

Legislative Council,

Wednesday 9th November, 1921.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

1. Adoption of Children Act Amendment.
2. Coroners Act Amendment.
3. Northam Municipal Ice Works.
4. Supply Bill (No. 3), £1,047,000.

QUESTION—STRAITS SETTLEMENTS GOVERNMENT AND HON. J. SCADDAN.

Hon. A. SANDERSON asked the Minister for Education: Will he lay on the Table the memos. of the 13th, 14th, and 16th September, referred to by Mr. Deans in a minute to the Acting Secretary of the Council of Industrial Development on the 26th October, 1921, in the file dealing with the invitation to Mr. Scaddan to visit Singapore, and laid on the Table of the House on the 8th instant?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The memos referred to have no connection whatever with the visit to Singapore, but relate to certain investigations that are being made by the Council of Industrial Development on a matter which at present is confidential.

BILL—PERMANENT RESERVE (POINT WALTER).

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILL—INSPECTION OF MACHINERY.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 12th October; Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair, the Minister for Education in charge of the Bill.

Clause 19—Faulty or defective machinery (partly considered):

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The clause gives power to inspectors to deal with owners of machinery which is proved to be defective, but no authority is provided for the inspectors to call upon the owners to furnish adequate ventilation. I move an amendment—

That after the word "person," in line 6, there be inserted "or where the ventilation of any engine room where any steam or combustion engine is erected and used is defective."

My chief object is to protect the men engaged on winding engines, who are usually placed in a higher position than the engine and therefore have to encounter the vitiated atmosphere created by the engine. Frequently, sufficient ventilation is not provided for them. Their work consists chiefly in the hoisting of men.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have no objection to the amendment.

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

Clauses 20, 21—agreed to.

Clause 22—Boilers to be fitted with certain fittings:

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move an amendment—

That Subclause 11 be struck out.

That subclause reads—

An intermediate stop valve or cock shall be fitted between the blow-off cock and the main blow-off pipe in every case where two or more boilers are connected to the same main blow-off pipe.

The proposed installation is quite unnecessary.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I expected Mr. Lynn to give at least some reason for the striking out of this subclause. Now, it often happens that the washer on a cock splits or breaks, with the result that the plug flies out. When there is only one cock, no provision exists, in such circumstances, for preventing the whole of the contents of the boiler, being hot water and steam, from escaping altogether. I shall vote for the retention of the subclause.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The necessity for this provision has never made itself felt, and consequently its absence does not constitute a danger. Why should this subclause apply even to new installations? It represents an unnecessary expense. No accident has ever resulted from its absence.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Yes. It is evident that the responsible authority who drafted the Bill must consider this provision necessary, otherwise the subclause would not have appeared.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The Chief Inspector of Machinery, on having the matter brought to his attention, expressed himself quite willing that the subclause should be deleted.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have no personal knowledge of this matter, but I confirm Mr. Lynn's intimation that the Chief Inspector of Machinery is willing that the subclause should be deleted.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am not acquainted with the object of the framers of the Bill in inserting Subclause 11, but from my knowledge of boilers I am aware that the subclause represents a safeguard for men engaged in cleaning boilers. Where there is a nest of boilers, and one of the boilers in the middle is in process of cleansing—men being engaged in scraping it—it has happened that some person, possibly un-

acquainted with the valves as set out, or possibly negligent, has opened the valve connecting one boiler to the other, thereby causing an inrush of steam which scalds the men in the second boiler. If the intermediate stop valve or cock were required to be installed on the whole of the plants throughout the State, it would be an expensive matter; but this clause merely provides for its installation on new plants to be erected.

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

Ayes	9
Noes	7

Majority for	2
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AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. A. H. Panton
Hon. J. W. Hickey	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: A consequential amendment is required in Subclause 16. I move an amendment—

That Subsections 10 and 11 be struck out.

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

Clauses 23 to 28—agreed to.

Clause 29—When boiler to be inspected:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The Bill apparently is for the purpose of raising revenue. Under the clause as it stands, a boiler might be inspected half a dozen times in a year. I move an amendment—

That the following proviso be added:—

“Provided that no fees shall be payable in connection with any inspection other than the first inspection in any year.”

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I cannot accept the amendment. It is not intended to inspect boilers except when necessary, and when they have to be inspected the fee must be paid.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I hope the amendment will not be accepted. It is possible that an inspector on inspecting a boiler may not be satisfied with it, and may point out some defect. He has to go back to see that the defect has been remedied, and so the second fee should be payable.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: A boiler in good condition may be inspected and a certificate issued. But, during the currency of the certificate, something unforeseen may happen to the boiler, rendering a second inspection

necessary; and as a result of the second inspection it may be found imperative to reduce the pressure of the boiler. In such circumstances the department would naturally look for a second inspection fee.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 30—May be inspected at any reasonable time.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 7 “competent” be struck out, and “any person certified as competent under Subsection 3 of Section 6 of this Act” inserted.

It is really consequential on the amendment made in Clause 6.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not see any necessity for the amendment. The clause gives full protection. The amendment may render it impossible for the inspection to be made.

Hon. H. STEWART: We are legislating for the whole State, and under the amendment it may not be possible to get a man fulfilling the prescribed conditions.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Life and limb may be in danger, and if we are to have inspection of boilers, the inspection should be made by a competent person. If in one case it is necessary that the person making the inspection should be competent it is necessary in all cases, no matter in what part of the State the boiler may be. My own experience of these matters impels me to press the amendment.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: You want the person making the inspection to be more highly competent than the inspector himself.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: No, I want him to be competent in accordance with Subclause 3 of Clause 6.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I will oppose the amendment. It is absurd to think that in a remote portion of the State it would be possible to secure a person fulfilling the conditions prescribed in Subclause 3 of Clause 6. Fancy sending a man all the way from Perth to inspect a boiler in Wyndham, when the inspector could appoint some competent local person to act with the assistance of a first-class certificated engineer!

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Surely there are very few members of the Committee better qualified to express an opinion upon these matters than Mr. Lovekin. When an hon. member with his experience makes a suggestion which he presses, it shows the importance he attaches to it. I do not understand the technical part of the Bill, but I think Mr. Lovekin's amendment is entitled to receive attention at our hands. If we hurry the Bill through, in all probability we shall

find it will be necessary to bring in an amending measure next session.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION : I draw the attention of members to Clause 44, which provides for a penalty in the event of an owner of a boiler working it without a certificate. If he requires a certificate to enable him to start work, this can be obtained in the way provided in the clause, in the event of an inspector not being able to carry out the inspection. If the amendment is carried the owner will be hung up indefinitely.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY : I know of a case in which a party was under a penalty to resume operations at a certain date. It was arranged for the inspector to pass the machinery but he did not arrive in time, and it was with great difficulty that the position was overcome through the Mines Department. Under this clause a competent man could have been selected to make the necessary inspection and issue the certificate required. If the clause is passed as it is, it will be of great advantage to outlying districts.

Hon. H. STEWART : Mr. Sanderson is evidently impressed by Mr. Lovekin's technical knowledge, but there are other members with a considerable amount of technical knowledge. I am as much concerned about the safety of the lives and limbs of people in the metropolitan area as I am about those in the country districts, but I do think the restrictions that would be imposed under this amendment are quite unnecessary.

Hon. A. H. PANTON : If an inspector is not satisfied with the certificate that is given under the conditions set out in this clause, he can make other arrangements to insure that the inspection is a thorough one. Mr. Lovekin is not consistent in his attitude in this matter. He now wants to protect life and limb, but a little while ago he voted against a clause which had that as its particular object.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN : Apparently some hon. members take the view that if a competent person cannot be obtained to do this work, any Dick, Tom or Harry will do to take his place. I am chiefly concerned about the back country. It is most essential that the inspections there should be thorough. I wish to be sure that this inspection will be made by a competent person. I must press this matter, in order to avoid the possibility of serious accidents occurring through inspections being made by persons who are not competent.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS : The inspection must be made to the satisfaction of the chief inspector. He would not appoint any incompetent person to do the work.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN : If the Chief Inspector cannot get a person whom he considers competent, he must get someone else who is more or less competent to make the inspection in the back country.

Hon. A. H. PANTON : The trouble is that he must get competent persons.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : I intend to move an amendment to strike out the word "may" appearing in lines 7 and 9 with a view to inserting the word "shall" in each place. Through no fault of the owner of machinery an inspector may not be able to attend to inspect the plant. In such circumstances, provision is made for two persons, one competent and another an engine-driver holding at least a first-class certificate recognised under the measure, to make the inspection and submit a report to the Chief Inspector who "may" issue a certificate. Seeing that the Chief Inspector has to approve of the two persons who make the inspection, I think he should issue the certificate and that it should be made mandatory.

Hon. G. W. Miles : There must be discretionary power.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : It seems ridiculous to have an inspection made by persons approved by the Chief Inspector and then to make provision merely that the Chief Inspector "may" issue certificates. It appears that a certain section of the people who are attempting to move the wheels of industry in this State are being hampered. I do not however, regard this matter in a very serious light.

Hon. A. H. PANTON : Surely you must give the Chief Inspector discretionary power!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : I am not very strong on the point, but the provision seems anomalous. Suppose an inspection were made at Wyndham and the persons approved by the Chief Inspector sent in a favourable report.

Hon. G. W. Miles : But suppose the report was unfavourable.

Hon. A. H. PANTON : That is the point.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : If a favourable report comes forward and the Chief Inspector decides not to issue a certificate, he will have to send up an inspector to make an inspection for himself.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS : In the report submitted by the two persons approved by the Chief Inspector, it might be mentioned that one of the plates of the boiler had been reduced to about one thirty-second of an inch in thickness. Mr. Baxter suggests that the Chief Inspector shall issue the certificate, notwithstanding that the boiler may be in such a dangerous condition.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER : I will not submit the amendment I intend to move. I will however move—

That the following words be added to the clause: "Pending the issue of such certificate the boiler may be used without incurring any penalty for so doing."

Where an inspection cannot be made because the inspector cannot attend to make the necessary inspection, the fault does not lie with the owner of the boiler. Notwithstanding that fact, however, the boiler has to be held up till such time as an inspection can be made.

The amendment would make provision to get over such a contingency.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: To my mind, there are two objections to the proposed amendment. The first is that it might not be intended to issue a certificate at all. The second objection is that the use of the boiler is conditional on the payment of fees. If the amendment is inserted it may have the effect of the person continuing to use the boiler without paying any such fees.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: And that is what the Bill is for.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: The amendment would spoil the purport of the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Some people are always talking about economy, yet when a proposal is brought forward by the Government with the object of seeing that services rendered to people, who are well able to pay for them, are charged for, they object and criticise the Government.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I cannot support the amendment. Mr. Baxter practically says that if we cannot get an inspector, we can first avail ourselves of the services of other individuals, and when we cannot get them we can do without an inspection altogether.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 31 to 35—agreed to.

Clause 36—Fees for inspection of boilers and machinery:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: In lines 4 and 5 the words "or any group of machinery driven otherwise than by steam" appear. I do not know what the inclusion of those words means and I think the words should come out.

The Minister for Education: I do not know what they mean.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in lines 4 and 5 the words "or any group of machinery driven otherwise than by steam" be struck out.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not think Mr. Lovekin has given any reason why these words should be struck out. I do not pretend to have the technical knowledge to tell the hon. member what the particular group of machinery refers to.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: The intention is that where there is a group of machinery under one roof with motors of one, two or other horse-power driving groups of machinery, there shall be an inspection fee for each group of machinery. If such a provision were not included, it would be contended that all the machinery under the one roof constituted one group.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The individual machine is charged and why should there be a second fee covering the group of other machines?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I do not think Mr. Lovekin need concern himself about deleting these words because the regulations under the measure must be laid upon the Table of the

House and objection can then be taken to the fees fixed under those regulations.

Hon. H. STEWART: The department will have enormous power to impose fees and I question the desirableness of granting such wide power.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: Would not it be better to have the fees prescribed in a schedule to the Bill instead of by regulation? Then everyone would know what he had to pay. A regulation laid on the Table might be overlooked.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I have a letter from Mr. Leslie, of Leslie & Co., engineers, of Perth, who suggests striking out these words in order to exempt machine tools, etc., from inspection fees.

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

Ayes	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	11

Majority against .. 4

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. A. Grelg	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. V. Hamersley
Hon. A. Sanderson	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. F. A. Baglin	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. A. H. Panton
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. W. Hickey	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: The regulations will be the principal factor governing this measure and, to give Parliament an opportunity to peruse the regulations, I suggest the insertion of a subclause reading, "No regulations framed under this Bill shall be operative as regards the fees chargeable until Parliament has had sufficient time to approve or otherwise."

The CHAIRMAN: That is dealt with later in the Bill.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: If the hon. member wishes to include a provision of that kind, it should be moved as an amendment to Clause 82, which gives power to make regulations. The Interpretation Act sets out what happens when regulations are made; they have to be laid on the Table.

Hon. H. STEWART: I fail to see the reason for the latter portion of the clause which provides that in the case of machinery driven directly by steam, with the exception of winding engines, a certificate shall be issued without charge. Will the Minister explain it?

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 37 to 41—agreed to.

Clause 42—Duration of certificate of machinery:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The first proviso refers to machinery used solely for threshing, chaff and grain crushing, sheep shearing, irrigation, etc., not worked for more than six months in any one year, the certificate for which may remain in force for two years. Dairying machinery is worked all the year round, but surely the inspector should be allowed to grant a certificate for two years.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The idea in the case of the machinery enumerated in the clause is to permit of it being worked for two periods of six months in the two years, this being equal to the one year stipulated in the case of machinery constantly in use.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 43, 44—agreed to.

Clause 45—Notice of sale, etc., of boiler or machinery:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of Subclause 3 the word "six" be struck out and the word "twelve" inserted in lieu.

We should give reasonable time to comply with the requirements of the clause and six months may not be sufficient.

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

Clauses 46 to 52—agreed to.

Clause 53—Drivers in charge of engines or cranes and hoists:

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 of Subclause 1 the words "or of any crane or hoist" be struck out.

These words are unnecessary. If they are retained it will be necessary to have a certificated man in charge of a friction winch or a hydraulic winch or a winch used in connection with construction work. The amendment will in no way affect steam crane drivers, because they are protected under Subclause 4 of Clause 55. These words will only complicate matters where construction work may be going on.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I oppose the amendment. We must take into consideration that there are men using hoists in our mines, and it is necessary for them to get certificates showing that they are competent to take charge of those hoists.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: With cylinders?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes.

Hon. H. Stewart: They are exempted under Clause 53, paragraph (c).

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: We do not want Holman hoists exempted. It is necessary that those in charge of hoists should hold certificates showing that they are capable of handling such machines. To-day miners do this work, but they have to satisfy the

inspector of mines that they are competent to handle such machines.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: In Subclause 4 of Clause 56 it is provided that a third class engine-driver's certificate is necessary for engines other than winding engines where the area of the cylinder or cylinders of which engines does not exceed 114 square inches. Therefore if a particular hoist has those cylinders, a certificate under the Bill is still necessary for that particular class of engine.

Hon. J. Cunningham: I do not want to force upon the miners a third class engine-driver's certificate to handle a Holman hoist.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Cranes and winches are continually being driven by uncertificated men. Why, at Fremantle on the mail steamers you see men asleep while driving hydraulic cranes. The great majority of men at Fremantle drive friction winches in the hulks. Sometimes you see as many as 16 of these winches going.

Hon. A. H. Panton: All fairly experienced men.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: You can teach these men to drive a winch in about an hour or even less than that. It is too ridiculous to assume that you are going to build up a fresh aristocracy of labour and issue certificates with the object of bringing about an additional union of certificated men, which will mean that because of their holding certificates they will be entitled to an increase in wages.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: In Subclause 6 of Clause 56 it is clearly set out what a hoist-driver's certificate shall entitle the hoist-driver to do. At the present time it is essential for a hoist-driver to have a certificate I do not know how far the Bill will affect the powers conferred upon an inspector of mines to issue a certificate to a miner competent to drive a Holman hoist. Nor is it my desire that this clause shall go out until I am satisfied that the existing safeguard is going to be continued. I discount what Mr. Lynn said about the men sleeping at their winch work. I wish to see the clause retained as it is, but when we come to Paragraph (c) which deals with Holman hoists, I want to be supplied with further information. Unless the Leader of the House can supply it, I will ask that progress be reported.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	11
Noes	..	..	..	8
Majority for	..	..	..	3

AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. A. Lovekin	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)

NOMS.

Hon. F. A. Baglin	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. A. H. Panton
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus passed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move a further amendment—

That Subclause 2 be struck out with the view of inserting a new subclause.

Boiler attendants' certificates do not exist in any part of Australia, and therefore the provision which I ask should be deleted represents a complete innovation. There may be reason in requiring a boiler attendant's certificate in the case of removal of a boiler outside the scope of observation of the man holding the engine driver's certificate—its removal to such a distance, or to such a place, that the engine driver cannot supervise that particular boiler. Under such conditions the Chief Inspector of Machinery might reasonably require the fireman looking after that particular boiler to hold a boiler attendant's certificate. I can give instances where under one roof there are two or three certificated engine drivers, and in such instances boiler attendants' certificates should not be demanded. The matter should be absolutely discretionary with the chief inspector.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I am wondering who is in charge of this Bill—the Leader of the House or the last speaker. On several occasions during this discussion inquiries have been made of the Leader of the House and that hon. gentleman has either simply nodded his head or just sat still. It is due to the Committee that the Leader should be able to explain the provisions of the Bill, instead of leaving that matter to private members. One hon. member expressed the opinion that, certain information not being forthcoming, progress ought to be reported; but progress was not reported.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That is not the case. Mr. Cunningham said that when we came to paragraph (e) he would require some information, and that if I were not in a position to give him that information progress should be reported. We have not yet come to paragraph (e). On Mr. Baglin's behalf, I regret very much that I am not an engine driver and, therefore, not conversant with the intricacies of engines.

Hon. F. A. BAGLIN: I accept the Leader's explanation. It appears that during the second reading stage a sort of secret conference was arranged by some persons. No representative of the workers was invited to that conference. I understand that as a result of that secret meeting Mr. Lynn was appointed to pilot the Bill through this Chamber. Mr. Lynn's present amendment I consider unnecessary. On the other hand, I am of opinion that Subclause 2 is necessary for the protection

of life and limb. Mr. Lynn has utterly failed to make a case for his amendment.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I am sure the Committee wish to give a right vote on these various divisions; but, speaking as an ordinary member listening to the wrangling of experts on various points, I consider it very hard to come to a right decision. Mr. Baglin's comments on the Leader of the House are quite uncalled for. I am frequently lost in admiration of the way in which the Leader of the House can handle several Bills at one sitting and turn on extremely pertinent observations on each measure. Mr. Baglin asks who is in charge of the Bill, or who is responsible for a certain amendment; but that does not really matter. It is the Committee who are responsible. I would suggest to the Leader of the House, however, that a Bill of this nature ought to be referred to a committee of three members, who could discuss over the table the important points involved. They would probably be able to return here and say, "We have agreed on that," when most likely their proposals would be accepted. Any points which could not be settled by such a committee could be discussed and settled here. It is not possible among a committee of 20, such as we are here, to get close and intimate discussion of technical points.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I oppose the amendment. I assume that the measure has been drafted by experts; and, with all due deference to Mr. Lynn, I do not know that he is an expert in this particular business.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I can bring along my diploma to-morrow and show it to you.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: On this amendment I am quite unable to follow Mr. Lynn. The Bill makes it mandatory for the boiler attendant to have a certificate. Then Mr. Lynn proposes that the Chief Inspector of Machinery shall have discretionary power to say whether a boiler attendant must have a certificate or not.

The Minister for Education: Should the attendant have it in all cases?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: If danger attaches to his work, he should have it in all cases; if not, there is no occasion for this discretionary power to the chief inspector. In my personal opinion, it is very necessary that a boiler attendant should hold a certificate. However, I do not speak as an expert.

Hon. H. Stewart: How are boiler attendants going to qualify?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: In the same way as engine-drivers qualify. There is generally someone in charge of a boiler. Let us assume that in the cases of nests of boilers it is essential that the leading attendant shall have a certificate. But what is a leading man?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: It is the man who gets 1s. a day more.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: What does he get it for?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: For being the leading fireman.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The hon. member is simply side-stepping the issue. According to our Arbitration Court awards, a leading man is one in charge of two or more men or women. On the goldfields there are men who are responsible for nests of boilers without anybody else working with them, except possibly the engine-driver, who may be altogether away from the boilers.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The question is whether hon. members believe it to be essential that a boiler attendant should have a certificate. If the experts who drafted the Bill are of opinion that a boiler attendant should have such a certificate, the subclause ought to be retained. When there is but one attendant to a nest of boilers, it is difficult for an inspector to say who is or who is not a leading fireman. Therefore I would strike out the word "leading" and insert "responsible." With that amendment the only difficulty I see would be overcome and the subclause could stand, as I hope it will. The chief inspector ought not to be asked to say whether or not a boiler attendant should hold a certificate.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: In view of the remarks by Mr. Baglin, I should like to make it quite clear that I was not at the conference. However, the Minister for Mines was there and so, also, was the Chief Inspector of Machinery. The whole of the amendments on the Notice Paper were considered in detail by the Chief Inspector of Machinery. Certain amendments proposed by Mr. Lovekin could not be supported by me, for the reason that, not having been placed on the Notice Paper, they were not considered by the chief inspector. However, in regard to the amendment before the Committee I support it, because it appeared on the Notice Paper and has the approval of the Chief Inspector of Machinery.

Amendment (that Subclause 2 be struck out) put and passed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Subclause 2:—" (2) If required by the chief inspector or his representative, and subject to section fifty-six any person employed or acting as a boiler attendant in charge of a boiler or boilers used for generating steam shall hold a boiler attendant's certificate, unless he is already the holder of a steam engine-driver's certificate; provided that, in the case of a range of boilers, it shall only be necessary that the leading fireman on each shift shall be the holder of such certificate.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I move an amendment on the amendment—

That in line 12 "leading" be struck out and "responsible" inserted in lieu. Amendment on the amendment put and passed; the amendment as amended agreed to.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Paragraph (a) of Subclause 3 provides that small machinery used by an agriculturist and not worked for more than six months in any year need not have a certificated attendant in charge. There is no reason why this provision should not be extended to such machinery worked over the whole 12 months. The Bill should not interfere unduly with small boilers used for the working of dairies and other branches of agriculture. I move an amendment—

That in line 4 the words "and not worked for more than six months in any year" be struck out.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: I should not be opposed to the amendment if we could restrict the provision as a whole to machinery used on any one farm. But I would not include such machinery as a travelling chaff-cutter which, as a rule, is driven by a fairly big engine working practically all the year.

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member wishes to move in the direction indicated, it will first be necessary to have the amendment already before the Chamber withdrawn.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

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

That after "any" in line 3, "one" be inserted.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Why exclude the boiler used in connection with the travelling chaffcutter?

Hon. A. H. PANTON: Because such machinery is generally owned by a contractor, and probably is used practically all the year round. Also a number of men are at work around that boiler. It is quite different from a domestic proposition on one particular farm. A contractor owning a travelling chaffcutter should be placed in the same position as any other factory owner.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I am afraid the amendment will work considerable hardship. Many men perfectly capable of attending to a boiler and engine driving a chaffcutter are not certificated, and might have some difficulty in passing the necessary examination.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 the words "and not worked for more than six months in any year" be struck out.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (b) "three" be struck out and "six" inserted in lieu.

In my opinion 6 horse-power is too low a standard. Certainly it should be the absolute minimum.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I should prefer to see the paragraph struck out. If it is necessary for a certificated boiler attendant to look after a 7 horse-power boiler it is equally necessary for such an attendant to look after a boiler of any size. A 3 horse-power boiler is just as dangerous as a 10 horse-power boiler.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Some members always try to hamper industry. For the past 30 years it has been the custom to run 8 horse-power boilers in connection with the stereo work in newspaper offices in Perth. These boilers are stoked from time to time by the men engaged in the stereo work, and it has not been deemed necessary that they should be certificated boiler attendants. Under this Bill it will be necessary for the newspapers concerned to appoint some specially qualified man at £6 10s. a week to do this very simple work. The boilers are not required to give a high pressure of steam and are only needed for heating purposes. We are continually being urged to reduce the cost of living, but in this case the tendency is to increase the cost of production when there is no necessity for it.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I endorse what Mr. Lovekin has said about the boilers used in newspaper offices. The same thing will be made to apply to other boilers which are used for heating purposes. Many men who are doing this class of work to-day will, if the Bill is passed in this form, no longer be able to do it and the cost of production will go up accordingly.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am prepared to accept the amendment, but would point out that we have already made a drastic alteration in the Bill by the amendment to paragraph 2. Had that paragraph remained as it was it would have been necessary in every case for any boiler of more than 3 horse-power or 6 horse-power, if the amendment is carried, to be attended by a certificated attendant. The amendment we have made to paragraph 2 provides for discretionary power on the part of the Chief Inspector. The reason for giving that power to the Chief Inspector is that he will not require the performance of this paragraph unless he deems it necessary.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: There are such things as putting the acid on either the Chief Inspector or the Government. This may be done by the unions concerned, who may say that such and such a man is doing a certificated man out of a job. If boilers are used purely for heating purposes they, at all events, should be exempt.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I suggest that the Leader of the House might postpone the consideration of this clause until such time as members, who have a knowledge of these matters, are present in the Chamber.

The Minister for Education: I am willing to postpone the clause.

On motion by Minister for Education the clause postponed until after consideration of Clause 82.

Clause 54—Board of examiners:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Paragraph (f) of Subclause 4 will have to be amended.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a consequential amendment and will be made.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: What provision is made with regard to the present representatives on the Board of Examiners, should the Bill become law?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I take it that the present representative of the engine-drivers will be re-appointed.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: The clause provides for the appointment of a person who shall hold a winding engine-driver's certificate under the measure. The highest grade of certificate is the winding engine-driver's certificate, and at least one of the members of the board of examiners should be one so qualified and having had practical experience in winding engine driving work. It should also be remembered that a person holding that certificate requires to have experience in all other grades of engine driving before he can get the winding engine-driver's certificate. I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause 1 the words "and have had at least two years' practical experience as a winding engine-driver" be added.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I understand it is the intention to continue the examiner at present on the board. I do not think there is any necessity for the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Do I understand that all consequential amendments will be made without the necessity for moving amendments of that description?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly, if they are consequential. Before being re-printed, the Bill will be closely examined. I have marked off the consequential amendments and they will be attended to.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 55—Certificates of service for internal combustion engine drivers, boiler attendants, and electric crane drivers:

Hon. R. J. LYNN: There is a conflict between the clause and Clause 53 which has been postponed.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I have also noticed that fact. I move—

That consideration of Clause 55 be postponed until after consideration of postponed Clause 53.

Motion put and passed.

Clause 56—Privileges of certificates:

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I move an amendment—

That at the end of Subclause 1 the following words be added:—"but the holder of an unrestricted certificate granted under any Act in force before the commencement of this Act shall be entitled to drive any engine other than a locomotive or traction engine."

I have several amendments relating to Clause 62 and the arguments regarding Clause 56 will cover Clause 62 as well. As far back as 1895, the Government issued engine-drivers' certificates under the Mines Regulation Act. They were unrestricted certificates entitling the holders to drive engines other than locomotive and traction engines. Since then, other certificates have been issued under the Mines Regulation Amendment Act, 1899, the Inspection of Machinery Act, 1904, and the Coal Mines Regulation Act of 1902. These certificates give the holder certain rights. Following upon the introduction of the Bill, I asked certain questions in the House. From the reply of the Leader of the House, I find that there are some 2,000 engine-drivers holding certificates who would be deprived of the rights they now enjoy, if the Bill were passed in its present form. That would amount to repudiation by the State of privileges granted to these men. These rights should be preserved. If the Bill is passed in its present form, those men will not be permitted to drive certain types of engines.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I am advised that the proposed addition to the subclause is unnecessary. The holder of a winding engine-driver's certificate under the Bill can take charge of engines other than locomotive and traction engines which, of course, are not stationary engines.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I cannot quite follow the Leader of the House because it is set out in the Bill that these men shall go before the board and if they satisfy the board's requirements, new certificates will be issued to them entitling them to drive hoist or internal combustion engines. None of these is covered by the first class certificate as it now stands. It should be made clear that these men are entitled to drive any engine other than locomotive and traction engines.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. R. J. LYNN: I move an amendment—

That in line 5 of Subclause 7 the word "solely" be struck out. The word is superfluous.

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

Clauses 57 to 61—agreed to.

Clause 62—Protection of existing certificates:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Seeing that we have made good headway, the Minister might con-

sent to give us a little time to consider the remaining clauses of the Bill by agreeing at this stage to report progress.

Progress reported.

BILL—MINING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [8.17]: I listened with particular interest to the remarks of the Leader of the House in moving the second reading of the Bill, because I regard the measure as one of the highest importance. We are all aware that the Bill deals principally with tributing on the mines, and a satisfactory arrangement would, I think, contribute very much to the development of the industry and to the material welfare of the State. There are very rich developments which can be worked better by tributing than in any other way. Last year we passed a Bill which had for its object the development of the tributing business, but, unfortunately, the conditions were of such a nature that they were not satisfactory to both parties interested, and the consequence is that, instead of experiencing good development and having the industry carried on satisfactorily, it has been hindered and brought almost to a standstill. Matters reached such an unsatisfactory position that the Government very wisely had the whole matter inquired into by a Royal Commission, who were charged to ascertain what the trouble was and how it could be repaired. The Royal Commission sat for some considerable time and took a great deal of evidence and went to the root of the whole business, with the result that they reported to the Government in such a way as to satisfy both parties concerned in the tributing business. The Government have wisely adopted the course of introducing this Bill in which it they have practically embodied the report of the Royal Commission. The Commission apparently gave satisfaction and both parties were prepared to agree to it. Every clause in the original Bill, as introduced, was adopted, but another clause was inserted in another place which, from the information I have received, would upset to a large extent the good effect which the Bill, based on the recommendations of the Commission, promised to have. From what we heard last night, it seems that one of the members of the Commission is also a member of Parliament, and I understand it was largely due to the influence of that member, who was in a minority on the Commission, that Clause 10 was inserted in the Bill. This clause introduces certain conditions which will not be at all welcome to one of the parties.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Was not it accepted by the Minister for Mines?

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I do not know; I do not propose to enter into the merits of the clause. I have with me full

particulars as to how it is likely to affect both sides. It seems to me that this House should hesitate to accept an amendment brought in by one party on a Royal Commission after the recommendations of the Commission have been accepted and embodied in the Bill. I do not propose to discuss the merits of the clause at this stage. It would be unwise to do so.

The PRESIDENT: I would also point out that the hon. member would be out of order in discussing the clause on the second reading debate.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I merely intended to convey an idea of what I mean; when the Bill reaches the Committee stage I intend to move for the deletion of the clause. With the rest of the Bill I am entirely in accord, and I can only hope that the measure will be passed in such a form that it will be acceptable to both sides. It is most important that tributing should be carried on satisfactorily, and all members will agree that we should do everything possible to conciliate the parties so that a remunerative occupation like this can be carried on properly. I support the second reading.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.22]: Last session I stood here, supported by Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. Stewart, in an effort to prevent the Mining Act Amendment Bill going through. It is of no use saying, "Let bygones be bygones," because the bygone in this case is a very important portion of the measure now before us. From this Chamber warning was given that, if the Bill went through, tributing would cease. I made that statement and explained fully the position. I was not speaking on a subject with which I was intimately acquainted, but I pointed out that it was a subject with the outlines of which I had made myself familiar, and that the authorities had given me a definite assurance as to what the effect of the Bill would be. I asked whether I might use that information, and the reply was "Certainly; if the Bill goes through tributing will cease." I am under the impression that that information was conveyed to this House at a very late hour, after midnight I think, and one knows that the irritability or impatience of members at that hour and at that period of the session is very great. Yielding to force majeure I said, "Very well, let the Bill go through," but I emphasised the fact that a great responsibility would rest upon the Ministry and upon the Minister for Mines, Mr. Scaddan, for allowing the Bill to go through. What was the result? It was exactly as was anticipated by the authorities I quoted. Tributing stopped, and what did this sagacious Minister do then? He called a conference of the people on the goldfields, which he should have done before, and had a Royal Commission appointed. The Royal Commission's recommendations are embodied in the Bill as it was originally introduced in another

place. Last year I expressed my regret that this House had no direct representative of the mining industry from the employers or the mine owners' point of view. We know perfectly well that from the miners' point of view this Chamber possesses several members who can speak with great authority and great skill. I also ventured to say last session that possibly it would be a good thing if interests were represented here as well as numbers.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You have interests represented well enough.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: How can the hon. member say that? This great mining industry—in some respects we can still say it is the premier industry of this country, the industry which has made this State known all over the world—

Hon. A. H. Panton: It has five representatives in this House.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: How can the hon. member say that with the evidence of last session before him? I stood here almost alone, for the hour being late and Sir Edward Wittenoom being a little older than myself—

Hon. A. H. Panton: You do not want interest but opinion represented.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: How can the hon. member say that the industry is properly represented here? Even Sir Edward Wittenoom does not claim to represent the mining industry as he can claim to represent other industries. Mr. Stewart, who also fought with me, does not claim any more than myself to be a direct representative of the mine owning interests of this country. This Chamber lacks that representation; it is much to be deplored, and has a bad influence on the prospects of the industry and the welfare of the whole community. This big interest which certainly can claim support in London, Melbourne and Adelaide, and a certain amount of support in Kalgoorlie and Perth, has no direct representative either here or in another place.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: Whom do you think the goldfields members represent?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Look at them! Whom do they claim to represent? I am glad to see them here representing the miners.

Hon. J. Cunningham: The mining industry.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: If they represent the mining industry, it is a very discreditable performance that we should have passed the Bill last session, and that it is necessary to come here again this session, within a few months, to rip up that measure and put it into the waste-paper basket. Yet these members claim to represent the mining industry!

Hon. J. Cunningham: We did not ask for the Bill; we did not want it.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Who wanted it? This Bill is brought forward—

Hon. J. W. Hickey: By the Government.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Because those members have brought us to a deadlock with regard to this important matter of tributing.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: The companies have.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I do not wish to bandy words with hon. members. So far as I can understand, they represent very ably and with great sagacity the miners and not the mine owners in this important industry. If they claim to represent the mine owners—and surely they are an important part of the mining industry—then they are very much discredited in connection with the Bill. I do not wish to pursue that subject any further, but I do say that the position is regrettable, and most discreditable. I blame principally the Minister for Mines for it, in that he was responsible for it going through this Chamber at a very late hour. Now we have to do what frequently happens, namely put the Act of last session through the workshop for repairs, as the machinery has broken down in the course of the few months during which it has been in existence. I do not blame the Minister who represents the Government in this House, because I know the limitations under which he is working. No one regrets more than myself that we are compelled to put last year's Act on the stocks and begin de novo. The Bill before us was introduced very properly as the outcome of the report of the Royal Commission. What has been the result? An amendment has been introduced by one of the members of that Royal Commission, which amendment entirely upsets the recommendations of the Commission. I intend to support the second reading on the distinct understanding that when the Bill is in Committee I shall endeavour to have that particular clause struck out. I do not represent the interests of the miners, but I do claim to represent any section of the community which comes before this Chamber with what I consider to be a just claim, and I say that what the mine owners and managers are putting forward is a just claim which is entitled to full consideration. I may be permitted to say that I got into communication with the parties interested in this matter and I have received a communication from Mr. R. S. Black, whose name is very well known in the mining world, and who fairly represents—I say “fairly” in both senses of the word—the mine owners and mine managers, and he has given me permission to use both letters he has written to me, hoping that they will have some effect on members here and on the public outside. He wrote first of all to say that the effect of the legislation last session was practically to block tributing. That is a fact which is undisputed. Then he goes on to say—

A Royal Commission was appointed and after taking lengthy and general evidence made specific recommendations for amendments of the Act, so that all parties might get a fair deal. Legislation in accordance with these recommendations would place

tributers in a position by far better than in any other State in Australia.

Then Mr. Black refers to the amendment which is in the Bill as it has come before us, and expresses the hope that it will be struck out by the Legislative Council. This is what he says, and his remarks will appeal to hon. members who know the position Mr. Black holds in the mining world—

My company having ceased operations and myself leaving the fields possibly entitles me to express an opinion without a suspicion of bias. Having been a lessee and also a tributer, I can claim to have some knowledge of the subject, and my view is that legislation on the lines of the Commission's recommendations will enable tributing to be carried on in a manner fair to all parties, and so beneficially to the industry, whilst Mr. Munsie's amendment will carry us back to the unsatisfactory condition created by the legislation last session.

I wrote and thanked Mr. Black for his letter and said that I would certainly do my best to induce members to give proper consideration to this important question. In a subsequent communication Mr. Black wrote—

Although more or less an onlooker now, I am naturally interested in the future of an industry with which I have been connected so long. Tributing, under conditions fair to both lessee and tributer, will materially assist the industry, but mutuality of interest between the parties must be secured, and this I claim is impossible under Mr. Munsie's amendment.

I do not know that it is necessary to read anything further, but there is a sentence which seems to be fair and which will I hope appeal to hon. members. It is this—

The evidence taken before the Commission was conclusive as to the inadvisability of attempting to legislate on the lines now proposed by Mr. Munsie; in fact the matter introduced by him should form no part of any tributing legislation.

The correspondence is available for anyone to read. I sincerely trust that the House will pass the second reading of the Bill and that in Committee the clause in question will be struck out. One word with regard to those hon. members who claim to represent the mining industry. I appeal to them to be fair and reasonable in this matter. I am quite ready to bury the hatchet, and I am positive that, no matter what legislation we have before us, it is impossible to turn out sound work at three o'clock in the morning. We now have ample time in which to put the matter right. Having seen the complete failure of the system that was tried last year, and having regard to the Royal Commission's report, I appeal to hon. members from the goldfields to see whether they cannot put themselves, as I have tried to do, in a kind of semi-judicial position, and carry out the recommendations of the Royal Commission, which

after all is the most important body. If those hon. members find it impossible to do what I ask, I shall then appeal, with certainty I think, to the rest of the Chamber to listen to what the Royal Commission has to recommend, and also the letters which I have put before the House, in the hope of putting right what was undoubtedly a great wrong done last session.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East) [8.40]: It is hardly necessary for me to add anything to the remarks made by the Leader of the House, Sir Edward Wittenoom, and Mr. Sanderson. All members realise the circumstances under which the Act was passed last session. Now we have the aftermath which was forecasted by Mr. Sanderson and of which the Leader of the House was warned—an aftermath in the shape of the Bill at present before us. The Bill proposes to amend a part of the Act which was passed last session, and I think that in the course of time we shall find that other sections of that Act will also require to be amended. It was impossible to attempt to carry any amendments last session, no matter how justified they were. Mr. Sanderson suggested various alterations, and I have no doubt that those amendments which it was sought to make last session will be carried through on this occasion. They have the impress of the Royal Commission, but there is one clause which has been inserted, though not on the advice of the Commission. There was an interjection when one of the previous speakers was addressing the House, to the effect that the Minister for Mines in another place accepted that new clause. I believe that the attitude of the Minister was that the measure which was introduced last session was his and represented his views.

The Minister for Education: He did not accept the amendment; he voted against it on a division.

Hon. H. STEWART: If that is the case, I have been misinformed. I was given to understand that he did not vote against it because it really expressed his views. However, I cannot quote "Hansard" and I cannot look up the matter; I am only going on what was said to me, and if I am wrong I stand corrected. There is one clause which I and others hope to see deleted from the Bill, the clause stipulating for the payment of a certain percentage of extraction. Speaking generally, and without going into the details of the provision, I may point out that although just now the House is dealing with tributings mainly in the gold mines of Kalgoorlie, that although the mining associations of Kalgoorlie may be mainly concerned with this measure, and that although gold may have been the principal thing in the minds of those who drafted the Bill, we, as legislators, should bear in mind that we are dealing with the whole of the mining industry of Western Australia. Therefore we must consider tributings not only with reference to gold mining, but with reference to

other phases of mining as well. It may at any time become desirable to let tributaries in connection with tin, copper, lead, or any other of the mineral resources of the State. That is another reason why a definite percentage of extraction ought not to be insisted upon. In the matter of direct treatment of refractory ores, one cannot get 80 per cent., or perhaps even 70 or 60, extraction until after much experiment. I have been twitted, though not by any member now present in the Chamber, with the fact that although I am the representative of an agricultural district, I speak on mining questions which come before the House. I may point out that coal mining is carried on in very close proximity to my electorate. Moreover, I have been a foundation member of the Mining Association of Western Australia, which association deals not only with gold but with all phases of mining. Therefore I have thought it desirable, on occasion, to lay before the House the technical aspect of mining questions, with a view to helping to bring about legislation fair to all parties and tending towards the development and progress of our mining industry. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill, though I regret the introduction of the measure, which would have been unnecessary had the amendments moved by Mr. Sanderson last session been carried.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [8.50]: I welcome the Bill as a means towards the solution of the deadlock which has arisen between the mining companies and the tributings section. That position was brought about by the mining company's refusal to let tributaries after the enactment of last session's measure, to certain provisions of which the companies took strong exception. Various members have pointed out that the mining industry is not properly represented here. I may say that I, as the representative of a mining constituency, deemed it my duty when this Bill was submitted to the House to send copies of the measure to the representatives of mining companies and to tributaries in my electorate, at the same time expressing a desire to be favoured with comments on the measure. Neither side has submitted to me any comment, either for or against the Bill. Therefore I take it for granted that they are perfectly satisfied. If those engaged in the industry are dissatisfied with any measures submitted here, it is their duty to communicate that fact to the member for the district, or to some other member if preferred, so that their case may be pleaded here. Prior to the passing of the Act of last session the mining companies had the matter of tributings entirely in their own hands, and the tributaries were unable to obtain from the companies any concessions whatsoever. Several conferences were convened, and following upon these the Minister for Mines conferred with both sides. Thus the Act of last session was framed. The satisfactory results which were expected from that Act did not, however, materialise; and the progress of the

gold mining industry was very adversely affected, especially in the district I represent. The Royal Commission have unanimously submitted certain recommendations as affording a solution of the difficulty, and these are embodied in the Bill. The measure contains an additional clause, which was added at the instance of one member of the Commission. This additional clause is likely to excite controversy in Committee. I welcome the Bill, and trust it will become an Act.

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

House adjourned at 8.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 9th November, 1921.

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

QUESTION—POLICE, PROMOTIONS.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What are the names of sergeants and constables who have passed the promotional examination and date they passed? 2, What was the reason that sergeants and constables who studied hard and passed the examination over four years ago, have not been promoted, when sergeants and constables of later date who have passed the examination have been promoted over senior men? 3, Can the Commissioner of Police give his reason why sergeants and constables who have been 25 years in the force, have passed the examination, and been in charge of stations for

years, and have seniority on their side, have been passed over? If they are not fit for promotion why are they kept in charge of stations?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Mines) replied: 1, A list is attached of members of the force in question. 2, The passing of the examination is the minimum requirement. 3, The mere fact of a sergeant being in charge of a station does not necessarily qualify him for the very responsible position of a District Police Officer—a position requiring considerable administrative ability and a good knowledge of police administration, together with other necessary qualifications. All recommendations for advancement are made by a promotional board whose duty is to select, in order of merit, those members who in their opinion should be promoted, bearing in mind that efficiency in its truest sense must be their first consideration.

QUESTIONS (3)—RAILWAY DEPARTMENT.

Inaccurate Timetables.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the time tables issued by the Railway Department are inaccurate? 2, Is it a fact that travellers to Geraldton could not continue the journey to Northampton, although the time table showed a connection? 3, Would he be surprised to know that it has cost one man nearly £20 for car hire owing to misleading information in the time table?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, Yes.

Mr. O'Loughlen: By Jove, that is the dizzy limit!

Acting Traffic Manager.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is the position of Acting Traffic Manager in the Railways now filled by Mr. Gallagher likely to be a permanent position? 2, Is a better Comptroller of Stores than Mr. Gallagher to be found in the Railway Department? 3, What special knowledge of transport and traffic work does Mr. Gallagher possess? 4, Is the Commissioner of Railways dissatisfied with the work of transport officers and other district traffic superintendents? 5, Can any department expect satisfactory results by denying competent officers the promotion they are entitled to? 6, If the traffic superintendents are not competent to become acting chief, why are they retained in the service?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, No. 2, No. 3, Experience in New South Wales, followed by 27 years' service in the W.A.G.R. 4, The Commissioner is always desirous of improvement. 5, No. 6, They are not incompetent.