

the board the complete power which Parliament intended to give them and which, by inadvertence, was given only in respect of a railway. Because, of course, the extension of a railway, although not specifically set out in Subsection 7, would be the construction of a new railway. Otherwise the Cue-Big Bell line is merely an extension. If it were a main line, it would be submitted by the Minister to the board before being submitted to the House. So I ask the House to accept this short measure, and I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Works, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.12 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 1st October, 1936.

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

BILL—FREMANTLE LITERARY INSTITUTE MORTGAGE.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Temporary provisions for relief from rent on account of drought:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Holmes and other members, when speaking on the

second reading, asked me to approach the Minister for Lands to ascertain whether it would be possible to make the provisions of the Bill retrospective, owing to the fact that there had been a severe drought extending, in some districts, over six years. I referred the matter to the Minister, as requested, and he regrets that it is impossible to accept an amendment to that effect. He points out, however, that amongst those entitled to consideration under the measure are a number of pastoralists who have already paid their lease rents. They have paid £44,000, and there is approximately £16,000 outstanding from pastoralists, who are usually very prompt in paying. The Minister gives an undertaking that those who have paid will receive consideration when the second half-year's rent becomes due. He regrets that it is impossible to go further, mainly because the great majority of pastoralists have paid their lease rents in the past, and, in order to give the relief suggested by Mr. Holmes, the Government would have to make refunds of cash, which they simply have not got. I understand that the Bill meets with the full approval of the Pastoralists' Association. I assure members that the Minister for Lands is sympathetic and that if he can see any way in which he can reasonably give more assistance, he will be quite prepared to consider the matter.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I recognise that the Minister for Lands and the Chief Secretary are sympathetic towards the pastoralists in the difficulties with which they are faced. But for that, I would have moved an amendment to achieve what I had in view. I realise now that the effect would be to create a difficult position for the Government, who, on the showing of the Chief Secretary, have already gone as far as they can go, seeing that those who have paid their first half-year's rent will receive consideration when the second half-year's rent becomes due. I do not desire to pursue the matter any further at this stage. I am satisfied that in the circumstances the Government have gone as far as they can go. Still, I believe that next year something more will have to be done to meet the difficult situation in which the pastoralists are placed, and I hope that the Government will then be in a position to provide further assistance to this well-deserving section of the community.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Government might consider making a further amendment of the Land Act. When the original measure

was before Parliament, the rents of the leases were fixed on the basis of wool at 12d. per lb. During a number of seasons previous to the measure coming into operation, wool brought a low price and the pastoralists were able only to pay their way. Just after the measure came into operation, the price of wool rose and the pastoralists had to pay increased rents. When the Bill was under consideration, I believe we advocated that the basis should be 15d. per lb., so that there would be a reduction in the rent when the price of wool fell below 15d., and an increase when the price was higher. I should like the Minister to consider that point and see whether the Act can be amended to make 15d. the basis instead of 12d.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—CUE-BIG BELL RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. C. G. ELLIOTT (North-East) [4.46]: By this Bill the sanction of Parliament is being sought for the purpose of the expenditure by the Government of a sum amounting to £60,000 to build a spur railway line from Cue to the Big Bell Gold Mine. The warrant for the proposed expenditure is that the company now owning the mine have since December 1932 been testing the property by shaft-sinking, cross-cutting, driving, sampling and diamond-drilling at a cost of about £100,000.

Hon. L. Craig: Have the company spent that amount already?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: Yes. The company are now prepared to make an arrangement with the Government pledging themselves to erect a modern, up-to-date power and treatment plant capable of dealing with 30,000 tons of ore per month, the cost of the plant being estimated at from £400,000 to £450,000. The question arises whether the inducement offered by the company to the Government is sufficient to warrant the expenditure of £60,000 on the construction of a line from Cue to connect with the Big Bell Mine. Having regard to the history and development work of the company for several years past, and to the excellent report given on the property by the State Mining Engineer,

Mr. Wilson, I personally have no hesitation whatever in stating that I consider the expenditure of the sum of £60,000 for the construction of the railway to be fully justified.

Hon. L. Craig: Can you estimate the life of the Big Bell Mine?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: I shall state presently what is the quantity of ore estimated to be at present existing. I know of no mine in Australia which has had the advantage of such a thorough investigation of its ore body and contents as the Big Bell has had. The ore body possessed by the property is in many ways unique. It has an average width of 80 feet, and this is maintained both in length and depth in a most remarkable manner. At the 250ft. level it has been driven on for 1,000 feet north and south of the shaft and still maintains that wonderful width of over 80 feet. It has been tested by bore holes down to 690 feet, and the same wonderful width is still maintained. Similar remarks apply with regard to consistency of values. Hundreds of samples have been taken and thoroughly checked, and the values are maintained marvellously, no matter where taken. From the surface practically down to the 690ft. level values are highly consistent. The value of the ore body appears to be between 3dwts. and 4dwts. per ton. According to the investigations of the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, the extractable value can safely be said to be about 3dwts. per ton. Further, from the experiments made at the Kalgoorlie School of Mines, it is inferred that no treatment troubles will be experienced in connection with the ore. It is considered that an extraction of 92.5 per cent. can be obtained, which of course is very good indeed. As regards the available tonnage of ore, I will quote from a report made by Mr. Wilson, the State Mining Engineer, which is contained in the report of the Department of Mines for the year 1925—

A block of ore 750 feet long by 650 feet deep by 80 feet wide, which on the information available is a reasonable supposition, would produce 3,000,000 tons of ore, assuming 18 cubic feet of ore to weigh one ton. This amount of ore mined at the rate of 30,000 tons per month, or 360,000 tons per annum, would last 8 1/3rd years; and it is satisfactory to note that similar values may be expected below that depth.

That represents a wonderful start for the mine. It is claimed by the company that 14s. per ton will cover all costs, and that with gold at the price of £8 per ounce a profit of 10s.

per ton will be obtained. The treatment of 30,000 tons monthly, representing the capacity of the plant, will thus yield a profit of £15,000 monthly on the 30,000 tons treated. No doubt it can be argued that the price of gold, now standing in the vicinity of £8 per ounce, may experience a considerable fall. However, that is purely a matter of opinion.

Hon. A. Thomson: Assume that the price of gold comes down, what becomes of the profit then?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: That depends on how much the price comes down. If the price falls below £8 per ounce, naturally the profit will not be so great. But in this connection the case of the Wiluna mine must be borne in mind. That mine, moreover, is a different proposition altogether, as it is treating refractory ore.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: On present estimates, the life of the mine will be eight years, and it will take the company the first three years to get their capital back assuming that the price of gold remains what it is?

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: Yes.

Hon. L. Craig: There will be about £10,000,000 worth of gold in the mine altogether, on the estimated tonnage.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: In connection with the Big Bell proposition it must be remembered that the company operating it happen to be a wealthy company, with quite a few million pounds behind them. Thus there will be no share-hawking in connection with the property, which is intended to be a success in low-grade mining. As the Wiluna mine set out to treat only 30,000 tons per month and is now treating 50,000 tons per month, I believe I am justified in assuming that history will repeat itself in the case of the Big Bell mine. It is only natural to assume that when the Big Bell proprietary get going smoothly, it will not be long before they duplicate their plant, and probably, instead of treating 30,000 tons monthly, they will be treating 60,000 tons, since they have a wonderful ore body to operate on.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: At that rate, the life of the mine will be only four years.

Hon. C. G. ELLIOTT: But there will be developments all the time as the shaft goes down. At the end of three years the shaft will probably be 1,000 feet deep. Still, all that remains to be seen. I was dealing with the question of the possibility of a fall in the price of gold. After all, up to date there has been no evidence of any likelihood of the

price of gold falling in a pronounced manner. On the contrary, all the evidence that we have leads us to assume that if the price of gold alters it will be in the direction of a rise. In connection with this aspect we have to consider that during the last few days France has decided to devalue her franc, which means that she has gone off the gold standard. Now she has linked up with the British Empire and the United States. In certain quarters it has already been suggested that the linking-up of France with those two great commercial nations will mean something highly important in connection with the goldmining industry. It is stated that there is a possibility that the joining-up of France with Britain and the United States will result in stabilisation of the price of gold. If that is so, it will certainly be of very great benefit to the mining industry. It will mean that a lot more capital will come into the industry. I was discussing the matter with a London mining investor in Kalgoorlie a few months ago. He is connected with one or two of our important mines and he considers that if gold can be stabilised somewhere in the vicinity of the present price it will be an enormous advantage to the goldmining industry because mining investors able to put from £100,000 to £1,000,000 into a proposition would have no hesitation in doing so if they knew that on a given date the price of gold would be fixed, for they would be able to figure out the prospects of making a success of their investment. I consider that the expenditure of £60,000 by the Government in putting down the line is certainly justified and I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.3]: I would like to associate myself with the hon. member in supporting the Bill and I am confident that all members will concur with the remarks that have been made. I recently had an opportunity of visiting the Big Bell Mine and listening to views about its prospects propounded by the superintendent, and it seems to me to be one of the most romantic ventures in gold mining that has been attempted in this State. I have been looking through "Hansard" and was struck by a remark made by the Minister for Mines (Hon. S. W. Munsie) when introducing the Bill in the Lower House. He stated that if the company proves that such a huge low-grade proposition can be profit-

ably worked, it will have done something of vast value to the State. Mr. Elliott has just compared the margin of profit of the Big Bell Mine with that of the Wiluna Mine and has mentioned the fact that although the margin of profit is in favour of Wiluna, the method of treatment or the advantages of treatment are in favour of Big Bell. That is undoubtedly the case. The superintendent of the mine assured me—he gave evidence, as a matter of fact, before the Licensing Court there recently—that the method of treatment provided no problems whatsoever to the mining world. It was estimated by people at Cue who were in a position to express an opinion, and by responsible officers of the mine, that within a short time there will probably be a township of between 1,000 and 2,000 people at Big Bell. Big Bell, as members know, is between 18 and 20 miles from Cue and it is confidently hoped that between 300 and 400 men will be constantly employed at the mine. The company proposes to duplicate the treatment plant which is at present being installed and which will provide for the treatment of 30,000 tons a month. If that policy is put into operation, a great number of men will be employed and it would be very difficult to estimate to what extent the township at Big Bell will grow. As I said in my opening remarks, it conjures up very hopeful visions of what might eventuate. We all realise there is nothing like mining to bring prosperity. We have had ample and concrete proof of that in recent years and we have the glorious example of Wiluna before us where some thousands of people are living under good conditions and directly or indirectly supporting other industries of the State. We also have the spectacle at Lancefield where a purely low-grade mine is employing 300 men who are responsible for keeping many hundreds of others employed. It is intended by the Government to expend the comparatively moderate sum of £60,000. This in itself will provide immediate employment and will bring about the utilisation of materials largely manufactured in the State. That moderate expenditure is secured by an agreement which, members will see if they read it through, is very secure. In consequence of that expenditure approximately £400,000 of overseas money will be spent in the State by a very reputable mining company with apparently almost unlimited resources. The company will tackle a big mining venture which, up to

the present time, has almost been beyond the dreams of those associated with the industry. If this company succeeds, as I am sure we all hope it will, it will be a wonderful asset to the State. I am sure members will commend the steps taken by the Government in entering into this transaction and will wish the company every success in its venture. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading.

HON. T. MOORE (Central) [5.10]: I have been pleased to listen to the support the Bill has received from the members who have already spoken. All have been in agreement with the idea. I have known this mine for many years. I knew it when an attempt was made to work it, with gold at £4 per ounce, and I realise what possibilities there are now as compared with those of the past. At that time a small company—it was a syndicate with obsolete machinery—ran the mine for quite a while. They said that if they could have continually kept the machinery going they could have shown a profit when gold was £4 an ounce. The trouble was that, being a syndicate short of funds, they had to buy secondhand machinery. This machinery was old-fashioned compared with the machinery it is proposed to put on the mine to-day, and one can therefore readily understand the possibilities there are of the mine being a success to-day. Somebody asked by way of interjection what would happen if the price of gold were to fall. Let us face that position; let us assume that it will go back to £4 an ounce. We must realise that the Big Bell Company intend to instal an up-to-date plant for the treatment of the ore, and I reiterate, knowing what was done in the past with obsolete machinery, I feel positive that even if the price of gold did go back to £4 an ounce—I have no fear in that regard—this mine would continue to work. The machinery would be there, and it would be the company's loss if they removed it; therefore it would be for them to keep it at work. As far as the proposition itself is concerned, I feel certain that for a good many years the Big Bell mine will be an acquisition to the State. With regard to public works, we know that the Government experience difficulty in justifying the employment that has to be found for the large army of unemployed that we have to carry. That is a very serious matter. The State has not been accustomed in the past to carry so many

men on public works, and so from that point of view, the construction of the railway to the Big Bell is a good proposition. Further, with regard to the employment of 500 men at the mine, as Mr. Heenan has said, that will mean the establishment of a town which will carry 2,000 or 3,000 people, and we must realise, too, what a great responsibility will be taken from the Government from the point of view of having to provide employment. Again, realising as we do what Wiluna has meant to the back country, where the town consists of a population of about 7,000 people, we must also remember that the people there have many requirements which have to be provided by other people in other parts of the State.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are keeping another 5,000 or 6,000 people in other parts of the State.

Hon. T. MOORE: Exactly. In the expenditure of £60,000 on the proposed railway, I see a very good investment from the State standpoint, and as regards the port of Geraldton, it will mean a great thing for the people in that part of the State. We want to see all propositions of this nature in the Murchison worked, while the going is good. Now is the time when we want to give every encouragement to companies of this description. I hope no member will suggest that this is a risky proposition. I, who have known the mine so long, who know its possibilities when worked with up-to-date machinery, have no doubt what the Big Bell will do for the Murchison and the State in general. I support the Bill.

HON. E. H. ANGELO (North) [5.16]: It is pleasing to hear the encouraging anticipations of the Chief Secretary and other speakers. After reading the agreement contained in the Bill, I feel that the Government have done a wonderfully good stroke of work. Only one point concerns me, namely, to see that the agreement is watertight in every compartment. Some 18 years ago when I was sitting in another place a Bill very similar to this was brought down to ratify an agreement made with a company that was said to be very wealthy. This Bill was for the construction of a railway from Waroona to Lake Clifton. I want every step taken to see that there is no leakage in this particular agreement. So long as there is no leakage, and we can be certain of that, any member who objects to the Bill will show very poor business acumen.

Hon. A. Thomson: Are these people not putting up a bond?

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I am coming to that. We were told by the Premier and Attorney-General of the day that the company for which the Waroona-Lake Clifton railway was being built was a wonderfully rich one. They were quite satisfied about the proposition, and the legal advisers said that the agreement was perfect, and that Western Australia could not lose a penny over the transaction. Those anticipations were not realised. The business did not turn out as good as was expected, and finally when the State had to pull up the line a dead loss of from £60,000 to £80,000 resulted. We must be careful to see that this particular agreement is in order. We are told that there is to be a bond of £50,000 and that it will be put up by a reputable company, an American concern. We are told that the matter has been referred to legal authorities in America to ascertain if the bond is in order, and we are informed that it is. Is there any security for that bond? Is there anything beyond the fact that we are told that the Government have been informed that this is a wealthy and reputable company? Who has given that advice? We do not know who has given it. If I am satisfied that the bond is worth £50,000, and that the money will be forfeited if the agreement is not carried out by the company, I shall require to know no more. I shall be only too glad to support a Bill of this nature but I should like to have some assurance on that point.

Hon. A. Thomson: We had an assurance in another place over the Lake Clifton railway.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: Yes, the assurance of the then Premier and the Attorney-General. I think the later was one of the company's solicitors. We were told it was a solid company, and there was no question about its stability, as we are told is the position here.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: The company has already given evidence of its good faith by spending many thousands of pounds, and machinery is now on its way to the mine.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: If that is the case, why ask for a bond of £50,000? If the Government are satisfied, the assets already in Western Australia should cover the expenditure of £50,000.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: It is an additional security.

The Chief Secretary: It is asked for on the principle that you are advocating, that we should be very careful to see that everything is all right.

Hon. E. H. ANGELO: I should like to see something behind that bond. There was nothing behind the bond we got before, and we lost by the transaction. I am not opposing the Bill; I hope it goes through. I trust that the anticipations of previous speakers will be fully realised, because I know what it means to the State. I ask the Government to be careful, and see that on no account do we have a recurrence of what happened 18 years ago.

HON. G. W. MILES (North) [5.20]: I support the Bill. The State is very fortunate in having a company such as this one to operate the Big Bell mine. It will be a wonderful asset, not only for the district concerned, but for the whole State to have a mining corporation of such standing prepared to come into the industry, and not asking the public for any money, as many other companies now operating in Western Australia have done. These people spent £100,000 in testing the mine before exercising the option. They have now exercised their option, and are satisfied as to the values and the life of the mine for the next six or eight years. I feel sure this enterprise will be of great benefit to the whole community. I hope the Bill will go through without any opposition. Wiluna has proved a wonderful asset for Western Australia, and has helped us through the depression. It has often been said that the primary producer carries five other people on his back. If the Big Bell proposition goes through, as I feel sure it will, and as further ore reserves are created, it will mean work not only for the people around Big Bell, but for many others in Western Australia. The people of the State do not fully appreciate the value of the gold-mining industry.

Hon. A. Thomson: Yes, they do.

Hon. G. W. MILES: There was a time when they did not. The primary producer was the man, and no one else, who carried the State on his back. I am sorry there are not more metropolitan members present to support this measure. As for the bond, I think these people have already shown their bona fides. If no bond were put up, the Government would be justified, after the

development that has taken place, and on the report of the State Mining Engineer, in going on with this railway. We have had railway Bills before us that I have opposed, and will oppose again. The ex-Chief Secretary brought down a Bill for the Yuna-Dartmoor railway. I said that was only a matter of giving the Government an opportunity to borrow more money. We also had the Southern Cross-Southward railway. That was a case of "You vote for my railway, and I will vote for yours." Parliament should not have passed many of the railway Bills that were passed.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Including the Marble Bar line?

Hon. G. W. MILES: That was in existence many years before I entered Parliament. That, too, will justify itself notwithstanding the croakers we have in the South concerning the North.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [5.25]: I am not an expert in mining matters, but I feel justified in saying that this is a proposition that is going to meet with success. In view of the remarks that have been made this afternoon, I wish to give a little information I was not in possession of when I moved the second reading. The whole of the capital, £400,000 to £450,000, is to be provided by the company or companies that are interested in this venture. There will be no public issue of shares, which indicates that these people are particularly pleased with the prospects. They have already spent £104,566 on the mine, and of this £31,031 has been spent this year. The average expenditure for June and July of this year was £11,400 a month. At present 183 men are employed, and as the plant and buildings, etc., are completed, and the development proceeds, so will the number of employees increase. Ultimately the mine will be employing 500 men or more, and it will mean the creation of a township that will contain about 2,000 people where only a little while ago there were no people at all. Wiluna has meant a lot to Western Australia, and I think the Big Bell will mean just as much. Indeed it may mean more, because if it can be shown that this low-grade proposition of three weights to the ton can be worked, we know there are other gold bearing areas in the State also of low grade, which perhaps can just as readily be worked as the Big Bell. The remarks of Mr. Moore on the subject of re-

lieving the Government of the necessity for finding money for relief works, were very apt and to the point. No industry absorbs men more quickly than the mining industry. Generally speaking one can say that most of the money spent in the industry, after the machinery has been installed, goes out in wages. Of these wages we can say that at least 90 per cent. is spent. If this company had a monthly pay roll of £20,000, one can see that at least 90 per cent. of that £20,000 per month is going to be circulated in this country. We have only to consider a moment to realise that this will mean relief to large numbers of people. I concur in the remarks of other members who say that if it had not been for the revival of the gold mining industry the position of the State would not have been as good as it is to-day. It is anticipated that by December the machinery for the Big Bell will have arrived. This machinery is necessary for the production and treatment of 30,000 tons of ore per month. By that time the amount of money that will have been spent, and the commitments of the company, will be such that if these people did not operate for more than one month, the State would lose nothing by building the railway. We would have received already more than the equivalent of the money we have to find to construct the railway. In these circumstances, I feel the Bill is one I can confidently recommend to the House. In reply to Mr. Angelo's criticism, may I suggest to him that on this occasion the Government have taken every possible precaution. I do not know of any other step that could have been taken. The hon. member did not suggest anything we might have done.

Hon. A. Thomson: Have you the bond?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The bond has been examined and certified. The Government were not prepared to introduce the Bill in another place until the bond had actually reached here.

Hon. A. Thomson: That must satisfy the objections that were taken.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Although we had received advice from our representative in America that the bond had been signed and posted, we would not introduce the Bill until we actually received the bond. I can confidently say that no stone has been left unturned in our endeavour to safeguard the interests of the State.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: Are the Government satisfied that the bond is actually worth £50,000?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Does the hon. member think the Government would have introduced a Bill of this description had they not been satisfied?

Hon. E. H. Angelo: History may repeat itself.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It may on many occasions, but not this time.

Hon. E. H. Angelo: We received similarly definite assurances on the last occasion.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member has not been able to suggest anything else the Government could have done in order to make the position more sure. All I can say is everything possible has been done by the Government to safeguard the interests of the State. I genuinely believe that this venture will be successful and of great benefit to the State. I wish the promoters all the success they are entitled to, particularly in recognition of the fact that they have provided so much capital on such a small margin.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are with you there.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—ABORIGINES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [5.35]: The Government are to be congratulated upon their decision to give legislative effect to a considerable proportion of the findings of the Royal Commissioner, Mr. H. D. Moseley. That gentleman devoted much time to his investigation and careful consideration to the evidence submitted to him, but in my opinion, neither his report to the Government nor the Bill before the House goes far enough. Various members have expressed the opinion that lack of finance will prevent the Government from administering the Bill,

when it becomes an Act, in a satisfactory manner. Western Australia might well benefit from the object lesson provided by New Zealand. We have occupied land that rightly belongs to the aborigines. I refer more particularly to the southern portions of the State. The hunting and fishing grounds of the natives have been wrested from them, and the aborigines have been driven back. No one wants them in the more settled areas. The children of the aborigines are, quite rightly, not wanted in the schools, and there should be separate scholastic institutions for them. In New Zealand the Government, and certainly the Maoris themselves, were more far-seeing. A huge area was reserved and is known as Maoriland. In consequence, a considerable amount of money is raised annually for the upkeep of the Maori race. The time is opportune in Western Australia seriously to consider the provision of a large reservation where the natives will be able, as far as possible, to live their lives naturally. When I advance that suggestion, I have in mind, of course, the pure blacks. Many of them have proved to be efficient shearers, and in the Great Southern districts a large proportion of the shearing is done each year by natives. The poor unfortunate aborigines, however, have no particular spot they can call their own. At Carrolup, a few miles out of Katanning, the State had a native reserve that was operated successfully. It is true that the farmers adjacent to the reserve were not keen on its continuance, but the fact remains that Carrolup was a place that the natives could call their own. After they had finished shearing, clearing, fencing, or whatever other task they had been engaged upon, they could always return to their reserve. The older natives were cared for by the superintendent and the young girls proved capable of excellent work. In due course, however, the Government of the day—it was not a Labour Administration—made a serious blunder. I told them so at the time. Merely for the sake of saving £200 or £300 a year, they closed the native reserve at Carrolup. I do not think there is any possibility of the settlement being reopened, because the land has been sold. I suggested to the then Chief Secretary, Hon. C. F. Baxter, that a suitable area should be set aside on the coast as a future reserve for the natives, but the reply I received from the department was that the area suggested was too far away from centres of population and

that the natives would not go there. Many of the natives from Carrolup were transferred to the Moore River settlement, but slowly and surely they drifted back to their natural haunts. If we were to make a determined effort, I can see no reason why, with capable administration and adequate control, we could not have an area where the natives would be to a great extent self-supporting. It would be hopeless for the older people who, in course of time, will pass away, but if the younger people were placed under control and provided with some education, they could be converted into useful citizens. At present, owing to racial differences, no one desires to associate with them, and that, after all, is quite natural. The result is that the natives are encouraged to become loafers, hanging about the various townships. They are harried by the police, and little inducement is offered them to improve their position. I congratulate Mr. Craig upon the excellent manner in which he handled a very delicate subject. I am inclined to support him in his views regarding the extreme penalties provided. To place the whole of the native population of the State under the control of one man will put upon his shoulders a difficult task. Judging by the remarks of members who represent northern provinces, and by the conditions we know to apply to the natives in the south, it seems to me that we should have two or three divisions, so that the administration could be decentralised. The treatment that may be regarded as suitable for the natives in the south would not appear to be necessary for the aborigines of the north. I am in favour of the appointment of an advisory board. As pointed out by previous speakers, the advisory board could be an honorary one or, at any rate, some small remuneration could be provided to cover travelling expenses. If such a board were appointed, the position might be considerably improved. The half-caste problem is extremely serious, and the difficulty of that section of the community should be handled in accordance with the desires of the Minister and the department so as to improve the position of those unfortunate people. It was stated by some speakers that we should take control of the children and remove them from their parents. At the time I interjected that that would depend on circumstances. In the southern areas there are some decent-living half-castes who are just as keen as

white men on the proper bringing-up of their children, and are most anxious to afford them education and the opportunity of getting away from their present unfortunate position. So I cannot imagine anyone in control attempting to take away a child from such parents who were endeavouring to bring up the child in decent conditions. I agree that many young half-caste men should be taken away from their present surroundings and trained to be useful citizens. On a number of farms in the Great Southern they are almost the only class of employees available to farmers. Some of them are fairly efficient, but of course they have to be kept under continual supervision. As to the half-caste girls, they constitute the most difficult problem of all in this many-sided question. The average half-caste girl has but very poor prospects of being anything else but what she is to-day. Of course there is a serious shortage of domestic assistance for the home, especially in the country and, perhaps in a lesser degree, in the metropolitan area. Sometimes those girls secure positions as domestics, but all too frequently they are taken advantage of by white men. Most certainly these girls ought to be removed from the native camps, which are by no means suitable environment for them. When we consider the conditions under which these young girls are being brought up, we cannot see any future for them. I am in favour of the suggestion that every half-caste child, whether boy or girl, should be taken out of the native camps and put in the way of becoming a useful citizen. I should like to see the State divided into two parts, North and South, because, judging from the remarks of members representing the North, the conditions there are totally different from those in the South.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Commissioner recommends that division.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It is pitiable to realise that these people have had their country taken from them, notwithstanding which no adequate provision has been made to enable them to become useful citizens. I hope the Minister, when replying, will be in a position to give us some information as to what consideration has been shown to the natives by successive Governments, and as to the feasibility of placing a considerable area of land at the disposal of those people

so that they would have the right to call it their own. Many areas that in the early days were considered to be of no value have since been cleared and cultivated and are now regarded as being of excellent quality. What has proved beneficial to the Maoris of New Zealand should prove equally beneficial to our aborigines. The Maoris have benefited by the reservations made for them and the incomes they have derived. It is time we adopted the same principle in Western Australia and afforded our natives the privilege of having a considerable portion of the State set aside for them. If we make a step in that direction we shall be doing something to alleviate the position of the natives in the South. My heart goes out to the half-caste children, particularly the girls, and anything I can do to improve their condition will be gladly rendered. Certainly this measure will have my whole-hearted support. I congratulate the Government on having introduced the Bill, and I am well aware that the Chief Secretary is anxious to get it through as promptly as possible. We have learnt very much industrially from New Zealand, and I think in regard to the treatment of aborigines we can learn another valuable lesson from that Dominion.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The British took only certain areas of the country, leaving the remainder to the Maoris.

Hon. A. THOMSON: And the Maoris are very proud of that.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You cannot compare our natives with the Maoris.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I agree that they are of a different type, although it is stated that the natives of the North are capable of learning various duties. But even if the native of the North has become a useful adjunct in the development of the North, it must be remembered that the same could be said of the earlier natives along the Great Southern. I frankly admit there is no comparison between the Maori and the Western Australian aboriginal, but I say that a principle good enough for New Zealand should be good enough for Western Australia. In my opinion, the sooner we adopt that principle here, the better will it be for the natives. I offer to the Minister the suggestion that he should set aside a considerable area of land which for all time shall belong to the natives.

Hon. J. Nicholson: We would require to do that in each district.

Hon. A. THOMSON: We have to look to the future of those natives that are being born to-day.

Hon. G. Fraser: Natives or half-castes?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Just now I am dealing with natives. I am not advocating that half-castes should be put on to those reservations with the full blacks. Still, the half-castes should be given opportunity for becoming useful citizens.

Hon. J. Cornell: What was done for the Maoris 80 years ago could not now be done for our natives.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The point I wish to impress on members is that the lands we occupy to-day originally belonged to the aborigines of Western Australia. That cannot be denied. The same thing applied to the Maoris, and therefore I say that because the Maoris were more warlike and able to defend themselves—

Hon. J. Cornell: The Maori would not have got his land if he had not defended it.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Here we are dealing with natives and half-castes living in most deplorable conditions. We will not allow them to remain in the towns, but we drive them to the outskirts, where they are living in shocking hovels. The only way in which we can improve their condition is to provide some place where they can be kept and trained.

The Chief Secretary: There are various reservations for them.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I should like the Minister, when he replies, to give particulars of the reservations in the south part of the State where natives can be controlled. In referring to reservations I do not mean areas of a few acres. Admittedly it would be difficult to keep the older natives on such reservations, but we have to consider the younger ones and to remember that we are laying down a policy for an appreciable time ahead. If we dared to impose similar conditions on white people, there would be an immediate revolt, and members should bear in mind that the native people have some rights. Consequently I adhere to my statement that the best method is to reserve certain areas for the natives and to stipulate that they must live there. That has been done in other countries like the United States of America. I support the second reading, but have mental reservations regarding the provisions of some of the clauses.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

BILL—BOAT LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [6.2] in moving the second reading said: This is only a small Bill. It is not often that a measure is introduced having for its object the reduction of fees, but that is one of the objects of this measure, and consequently I do not expect it to meet with much opposition. At present, harbour and river steamers, launches and other vessels are required to be surveyed under the provisions of the Boat Licensing Act, 1878, and the regulations made under the Act. The same vessels are also subject to a similar survey under Section 30 of the Navigation Act, 1901-26. The two surveys are carried out by the same officer, but at different times of the year. Naturally the owners of boats have objected somewhat strenuously from time to time to preparing their boats for both surveys. Therefore we propose to exempt from further survey any vessel that has once been surveyed under the provisions of the Navigation Act, and owners will be relieved of paying the double fee. Section 4 of the Boat Licensing Act, 1878, states—

Nothing in this Act contained shall apply to any boat, ship, vessel or steamer making any coasting voyage within the meaning of the Colonial Passengers' Ordinance, 1861.

The powers of survey contained in that Ordinance have been provided for in subsequent statutes, and as a result Section 4 has fallen into disuse. It is proposed to substitute in lieu a provision as follows:—

Nothing in this Act contained shall apply to any boat, ship, vessel or steamer coming under the provisions of the Navigation Act, 1904-26.

This will mean that any passenger steamer or motor launch engaged in trade or carrying passengers for hire or reward in any harbour will be exempt from the provisions of the Boat Licensing Act, 1878, as such vessels will come directly under the provisions of the Navigation Act, 1904-26.

Hon. A. Thomson: Does a small launch on the river come under the Navigation Act?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Not unless it is engaged in trade or carrying passengers for hire or reward.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Will that exclude what are termed the black boats on the North-West coast?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has nothing whatever to do with those vessels. The measure applies only to small boats plying for trade or hire on the river. The measure will be welcomed by the owners of vessels of the river type, seeing that it will relieve them of the payment of one license fee. In future they will pay one license fee only, namely, under the Navigation Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 6.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 1st October, 1936.

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

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, KALGOORLIE EXPRESS.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is the Kalgoorlie-Perth express operating to his satisfaction? 2, Is any action contemplated to improve its speed or conveniences in conjunction with the projected speeding up and further air conditioning on the East-West line?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes, generally. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—DRAINAGE, BUTLER'S SWAMP.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Water Supplies: 1, Has he been requested by the local authorities of Nedlands or Claremont or by any independent body of citizens to drain Butler's Swamp? 2, Does he intend draining, snagging, or beautifying this swamp?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES replied: 1, No request has been made for several years by any body such as those mentioned. 2, The matter is not being considered at present.

BILL—FREMANTLE LITERARY INSTITUTE MORTGAGE.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—DISTRESS FOR RENT ABOLITION.

Introduced by Mr. Cross and read a first time.

BILL—STATE GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 29th September.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [4.33]: This Bill is not foreign to the Chamber. It has been presented for the sanction of Parliament on three or four occasions. It is not necessary for me to stress the importance of placing it on the Statute Book, because up to date the Opposition has presented a very weak case against it. In countries where labour in politics is foreign, the authorities have adopted the principle of the State competing with private companies in this form of business. In some parts of the world they have given a complete monopoly to the State. I thought when the member for West Perth (Mr. McDonald) was speaking the other evening that he proposed to read some of the information contained in certain documents produced in America to show what had happened in that country in the matter of State insurance as compared with private companies. He failed to give us any information as to any reliable opinion expressed by American authorities. I wish to quote from a bulletin issued in the United States known as the "Bureau of Labour