

have been provided with extra accommodation within the last few months are again overcrowded and will require to be still further extended. . . . .

Question put and passed; the Address adopted. . . . .

House adjourned at 4.24 a.m. (Friday).

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st July, 1914.

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Alteration to by-laws under the Roads Act for the Black Range Roads Board. 2, By-laws under the Roads Act for the Kalgoorlie Roads Board. 3, Map showing route of proposed railway from Esperance Northwards.

By the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin): 1, Preventative Detention Regulations, 1914. 2, Western Australian Police Benefit Fund, amendment of Regulations. 3, By-laws under the Health

Act, 1911-12 for the Gnowangerup Local Board of Health. 4, Food and Drugs Regulations, 1913-4, under the Health Act, 1911-12. 5, Return showing the number of members in each industrial union registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act (Section 25) as on the 31st December, 1913.

### QUESTION—PANAMA EXHIBITION.

Mr. SWAN asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the Government have purchased some carved jarrah for exhibition at the Panama Exhibition? 2, If so, will he arrange for its exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery prior to its being sent away, so as to afford the general public an opportunity of viewing it?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes: it is now on exhibition at the Art Gallery.

### QUESTION — SHIPMENT OF NORTH - WEST CATTLE BY GOVERNMENT STEAMERS.

Mr. UNDERWOOD asked the Premier: 1, What are the names of the stock owners who have shipped cattle from the North and North-West by the Government steamers during the present season? 2, What number of cattle has been shipped by small owners, including Government departments, and by large owners respectively?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The shipping season will not expire until the end of October, but the following have booked space:—Stock Department; Connor, Doherty & Durack; R. H. Holmes; M. Kelly;—Brennan; Elder, Shenton, & Co.; M. J. Durack; Aborigines Department; Robt. Sexton; F. C. Booty;—Bridge; F. Taylor; A. Dunbar; C. Newman; McDonald Bros.; Farquaharson and Gordon Buchanan. 2, The total number booked for the whole season by small owners is 7,800, and by large owners, 1,890.

Mr. Mitchell: Who are the small owners?

The PREMIER: All except Messrs. Connor, Doherty and Durack, and Holmes.

### QUESTION—TREASURY BILLS MATURED.

Mr. BOLTON asked the Premier: What amounts have been paid to the Commonwealth Treasurer for Treasury bills which matured during the year ending 30th June last?

The PREMIER replied: £100,000 on the 30th November, 1913; £100,000 on the 31st December, 1913; £100,000 on the 1st April, 1914; £200,000 on the 20th June, 1914. Total, £500,000.

### QUESTION—YORK HOTEL, DANGIN.

Mr. DWYER asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been directed to the following news item appearing in the issue of the *Eastern Districts Chronicle* of 26th June:—"Sale of the York Hotel.—The sale on behalf of the estate of the late Mr. M. J. Monger has been effected through Mr. Kenneth Edwards of the York Hotel, the purchaser being Mr. J. S. W. Parker, of Dangin. The figure was a satisfactory one . . . ." 2, Is he aware that the J. S. W. Parker mentioned in the said news item is the well-known temperance and teetotal advocate? 3, Is he aware that the Dangin mentioned is a private townsite, the property of the said J. S. W. Parker, and situate about five miles from the Government townsite of Quairading? 4, Is he aware that the blocks of land of the Dangin townsite, sold by Mr. Parker, have been subject to the restriction that the purchasers must not apply for any license under the Licensing Act, and consequently Mr. Parker himself is the only one who can so apply? 5, Is he aware that the said York hotel has been purchased by Mr. Parker with the object of applying to the York Licensing Bench for permission to transfer the publican's general license from that hotel to the

Temperance Hotel erected and owned by him at Dangin? 6, Is the said Mr. Kenneth Edwards mentioned in the news item identical with the member of the York Licensing Bench of the same name? 7, Will he cause the application for transfer of license referred to in the question following to be opposed?

### *Point of Order.*

Mr. Monger: Before the Premier answers this question, I rise, Mr. Speaker, to a point of order. I ask, Sir, for your ruling as to whether or not it is in order for a professional member of this House to put questions to a Minister upon information presumably obtained by him in his professional capacity from a client who thinks that his business will be interfered with if the facts and predictions set out in these questions be taken as correct. I also desire to ask whether the hon. member is in order in reflecting upon the impartiality of a member of the licensing bench in that particular district, on the sole ground that he, in his business capacity, might have earned a commission on the sale of the property referred to. I ask for your ruling on this point.

Mr. Dwyer: Before you give your ruling, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that evidently the hon. member for York finds that there is something in the questions which has made him rather nervous.

Mr. Monger: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. Dwyer: At all events, I can assure the hon. member for his own peace of mind that no information which the context of the questions may suggest to him was conveyed to me in a professional capacity in any way. Certain information was, however, conveyed to me by one of the hon. member's constituents, who, rightly or wrongly, believed that the hon. member himself would not ask the questions, and who therefore had to come to me for redress.

Mr. Speaker: There is nothing contained in the Standing Orders to prohibit an hon. member of this House from asking any question affecting the public business of the country. Further, there

is nothing contained in the Standing Orders to prohibit an hon. member from reflecting upon any individual except they be the Governor, the Governor General, judges of the Supreme Court, His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen. I do not think that the gentleman mentioned in the hon. member's point of order comes within the prescribed category.

The Premier: I desire the hon. member to postpone the question until Tuesday next.

Question postponed.

#### QUESTION — QUAIRADING AND DANGIN, EXPENDITURE OF PUBLIC MONEY.

Mr. DWYER asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that the roads board hall for the district towards which public moneys were contributed by the Government has been erected in the private townsite of Dangin in place of the Government townsite of Quairading? 2, Is he aware that the Government District Medical Officer has his head quarters at Dangin in place of Quairading? 3, Is he aware that the advancement of Dangin, at the expense of Quairading and the larger amount of Government moneys expended in the former town, has caused much uneasiness and discontent in Quairading, where the holders of town blocks have purchased same from the Government, and invested their moneys on the tacit understanding that no Government assistance would be given to the private township? 4, Will he cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances detailed in Questions Nos. 1, 2, and 3, with a view to remedying the grievances of the Quairading townpeople?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. In January, 1912, the Quairading District Advertising Association asked for terms on which a medical man would be appointed by the Government. They were informed as to the amount of local guarantee required. They did nothing towards this end. In May, 1912, the Dangin road board wrote stating that

the residents of Dangin and surrounding district, including what might be termed residents of Quairading, had guaranteed the sum of £325 towards the practice of a doctor to reside in Dangin. Nothing having been done up to that time by the Quairading people, the Government decided to subsidise a doctor to reside in Dangin. 3, No. 4, It is considered there is not sufficient justification for such inquiry.

#### QUESTION—SLEEPER HEWERS, PROSECUTION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is he aware that a number of sleeper hewers were recently prosecuted for cutting timber on reserve 12413, near Nanga Brook? 2, Is he aware that during the last 12 months other hewers have had their sleepers confiscated by Millars' on this same area? 3, Is he further aware that a great portion of this reserve has been denuded by Millars' in order to get logs for their mill, prior to the Government surveying such area? 4, What action does he propose to take?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes. They were cutting on the reserve without licenses authorising them to do so. 2, No. 3, Yes, during the period it was held by Millars' as a timber lease. 4, No action is considered necessary.

#### QUESTION — LANDS REVALUATION, ASSISTANCE TO SETTLERS.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, In view of the fact that Parliament decided by resolution last session to afford relief to those settlers whose lands have been over-valued, and that the Government are now considering the best means of giving assistance to such settlers, by reducing the price of the land and deferring payment of land rents, will the Government invite the vendors of other rural lands to give similar consideration to their tenants? 2, Is the Government aware that up to £4 per acre, with interest added, is being charged by the Midland Railway Company for some

of the unimproved lands sold by that absentee company, and that the buyers find extreme difficulty in meeting their legal engagements? 3, Will the Government advise the Midland Railway Company, through the local director (Mr. A. J. Monger) and the local agent (Mr. Jas. Gardiner), of the action being taken in regard to the revaluation of lands selected by Crown tenants, and ask the said company to take similar action? 4, Will he make representations to the Farmers and Settlers' Association, now sitting in conference, with a view to that body using its influence to secure a reduction of price for the Midland Railway Company's rack-rented tenants?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister), for the Minister for Lands, replied: 1, The matter is not one for Government intervention. 2, The Government have no information on the question. 3, No, but the decision of the Government will shortly be made public. 4, Answered by No. 1.

#### QUESTION — POWELLISING AGREEMENT, SLEEPER CONTRACT.

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, With reference to the contract for the supply of one million sleepers included in the powellising agreement, what is the size of the sleeper and the price to be paid for same? 2, Is the contract still in existence, or has it been cancelled? 3, If cancelled, what was the date of cancellation? Why was it cancelled? What consideration was given, if any?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Size, 8in. x 4in. x 6ft. 6in. Price, 2s. 2d. per sleeper. 2, Under the indenture by which the powellising rights were obtained, reference is made to the fact that the patentees would supply one million powellised karri sleepers. Subsequent contract arrangements were, however, necessary which were not proceeded with because in the meantime the Government decided to erect additional mills, which would be

capable of fulfilling all sleeper requirements. The action of the Government in not arranging the contract for the supply of the one million sleepers carried with it the refusal to grant the patentees a further 15,000 acres of karri forest, also referred to in the said indenture. It is quite possible for the Government to supply their requirements at a price lower than, or at least not exceeding, the figure at which the patentees tendered. 3, Answered by No. 2.

#### QUESTION—STATE STEAMSHIP “WESTERN AUSTRALIA.”

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Premier: Seeing that the Government now admits that the “Western Australia” is unsuitable for the North-West trade and is being run at a loss, when will the Premier take the House into his confidence and explain his proposals for the continued running of the steamer without loss?

The PREMIER replied: When the proposals which, it is anticipated, will obviate the present loss on the service, and which are dependent on relative circumstances and projects now under review, have been adopted a full explanation will be made to the House.

#### QUESTION—STATE IMPLEMENT WORKS — ENGAGEMENT OF WELDER.

Hon. FRANK WILSON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is it not a fact that the manager of the State Implement Works was advised by the Atlas Engineering Co. that Wilfred Shaw, the oxygen acetylene welder, was under agreement to them? 2, If so, how does he reconcile that fact with his statement that Shaw was not induced to break his agreement?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister), for the Minister for Agriculture, replied: 1, Yes. 2, Shaw, amongst a number of other men, answered the advertisement for an oxy-acetylene welder, and having the best qualifications

he was offered the position, the manager not being aware of any agreement with the Atlas Engineering Company. Later on the company advised the manager of their agreement with Shaw, and the manager immediately communicated with the latter advising him to do nothing prejudicial to his interests, and at this stage refused to engage him. Later, Shaw left the employ of the Atlas Engineering Company and was without occupation for some days. He visited the works and made application, as hundreds of others do, on the prescribed form, and being out of work was put on.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. BOLTON, leave of absence for two weeks was granted to the hon. member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) on the ground of urgent public business.

#### BILL—BUNBURY MOTOR 'BUS SERVICE.

Introduced by Mr. Thomas and read a first time.

#### RETURN—GAME ACT ROYALTY.

On motion by Mr. McDONALD ordered: That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing—1, The amounts as royalty collected under the Game Act, (a) at Carnarvon; (b) at Onslow; (c) at Roebourne; (d) at Port Hedland. 2, The cost of collection.

#### BILL—RIGHTS IN WATER AND IRRIGATION.

##### Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending the Bill.

##### Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) [4.52] in moving the second reading said: I rise for the third time to move the second reading of this

Bill, and may I at the outset express a fervent wish that this, the third time, will be the last that it will be necessary for the Government to appeal to Parliament to pass the measure. Now, I wish to point out to the Chamber that the Bill is practically the same Bill as was presented to the Assembly last session. Certain amendments are embodied in it, but they are the amendments which were agreed to by this House after suggestions made by another place. Therefore, while it is correct for me to say that this is practically the same measure, there are certain amendments made in it—amendments which have already been the subject of discussion in this Chamber. I do not propose on the present occasion to go fully once again into the details of the Bill, the merits of the Bill, and so forth. *Hansard* is already full of information regarding this important measure. I feel it would be superfluous to place any more on *Hansard* in regard to the Bill, unless, of course, it is possible for me to break new ground. I think, however, that it is necessary for me to deal with four questions, the questions which caused the defeat of the measure last year. Hon. members will remember that the Bill passed this Assembly and was considered in another place. Another place suggested amendments in the measure. The Government, with the support of this Assembly, agreed to the majority of the amendments suggested, but on four questions we refused to agree; and it was because we refused to agree to those four amendments that the Bill was ultimately defeated. Now, those four questions are: first, dealing with the beds of streams; second, application of the Bill by proclamation to districts; third, the introduction of the leasehold principle; and fourth, the making of regulations. With regard to the first question, the suggestion that the right to the bed should not revert to the Crown with the water, I wish to point out that at Common Law to-day the so-called owner of a stream has not really the rights of ownership; he has simply the rights of user. This view is supported by various judgments,

delivered by various courts at various times; and Mr. de Verdon, the Commissioner of Titles in Victoria, has taken up this question and, in my opinion, has put the matter very clearly. He says—

The right of a riparian owner to the bed and banks of the creek is altogether different from a fee simple absolute. It is limited in user, restricted in alienation and incident to the abutting land, and, therefore, should not be, either by colouring or acreage, shown in a certificate of title as on the same footing, and held under a title of equal estate as the freehold land to which it is incident.

Mr. George: But it is.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The position is that if what the hon. member has stated is correct, that if it has been shown that the bed of the stream forms part and parcel of the land to which the title applies, then the Crown has done something, or this officer of the Crown has done something, that Common Law does not recognise.

Mr. George: That may be, but it is a practice.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Consequently, while on a piece of parchment it may be contended—I am not prepared to dispute the statement of the hon. member that it is so—that the bed of a stream belongs to the owner, still, as pointed out by the Commissioner of Titles in Victoria, that ownership extends only to the right of usage, and cannot be taken as an indication that the owner has the fee simple of the bed to the same extent as he has to the abutting lands.

Mr. George: But it is included in the acreage of his area.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not prepared to go into that question. Possibly one or two instances may be found where the position is as the hon. member states, but if he went into it more deeply he would find various other instances where the position is otherwise. However, I do not want to enter into an argument on that phase of the question. I do not think it necessary. I do pro-

pose, however, to claim now that it is not a reasonable proposition to maintain that while the Crown should have the right to water in a stream, it should have no right to the creek, or I may say the receptacle, in which the stream is found. Further, I wish to point out to the House that we compromise on this question. It will be remembered that in the first Bill which was introduced the Government proposed to take not only the bed, but also the bank of the stream; but in order to get the Bill through we compromised on that point, and agreed to delete that provision of the measure which referred to the banks. We limited ourselves to the bed, and of course the water. I have stated that the Government think it a reasonable proposition to take the bed of a stream as well as the stream, and when we are doing this we are not doing anything contrary to the usual practice. As a matter of fact, in all other measures of a similar nature in Australia—and this measure is based on the Victorian, New South Wales, and Queensland Acts—if there is not provision for absolutely taking the banks and the bed, there is certainly provision for taking the bed. Consequently, we are not introducing any new principle; but, on the contrary, we are reducing to some extent that which is acquired under similar Acts in other States. I wish also to point out that the provision for taking the bed of a stream does not apply to streams inside, or surrounded by, land belonging to the one owner. The bed which this measure proposes to take is absolutely the bed of a stream forming the boundary of two allotments, or forming the boundary of a subdivision; and, consequently, when I point that out—

Hon. Frank Wilson: Where is that provided?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is in the Bill. That question was dealt with very fully last session. It is correct; and hon. members will follow me when I say that, that being so, since we are taking only the bed of a creek which forms the boundary of a holding, we are actually taking nothing from the so-called owner; because when a stream or a creek

forms the boundary of a property, then the centre of that stream becomes the boundary. It is impossible for anyone on either side of the creek or stream to fence along the centre, consequently the boundary fence must be on one side or the other, or on both sides. If it is on one side, one owner is getting more than he is entitled to, and the other is getting less. In other words, neither one nor the other can get that which he is justly entitled to, even though it is admitted that there has been alienation. We are not taking anything from anyone, because that which it is assumed they own to-day they cannot use, and when they cannot use it, we therefore cannot be taking it from them. The next point was the question of proclaiming the Act to apply to given districts. The Government opposed that, because, in their opinion, it would be a wrong system to introduce. If it is good to apply the measure to the State, then it is good that Parliament should apply it to the State. What is the good of saying that the Government are to be denied the right of proclaiming the measure to apply to the whole of the State, and then immediately after it has become law, permit the Government by Executive Council minute to apply it to the whole of the State? An amendment of that kind is small and unreasonable, and out of the usual practice and custom, so much so, that the Government did not take it seriously. I claim that the Legislative Council should not have pressed that amendment because it means nothing. If the Bill is passed as presented by the Government it will apply to the whole of the State; if we pass it as proposed by the Legislative Council then the Government will be given exactly the same power. Consequently, why not leave it in the Bill as we propose, namely, that it shall apply to the whole of the State?

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is a very different thing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is not. If the Bill is passed as it is printed it will apply to the whole of the State, but the operation of the measure should not take place unless a stream can

be used for irrigation purposes, or unless there is a dispute as to the quantity of water taken by one owner whose property is abutting on the stream, to the detriment of his neighbour. Therefore, it will be necessary for us to apply the measure to those streams where irrigation is possible. It may also be necessary to apply the measure to streams where irrigation is not possible, but where it is desired that there shall be an equitable distribution of water amongst the various people in the vicinity. Let me give one or two illustrations. If the measure is passed we shall apply it to the Harvey river, and almost immediately to the Collicie river, when we are in the position to start the irrigation proposition. If we are not here to carry out the work, another Government will be able to do so—at the same time I do not like their chance. There may, however, be just a possibility of another Government doing so, consequently, the Bill will be applied to those rivers when we start the irrigation propositions on a large scale. Then we take a smaller stream, such as the Narrogin brook, which has been under discussion and the subject of litigation recently. That is a small stream with the water from which I do not think it will be possible for the Government to do anything in the way of increasing the area irrigated, but in order to prevent difficulties and avoid litigation, similar to that which has ruined one or two of the settlers along the banks of that stream, the Government would say that the water is the property of the Crown, and the bed where the water is found is also the property of the Crown. We would propose, on the advice of expert officers, to distribute the water so that everyone would receive an equal share. To-day the man who takes the first draw gets all he wants, and as it goes further down the others receive less in proportion. Two of the settlers interested went to law to determine who was right, and while a decision was given it proved unsatisfactory to both parties, and, so far as I can understand, both the settlers have been practically ruined. We could prevent that kind of thing by an equitable

distribution, and give satisfaction to all concerned, that is, if this Bill is passed.

Mr. Turvey: The Bill will establish their rights.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Quite so. The next point is in regard to the question of leasehold as against freehold. The provision of the Bill is that it shall apply purely to the system of leasehold areas of land which has been repurchased. The Government claim as a general principle that where it is necessary in the interests of the State to repurchase land, it is an unsound policy to again start selling it. This kind of thing has been done in Australia before to-day. Estates have been purchased, and subdivided for closer settlement, and after a given number of years, people have gone on buying until the property has once more become a big estate. We claim that where it is good in the interests of the State to repurchase property, it should not be alienated again, and so enable that same property to again become a large estate.

Mr. George: Do you think you can legislate for all time?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We are not legislating for all time. When the hon. member gets on the Treasury bench, if he ever does, he will be able to amend this measure. Because we pass a Bill it does not follow that we are legislating for all time. We are legislating in the interests of the community, and we claim that the people are behind the Government when we say that the leasehold system should be applied to repurchased estates. Apart from all that, let us look at it purely from the point of view of the land that will be acquired under this Bill. It is generally agreed that it will be necessary, in a number of cases to exercise the right to buy up big areas where irrigation will be possible. Unless we do that, or bring influence to bear on owners to subdivide land, irrigation will be totally impossible. Irrigation is only possible when we have small areas available for closer settlement, and if the owner does not cut up his property himself, it will be necessary for the Government to do so, and in many cases it will be neces-

sary for the Government to do it, so as to ensure a guarantee that it will be done at the right time and in a practical way. Having done that, it would be wrong for us to say that while we purchased land to bring about that desired object, we proposed to put something in the Bill which would bring about the defeat of that object. Therefore, we say that as we shall repurchase estates for the purpose of closer settlement, we should not introduce the system of freehold tenure, but insist on leasehold so as to have a guarantee that the areas will be held in small parcels. The next and the last question is in regard to the regulations. The difference of opinion on this question is purely on the matter as to whether either or both Houses should have the right of vetoing any regulation. The Government claim that if it is right for both Houses to pass the measure, and it becomes necessary under that measure to frame regulations in accordance with it, it should be equally right for both Houses to have a say in the regulations. It is wrong, in my opinion and in the opinion of the Government, to say that both Chambers shall agree to a measure becoming an Act of Parliament, and that one Chamber shall have the right to say whether a regulation shall or shall not apply. If both Houses must pass the measure, both Houses should express an opinion in regard to the regulations. Therefore, we say that we are not agreeable to the proposal of another place that we should allow either House to veto a regulation framed under the Bill. I do not think it is necessary for me to take up much more time of the Chamber. That the measure is urgently required is recognised by all parties, and it is also recognised that the measure is largely in accord with similar legislation to be found in operation throughout the world, and particularly in the Eastern parts of Australia. It is on record that we in Western Australia have areas that are particularly adapted to irrigation and closer settlement. It is also on record that we have a special advantage inasmuch as while we cannot go in for huge schemes, such as have been undertaken in New South Wales, where



many large rivers flow, we can lay claim to the possession of many small streams. We can start one irrigation scheme and make a success of it, and then begin on another, and so we can go on utilising the natural waters for the purposes of irrigation in stages, finishing one before entering upon the next, each one involving small expenditure. Then it has also been proved that in regard to a number of foreign crops, the growth is greater and longer in Western Australia than in any other part of Australia. To show that what we propose is practicable, numerous schemes have already been surveyed, and the details in regard to a number of them are already to be found recorded in the pages of *Hansard*. The Government's sincerity in regard to this measure was evidenced when a commencement was made with the irrigation works at Harvey in anticipation of the Bill passing in 1912. We never dreamt that if we introduced a measure on the lines of legislation which had been found workable in other parts of Australia, there would be any opposition to it. We thought that all parties recognised the absolute necessity for doing something to extend the development of our South-Western lands, and we also thought that everyone admitted that there was need for irrigation. Therefore, anticipating at that time that the Bill would be passed, we went on with the work, but it was seen that it would be dangerous to proceed further in view of the defeat of the Bill. Additional investigations have lately been made, and the engineers have assured me that they can still get on a little further if they can secure the consent of the Government, and then, if the Bill should pass into law within the next month or so, they could finish damming up the creek in that particular place, and water would be available for a part of the Harvey settlement in the approaching summer.

Mr. George: Is that the top dam?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. Taking the advice of the engineers, the Government made money available for the purpose of starting the weir wall. We have not interfered with the stream, because we had not the power, and, I take

it, we would have been subject to an injunction from the settlers had we attempted to do so before the Bill passed. But we brought the wall as close to the banks of the stream as we dared, and when the Bill passes we can complete the work, and dam up the stream at once.

Mr. George: But do you not own the whole of that property?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, we do not. As a matter of fact, even though we bought the land it is questionable whether we could dam up the stream, because, of course, we could not do so without interfering with those below. In any case, it is not worth while going into that phase of the question, because we have not the land referred to. As showing the Government's anxiety to see that we get good schemes established in Western Australia, practical propositions that will give a fair return to those working in the irrigation settlement and also good returns to the State, I may mention that we recently got into communication with Mr. Mead, the eminent irrigation engineer of Victoria, and we asked his Government whether they could spare him to come over here and view the proposition. We did this because we wanted to get the best expert advice on the first scheme, so that we could make of it a thorough success, and thus have an example to be followed in other parts of the State. I regret to say we have received a reply from the Government of Victoria, stating that at the present time it is impossible to spare Mr. Mead. We have again communicated with Mr. Mead, asking whether, if we sent—and we have sent—an engineer to Victoria with a detailed explanation of the scheme proposed by the Government, Mr. Mead will, in writing, express his views on the proposition. I give this information to show that we are anxious to start in a proper way. The only way to do that is to have a proper Bill, and we claim that the Bill submitted will enable us to start in a proper way and get a guarantee from the engineers that the scheme will be successful.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Is Mr. Mead going to advise you on the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, on the Harvey scheme. I wish to explain the difference between the Bill now introduced and the Bill introduced in 1913. I asked the Parliamentary Draftsman to be particularly careful to show where the amendments are placed in order that hon. members may be able to follow them, and so that I can give a guarantee that the amendments which I will proceed to outline are the only amendments that have been made to the Bill since it was introduced in 1913. In Clause 2 the definition of "irrigable" is amended. That was effected in the other place and agreed to in this Chamber. The next definition, that of "Minister" is also amended. In Clause 3, Subclause 3, the words "except the power to borrow money" have been inserted.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What does it mean?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is not for me to tell the hon. member what it means. If he wants to know when in Committee, then I will explain it to him. If he will look at the two Bills, and mark the difference, he will see what it means, and will realise that it was the result of discussion last session.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I cannot be examining two Bills and marking them, and listening to you at the same time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member will mark his Bill in the manner I am outlining he will do his work a great deal better. I would advise him to mark his Bill so that at his leisure he can compare it with the earlier Bill, and see what the amendments mean. The object I have is to assist members in learning where to look for the amendments as made in the Bill of 1913.

Mr. George: Have you decided to borrow money?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. In Subclause 4 of the same clause the words "who may be officers of the public service" have been inserted in place of "being officers in the public service." In Clause 15, Subclause 1, line 6, the words "not less than two years" have been omitted. In Clause 17, "5,000 gallons" is inserted in lieu of "4,000 gallons." This

is an increase in the quantity of water made available. In Clause 23, second paragraph, "6 per cent." has been inserted in lieu of "5 per cent."

Mr. George: Money has gone up.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Clauses 29 and 31 have been redrafted in accordance with amendments made last session.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What is the alteration?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can look it up. My object is merely—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister will not be permitted to make explanations on the clauses.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: My object merely is to save hon. members the trouble of going right through the two Bills and comparing them.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He has done that already.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am directing his attention to it; he must not do it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was endeavouring to point out that I am explaining these amendments merely to save hon. members the trouble of comparing the two Bills right through. It has been stated that we were making a lot of amendments. Under definite instructions the Crown Solicitor has prepared this list, showing where the amendments have been made. If hon. members will mark their Bills they can see exactly where to find the only amendments.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to inform the Minister that by discussing the clauses as he goes along he is departing from the rule governing second readings. It is almost entirely a Committee discussion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I will just outline the amendments, and in Committee we will have an opportunity of discussing them. In Clause 32 certain words have been substituted in accordance with amendments made last session. In Clause 38, Subclause 1, a proviso has been inserted to the effect that lands shall not be rateable if the Commissioners certify that the land is unsuited for irrigation, not until works are constructed from which the board is prepared to supply water.

Clause 50, Subclause 2; clauses are added, resubmitting the proposal to the electors, as inserted by Parliament last session. In line 2 of Clause 60 the word "irrigable" has been omitted, while Subclause 8 has been redrafted in accordance with an amendment made last session. Clause 78 deals with the question I have referred to already, namely, the making of regulations. Those are the only amendments made in the Bill since it was introduced last session. In conclusion I would appeal to hon. members, more particularly those of the Opposition, to assist us to the fullest extent in convincing another place that the Bill is a practicable proposition, and in convincing them that the four amendments which caused the defeat of the Bill last session are altogether too small to defeat a Bill of this magnitude, and that if agreed to, those four amendments would limit the operations of the measure. I appeal especially to hon. members apposite because I know the influence they have with members of another place. They are able to influence them to a large extent for or against a Bill, and consequently I appeal to them that as the Assembly has passed the Bill on two occasions, and has given a great deal of time and attention to discussing and amending it, and putting it in accordance with the opinion of the majority of the Assembly, it is only fair that, the Bill having passed this House twice, the Legislative Council on the third time of asking, should realise that the Bill is in accordance with the desires of this Chamber, representative of the whole of the people, and that, therefore, they ought to permit it to become law. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. Frank Wilson, debate adjourned.

## BILL—MELVILLE TRAMWAYS.

### *Second Reading.*

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister) [5.28]: In moving the second reading of the Bill I wish to point out that it is purely a permissive measure. Under

the Roads Act roads boards have no power to construct tramways. In the Melville Park roads district, at the Fremantle end, the question of extending the tramways into the Melville roads board district has been under consideration for some time.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Electric trams?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Yes. It was at first thought that it might be desirable that the Fremantle and East Fremantle councils should extend their municipal tramway system into the Melville district. But the Melville ratepayers are of opinion that it would be preferable to own their own tramways. The Melville roads district adjoins the East Fremantle municipality. The municipal tramway system is in operation within the boundaries of East Fremantle to within about a quarter of a mile of the boundary of the Melville Park district, and both the Fremantle municipalities have consented to extend the tramways to the boundary if the Melville Park roads board will construct tramways in their own district. Thus both tramway systems would be linked up. This matter has been considered by the Melville roads board and if they have power, subject to the approval of the ratepayers under the Roads Act, to raise money to construct the line they will continue it from the East Fremantle boundary to the Point Walter reserve, a distance of about 2½ miles. The Point Walter reserve is one of the most popular public resorts in the metropolitan area, and a very large number of people visit it during the summer season. The engineer of the Fremantle tramways, who has been advising in regard to the construction of this line, estimates that to construct a line from the East Fremantle boundary to the Point Walter reserve will cost £7,321 which amount includes the purchase of two cars to be run on this line. The engineer has also estimated the revenue which will probably be derived from the line. Hon. members are aware that it is difficult to arrive at such an estimate; the Point Walter reserve is a popular resort for picnickers, but it is largely a matter of guesswork to calcu-

late the traffic which will be carried on the line. The engineer estimates that in all probability the revenue will be £1,629, and the operating expenses £1,597, which will leave a small net profit after paying interest, sinking fund, etc., on the working of the line. This estimate may prove to be too optimistic for the first year of running, but there is no doubt that after the line has been working for a few months the engineer's estimate will be realised. A little while ago there was scarcely any population outside of the East Fremantle municipality. There is a large estate known as the Palmyra estate adjoining the municipality. Five years ago it was subdivided and during the last year or two residences have been springing up all over this area. It is estimated that the Bicton and Palmyra districts, two of the wards in the Melville roads board district, have a population of 800 to 900 people. The Fremantle tramways have been taking the people further out of the town, and consequently a very large and growing district is springing up in this direction. The Melville roads board, in asking for this Bill, thought that the powers under the Roads Act should apply in connection with this measure in that the area to be benefited by this tramline should be liable in the event of it being necessary to strike a rate to provide interest and sinking fund on the outlay. The two wards, Bicton and Palmyra would benefit by the construction of the line, and these two wards alone should be required to meet any deficiency in the working of the tramway.

Mr. Wisdom: Who will get the profit?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The profit will go to the board but I am not looking for any profit for a while. Allowing for the time which will be occupied by the construction of the line and for the fact that for the first year of working will probably not result in any profit, it is proposed that the board should not provide a sinking fund for the first two years. This provision was granted in connection with the Fremantle tramways, and it means that a larger sinking fund will have to be pro-

vided in future years. The Bill stipulates that the sum of money necessary for the construction of the tramways shall not be a set-off in regard to the amount which the roads board are permitted to raise for general works in the district. If the board were limited to borrowing seven times the amount of an average year's revenue, as provided under the Roads Act, and had to pay for the construction of this line out of that money, they would be unable to raise any further funds to improve the district. The unimproved value of the land in the two wards of Bicton and Palmyra amounts to £77,316. The district is progressing in value and population and there is no doubt that the construction of the tramway will make it a flourishing centre. The Bill is purely a permissive measure, as it is subject to a vote of the resident owners of the district in accordance with the Roads Act, and nothing can be done without their approval, and without the consent of the Governor-in-Council. I may inform hon. members that it is also intended to carry a line for about half a mile further along the Canning-road from the present cross road to the Point Walter estate.

Mr. Bolton: Is that necessary?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It is a matter for the ratepayers to decide.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How far does the Melville boundary run?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): Right through to Canning Bridge.

Mr. Bolton: Would not you have to get permission from both of the municipalities in regard to the quarter of a mile section?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The East Fremantle and the Fremantle municipalities have agreed to construct this portion, which will cost £1,945. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [5.39]: I do not wish it to be thought for one moment that I object in the slightest degree to tramway extension in any portion of Western Australia, be-

cause I believe the more facilities we give the general public to travel to and fro, the more the districts will prosper, and the better will be the homes which will be erected. What strikes me in regard to this Bill is that we are repeating the troublesome times we had after allowing the Perth Tramway Company to make differential agreements with the different suburbs. Hon. members will remember how difficult it was to come to any satisfactory arrangement with regard to the suburban municipalities. It was almost impossible to do other than nationalise the service in order to get rid of the numerous small agreements entered into by those municipalities. The extensions to Nedlands and to Osborne Park were carried out by private companies under certain agreements with the Perth Tramway Company. Then there were municipalities like Victoria Park which laid down a line operated by the company, and there was also the case of North Perth and others almost too numerous to mention. Thus Parliament was practically almost compelled to endorse the proposal to nationalise the service. It is now proposed to continue the Fremantle tramway from East Fremantle up the main Canning-road as far as Point Walter and to some little distance beyond.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We cannot go any further. Point Walter is off Canning-road.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Well to the turn-off at Point Walter and some further distance as the Minister explained. I would have preferred, on principle, an agreement between the roads board and the Fremantle council to extend the service into the Melville district so that it would continue to be under one control.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: The existing service is not under the one body.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The system operates in North Fremantle, and the North Fremantle council, I presume, have given running powers and have some representation on the board.

Mr. Bolton: No, not representation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: At any rate, they have given running powers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is leased the same as is proposed here.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: That is objectionable, too. I would rather see the system run by a combined body and a central board than under these small agreements. I am afraid that we shall drift into the same position as obtained in regard to the Perth tramway service and that ultimately the State will have to step in and nationalise the Fremantle service.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It would be a good job for the Government if they did.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not think so. As long as the local boards can manage their own affairs with one central body, it is better than having the State interfering. I would have been satisfied if a greater Perth had absorbed the smaller local governing bodies, and run the service, as I am with the Government running it in conjunction with the railways. The estimates which the Minister has quoted are those of the Fremantle tramways engineer, and cannot be cavilled at. The portion of the district concerned will receive an enormous benefit if the tram is extended from Fremantle as proposed. Homes have sprung up in great numbers—I have marked the difference in recent years—and I am sure that other homes will be erected if the facilities for transit provided for under this Bill are made available. But we have to look at this aspect, that we are largely enhancing the value of private estates. I believe Palmyra estate is privately owned.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There are about 160 houses on it now.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, but a great area is still privately owned and up for sale.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They will have to pay, if necessary.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I would suggest that the owners of the estates who would be benefited by the tramway extension should contribute something towards its construction. We found the owners of the Nedlands Park estate and

the Osborne Park estate constructing their own tram lines, and in this case it is only reasonable to suppose that the advantages of a tram service would be such that the owners of private lands would very largely benefit, and that for these benefits they should make some return. Of course the matter of the sinking fund being postponed for two years is not of very much moment. The main reason, I should imagine, why this was granted to Fremantle, was because of the length of time that it took to construct the service, and before they could get any return from it. I suppose it took all of two years before they could get a proper service running.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): This will take nearly twelve months.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I hardly think it would take as long as that. What the Minister is concerned about, and ought to be concerned about to-night, is to protect the credit of those who find the money for the construction of the service. In my opinion the borrower ought to be hedged around with such conditions that there could be no doubt as to interest and sinking fund being provided for, and, further, that there should be no fear of repudiation. In the case of Fremantle, there was a large asset. The whole city was in fact responsible, and there was no doubt about the matter. In the case of the roads board, I do not know, of course, whether they have much in the way of assets to be realised upon, in the event of the tramway extension not proving sufficiently remunerative to meet the liability upon it. I suppose, however, the Minister will watch that point and see that the position is safeguarded. If that is done there is no reason, so far as I can see, why the tramway service should not be gone on with. Whilst raising no objection to the passing of this measure, I desire to express the opinion that we should try to avoid as much as possible innumerable small schemes, which must ultimately be absorbed by some larger body, possibly the State itself, or perhaps the central authority.

Mr. BOLTON (South Fremantle) [5.48]: I desire to support the remarks of the Honorary Minister who has intro-

duced this Bill. I fully realise that this measure has been looked forward to by the population which has only recently been settled about the point at which it is proposed to terminate this tram line. There is something in the argument of the leader of the Opposition about perpetuating the trouble which existed in regard to the Perth tramway service before the Government took it over. If power is to be given by legislative enactment for this extension it would be better that the local authority benefiting by it should have power to construct within their own boundaries, as was the case with North Fremantle. I would like to say that if North Fremantle had at the beginning of the Fremantle tramway scheme entered into partnership with Fremantle, it would have been in a very much better position now than it actually is. The estimate of revenue and expenditure connected with the proposed service may be correct as given by the Honorary Minister, and I have no figures myself by which to refute it. In thinking that the extension of the tramway service is going to pay its way in the course of twelve months, the Honorary Minister should remember the experience of North Fremantle. In that case a good many months elapsed before there was any question of profit. Indeed, there was some difficulty about making good the deficiency at the start, and it is not very long since it has begun to pay at all.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It pays now all right.

Mr. BOLTON: Oh, yes, it pays now, but it was a matter of paying out month after month before the service actually began to pay. The Palmyra district has been cut up during the past twelve months, and houses have been springing up, one might say, like mushrooms. Indeed, the development there has been little short of marvellous. A large proportion of the land in the district has been sold, but adjoining the estate, there is a good deal of splendid land which, no doubt, will be cut up into blocks when the extension is made. The estimate given by the Honorary Minister for the building of the quarter of a mile of line with-

in the boundary of East Fremantle was, I believe, £1,900, whilst the extension of the half a mile of track beyond the turn-off to Point Walter will cost nearly double that amount, because it is double the distance. If it is only two-thirds of the cost of the original quarter of a mile, it will still cost £3,000 to extend half a mile to the roads board office. At the turn-off to Point Walter, the settled population practically ceases, and becomes very much thinner from that point onwards. That is where the settled district is. Whilst I think there should be a big revenue from the Palmyra district, I think that they will be disappointed if they think that it will not be more than twelve months before the service begins to pay. I do not know whether it is mentioned in the Bill that the tram line shall extend along the Canning-road beyond the turn-off to Point Walter. I realise, of course, that this is only a permissive Bill.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There are no lines mentioned.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They can take it from boundary to boundary.

Mr. BOLTON: If it were to rest with the property owners to decide where the line should go after it had reached the turn-off to Point Walter, I think they would vote down any suggestion to take it beyond the terminal point. It must be recognised that the Point Walter reserve is a place that the public make very much use of on holidays. There does not appear to be any other approach at present than from the water, unless access is provided by means of a road. The revenue derived from the line will be derived to a large extent from the presence of this Point Walter reserve. If there were nothing else beyond the rapid growth of Palmyra and the existence of this water reserve at Point Walter, these two factors alone would be sufficient to justify the extension. In the municipality of Fremantle there are three other lines, only one of which is extended to the boundary of the municipality. In two other directions, there are centres of population towards Spearwood, for instance, where the growth is as rapid as at Palmyra. The population

is growing very rapidly in this direction, and yet, while the question of extending their own service to serve the growing population has not been considered, it is proposed to extend the service into the boundary of the roads board. I want to point out that the tramway board have agreed to construct their quarter of a mile of line to tap the population which is in the roads board boundary. When the extension towards Beaconsfield was made, the revenue began to increase at once, and so great was the traffic that they were not able to cope with it. Further on at White Gum Valley, there is another big population. If permission is given to the Melville roads board to construct the line, the tramway board agree to link it up with the quarter of a mile of line in their own district. It would be a good thing if they would construct two or three other quarter miles of line within their own boundary to serve the population there. I do not object to the extension of the tramway line, but I would like to bring under the notice of the Government that at Beaconsfield and along the Mandurah-road in South Fremantle extensions are urgently required. I hope the authorities will not be disappointed in their estimate as to when the line will begin to pay, and that it will not be long before the population expands in the direction in which the proposed line is going.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister—in reply) [5.55]: In regard to the remarks made by the leader of the Opposition, I wish to point out that the lines in the Fremantle district (even if there are various sections) are owned by the people themselves and not by the private owners as was the case with the trams in Perth district.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The same trouble arises.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): I do not think so. You can deal much better with public owners than you can with private owners. The position is this: the local authority, if so desired, by running their tram line from boundary to boundary, would have

a much larger district than the Fremantle district. There is no doubt that eventually this is going to be a populous suburb of the Fremantle district. With proper railway communication, which will come later, that district should be settled quickly and a very large number of people will reside in it. There is no doubt that some of the private estates surrounding this area will benefit considerably by the construction of the tram line, but if there is any loss on the line, the private estates will have to subscribe something towards the loss. Whether a person resides on his land or not, it is provided that he shall pay rates just as other people would have to do, for he would still benefit by the construction of the line, and from the increased value which would be given to the land and by the fact that he would be in the position of being able to sell his land which he is unable to do at the present time for want of means of communication. There is no doubt that this area has gone ahead because of the low price of land. Here you could get land from £20 to £30 a block, while just across the road they are charging between £40 and £50 for land which is no better than that in the Palmyra estate. As a matter of fact, the workers are going up there, or have been going up there to build their homes during the past two years, with the result that the population has increased about 100 per cent. As a matter of fact, the concern of the Minister for Education now is the provision of adequate school accommodation there. Three years ago there were only some twelve or fourteen children in the Palmyra district under the age at which they could attend the central school in the town. Now, however, there are some ninety juniors attending school at the building in the Palmyra district.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We ought to encourage that district.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): It is a healthy district. This shows how the locality has progressed. The hon. member for South Fremantle has referred to the action of the tramway

board in regard to extending lines within their own area. The board has no power in any way to extend the tram line. The board is limited only to the management of the service, and any extension that is made has to be approved of by the municipalities concerned. The two bodies are themselves elected by the ratepayers. The position is that this area where the half-mile of line is to be constructed is not outside the boundary, but within the boundary of the tramway board. That is that the East Fremantle line will be extended to the boundary in order to link up with the other line.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You are giving very big powers here.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (Honorary Minister): The powers are subject to the vote of the ratepayers. I think you can be sure that when the ratepayers deal with the matter in large numbers, they are quite certain to carefully consider the cost, and to consider very carefully whether this is likely to bring about any increase in their rates. Consequently, when they come to vote, the usual procedure will be followed, and the matter will receive such careful consideration that they will see that the board shall not construct trams anywhere except in localities where eventually, or in a very short time, there will be a payable traffic. This Bill is permissive, and subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council. I thought I would mention to hon. members the lines which are under consideration at the present time. There is the Point Walter line; and there is a line which has not yet been brought forward as a practical proposition, to continue the tramway further along the Canning-road. I believe the ratepayers resident in that quarter are asking for further extension. North Fremantle, as the leader of the Opposition ought to be aware, has a special Act of Parliament giving power to construct tram lines. The North Fremantle line is at present leased to the Fremantle Tramway Board, and that board has running powers which will not expire for about two years. The Bill now before hon.



members gives the roads board the power to lease in a similar manner, if the roads board should desire to do so.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Mr. McDowall in the Chair; Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Power to construct and work tramways:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This clause gives fairly general powers to the Melville roads board to run tramways practically wherever they please. At present they wish to connect the Fremantle tramway system with Point Walter, and no more. Why should it be necessary to give such wide power to construct? The power is subject to the approval of the Government, and Parliamentary approval is not necessary. Recently the Government thought fit to buy the Perth trams, and the rights of the ratepayers were disregarded entirely, the trams indeed being bought for more than their value. Later the Government may desire to purchase the trams to be constructed under this Bill, and the Government may have considerable difficulty in dealing with all the various tramway systems. Will the Honorary Minister say why he thinks it necessary to confer such wide powers, whilst restricted powers will meet the case for the present?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The powers under this Bill are curtailed very considerably. No tram line can, under this measure, be constructed without its first being approved by the ratepayers, who have to sanction the raising of the necessary funds for the purpose under the Roads Act. As a further safeguard to ensure that roads boards shall not incur indebtedness beyond what they can really meet, the Governor-in-Council has power to check them. That is a very important safeguard. For the purpose of borrowing under this measure, the whole of the procedure under the Roads Act will have to be observed.

Mr. Taylor: The Roads Act does not limit borrowing powers, does it?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, it does.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Is there any provision for regulating the tolls and charges permitted under this clause?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have to be placed before Parliament.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not know whether that is so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is provided in Clause 6.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We would not have power to interfere with those tolls and charges. Suppose the Melville roads board stipulated for a sixpenny fare: what power would we have to interfere and to ensure that a proper charge is made? I do not think Parliament could interfere, and I do not think the Government could either. Would it not be wise to insert some provision that tolls and fares shall be subject to the approval of the Governor-in-Council?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That will be dealt with under Clause 6. This clause deals solely with the construction and working of the tramways. Hon. members ought to be aware by this time that local authorities impose only such fares as are sufficient to pay interest, sinking fund, and depreciation. They do not impose extortionate fares. The fare from the Rocky Bay works right to the South Fremantle smelters is only 2d., which is pretty reasonable.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes, but why not have penny sections?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Because the board cannot afford them at the present time. The undertaking must pay its way. Last year the tramways made a profit of a little over £2,000, which is a very small margin on the turnover, and one which a fraction on the fares would quickly wipe out. Prohibitive rates, of course, would stop the use of the tramway. According to the estimate made by the engineer, fares for the Point Walter round trip should be 4d.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Is that from the boundary?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. The fare into Fremantle would be 6d. Operating expenses are worked out at 10 per cent.

for interest and depreciation, insurance, employers' liability—

Mr. Wisdom: Ten per cent. on what?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On the cost of construction of permanent way and cost of rolling stock.

Mr. Wisdom: All round?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I admit there is something in the Honorary Minister's contention that this matter adjusts itself and that no sane body of men would impose prohibitive fares, which would defeat their own object. In Perth, however, the people have for years been wanting penny sections, and have not been able to obtain them even to-day, under Government administration. The people of Perth are still calling for penny sections. The same thing will apply in Fremantle. While I commend what the Fremantle Tramway Board have done with regard to long distance fares, I would prefer to see higher fares for long journeys, with extension of the penny sections. That is why I draw the Honorary Minister's attention to the fact that this clause gives the Melville roads board power to charge anything they please. Suppose the board's regulations were submitted to the House and hon. members objected to the tolls and fares, what would be the result if we refused to approve them? The board could cease running the trams.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why should we be dissatisfied if the ratepayers are satisfied?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The ratepayers will not be consulted.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Melville roads board is elected by the ratepayers.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Not only the ratepayers are concerned, but the people generally who will use these proposed tramways, the visiting public. Most of the traffic will be derived from visitors, and not from the residents. We ought to have some control over tolls and fares, and I suggest that we provide they should be approved by the Governor-in-Council.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. TAYLOR: There is no limit in the Bill to the mileage which can be constructed, and I think it would be well to provide for such a limit, and to arrange for the fares to be charged. The Honorary Minister told the Committee that twopenny fares were charged in Fremantle, when, as a matter of fact, cash fares are 3d. The twopenny fare is only exacted when a person has bought a dozen tickets for 2s.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You can buy six tickets for 1s.

Mr. TAYLOR: Even in Perth the cash fare is 3d., but here the reduction is only to the extent of ½d. when a dozen tickets are bought. There ought to be in the Bill provision for the limitation of extensions and the regulation of fares.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Every Tramway Bill which has been passed has placed no limit on the mileage to be constructed, and has not provided for the fares to be charged. The Fremantle authorities can extend their mileage over any distance with the consent of the Governor-in-Council, and similar power is provided in the Bill before the Committee. The object is to safeguard the ratepayers who have to vote the money.

Mr. TAYLOR: Ever since the trams have been running in Perth the people of the metropolitan area have had a grievance because of the absence of penny fares. The private company who conducted the system always refused to introduce the penny sections, and it was an argument used in favour of the purchase of the system by the Government that penny sections and extensions would follow. We find, however, that we are in the same position to-day as formerly. If similar concessions were being applied for to-day I am certain that more restrictions would be placed upon the applicants than was the case in the past.

Mr. Underwood: But it is not a company this time.

Mr. TAYLOR: I know. We propose to give power to a roads board with the consent of the ratepayers—

Mr. Underwood: To give the people the right to build trams.

Mr. TAYLOR: I would not contradict the hon. member. We were too liberal in the past. Is there anyone here to-day who would consent to power being given to a private company to construct a tram-line from Kalgoorlie to Boulder alongside the Government railway.

Mr. S. STUBBS: The Government are going to run a railway line on the south side of the river shortly.

Mr. TAYLOR: I did not know the hon. member was in the confidence of the Government. If in the past we had had the experience we possess to-day, I am positive that we would not have been so liberal in regard to the granting of concessions.

Mr. DWYER: The hon. member is making a false comparison when he likens the powers proposed to be vested under this Bill to a roads board with those given to a company. A private corporation has no body to be kicked or soul to be damned, while a roads board is subject to the fluctuations of public opinion. The members of these boards have to stand or fall by their policies. There is sufficient safeguard for the public contained in the Bill. The fares to be charged have to be approved by the Governor-in-Council, and all regulations must be laid on the Table of the House.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is surprising to hear the member for Perth talking in this way when we usually hear him say that the members of roads boards are elected on a restricted franchise. I would be content to hand over these powers to roads boards, but it is extraordinary to find the hon. member approving of the proposal. Local authorities should not be permitted to charge what they please, and there may be an incentive to put up the fares because of bad management. In Perth we were promised cheap fares, but apparently we are not going to get them, and the system is no more satisfactorily conducted than when it was in the hands of a private company.

Mr. Dwyer: The present owners of the Perth trams will soon have to go before the country.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I would like to see a proviso that tolls and charges should be approved by the Governor-in-Council.

Mr. Dwyer: That is already provided for. Read Clause 6.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Clause 6 has nothing to do with the case.

Mr. Taylor: All by-laws have to be approved by the Governor-in-Council.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: This gives the board power to prescribe fares.

Mr. Dwyer: Read Subclause 3.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That merely provides that when confirmed by the Governor-in-Council such by-laws shall have the force of law. I doubt if the clause gives the Governor-in-Council power to control the fares. I want to make it imperative that the Ministry shall sanction the charges to be levied against the public.

Mr. Dwyer: It is provided in Subclause 3.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: That is very doubtful. The proper place in which to insert this proviso is the clause we are now discussing. However, I have entered my protest.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It is hard to fathom the anxiety of some hon. members to fix a maximum charge. The tramway is to be owned by a local government body, and such a body is always amenable to those who elect its members. If those members were to endeavour to foist an unreasonable charge upon the people the people would take an opportunity of bringing them to book. Who is the best judge of what should be the charge on a tramway service?

Mr. Taylor: The people who pay the fares.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: Suppose we, who know very little about the local conditions, were to fix upon 3d. as a reasonable fare. It might subsequently become a question of whether the fare should be raised, the number of trams curtailed, or, indeed, the whole system removed. In such circumstances the people concerned might elect to pay a 6d. fare, and, undoubtedly, the people who use the trams are the best judges of what the fare should be. The residents of the Melville Park district are amply safeguarded in the Bill, and there is not likely to be any objection to the fares imposed.

Mr. TAYLOR: Those who are in favour of the clause stress the point that we cannot do wrong in placing the power in the hands of the people. But the Bill does not do that. As a matter of fact it places the power in the hands of the ratepayers, and I venture to say that only about 50 per cent. of those using the trams will be ratepayers, while the other 50 per cent., not being ratepayers, and having no votes, will be unprotected, will have no say in the election of the board controlling the fares. All the power is to be placed in the hands of those who pay rates, and only the people who have votes will be able to influence the board. Hon. members who cry out that the proposed tramway will belong to the people should remember that it will belong to only those who pay rates, while those who are not ratepayers, although they may be the most frequent users of the trams, will have no say in the fixing of the fares. To those people we should give some consideration, and a limitation should be made as to the fares. Every local government body exercises the full power conferred on it. One can protest as much as he likes against rates imposed, but, the local board being protected and safeguarded by an Act of Parliament, that is the end of it. We are asked to give the board power to fix the fares, and it is idle to argue that the board will necessarily deal fairly by the people. The board, like all other such boards, will go just so far as the Bill allows.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister ought to tell us if he has power to deal with the fares.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor) fails to realise that 98 per cent. of the residents of the district are property-owners and ratepayers, and that the members of the board which will control the trams are elected by those property owners. In almost every instance local authorities run their services as cheaply as possible. There is no occasion to fear that in this case the charges will not be kept as low as possible, if only with a view to inducing people from beyond the district to settle in the district. There is no necessity for any limitation on the fares.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We are to give to this body power to run the trams for all time, with full control in regard to the charges. No harm would be done if the Minister retained the power to exercise a control over any charges which may be set against the public.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Receipts and expenditure:

Mr. WISDOM: On the second reading the Minister mentioned that those living practically on the route, and who were likely to derive direct benefit from the trams, would be the only people to be charged with any loss which might be made. It seems an extraordinary provision. Did I understand the Minister correctly?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Melville district covers a very large area, and under the Roads Act a board may borrow money for the improvement of any portion of the district and declare a rate applicable only to the portion benefited by the expenditure.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5, 6—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

## BILL—BILLS OF SALE ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker) [8.2] in moving the second reading said: The House will not expect a long speech on this measure because the Bill was considered at great length last session and was debated almost word for word from the first clause to the last, and it will be familiar with everyone what then transpired. Briefly the measure is the result of a deputation to me from members of the Chamber of Commerce, who desired to procure certain safeguards in regard to bills of sale for those merchants who honestly and openly advanced money on this security. The banks, too, have some doubts as to certain securities more particularly relating to contemporary and future advances. Hon.

members will recollect that Section 31 of the Act of 1889 made a bill of sale void in certain cases, except in connection with present advances, etc. I have no desire to weary the House by reading the whole of Section 31. I only wish to say that the uncertainties in regard to contemporary and future advances is remedied by the present measure. Under the Bill as now introduced, and as introduced last session, there must be a clear statement in the Bill itself as to what amount is advanced by way of an antecedent debt and what the bill covers in the way of a present or a future advance. This is necessary in view of the provisions of Section 35 of the old Act which renders null and void in case of bankruptcy a bill of sale executed six months prior to the act of bankruptcy. We make it clear now as to what the bill actually covers, and we safeguard the borrower and the lender, provided all the other requirements of the Bills of Sale Act are observed. Moreover the Bill substitutes by Clause 7 a new provision more simple and more effective for Section 35 of the Act of 1889. In addition we have preserved in this measure the suggestions which were made by, I think, the hon. member for Katanning (Mr. A. E. Piesse) last year in regard to growing crops. The Act makes provision for giving a bill of sale over growing crops, but it was pointed out that sometimes a settler beginning on a farm could be very materially assisted by those who could supply him with fertilisers and seed wheat; but that the Bills of Sale Act as it stood and as it now stands, made no provision for any security for these agencies lent or advanced to the settler. In other words, anyone who likes to assist a settler by supplying him with seed wheat does so at his own risk. As soon as the crop is sown, a merchant or other creditor can get his bill of sale over the growing crop, and the one who has been the chief instrument in providing all the creditors with funds and who has kept the settler going, is deprived of any security whatever. This Bill makes it possible for a bill of sale to be executed over crops about to be sown, and the Bill will

be of assistance in enabling the Government to assist the settlers to a very much larger extent. The Department of Agriculture at present is doing an immense amount of good to beginners in all parts of the State by granting them seed wheat and other requisites so that they may make a start upon their newly cleared land, but no legal, valid security can be taken for that seed wheat when it is dispatched from the Department of Agriculture to its destination. By means of obtaining this security, I am convinced that much more good will be done to the settler and much more justice obtained to the other creditors of the settler.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Why will it be of much more advantage to the storekeeper and other creditors if the Government take the bill of sale? Why should not the merchant take the bill of sale?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The merchant may do so if he chooses. This Bill will not prevent him from doing so, but it will prevent an unscrupulous merchant or lender from obtaining the first bill of sale and allowing all the other creditors, the storekeeper for instance, to go without any provision whatsoever. At present the Government are actually standing as a sort of safeguard amongst the creditors so that, if all the crop is under a bill of sale to the Government and all the money goes to the Government, it is apportioned out in fair proportion amongst each of the creditors who have assisted the settler in the past year. This is what happens now; but it is not absolutely set out that the Department of Agriculture must take all and be the only one to be possessed of the bill of sale. The storekeeper or the machinery man or any other will be able under this Bill to take a bill of sale over a crop about to be sown. The measure, too, provides that in cases of this kind, the lender shall be able to dispense with the usual notice provided for in the principal Act. It brings the seed wheat, fertiliser, and other interests that help a man to get his crop going into the same category as stock under the existing Act. The measure has a further advantage inasmuch as it enables the borrower to borrow a small sum. Un-

der the existing Act a man must borrow to the extent of £30 before he can give a bill of sale. The small borrower who wants £10 to help him over a temporary difficulty cannot at present give a bill of sale for that amount. He must, forsooth, borrow £30, or he cannot borrow at all through the medium of a bill of sale; he cannot give a bill of sale as security for less than £30. In the other States, particularly in South Australia, we have the example of a simple form of a bill of sale granted for a small sum at a small cost, and thus men have been relieved of temporary difficulties. When a man required £20 he was relieved of the necessity of borrowing £30 and paying £10 back; and under the simplification the farce is dispensed with and a man can tide over his difficulties at very mediocre expense. We provide the form of a bill of sale in the first schedule which is exceedingly simple and brief, and such as can be filled in by anyone without having recourse to the usual lawyer and incurring the consequent legal expense. I have retained in the measure a provision which was inserted in the Bill last session whilst passing through this House for a protection to those who are earning wages. In the same way as the landlord has preferential claims and stands before all other creditors, so this measure makes it possible for the worker to whom wages are owing to have a month's preferential treatment, before other creditors can realise or make a seizure in bankruptcy. I think we may still stand by that in this Chamber. Another great advantage in this measure, and one, too, which will protect the mercantile world and traders generally, is that in reference to unregistered bills of sale. The old Act made it necessary to register, of course, but the unregistered bill of sale is at this moment good and valid, providing that on the day before, or an hour before bankruptcy, you can get hold of the goods that were in the debtor's possession.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Legally?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Legally at the present time, and thus get a sort of fraudulent preference. This Bill ab-

solutely destroys that fraudulent preference.

Mr. S. Stubbs: And quite right too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: For it ante-dates the bankruptcy by three months and the bill is null and void as to goods, that is the unregistered bill is absolutely void, in the possession of the grantor three months prior to the bankruptcy. There are some consequential amendments to this, following upon what I have said, but these are matters more for Committee than for explanation on the second reading of the Bill. I take it for granted that the debates are still fresh in the memory of hon. members, and more than what I have now hinted at is unnecessary. I therefore beg to move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. J. Mitchell debate adjourned.

## BILL—ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

The Minister for Works laid on the Table the plan showing the route of the proposed railway from Esperance Northwards.

### *Second Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. D. Johnson) [8.18] in moving the second reading, said: For the fourth time I rise to present the Bill for the construction of the line from Esperance northwards, for the consideration of this Chamber. One cannot, of course, Sir, have introduced a Bill of this description on three previous occasions without having had placed in *Hansard* a great deal of evidence in regard to the proposition. As with the Irrigation Bill, which I introduced earlier in the evening, I do not propose to repeat the evidence which has been collected at various times in regard to this railway proposal, and which is already to be found within the pages of *Hansard*. I propose, Sir, just to introduce any new matter that the Government have been able to collect since last year. The most important evidence that

we have received on this question, we have obtained from Mr. Sutton, the Commissioner for the wheat belt, who has visited the Esperance lands on more than one occasion. Mr. Sutton, in writing quite recently in regard to the Esperance proposal, stated as follows:—

As a result of the several visits which I have made, I find that though the soil is variable in character, there is a considerable area suitable for the production of payable wheat crops with such a rainfall, as I am informed, the district receives in normal seasons. Railway facilities are, however, essential to enable the wheat to be marketed. The first year I visited the district, the rainfall was good, but in that year the only crops planted were by the old established settlers, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Lewis. As the department was not financially interested in these settlers, there are no official records regarding their yields.

He goes on further to state—

During the next two years, the rainfall was below the average recorded for the district, and at Grass Patch its incidence was not favourable to the wheat crop. Its effect is shown in the small yields of the wheat crops grown by settlers.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Where is Thompson's land?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is at Grass Patch, about 46 miles out. Mr. Sutton states that the results of the crops in the two years referred to were due to the very dry season, and as we know it was dry throughout the State, and this even affected a very large extent of Australia generally, namely in the years 1911 and 1912.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not 1913?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I take it it was for the years 1911-12. This was the driest season we have experienced in Western Australia, and it applied, of course, to Esperance as well as to other portions of the State. Mr. Sutton speaks of the next two years and so he must have included the year 1911, because previous to that he says that they had a normal rainfall. The position as set out by Mr.

Sutton makes it abundantly clear that we have not received from the Esperance land the wheat yields that could be expected under normal conditions. Let me finish what he says, and his statement will show that he takes a general view of the situation and explains, that while the results are not good, what in his opinion is the cause of this state of things. He says:—

These results are not satisfactory, and though the rainfall, which has been below the average, is to some extent responsible, a contributing factor is also the pioneer methods of the settlers. This low average is explained by the fact that most of the settlers are men who have had no previous agricultural experience, and in consequence their methods are crude and not such as will produce the best results under favourable or indeed under normal conditions. In most cases the crops have been put in without fallowing, and in isolated instances where fallowing has been practised, the land is so newly broken up that the mallee suckers have proved troublesome and the wheat plants have to compete with them for their sustenance. Until these suckers have been destroyed the land cannot be considered to be even cleared, and until this is done, normal results are impossible.

He proceeds—

Because the district is a new one, and in the initial stages of development, very few facts regarding its agricultural possibilities are available. I am informed that at Grass Patch, which is the oldest and best developed holding in the district, satisfactory yields have been obtained from this cultivated area over a series of years. As the land in this area is largely typical of the district, in which it is situated, the results which are possible at Grass Patch should also be obtainable on other holdings. It is possible that in the future better results will be secured than in the past, as I understand that it has not been customary at Grass Patch to use fertilisers nor to fallow.

I would like to point out that were we to farm under similar conditions in our eastern districts, as they are attempting

to do nearer Esperance, I am satisfied that our agricultural industry would be in a very sorry plight indeed. I have had some little experience myself of farming under difficulties. I have a holding in what is known as the eastern belt, and I know that in the first year when we attempted to get a crop on new ground, which was not thoroughly cleared, we got nothing in return for our labours. I found that even if you fallow, if you do not break up your land well and keep it cleared you cannot get anything like a profitable return. I have been in the Esperance district and have no hesitation in saying that if the farmers in the eastern agricultural belt were to carry on their farming operations under such conditions their yield would not be any greater than the farmers obtain in the Esperance district.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What are the conditions?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The conditions are these: The land which has been farmed at Esperance is in the mallee belt. The country is loamy and the roots are to a very large extent lifted by the ploughing which takes place. When the mallee roots are left in the ground, the suckers grow, and grow with such rapidity, as has been shown by Mr. Sutton, that they really overcome the wheat in the struggle. We know that in the eastern agricultural belt—

Mr. S. Stubbs: That is so within railway centres now.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the eastern agricultural belt we have had very great difficulty for a number of years in regard to keeping down the suckers from our mallee thickets. On my own farm I know that for several years in succession, I have had to cut down the suckers although I have cultivated the ground each year. I know that I cannot expect to get a crop until I have killed the roots which are left in the ground from the troublesome mallee thickets. I think that the experience I have had on my own place must be similar to the experience of anyone else who takes a reasonable view of the question.

When we realise the difficulties created by this mallee thicket, we can well imagine what it would be like for a man who had a thousand acres comprised of all of that class of country, if he desired to keep it clear. A great difficulty about the Esperance lands has been that the farmers have cleared too much, and that it would not pay them to cultivate it. Something will certainly have to be done to render them such assistance as will enable them to bring it under crop now, and to put into use land which, though once cleared, is now almost overrun. There they are, struggling on under absolutely impossible conditions, hoping that eventually Parliament will do something in the way of giving them railway facilities and enabling them to work their land as it should be worked. As a matter of fact, the crop that was sown the year before I went down was still in the barn in the case of one or two holdings—I refer to those settlers that had sown to any extent. The settlers told me it would cost them more than the wheat was worth to shift it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You promised to take it away for them, and that it should not cost them any more than railway freight to move it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government have carried out all they promised to do. These particular settlers informed me that it was utterly impossible for them to go on cultivating. I immediately said, "If you do not cultivate and use your land now that it is cleared, what will happen? The land will be overrun by the growth from the mallee roots." That is exactly the position on a number of the holdings: the settlers have cleared part of the land, and they have to go on keeping down the suckers because it does not pay to keep them down with the plough.

Mr. George: It looks like doing work to make work.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As the hon. member says, it is like doing work to make work. That is exactly the position of these unfortunate settlers. It is no use cultivating the land because,



when the land is cultivated, it does not pay to put in the crop. There are those settlers, struggling on under hopeless conditions; and hon. members must realise that the fact of those settlers having been there for several years is a proof of the pluck and determination of those settlers. I have no hesitation in saying that in no part of this State have men battled so hard as have the pioneers of the Esperance district. Take the Mount Marshall district, to which railway communication has been authorised by Parliament and to which a railway is actually under construction. How many settlers are on their blocks in that district? Many of them became discouraged after a year or two, although Parliament agreed to give them a railway. On the other hand, in the Esperance district the settlers have gone on slaving in hopes that Parliament will eventually do them justice. Let hon. members compare the attitude of those other settlers with the attitude of men labouring under the same disadvantages at Esperance.

Mr. Harper: The construction of a railway will not make the crops grow.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; but the construction of a railway will make it possible to procure fertilisers. If the hon. member attempted to grow a crop on his farm without manures, he would know that he could get no results; and if he had to cart his manures 65 miles, he would not put in any crop at all. The settlers in the Esperance district want the railway in order that they may obtain machinery and put in fertilisers. Again, I wish to point out that at one time grave doubt existed in the minds of hon. members of this Chamber and of another place as to whether it was possible to conserve water in the Esperance area. Mr. Sutton, however, points out—

With regard to water catchment, the action by the Agricultural Department in arranging with the settlers to put down tanks has proved successful. Twenty-eight tanks have been excavated, and the inspector's report is to the effect that most, if not all, of them have water in them.

I can speak from experience in regard to those tanks. Travelling from Norseman to Esperance, or, say, within 30 miles of Esperance, I observed that tanks have been put down every 10 or 12 miles. I visited the district at the end of February—absolutely the worst time of the year—and I found that in every case the tanks were just about filled and holding beautifully.

Member: What depth would the tanks be?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The average agricultural tank, 2,000 yards by 12 to 14 feet. As a matter of fact, they were tanks that would bear comparison with any tanks I have seen in any part of the State. They have been put down well by Government officers. As I said to the Press on my return to Perth—and I want to repeat it now—the tanks had more water in them, and were holding better, than the tanks in the eastern districts. Indeed, there was more water between 60 miles from Esperance, and Esperance, than you would find in the eastern districts outside the area served by the Goldfields Water Supply. Consequently, any doubt in the minds of hon. members as to the holding capacity of the land for water conservation should be absolutely removed. The Esperance district to-day can boast of possessing a better water supply than a number of our eastern agricultural districts unfortunately have. It has been stated in various quarters that the land is flat, and that consequently there is no possibility of catchment. That is absolutely incorrect. The land is undulating. I took particular notice—and I may say I had an engineer with me—that on every thousand-acre block which we passed a catchment could be found suitable for the excavation of a dam. In other words, the land lends itself to water conservation, and the soil is of a good holding nature. Consequently, the catchment being available on the land, and the possibility of excavating a dam being there, and the land being good holding country, there is no difficulty whatever as far as water supply is concerned.

Mr. S. Stubbs: What timber is there other than mallee?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The wheat belt is entirely mallee. There are miles and miles of it, as far as the eye can reach—for many miles travelling from Norseman to Esperance.

Member: Mallee always looks flatter than it is.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I spoke of catchment being available on every thousand-acre block because I made my observations where clearing has taken place, and where, consequently, I could see whether the land is undulating or flat. With regard to the rainfall, full details are to be found in the pages of *Hansard*, and I need not go into that matter because I have dealt with it so many times. I wish to point out also that last year a sum of money was granted to the Government on the Estimates for the purpose of improving the communication between Esperance and the wheat belt in that district. With the Assistant Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Rolland, I visited the district to see for myself how the money could be best expended. There is no doubt that between the township known as Scaddan, some 30 miles distant from Esperance, and Esperance, there is a patch of very heavy sand, which makes travelling extremely difficult. Mr. Rolland suggested that attention should be concentrated on this particularly bad part. The road, as declared, is in close proximity to the railway, as surveyed, and it was agreed that the better course would be to expend the money granted on the railway, as surveyed, in the hope that the expenditure towards providing road facilities, which we were authorised to give, might ultimately be utilised for the purpose of laying down the railway. In other words, it was proposed by the Government that if we could not assist the settlers in any other way, we should do so by road traction; and in order to afford them road traction we should have to lay down sleepers and a certain quantity of planking, so that they might travel over this heavy sand patch. However, only the grading has been proceeded with; so that if this Bill is passed, the money already authorised may be used towards the construction of the railway.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Have you put this road down?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is being done to-day. We have an engineer in the district who is busy working in the direction I have already indicated.

Mr. George: How many men have you working there?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: About 30, as far as I remember. About 30 all told.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What vote are you charging the expenditure to?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The vote authorised by Parliament, the amount passed under the Loan Bill for the purpose.

Hon. Frank Wilson: For the railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; for the road. We are constructing a road at the present time, but we have hopes that the road work we are now doing will be utilised ultimately in connection with the railway. To put it another way, we are making a genuine effort not to waste the public funds. We think that Parliament must ultimately authorise this railway. It is an absolute shame that the railway has not been authorised before this. As a matter of fact, the Esperance railway is a better proposition by a long way than are a number of railways which have been passed by this Parliament and constructed in this State. The Government think Parliament will take a different view of the matter and pass this railway Bill. That being so, it would be very unwise to build a road which might run parallel to the railway. If we can utilise the money authorised by Parliament for the purposes of the road, so as to assist the construction of the railway, we are doing what is wise, in my opinion. By that means we are serving the best interests of the State, and at the same time doing that which Parliament authorised us to do, namely, to assist the settlers.

Mr. Elliott: What length of line do you propose to build?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I may state, for the information of hon. members, that the length of line proposed is 60 miles, and that, speaking roughly,

in round figures, the estimated cost of construction will be £160,000. Mr. Canning, the district surveyor, who, of course, knows that country well, in a recent report stated that since November, 1913, fifty applications have been made for an area of 10,151 acres in the vicinity of Esperance. Those, of course, are quite recent applications—applications for land that has been made available, I believe, as a result of the action of the Government in resuming pastoral leases which have been held for a considerable number of years by the Dempster brothers.

Mr. George: That is 200 acres to an application. Is that good enough to make a living on?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. That particular country is swamp land, very suitable for closer settlement. As a matter of fact, some of the land I saw in the Esperance district is the richest I have seen in the State, and some of the crops grown on it, potato crops especially, were very big indeed.

Mr. George: This would not be very far from Esperance?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. Within five or six miles of Esperance.

Mr. George: You do not want sixty miles of railway to develop that country.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am saying that that obtains in the vicinity of Esperance, and that it is the result, I believe, of certain resumptions of pastoral areas. This, however, has nothing to do with the wheat belt. The wheat belt is found further out, and the railway is necessary in order that the wheat belt may be reached, although, of course, the railway will develop the other area to which I have referred.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The settlers are limited to 100 acres for swamp land.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: From numerous inquiries he has made, Mr. Canning states he is confident that settlement in the country affected by the proposed railway will be considerable and rapid. Of course, there is no settlement now, because a few years back the whole of the land was reserved from settlement. The present Government have taken up

the attitude that until we can give settlers some guarantee that they will obtain railway communication within a reasonable time, we have no right to encourage them to go on the land. We know, of course, that a considerable area has been selected; and, as I have said, the settlers have been on their areas for three or four years, and in some cases longer.

Mr. George: Does Mr. Canning think that all along the 60 miles there will be continuous settlement?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. There is no question that the wheat belt extends 60 miles. There is absolutely no doubt about that.

Mr. George: It is all wheat land?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, with the exception of the area in the vicinity of Esperance. As a matter of fact, there are people who state, and I am prepared to agree with them, that further than 60 miles northwards of Esperance there will be wheat grown and areas of land selected. It will be remembered, however, that the Advisory Board which reported on the matter suggested that the railway be limited to 60 miles from Esperance; and the Government have adopted the suggestion of the Advisory Board to that extent. On the first occasion we proposed that the line should be built from Esperance to Norseman; but Parliament did not see its way clear to endorse that recommendation of the Government. Then we altered our proposition from Esperance-Norseman to Esperance-Northwards 60 miles, as recommended by the Advisory Board.

Mr. Elliott: I notice on the chart that the rainfall is given as 25 to 30 inches. Is that at the end of the 60 miles?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At the extreme end the average rainfall runs into about 14 inches, and the fall during the growing season compares more than favourably with that in the eastern agricultural districts. I am pleased to say that there has been another development at Esperance, in regard to the salt industry. This has been struggling for some time, but owing to the amalgamation of the company with another in South Australia where their supply had given out,

that South Australian company have taken over a portion of the Western Australian company's shares, and the result is that a larger number of men is being employed at the salt lakes. Recently some 2,000 tons of salt were exported to New South Wales and Queensland, and a further 2,000 tons are being shipped this month. The industry is increasing in importance, and when it is realised that 40,000 tons of salt per annum can be obtained from these lakes within a reasonable distance of Esperance, and at not a great distance from the proposed railway line, hon. members will admit that there are great possibilities so far as the industry is concerned. I want to draw the attention of hon. members to the fact that Mr. Drew, the Colonial Secretary, who is an authority in regard to the possibilities of this land from an agricultural point of view, did not entirely put forward his own views after having paid a visit to the district. He placed a report before the Government and it was submitted by me to Parliament last session. This report outlined what had been done in the district by the individual settlers. Hon. members will find on reference to *Hansard* that I dealt exhaustively with the report in order to prove that it was sufficient evidence to justify Parliament in authorising the construction of this railway. Since that time I have had the pleasure of visiting the district, and I can declare that the report presented by Mr. Drew is conservative in regard to the estimate of the possibilities of the Esperance lands. I was agreeably surprised with what I saw there. I had not been to the district before, but I had read a good deal about it, and had interviewed various officers, and although I was fully convinced that the proposition which I had already placed before Parliament was sound and worthy of support, I had no idea that the possibilities of that part of the State were as great as I found them to be. As I have already stated the land is undulating and a considerable portion of it has been cleared. I regret to say that too much has been cleared, and that it is impossible for the settlers to keep down the suckers. I was agreeably surprised to

find that there were many settlers at the various centres, and that the gatherings compared favourably with those I had met in some of the eastern agricultural districts. When we got to Scaddan, quite a number of people were present to meet us. Scaddan is 30 miles from Esperance, and Grass Patch is 15 miles further on. There too we were met by another body of settlers, and in fact we met some between those two places. We accepted their hospitality and learned from them what they were doing. It was marvellous to find what good heart those people were in. Naturally, we found that they were disappointed with regard to the attitude of Parliament, but they all declared that the land was so good that the time must come when members will have to realise their responsibility to that part of the State, and give them the facilities they must have to enable them to farm successfully. There was a pleasing feature associated with that trip of mine, although it had its pathetic side. At one settlement we found a mother with her daughter, the latter having been a school teacher at Boulder. The family, including the husband, had gone there from Boulder, and had battled with what little money they had been able to save. It was found, however, that farming under the conditions existing there was difficult, if not impossible, and ultimately the husband decided to go back to work on the mines, leaving his wife and daughter to continue the labours on the land. When we visited the farm the daughter was engaged in attending to the horses, feeding and yoking them up and doing the ploughing, while the mother assisted. They had put in a crop and had harvested it. That is the class of settler we found down there, and when we see what women are prepared to do under difficult conditions, it can well be imagined what men would be capable of doing. In spite of all the disabilities under which the settlers in those parts have worked, what has been done compares more than favourably with what is to be seen in other and more favoured parts of the State.

Mr. S. Stubbs: How many settlers are there there?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I should say that at the present time there are between 50 and 60 in the vicinity of Scaddan and Grass Patch, and of course a number of them have been there for a considerable time. Some have battled right through while others have remained for a time and have gone back to work at their original callings, holding on to their blocks, to prevent their forfeiture, and waiting for railway facilities to be given them. I am awfully sorry that we cannot take members down there to see the district. It is undoubtedly good country, and not only has Mr. Sutton declared it to be suitable for wheat growing, but other officers have also similarly referred to it. District Surveyor Canning has reported on it. Surely members will agree that Mr. Canning is some authority on the possibilities of land for wheat growing and general agricultural settlement.

Mr. Elliott: Is that the Perth district surveyor?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. He has said that the district is good, and he has urged that railway communication should be given, and has declared that the construction of the line is absolutely justified. Hon. members can take the report of any authority they like. Even the member for Northam does not dispute the fact that there is good wheat growing country there. The hon. member has stated in this Chamber over and over again that it is possible to settle that land successfully from a wheat growing point of view.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I said it was good.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member has not denied the fact that it is wheat growing land, and that it is possible to farm successfully there. I gathered that from the hon. member's remarks on more than one occasion. I would appeal to hon. members to assist the Government to carry out this work. Why is it that the settlers at Esperance are denied that which is given to others in districts which are not so good? There is no question that the Mount Marshall country is not as good as that at Esperance; the rainfall is not so good as that at Esperance; and yet the settlers at

Mount Marshall, though they are not so badly situated as those at Esperance, have left their holdings, and, in spite of the fact that we have promised them railway communication, they are not going back. Yet Esperance has battled under serious disabilities.

Mr. Harper: What about the salt in the soil in the Esperance district?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: How can there be salt in the soil when in all the excavated tanks fresh water has been obtained?

Mr. Harper: There are salt lakes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: And there are salt lakes at Meckering, and not many miles from Northam, and it has not been shown that they have done any harm from an agricultural point of view. If the salt lakes around Esperance, as the hon. member believes are likely to do some injury to the soil, what about the lakes around Cowcowing or at Three Springs.

Mr. Broun: The best corn land is always in lake country.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the Esperance district there are one or two fresh water lakes in what was formerly pastoral country, and this is now being settled in small areas for the purpose of intense culture.

Mr. Harper: What about Mr. Paterson's suggestion that the land should be tested?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The land has been tested. Why do some hon. members take up a different attitude in regard to Esperance from that which they adopt concerning other districts? I am convinced that if conditions prevailed at Mt. Marshall similar to those existing at Esperance, the same results would not be obtained at the former place. Whenever Bills for the construction of railways have been introduced in the past no one has ever advocated that experiments should first be conducted in order to find out what the country was capable of producing.

Mr. Harper: There has never been any doubt in regard to other lands.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Why should there be any doubt so far as Es-

perance is concerned? Esperance has a better rainfall, and the land is admitted to be better than in some of our settled districts. It is mallee country, and the member for Pingelly should know what that land is capable of producing. The settlers in Esperance are doing as good, if not better, work than was ever done by pioneers in other parts of the State, and they are holding their land under worse conditions than land was ever held in the eastern districts.

Mr. Harper: They have not produced more than three bushels down there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member knows well that in some of the eastern districts in one season we did not get one bushel. In my own case I did not get a single bushel. What is the use of saying that the Esperance railway is not justified because down there they only got three bushels? Have we not built railways where they did not get a bushel at all? Why take up this hostile attitude towards Esperance, when it has been proved beyond doubt that the Esperance proposition is sounder than some of the railway projects which have been passed by this House and the Legislative Council. Of course I know that members of this Chamber have never shown any great opposition to this project. The measure for the construction of the line has always passed this House by a large majority, and I trust that on this occasion the Legislative Council will see that justice is done to the Esperance settlers. It is an absolute crime to leave those people in the isolated position they are in to-day labouring under great disabilities. It is wrong to put them there unless reasonable prospects of success are held out to them, and it is wrong to allow them to remain there without railway communication. This is the fourth occasion on which this Government have asked Parliament to pass the Bill authorising the construction of the railway, and I trust that this time we shall be successful. I commend the Bill to the favourable consideration of members. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [9.0]: I am sure we must all be fairly tired of the Esperance railway question. In every session the same old suggestion is brought forward to construct a railway from Esperance northwards. We have had many attempts made by the Minister and his colleagues, first of all to carry the line right through to Norseman, and eventually, when that did not receive the approbation of both Houses of Parliament, to construct a line 60 miles northwards from Esperance. We are told this is going to open up a wide district of wheat-growing land. The Minister tells us there is sufficient information in *Hansard* to convince us that on this occasion we should pass the Bill. On four different occasions members on this side have refused to pass the Bill, because we do not believe the country has been sufficiently tested to warrant the large expenditure which would be incurred on the line, and the increased expenditure which must be incurred if the people down there are to export their produce through Esperance harbour itself in order that they may tap the markets of the world. We are now asked if we intend to continue to refuse the people who have settled in the Esperance district railway communication, why did we ever allow them to go on that land? Speaking from memory, so far as the Liberal Administrations are concerned I say we never induced anyone to go on to the supposed agricultural areas in the Esperance district.

The Minister for Works: You never closed it from settlement as we did.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We absolutely refused to encourage anyone to go on that land. Our friends opposite have encouraged people to go there times out of number. The Attorney General, who represents that district, has visited it, and on many occasions made promises that a railway would be constructed. The Minister for Works has also done the same. Indeed, it is a portion of their goldfields policy, and I am safe in saying it is a compact between them and a certain gentleman who runs a newspaper in Kalgoorlie. This is the price of the sup-

port of that newspaper, and the support of different members from the goldfields who represent electorates in and near the district.

The Minister for Works: That is a miserable insinuation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is a fact, and not an insinuation at all. It is an absolute fact, and is patent to everyone but the Minister himself.

Mr. Foley: This is a good place in which to say it. You would not say it outside.

Mr. Harper: Yes he would.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then the Minister goes down there, notwithstanding that on four occasions the Bill has been rejected, and he takes—If the member for Leonora would bark as loudly in the streets as he barks in the House he might get some response and some attention.

Mr. Foley: His bite sometimes hurts you.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: He has never learnt how to bite yet. The Minister goes down to this electorate, and notwithstanding that Parliament has had sufficient reason to refuse to sanction the construction of the line, he flouts the decision of Parliament, and says, "Well, I have a vote for a road, and I am going to make, at any rate, the first preliminary move in the construction of a railway. I am going to spend this money on a road which will ultimately merge into a railway." And thus he faithfully obeys the decision of Parliament that for the present no line shall be constructed in that portion of the State. When last we debated this matter, we were told to look to the Colonial Secretary's report. Indeed it was read out to us almost *in extenso*, the report of a trip which he had made from Norseman to Esperance. I am again speaking from memory when I say he took 48 hours to make the trip of 120 miles or thereabouts. Yet he came away, after having been received at Esperance, fortified with full information to enable him to get up this expert report and convince Parliament that the proposals of the Government were all that was correct, and in the interests of

the whole of the State. The Minister to-night has once more referred to this report by Mr. Drew.

Mr. Elliott: Mr. Drew is a new convert.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I pointed out last session that Mr. Drew had for years condemned the proposal, publicly and in his newspaper, the *Geraldton Express*. Of recent years, however, he has been brought under the whip and made to swallow the policy of the Labour Administration, whether he is convinced that it is sound or otherwise. It reminds me of another famous report which was made by the Minister for Works himself, and for which the country is now suffering pretty extensively. I refer to that memorable trip to the North-West. The Minister for Works travelled up there to convince himself that we had cattle in sufficient abundance to feed the whole of the people of Western Australia, and to feed also the teeming population of the islands lying off our north coast. He condemned the freezing works proposition. Chilling works were no good; we did not want them in Western Australia. We should export cattle on the hoof, he said.

The Minister for Works: That is as incorrect as your statements usually are.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Well, what did you say?

The Minister for Works: You quote what I said.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Very well, I will give it to you. I know the Minister has denied it since. He has a very short memory, and he credits everyone with having as short a memory as his. The other night he denied that he had condemned the freezing works at Wyndham. Here is his report. It is a very extensive one. He says, referring to those islands—

That market is unlimited, and the price that can be obtained for the stock, considering the quality of some of them, is as much as could be paid for such stock for freezing or canning. I would recommend that no expenditure be incurred in connection with freezing or canning works, but would strongly recommend that the Government take

an early opportunity of having exhaustive inquiries made as to the possibility of extending the trade to the islands mentioned.

That is exactly what I said, almost word for word.

The Minister for Works: It is not.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The report continues—

I recognise, however, that there are a number of people who consider the freezing of meat in the North-West would reduce the price to the consumers in the South. This no doubt would take place, provided the consumers in the South would consent to eat frozen beef, but I am of opinion that there would be little or no demand for that produce in these markets.

Mr. Underwood: On a point of order. I contend this has nothing whatever to do with the Bill before the House. We are dealing with the question of building a railway for Esperance, and not with selling cattle at Kimberley.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am waiting for the hon. member to apply his remarks. I did not desire to anticipate him in their application. I will give him a reasonable opportunity.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Thank you. It is an old rule in Parliamentary debate that we can illustrate our arguments. I am illustrating the absolute nonsense of asking the House to pass a large expenditure on the report of a member of Cabinet, the Colonial Secretary, and I am pointing out by way of illustration how erroneous was the report of the Minister for Works in connection with the North-West on a memorable occasion when he visited that portion of the State. He has denied my assertion with regard to his report, and I have quoted it.

The Minister for Works: I have denied the construction put upon it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Of course the hon. member puts his own construction on it. He has put several different constructions on that report already, and he will probably put another yet. I attach just as much importance to the Colonial Secretary's report in regard to Esperance and the project of building a

railway northwards from Esperance, as I do to the report of the Minister for Works on the North-West and our cattle industry, and the problem of cheapening the food supplies of the people. He it is who will be responsible for our losing, when we shall have lost it, a good portion of our trade to the Northern Territory; responsible for the blocking of the building of freezing works at Wyndham; and the Colonial Secretary in turn will be responsible for plunging the country into a huge expenditure of public moneys and for encouraging further settlement in an area which has not been proved, that is, if we accept his report and pass the Bill on that report, as the Minister for Works would have us do.

The Minister for Works: What about the expert officers' reports?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We are dealing with the expert report of the Colonial Secretary who has never been on the land in all the years he has lived in Western Australia. I give him all credit for being a son of the soil and a West Australian born, and for wishing to do the best he can for the State; but he is not an expert agriculturalist, and to ask us to accept his opinion on a matter of this sort is purile and childish. Mr. Drew is a literary man, a journalist, and has been so all his life. He may have an orchard around his house growing some fruit, as the Minister interjected last session. So have we all, but what do we know about the great agricultural pursuits of the country, from a practical point of view? Even the Minister for Works does not know anything about it. He says himself he has been farming and has not obtained one bushel to the acre from his farm. The sooner he gets rid of it or puts in a manager the better. It is a good farm, I know, for it is in a good district and close to the railway.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is all very interesting, but it is not relevant.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I submit we can discredit the grounds on which we are asked to pass the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the hon. member is not discrediting the grounds. He is dis-



cussing the Minister's farm. I want him to discuss the Esperance railway.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am discussing the ability of the Colonial Secretary to report as an expert on the prospects of that portion of the State, and I say unhesitatingly that the member who would be influenced by a report made by Mr. Drew—without any offence to him—on the agricultural possibilities of any portion of Western Australia would be doing wrong, just as much wrong as they would do if they depended on a personal report from myself. I do not profess to know anything about agriculture, and I would be sorry to go over the country, write a report and ask Parliament to construct a railway line of this description on such a report.

Mr. McDowall: You are throwing them all aside and taking the Minister's report.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We have had two or three extracts from a letter or an alleged report by Mr. Sutton. I do not know whether it is a report or a letter.

Mr. Harper: He does not recommend it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: He does not go so far as to recommend it. He says, as Mr. Paterson said years ago, that undoubtedly we have a large tract of country which, if proved, will be an immense wheat growing area.

Mr. Underwood: How will you prove it without a railway?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Mr. Paterson laid down how it should be proved.

Mr. Harper: By growing wheat there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: By growing wheat there and showing that it is capable of sustaining closer settlement and that those who are established there will not court ruin and disaster. The Minister told us that Mr. Sutton says the rainfall is sufficient for wheat growing. No one has disputed that fact. Even Mr. Paterson, in earlier reports, admitted that the rainfall was all right; but he cast some doubt on the holding capacity of the ground, and thought that the porous nature of the ground was against

successful wheat growing. But Mr. Paterson did not condemn it, and no one else has done so. All that Mr. Paterson said was—"Prove that this is good wheat-growing land and then go ahead with your expenditure." But we are asked, before any proof has been given, to countenance this expenditure, and a very large expenditure it must be. There will be 120 miles of railway, and the 60 miles to commence with will cost, I suppose, £150,000.

Mr. Harper: The Minister gave it as £160,000.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then it will be necessary to provide rolling stock and workshops because this will be a separate railway system; therefore it must cost considerably more than any other portion of the railway system which is connected with the capital and the port of Fremantle. In addition we must look forward to considerable expenditure on the harbour. It will not be of any use to build the first section of the railway and encourage people to settle in the district unless we are sure that they will be very large producers. They must be able to grow an average of 10, 11, 12, or 14 bushels to the acre, and build up a huge export trade. We must first be sure of this.

Mr. McDowall: Where did we have 14 bushels to the acre?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It was the average for the whole of the State last season and I hope we will get a similar average this season. We have to look forward to the expenditure of anything from £350,000 to £500,000. It will just about be equal to the deficit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Are you including ships too?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No sufficient ground has been advanced to lead us to alter our opinion of last year and on previous occasions with regard to this Bill. The results have not been satisfactory. Mr. Sutton admits this, but he instanced two dry seasons. Will anyone tell me that the results will be any better than they have been during the past 14 years. I notice they have been in the same posi-

tion for at any rate the last five years. The *Statistical Register* gives the following returns for the season 1912-13:—Wheat, 918 acres under crop, average return per acre 3.2 bushels; oats, 19 acres under crop, average return per acre 6.2 bushels; barley, 10 acres under crop, average return per acre 6.1 bushels; peas, 2 acres under crop, average return 18 bushels. Of wheaten hay, 1,458 acres produced 681 tons, or under half a ton to the acre; of oaten hay, 227 acres produced 151 tons, or an average of 14 cwt. per acre. The combined yield of wheaten and oaten hay from an area of 1,685 acres was 832 tons. Will anyone say that this is a payable proposition which will justify a large expenditure of money?

Mr. Harper: They would starve on it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: On many occasions, figures have been quoted right back for 14 or 15 years since the first settlement took place at Grass Patch. The first settler was quite content to get any yield he could procure because he could command his own price. He settled there in order to provide fodder for the teams which carried goods between Esperance and Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie. He did very well even if he got a yield of only a ton per acre. He obtained a good price and made money. It is strange that the original settler has eased off in his production during late years. His production has not gone on increasing and, notwithstanding what the Minister may say, even according to Mr. Sutton's report, the settlers in this district have not done anything approaching what might be termed well during the last year or two. Mr. Sutton states that this is due to two dry seasons. I admit that this district would suffer in common with other portions of Western Australia from drought, and naturally we might expect the yield to be reduced considerably as well as in other parts of the State. But these settlers have not done well even during the last season. During last season they got a return of 4.2 bushels per acre. This is not a payable proposition; it is not a living pro-

position for any man; and this in face of the fact that the Government promised to take their produce on the main road; in other words they put the settlers in the same position as if the railway had been constructed. That promise was made; the Government were to cart seed wheat and fertilisers for them, and I am told they did so and the result is four bushels to the acre. If this is satisfactory to the Government and to the Minister for Works I cannot say that it is satisfactory to me. The Government actually agreed to take the settlers' produce on the main road.

The Minister for Works: That is the extent of what we promised. We did not promise to cart fertiliser.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Government promised to deliver fertiliser to them.

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then the Attorney General made the promise. He put the settlers in exactly the same position as if a railway had been constructed.

The Minister for Works: As far as taking their yield was concerned.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And carrying their fertiliser.

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Anyhow, what does the fertiliser amount to?

The Minister for Works: Put in a crop at Kellerberrin without fertiliser and see whether it amounts to three bushels.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: But what does the carriage amount to?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Three pounds per ton.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And how many tons are used? About 50lb. to the acre.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The additional rates, therefore, cannot be very heavy.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: What additional rates?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): On fertilisers.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They are only about five times as much as we used to charge.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They cannot have much effect if that is all that is used to the acre.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If a farmer paid £1 for the carriage of his fertiliser before, he is charged £5 now. The difference is only 500 per cent. I am not sure whether the Esperance settlers got any fertiliser last season.

The Minister for Works: Mr. Sutton says they did not.

Mr. Harper: Why did not they?

The Minister for Works: Would you cart it 60 miles? You are too fond of the bawbees for that.

Mr. Harper: Then I would not put in a crop.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I cannot understand why these settlers did not get any fertiliser last season, because on a previous occasion—I think it is stated in the report of the Colonial Secretary—they used 35 lb. to the acre which gave a yield of three to four bushels to the acre. I can quite understand that the result is not satisfactory but I cannot understand Mr. Sutton explaining it away by the inexperience of the settlers. The same inexperience which has characterised these poor people in the Esperance district has characterised a goodly number of the settlers in other agricultural districts. It is not altogether inexperience, although inexperience counts for a good deal in the first years of one's career whether on the land or elsewhere. It is not altogether inexperience which has prevented these people from succeeding; it is more because they have been induced to take up an impossible proposition. If we pass this measure without further proof of the possibilities of the Esperance country, we will not only grievously injure those who are already there but hundreds and perhaps thousands of others who will be induced to settle there. I do not for one moment wish to argue that this land is no good; I do not for one moment wish to argue that this will not prove to be excellent wheat growing country; but up to the present it has not proved to be such, and we as reasonable and sensible men, safeguarding the interests of this country, are not justified

in passing this Bill merely to pander to the whim of the Government who have pledged themselves up to the hilt to construct this line. Why was Mr. Sutton sent down there? Why was not Mr. Paterson sent there? Mr. Paterson was the man who went through the district and whilst saying that possibly it would prove to be all that was desired, yet recommended caution. He is the head of the big financial institution belonging to the State which finances the settlers on our lands.

Mr. Harper: He had good reason to recommend caution.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: And yet Mr. Paterson and his co-trustees bar this district for advances of public money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They would bar any district outside of a railway.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They do nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They do.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: All the country settled in our time was open to receive advances from the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): No, it was not.

Mr. Turvey: Under Ministerial direction.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The trustees of the financial institution of this State have refused to advance the bank's funds on the security of this land, as they are not satisfied that it is a safe proposition.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Because it has no means of communication.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No means of communication! Why the Minister for Works has given the settlers the equivalent of a railway. He has promised to take their produce on the main road; nay the Government have gone further and have given these settlers all the privileges of the Agricultural Bank for they have advanced them out of departmental votes money on the same terms as the Agricultural Bank would advance on this land; so that the settlers down there have had

the opportunity, whether they have taken it or not, of borrowing money from the Government in the same way as any other settlers in any other portion of the State have had of borrowing from the Agricultural Bank.

The Minister for Works: No, they have not.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They have had the opportunity, but they have taken very little advantage of it, because they have done very little work. The Minister knows that this is so. I proved it last session when we were discussing the same thing. The public accounts showing the expenditure of the Agricultural Bank will prove that some thousands of pounds have been advanced to settlers in that district.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They do not say that they have had the same opportunities.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They have had greater privileges and opportunities. They go without any proper inspection to the Minister and get advances. Why have we not got a better report? Why have we not got a large number of people settled down there? The Minister said last year that there were about 50 settlers between Grass Patch and the locality surrounding that place and Esperance. To-day we have still got 50 settlers down there.

Mr. Harper: They grow wheat with sprinklers down there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The same old settlers I suppose, still being buoyed up by these promises of the Government, that they are going to have half a million of money spent on the district to give them railway facilities and what not, and make their fortunes in time! But what difference is the railway going to make to them? These settlers can only produce four, five, or perhaps six bushels to the acre. Will all the railways in the world make this a successful venture? We are told, if we accept the statement, that we are to have an application for 10,000 acres from 50 people for some of the land near Esperance.

Member: They say they have some good swamp land down there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I admit that there may be some very good swamp country in and near Esperance, country that will grow potatoes and other vegetables galore. It is like that wonderful orchard that the Colonial Secretary reported upon at Esperance, when he spoke of the possibilities of fruit growing in that locality. I venture to think that no railway will help the potato growers in the swamp country around Esperance. No railway construction will help the Chinese to market their produce, or even help the orchardists. We have got a State steamer running between Albany and Esperance at the present time. All this class of produce must be sent to the most populous centre nearest to it, and Albany is the most populous centre nearest to Esperance. With a State steamer running, those who like to produce vegetables and other produce at Esperance can send their goods to Albany. If the Government wish to go one further, they can do as they are doing with the North-West, carry the produce at a loss on the State steamer and so encourage the growers.

Mr. Foley: I thought you would finish up with that.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: We are told that there are salt works down in that portion of the State, employing a large number of hands and producing a large quantity of salt. If they are not producing it now they are said to be capable of doing it, and I think the Minister said they can produce 40,000 tons per annum. I knew of a great many salt centres in Western Australia where you could get all that quantity of salt if you could find a market for it. Surely the Minister is not serious when he suggests that we should build this railway on the grounds that there are salt works at Esperance. These salt works are situated not more than a couple of miles out from Esperance, and if they were such a good undertaking, it would be very easy for them to put down their own line of tramways and take the salt direct to the ocean and ship it by sea. This salt must all be sent away by ship. It is not going to pay to

freight it from the six-mile point on the railway, and even if the railway were built through to Norseman, no one would think of sending salt up that way. They could not afford to pay the necessary railway freight on salt. If the railway were constructed, I venture to think that these people would not send their salt by it.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They would send their potatoes by rail.

The Minister for Works: Where do you get your two miles from?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I had it from a gentleman who has been down there and seen it. He had measured the distance pretty well. You can take it by the map if you like.

The Minister for Works: The hon. member handles truth awkwardly like some other politicians.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Make it five if you like. It is a short distance, anyhow. It is not 50 miles. I got it from the hon. member for Northam, who is as good a judge of distances as the hon. Minister.

Mr. Foley: He went down at night time.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Honorary Minister said that no advances have been made. I have the accounts here. These show that for the financial year ending the 30th June, 1913, £5,583 had been advanced to the settlers in the Esperance district. Of this amount £3,451 was debited to the settlers on account of general advances, and the balance represents seed wheat, fertiliser, and legal charges, etcetera. So you see that seed wheat and fertilisers stand out pretty prominently as accounting for the expenditure of about a couple of thousand pounds. There must have been a fair quantity of fertiliser sent down, and yet the yield was no more than it had been previously. I was pointing out that we are asked to depend upon the Colonial Secretary's advice contained in his report, but that we should not be asked to build a line because of the fact that in and around Esperance the land will grow vegetables and fruit. The man

who has that magnificent orchard in Esperance has every facility for getting his fruit to market, greater facilities, in fact, than some of our own fruitgrowers on the Great Southern and the South-Western railway have at the present time. The Esperance orchardists can pack their fruit and cart it down to the wharf, place it on a steamer and carry it by water even that short distance, whereas the fruitgrowers in other centres have to ship by rail a long distance to a port. There is no hindrance at Esperance in the way of fruitgrowing so far as any lack of railway facilities is concerned. I have shown that there is no hindrance at Esperance so far as vegetable and potato growing is concerned, and I submit to any practical man that we are not justified in building the railway because of certain salt works which are adjacent to Esperance and within a very few miles of it. Unless we can get something better than this from the Minister hon. members will not be justified in voting for this measure. I want again to tell the House that Mr. Paterson, who, with his trustees refused to advance Savings Bank moneys and who reported, on I believe two occasions, in connection with this proposition—

The Minister for Works: Mr. Paterson promised advances to the settlers and I would like to know who prevented him from giving them.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: He did nothing of the sort.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He did. It is in writing.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I say that Mr. Paterson refused to make these advances, and I challenge the Minister to apply to Mr. Paterson to find out from him whether or not he is prepared to make the advances. I think that Mr. Paterson was perfectly justified from his experience in refusing these advances. Why has he not been sent down again? He is a man who is to be trusted—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Is not Mr. Sutton good enough?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: No. He has not had anything like the experience.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He is the smartest man in Australia.

Mr. George: He has not the experience of Western Australia.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am not prepared to take any man's opinion against that of Mr. Paterson so far as Western Australia is concerned. Mr. Sutton has given some reports and he wants this bit of land developed. He himself would not pit his experience against that of Mr. Paterson if you asked him.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you suggest that Mr. Sutton has reported in accordance with the wishes of the Minister?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did not say so at all. I say that the Minister would use Mr. Sutton's report in support of his desire to see the railway constructed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That is one of the good appointments you made of a man who knows his work.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: There is a very great difference between throwing doubt upon an official and upon a Minister.

The Minister for Works: That is a nasty insinuation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Minister is quite capable of using the report to fit his Bill.

The Attorney General: That is an imputation of dishonesty against the Minister.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did not say so, but if the cap fits the Attorney General, he can put it on.

The Minister for Works: More dirt.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is just a reasonable retort to the Attorney General.

The Minister for Works: It is neither reasonable nor clean.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It is both a reasonable and a clean retort to the Attorney General when he chips in like that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must discuss the Bill.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If the Attorney General does not interrupt, I was pointing out that Mr. Paterson in his report recommends caution, and on very sound grounds. Mr. Paterson has had a lifelong experience of Western Australia in all its difficult phases of agricultural pursuits. His experience and character are such that no one could gainsay his recommendations. He may have made mistakes at times, of course.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He made one this time.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not think he made any mistake on this occasion. No one would say that he was not honest in his expressions of opinion.

The Minister for Works: He was no more honest than any other Government servant.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am dealing with the Minister, and not with Government servants. I never attack Government servants. I attack Ministers. They are the men that muddle and upset things, and mix things up and spoil everything. They spoil the meat trade. The Colonial Secretary is going to spoil this district if we pass the Bill on his report. The Treasurer has spoiled the finances of the country. Everything is spoiled.

Mr. George: And the Attorney General has spoiled the law.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: They have muddled along from beginning to end, and yet they go on interfering. If the Ministers would, instead of chopping and changing about, stick to a good and reputable man when they have him, they would get along better. Let them stick to Mr. Paterson and send him back again to Esperance and say, "Go and spend a week or two there, instead of only 48 hours. Examine the district carefully and see what has been done down there. We maintain that so and so has been the result of our efforts. Notwithstanding this, you would not advance the bank's funds, so we have advanced the State funds from the Agricultural Department. Go back there and tell us whether you are right or wrong, and whether you are justified now in modifying your views and in taking up this attitude in regard to

our expenditure of money there." If Mr. Paterson comes back and says, "Yes; build your line; you are all safe," I, for one, am prepared to cease all opposition to the measure. It is said that the mallee country is a detriment to the settlers. We know, however, that mallee country can be settled and cleared much cheaper than our forest lands or salmon gum country can be. In the case of mallee country there are some difficulties in regard to roots, but still the total expenditure is not so great as in the case of timber country; and I do not think it is fair to argue that mallee country is more difficult than any portion of Western Australia in this respect. People account for the bad results that have been obtained, by the want of water; but these 20 tanks that have been put down are a point in favour of the Esperance country. Those tanks are holding water, which fact goes to show that the ground is holding ground to some extent. That ought to be taken into consideration. But I say again, that the proper man to come back upon for a report is Mr. Paterson.

The Attorney General: Is he the one living man?

Hon FRANK WILSON: Yes, he is the one living man in connection with this scheme. It was on Mr. Paterson's recommendation that this land was not opened up. It was against Mr. Paterson's recommendation that the Attorney General and his colleagues induced the people to settle there—those people now on the Esperance land starving and appealing to the Government for help.

The Attorney General: It was you who put them there.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I did not.

The Attorney General: Well, I found them there.

Hon FRANK WILSON: The Attorney General did nothing of the sort. He found some old settlers who went there of their own initiative, who went there to select without survey, as they could do in any portion of the State. But the Attorney General induced far more people to go there. The people were warned by my colleague the late Minister for Lands, that they could not get any assistance

if they went into that district. They went there at their own risk, in the first place. But the present Minister induced others to go.

Mr. Harper: They went there as a speculation.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Outside of those who went for speculative purposes, the poor people who are actually on the land are suffering because they have been misdirected, badly advised, by members of the present Administration.

The Minister for Works: You put the people there. You do not want to make mis-statements.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I have told the Minister that he is not speaking exactly the facts.

The Minister for Works: I am speaking absolute facts. We reserved the land from settlement.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: How is it you have settled it, then?

The Minister for Works: The settlers there are the men you took the money from.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The argument seems to be that because the present Government reserved the land from settlement, they want money to build a railway to assist the settlers.

The Minister for Works: Because you put the settlers there, and took their money, too.

On motion by Mr. Price, debate adjourned.

## BILL—FREEDOM OF MARRIAGE.

### *Second Reading.*

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [9.49] in moving the second reading, said: The principle of this Bill was approved by the House last year, and therefore is familiar to hon. members. The object of the measure is to prevent employers generally in this State from restricting the marriage of their employees, and the Bill is particularly directed at banks and other financial institutions and companies, and also at Government departments which in the past have had regulations preventing their em-

ployees from marrying. Hon. members will remember that last year Mr. Holmes, the manager of the Western Australian Bank, when giving evidence in the Arbitration Court, said that the rules of his institution prevented employees from marrying without the approval of the bank authorities. In the *Federal Hansard* of the 19th November, 1912, is to be found a number of statements from other banks showing clearly that the general practice of financial institutions, as well as of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, and of similar employers, is to forbid their employees to marry except by permission. As regards the amount of salary adopted by the Western Australian Bank and many other financial institutions as the minimum for a married employee, namely £200 a year, I wish to point out that a large number of Australians never receive a salary of that amount. Further, it is pointed out in the *Federal Hansard* that numbers of bank clerks after working 10, 15, and in some cases 20 years do not receive £200 per annum. It is clear, therefore, that while the operation of such a regulation continues, some men have no hope at all of ever getting married. I am sorry to think that such a regulation exists. I am sorry, further, to find that the regulation is not confined to private institutions, such as banks and companies. Until lately, a similar regulation obtained in connection with the police force of Western Australia; but I am pleased to state that the present Colonial Secretary (Hon. J. M. Drew), on having his attention drawn to the matter, decided to have that regulation cancelled.

Mr. George: There is no restriction on this Chamber, is there?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I wish there was a restriction on the inane interjections of the hon. member.

Mr. George: But there is no restriction on getting married here.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I wish to point out also that in the Education Department of this State at the present time women teachers are bound to resign on entering the matrimonial state. This particular question has been before the law

courts in the United States for a number of years, and eventually the Supreme Court there decided, after endless litigation, that such a regulation was against the Constitution of the United States. If this Bill becomes law, the existing regulation of our State Education Department will also be overridden and annulled in this respect. I regret to note also that the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, an institution to which we should look to set an example to other banking institutions, has to-day a regulation restraining its clerks from marriage without permission unless they are in receipt of a certain salary. That regulation also will be annulled if this Bill becomes law. I desire to mention that I have had opportunities of discussing the matter with several leading bankers and with men high in the commercial world, and that I find their sympathies are entirely with this proposed new law. The bankers themselves wish this Bill to be carried, so that bank directors may be stopped from imposing the restriction on their employees. The bankers themselves regret having to make inquiry into the social and financial standing of the girls whom their employees desire to marry, as is necessary to-day, when permission is sought. Now, when this Bill was before Parliament last year, it was not only passed by this Chamber, but was approved by the Upper House the first time that it was considered by that conservative Chamber. However, some influence got to work after the measure was approved. Some influence was brought to bear from St. George's-terrace, with the result that when the measure came up for the third reading in another place it was recommitted and this proposal rejected. It is to me an extraordinary thing that the wealthy financiers of St. George's-terrace, and the members of the Upper House who on this occasion obeyed the wishes of the financial institutions, that these people who are always advocating immigration into Australia in general and into Western Australia in particular, who profess a desire to fill this country and see it populated, should yet endeavour to prevent, and use all their influ-



once to prevent their employees from getting married in a human manner. Those bank directors and those members of the Upper House have a lot to say, at times, about the sanctity of the marriage tie; and yet we find members of the Upper House throwing out this desirable reform and so preventing certain uninfluential members of this community from entering into the noble and patriotic state of marriage. It is a good thing that these people should show themselves in their true colours, that we should have this proof that the Upper House of Western Australia, as constituted last session, was prepared to refuse the ordinary working people of this State even the right to marry. Many of the employers who are represented in the Upper House, we have always known, have been prepared to sweat the bodies of their employees; but their action in causing this Bill to be thrown out last session shows clearly that the Liberal influences in the Upper Chamber are prepared also to starve the souls of certain employees by refusing them the right to marital companionship. I want the people of Western Australia to know that although this is supposed to be a free country, the opposition of another place to every measure sent forward by this Chamber has been so bigoted as not to stop short of even denying to West Australian employees the right to get married when that right could be exercised with safety for the future, by the young persons concerned. To my mind it is a most unfair position that any section of young people wishing to get married should have to go cap in hand to the bank or to the boss asking for permission to enter the marriage state. The Parliament of Western Australia is clearly justified in legislating on this subject, and in affirming once and for all the principle that employers are not to dictate to their employees as to the disposition of the private lives of those employees. Certainly it is against public policy that the existing restrictions against the marriage of young people should be allowed to remain. The Labour party stands for freedom in this

instance. We are desirous of freeing these young people from obnoxious regulations, and I hope that this measure will be carried and that this Parliament will confer on all employees liberty to please themselves as to how they will work out their future lives and destinies.

Mr. Underwood: The regulation is not only obnoxious; it is immoral.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I agree with the hon. member on that point, although I did not mean to refer to that phase of the matter. The Bill provides that the averment of the complainant shall be accepted in the absence of proof to the contrary, in the case of a prosecution for the dismissal of an employee. That provision was inserted last session at the instance of the member for Perth (Mr. Dwyer), and I insert it again in bringing forward the Bill this session.

Mr. Elliott: What clause is that?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Clause 5. The Bill also provides for a fine of £500 against a financial institution if it continues to enforce the existing regulation against marriage. I do not think there would be much necessity to take proceedings because bankers are a very law-abiding section of the community, and if we put this measure on the statute-book I feel sure that its provisions will be observed by them. Another provision is that the alternative to a fine imposed by the court shall be three months' imprisonment. It is also provided that the Bill shall not apply to religious orders. The Press of this State have been very generous in their endorsement of the proposed reform, both the *West Australian* and the *Kalgoorlie Miner* having published leading articles approving of the action taken by this Chamber in the matter last session. The suggested reform also attracted considerable attention abroad. The Government of New South Wales have written to the Government of this State for full particulars of the Bill, with a view of its introduction in that State, and I have in my hand a copy of the London *Daily Mail* of 6th December, 1913, in which appears a leading article on this subject. I would like to read it to the House. It is headed,

"The Right to Marry," and is as follows:—

The Parliament of Western Australia is to be congratulated upon a wise act in passing a law which punishes with imprisonment employers who prohibit their employees from marrying under pain of dismissal. This practice is all too common in certain spheres of employment and professions, though the most superficial observer can understand its mischief to the community. Thus in the United States a succession of law suits has been required to establish the right of women teachers in the public employment to marry without forfeiting their positions. But if Australia is to become the home of a large white population—and only thus can it be held in the long run for the British flag—further action is needed. There is to-day a custom of importing British labour without what is commonly called the "encumbrances" of that labour. Workers are induced to immigrate into Australia, leaving their wives and children in this country. It may, of course, be the fact that employers are in a large measure to blame, but if so legislation to forbid discrimination by them against labourers with families is urgently needed. The matter is one for the Australian people themselves to decide, but now that one of the States has taken this forward step it may be hoped that the other States will follow with even broader and more generous measures.

I am sure it must be gratifying to us in this Parliament to know that even a leading London newspaper regards the proposal as of sufficient importance to mark it with its approval, and to urge other of the British Dominions to follow the example the Parliament of Western Australia has set. The Government of Western Australia have instituted a workers' homes system with the view of helping young people, and yet we find some employers trying to prevent young people who are satisfied that they can safely do so, from marrying in order to take advantage of that beneficent Workers' Homes Act. There are other phases of the question I

would have liked to bring forward in this Bill. For instance, I would have liked to introduce a provision that an advertisement for an employee "without encumbrances" should be regarded as illegal, and that the newspaper publishing the advertisement should be penalised. I felt, however, that in this short session it was inadvisable to bring up principles which had not already received the approval of this Chamber. Last year the Government accepted this Bill unreservedly, and the leader of the Opposition gave me his support, and I thank him for it. Therefore, in the present short session, I have merely introduced the same short provisions over again in the hope that they may pass without opposition, and that the reform will be put on the statute-book without further delay. The Bill simply aims at giving every person in Western Australia the right to marry if they wish to do so, and when they wish to do so without the loss of their employment through that action. It is a Bill simply to give employees the right to guide their own futures, to decide their own lives, and to enter into the marital state when they think fit to do so. I am sure the measure will commend itself to the Labour party in particular, and to members of this House in general. I beg to move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Mr. George debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.*