

council intended to levy a charge on a percentage basis on the quantity of oil run off through the pipes. A charge of that description was levied by the Fremantle Municipal Council on the Anglo-Persian Oil Co., but there is a difference in that in one instance, the oil is refined, and in the other it is crude. After considerable discussion the council decided to refrain from levying such a charge, and realising that it would be unfair to the Texas Co. to charge more than they were charging the Shell Co., finally agreed to impose £35 a year as rent, that being the amount charged against the Shell Co.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: That is the rent from the pipes.

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, exclusive of any rates to be charged in respect of the land and buildings. At the present time there is some argument between the council and the Shell Company as to whether the tanks are rateable. If it is proved later that a rate can not be levied on the tanks, it is the intention of the North Fremantle Council to ask Parliament to pass an amending Bill to permit a higher rental being imposed. The matter may be adjusted, however, so that further action in that direction may not be necessary: I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan Suburban) [10.35]: I support the second reading of the Bill. I wish to be assured regarding the area of land to be used for the line between the premises to be erected and the foreshore. It is true that at the present time that area, including that occupied by the Shell Co., is of little value. Now that the land has been taken over and in view of the growing population of North Fremantle and the expansion of industries there, the land I refer to may become valuable. In fixing the conditions attaching to the use of the land, we should do everything possible to see that the interests of the community in respect of the land between the foreshore and the buildings are preserved.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; Hon. G. Fraser in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Payment in lieu of rates, etc.:

Hon. G. FRASER: I wish to reply to Sir William Lathlain regarding the land on the other side. There is no land between the property of the Texas Co. and the foreshore, for the company's land runs right through the foreshore.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Is there no space whatever between the company's property and the foreshore?

Hon. G. FRASER: None at all.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Is there no reserve for promenading, no beach reserve?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes, that is there.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 17—agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 18th December, 1928.

	PAGE
Main Roads Act administration, Select Committee, extension of time	2537
Main Roads Act administration, Select Committee's Interim reports	2549
Question: Licensing Act, revenue, etc.	2537
Standing Orders suspension	2537
Bills: Harbours and Jetties, 3a.	2537
Texas Co. (Australia), Ltd. (Private), 3a.	2537
Kolonup Cemetery, all stages	2537
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, all stages	2537
State Trading Concerns Act Amendment, 1a., 2a.	2538
Land Act Amendment, 1a., 2a.	2549
Health Act Amendment, 1a., 2a.	2550
Hospital Fund, 2a., referred to Select Committee	2553
Licensing Act Amendment, 1a.	2574
Group Settlement Act Amendment, Assembly's message	2574
Workers' Homes Act Amendment, Assembly's message	2574
Town Planning and Development, Com.	2574
Poor Persons Legal Assistance, recom.	2576
Coal Mines Regulation Act Amendment, 2a., Com.	2578
Loan (£4,800,000), 2a., etc.	2579
Appropriation, 2a., etc.	2581
Resolution: State Forest revocation	2582

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

MAIN ROADS ACT ADMINISTRATION.*Select Committee—Extension of time.*

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, the time for bringing up the report of the select committee was extended until 7.30 p.m. to enable a minority report to be prepared.

QUESTION—LICENSING ACT, REVENUE, ETC.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN asked the Chief Secretary: For the licensing year ending December, 1928—(a) What was the net amount paid by licensees for liquor; (b) What was the amount of duties and charges thereon?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: As the year has not yet expired the amounts cannot be given.

Personal Explanation.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I notice there is an error in the question, and it is obvious the Chief Secretary could not give me the information. It should have been December, 1927, instead of December, 1928. Perhaps I may give notice of the question for to-morrow.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member may give notice of the amended question for to-morrow.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.34]: I move—

That, during the current month, so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the House to deal forthwith with messages received from the Legislative Assembly, and to pass Bills through all stages at one sitting.

No apology is needed for presenting the motion. After going carefully into the matter I am able to say that this is the latest stage in any session that such a motion has been tabled by the Leader of the House.

Hon. E. H. Harris: It is quite early enough now.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1, Harbours and Jetties.

Transmitted to the Assembly.

2, Texas Company (Australasia), Limited (Private).

Passed.

BILL—KOJONUP CEMETERY.*All Stages.*

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.39] in moving the second reading said: The people of Kojonup have been trying for a considerable time to have the local cemetery brought under the Cemeteries Act, 1897, and placed under the control of trustees in accordance with provisions of the Act. The difficulty is that the land comprising the cemetery is held by the Anglican and the Roman Catholic churches respectively. It was granted to the churches before the enactment of the Cemeteries Act and the Transfer of Land Act. The churches have signified their willingness to transfer the land to the Kojonup Road Board as a board of trustees under the Cemeteries Act, but, as some of the land is not under the Transfer of Land Act, there are difficulties in the way of effecting a transfer, and the Crown law authorities consider that the matter can more effectively be dealt with by a Bill vesting the land in the Kojonup Road Board as trustees under the provisions of the Cemeteries Act, 1897. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.*All Stages.*

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.45] in moving the second reading said: The completion of the bank's financial statement for the year ended 30th June, 1928, discloses that the capital authorised by statute has been exceeded by £86,330; and it is estimated that a further sum of £500,000 will be required by the 30th June, 1929. The last increase in the bank's capital, from £1,000,000 to £4,500,000, was assented to on the 8th September, 1914, under the Amendment Act No. 12 of 1914. It now becomes necessary to seek approval to have the Act further amended so as to provide for the bank's capital being increased from £4,500,000 to £5,500,000, an increase of £1,000,000. I have here figures showing that the loans authorised by the bank amount to £8,122,360, less balance cancelled £513,950, leaving £7,608,410. The advances made amount to £6,649,386. The balance of loans approved but not advanced is £959,024. The bank is committed to meet these advances over a series of years as the work proceeds, and as the improvements are carried out by the selector. The bank's capital as authorised by statute is £4,500,000. The capital appropriation as at the 30th June, 1928, is £4,586,330. Consequently there is an overdraft of £86,330. The estimated capital appropriation for 1928-29 is £500,000. That would, of course, make the overdraft £586,330. The general manager of the bank writes—

You will please note that while actual advances are £86,330 in excess of authorised capital, approval for a further £959,000 has been given. This makes the total amount advanced and authorised to 30th June, 1928, £5,545,354. Based on the present rate of approvals, the authorisations for the current year will probably be in the vicinity of £1,000,000. The indications are that the Associated Banks will be operating freely, and in all probability £400,000 to £500,000 will be repaid, which amount will be available to re-advance.

I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—STATE TRADING CONCERNS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.53] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill is to give the Government power to enter into a partnership agreement with the Westralian Farmers, Limited, in connection with certain activities of the company and of the State Implement Works. By their articles of association the directors of the Westralian Farmers, without reference to the shareholders, have authority to enter into a partnership with any person or corporation. The State Government have no such legal authority. The Act of 1917 provides that the Minister may sell or lease any trading concern on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Governor, provided that possession shall not be given to an intended purchaser or lessee under a contract of sale or agreement for lease, until the approval of Parliament has been obtained. The Schedule to the Act provides that so far as the State Implement and Engineering Works are concerned, authority is given to manufacture and sell agricultural and farming machinery, accessories and spare parts, to purchase and sell imported agricultural and farm machinery, spare parts, etc. This Bill is introduced in order that the Government may have legal authority to go further than that and enter into a partnership with the Westralian Farmers for the purchase and sale of agricultural machinery, tractors, and other plant required in the agricultural industry. It will be remembered that the State Implement Works were established with the sole object of producing without our own State agricultural implements, such as were being manufactured in and imported from the Eastern States and from overseas. It is a regrettable fact that so far as the implement branch of the Engineering and Implement Works is concerned, early anticipations of success have not been fully realised, and one important reason for this is the extreme difficulty which has always been with us, and which has not lessened as time went on, in securing agents in the country who will sell only

the products of the Implement Works. That has been the experience, I think, of every Government in power since the works were established.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Because the products are practically unsaleable.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A few years ago agency agreements were made with some of the co-operative societies, but it was found that they were agents also for machinery which was imported, and which was in competition with the product of the State Implement Works. A big proportion of such machinery was being imported by the parent organisation, namely, the Westralian Farmers. As the operations of the Westralian Farmers expanded, so, more and more, did it become obvious that the co-operative societies could not be of any material assistance to the State Implement Works in the direction of selling their products. And it became necessary for the Implement Works to seek other agents. It was then found to be impossible to secure suitable agents in good centres in many country districts, and it is largely due to this that the demand for State implements decreased, and with that decrease it naturally followed that the importations from the Eastern States and overseas increased correspondingly. With the decreased output in the State Implement Works it followed that the cost of producing each implement increased. It is, of course, a well known fact that, with fixed overhead and managerial charges, the greater the output, the less is the cost per unit of manufacture. Another reason why some difficulty was experienced in the production of implements which could successfully compete against importations, was the fact, in the earlier stages of the management, that there was displayed too much ambition in the direction of manufacturing too many types of implements, without first having perfected the manufacture of a few particular lines. However, at the moment, it can be said that what is now being produced in the Implement Works, particularly ploughs and cultivators, chaff cutters, etc., is generally recognised as being equal, if not in some instances superior, to what is being imported into the State from the East and from overseas. The main object the Government have in asking Parliament to agree to pass this legislation is to retain in Western

Australia some of the money which is now flowing to the Eastern States and elsewhere, and to provide work for our own people. If it were not for these reasons this legislation would not have been brought down. The Westralian Farmers, having at heart the welfare of the State and in particular the interests of the farming community, submitted to the Minister for Works a proposal that he should combine with them in the business of the purchase and sale of farming implements, including tractors. It must be understood that the Westralian Farmers have never manufactured on their own account. Practically everything they have sold has been imported, and most of it in the form of made up machines, although some machines arrive here and are assembled by a few men who are employed by the Westralian Farmers. Discussions have taken place between the Government and the representatives of the Westralian Farmers and at the moment the Minister has good reason for believing that a very satisfactory partnership will be arrived at, but of course finality cannot be reached without legislation. However, even with legislation, Parliament can depend upon it that an agreement will not be entered into unless it is entirely satisfactory from the point of view of the State, and particularly of the farming industry. So far as preliminary negotiations have gone the objective in sight by the two parties is that a committee of management consisting of three persons to be nominated by the Westralian Farmers and three by the Minister for Works shall be constituted. This committee will be given power by a partnership agreement, to purchase all implements, etc., which may be required. It is provided that the committee shall enter into a contract with the State Implement Works for the manufacture of certain lines, such as—windmills, heavy disc ploughs, disc cultivating ploughs, mould-board ploughs, various types of cultivators, chaff cutters, corn crushers, poison carts, wagons and spring carts, 50 per cent. of stump jump heavy harrows, and certain other minor lines which are not being economically and efficiently turned out. The partnership will take over the Horwood-Bagshaw agency and 50 per cent. of the stump-jump harrows will be placed with the State Implement Works. Then again, the Case-tractor

people have agreed to a large proportion of their machinery parts being made locally. This would mean more employment being available at the works. As the lines which the State Implement Works successfully manufacture are now in competition with importations, it necessarily follows that, with the Westralian Farmers and their big selling organisation behind, the demand for these locally manufactured products must increase, since similar lines will not be imported from the Eastern States by the Westralian Farmers. It is well known that a make of tractor is imported from America all ready to go from the ship's side to the farm. We believe that an agreement might be made with the agents for the tractors to, in part, arrive here unassembled, thus providing for employment of local men in assembling work. It is known that the agents will give authority to the partnership to manufacture certain spare parts, thus providing again for more work for local men. There is reason to believe that certain other lines which are now being imported under contract will, by consent of the two parties to such contract, be manufactured wholly or in part by the State Implement Works. In regard to manufacture, the relationship of the State Implement Works to the committee of management would be exactly as if the State Implement Works were a privately-owned concern. That is to say, the State Implement Works will enter into firm contracts with the committee of management for the supply of machinery and spare parts at rates which will enable the committee of management to sell in competition with others. The State Implement Works will quote prices for machinery as if they were in competition with the other manufacturers through a partnership. If the price is considered all right and the quality of the article up to standard, preference will be given to our manufacturers. Subject to this proviso the partnership arrangement would provide that preference of manufacture must be given to the State Implement Works. We have good reasons for believing that satisfactory arrangements can be made with agents in the Eastern States for the implements which will be purchased from them to be delivered in parts. To a certain extent this is done now, but a great deal

more in that direction can be done. It is obvious that the more there is imported in this way the greater will be the avenue to the employment of our own people. The agreement would further provide that the Minister for Works, controlling the State Implement Works and Engineering Work would lease to the committee of management the building known as the assembling shed at Rocky Bay, together with the necessary land and railway siding. On to the floor of this shed would be delivered the product of the State Implement Works in the form of parts, and the other implement imported in parts. The men engaged on the assembling work will be the employees of the committee of management, as will those who are now exclusively employed by the Westralian Farmers as salesmen, and those who are employed in the show rooms. Only the assembling part of the business will be subject to the agreement. The manufacturing side will be a responsibility of the State and will not come under the partnership in any way. The agreement—and this is important—would provide that all sales shall be effected on behalf of the partnership by the Westralian Farmers and their agents. I am informed that their agents consist of 63 local co-operative companies, 9 branches and 11 sub-branches, and 32 other agencies that there are show rooms now at Geraldton, Wyalkatchem, Koorda, Merredin and Naremburn, and Katanning, Albany, Bridgetown and Narrogin, as well as in Perth, and some of the local co-operative companies have small show-rooms. From this it will be seen that the selling organisation embraces practically the whole of the wheat growing districts. The great bulk of the farmers are members of the co-operative societies and do business with them. The stores belonging to these societies will be the channels through which the implements handled by the partnership will be sold. The result should therefore mean that, through Government and co-operative effort, an important secondary industry will be developed on sound lines. The committee of management will pay to the Westralian Farmers, who in turn will pay all their agents, commission on sales effected, just in the same way as the Westralian Farmers now pay. Apart altogether from the fact that the farming industry is rapidly expanding, it is obvious

that by co-operation between the State Implement Works and the Westralian Farmers, the use of implements must expand, and this growth can only mean more work for our own people, and more money being retained for circulation within the State. It will be provided that the capital required to purchase and sell implements shall be found in equal parts by the two partners. It is estimated that in the near future some £300,000 would be required, but that money would only be made available from time to time as and when necessary to meet the needs of the committee of management. It has been estimated that the turnover for next year might be between £400,000 and £500,000.

Hon. E. H. Rose: Will implements required for group settlements be included?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Everything will be included. It would, of course, be provided, too, that the profits would be equally divided between the two partners. The State Statistician has furnished figures which show that in 1926-27 there was imported from the Eastern States agricultural implements, not including tractors, to the value of £633,496, and from overseas £112,461. In 1927 the figures were £737,591 from the Eastern States and £111,154 from overseas. Surely it is worth while endeavouring to co-operate in partnership with the object of reducing these importations. The agreement when made—it is not made yet—will have a currency of ten years. A Government entering into partnership with a company may appear strange to anyone who is not a close student of political events. It is by no means a unique happening. The Commonwealth Government have set a precedent in that direction. They have half the shares in the Amalgamated Wireless Limited, and have the right to nominate three directors on the board. They have a liability to contribute half a million capital on the shares in their name. The Federal Government hold 50 per cent. of the shares in the Commonwealth Oil Refinery and are associated with the Anglo-Persian Company. So that there is nothing wrong with a Government taking shares in a company provided the public interests will be served by such a step.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: There was a precedent long before that—the Suez Canal.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did not think it was necessary to go so far back; I might have been accused of quoting ancient history. The company, with which the Government wish to be associated in a particular business, is a co-operative concern embracing a large body of farmers in this State. And the object sought by the Government is to secure a better distribution of the products of its works among those farmers who use those products and who are also connected with the company whose co-operation the Government are seeking.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You will not be joining in partnership with the Primary Producers' Association, I suppose?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We may be eventually. If the proposed agreement be completed on terms satisfactory to both parties—and the negotiations so far point that way—it will be a good thing for the Westralian Farmers and a good thing for the State. Neither party will have an advantage over the other; but the united efforts of both to secure business should result in benefit to the State trading concern, to the Westralian Farmers and to agriculturists whose requirements should be catered for with an efficiency never before reached in this State. And the benefits may not be expected to end there. A secondary industry will be built up and work will be found for many more men than are now employed at the State Implement Works. It is estimated that the number will be enormously increased in order to cope with the increased volume of work which will result in the carrying into operation of this contemplated agreement. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR WILLIAM LATHLAIN (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.17]: The most wonderful thing about the Chief Secretary's speech is the optimism which he and his colleagues have displayed over the future of the State Implement Works. It reminds me of some of the prospectuses that were published in the early days of gold mining painting glowing pictures of great successes that were to be achieved. After being in this business for something like 14 years, when the works made tremendous annual losses, and in connection with which in one year £120,000 was written off, the Government hope by co-operation to make this

undertaking a brilliant success. Nothing has been placed before us to show how the capital will be supplied, whether the money will be put up, or only IOU's. We have had previous experience of co-operation. One was in respect of the Carnarvon meat works, which the Government will probably have to take over in its entirety. The people of this State are quite satisfied that the Government should carry on their business of developing the land, but without entering into any State trading concerns. Other manufacturers are seeking to establish themselves in Western Australia and supply the wants of the farmers by making agricultural machinery and the requisite parts. Had the previous Government entertained the proposals that were put up by a well-known Eastern States manufacturer the position would be vastly different to-day. If a man had come to me from the Eastern States, as this gentleman did, with the desire to start operations on a proper basis, not with an obsolete plant which was originally an insolvent plant and has been out of date ever since, and had I been in the position of the Premier, I would have put my arms round him and said, "Take the lot so long as you establish a good concern here." We are now asked to agree to the Government entering into a partnership. I have not the same bright optimism that the Chief Secretary and others seem to possess. I do not think that even with this partnership the concern will be any better off. It is an admission of complete failure on the part of the Government that they should, after 14 years of tremendous failure, seek to co-operate with a private concern, and thus hope to resurrect something that is as dead as Julius Caesar. We should do all we can to encourage manufacturers to come here, but, while the State interferes with secondary industries such as these, they will not come here. We have a local company that is now getting on its feet and doing well, and is manufacturing many parts of implements and hopes eventually to launch out still further. We have two millions invested in State trading concerns. If that were invested in railways, it would give a better return and do more for the development of our agricultural areas than tied up as it is in these other concerns such as the Wyndham Meat Works, the State Implement Works and others. The Chief Secre-

tary said he desired to retain the money in Western Australia. We all want to do what we can, not only to keep the money in the State, but to induce manufacturers to establish themselves here in an efficient manner. The responsibility will then be theirs and not of the Government, and eventually we shall have the same success that has been achieved in the other States. I remember when Mr. McKay started at Sunshine. The factory has now grown to enormous dimensions, and is surrounded by a township where the employees all live. Something of the same ideal was in Mr. McKay's mind when he desired to come to this State. His firm is now engaged in assembling machinery locally, but until we get rid of these State enterprises, no inducement is offered to him or anyone else to establish a complete branch of his industry here. The balance sheets that are presented to us do not clearly set out the assets and liabilities of the trading concerns. The return covering State hotels says that the sinking fund investment is £9,710 12s. The Auditor General in his report dated the 30th June last says he cannot find any investments for the special sinking fund payment of £548 15s. 8d. shown in the balance sheet as invested. The amount paid over to the Treasury for this purpose was credited to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. Statements like that make us suspicious as to how all these concerns stand. Members would be wise if they discontinued such drastic failures and once and for all showed their determination that there should be no more State trading concerns, and that every opportunity should be afforded to private enterprise to establish itself locally in those particular industries. The only way to encourage private enterprise is for the State to go out of the business, so that private individuals who have had a lifelong training may step into the breach. The State Implement Works have been exceedingly fortunate in their manager, Mr. Shaw. I believe he possesses great ability. When, however, concerns are controlled by the Government such as fish shops, meat shops and other establishments of the kind they are doomed to failure, no matter under whose management they may be. It is not the business of the Government to embark upon that kind of trading. Their business is to govern, guide and direct the people, look after their health, and encour-

age them to establish themselves on the land so that in our day and generation the community may do the best possible with the great heritage that is ours. One of the reasons why the Implement Works have failed is that they have endeavoured to make practically everything on earth, like a Jack of all trades. Everyone who goes in for business to-day makes either a plough or a reaper and binder or a barrow, or specialises in some direction. People then succeed only because they specialise in the requirements of the man or the land. That is why they get such good results and are able to sell at comparatively low prices. I shall oppose the second reading.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [5.27]: One can agree to a certain extent with what Sir William Lathlain has said, but two wrongs do not make a right. The State Implement Works have not been a success, and are not likely to be. People may oppose the Bill until they have made a thorough examination of the position and have considered all the facts. The Works have been badly handicapped chiefly because they have not turned out machinery suitable for the farming community. A few of the implements are all right, but the majority of them have not fulfilled requirements. I agree that the Government are fortunate in having Mr. Shaw as manager, but he cannot do impossibilities, even were he a superman. These works have been a drag upon him, although he has done yeoman service. In their attempt to dispose of this farming machinery the Government established a costly selling organisation, which failed because there was not the proper machinery for the salesmen to handle. It is now proposed that the Government shall enter into a partnership. It is unique, but I think will prove a success, and what is now a costly failure should be taken along the road to prosperity.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Do you know the terms of the agreement?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Only what the Chief Secretary has said. I take it the Government will see that the terms are favourable to themselves.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The House should be furnished with the information.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes, but how can we get it until the partners decide on the

terms of the agreement? It would not be business to expect it otherwise. The Westralian Farmers have a selling organisation. Some of the machinery manufactured at the works is satisfactory, for they have discontinued the manufacture of those that are unsuitable as they are also unsaleable. On the other hand the works will be assembling machines for which the Westralian Farmers hold the agency, and other agencies may also be acquired. This trouble has been brought about principally because of the freights charged on agricultural machinery. An increase was made recently and under it, the freight on machines sent to Western Australia is certainly excessive. Much of that cost can be obviated if the machines are assembled here, and I am told that as much as £10 per machine can be saved if the assembling is done here. It has been said outside this Chamber that an amalgamation between the State Implement Works and the Westralian Farmers will mean a tremendous reduction in the number of employees at the implement works. I cannot agree with that assertion because the assembling of the machines alone will require the services of a large number of men, more than are employed at present. In addition to that, there will be the manufacture of the spare parts, and duplicate parts will be required as well. I understand that many parts of machines that will be assembled here can be manufactured locally and used in those machines. That will mean increased work for the employees of the State Implement Works. I would instance the position of owners of tractors. Should spare parts be required, there is not only the excessive cost to be borne, but the delays experienced pending the receipt of duplicate parts from outside the State represent a burden on the agriculturist. If those spare parts were manufactured at the State Implement Works, it would be a tremendous saving to the farmers. Under existing conditions I see no prospects of success for the State Implement Works.

Hon. E. Rose: Then sell them!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is a humorous interjection! Where shall we find the fool who will buy them at present? If there was an opportunity, as suggested by Sir William Lathlain, for disposing of the

works, it is a pity that the Government did not avail themselves of that opportunity. At present it would be extremely difficult to find a buyer to take over the works. I would draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that if an amalgamation should take place, it should be laid down definitely that the State Implement Works must not compete in any engineering work against outside firms. We should lay it down that the only engineering work to be undertaken should be that necessary for various Government departments. I know of engineering firms that would instal more up-to-date machinery were it not for the fact that the Government operate in opposition to them. Prices are cut so low that outside engineering firms cannot participate in work. If we handle agricultural machinery that is brought from abroad or from the Eastern States, it will be satisfactory from the standpoint that we will be employing people locally in the work of assembling those machines. For my part, I have never looked upon the State Implement Works as in opposition to McKay's. The agricultural machinery manufactured is different altogether. It would not be suggested for one moment that the State harvester could be regarded as in opposition to McKay's Sunshine harvester.

Hon. H. Stewart: Otherwise the State harvesters would be sold.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is so. At present they are unsuitable and unsaleable.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But will they not be saleable under the partnership?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, because they will not be manufactured. Where more suitable types of machinery can be procured from the Eastern States or from abroad they will be assembled at North Fremantle, and spare parts will be manufactured at the State Implement Works. Surely that is better than for the State Implement Works to continue manufacturing machines that are unsuitable and unsaleable.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Who has agitated for this amalgamation? The Government or the Westralian Farmers?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know that there has been any agitation at all. My impression is that the Government will be darned glad to get someone to assist them in the disposal of their machinery.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Did the Westralian Farmers seek the amalgamation?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The hon. member could have made inquiries just as I did. Any information I have on the subject is the result of inquiries. From what I can ascertain, the move will be a good one for the Government, and it may be of advantage to the Westralian Farmers, who may do well out of it. It may even be that this move will lead ultimately to the disposal of the State Implement Works altogether. Let us hope so, at any rate. I have no special inside knowledge regarding the question.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is merely a business proposition and nothing political!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know that there could be anything political about it.

Hon. G. Fraser: It is agricultural, not political!

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It remains to be seen whether the Westralian Farmers will make anything out of it at all. I support the Bill because I think it is a wise move. Although the works may not make a profit as a result of the amalgamation, it may be that some of the present losses will be cut out. I also support the Bill because I believe a larger number of men will be employed at North Fremantle, and the producers will benefit by acquiring their machinery cheaper, and getting more expeditious delivery of duplicate parts.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.37] The first thought that occurred to me in connection with the Bill was one of regret that a measure of such importance should be brought before the House during the closing hours of the session. The proposal embodied is undoubtedly an important one and appears to comprehend a vital change in relation to the State trading concerns. That change was never contemplated under the original Act. A perusal of the State Trading Concerns Act will show that it was intended that these activities should be controlled by the Minister in charge of them. If, as is proposed, we enter into a partnership, the Minister will be in a peculiar position. The Leader of the House indicated that the partnership will be controlled by three representatives of the Minister and three representatives of the Westralian Farmers.

Hon. H. Stewart: I presume they will be able to get six who will know all about the business.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I presume that will be possible.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Do you think six will be sufficient?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I would like to refer hon. members to certain sections of the State Trading Concerns Act, which define exactly the authorities and powers to exist in regard to the State trading concerns. Subsection 3 of Section 4 sets out that the expression "trading concerns" shall mean "any concern carried on with the view to making profits or producing revenue, or of competing with any trade or industry now or to be hereafter established, or of entering into any business beyond the usual functions of State government." The schedule attached to the Act includes various State trading concerns, including the State Implement Works, that were carried on then, and the Act applies to others that have been established since. The members of this House have expressed their views on more than one occasion with regard to the State trading concerns generally. They have certainly indicated their view that it is not possible for any Government to carry on such operations successfully. A year or two ago we went so far as to pass a Bill to authorise the sale of the trading concerns. If I remember aright, negotiations took place for the sale of the State Implement Works, but nothing eventuated. I agree with others who have spoken that it is desirable the Government should cease to compete with private enterprise, in activities that are outside the ordinary functions of government. We have had unfortunate losses in connection with many of the State trading concerns, and these have lent point to the undesirability of Governments undertaking such operations. Governments in various States of Australia have endeavoured to carry out such businesses, with equally unfortunate results. It is unnecessary to go into details, but I could mention Queensland and New South Wales, in both of which States results from such attempts were most unsatisfactory. We have had unfortunate experiences in Western Australia with our trading concerns. Section 6 of the State Trading Concerns Act deals with the administration of the concerns, and sets out that they shall be under the control of a Minister of the Crown charged with that

responsibility by the Governor from time to time, and it also sets out that the Minister shall be a body corporate, having various powers. If the Bill be passed, what will be the position of the Minister? How can the Minister have control of the State trading concerns, as is contemplated by the Act? If there is a partnership, the members of that partnership will have an equal voice and they will be in control, not the Minister. Instead of introducing a short Bill such as the Government have done, it should be necessary to bring forward one that will re-model the various sections of the existing Act. That has not been done. We find that it is proposed by the Bill to extend the objects for which the State Implement Works were established to embrace the following:—Dealing in agricultural engines, tractors, machines, machinery and implements, in partnership with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., and for such purpose may lease to the partnership that portion of the State Implement Works used for such dealing. One question that presents itself to me is how the Government are going to lease to themselves, in conjunction with another party, those works, and how they are going to deal with the various assets. There is in the Bill nothing mentioned which would indicate that certain credit is to be given to the Government in respect to the assets to be taken over by the partnership. Nor is there any suggestion made as to the value to be put upon those assets, or whether that value is to be ascertained by arbitration or otherwise. Apparently the whole thing is left to some undefined method of treatment. All that is asked is a simple authority to carry on this business in partnership with the Westralian Farmers and to lease this property to the partnership. I think there is a legal difficulty in the way of leasing this property to a partnership consisting of the Government, which would be the lessor, and the Government plus the Westralian Farmers, which would be the lessees. So the Government would be leasing to themselves and another party property which the Government and that other party would take over as lessees.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: Which end of the dog is going to wag the tail?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is the important question. There is nothing here to indicate the answer. It is a very shrewd interjection, an interjection which, I think, will cause members seriously to consider whether, in the closing hours of the session,

they can deal adequately and fairly with a measure like this. Personally I think we cannot do so. We should have fuller information before we can consent to a measure of this character. We are dealing with a very large sum, because the State Implement Works represent in capital a very considerable amount of money. Originally the capital was £375,000, but from time to time that has been added to, and now it stands at a very much larger sum.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: It represents more in posse than it does in esse.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Possibly, but there are certain concerns respecting which it would have been better if the Government in the first place had adopted some other method for disposing of them. They could rest assured of this, that they would have no difficulty in getting the authority of this House for that proposal.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are coming round by degrees: we have got them half-way now.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Do you think the Government will take over half the liabilities of this concern?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is exactly the point about which we are kept entirely in the dark. There is here nothing to indicate who is to take over the liabilities, nor at what price the assets are to be taken over, nor at what price the premises and property are to be leased to the partnership.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It will be on a commission basis.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am afraid that would scarcely be a proper method. There is in the Act an interesting section showing that it was contemplated that when the assets from one State trading concern are transferred to another State trading concern, transfer entries shall be passed in the books of each concern, reducing or increasing the capital of such concerns. So the concern getting the assets or the property transferred over to it would be debited, while the other concern would be credited. But in the Bill we are left entirely in the dark as to what is to be done about the parties to the partnership. The other day I read in the newspaper something indicating that the Government would require to find £150,000 for the purpose of carrying on this business. It may have been the report of a

speech in another place; I am not sure. At all events, the Westralian Farmers had to find an equal amount. It suggests that the capital of the State Implement Works needs fortifying. Obviously, it is necessary to add to that capital for the purpose of carrying on the more extended business that is contemplated. At the present time the scope of the operations of the State Implement Works is limited to these: general engineering and jobbing work, manufacture and sale of agricultural and farming machinery, accessories and spare parts, purchase and sale of important agricultural and farming machinery, spare parts, oil and twine and general sundries, and the carrying on of any business pertaining or incidental to the above, including the purchase of stores and raw material required, the establishment of agencies on commission, etc. Probably that is what Mr. Brown was referring to when he spoke of a commission basis, but it is quite different from what I was alluding to when he interjected. In the Bill before us an effort is made to extend the scope of the operations of the works by including agricultural engines and tractors. Consideration of the Bill requires that when we are dealing with the very large sum invested in the State Implement Works, we ought to have more information before us, so that we can decide whether or not it is the wisest course to pursue, namely, to enter into a partnership, or whether it would not have been better, in the first place, for the Government to have invited tenders for the purchase of the whole of the State trading concerns, lock, stock and barrel, and so rid themselves of a serious incubus and also rid themselves of that which is doing a great deal to discourage other manufacturers from establishing works and industries here. If the Government have to find—I do not know whether or not it is true—the sum of £150,000, presumably it will require to be found out of revenue; because, obviously, the assets are being written down to a very low point. On that, however, we have no information.

The Chief Secretary: Capital to the extent of £300,000 will be required.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: And that will be contributed in equal parts by the respective parties. The chances are that, as those works expand, it will be necessary to find still more capital. Who is to find it? It

means increased taxation on the people of the State, and already I think their burdens in the way of taxation are sufficiently onerous. It is sometimes considered wise for a man to cut his loss when he has entered into a bad bargain. Here the Government have entered into a bad bargain and would be well advised to consider cutting their loss and, probably, entering into negotiations with the Westralian Farmers, or some other persons, for the absolute sale of the State Implement Works. Probably the Westralian Farmers would become the purchasers. It would give them an opportunity to deal with the whole of the assets of this concern. But to carry out the proposed scheme of partnership is so foreign to the powers and intentions of the State Trading Concerns Act that I say we are not justified in passing the Bill before us.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.56]: I hope the Bill will be carried. Sir William Lathlain said that Hugh Victor McKay came across here some years ago and endeavoured to purchase the State Implement Works. Sir William also regretted that the State Implement Works had been established by the Government, thereby keeping out private enterprise. Apparently he forgets that for years private enterprise had the opportunity to think over the matter and come to Western Australia before the State Implement Works could be established. It was because of the failure of private enterprise to start the industry here with a view to assisting the farmers, that the implement works were first established. Now we find it being said that those works are keeping private enterprise out of the State. Mr. Baxter also dealt with this phase of the question and, in reply to Sir William Lathlain, said the implements that Hugh Victor McKay sells in this State are not in competition with those turned out at the State Implement Works because the implement made at North Fremantle had been a failure. There are not many prepared to get up and declare that it has been a failure. Still we all realise that it was not up to the standard required. That is one of the machines which, under this agreement, will not be manufactured at the State Implement Works. Sir William Lathlain declared that, but for the State Implement Works, Hugh Victor McKay would

have established a branch of his works here. We know, of course, that McKay's have a large assembling works here. But if the State Implement Works were in the position that some members would have us believe, what would be wrong with Hugh Victor McKay, or any other manufacturer of agricultural implements, starting here if the implements turned out at the State Implement works are so very defective? For in that case no private manufacturer need be afraid of competition from the State works. Mr. Baxter expressed sympathy with Mr. Shaw, the manager of the State Implement Works, in having to carry on such works. I have heard it said by several members of this House that Mr. Shaw is an excellent manager.

Hon. J. Nicholson: He is a good manager.

Hon. G. FRASER: He may be a good manager, but I consider he is not the manager that most members would have us believe.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: He would be if he had a chance.

Hon. G. FRASER: I fail to see where he has not had a chance.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: What about the machinery he has had to deal with?

Hon. G. FRASER: Who is responsible for the machinery? Is not Mr. Shaw more responsible for the machinery manufactured than anyone else in the works?

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: He cannot get the machinery he requires without money.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And you cannot pick money off the streets.

Hon. G. FRASER: We are all aware of that. It has been said that Mr. Shaw is a manager to be pitied for having such works to control. I candidly admit that Mr. Shaw did improve the works considerably as compared with what prevailed under the previous manager, Mr. Davies.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Mr. Shaw reduced the number of men and got more work.

Hon. G. FRASER: In that connection I am not sure that Mr. Shaw is the manager members would have us believe he is. My opinion of the State Implement Works is that there are too many men with their coats on and not enough with their coats off. If that is so, I maintain that Mr. Shaw is to blame.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: That was Mr. Shaw's complaint when he took charge.

Hon. G. FRASER: Then he has made the position worse.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: He said there were 200 men in excess of requirements.

Hon. G. FRASER: If he got rid of 200 men, they were men who had their coats off, and he has since introduced men who keep their coats on. Mr. Shaw in a large measure is responsible for the introduction of men who walk around the works with their coats on.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Those with their coats on may be doing more than those with their coats off.

Hon. G. FRASER: I have not seen too many men with their coats on that do more than those with their coats off.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Is the Minister aware of that?

Hon. G. FRASER: I do not know. I have lived within a stone's throw of the works for 16 years and I have some knowledge of them. I admit freely that an improvement was made by Mr. Shaw on the conditions that prevailed under the previous manager. A great reduction of staff took place when Mr. Shaw assumed control. It was essential that a lot of men should be put off, but when Mr. Shaw reached a certain standard, he did not improve on it. I am not convinced that he is the manager that many members would have us believe. Anyone having a conversation with Mr. Shaw would be convinced that he was the best manager in Western Australia, but I know of different things that have happened at the works.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Did he convince you of that?

Hon. G. FRASER: No, because I know him too well. To a stranger or to anyone without a knowledge of the inside workings, he would convey the impression that he is an excellent manager, but I happen to have a little additional knowledge. However, I hope the House will pass the Bill, because I believe that as a result the works will be improved and the number of employees will be increased three or four fold. Some members may think I am optimistic. I am optimistic, and I believe I have grounds for my optimism. We are told by the Minister the the agency is to have the handling of the Case tractors, and is also to manufacture parts at the imple-

ment works. If it were only a matter of assembling Case tractors it would lead to an increase in the number of men employed, but when we remember that parts for Case tractors will be made at the works, we must realise that that will tend further to increase the number of men employed. In connection with harvesters, although a little assembling work is done here, the machines are imported practically in the assembled state. If the agreement is finalised, they will be brought here in parts and wholly assembled here. That will increase the number of men employed at the works. We are told that the co-operative companies are to purchase ploughs and various other implements from the works. Very few men will contend that the implement works are not making ploughs comparable with any others manufactured in the State or imported. It is recognised everywhere that the ploughs of the State Implement Works are excellent.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Can you tell us why the farmers will not buy them?

Hon. G. FRASER: They are buying some, but they are not buying the number they should because the State Implement Works have not the necessary selling agents. This agreement will give to the State Implement Works that which they have lacked in the past. I understand that the Westralian Farmers Limited have very good selling agents right through the State, and I am hopeful that the partnership will supply the great feature that has been lacking in the State Implement Works organisation.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: Were not the State Implement Works previously represented by the Westralian Farmers Limited?

Hon. G. FRASER: I believe they were some years ago; the Minister dealt with that phase of the question. Mr. Nicholson spoke of the legal difficulties likely to arise. I ask him whether he does not think that phase of the question would be thoroughly considered by the Government before they introduced such a Bill.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is also opposed to the intentions of the Act. It does not read in harmony with the Act at all.

Hon. G. FRASER: We may rest assured that the Government have considered that phase of the question. Mr. Nicholson spoke

of the co-operative company taking over the liabilities of the State Implement Works. That will not be done. The State Implement Works will still be run as such, and the partnership agreement will constitute a separate entity.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It would be wise to have further information. Let the Bill be postponed.

Hon. G. FRASER: The State Implement Works will still manufacture implements. The new company will do the assembling, and a price to be agreed upon will be charged to the company for the implements.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: That will make it more complicated.

Hon. G. FRASER: I think the arrangement is very clear. I have no doubt that the agreement will operate to the benefit of the Westralian Farmers Ltd., the Government and the people of the State.

Hon. H. Seddon: Have you seen the agreement?

Hon. G. FRASER: Yes.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Then why is not the agreement here?

Hon. G. FRASER: I misunderstood Mr. Seddon; I thought he was referring to the Bill. I have not seen the agreement. Like Mr. Baxter, I have made inquiries and have gathered what information I could. My information leads me to believe that the arrangement will be beneficial to all parties concerned.

Hon. E. H. Harris: How do you arrive at that conclusion if you have not seen the agreement?

Hon. G. FRASER: I happen to possess faith, which the hon. member evidently lacks. I am convinced—

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You are convinced by faith?

Hon. G. FRASER: Not only by faith; I am convinced by my knowledge of the works, the workmen, and the class of work they turn out that when the one thing lacking—the selling agency—has been supplied, the arrangement will turn out trumps for the State. I support the second reading.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, debate adjourned.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

MAIN ROADS ACT ADMINISTRATION.

Interim Reports of Select Committee.

Hon. H. Seddon brought up a majority report and a minority interim report by the select committee appointed to inquire into the administration of the Main Roads Act.

Reports received and read, and ordered to be printed.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon, resolved that the consideration of the reports be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [7.50] in moving the second reading said: In order to make this Bill more intelligible, it will be necessary for me to review the legislation of the last 10 years dealing with pastoral leases. I shall endeavour to do so as briefly as possible. On the 28th March, 1917, legislation was passed allowing to lessees who applied within 12 months and paid double rent until appraised, extended tenure to 1948. If a lessee refused appraisal, the lease reverted to the original conditions and expired on the 31st December, 1928. On the 29th March, 1918, further legislation was passed extending the time for applying until the expiration of one year from the issue of a proclamation by the Governor General of the Commonwealth that the war had ceased. But in this case if a lessee refused to accept the appraised rent, no refund of the double rent was allowed. Certain lessees were unable to take advantage of the previous Acts; therefore still further legislation was passed on the 22nd December, 1923, allowing lessees who desired extended tenure to apply before the 30th June, 1924, provided double rent was paid from the 28th March, 1918, until appraised and in addition pay 7 per cent. compound interest from such date to the date of application. As lessees holding 4,077,344 acres failed to take advantage of the previous legislation, it is now proposed that lessees shall pay the penalty passed under the 1923 Act, that is, interest from the 28th March, 1918, to date of application, so that they

may be granted extended tenure until 1948. Under the new Act 210,244,763 acres have been appraised, or approximately 97 per cent.—leaving only approximately 3 per cent. to be dealt with. There are 4,077,344 acres held in the following divisions:—

	No. of Lease.	Acres.
Kimberley Division ..	33	1,565,337
Eastern Division ..	21	360,044
North-West Division ..	45	1,649,463
Euela Division ..	21	502,500
	<hr/> 120	<hr/> 4,077,344

In the South-West Division there are 230 leases covering 950,000 acres (approximately), which are not affected by these provisions, with regard to rent and will not be penalised, but those leases will expire on the 31st December, 1928. The leases affected expire on the 31st of this month, and the Bill will give the lessees the opportunity within a period of three months to apply for new leases to 1948, except north of the 20th parallel of South latitude, where the time is extended to six months. All leases outside the South-West Division of the State will be subject to appraisalment, and as the decision of the Government was that this legislation should give a lessee no more favourable conditions than apply to those who availed themselves of the previous legislation, the leases will be subject to re-appraisalment at the expiration of fifteen years from the 1st April, 1918, from which date all leases previously surrendered are affected in regard to rental. The result will be that the leases dealt with under this Bill that are subject to appraisalment (that is, excluding those in the South-West Division) will be re-assessed in 1933. Clause 2, paragraph (e) provides that the Land Act Amendment Act of 1926 shall apply. This Act enables the board of appraisers to appraise pastoral leases which prior to that Act could not be appraised at less than the rental of the Division in which the leases were situated as fixed by the original Land Act. For instance, Kimberley and the North-West Division were 10s. per thousand acres, and although the Board may have considered that such leases were only worth 8s. per thousand acres, it had no power to fix the rental at less than 10s. Many leases have since been re-appraised under this provision and the reference in this Bill will extend the concession to the lessees concerned in this measure. Clause 2, paragraph (f)

deals with mortgages, and is necessary to avoid legal difficulties which might arise between the date of expiry of the lease, namely, the 31st instant, and the three or six months, as the case may be, during which the lessee is entitled to apply for a new lease. Clause 2, paragraph (g) sets out that pastoral leases in the South-West Division shall not be affected by the provisions relating to rent. This is merely a repetition of the provisions in the 1917 Act, and was put in because such leases are open to free selection, and subject to an annual rental of £1 per thousand acres, which has not been increased for many years. The reference to the Forests Act is inserted because a number of the leases in the South-West Division are in forest country, and the Conservator of Forests does not want to be hampered by being compelled legally to grant leases over forest lands. The pastoral lessee will not be affected, because if the land is taken for a State forest, he will be entitled to compensation for improvements as under any other resumption. Clause 3 merely provides that the Group Settlement Board, as at present constituted, and being a board of administration in connection with Group Settlement, shall be substituted for the words "General Manager" in permits which have been issued to group settlers entitling them to occupy their blocks. "General Manager" was intended to be the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank. It was desired to introduce an amendment so that the Group Settlement Board should be deemed the general manager of the scheme under the Minister. Hence in future the Group Settlement Board will fill the position of general manager of the scheme in order that the permits which have been issued may have legal effect. In regard to these permits, the general manager has certain powers, and if the Act were not amended it would be impossible for anyone to exercise them seeing that the General Manager of the Agricultural Bank has nothing to do now with group settlement.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [8.5] in moving the second reading said: The Bill comprises a number of amendments which experience has proved to be necessary for the better working of the department. It includes some new provisions which have also been found necessary. Our health legislation has not been amended since 1919. Our experience since then prompts us to put forward this particular Bill. Generally the amendments are not of a very important character, and many of them are not contentious. Taken altogether, however, they are desirable and will make for the better administration of the Act, as well as improvement in the present state of affairs. Some of the definitions in the parent Act have been amended. The definition of infectious diseases has been replaced by an entirely new one, namely, that recommended by the Federal Health Council of Australia for adoption throughout the Commonwealth. The Bill also contains a new provision whereby the residents of a health district, which is governed by a local health board, may be able to decide the personnel of that board by election. At present I understand members of health boards are nominated by different bodies. This method has not been satisfactory in every case. It is considered advisable that the residents of any particular locality should have the right to elect their own representatives on a health board. Another provision deals with the constitution of a sanitary area. This is intended to apply to small towns where the establishment of a local board of health would not be justified. The area would be controlled by a sanitary board having certain restricted powers and functions. The Bill also provides a new method of dealing with local authorities who fail to carry out their obligations, and provides a much shorter and preferable method of procedure than the existing one. One of the most important provisions is in regard to the improved sanitation of country health districts. The proposal is to group a number of health districts and appoint a full time inspector for the whole area. It would be the inspector's duty to see that the Acts and by-laws were carried out, and he would be held responsible for the general sanitary conditions of the area.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Like the workmen's inspector, he will have no qualifications?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That remains to be seen. It is not contended that existing officers should be removed, nor that the powers of local authorities concerned should be in any way interfered with. This proposal is put forward because the local inspectors at present have not sufficient time to attend properly to health matters. The inspector in a country district is usually the secretary of the road board, and generally has a full-time job on his hands. The Minister will pay half the salary of the inspector and half his expenses, while the other half will be paid by the local authorities concerned. Another useful provision is in connection with sewers. This will enable the local authorities to construct a sewer within any portion of its district, and to levy upon the rateable land situated within such portion of the district such rates as will cover the cost of the undertaking. A further provision gives the local authority power to require the owner of the premises to connect them up with the sewerage system when such exists. The local authority at present does not possess this power. It is required to carry out the sanitary service at premises within the sewered area that are not connected up. A sanitary service in these circumstances is costly and difficult to maintain. It is also unnecessary if proper facilities for sewers exist. Another important departure is in regard to the feeding of infants. Every effort is being made by the department and the Infant Health Association to persuade mothers to rear their children in the natural way. It is found that this work is seriously hampered by agents or travellers for infants' food, who try to persuade mothers to cease that mode of rearing their children and to adopt some form of artificial food. This is considered to be of great importance, particularly as the chances of a healthy adult life are enormously greater in the case of a child which is fed naturally than where it has been artificially nourished. The new provision makes it an offence to persuade any mother or person in charge of a child under six months old to purchase any kind of artificial food for the purpose of giving it to such child.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The clause says "advise."

The HONORARY MINISTER: Should it be found necessary to feed a child artificially, the trained staff of the Infant Health Association will be prepared to offer such advice as may be necessary. There is a further clause dealing with infant health centres. It gives a local authority power to subsidise any infant health centre to any extent it may think fit. At present local authorities are handicapped as they are restricted to nursing homes or to hospitals for the reception of sick generally. Their contributions are limited to not more than 10 per cent. of the ordinary income under the Act. From the public health point of view it is more logical to subsidise infant health centres than hospitals from the funds of the local authority. Another important provision is in regard to parents or guardians who neglect to have remedied any medical defects that have been discovered by the medical officer. Cases have come before the department showing that parents have willfully neglected to secure the necessary medical attention, with the result that the health of the child has been seriously endangered. The clause provides that no proceedings shall be taken against any parent or guardian until a further examination has been made by the medical officer and a proper medical practitioner in consultation. That is a very essential provision, and a very wise one in the interests of the children of the State. We can claim for our health activities in this State that for many years we have been in the van compared with other States throughout the Commonwealth. The amendments sought will bring our legislation up to date, and maintain our position in that respect. There are, of course, a number of amendments that I have not referred to.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Including the one about getting hair cut!

The HONORARY MINISTER: That may be very important, too. The Bill is essentially for the Committee stage, and I have information to show that the various amendments sought are necessary and advisable. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

RESOLUTION—STATE FOREST REVOCATION.

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution—

That the proposals for the partial revocation of State forest No. 4, Collie, laid on the Table of the Legislative Assembly, by command of His Excellency the Governor, on the 12th day of December, 1928, be carried out.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [8.17]: I move—

That this House concurs in the resolution forwarded by the Assembly.

The resolution is the result of a proposal of the Conservator of Forests for the revocation of a small portion of State forest No. 4 at Collie. The proposals have already been laid on the Table of this House. The revocation, for reasons I shall explain, are necessary so that certain portions may be excised from the State forest mentioned. The reasons are that, in the first place, there is a small area of 1 rood 27 3/10ths perches on which the Collie Road Board office has been erected. That area was inadvertently included in the State forest. The second proposal embraces about 47 acres near the new Stockton coal mine, while the third area refers to about 33 acres. The excision of the last mentioned area will enable the Lands Department to extend the boundaries of the Collie town site and deal with an application for an area of land on which it is proposed to erect a power station. The motion was passed in another place and it is necessary, under the provisions of the Forests Act, that it shall be passed by members here. The total area affected is about 80 acres only.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Is the proposal for the power house in connection with a national scheme, or one for Collie only?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It will not be in connection with a national scheme, because there is no such scheme at present.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [8.10]: I do not intend to oppose the motion, but I rise to protest against matters of this description, which could have been here long ago, being placed before us at the eleventh hour. It does not give hon. members an opportunity to look into the ques-

tions. We have just listened to a second reading speech by the Honorary Minister on a most important Bill.

Hon. E. H. Harris: There are 42 amendments in it.

Hon. H. Stewart: The Honorary Minister does not intend us to pass it this session!

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: In connection with that Bill we must look at the parent Act, and yet we are expected to come here, and deal with such an important matter off-hand, and to do justice to our work.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I do not see how it is possible for us to do it.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: If some of the Bills have to go overboard this session, the fault will rest with the Government for not having given us an opportunity to consider them.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [8.21]: I endorse the remarks made by Mr. Lovekin. When I perused the Notice Paper to-day, I saw there were nine matters to be dealt with, and that was all we should reasonably be asked to consider. After I came here, I found we had a number of messages from another place to be dealt with. I expected to be in a position to consider the Hospital Fund Bill, which is No. 3 of the Orders of the Day. We have not reached it yet! There are many other matters to be dealt with. I agree with Mr. Lovekin that we should not have measures introduced at this late stage of the session, for it is impossible to deal with them properly. With the work already on the Notice Paper, it will take us the full week to deal with the measures mentioned. If we are to have more new Bills placed before us, it will be impossible to deal with them, and I enter my protest too.

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, debate adjourned.

BILL—HOSPITAL FUND.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th December.

HON. A. J. H. SAW (Metropolitan-Suburban) [8.23]: I desire to protest against a Bill of the importance of that under discussion being brought down at this late hour of the session. As other hon. mem-

bers have just pointed out, it is not only this Bill but numerous other Bills that are coming down for consideration. In fact they are falling round us like autumn leaves. I desire to register my protest against such a state of affairs. We have been ambling along throughout the session, and we would have been in a position to devote more attention to these Bills had they come before us at an earlier stage. Now at the eleventh hour, they are being crowded in upon us! I would also protest at the attempt on the part of the Honorary Minister to force an important Bill like the one now before us through the House at the second reading stage with very little consideration. The Honorary Minister introduced the Bill at a late hour on Thursday night and he was followed by Sir Edward Wittenoom. On Friday three other hon. members addressed themselves to it, and the adjournment was then moved but was resisted by the Honorary Minister.

The Honorary Minister: Yes, in view of assurances given me by several members.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I do not know whether the Honorary Minister is referring to me. I can inform him no such assurance was given by Mr. Lovekin or myself that we would consent to the second reading of the Bill being hurried through.

The Honorary Minister: I did not ask that it should be hurried through.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The Honorary Minister said he had received assurances, and if he referred to Mr. Lovekin or myself, I give him a denial.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That is so.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: The financial position of the hospitals of the State undoubtedly calls for some remedy. More beds are required; enlarged departments, additional equipment and so forth are also needed; but unfortunately the hospitals are hampered through lack of funds. The maintenance of the people's health is one of the first duties of a Government. No doubt the various hospital authorities in the State welcome the proposals embodied in the Bill. I can quite understand that, because of the desperate financial position so many of them are in. Just as a drowning man clutches at a straw, so do the hospital authorities agree to the provisions of the Bill which they consider will remedy

their financial position. I doubt very much if those who are responsible for the administration of our public hospitals realise the greater responsibility that will be cast upon them by the Bill, and the greater expenditure that will necessarily have to be met by them. If we compare the hospital of to-day with hospitals as they existed in former times, we must be struck by the numerous changes that have taken place. In the days before Lister, hospitals were referred to as "little short of pest houses" and in some places the hospitals were regarded as synonymous with the house of death. I think it is probably on account of traditions handed down from that time, that there is a dread of hospitals on the part of some people to-day. Such was the condition of affairs before Lister's time that when in the reign of George IV. Sir Astley Cooper, an eminent surgeon, was called upon to perform a minor operation on His Majesty for the removal of a mere sebaceous cyst from the Royal head, he was so seized with dread lest erysipelas or pyaemia should supervene, that he did all he could to shift the responsibility on to other shoulders. From letters he wrote, one gathers that he was in such dread lest those developments should supervene, his reputation be ruined, and the King lose his life, that he took the action I have indicated. Fortunately, nothing of the sort resulted. At any rate, that shows how in those days an operation of the simplest description was fraught with great danger. To-day, operations of the greatest magnitude are performed every day of the week in every large public hospital throughout the world and are carried out successfully. There have been not only these improvements that have taken place as the result of the efforts of Lister, the greatest benefactor of mankind, but various new methods prevail now in the treatment of patients. I wou'd refer hon. members to what they have read in the newspapers recently in connection with the grave illness of His Majesty the King, for whose recovery we are all hoping. At the beginning of the illness the physicians were called in. Next came the radiographer to take an X-ray picture of the lung; then the pathologist who examined the secretions from the lung and the organisms growing in the blood; then came the anaesthetist in

order that a small operation might be performed; then the electro-therapist with two different kinds of treatment; then followed the surgeons. That represents something like eight special methods of treatment that were applied in a case which, I suppose, in former years would have required only the attention of the physician, the surgeon and the anaesthetist. I think those are the facts that account for the very large increased expenditure which takes place in hospital treatment. The Bill introduces certain new principles. One is special taxation for a specific purpose. Then there is another new principle in the Bill, which refers to a change in the basis of admission of patients to the Public Hospital. At present at that hospital those unable to pay for private treatment are admitted for free treatment. But, if able, they are expected to pay something towards their maintenance in the hospital. There is no wage limit imposed, but merely a declaration on the part of the patient that he is unable to afford private treatment. This provision, of course, is made by resolution of the hospital board. But there is nothing whatever to prevent the board from altering their determination as to the conditions governing the admission of patients, and so although that may be the method of admission to-day, there is no guarantee that the conditions will remain fixed in the future. The Bill provides for a contribution to hospital funds, which really is a system of insurance against the payment for hospital treatment on the part of practically every wage earner and income taxpayer in the State. It is a system of insurance whereby those entitled to admission to the Public Hospital will be entitled to free treatment and free maintenance.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Will you be able to get honoraries under those conditions?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I think so. The patients will be entitled to free treatment and free maintenance in place of the present conditions under which those who can afford to pay are expected to pay for their maintenance. There is in the Bill another provision: there is to be a subsidy of 6s. per day or two guineas per week on every admission of a patient to a private hospital. Let us study what the effects of these new provisions will be on the various hospitals. Take first the public hospital: formerly admission to the public hospital was regarded

more as a favour or privilege than as a right. The patients there were attended to by a voluntary honorary staff. But under the provision now introduced by the Bill these patients will have been paying into a fund, and consequently and rightly they will consider that they are entitled to demand admission. The Perth Hospital is already overtaxed in point of accommodation. There is a long waiting list, and frequently even urgent cases have to wait a considerable time before being admitted. I had experience of that only two weeks ago when a patient whom I had seen, a young woman quite unable to pay for hospital treatment or medical attendance, had a haemorrhage from a gastric ulcer. She was in a condition requiring hospital treatment. But although I know the authorities at the hospital would have done everything they could to give that patient early admission, there was no bed available and she had to wait four days before a vacancy occurred and she could be admitted. Only yesterday I heard of a case of appendicitis, not in a very acute stage, but one that required treatment and operation. However, the case could not obtain admission to the hospital owing to pressure on the accommodation. When the Bill becomes law and this new system is in vogue, the pressure on that hospital will be very considerably increased. The patients having contributed to the fund, more of them will consider they have a right to hospital treatment. And also, as they have the privilege of admission for free treatment and free maintenance, naturally the Perth Hospital will be even more popular than it is at present. So I think the first effect the Bill is going to have will be to very considerably increase the demand for admission to the Perth Hospital. Then there is another consideration. At present when the time comes for a patient to leave the hospital, very often the determining condition is the demand there is for beds in the hospital. If the pressure on the accommodation is great, the patients have to be asked to go out of the hospital, perhaps earlier than might be advisable, in order to make room for other patients whose condition demands their admission. But the patient in the hospital, regarding it as his right to go there in view of the fact that he has contributed to the fund, naturally will not be so easily moved out of hospital as at present. Consequently, I think the period of the stay of a patient in hospital will be prolonged.

It may be argued that that is entirely in the discretion of the medical officer. But, of course, the medical officer always tries as far as he can to meet the wishes and convenience of the patients. I have no doubt the effect of the pressure that will be brought to bear on him through this consideration will be that the stay of patients in the hospital will be longer than it is at the present time. In consequence, there will be a still further call for additional hospital accommodation. The difficulty will be met and should be met by the establishment of convalescent homes whence those patients not fit to go home can be moved in order that the space in hospital may be relieved. That again will be an additional expenditure to be incurred by those responsible for hospital administration. Let us see what the effect will be on the private hospitals, on the demand for accommodation in private hospitals. I think the same conditions I have alluded to in reference to public hospitals will prevail with even greater force in the increased demand for accommodation in private hospitals, because every patient who goes to a private hospital will be subsidised to the extent of two guineas per week. In some hospitals, St. John of God's for instance, there is a considerable number of free beds, and also a ward where patients can be admitted at two guineas per week and another ward where they can be admitted for three guineas per week and so on up to four guineas or five guineas per week. Take those paying two guineas or three guineas per week. Having a subsidy of two guineas per week from this fund, naturally they will like to go into the hospital for less serious cases than they do at present.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And make it a kind of rest-house.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I am not saying it will not be to the advantage of the people in the long run. I am pointing out that it will involve considerable extra expense and that consequently the hospital authorities will not be relieved to the extent contemplated in the Bill. I have said that more people will go into the hospitals. One of the striking features of the last 20 years has been the increase in the demand for admission to private hospitals. When first I came to practice here, many years ago, there were in the town, as it then was, but two private hospitals, and they contained accommodation for not more than 30 patients.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom : How do you account for the increase in illness?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: There are always certain factors that contribute towards sickness. I do not think I need allude to them, but there are certain things that contribute to ill health, and those have been going on for all time, and still prevail. I was saying that about 30 years ago there was in Perth accommodation for not more than 30 patients in two private hospitals. Since then the population has increased very considerably, and probably there is now in private hospitals in Perth accommodation for 300 patients. For instance, the St. John of God Hospital alone can accommodate 220 patients, and they are erecting further wards which will be completed within two years and will provide accommodation for another 120 patients. So that private hospital alone will be providing for 340 patients. I think therefore, there will be a considerable increase of admissions to private hospitals as against the present demand, owing to the fact that they are going to be subsidised to the extent of two guineas per week per patient. Then the same considerations that prevail in regard to a public hospital will prevail in even greater force in respect of private hospitals, especially in the cheaper wards. I refer to the duration of stay. But even in the other wards the fact that portion of the payment will be made by this subsidy will prolong the period of stay and so increase the expenses on this fund. The Honorary Minister in dealing with the Bill said it was expected that £29,000 per annum would suffice for the subsidising of patients in private hospitals. Taken at 6s. per day, on the average stay in private hospitals that works out at 266 patients. Workers' compensation cases are excluded from the operation of the Bill, but from investigations I have made I am sure that at the present time the average daily number of patients in eight private hospitals in Perth alone amount fully to 245. Some of them will be workers' compensation cases and will not come under this measure. They should be excluded from the number, but unfortunately I have not the statistics to tell me the precise number of workers' compensation cases in the different hospitals at present. But that total does not take into account the private hospitals in other parts of the State. In the different suburbs around Perth and at Fre-

mantle there are private hospitals. Katanning and Kalgoorlie each has a private hospital and at Bunbury I understand there are two private hospitals.

Hon. J. Ewing: Three.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Anyhow, there are many private hospitals scattered about. I feel sure that the total at the present time is more than the 266 which would be provided for by the £29,000 to which the Honorary Minister alluded. Whether that is so or not, I am certain that when this measure becomes law there will be a considerable increase of patients going into the hospitals both in the metropolitan and the country districts. If that is so, it will not be long before the increased demand for accommodation in the Perth hospital and the subsidy paid to private hospitals will swallow up the sum of £55,000 that the Honorary Minister thought would remain over and would go towards maintenance and building for the future needs of public hospitals throughout the State. What I am rather afraid of is that this subsidy of patients in private hospitals will have a tendency to prevent what I am sure the great majority of medical men regard as the ideal scheme, and that is that the Government should erect wards for paying patients in association with the public hospitals already existing, so that patients who can pay for their own maintenance and also pay their own doctor's fees may go into private hospitals.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Why should they?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: Because the medical profession think the advantages of their being admitted to hospitals of that kind would be considerable. At such hospitals they would have available the various departments, such as the use of the pathologist, the use of an up-to-date theatre with its accessories, and the use of the radiologist, by paying for them, and those advantages would undoubtedly do much to improve the lot of those who unfortunately have to seek admission to private hospitals. I am on sure ground when I say it is the opinion of the medical profession that it would be a great advantage to the health of the community if the Government would only erect paying wards in connection with the existing public hospitals. It may be said that St. John of God's Hospital fulfils to a cer-

tain extent the advantages of an intermediate hospital. It does. I do not wish in the least to under-value the great work being done by the nuns of St. John of God's Hospital. But that hospital labours under the disadvantage that it has no resident medical staff. There are none of the departments to which I have alluded, but that is to a certain extent counterbalanced by the good nursing attention and the excellent accommodation patients get there. We think the ideal method is for the Government to erect private wards for paying patients at the public hospitals. There is another point to which I wish to refer and that is the effect this Bill will have on the friendly societies. The other day I interjected that I had seen an account in the Press of a deputation from the friendly societies that had waited on the Minister for Health and had pointed out certain things to him, and the Minister said it was the first time those matters had been brought under his notice. I thought that an extraordinary statement to come from the Minister. That there was something affecting the welfare of the friendly societies and that the details had not even been brought under the notice of the Minister who introduced the Bill was certainly extraordinary. The position is, I understand, that the word "treatment" is used in this Bill, and the friendly societies do not know whether it refers to out-patient treatment as well as in-patient treatment. They think the people who belong to friendly societies and who contribute a sum every week towards the fund will be faced with a further contribution under this measure. When they find that this contribution is going to entitle them to free treatment at the Perth hospital and free maintenance for such of them as come within the category of patients unable to afford to pay for treatment, it will have a considerable effect on the number of people desirous of taking advantage of the benefits offered by friendly societies. I think that is a very pertinent argument, and one that undoubtedly is real. I am not saying that because of this the Bill should not be put into force, but I was rather struck that this, which seems rather an elementary consideration, apparently had not previously impressed the Minister.

Hon. G. Fraser: I do not think too many will go to the hospital when they can have a private doctor.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: That is not the experience of the medical profession, anyhow, and I am speaking after consultation with a number of men in the medical profession. Their opinion is emphatically that this Bill will increase the demand for both public hospital and private hospital treatment.

Hon. G. Fraser: I was referring to the out-patients.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: A considerable time is wasted by those who have to go to the out-patient department, but if their ailment is such that they cannot attend their work and they can still get about, it does not matter much whether they wait an hour or two at the out-patient department or not.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Not on those hard seats?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I shall not pursue that subject. One of the complaints I have against the Bill is that it seems to me to have been compiled without proper investigation. So far as I know, there is no other country in the world—I speak subject to correction—where the conditions provided for in this Bill prevail. I do not know any place where private hospital patients are subsidised to the extent of £2 2s. a week.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is no argument against the Bill, is it?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I think the Bill has been compiled without proper investigation, and I intend to pursue that line of argument. So far as I can learn, none of the gentlemen now practising in Perth who have occupied the position of chief resident medical officer at the Perth Hospital during the last 15 or 16 years has been consulted about the Bill. Their experience and their inside knowledge would have been of very great assistance. I refer to the present C.R.M.O., Dr. Anderson, and to the two former ones, Dr. Barker and Dr. McKenzie. So far as I can ascertain, no one connected with the council of the British Medical Association has been consulted. I have not heard of a single medical man in Perth or elsewhere who has been consulted. No doubt the Commissioner of Public Health has been consulted regarding the clauses of the Bill, but I wish to point out that, much as I respect him, his experience of hospital

practice or private practice is almost negligible. During almost the entire period since he qualified, he has been occupied in public health work and he does not possess an intimate knowledge of the detail connected with hospitals or private practice which, to my mind, is so essential in considering this Bill. I think that is a reason why we should scrutinise the details of the Bill pretty closely and that is why I object to its being introduced at such a late hour of the session. I believe it is the intention of Mr. Lovekin to move for the appointment of a select committee to consider certain aspects of the Bill, and I intend to support him in that action, even if it involves carrying over this Bill to another session.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. R. Brown: Do it now and save the time of the House.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I foresee that great benefits will be derived from the measure, but I foresee also that there will be considerable extravagances and no doubt considerable abuses in connection with it. I am not prepared to say how those extravagances and abuses can be remedied. I think they are probably inherent in the Bill and there is no remedy for them. We have had considerable experience of the sections of the Workers' Compensation Act dealing with the allowance for medical treatment and hospital treatment. When the Bill was under consideration in this House, I pointed out the increased cost that would be involved as a result of those provisions, and I moved that the amount, instead of being £100, should be £50. To my astonishment I was not supported. It was one of the greatest shocks I ever got inside this House. The additional amount was granted and it has undoubtedly given rise to considerable abuse. There is no doubt whatever about that.

The Honorary Minister: Abuse on whose part?

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: On the part of some of the medical men and some of the patients. I am glad to say the great majority of medical men have acted strictly honourably in connection with workers' compensation and I am glad to say the British Medical Association have frowned on any practitioners who took undue advantage of any of the provisions of the Act. The association appointed a committee to try to

check those abuses, but the fact remains that they still persist. There is no doubt whatever of that. I can foresee that under this measure there will be considerable extravagances and considerable waste of money. I should like to remedy that. The Bill, in many of its aspects, is a very good one, but I should be sorry to see so much money expended on this scheme which might perhaps not prove such a success and might delay the introduction of what I and many other medical men have at heart, namely better hospital provision for all kinds of patients. One of the great advantages of this measure is that it provides a system of insurance whereby provision is made in the hour of sickness for those who contribute compulsorily to the funds. That is only a right provision and it is to be commended. The patient who is passing through the deep waters of sickness—perhaps in the valley of the shadow, has enough anxiety without being harassed by financial difficulties. Any scheme of insurance that will enable him to meet those difficulties during his time of danger and illness is to be applauded. Therefore I think that whilst there is much to be commended in the scheme, there are also certain dangers, and it is a subject that requires considerable thought—thought which I am quite certain has not been given to it by those who are responsible for its introduction, and who have not taken the opportunity of the best advice available to them. With reference to the point I have made, that there will be an increased demand for accommodation and also a prolongation of stay of patients in hospital, I believe that that argument will be met by those who are advising the Honorary Minister—I may say I have had the advantage of consulting Dr. Atkinson and Mr. Huelin on those points—by saying that investigations which have been made with reference to those who are at present entitled to hospital attendance through being connected with certain benefit societies, do not bear out my contention. In order to meet that argument I point out that the people who have joined these benefit societies are selected and picked men, and have a sense of loyalty towards the funds of their lodge or friendly society. Moreover, when they are admitted to a hospital they are in the prevailing atmosphere that admission to the institution and the accommodation of a bed there are more to

be regarded as a favour conferred than as a right.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: And they have to pass a medical test before being admitted to the lodge or society.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: I do not know whether that circumstance would affect the argument as to their morale. But I do understand that investigations which have been made show that there is no tendency on the part of those people to take undue advantage of the opportunities they have of admission to the hospital, or of prolonging their stay in it. There is probably a reason for that, in view of their being selected people. The fact that they have joined a friendly society is some warrant for believing that they are picked people, and there is also the argument that when they get into a hospital they conform to the routine established there. But once one gets patients who have contributed to a fund perhaps for many years without ever requiring hospital assistance, they at once say, "We have contributed for so many years, and we regard it as a right and insist on getting admission to the hospital." The tendency will be, I am sure, to use the hospitals to a much greater extent than at present. Not that I regard that as altogether unfavourable, but I do want to point out that it is going to increase the expense considerably. I am sorry that, though through no fault of the House, we are dealing with the Bill at this late hour of the session. Had we had the opportunity of dealing with it a month earlier, no doubt we could have thrashed out these matters quite well, or at any rate we could have obtained the benefit of expert advice of which up to the present, so far as I can learn, the Government have not availed themselves.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [9.5]: I strongly support the Bill, and am a little disappointed at the trend of Dr. Saw's contribution to the debate. The passing of the measure will have a tendency to encourage people who should go to hospitals, to go there. The idea that large numbers of people will be going into hospital for a holiday or a rest strikes me as humorous. I suggest that the bill of fare imposed upon patients in a public hospital is quite sufficient inducement to drive out any healthy person bent on a holiday or re-

cuperation. No doubt that would be a big factor in upsetting Dr. Saw's forecast. Doctors sometimes seem to lack a knowledge of the world. I cannot imagine an ordinary person rushing to a hospital as Dr. Saw has suggested. It has been stated that the Bill sets up a new principle. That is so.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you believe in that principle?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I will explain.

Hon. H. Stewart: What is the new principle?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The principle of imposing taxation for a special purpose.

Hon. H. Stewart: That is not a new principle.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I did not say it was. The statement was made by Sir William Lathlain. The new principle can only be imposed upon a people of whom the majority are ready to accept it. A tax imposed to support a State bakery would be received with derision by the community, and the Government suggesting it would probably be in danger. Some day, when the people are better educated, they will see the necessity for such a tax in order to obtain cheap bread. At present, however, it would be impossible to impose such a tax. I have had some experience in assisting in the work of hospitals, and I say that this measure is backed by the majority of people of all classes in Western Australia. I have been in close touch with commercial and business people and with all other sections from whom it is possible to collect subscriptions for hospital purposes. One feature of the measure which should appeal to every member is that we can debate it without any party spirit whatever. This measure is above all party considerations. I believe that three-fourths of the people of Western Australia look forward to the passing of the Bill. I would not like to see the measure laid aside because it has been received here late. To some extent this Chamber is to blame for that fact. Both Houses have got into the habit of ambling along for weeks after the session opens, and then rushing legislation through. That habit has obtained for many years. When the session starts, there are agricultural shows for several weeks, and honourable members have to attend those shows and therefore do not appear in this Cham-

ber. If the measure had been presented here a month ago, we would not have made much progress with it. However, there is no doubt that it would have been better if the measure had been received here earlier. It is not my opinion that the passing of the Bill will close people's pockets or affect other charities. Many people are ready and willing to subscribe to any worthy object. With public opinion advancing so rapidly in the matter of hospital finance, the Bill should be passed if only to allow of other social welfare work being pushed on. If the measure is carried, a great deal more money will be made available by the public for infant welfare, to give one example. We pride ourselves on our infant welfare work, but it must be admitted that the building near the Beaufort-street bridge, which is assigned for that purpose, is simply grotesque. It is absurd to suppose that such a building meets present needs. We are only at the beginning of infant welfare work. The passing of the Bill will relieve the people of the need to subscribe privately to hospitals, and that money will be rendered available for social welfare work generally. I cannot believe that the imposition of this tax will close up people's pockets. Moreover, it is only fair that everyone should be called upon to subscribe his share towards hospital work.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: That is the best feature of the Bill. In fact, it is the only good feature of the Bill.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is the only feature of the Bill. Many objections have been raised by Mr. Lovekin. I think the hon. member said the tax would cost £30,000 to collect.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We shall see.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I cannot imagine how that large expenditure will be involved. I think the hon. member has made a serious mistake.

Hon. A. Lovekin: No.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The hon. member raised another point as to the great disability imposed on a large employer by having to affix stamps.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I did not say that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The hon. member said something like it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: No. I said they could do it under the Bill, they could affix one or two stamps.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: But the hon. member made a feature of the enormous trouble to employers and employees in licking stamps and affixing them. That disability is provided for in the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The hon. member must address the Chair.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is provided for in Section 9.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I stated that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: The employer can make arrangements with the department to collect for them and to show the amount on the pay sheet. That effectively deals with the hon. member's objection.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That was not my objection.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: At all events, that is the impression I derived from the hon. member's remarks. I ask the House to comply with the public demand for the Bill. If the reference of the measure to a select committee means the shelving of the Bill, I shall strenuously oppose it. The requirements of hon. members could be met by a statement from the Honorary Minister as to the Taxation Department's view of the cost of collecting the tax, as to the number of additional clerks required for its collection. Mr. Lovekin said he wanted that information. It is too late to appoint a select committee to inquire into the Bill. I think every member of the Chamber would accept the Honorary Minister's word on the point. I hope the Honorary Minister's reply at the close of the debate will satisfy all members, so that the Bill may be carried and the public demand for it met.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [9.15]: We have heard the interesting address by Dr. Saw and the advice that he has given to the Chamber. Mr. Gray was rather disappointed with the doctor's speech, but I am sure he will be delighted with mine when I deal with the incidence of the tax. This is purely a taxation measure though not introduced as such. It is meant to appeal to sentiment so that provision may be made for the sick and afflicted of mankind. We all realise that that is necessary and we understand also that finance has been necessary for a long time in connection with hospital administration. As to whether the Bill will meet with general approval, I offer no opinion. In 1922 when the previous hospitals Bill was introduced

by the Government of the day, it was vigorously contested by the then Opposition who are now the Government of the day. Vituperation was indulged in, in the denunciation of the Bill, from cover to cover. The object, it was contended, was to pander to class prejudice. The statements made by the Opposition were published broadcast throughout the State with the object of influencing the people at the approaching elections. There were mendacious statements published in the Press of Western Australia. The then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Collier, when debating the Bill in another place, said, "I cannot support the Bill, from Title to Schedule." Then he took strong exception to it and in the chorus of speeches that followed there was a hostility to the incidence of the tax of 1d. which it was considered was unjust to the worker, the man on the bottom rung of the ladder, and it was claimed that no self-respecting Parliament would dare submit such a proposal. The then Leader of the Opposition also said that the Government were bankrupt of ideas when they attempted to raise revenue in that way, and he added—

The mentality of the Ministry has not risen above the tax of 1d. in the pound. It is the most undemocratic measure introduced into any Parliament by smug-faced round-bellied men.

Faney, a man of the physical proportions of Mr. Collier, or even Mr. Lacey, Mr. Walker and others making such a remark. This happened when the Bill was introduced in 1922, and when the then Government were accused of attempting to fleek money from the public. I propose to quote from speeches made with regard to the then suggested tax of 1d. in the pound and compare them with what has been said by the same people in connection with the proposed tax of 1½d. in the pound. Mr. Collier, in the course of his speech in 1922, said—

What is there special about hospitals that a Bill of this sort need be introduced for the raising of money? Why not say we want a special tax to raise money to cover the cost of education? If we are justified in bringing down a special Bill to raise money for hospitals, why not do so for the purpose of raising money for our charities, our State children and our Lunacy Department, and for every other non-revenue producing department of State? The principle is bad. We should not single out one particular department in a manner like this by imposing a special tax, to be devoted to it. If additional revenue is neces-

sary it should be raised upon more equitable lines. There is no reason for this special attention to hospitals. If we are justified in imposing taxation for the one, we are justified in doing so for the other departments. If that is so, we should repeal all our forms of taxation and bring in a special taxation for education, for hospitals, for police, for charities, for lunacy, and so on, so that we may have a separate tax to cover each of the different services.

Hon. H. Stewart: That was when Mr. Collier was in opposition.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: That was when it was suggested that the tax should be 1d. in the pound. Mr. Collier went on to say at that time—

Nobody will argue that we are not taxing right down to the breadline, and in fact below the breadline when we tax a married man with £156 a year or a single person in receipt of £2 a week. If we are now going to obtain payment of a hospital tax from 100,000 persons who to-day are exempt under the Income Tax Act, it is conclusive proof that we are proposing to tax people who cannot afford to pay taxation.

When it was proposed to tax people who received up to £156 a year, strong exception was taken to it. Mr. Collier went on to say—

I say that the House would not be justified in doing what is proposed and I hope the Bill will be rejected on the second reading.

Proceeding further he said—

This is a wretched, miserable, paltry, contemptible form of taxation. The days of special taxation for specific purposes have long gone by. Did anyone ever hear of such a retrograde step as making every employer in the State a taxgatherer?

Those are the opinions expressed in 1922 by the present Premier as regards this measure of taxation which has been lauded so much by Mr. Gray who, by the way, not caring to hear what his Leader had to say six years ago, has left the Chamber.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He changed his mind; you changed your mind once.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Only fools never changed their minds.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Mr. Walker was scathing in his comments and he happened to be in one of his best moods. He said—

A new principle has been introduced, and a new departure made from the general methods of taxation. This is a method which England has avoided for centuries. Members of the commission were inexperienced in the prin-

ciples of taxation and complacently the new inexperienced Minister has followed their example. . . . To the Government taxgatherers, is it now intended to add countless others in the form of employers? The Government have not the courage to maintain their hospitals by legitimate taxation, but propose to do it by a side wind.

He declared that the Government had not the courage to introduce taxation by the usual methods and I say now the same thing of the present Government. They are not prepared to introduce taxation proposals in the ordinary way. The money required should be taken out of Consolidated Revenue instead of being raised by a special tax. Mr. Troy, who is also a member of the present Government, made these comments on the Bill of 1922—

Why should I as an employer be called upon to tell a man that so much has to be deducted for hospital tax? It is not my responsibility, but the Government's. Tax collection by the employers is a rotten and vicious system.

There are the opinions of those who form the Government of to-day. The chairman of Committees (Mr. Lutey), speaking on the goldfields was very emphatic in his protestations about the tax of 1d. in the pound. Speaking in Parliament he said—

I say it is a backstairs way of raising revenue for hospital maintenance. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there is no more reason for special taxation for hospitals than for any other Government function. The member for Leederville (Captain Carter) referred to the speech of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Walker) as sloppy sentimentality. It is always sloppy sentimentality when members of the Opposition put up a fight for the 100,000 wage-earners not assessable to income tax because of the lowness of their earnings. I protest against taxation of people who are below the bread line.

The bread line is indicated there, and people in receipt of under £156 a year and who did not submit taxation returns were exempt. We find now that the Government are going to tax every person who earns almost anything at all. As has been indicated by the speeches that have been made, it is proposed now to tax the woman at the washtub and the boy who sells newspapers perhaps to maintain members of his family. I am really surprised to find that the Government who were so strong in their denunciation of this form of taxation for hospital purposes in 1922 should now be introducing similar legislation and endeavouring to collect a tax 50 per cent. higher than the one they objected to at that time, and who,

moreover, will not permit of any deductions being made.

Hon. G. Fraser: Everything has gone up since 1922.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I do not know that everything has gone up to that extent, but the Government objected to the principle, and while prices may rise or fall, the tax should remain as was originally suggested. I may inform Mr. Fraser that at the recent Labour Congress it was decided that there should be free hospitals. Whilst that is the policy of the Labour Party, we now find that they are submitting taxation proposals for taxation purposes.

Hon. H. Stewart: You are against the Bill?

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I am not against providing funds for hospitals so long as they are worked on an equitable basis. I direct the Minister's attention to one or two points which may or may not have been overlooked. I refer to the Stamp Act. Provision is made for the affixing of stamps on wages up to £5 or more and in addition to that, a person will, under the Bill, have to pay 1½d. in the pound an everything he receives. Is it intended that in addition to the 1½d., stamps will also have to be affixed to receipts for wages beyond a certain? I would like the Minister to indicate in his reply what the proposal is. There is also the Truck Act which precludes employers from deducting anything from wages. I have heard protests from members of the present Government when employers have evaded the Truck Act by certain devious means. Frequently that Act has been amended with the object of precluding an employer from deducting anything from wages. We know that in several industries there is an agreement between employers and employees that certain moneys shall be deducted from their wages for such things as hospital accommodation and medical fees, and it is practically now a condition of employment that if an employee does not contribute in this direction—and he has the right to object—he will soon discover that he will not remain in that industry very long. I draw attention to the fact that we shall be committing a breach of the Truck Act if we comply with the conditions set out in the Bill. During the war the Commonwealth Government imposed an entertainment tax. Some 3½ years ago they decided to relieve

those who were on the bottom rung of the ladder, those who visited entertainments where the price of seats was below 2s. 6d. The object was to relieve the public of that measure of taxation. Following upon this, the Minister for Mines brought down a Bill in another place to re-impose a tax of a similar nature, upon all entertainment tickets of the value of less than 2s. 6d. According to the report of the Commissioner of Taxation, this tax has brought in £83,940 3s. 10d. This money has been extracted from people who sit in the back seats of the various entertainments. The poor man has had to pay 1d. in the shilling and one halfpenny on every part of 6d. exceeding one shilling up to 2s. 6d. The tax has been imposed upon people who can ill afford to pay it, and the money has been used exclusively for the maintenance of hospitals.

Hon. J. Ewing: Not the £83,000!

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: Yes, covering the periods 1926, 1927 and 1928, the amounts raised each year respectively being £19,647, £30,155, and £34,136. The Honorary Minister, notwithstanding that his Government are collecting that money from the people, now wishes to tax them at the rate of 1½d. in the pound. This means that any person engaged in a vocation from which he is earning more than £50 a year, or in the case of a girl if she is receiving board and lodging in addition to that £50 a year, shall contribute at that rate. I submit this is practically a double tax.

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is also the contribution from general revenue.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: I wish to add my protest against the Bill being brought down at this stage of the session. There is also the Health Bill which contains about 90 amendments to the Act, and covers about 42 clauses. That Bill will take some time to digest, and yet we are asked to consider it in a few hours. If the Government intend to hold a special session early in the new year three or four of the Bills now before us might well be postponed until then. Should this Hospital Fund Bill reach the Committee stage I shall have something further to say upon it.

HON. C. H. WITTENOOM (South-East) [9.35]: This is a very important Bill and will have far-reaching results. I should

like to say a few words before recording my vote. I must add my condemnation of the Government for bringing the Bill down at this late hour. It seems as if it was brought down now with the object of getting it through in a hurry without any discussion, but there is a song which says, "Every cloud has a silver lining," and I congratulate the Government upon recognising the fairness of calling upon all who are likely to receive some assistance from this Bill to contribute their quota towards the funds that are to be raised. I intend to support the second reading.

HON. W. T. GLASHEEN (South-East) [9.37]: One thing we can all be sure of and it is that the more closely people are associated with the administration of hospitals, the more do they welcome legislation of this character. I was interested in Dr. Saw's remarks. I agree with his contention that the health of the people should be our first consideration. The first consideration of the individual should also be his health. People very often pay too little regard to their health until it becomes too late and they are forced into the hands of a medical practitioner or some nursing institution. If, however, they had taken precautions earlier in their lives they might have obviated the necessity of being in the hands of either. Both Dr. Saw and Sir William Lathlain spoke about the departure from the general principle. They objected to this legislation on the ground that it was irregular, as the tax was to be raised for a specific purpose and devoted exclusively to that. It is strange that the objection to a principle of this kind is being enunciated for the first time in this House. It was long ago brought into effect when a tax was raised for the eradication of vermin. The accumulated funds from that tax are devoted to the specific purpose of ridding the country of vermin.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: And there was the petrol tax.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: The petrol tax was raised exclusively for the maintenance of roads. The argument about departure from principle therefore is wide of the mark. I was interested in Mr. Harris's remarks when he referred to what the Premier said in 1922. It savours rather

of digging up something from the cobwebs of the past. The only man who does not change his mind is he who is dead. I have no objection to a man changing his mind. In fact, I have a great admiration for him. A man should change his views as he gains experience and becomes more educated along the lines of new thought and development. We are always changing our minds with the evolution of education and experience. The Premier however, must have had his tongue in his cheek when he drew the appalling picture of the poor man having to pay this tax for hospitals. He wondered why it was necessary to raise money for hospitals any more than it was for education. He is a man of keen economic mind. He gets below the surface of most things. He knows well that this taxation will not be paid by the poor man or the woman at the wash tub, but will be paid by the same industries that eventually pay all taxation. I refer to the primary industries of the State. Whether income or wages are taxed, the man on the land finally pays the lot.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What about the man in the mines?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: He merely passes through the Arbitration Court where the taxation of the day is taken into consideration in the wages that are fixed for him. Everything, however, falls upon the primary producer who is obliged to sell his products in the markets of the world. Undoubtedly the health of the people is the first consideration. That, however, whether it be per medium of hospitals or otherwise, should not rest upon the uncertainty of charity or benevolence. These are too uncertain for the public necessity. This Bill is an attempt to provide a definite scheme for the upkeep and maintenance of hospitals in a permanent manner. There is a tendency in these times of motor cars and the rapid bridging of distances for districts to progress at a greater rate than ever before, and for the residents to desire to be fully equipped in all respects with local hospitals. In some cases a district is no more qualified to get a hospital than such qualification is comprised in the willingness of the residents to contribute a certain amount of money if the Government will give pound for pound for the erection and maintenance of a hospital. Under this Bill, with the numbers of

applications for hospitals and the installation of medical and nursing facilities, the load upon the Government may become unduly great. It may be necessary to check the eagerness of some small districts for hospital equipment, for even with the great revenue that it is expected to raise, the sum in hand will be insufficient to cope with the demand. I intend to vote for the second reading, but I hope that in Committee some effort will be made to improve the Bill. Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to express my conviction that the Bill introduced some time ago by the present Minister for Health for the conduct of a State lottery was such that I would have supported had I been a member of the House. The main objection responsible for the rejection of the Bill was that it would encourage gambling of which, it was suggested, we had too much already. If there is any form of gambling that may be described as desirable, I think it is the lottery. The amount of money that goes from this State to Tasmania for investment in Tattersall's is large indeed. The fact that Parliament rejected the Bill having for its object the establishment of a State lottery and the prevention of that money from leaving the State, has not decreased the amount of gambling. When we say that we disagree with that method of raising revenue for hospitals because it is drawn from gambling, I must confess that I can see no great harm arising from a man paying a few shillings to get a ticket and waiting at home for a month or six weeks to ascertain the result. That is quite different from gambling in a poker school where a man may sit all night chasing bad money with good money. That I regard as gambling in its worse form. On the other hand, if there can be any form of gambling that may be regarded as good, it is a lottery the proceeds of which are devoted to the maintenance of our hospitals. However, that legislation was defeated, and the Bill represents the first attempt since then to place our hospitals on a surer foundation. I presume other members have had a similar experience to that which I have had, and they have received shoals of letters from country people expressing their support of the Bill and trusting that Parliament will assist them to gain a more assured revenue. They are heartily sick of raising revenue by the methods they have to employ.

I hope the Bill will be improved during the Committee stage, and I agree with Mr. Saw that the health of the community should be the first consideration of any Government. I express my gratitude to any Government or any Minister sufficiently concerned with the public health to bring in a Bill such as that now before us, even though the measure needs improvement.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [9.48]: As a member of the Labour Party, I am sorry that the Government have not made provision in the Bill to give effect to one of the planks of Labour's platform and make available free treatment in the hospitals for everyone. To secure that objective, they could have harnessed up the gambling power of the State. Mr. Glasheen was concerned about the estimated cost of the hospitals because, in his opinion, the burden would fall upon the majority of his constituents. I take it he referred to the farmers. I disagree with him, because I believe the greater share of the burden will fall upon the workers in the gold-mining industry.

Hon. V. Hamersley: They are spoon-fed all the time.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: If they were spoon-fed half as much as the farmers, then the State would be in a much better position to-day.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: If that were done, would it not be an item of cost included in Arbitration Court claims?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Gold has a value, and beyond that the worker in the gold-mining industry cannot expect to get any benefit through increased wages. On the other hand, the people the hon. member has in mind force up the price of bread, and that comes back on the miner and the gold-mining industry which cannot pass on the increase. The workers on the goldfields are now taxed to the extent of 6s. per month for medical and hospital attention. They contribute 3d. per week for hospital attention, or 12s. per year. The Government intend to tax them to the extent of 1½d. in the pound. The workers throughout the State will be taxed to that extent, and it means that the impost will eventually fall back upon the men in the mining industry who cannot pass it on. I am not very keen on the Bill, although I admit it is necessary for the hospitals to secure more funds. I am afraid the Govern-

ment have become a little pannicky and are afraid to try the Legislative Council once more with a Bill that will harness up the gambling power, as was done in Queensland. If Mr. Glasheen likes, we can harness up the poker schools.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: I did not say I would harness them up; I said I did not like them.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: The Government seem to think that they can get the necessary money by a direct tax on the people's wages, but I am afraid it will prove a rather harsh measure to impose upon a large section of the community, particularly in view of the vast sums that are going to waste in the State. They are going to waste in that they are being sent away to Tasmania for investment in Tattersall's. Any day a member can walk along the street and see here and there the legend, "I communicate with Hobart." In those places it is necessary for people to pay a royalty of 6d. to the shopkeeper in order to have the privilege of sending for a ticket. It is possible to see smug citizens walking past the shop and sneaking in to get their 6s. worth of communication with Tattersall's. They do not take out the tickets in their own names, but probably as "The Mug: Syndicate." Such people are afraid of the anti-gambling section. The streets of Perth are becoming a by-word among visitors. Able-bodied men, and men who are not able-bodied, children and women, all can be seen selling tickets in sweeps. A member of Parliament has to practically mortgage one month's salary each year in order to purchase tickets, or he will collect black looks from those who are selling them. The Government propose a tax that will fall heavily upon the many wage-earners. There are hon. members here who gamble every day of their lives. They gamble in stocks, in commodities, or in some other way, and yet when it comes to a straight-out question of a Bill to harness up the gambling power of the State and furnish hundreds of thousands of pounds for the charities and the hospitals, they become exceedingly worried about the opinion of a few people who are anti-gamblers. In my opinion they are not true representatives of the people. A true representative is one who is not afraid to express himself, and who takes little notice of people who talk loudly but have little support behind them. I have paired on the

Bill; otherwise I would have voted against it. My constituents will be among those who will be hard hit by it. Some members of the Government represent electors in my part of the State, and I do not know whether they have consulted those electors. They may themselves be consulted by the electors in the near future.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [9.55]: I intend to support the Bill because I consider some of the principles associated with it are such as commend themselves to members. From time to time we have heard comment upon the viciousness of taxation for this special purpose. I cannot see anything vicious about it. I regard it as a step in the right direction. If we impose taxation for the special purpose of assisting the hospitals, we know what those services are costing us, and there is no better way of determining whether efficient service is being obtained in any particular direction for which the money is raised. From that standpoint I consider the introduction of the Bill has much to commend it. The Bill will apply to practically everyone in the community who will have to contribute towards the upkeep of the hospitals by making available a portion of their wages or salaries. The tax will bear fairly upon every section of the community. The fact that it throws the responsibility upon the person receiving small wages as well as upon those receiving high salaries must commend itself to hon. members. Reference has been made to the introduction of a measure in this House having for its object the raising of funds through a form of gambling. I repeat the statement I made on other occasions; I am opposed to that principle entirely. I think the maintenance of our hospitals is a duty that all should bear in their due proportion. From that standpoint, therefore, I support the present Bill. There is not the slightest doubt, in spite of the objections raised by Dr. Saw, that there are some tremendous advantages. We who keep in touch with the working man and working woman, know many people who should receive hospital attention but who have an absolute dread of going to a hospital or incurring the expense of medical treatment. One beneficial result of the Bill will be to relieve them of financial anxiety. They will go to the hospital and receive the necessary attention and be placed in a better physical

condition. The result of that will be not only to brighten their lives but will enable them to bear the burden associated with those who work to a far greater degree than is possible under existing conditions. I can imagine nothing worse than a person struggling along under the burden of some complaint that could be remedied by proper medical attention. The Bill will assist in that direction and the community will benefit from that standpoint. Another point of view has been referred to, and that is the position in the country. There are some serious disabilities that arise there owing to the lack of adequate hospital facilities. If the Bill will be the means of establishing hospitals in different country centres and providing for the adequate equipment of those institutions, it will be of assistance to the pioneers and their families. From that point of view, the Bill should commend itself to all hon. members. Another point of view has been stressed from time to time, and that is the conditions under which nurses are working at hospitals. I consider those conditions disgraceful both as regards the hours they have to work and the remuneration they receive. If the Bill will result in provision being made to enable those noble women to secure a more adequate return for their services and to have better conditions, then the measure must commend itself to every hon. member. There are so many advantages to be gained as a result of the Bill, despite the references made to disadvantages, that I intend to support it. I trust hon. members will agree to the Bill in the interests of the general health of the community and in the interests of people in the country areas where medical attention is not so readily available as it is elsewhere. Reference has been made to the cost of collecting this tax. One point to be said against that is by imposing the tax in the form of stamps to be raised against salaries we are going to tax a lot of people who at present are evading all forms of taxation. Quite a number of people, especially casual workers, escape taxation at present, and this will certainly catch them. The result will be that they will contribute towards the upkeep of hospitals, and I think that can fairly be set off against any possible increase in the cost of collecting the tax. At the same time, if Mr. Lovekin's attempt to determine the cost can be achieved without jeopardis-

ing the passage of the Bill, I shall be inclined to assist him. Still, undoubtedly the passage of the Bill will not be facilitated by referring the measure to a select committee. I join with those who protest against legislation of this sort coming before the House so late in the session. Nevertheless in my view the measure is so very important to the community that we should do all we can to facilitate its passage.

HON. H. STEWART (South-East) [10.2]: I approve of the principle in the Bill of raising this tax for the special purpose by making all sections of the community contribute. I have seen in the mining industry the great community benefit that has been derived by the contribution of all people, not only those engaged in the mines, to a medical fund which enabled them to provide, not only hospital facilities, but the payment of satisfactory remuneration to a medical man in return for services which otherwise could not have been made available. It is only an extension of that principle which is contained in the Bill. At the same time there are aspects of the Bill which will need consideration, and perhaps modification, in Committee. I shall watch carefully and endeavour to assist in the passage of the Bill, with due regard to any amendments that may be proposed. It is all very well to aid the Government in providing finances, but I think Mr. Harris was perfectly justified in illustrating why it is we did not have satisfactory hospital finances provided years ago. It was because of the attitude of those constituting the present Government that the earlier Hospital Bill was not passed. Mr. Harris was most modest in the quotations he made from "Hansard" of 1922 instancing what Mr. Collier, and other members of the present Ministry said at that time. If Mr. Harris had turned up the Committee stage and seen what members of the then Opposition said, it might have surprised members generally. I have been trying to find the amendment that the Opposition secured at that time, exempting all those in receipt of about £250 per annum. It was that practically wrecked the Bill. It is only meet and right, if the present Government seek to take credit for instituting a good system, that they should also bear the blame for having in years past opposed a less strin-

gent measure, one that was not so hard on the workers, and that carried a smaller tax.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Are you referring to the amendment to reduce the tax to a half-penny?

Hon. H. STEWART: No, but I am going to refer to that. It is only right and proper that instead of taking credit they are not entitled to in this, the present Government—

Hon. J. R. Brown: They are not taking any credit to themselves.

Hon. H. STEWART: They are seeking to take credit and they certainly will take credit when they go before the electors again, just as they took credit for initiating a policy of agricultural water supplies, but never once told the public on the hustings that that was their intention. That was only put forward by the Country Party at the 1924 and 1927 elections. If the Government cannot evolve suitable systems for the provision of facilities for agricultural development or for hospital finance, but have to condemn those things when in Opposition and then when in power turn round and take what has been provided by the brains of others and put it into operation—I agree with Mr. Glasheen that people who can change their minds and at last do something for the State are to be congratulated by us, who should endeavour to help them in their new resolve. It seems to me the Government by this tax of 1½d. will get a larger amount of revenue than is really necessary at the present time. They will certainly get a much larger amount of revenue than they have had to handle in respect of hospitals in the past. Whether it is agriculture, or the Main Roads Board, or hospitals, or a mere business man, if there be too much money to start with, the chances are it will be wasted. I do not think we should provide the Government with over-finance under this measure until they settle down and get into sound working operations. When a previous measure—on a similar basis to this—for raising money was proposed by those now in Opposition but who then constituted the Government, it was stoutly opposed when it came to the clause which dealt with the amount of the contribution. The Hon. P. Collier, as will be seen on page 2089 of "Hansard," 1922, moved an amendment. He moved, "That after 'one'

in line 3 of Subclause 1 the word 'half' be inserted." That was an amendment to reduce the proposed tax of 1d. to a half-penny. Mr. Collier followed up his amendment with these remarks—there are columns and columns and pages and pages in 'Hansard' of things on a par with this that led to the condemnation of a similar measure in another place. Eventually an amendment that was carried granting considerable exemption, was largely responsible for the Bill being shelved in this Chamber. Mr. Collier, having moved his amendment, went on to say —

If there is to be such an iniquitous, pettifogging tax as this, I propose to make it as light as possible. Even if the amount is thus limited, I shall not support the principle, but shall endeavour to defeat the clause afterwards. The Premier said he believes everyone is willing and anxious to pay. It is absurd to say that men who cannot feed, clothe and house their families as they desire and as they ought to be able to do, should have to pay taxation for any purpose whatever.

And a little lower down the column Mr. Collier said—

It is time the people knew the motives which actuated some men in their desire to secure seats in the House and the reason why some people are prepared to spend thousands of pounds to win an election. It is because of the power and influence it gives them in legislation of this kind. They are able to pay big fees to King's Counsel to draft amendments for them in order to defeat the objects of measures which would make some of them pay a little more to the taxation of the country. But when it is a matter of taking taxation from unfortunate individuals receiving only £2, £3 or £4 a week, members sit back unconcerned, apparently prepared to support it. In the North-West the rich pastoral areas have been handed over—

Mr. Duraek: It is good electioneering stuff.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is true and the hon. member is one of those who have benefited by such legislation. He is one who has come here armed with amendments prepared by lawyers in the city, and endeavoured to secure the insertion of those amendments because they would benefit his own personal interests. Whether it is good electioneering stuff or not, it is true. If the truth is good electioneering stuff, it will do no harm. I am astonished that Parliament should adopt a schoolboy's method of imposing a tax of this kind. How many of the people who will be called upon to pay it will have occasion to use a hospital?

That reference to the North-West rich pastoral areas is only another indication of where the same party opposed a similar thing when the other Government were dealing with those rich pastoral areas. And

then the Collier Government come down to-day and introduce a measure exactly the same as that they opposed in 1922. Were it not so late an hour there would be much of interest to discuss in dealing with a measure such as this to benefit people who badly need it, that is to say, those suffering from illness and unable to pay for private medical treatment. Through the Bill the Government are seeking this financial relief in order to benefit the general finances of the State, to save providing this money from Consolidated Revenue; whereas when dealing with the measure in 1922 members of the present Government said all this money should be provided from Consolidated Revenue. I was impressed by the views put forward by Dr. Saw, that sufficient consideration had not been given to just what would be the effect of having this money available, and how the allowance of 6s. per day for patients, whether in Government or in private hospitals, would lead to a much greater demand for hospital accommodation. We should be very careful in dealing with the Bill. Rather than impose too high a tax or pass a Bill which would leave the way open for extravagance or anomalies, we should arrange for the question to receive full consideration so that a comprehensive measure may be put on the statute-book. I wish to make one suggestion that ought to appeal to all members. We have heard it mentioned in this Chamber often that the Perth Hospital is the institution to which people come from all parts of the State. We know that is so, but if we could find out the amount of money collected for metropolitan and country hospitals to finance both buildings and maintenance I think it would show that per head the country people contribute their full quota to the Perth Hospital, and save for the Government subsidy, entirely support their own hospitals. The people of the country build their own hospitals with the assistance of a pound for pound subsidy from the Government. I have come to the conclusion that the people of the metropolitan area do not contribute for hospital accommodation to an extent comparable with that in which the country people contribute. I desire to ensure that the money contributed in the country is made available for distribution in the country, and, if country patients enter

the Perth Hospital, they should pay for the treatment. It is often found that people who ought to be admitted to the Perth Hospital cannot be taken in owing, not to lack of sympathy, but to lack of accommodation. Emergency cases that ought to be admitted cannot be taken because there are no beds available. The money could be collected through the Taxation Department and under the stamp system, and it would be well administered by the local authorities outside the metropolitan area. It would meet the demands made by the country people on their own hospitals, and they would be prepared to make an equitable contribution for any service rendered them by the metropolitan hospital.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [10.20]. I regret that this Bill has reached us at this late hour of the session. Members will admit, however, that some Bills have to be introduced at a late hour and this happens to be one of the Bills that was quite a long time under discussion in another place before it was sent here. The fact that it has reached us at a late hour surely will not mean that any member is not prepared to give it the consideration to which it is entitled. There has been a good deal of criticism, helpful and otherwise, and I propose to deal as briefly as I can with the criticism of various members. Mr. Lovekin criticised the amount we were likely to raise as the result of the 1½d. tax. He estimated that the tax would produce about £350,000. To arrive at that figure he took statistics quoted in the latest report of the Taxation Department, which showed that 57,666 persons sent in income tax returns. To that number he added 135,000 wage earners, the latter figure being obtained from the Government Statistician. The individual figures are correct, but apparently Mr. Lovekin omitted to realise that a large number of the 135,000 wage earners were included in the 57,666 persons who sent in taxation returns.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I think I interjected to that effect at the time.

THE HONORARY MINISTER: Of the 57,666 people who sent in taxation returns, under 45,000 were taxed, and of the 45,000 over 33,000 were salary and wage earners. Of the 12,000 odd who sent in returns and were not taxed the great majority, probably

10,000, would be salary and wage earners, so that altogether we have 57,000 persons who sent in returns, of whom 43,000 were salary and wage earners, leaving a difference of 14,000 who sent in returns and who were not included among salary or wage earners. The 43,000 would be included in the 135,000 mentioned by Mr. Lovekin. Also in calculating the total wages of the wage earners, Mr. Lovekin began by taking the basic wage of £4 5s. Some 26,000 females included in the number of wage earners would not draw anything like the basic wage. Probably they would average only £2 a week and very likely considerably less than that. The hon. member took no account of the number of persons who receive less than the basic wage, including a large number of young persons employed. He seemed to think the operations of the Taxation Department in regard to the measure would cause a great deal of trouble and would be very expensive. The Taxation Department will deal with only those persons who send in income tax returns. All the returns from persons receiving only salary or wages will be discarded for the purposes of this Bill and the Commissioner of Taxation need take no action whatever regarding them. The other returns, after being assessed for income tax, which is the major work, will have to be reviewed for the purposes of this measure, and it has been suggested that all that is necessary is that after the ordinary taxation assessment has been arrived at, the return will be re-examined and certain figures added. Deductions for insurance premiums and children will have to be taken into consideration. Those are all contained in one portion of the income tax return, and I understand that a few minutes would suffice to deal with any one of the returns. Mr. Lovekin also mentioned the Home of Peace, and I believe Dr. Saw also mentioned it.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: No, it was Sir William Lathlain.

THE HONORARY MINISTER: The Home of Peace is not considered to be a hospital in the ordinary sense, although it is an institution that is doing excellent work. I understand the cost per patient per day in the Home of Peace is about 4s. 6d., and towards that the home receives from the old age and invalid pension authorities approximately 2s. per day for each pensioner. I believe a majority of the inmates are

pensioners. To apply this Bill to the Home of Peace and pay 6s. per day would leave the home with a fair margin of profit. If the Bill were applied to the Home of Peace why not to the infirmary of the Old Men's Home, which is in a similar category?

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: It is not in a similar category.

The HONORARY MINISTER: For the purposes of this measure, it can be said to be in exactly the same category.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: One is a place for incurable disease.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I referred to the Old Men's Home infirmary, not to the home itself. There are a larger number of patients in the infirmary of the Old Men's Home than in the Home of Peace. Both are excellent institutions that we should do our best to assist, but the Home of Peace is not a hospital that comes within the scope of this measure.

Hon. A. Lovekin: You could make it so that it could get a little advantage.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If kindred institutions were included, there would be a lot of difficulties, as it would be almost impossible to draw a line. Where would one draw the line? All such institutions are deserving and I am sure we would be only too glad to do what we could in their interests. My opinion is that assistance to such institutions is quite outside the scope of the measure. Much has been said regarding the statement of the Minister for Health that one phase of the Bill put to him by the friendly societies had not been considered previously. As I interjected at the time, that was only one phase. There was no suggestion that the friendly societies had not been consulted. As a matter of fact, they have had a copy of the Bill for some months. The council of the friendly societies have dealt with it, and I believe the friendly societies generally have dealt with it, so it cannot be said they have not been consulted. I do not think they have any opposition to the Bill.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They should get a coup for what they pay.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is provision in the Bill that may not be entirely satisfactory, but I think it will meet with their approval for the time being.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: They will be paying twice for the same provision.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It might be as well to read the reply of the Minister for Health to the deputation that waited upon him some little time ago. As Minister controlling the friendly societies, I was invited to be present in order to hear the particular point the friendly societies desired to make. This is the reply—

6th December, 1928.

The Secretary, Friendly Societies' Council of W.A., 11 and 12 E. S. & A. Bank Chambers, Perth.

Dear Sir,

With reference to the deputation which waited upon me from your Council on the 30th ultimo, I gather that there was some misapprehension in the minds of members of the Council as to just exactly what benefits will be conferred by the Hospital Fund Bill, and I think perhaps the best reply I can give the deputation is to clearly set out what those benefits will be, having in mind the representations which you put forward.

I think it would be well to bear in mind that there are three types of hospital cases that are dealt with in the hospitals of this State:—

Public Hospital cases: These cases include all those that may be described as indigent, as well as those who are so placed as not to be able to afford to pay for the medical or surgical services that they require. It is for this type of case that the large public hospitals in the metropolitan area almost entirely cater, and it is to serve this type of case that members of the medical profession give their services to such hospitals in an honorary capacity.

Intermediate cases: These cases include those in the two or three grades above those just referred to. They are cases who are able to pay a moderate fee for medical and surgical attention, and these cases would, generally speaking, include most, if not all, of the members of Friendly Societies.

Private cases: These are cases which in the metropolitan area go to private hospitals, and in the country would be admitted to Committee Hospitals subject to arrangements being made with the local medical practitioner that they pay full professional fees for services rendered.

In considering the above classification of cases, it should be remembered that the three large hospitals in the metropolitan area, namely, Perth, Fremantle, and Children's, confine their attention to those cases coming under the first category.

In the hospitals that are scattered throughout the country, which are generally managed by local committees, but sometimes by the Medical Department, all the above types of cases are admitted.

In regard to the *public hospital* case, the local practitioner gives his services in an honorary capacity. In the *intermediate* case, the same practitioner gives the same service, but he arranges with the patient to pay a *moderate* fee. Regarding the *private* case the same

local practitioner again renders perhaps the same service, but expects to receive from the patient full professional fees.

Bearing the foregoing in mind, we can now discuss the benefits of the Hospital Fund Bill in respect of in-patients and out-patients, remembering that the Bill does not confer any medical service, but only hospital care and maintenance.

In-patients: All contributors under the national fund scheme will in future receive the benefit of hospital care and maintenance. All cases which are dealt with in private hospitals will be entitled to a refund at the rate of 6s. per day; cases admitted to public, to departmental, and to committee hospitals will receive nursing care and maintenance free. The existing arrangements in connection with medical service will continue.

Out-patients: Hospitals may only render out-patient services in respect of cases coming under the first category mentioned, that is, indigent and poor cases. Steps are regularly taken now by the public hospitals to see that the gratuitous services of the honorary medical staffs are not imposed upon, and careful inquiries are made from each prospective patient in regard to his or her financial circumstances.

The present arrangements for out-patient work in respect of indigent and poor people will continue when the Hospital Fund Bill becomes law, exactly as they are in force to-day.

It should be remembered, too, that hospital out-patient clinics are, generally speaking, only held in the mornings from about 10 to 1; that frequently by reason of the number of cases, patients are delayed for two or sometimes three hours or even longer, and that the existing restrictions in regard to financial circumstances will continue.

In all the circumstances I think members of your Council will perceive that they need not fear that those persons who are now included in the membership of Friendly Societies will abandon that membership, thinking that equivalent benefits can be obtained gratis under the National Hospital Fund Scheme.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) S. W. MUNSIE,
Minister of Public Health.

That letter should remove misconceptions which I feel sure have been worrying one or two hon. members. With regard to the Taxation Department, Mr. Lovekin assumed that the Commissioner had never been heard from regarding the Bill. This is hardly correct. The Commissioner has been consulted on various occasions during the two or three years the measure has been under consideration. It is not a Bill that has been framed hurriedly. It is a measure which apparently has been taking shape over a period of years. During the whole of that period various authorities, including the Commissioner of Taxation, have from time to time been consulted.

Hon. A. Lovekin: It is a bad Bill for all that consideration.

The HONORARY MINISTER: That may be the hon. member's opinion, but I think that when he hears explanations of the various clauses, as I believe he will, and more particularly when he gets the information that he desires as the result of the appointment of a select committee, he will alter his mind. I am simply putting forward the case as I have been advised. I have given the matter a certain amount of consideration, but on the other hand nothing like the same consideration as the officers who were appointed a special committee to inquire into the various schemes which had been submitted from time to time. That committee comprised the assistant Under Treasurer, Mr. Berkeley; the secretary of the Medical Department, Mr. Huelin; and the assistant State Statistician, Mr. Reid. From the evidence I have seen I can assure hon. members that those three gentlemen did their work very thoroughly. They explored all methods that had been suggested for the adjustment of hospital finance. They went into almost every possible detail that can be thought of, and I feel sure that Mr. Lovekin will be just as satisfied as I am after he has secured the information that I know he desires to get from the particular witnesses he proposes to call before the select committee. The Taxation Department will only have to deal with about one-tenth of the persons contributing to the fund. The Commissioner of Taxation has been consulted on every point. He has recently furnished lengthy notes on the various clauses of the Bill. Regarding administration, on which Mr. Lovekin had something to say, the Medical Department, which will actively deal with the administration, is the existing agency in touch with all hospitals; and I think it will be admitted that the Medical Department is well informed of the hospital situation and hospital needs. As to collection, several existing agencies will be used. The distribution and sale of stamps, a matter that is dealt with in Clause 9, will be done through the Commissioner of Stamps. The collection of contributions from persons rendering taxation returns and in receipt of income in the form of salary or wages will be carried out by the Taxation Department, but no additional returns will be asked for from anybody. That is an

important point, which I think Mr. Lovekin rather doubted. In regard to persons receiving small incomes other than salary or wages, the idea of the Bill is to utilise throughout the country existing Savings Bank agencies and also, where they exist, receivers of public money. As to inspection, there are already two inspectors under the Stamp Act, and they will be appointed inspectors under this Bill. Moreover, there are several inspecting officers of the Taxation Department, and there are a number of factories and shops inspectors, who will also be appointed. If possible, the services of inspectors under the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board will likewise be utilised. So that in every way we shall be making use of existing departments rather than creating an additional department for the purposes of the Bill. I understand that existing facilities can be brought into co-operation in a very satisfactory manner and at very cheap cost so far as the Bill is concerned. I do appreciate the advice given by Dr. Saw. At the same time I regret that the hon. member should have thought I was desirous of forcing the Bill through the second reading stage. I have absolutely no desire to do that; but, acting on an assurance that it was the wish of some hon. members to have a select committee over the week-end in order to secure further information, and knowing full well that Mr. Lovekin could not move in that direction till the second reading had been carried, I thought an effort might be made to get through the second reading that evening. I had no desire whatever to prevent any hon. member from speaking. However, acting on that assumption, I was against the postponement of the Bill, because I believed it was necessary, if we were to have a select committee without risking the loss of the Bill, that the committee should have as much time as possible; and the only time they really had was over the week-end. Consequently I took up the attitude that I did. At no time have I desired to prevent any hon. member from expressing his views, either on the second reading or during the Committee stage. Dr. Saw indicated that greater responsibilities would be thrown upon the hospitals. That fact is realised, but I do not think we need have so much to fear from the increased number of people who will

desire to utilise our hospitals as Dr. Saw seems to think. He said that the hospitals were overtaxed at the present time and that there were long waiting lists. That may be so, but surely the introduction of the Bill will not create more sickness amongst the people! So far as existing facilities are concerned in the metropolitan area, they have been overtaxed for a considerable time, and we have not been able to supply sufficient money to overcome that trouble. Hence the necessity for the Bill. As to the possibility of a greater number of people going to the hospital and desiring to stay there for longer periods, there may be some risk in that direction, but an investigation regarding those who are entitled to hospital benefits under various benefit funds disclose that the tendency in the way suggested by some hon. members is almost infinitesimal. There may be a tendency in that direction, but that is about all that can be said for it. In dealing with the question of private hospitals, Dr. Saw quoted figures that indicated that the average number of patients in those hospitals was 266.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I said that the Bill allowed for £29,000 which would cover 266 patients.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I know that there are only five private hospitals outside the metropolitan area.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I know that there are two at Fremantle and two at Cottesloe.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They are in the metropolitan area.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: There are three at Bunbury, one at Katanning, another at Wagin, while there are others at Kalgoorlie, Northam, Busselton and other places. You will see that you are quite wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I may be wrong, but that is what I have been advised, namely, that there are only five recognised private hospitals outside the metropolitan area.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What do you mean by "recognised"?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I cannot tell the hon. member off-hand, but I could find out.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: They have to be licensed.

The HONORARY MINISTER: With regard to the subsidy of £29,000 that will be available for private hospitals, it was esti-

mated on the figures available to the committee that the full amount would be £33,000 less the fees paid in respect of maternity and venereal cases which would bring down the amount to the £29,000 I mentioned. It must be remembered that the whole of the figures on which the Bill is based are estimates, and as such may be exceeded in various directions. I have every confidence in the three gentlemen who constituted the committee, and I think that their estimates will be as near the mark as one could expect them to be, based on the available statistics. I might agree with Dr. Saw regarding his reference to the provision of private wards at our public hospitals. For my own part, I would like to see established an intermediate hospital in the metropolitan area and the Government have already indicated their views in that regard.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: I wish you would deal with that question under the Bill.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The financial position of the Government will not admit of that being done. Suggestions have been made regarding extravagance and abuses. There may be, no matter what scheme is introduced. I have no hesitation in saying that after the Bill has been in operation for a while, we shall find certain anomalies and various ways in which the Bill could be improved. It would be a wonder if in the early months of the operations of such a scheme we did not find a number of matters that required rectification. We must place our trust in the people who will administer the Act, and we must see that the right people are selected to take charge of that duty. Mr. Harris had a good deal to say about what had been said in another place by members of the Government.

Hon. A. Lovekin: He was only pulling your leg!

The HONORARY MINISTER: That may have been so, but he made references to another measure and suggested it was on all fours with the one now before us.

Hon. E. H. Harris. I referred to the incidence of the tax and asked if a penny in the pound was unfair, in what light would 1½d. in the pound be regarded.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Why did the hon. member not refer to the whole of the incidence?

Hon. E. H. Harris: That was the point on which my argument turned.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member did not say that the proceeds from the two taxes were to be devoted to different purposes.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Bill introduced in 1922 by the Mitchell Government was expected to raise £130,000.

Hon. E. H. Harris: As against £217,000 under the Bill now before us.

The HONORARY MINISTER: But of that £130,000, it was estimated that the Treasury would benefit to the extent of £100,000. The Treasury ordinarily contributed £100,000 to the hospitals, but under the 1922 Bill the Treasurer would have been relieved of that burden. That is one difference between the 1922 Bill and that before the House now.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Treasury will be relieved of the whole of the burden if we pass the Bill.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

The HONORARY MINISTER: The hon. member knows that that is not correct, if he is prepared to accept my statement that the Government do not propose to reduce their contribution from revenue even if the Bill be passed. The 1922 Bill did not provide for any hospital revenue at all. As a matter of fact, the contribution of 1d. in the pound gave nothing specific in return, and the whole proposal was quite different from that embodied in the Bill. There is another point that I hope the hon. member has not overlooked and that is that taxation has been reduced since the present Government came into office. I do not know that I need deal at length with any other comments that were made by hon. members, except to refer to a point made by one or two members regarding the position in connection with the Stamp Act. I am advised that stamps to be attached to receipts will continue as previously.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then the wage earner will have to pay twice!

The HONORARY MINISTER: What is the good of saving he will have to pay twice! There is no question of paying twice at all; because one tax is for a special purpose. Probably he may pay a dozen times in one way or another. Mr. Lovekin mentioned the Truck Act. I am advised that

the Solicitor General stated that as the Bill was a later measure there was no need to mention the Truck Act. I understand that phase of the question was gone into thoroughly and that the Bill is in order from that standpoint. I do not say that there is no way in which the Bill cannot be improved and that all intelligence is centred in the three members of the committee who drew up the Bill and were responsible for its drafting.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Have you read Judge Parker's judgment on that Truck Act case?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, but I have the advice of the Crown Law authorities on the subject.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Do you say that if the Bill passes, the employer can deduct any other payment he may desire?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No, he will be allowed to deduct for the purpose of taxation the amount due from the employee.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And you say no other purpose?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Bill will not give him power to do anything but that. Mr. Seddon dealt with the expense of collection. I do not desire to go exhaustively into that, but I am advised that the cost of collection will be comparatively small. I think the estimate submitted, namely about £5,000 per annum, will be found to be about right. If the Bill is put into operation as it is now drafted, it is not expected that there will be any very great difference between that estimate and the actual cost of collection. Mr. Stewart suggested that we might wait until next session in order that we might get a proper and comprehensive measure. I have no quarrel with the desire for a proper and comprehensive measure, but I think we have a proper and comprehensive measure before us. It has been arrived at after due consideration of all the facts associated with hospital finance. Knowing that, I hope and trust the measure will pass the second reading, and that if a select committee be appointed the work of that select committee will be accomplished in quick time so that we can have their report and deal with it this session.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Referred to select committee.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move—

That the Bill be referred to a select committee consisting of Hon. E. H. Gray, Hon. W. J. Mann, Hon. A. J. H. Saw, Hon. H. J. Velland and the mover; and that the committee have power to call for persons, papers and records, and report to-morrow, the 19th inst., at 7.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Received from the Assembly and, on motion by Hon. A. Lovekin, read a first time. 1922

BILL—GROUP SETTLEMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment.

BILL—WORKERS' HOMES ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment.

BILL—TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 14th December. Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 21—Certain transfers, etc., to be subject to approval.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 the word "lease" be struck out.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It would be wise to leave out mortgage as well, and I suggest that the Minister include it in his amendment. The same argument applies to mortgage as to lease. If I were the owner of half an acre of land, so long as I had not subdivided it, I could put up such number

of houses as might be erected under a plan approved by the local authority. I might put up three cottages which would allow 44 feet frontage for each cottage. Circumstances might necessitate my raising £200 or £300, and the security of one house would be quite ample, but under this provision I could not mortgage one house without first submitting it to the local authority and getting their approval to subdivide the land into three portions, so that I might get a separate title for each portion. My application would be subject to the consent of the local authority.

Hon. J. Ewing: It always has been.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It never has been. Some local authorities seem to think they are bound to the half-acre, and it takes a lot of persuasion to convince them that the subdivision is a matter under their control. I admit that if consent was refused, there is a remedy by way of appeal, but a man should not be put to the unnecessary expense that would be entailed. The owner would have the choice between giving the mortgagee security over the three houses or going to the expense of getting a survey plan and awaiting the approval of the local authority. That sort of thing would seriously hamper business and progress. It is time to draw the line. It will be said that, if this is not done, there will be no check and slum areas might be created, but a man would not be allowed to erect the houses without having submitted a plan. Consequently if the mortgagee, in the event of default by the mortgagor, sold one of the three houses, it would have been approved originally by the local authority. I am opposed to the creation of slums and I recognise that reasonable power must be given.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member opposing the amendment to strike out the word "lease"?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No; I was calling attention to the fact that the clause refers to the lease of land containing half an acre.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can achieve his object by moving to strike out the words "or mortgage."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 1, line 1, the words "or mortgage" be struck out.

The inclusion of those words would be harmful and would not afford any degree of protection. Owners of land should not be put to the unnecessary expense of having survey plans made. I should like to see it provided that no land can be subdivided into blocks of less than a frontage of 50 feet.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have given this matter careful consideration, and consulted with the Town Planning Commission. The suggestion to delete these words is a horse of a different colour from the striking out of the word "lease." If an owner were allowed to subdivide half an acre into three blocks, we might just as well give him power to sell those blocks, for he could do so in any case by means that are well known. If this amendment were carried the whole clause might as well be struck out. The value of the principle involved was recognised in the Road Districts Act of 1919. The Commission are strongly opposed to an amendment of this character.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Road Districts Act does not refer to mortgages. Under that Act no person can lease less than half an acre of land without the consent of the local authority, and under this Bill no person is to be allowed to mortgage land without the consent of the local authority. The two measures ought to be brought into line when the opportunity offers.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	12
				—
Majority against	..	..	..	6
				—

AYES.

Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. C. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. G. A. Kempton

(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. R. Brown	Hon. E. H. Harris
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. Sir W. Lathlain
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. W. T. Glasbein	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. E. Rose

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

New Clause:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 33:—"Subject to the regulations made by the Minister under the preceding provisions of this Act, the Governor may make such further regulations as are necessary to give effect to this Act."

New clause put and passed.

First and Second Schedules, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with further amendments, and the report adopted.

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

BILL—POOR PERSONS LEGAL ASSISTANCE.

Recommittal.

Resumed from the 14th December; Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair, the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

The CHAIRMAN: An amendment has been moved, "That a new definition clause be added as follows:—'Committee' means the committee of the Law Society of Western Australia."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That a new definition be added as follows:—" 'Society' shall mean the Law Society of Western Australia."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I have no objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That in the definition of "Poor person," after the word "and" in line 4, the following be inserted:—"if such poor person is married, then he or she and his or her wife or husband as the case may be are not together worth the said sum of £50, and that such poor person."

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That all words after "months" in line 7 to the end of the paragraph be struck out.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I must oppose the amendment. There might be instances in which great hardship would be inflicted upon individuals if legal assistance were not provided. For instance, a worker might have been in receipt of the basic wage for 12 months, but through sickness in his family it might be impossible for him to shoulder any legal expenses. We should provide some means of assisting people in that position.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I recognise the point and will ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause, as previously amended, put and passed.

Clause 3—Appointment of public solicitor:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I have an amendment on the Notice Paper providing that the Governor shall appoint the Law Society or a committee of the society, approved by the Chief Justice, to carry out the Act.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I intend to accept the whole of the amendments that Mr. Nicholson has included on the Notice Paper, with the exception of the one now to be discussed. It would be better to include the word "may" instead of "shall" as set out in Mr. Nicholson's amendment. We are anxious to secure the co-operation of the Law Society, but we do not desire to make the clause mandatory.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is quite correct. I will adopt the Chief Secretary's suggestion. I move an amendment—

That after "Governor" in line 1, the following words be inserted:—"may appoint the Law Society of Western Australia or a committee of the society (if willing to act), such committee to be approved by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Western Australia for the purpose of carrying out all or any objects or purposes of this Act and failing this the said society or committee being willing to act the Governor."

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

Clause 4—List of practitioners willing to assist poor persons:

Hon. H. STEWART: I move an amendment—

That after "list" in line 1, the words "approved by the Law Society of Western Australia" be inserted.

If the amendment is agreed to, I have another to propose in the same clause.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I oppose both amendments suggested, with reference to which the Crown Law Department advise as follows:—

The intention is, no doubt, that in saying it shall be an offence against the Act for a practitioner on the list who has been consulted by a poor person prior to the latter's application as a poor person to conduct any legal action on behalf of such applicant, a safeguard shall be provided against any practitioner certifying that a case is one for consideration with a view to his being appointed to conduct that case. In the first place, it would be absurd to make such action an offence if the practitioner had been engaged on a case and subsequently the person engaging him had made application under Clause 7 without his solicitor being in any way notified of the fact. What would happen in actual practice, where a solicitor had been acting for a person who subsequently got approval to take proceedings under the Act, would be for the solicitor appointed to take the proceedings to notify the solicitor originally engaged, and if the original solicitor did proceed with any action in the case in question subsequently, he could not recover any costs.

I think Mr. Nicholson's amendment covers the whole point and it is quite unnecessary to include either of the amendments suggested by Mr. Stewart.

Hon. H. STEWART: I proposed the first amendment in order to hear what the Chief Secretary had to say regarding the two of which I have given notice. I have not quite satisfied myself that what I have in mind will be covered by Mr. Nicholson's amendment. We know there are black sheep in all professions and I sought to safeguard the position from that standpoint. I ask leave to withdraw my amendment, and if I think it necessary I shall ask for the recommitment of the Bill to deal further with this point.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Legal aid for persons accused of indictable offences:

On motions by Hon. J. Nicholson the following amendments were agreed to:—

That after "application" in line 1 of Subclause 2 the words "to the society or committee and failing them" be inserted.

That at the beginning of Subclause 3 the words "the society or committee or" be inserted.

That at the end of line 3 of Subclause 4 the words "society or committee or" be inserted.

That after "the" in line 2 of Subclause 2 the words "society or committee if acting hereunder or to be" be inserted.

That in line 4 of Subclause 2 the words "he is" be struck out.

That in line 7 of Subclause 2 the words "he shall lodge" be struck out and "there shall be lodged" inserted in lieu.

Clause 9—This Act to apply to appeals:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That after "inferior court" in line 3 the following be inserted:—"Provided that no appeal or proceeding in the nature of an appeal shall be taken without leave of the Minister, who shall first obtain the opinion of a counsel recommending such appeal or proceeding."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A few minutes ago I said I was prepared to accept the whole of Mr. Nicholson's amendment. To this amendment there is no objection, except that the Crown Law Department consider it is already provided for. Appeals in civil cases will come under Clause 7. A person could not get legal aid unless he or she applied under Clause 7.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Very well, if the Crown Law authorities are quite certain the point is covered, I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the following new clause, to stand as Clause 12, be inserted:—"Should the public solicitor or practitioner acting for a poor person discover at any time that the poor person or the wife or husband, as the case may be, of the poor person is possessed of means beyond £50 he shall at once report the matter to the Minister, who may withdraw and cancel any leave given to proceed under this Act and take such action thereon as he may think proper."

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move—

That the following new clause, to stand as Clause 13, be inserted:—" (1) Except as herein provided no public solicitor or practitioner shall solicit, take, or agree to take or seek to obtain any payment, fee, profit, or reward for the conducting of proceedings or any expense in connection therewith or make or attempt to make any arrangement or agreement to

share in the proceeds of any judgment or moneys or property which may be obtained or recovered on behalf of any poor person, and any solicitor or practitioner so doing shall be liable at the suit of the Minister to repay or re-deliver the same to the Minister on demand, and also to pay by way of penalty such sum as the Minister may in his sole discretion demand or fix up to double the amount of the payment, fee, profit, or reward, moneys or property received by such solicitor or practitioner and the name of every such person will be removed from the said list referred to in section four hereof." "(2) If any payment, fee, profit, reward, money or property shall be made, given, paid, delivered or promised all right or leave given to any poor person to proceed or to receive legal assistance under this Act shall be cancelled and withdrawn, and such poor person shall not again be entitled to receive legal assistance under this Act in any proceedings which may be brought or instituted by or against him save by leave of the Minister."

Hon. H. STEWART: The object I had in view is achieved by the new clauses so I shall not seek to recommit the Bill.

New clause put and passed.

Bill again reported with further amendments and the report adopted.

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

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th December.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [11.55]: As I pointed out in moving the second reading, the object of the Bill is to authorise the appointment of three classes of inspector instead of one as at present. One of them is the special inspector about whom Mr. Harris was very much concerned in that he wondered whether the special inspector would be required to make a record of his investigations in the book kept at the mine. That is a query the hon. member might well have answered for himself, particularly in view of the fact that a special inspector is not likely to be appointed unless particular circumstances demand special investigation by a man possessing scientific and technical knowledge. It would be his duty to report, not to the mine owner, but to the Minister who appointed him. It is patent that it would

not be right for a special inspector appointed for a special purpose to have to record his finding in a book before reporting to the Minister. As to the appointment of a workmen's inspector, Mr. Harris asked whether it was intended to have two part-time inspectors. I have made inquiries and have been advised by the Minister for Mines that it is intended to have one workmen's inspector who will be employed approximately only half time. It is considered that that will be sufficient.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Can you get a man to work half time? What will he do during the other half of the week?

The HONORARY MINISTER: He will be working in the mine. The hon. member knows that an arrangement of the kind is often made.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I have never heard of it before.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Well, the hon. member is hearing of it now. This proposal meets with the approval of the people engaged in the industry. If I did not mention it on the second reading, I wish to inform members now that a conference was held at which the employers expressed themselves quite agreeable to the proposal, while the men also are agreeable, and the Government see no reason why they should not agree to it. When all parties in the industry are agreed on the point, we should not desire to interfere, especially when it is a question affecting the working conditions of men employed underground. I do not think the criticism calls for any further remarks and I trust the House will pass the Bill.

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.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Repeal of Sections 36 and 37.

Hon. H. STEWART: I ask the Honorary Minister to report progress, as the hour is late and very few members are present.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Classification of inspectors.

Hon. H. STEWART: I again appeal to the Honorary Minister to report progress. The committee is a thin one, and there are but few items left on the Notice Paper. In all my long experience I have not before received so little consideration at the hands of a Minister.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If Mr. Stewart puts the matter in that light I will agree to report progress.

Progress reported.

BILL—LOAN £4,800,000.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 14th December.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [12.3] In moving the second reading of the Bill I invited members to ask such questions as they thought necessary so that I might be able to give them information upon matters that might interest them. As a result of the speeches that have been delivered I have got into touch with different departments and will now read the replies I have received. Mr. Hamersley complained about the huge loan expenditure contemplated. He did not, however, deal specifically with the measure or point to any items to which he objected. If members will refer to the Schedule they will find that the main expenditure is in connection with the agricultural industry. Railways and tramways, particularly agricultural railways, will absorb £980,000.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And all built by day labour.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Harbours and drivers, in order to provide facilities for shipping the wheat to London, will absorb £315,000; water supplies, a small amount for towns but principally for the country districts; development of goldfields and mineral resources, £8,000; development of agriculture, £1,885,000. The hon. member should be well satisfied with the Bill from his point of view. There was some criticism of the railway department, and I have received the following notes from the Secretary to the Commissioner:

In reference to the questions raised by Sir Edward Wittenoom and Mr. E. H. H. Hall during the discussion on the Loan Bill last evening, I am directed to advise that Sir Edward Wittenoom and the travelling public can rest assured that the railways are conducted in a safe manner. The recent accident at Goomalling was caused through a loose tyre on one of the wagons. Accidents caused by loose tyres are very rare. No particular significance can be attached to the accidents which have occurred during recent months, the majority of which have been in station yards, and due to over anxiety on the part of the staff to expedite shunting arrangements. Derailments of a similar kind occur almost daily on railway systems throughout the world and are liable to happen at any time. It is only unfortunate in our case that, while we have been practically immune for some time past the present series have come almost together. It may be mentioned that the increase in expenditure on the maintenance of permanent way was £45,000 greater in 1928 than 1927. As regards the Mullewa train ex Perth Mondays and Thursdays, nothing is known of any overcrowding. The usual composition of the train is four coaches, and if this is not sufficient at any time other coaches are always available at Perth. This train does not convey passengers for stations south of Buntine. No complaints have been received either from the public or the conductors re overcrowding on this train.

With regard to Mr. Cornell's comments upon water schemes for settlers at Bullfinch, Wheatley, Turkey Hill and Moorina, the Water Supply Department have supplied me with the following information:

The amount provided on the Loan Estimates for goldfields water supply is £40,000, and the first charge against that amount will be the liabilities which have been incurred on works in hand, including renovations to the 30-inch main, £10,000; construction of a conduit between Southern Cross and Kalgoorlie, £6,000; and other items making a total of £28,000. In addition to the scheme referred to by Mr. Cornell there are other G.W.S. extensions which are being pressed for, the total cost of which would be not less than £130,000. The work referred to by Mr. Cornell would cost £88,000. It is unfortunate that it is not possible to provide all of the money required for all necessary works. In any event even if all the work referred to by Mr. Cornell could be authorised now, it could not be completed in time to provide water for settlers before winter set in. It is the intention of the Hon. Mr. Cunningham to give full consideration to the programme of works which have not yet been commenced, and towards the end of this financial year, say in April, to confer with the Treasurer with a view to putting in hand some of the more urgent reticulation works in anticipation of the next Estimates, so that water can be made available before next summer. The work referred to by Mr. Cornell will be on this programme. More than this cannot be said at present.

With reference to Mr. Cornell's remarks upon the salaries of district inspectors and bank inspectors employed by the Agricultural Bank, I am informed as follows:—

The district inspectors are under the Public Service Commissioner and they receive from £408 to £504 per annum. They have the right to go to the Appeal Board. The wages or salaries of the bank inspectors are fixed by the Agricultural Bank in consultation with the Public Service Commissioner. The wages or salaries range from £264 to £312 per annum, plus a fixed travelling allowance of £150 per annum, and in cases where a motor car is necessary in the interests of the Bank an extra £25 per annum is paid.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

First Schedule:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: What is proposed to be done with the amount of £200,000 for additions and improvements to opened railways? Is this for additions to the Perth railway station, on which a million of money could be spent, or for the improvement of those numerous railway stations and sidings inland where the officials have to carry out their duties in what are practically dog boxes? Many of the railway buildings in the country have not had a coat of paint since they were first put up, in some cases as long as twenty years ago. There is no mention of the Yorkrakine or the Armadale-Brookton railway. Why are such important lines omitted from so enormous a loan authorisation? The people concerned have been promised railway communication for years. The item of lighting of country stations and sidings, which I have frequently but unavailingly spoken of, should receive prompt attention. At country centres I have seen the guard vainly trying, by a bad light, to read the addresses on parcels, which as a result are often overcarried, entailing long, unnecessary delays. The obsolete lighting system is the same now as it was when I was a youngster. It causes great loss of time, not only to the trains but also to passengers, who are frequently kept waiting for hours.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In moving the second reading I invited hon. members

to ask any questions they had to raise, as in nine cases out of ten it is necessary to consult the departmental officers in order to get satisfactory explanations. As regards this item, I have the following explanation:

The item is operated on by the Railway Department only. It is used principally for the purpose of relaying with heavier rails, re-grading with a view to the economical working of the railway system, re-arranging yards, plant for workshops, and various improvements which will facilitate the working of the railways.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Will the Chief Secretary make a note of the matter of lighting which I mentioned?

The Chief Secretary: Yes.

Hon. J. EWING: I followed the Minister's advice by asking a distinct question with regard to the item of £75,000 for the electric power station at East Perth. The Minister did not treat me as he treated other members, whose questions he answered. I hope he will answer my question now. The matter is of great importance.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I regret the omission. The slip containing the answer to Mr. Ewing's question must have got away from the bundle I had. The explanation is that the amount is required for the completion of the contract for the fifth unit and for various works in hand. No provision has been made for the additional unit that is said to be necessary. That was the information I intended to convey in my reply.

Hon. J. EWING: The report of the Commissioner of Railways dealt with this question and indicated that it involved an expenditure of £588,000. I cannot imagine that the £75,000 is intended for that purpose. However, I cannot get the information I desire regarding the £75,000, but I will not worry the Minister about it now. So long as he assures me that the sixth unit will not be started, I will not proceed further, but I hope the Government will give attention to this important matter.

Hon. W. J. MANN: With reference to the provision of £6,000 for State hotels and tourist resorts, can the Chief Secretary supply us with some information as to what this refers to? Since I have been in this House, I have constantly advocated the extension and improvement of State hotels.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: I have been advocating the sale of them!

Hon. W. J. MANN: But without any result! Hon. members know that the accommodation at Caves House is altogether inadequate, and I regret that £600 only is provided on the Estimates. That amount will not provide what I would like to see carried out at Yallingup alone.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The money will provide for work at the Corriwin State hotel, the completion of the kitchen at Yallingup and for minor matters elsewhere.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Then Yallingup gets a kitchen out of it.

Hon. Sir WILLIAM LATHLAIN: Provision is made for £100,000 for the Metropolitan Market Trust. I would like to be assured that the Government will not take the whole of the revenue and profits from the trust into Consolidated Revenue, and keep on borrowing money on the same basis as for the State hotels and other State activities. When once such institutions are established a sinking fund should be provided. Papers laid on the Table disclose that a sinking fund of £9,700 has been provided for State hotels, and then we have the statement of the Auditor-General that £548 has been taken into Consolidated Revenue from the earnings in connection with those concerns. I hope that sort of thing will not be repeated regarding the Metropolitan Market Trust.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The item in the Schedule refers to a loan to the trust for the purpose of erecting buildings. On that money, interest has to be paid and the loan will have to be repaid.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: That will be provided for?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is a trust, and the profits from such a business should not go into Consolidated Revenue. The trust will have to meet its obligations and a sinking fund is to be provided with that end in view.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: I am satisfied with that assurance.

Schedule put and passed.

Second Schedule:

Hon. W. J. MANN: The schedule shows a re-appropriation of £10,000 that was originally appropriated for the Busselton jetty extension. What is the explanation of the item?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Regarding the Second and Third Schedules, the work

at Busselton, for which the money was appropriated, has been completed, and the Public Works Department desire the re-appropriation of the money for works referred to in the Third Schedule. The Bill therefore authorises the re-appropriation accordingly.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I wish to protest against the re-appropriation of the money, for the Minister has been misinformed. For the last two years £5,000 has been provided on the Estimates for improvements and additions to the Busselton jetty. Prior to the last election, the Premier promised the Busselton people definitely that £5,000 would be expended in widening and slightly lengthening the jetty and in laying down an additional line of railways to facilitate the working of boats. The additions to the jetty would have enabled large steamers to berth with ease, while the additional railway line would have made for the greater safety of the men employed there. Numerous deputations have waited on the Premier and I am astonished that money set aside by the Premier in accordance with his promises is to be re-appropriated, thus repudiating the promises I have referred to.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: How many boats call there in a year.

Hon. W. J. MANN: About 200.

Second Schedule put and passed.

Third Schedule, Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th December.

HON. E. H. HARRIS (North-East) [12.30 a.m.]: My attention has been drawn to the following item in one of the schedules, "Grant to Hon. A. McCallum, Minister for Works and Labour, to cover expenses, including those of his secretary, visit to England and other parts, £2,165 2s. 6d." Members may recall that when we had before us the Bill to increase by one the number of Ministers, it was suggested that one of the Ministers was about to make a trip overseas. It occurred to me that the extra Minister

was to fill the place of any Minister who might go abroad. Somebody suggested that it was going to be an annual affair, that one of the Ministers would go away every year. I should like to know from the Chief Secretary whether that is really so, and if so, which of the Ministers is to be the next to take a trip abroad.

The PRESIDENT: The proper place to ask for information regarding details of the Bill is in Committee.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: My idea was merely to save time by asking the direct question here and now. It is quite unimportant to me whether we get the information on the second reading or in Committee.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [12.32 a.m.]: In answer to the hon. member, all I can say is that Mr. McCallum while away attended to a great deal of the business of the State.

Hon. E. H. Harris: I want to know whether we got value for the money, and whether it is to be an annual affair.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member can determine that for himself just as well as I can.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

House adjourned at 12.37 a.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 18th December, 1928.

	PAGE
Questions: Chief Electoral Officer, retirement ...	2582
Agricultural water supplies—1, East York-	
kine, Kodj Kodjin: 2, Norpa area	2582-3
Railways—1, Survey of 4ft. 8½ in. gauge: 2,	
Trucking yards, Boddalín ...	2583
House Committee, new member ...	2583
Motion: State Forest revocation ...	2583
Bills: Licensing Act Amendment (No. 2), 28., etc. ...	2584
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 1), returned ...	2605
Road Districts Act Amendment (No. 1), returned	2605
Reserves, returned ...	2605
Roads Closure (No. 2), returned ...	2605
Texas Co. (Australia), Ltd. (Private), returned	2605
Kojonup Cemetery, returned ...	2605
Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, returned ...	2605
Harbours and Jetties, 18. ...	2605
Land Agents, Com. ...	2605
Group Settlement Act Amendment, Council's	
amendment ...	2608
Worker's Compensation Act Amendment, Coun-	
cill's amendment ...	2610
Resolution: Public services, late Hon. J. E. Dodd ...	2610
Motion: North-West development ...	2612

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

QUESTION—CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER, RETIREMENT

Mr. LATHAM asked the Minister for Justice: Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House copies of all papers relating to the retirement of the State Chief Electoral Officer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE replied: It is not the practice to place papers dealing with the retirement of officers of the Public Service on the Table of the House. If the honourable member will move for the papers in the ordinary way I will be pleased to agree to the motion.

QUESTIONS (2)—AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES.

East Yorkkrakine, Kodj Kodjin.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies: 1, Has he decided to do anything in regard to providing a water supply scheme for the East Yorkkrakine, the Kodj Kodjin, and near-by areas? 2, Have not surveys already been made and plans prepared?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, A scheme providing for reticulation from the Gold-