prepared under the Government Railways Act. This means

that the capital cost will not be charged to the railways.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The line may be wanted again, and a new Bill would be required to restore it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The rails will be used elsewhere. The matter can be put right in Committee. We should not write off the capital in the way proposed.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It is the embankment that costs the money. That cannot be moved. Of what use is it to leave it there? You cannot move the track.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Holmes raised a very pertinent question, namely, is this Bill a book-keeping Bill? There is no doubt it is. It is designed to relieve the railways of the capital cost of these lines. It means that they are to have all the profit that has accrued from the capital expenditure. The capital cost should remain with the railways. They should not be allowed to eliminate that cost, as well as the interest charged upon it, from their accounts.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Why not temporarily close the Kanowna line?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: A book-keeping entry could be made to include the value of the rails. To write off the capital cost and charge revenue is wrong in principle.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [6.5]: I oppose the Bill. It has been argued that if this district revives, motor transport can do all the necessary work. One of the reasons why the railways have not been paying well for the last 12 months is that the high rates charged have thrown a great deal of trade in the way of motor transport. The freight on wool and petrol and other things of that kind is very high. If the Railway Department were to reduce the charges on those goods, they would undoubtedly be carrying more traffic than is being carried to-day. As it is, they are fostering the motor transport in competition with themselves.

Hon. G. Fraser: Do you think wool would be carried by motor?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It would be carried to the nearest railhead for subsequent transport by the railways if the rates were not so high. The same argument applies throughout the State. When I was motoring recently through the country districts I noticed trucks going out to the country carrying petrol and kerosene, and returning with wool. Those are the three items on

which heavy freights are charged. If the railways were a business undertaking, run by private people, the freights on those items would be reduced with the object of defeating motor competition. This would give them more traffic in other ways. The argument applies to the Kanowna line as well as to the whole State.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Private enterprise would not give its employees three months leave for every ten years of service.

Hon. G. W. MILES: No doubt the high freights are partly attributable to that particular scheme. The railways are detrimentally affected because of the high freights charged. If necessary the higher rates could be charged on other lines, such as timber, coal and firewood, which it would not be economically sound to carry by motor transport. In this way the charges on wool, petrol and kerosene could be reduced, and more trade would go to the railways.

Hon. J. Ewing: The freights on wood and coal are high enough.

Hon. G. W. MILES: No motor transport could compete against the railways in the carriage of either wood, coal, or super. Of course super is not carried on the Kanowna line.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: An increase in the freights on super would not be very popular.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The present policy of the railways encourages motor competition. They should impose such freights that the motor trade could not compete. If that had been done, the Kanowna line would probably be running to-day. I think it will be running in the future as the sheep industry there is developed in the north-east. I feel sure that the Kanowna mines will yet produce as much gold as has come out of them in the past.

On motion by the Honorary Minister, debate adjourned.

BILL—FERTILISERS.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 3rd October; Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 8—Publication of list:

The CHAIRMAN: The Chief Secretary has a consequential amendment to move on this clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 8 of the clause the word "July" be struck out, and "November" be inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9—Offences relating to the sale of unregistered fertilisers or use of unregistered brands or names of unbranded packages:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Can this clause be applied to the newspaper which publishes the advertisement of an unregistered brand? The newspaper would not know that the brand was unregistered.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The person advertising would be liable, and not the newspaper.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 14—agreed to.

Clause 15—Limits of variation:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (b), after the words "per centum" in line 7, the following be inserted:—"Provided that an excess of water soluble or citrate soluble may be set off against a deficiency of acid soluble, and an excess of one of the water soluble or citrate soluble forms may be set off against a deficiency of the other."

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move a further amendment—

That the second proviso of the clause be struck out.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Clauses 16 to 18—agreed to.

Clause 19—Sale of fertiliser not in conformity with standard:

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 before "standard" the words "minimum chemical or physical" be inserted, and that in line 3 before "standard," the word "prescribed" be inserted.

I have conferred with the Leader of the House and he has no objection to the amendment. I have also been in touch with those who will be directly concerned with the

operations of the Bill, and they also accept the amendment.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: What is meant by "physical standard."

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The hon. member has been a school teacher, and should know!

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: It really means that the manure will do what it is intended. With superphosphate, for instance, it means that it will run through the drill and not clog in a solid mass.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I was under the impression that that was the sense in which the hon. member used the word. I would point out, however, that physical conditions alter, and it is possible, should conditions affect the manure, for the manufacturers to be held responsible. I fear that the manufacturers may be placed at an unfair disadvantage, and I think the word "physical" should be omitted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have received a letter from the Director of Agriculture, Mr. Sutton, in which he states that he has consulted the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Sayer, and he indicates in the letter that the words should be included. In effect the amendment has been prepared by Mr. Sutton and submitted to Mr. Sayer for his consideration, and Mr. Sayer has approved of it.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I went into this matter with Mr. Sutton and also with the manufacturers. They consider the amendment will improve the Bill.

Hon. H. STEWART: I regard the amendment as a distinct improvement. The use of the word "physical" is necessary. A few years ago a good deal of superphosphate was imported from England. The physical condition of some of that superphosphate left much to be desired. It was certainly cheaper to buy than super. f.o.r. Fremantle when other prices were taken into consideration, but owing to the time the farmers were held up in getting the manure to run through the drills, it would have paid them to buy other manure at three or four times the cost, for they would have been able to get on with their work without delay. I have always claimed that it was necessary to prescribe a standard having regard to the many varying influences that affect the condition of superphosphate.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 20 to 36—agreed to.

Clause 37—Regulations:

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (g) before "standards," the words "any minimum chemical or physical" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed, the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 38 to 40—agreed to.

Postponed Clause 6—Registration of Fertilisers.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That the following paragraph to stand as (d) be added to Subclause 3:—"It is likely to mislead a purchaser as to the composition of the fertiliser."

Mr. Stewart asked me for an explanation in regard to this clause. One of the definitions of brands is "trade mark" and makes provision that if a brand or a trade mark is registered, there cannot be a new brand registered while the previous one is in operation.

Hon. H. STEWART: I cannot see that, by the registration of a different brand, any evil can arise. A brand is a brand and people would buy on that brand.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I ask the hon. member to read the definition of brand. One manufacturer or importer or dealer can have one trade mark and no more.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He could have one brand, but of one, two, or three grades.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, only one grade.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move a further amendment—

That the following be added to stand as Subclause 5:—"In this section the word 'year' means the period of 12 months commencing on the 1st day of November and ending on the 31st October."

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: What is the reason for fixing this date? Most of the orders for superphosphate are put in long before the 1st November. It seems to me that that date is late in the year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The manufacturers waited on the Minister and requested that this amendment should be made. Originally it was July in the Bill.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I can bear out what the Chief Secretary has said. The manufacturers considered that July would be unsuitable and they asked that the month should be altered to November.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The railways carry at a special rate commencing on the 1st December and the month of November is fixed in the Bill because the orders start to come in at that time.

Amendment put and passed, the clause, as further amended, agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN: When the Bill was last under consideration I put clause 7, and stated Clause 8. Evidently the Clerks understood that progress was reported on Clause 7, whereas it was reported on Clause 8. As Clause 7 does not appear in the Minutes as having been passed, the President suggests that the Bill be formally recommitted for the purpose of putting Clause 7 again.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from 26th September; Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 2.

Clauses 2 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Re-enactment of Section 20:

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I move an amendment—

That all the words from the beginning of the clause down to and inclusive of "Act," in line 16, be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"Section 17 of the principal Act is amended (a) by adding a proviso to Subsection 1 as follows:—'Provided that if in any year the production of any class of dried fruits in Western Australia shall be below the State consumption the Board shall not have power to order the compulsory exportation overseas of such dried fruits.'"

Section 17 states that the board shall have power, in its absolute discretion, from time to time to determine where and in what respect of quantity the output of dried fruits produced in any part of the year has to be marketed, and to take what

ever action the board thinks proper for the purpose of enforcing such determination. As has been pointed out, it was injudicious to give such power to the Dried Fruits Board. At the present time the quantity of sultanas used is 325 tons. Those figures are taken from the latest reports. Western Australia produced 123 tons and that means that under ordinary conditions we have to import 202 tons to supply the demands of the State. If we take that on a percentage basis it means that we produce only 38 per cent. of our total consumption, and it is possible under Section 17 of the parent Act for the board to declare that the percentage of dried fruits shall be exported in accordance with the Federal quota. The export quota is 80 per cent. Applying that quota to sultanas produced here, we arrive at the peculiar position that of the 38 per cent. of our total requirements we shall have to export 30 per cent., thus consuming only 8 per cent. of our own product. The 30 per cent. would then be supplied to us by the Eastern States. We would have to export 99 tons, and import those 99 tons on top of the 202 tons we already import from the Eastern States. To give the board such a power would be unwise. My amendment is moved in the interests of the producer. In another place it was stated that the board had decided to enforce the export trade of 80 per cent. next year, and therefore the position I have described may be created. It should be mentioned that the board were not unanimous in the matter. So long as the consumption of dried fruits of any class is not met by the production here, until local production meets the local demand, the board should not be empowered to compel exportation overseas.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I support the amendment. The attitude the board propose to adopt seems to me most unjust to producers of sultanas, and most unwise. As a rule, the local market is the best market one can have, and the primary producer should be allowed to supply the local market as long as he can do it. If there was a surplus, the board could fix the quantity to be shipped overseas.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If Mr. Yelland secures his object, not only will the Bill be valueless but the Act of 1926 will be valueless also. The amendment inter-

feres with the discretion granted to the board by Section 17 of the Act. The personnel of the board consists of fruitgrowers, men engaged in the industry, who will consider their own interests in every respect. Are they likely to export dried fruits if there is a better market for them in Western Australia? The fruit fetches here about double what it fetches in London. The board could not be imagined as doing what Mr. Yelland suggests.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: The board have already agreed to do it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Then there is another remedy. The Minister has the power of veto. If the necessity arose, the Minister should be consulted, and he could veto any decision of the board. Who is to say whether the local production will be beyond the State's consumption?

Hon. H. J. Yelland: How will the board determine what will be the State's consumption this year?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: My main argument is that men engaged in the industry constitute the board.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The carrying of the amendment would repeal the Act.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, most effectually.

Hon. G. A. KEMPTON: I am absolutely in accord with the Chief Secretary. This measure must be uniform with the measures of other States; otherwise it will be inoperative. At a recent meeting of sultana growers of the Upper Swan district the following resolution was carried unanimously:

This meeting of sultana growers affirms the principle of an export quota of sultanas, and supports the proposal for the export of that portion.

The Eastern States produce a large quantity of dried fruits, and if we do not come into line with them they can easily flood the Western Australian market. For the last two years no sultanas have been exported from Western Australia, and I think there is no chance of any being exported next year. The measure is to run for three years, of which 18 months have elapsed already. Up to the present, the work of the board has been excellent. The other States produce 55,000 tons of dried fruits yearly, and the total Australian consumption yearly is 12,000 tons. Australia is certainly the best market for Australian dried fruits, but the export of a certain quantity is essential. The carrying of the amendment would

mean a serious set-back to the dried fruits industry in Western Australia. One or two growers to whom I have spoken on the subject are absolutely in favour of this amending Bill.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The previous speaker does not seem to understand the operation of the Act. Before the Act came into force, Western Australian currants could compete with Eastern States currants in Eastern States markets. The Eastern States can only flood our market by reducing the quota, because the quota applies to the oversea exportation of dried fruits. The quantity remaining within the Eastern States can be sent over here. If the Eastern States start to do that, then, having reduced the oversea quota, they leave a greater surplus of currants in Western Australia, with which surplus we can fight the Eastern States in regard to the sultana industry. I am only putting up a case as to our sultanas. I have no objection to the oversea quota so long as we produce as much as is required within Western Australia. According to the statistics given us, roughly 200 tons of sultanas come into Western Australia. We are not increasing our production, yet our consumption is increasing because our population is increasing, and so as the years go on we shall be importing more than 200 tons from the Eastern States. Yet the hon. member says he is in favour of exporting some of a commodity that we can consume here, just in order that we might have the benefit of that market.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: I do not think he said that.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: The board has decided to export some of the product next year. How can we be expected to export a commodity all of which we can consume here? We are justified in saying that in those circumstances we shall not export. After all, the amendment is only a proviso restricting the absolute discretion of the board in exportation of commodities required in the State.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Chief Secretary has told you the Minister has power to veto.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: But I do not wish to leave it to the power of the Minister. I say we have the right to restrict the discretion of the board.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: From the very beginning it was realised that occasions would arise when, perhaps, it would be

necessary to have some controlling tribunal. Parliament said it should be the Minister. This provision, contained in Section 31 of the Dried Fruits Act of 1926, was passed by both Houses of Parliament. Those with reason to complain of the administration of the board should approach the Minister, who will consult his expert officers and have a thorough investigation into the matter in the interests, not only of the growers, but of all Western Australia.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I wish to ask the Chief Secretary whether the board were appointed by the Government or elected by the growers, and whether the Bill is in accordance with the wishes of the board.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Until everything was in proper order, the board were appointed by the Government, but afterwards they were elected by the growers. As to the Bill being in accordance with the wishes of the board, when I approached the Department of Agriculture in relation to the measure, I was told the department had nothing whatever to do with it, and that I would have to consult the board.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 to 16—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT,

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 2nd October.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [8.25]: In reply to criticisms, I wish to say that permits for the slaughtering of pigs away from abattoirs are issued by the Minister, and then only where the slaughtering and inspection can be thoroughly controlled. It is not intended to alter that procedure. The inspection of slaughtering places under permit is just as thorough as the inspection at the metropolitan abattoirs. Before a permit is issued, the premises are inspected by an officer of the Public Health Department, who sees to it that all the requirements as to drainage and the handling of the meat after slaughtering are provided for. No difficulty is expected in this direc-

tion, as the importance of inspection, particularly of pigs, is fully recognised.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It was not the cleanliness of the premises I was alluding to, but disease in the animal itself.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The inspection is just as thorough in every respect as it is in the metropolitan abattoirs. As to the saleyards, the public saleyards in the metropolitan areas of Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney are under the control of the respective abattoir authorities. Mr. Holmes referred to charges made at abattoirs and at saleyards. Regarding the abattoirs, his remarks were scarcely relevant, because the charges have been imposed by an Act that was agreed to by this Chamber. All that the Bill before us does is to give authority to do something we have been doing for a considerable time past. Our present charges for sheep are 1½d. per head, and for cattle at Midland Junction 9d. per head, while for cattle at Fremantle the charge is 6d. per head. These charges compare favourably with those in the other States. For instance, in Adelaide the charges are, sheep 1d., cattle 1s. 6d. It is the intention of the Government to reduce the charges for sheep as the slaughtering at Midland Junction increase. For the year ended 30th June last the average yardings at Midland Junction for sheep and lambs was 9,936 per week. It would cost no more to yard twice that number, and so when that stage is reached, and the revenue from that source is doubled, it will be a simple matter to reduce the charges proportionately. Last year we erected for the sheep yards at Midland Junction a building in which concrete was used as much as possible. The floor of the yards is of concrete and the whole of the posts are of reinforced concrete. The opinion expressed by the trade is that this block of yards is equal to or better than anything in the Commonwealth, and they have given such satisfaction that it is proposed as soon as funds are available to build the whole of the yards in that manner. The initial cost may be a little higher, but it is considered that the maintenance cost will be so low that it will easily warrant the additional expense. It is proposed to do one section each year so that no increase in the charges will be necessary to meet the added cost. The principal reason for the amendment regarding the saleyards is that it will protect the money that the Government are called upon to spend each

year to meet the requirements of the trade. Every care has been taken to see that the expenditure to meet the requirements of buyers and sellers shall not be undertaken in such a manner as to overcapitalise the concern or necessitate the raising of charges to meet interest, depreciation and working expenses. The authorities controlling the metropolitan abattoirs in the Eastern States have all been vested with the power we seek under this Bill and for the same reason that I have just given. Mr. Holmes made some remarks about the cost of slaughtering that were not relevant to the Bill, but I referred his statements to the department and I propose to reply to them. Mr. Holmes stated that it cost ½d. per lb. to slaughter stock under Government conditions and 2d. per lb. to distribute it. The Government charges are for the use of the abattoirs and the provision of all facilities for the butchers to do their own work there. For the year ended the 30th June last stock was slaughtered at the metropolitan abattoirs at Midland Junction and Fremantle as follows:—Cattle, 29,284; sheep, 382,053; pigs, 11,612; and calves 950. The amount collected for slaughtering charges was £22,976. On the assumption that the cattle weighed 580 lbs., dressed, that sheep and lambs averaged 35 lbs., pigs 70 lbs., and calves 80 lbs., the charge raised by the Government for supervising and inspecting the whole of the meat in the interests of the consumer was slightly under one-sixth of a penny per lb.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: That is cash, but what do you take in kind?

The HONORARY MINISTER: It must not be forgotten that for that amount the butchers get 24 hours' free storage and their meat chilled. By no stretch of imagination can it be said that the Government charge is calculated to raise the price of meat as was stated by Mr. Holmes. Whatever other charge is passed on to the consumer is the cost to the butcher of the slaughtermen's wages and of distribution. I believe our charges here compare more than favourably with those of any other State of the Commonwealth. Mr. Holmes said that two abattoirs in the vicinity of Robb's Jetty were standing idle, and butchers were forced to send their stock to Government abattoirs to be slaughtered and to pay the charges raised by the Government. All the world over in the interests of the consumers

slaughtering in the main cities is centralised. This is done in order that proper supervision may be exercised from a health point of view. In doing what has already been done, this State is only keeping in line with the rest of the world.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But your Bill aims at decentralisation.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It does nothing of the sort. As to Mr. Holmes' statement regarding the amount of money paid by the Anchorage Butchers, that has nothing to do with the Bill.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It shows the effect of the Government monopoly.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The charges, considering the number of stock slaughtered, compare very favourably with those of other parts of Australia. As our killing increases, so those charges can be lowered until we ultimately reach a stage when the slaughtering charges at the Government abattoirs in the metropolitan area will be lower than those of any other part of the Commonwealth. At the rate our population is increasing I think I am right in saying that in the near future the number of stock slaughtered will be double that at present, and when we reach that stage the charges can be lowered proportionately. The charges now being raised against the butchers are passed on to the public, and the amount that the Government receive for the provision of premises, inspection, etc., and for seeing that the public are properly protected and that nothing but wholesome meat is supplied is not more than one-sixth of a penny per lb. Those charges have been approved by this House, and are not affected by this Bill. To introduce that question I consider was irrelevant, but I thought that in view of the apparent seriousness of the position as represented by Mr. Holmes, it was desirable that the actual facts should be obtained from the department. From the statements made by Mr. Holmes, I understand he has a brief for one particular firm, and that firm has the right to kill under whichever scale it chooses. Since the Anchorage Butchers have been forced to kill in the Government abattoirs they are on the same level as every other butcher slaughtering in the metropolitan area. That did not apply when they were allowed to slaughter in their own premises. When they were slaughtering in their own premises, I believe they had an unfair ad-

vantage over the rest of the trade, but now that they are slaughtering in the Government abattoirs, they are in the same position as other butchers. One or two other remarks made by Mr. Holmes have been referred to the departments concerned—statements relating to State Shipping Service and to the Wyndham Meat Works. Mr. Holmes spoke of the State Shipping Service refusing to accept 600 beasts from Wyndham to Fremantle at a freight of £5 per head. He said this was one way of bolstering up State trading concerns. The hon. member knows as well as I do that the Wyndham Meat Works were established for the benefit of cattle growers in the East Kimberleys. If the cattle growers there exported their livestock to Fremantle or elsewhere, there would not be sufficient cattle to keep the Wyndham Meat Works going. I am advised it is correct that the State Shipping Service had an offer to carry 600 head of stock from Wyndham to Fremantle at £5 per head, and it also had an offer of 600 head from Derby to Fremantle at £4 10s. per head. The Derby offer was accepted in preference to the other. The hon. member said that was one way of bolstering up the State Shipping Service. If one takes the hon. member's figures without reference to any other factor, they show that the State Shipping Service lost £300 over the transaction.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I did not say to bolster up the State Shipping Service. I said it was creating a monopoly at Wyndham.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member's words were "By such means are the profits of the State Shipping Service increased at the expense of the public." Yet the hon. member's own figures show that, taking no other factor into consideration, the State Shipping Service lost £300 by refusing to lift the 600 head of cattle from Wyndham.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I will come back to that question later.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member referred to 120 tons of frozen meat that it was desired should be shipped from Wyndham to Fremantle by a boat coming down the coast to pick up wool. I had inquiries made about that statement, but the department has no knowledge of the facts. Neither has the management of the Wyndham Meat Works at any time made such a

request, and consequently it appears that the hon. member has been misinformed. If he would only supply more details we might be able to trace the facts, but the management of the meat works declares that it has no knowledge of the matter. Mr. Holmes said the Wyndham Meat Works paid the men what they demanded and paid what it liked for the cattle.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Well, that is so. It is known by everybody.

The HONORARY MINISTER: We do not pay the employees at the meat works what they demand. We pay rates that compare favourably with those paid by our Queensland competitors under arbitration court awards. We pay full export values for cattle, more than our North Queensland competitors pay for cattle that give better yields of beef and tallow. Those are facts that cannot be controverted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is just as well you have the last say.

The HONORARY MINISTER: No doubt the hon. member will have another opportunity in Committee if he has anything else to add. I am only giving information supplied to me in reply to the statements he made. While he did not give any actual detail regarding the charges or statements he made, I considered them of sufficient importance to get whatever information the department had to offer in reply. The information I have just given the House is the information supplied by the department. Under the Bill we are asking for nothing but what the Government in every other State of the Commonwealth has at present. When the original Abattoirs Bill was drafted, the mention of saleyards was omitted. It should have been included. During the whole of this period the Government have been making charges without statutory authority. All we are asking is that the Government shall be allowed to do this legally. They are making certain exceptions in regard to slaughtering, particularly of pigs. We believe it is only right that the small man, who is killing one or two pigs per week, and endeavouring to build up the industry, shall be given every encouragement. We are also providing that, no matter where the pigs are slaughtered, and what permit may be given, every possible precaution shall be taken to see that the place is not only kept in proper order, but that the condi-

tions shall be as stringent as they are now at the metropolitan abattoirs in Midland Junction. I hope the House will give the Government the power asked for. I commend the Bill to members. If Mr. Holmes has any further criticism to offer, I hope he will do so in Committee. If he cares to submit actual details of the complaints he voiced on the second reading, I shall be only too pleased to have inquiries made and endeavour to satisfy him on all points.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 6:

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Honorary Minister would lead us to believe that I was opposed to every clause. I insisted that if the Government granted people exemptions to slaughter elsewhere than in the metropolitan abattoirs, they should provide proper inspection of the meat and see that it was branded before being allowed to go into consumption. The cleanliness of the premises is another matter. Pigs carry disease, such as tuberculosis in the throat and head, and it would be criminal to allow the carcasses to go into consumption before they had been properly passed.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is no safeguard in the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I want to help the Honorary Minister. He will find that if he takes the advice and assistance of those who know something about the matter, he will get along much better.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The meat will be inspected just as thoroughly as it is at the metropolitan abattoirs. The same standard will be maintained everywhere as is maintained there. Permits will not be issued indiscriminately, and everything will be done under proper inspection.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The Bill proposes to give the Government a monopoly of saleyards in the metropolitan area. I have shown what a monopoly at the Wyndham

Meat Works and the metropolitan abattoirs means, and it is now proposed to apply the same principle to saleyards. I welcome the idea of pigs being slaughtered at the convenience of the grower, subject to proper inspection, and to the Government having statutory authority to impose charges. But I object to the Government having a monopoly of the saleyards and then seeking to impose whatever charges they like without competition. This is only another step in the direction of Government monopoly. I agree that the present charges are reasonable, but will they remain so if we pass the Bill? I move an amendment—

That paragraph (C2) be struck out.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This paragraph will give the Government no more power than they have to-day. All sales are conducted at present in the saleyards at Midland Junction and Robb's Jetty.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do the Government own all the yards?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. As the yarding increases so will the price for yarding decrease. Yarding must decrease as time goes on. It will cost very little more to yard twice the number of stock that is yarded to-day. The Government do not intend to increase the present fees, which are satisfactory. Milch cows, horses and stud stock are exempted by this paragraph, and there is no desire to interfere with private yards where such stock is sold. The Minister will also have the right to grant a license to anyone else who may wish to establish saleyards. Sales on farms may also be exempted. Of course, a farmer will not be able to conduct on his property a sale of stock belonging to someone else. It is essential that the paragraph be retained. The Government are committed to the expenditure of a fairly large sum of money each year, and they maintain the present saleyards in such a way that they are giving satisfaction to everyone concerned. I hope that the Committee will not agree to the amendment, more particularly in view of the fact that it is not desired to make any alteration in the present position, and that for several years the Government's activities have been satisfactory. The Government have no desire to effect any alterations in the existing condi-

tions. The paragraph sought to be deleted merely gives the Government power to do what they have been doing, apart from the exemptions I have already mentioned.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am stating the position accurately when I say that the Government own the saleyards at Midland Junction, and that the saleyards at Fremantle are owned by private individuals and leased by the Government. We can imagine the position of owners of private saleyards if the Bill goes through and the Government secure a monopoly. In accordance with custom, as evidenced in connection with Government monopolies in this State, a pistol will be held at the head of each private owner.

The Honorary Minister: That is not a fair statement.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I can only say that that is what has happened elsewhere. The people I represent at Wyndham know exactly what a Government monopoly means; the people of the metropolitan area will know exactly what it means if we give the Government the sole right to conduct saleyards. It is all very well to say that the charges levied are moderate, but no monopoly exists so far! I shall say no more. Hon. members can realise for themselves what is likely to happen.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	4

Majority for 7

AYES.

Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. W. T. Glasheen	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. G. A. Kempton
Hon. J. Nicholson	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. E. H. Gray
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

ADJOURNMENT—ROYAL SHOW.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [9.7]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Thursday next.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.8 p.m.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1923-29.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 27th September on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £1,700:

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.37]: First there is occasion to be gratified because the waterside trouble is over at Fremantle and we shall return to normal conditions there. Everybody throughout the State will rejoice that the trouble is over. It has held up trade and work for the past month. Another matter to which I wish to refer is the unfortunate retirement of Colonel Pope, Commissioner of Railways, who has filled that position for some nine years with great satisfaction to the people of the country and particularly to the workers on the railways. Colonel Pope has shown himself a strong, firm, fair man, and very capable. He has had the whole of the railway staff working with him, very much to the advantage of the State. We must all regret that ill-health is the cause of his retirement, and I am sure Ministers regret the retirement just as sincerely as anyone else. My Government had some years' experience of Colonel Pope. All who have had to do with him must realise that in Colonel Pope the State had a loyal official and a very capable administrator. He was appointed, hon. members will recollect, from the service, occupying then not a particularly high position. I hope that when it comes to the appointment of a Commissioner, we shall not go outside Western Australia. There is always some risk in bringing in a stranger, particularly in such a service as the Railway Department. In making all appointments we must remember that our duty is to do the best we can for the State, regardless of individuals. It is the duty of Ministers to do that, and I am sure they will. However, I hope that within the service someone will be found capable of filling the vacancy. That, of course, remains to be seen upon inquiry. Now I come to this dry-as-dust document, the Annual Estimates. The Premier, in delivering the Budget Speech, made the best of a bad case; and now I shall try to state the facts.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 9th October, 1928.

	PAGE
Mt. Leonora electorate, seat declared vacant	1116
Annual Estimates, general debate	1116
Bills: Wheat Bags, 2R., Com.	1127
Town Planning, 2R.	1134
Profiteering Prevention, 2R.	1136
Land Agents, 2R., referred to Select Committee	1139
Group Settlement Act Amendment, Com. Report	1189
Adjournment; Royal Show	1145

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

MT. LEONORA ELECTORATE.

Seat Declared Vacant.

THE SPEAKER [4.33]: I have received the certificate of the death of a member—

We the undersigned, being two members of the Legislative Assembly, do hereby certify that Thomas John Heron, a member of the said House serving for the Mount Leonora district, died upon the 3rd day of October, 1928, and we give you this notice to the intent that you issue a writ for the election of a member to supply the vacancy caused by the death of the said Thomas John Heron. Given under our hands this 9th day of October, 1928. (Signed) A. H. Panton, C. P. Wansborough.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.34]: I move—

That the House resolves that owing to the death of Thomas John Heron, late member for Mount Leonora, the Mount Leonora seat be declared vacant.

Question put and passed.