

whole of the teaching can be provided voluntarily; and, after all, it is not much to ask of the legal profession that it should make its voluntary contribution to the community. The medical profession for many decades has contributed enormously for nothing. Every public hospital, every free hospital throughout the British Empire is practically staffed and carried on by the voluntary services of medical practitioners. A man may go into a London hospital and be operated upon, gratuitously, by a surgeon who would charge a fee of hundreds of guineas to operate on a person not in that hospital. As a member of the legal profession I would be not only pleased but intensely proud to offer my little mite towards directing bright boys into that profession. The result would be good. We who are in the profession are proud of it, and desire to see ourselves entitled to be still prouder. The way to become prouder of one's profession is to get the best people into it. The "best" people in that sense are not the sons of that man or of this man, but the boys who have the brains and the ambition. We do not care where they come from: if we get them into the profession, we shall be more entitled to be proud of it. I therefore say to members of this House that the Bill, if passed, will to a deplorable degree reduce the standard of the legal profession. The only argument brought forward is the argument that at present people not properly qualified are admitted. I agree that that is so, and I say that it should be remedied. The only objection to the present state of affairs which could possibly be urged is that it is a little too difficult, because an entirely destitute boy cannot enter the profession. I give members a solution for that: a chair of law, I ask, therefore, that the Bill be voted against solidly on the second reading. I say it is a Bill which does not merit the consideration of the House. I have carefully avoided making the obvious comment on the measure, but I do ask that members will vote the Bill down on the second reading and give it no further consideration.

On motion by Mr. Marshall debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th September, 1924.

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

QUESTION—CREAM SEPARATORS, STATE AGENCY.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Is it a fact that the State Government, through the State Implement Works, have become selling agents in Western Australia for a foreign company making or selling cream separators? 2, Have the Government, through the State Implement Works, already purchased a number of these foreign-made machines? 3, Is the separator a new type of machine that has never been proved as suitable for Australian conditions? 4, Is the Minister not aware that there are already six or seven reputable firms in the State meeting the demand for cream separators with well-known models?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, The general manager of the State Implement Works has become a selling agent for cream separators made in Sweden. 2, An order has been placed for 50, the selling price of which will be considerably below the price now being paid by settlers. 3, The machine has been tested and approved of by the Dairy Expert, Agricultural Department. 4, I am not aware of the number of firms who are selling, but I am informed that all separators used locally are of foreign make.

BILL—PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary and read a first time.

MOTION—TRAMWAYS AND WATER SUPPLY.

Transfer to Local Governing Bodies.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.35]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House the Government should immediately enter into negotiations for the transfer of the metropolitan tramway system and the metropolitan water supply to representatives of the local bodies concerned.

Since I gave notice of my intention to move the motion, there has been a heated controversy regarding the tramways and the competition of motor buses. It is somewhat remarkable to find a responsible Minister of the Crown, speaking on behalf of the Government, taking up a stand that practically means wiping out the bus services. The attitude of the Government is retrogressive, because in other countries where progress is being made, bus services are increasing almost daily. I have included the metropolitan water supply in the motion, but I do not intend to deal with that aspect at any length. A select committee appointed by this House is inquiring into that problem at the present time, and it would be unreasonable for me to discuss it to any extent at the present juncture. The function of Government should be to render service to the public, but not to embark upon commercial concerns. We have had State ventures of various descriptions, and much money has been lost as a result.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Not in all instances.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The exceptions are few and the profits small in comparison with the losses made in respect of all of them. It is remarkable that, seeing that so many people are in favour of transferring the metropolitan services to the local bodies concerned, nothing has been done in that direction up to the present time. Some years ago the Lefroy Government were prepared to hand over both the metropolitan water supply and the metropolitan tramway services, but at that time the world war was in progress. It was not possible for the Government to raise loans on behalf of the local bodies, or for the local governing authorities to do so themselves in order to take over the services. Naturally the Government could not hand over those services until necessary financial arrangements had been made.

Hon. J. Duffell: In which year was that?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I cannot remember the exact year. I know the matter was discussed, and the financial aspect proved the stumbling-block. The war has been over for some time, and the financial position is a bit more liberal. It would be quite an easy matter now for local governing bodies, if they had the necessary legislative authority, to borrow money and take over both services. Western Australia has been overwhelmed with State trading concerns. We have arrived at that stage when we have not Ministers enough to carry on the work of Government departments properly.

Hon. J. Ewing: They have nine Ministers now.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: My experience shows that nine good men are required to do justice to their portfolios. That is to say, it requires nine Ministers who must keep at the work without attending functions outside their offices. That is impos-

sible, of course, for Ministers must travel about the State.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not have a Minister for agricultural shows and another Minister for deputations?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If Ministers carry out their duties properly they cannot remain in their offices the whole time. I claim that nine Ministers would require to be in their offices, not for 44 hours a week, but for much longer than that in order to adequately deal with the business that comes before them. This position is brought about by the commercial concerns that should not be run by the Government. The function of government should be to assist in the development of a country, and to attend to the finances.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you consider the Government should run the tramway services?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Decidedly not. That is work not for the Government but for the local authorities concerned.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Would you hand over the trams to private enterprise?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Both the services I refer to are connected with the metropolitan area. That is to say, one section of the people are concerned, not the whole of them. If any benefit accrues from either service, the financial result should not be taken into revenue, but should be credited to the utility rendering the service.

Hon. A. Burvill: And those funds could be used for extensions.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That cannot be done by the Government, however, but it could be done by the local authorities who should have control over these concerns.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you know how the Government got control over the tramways in the first instance?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. When they took over the service it was in a bad condition. It cost a lot of money.

Hon. A. Lovekin: We know how they paid, too.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The plant was worn out when the Government took over the trams.

Hon. J. Duffell: But how did the Government come to get control of the service?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We are not discussing that point now.

Hon. J. Duffell: But did not the local governing bodies make an effort to secure control of that service?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That was some years ago. I do not know that anything has been done in that direction lately. The local governing bodies are those who should have the control of the services which affect them directly. In Parliament we have representatives of the whole of the State. Every member of Parliament is not concerned with the metropolitan area, but every member is in a position, because he is a member of Parliament, to say what is

right or wrong for the metropolitan area. That question should be in the hands of those concerned who have to pay. Incidentally, it looks as if the people will have to pay more heavily in the future. It will be nothing new for local governing authorities to take over such services and run them successfully. With all the ramifications of government, with all the circumlocution and procrastination of Government control, the work must be held up more than if it were in the hands of the local authorities. One can look at the wonderful results achieved in Glasgow.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They have a much better franchise than we have.

Hon. J. Duffell: I question that.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know that the franchise affects the question. Rather is it a matter of local governing bodies comprising good, sound men. We have men of that description here, and they ought to be just as successful in their control of these concerns as similar bodies are in other parts of the world.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The people would require to have a bigger range of choice in order to select those who will control the services.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If the local governing bodies had control of the tramway service at the present time I am convinced they would not attempt to concentrate the traffic in one part of the city. One has only to bear in mind the recent announcement by the Minister for Railways, who controls the Tramway Department, to the effect that he intended to run the Leederville trams over the Horseshoe Bridge, to realise what I mean.

Hon. J. Ewing: That is an important point.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is important. The effect of that will be to congest the traffic in the central portion of the city, and many dangers attach to the movement. It appears to me that if any alterations are to be made, the trams should be taken along the most direct route towards their destination. The best route for the Leederville service is not through the congested part of the city. If the Government cannot see their way to put an overhead bridge across the railway line at Melbourne-road, the route could be taken further to the west, where a bridge already exists at Thomas-street. Probably that bridge would have to be widened. We must look ahead and see what expansion is likely to take place. We know the wonderful development that is occurring at present, and the increase in traffic that has been encouraged by the bus service. Within a few years of the tramline being laid over the Horseshoe Bridge there will be such a congestion in that part of the city that the tramway service will be in a similar position to that of the railway service to-day. At the Perth railway station there is a bottle-neck through which all the traffic has to pass.

The tram tracks are being relaid in Barrack-street, and meanwhile the traffic has been diverted to William-street. A fortnight ago practically the whole of the traffic of the city was held up owing to a bogey tram taking the wrong points at the intersection of Hay and Barrack-streets. The time has arrived when steps should be taken to relieve the congestion of traffic.

Hon. J. Duffell: By having overhead railways?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The time is not far distant when our railways will have to be electrified in order to make them pay. If a bridge were constructed over the Melbourne-road crossing, it would relieve the congestion of traffic that now represents a great economic loss to the State. Of course it would be a matter for the engineers to decide whether the trams using that route should run along Murray-street or Wellington-street.

Hon. J. Duffell: You would not expect the local governing bodies to build that bridge.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, but the local governing bodies would not have laid a tramline across the Horseshoe Bridge.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Can you give the authority under which the Government can divert the trams over the Horseshoe Bridge?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: No, but I suppose they have considered that. Wherever the tramways are in the hands of the local governing bodies, the motor bus traffic is not interfered with beyond the specifying of routes. In most instances the local authorities run buses of their own or arrange with private bus owners to connect up with the tramway system. The attitude of our Government is that the motor buses should be cleared off the roads entirely, or relegated to routes where the travelling public cannot conveniently make use of them. What is the tram service for but to facilitate people in travelling? If the Government insist upon the buses being run at long distances from the trams, and thus deprive the public of this convenience, the people will soon object because they know the value of the buses.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you contend that the present Government are acting more arbitrarily than did the previous Government?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is very difficult to answer that question.

Hon. J. Duffell: The previous Government raised the fares, and when the people asked for a reduction, Mr. Scaddan told them it was a luxury to go to the city to do their shopping.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Government were trying to make an obsolete service pay its way, but the present Government appear to be sacrificing everything in order to show a huge profit on the Electricity Department and the tram service. The relaying of the tram tracks will be found to be largely a waste of money. A double line is

being relaid in Barrack-street and I venture to say that in a very few years the increase in traffic will necessitate the pulling up of one of those tracks. Let us consider what is happening in other parts of the world. "The Commercial Motor" of the 8th July, 1924, contains an article headed, "Darlington discards its tram cars," and Darlington has a population of 55,000. The article reads—

As has been stated in previous issues of "The Commercial Motor," the Darlington Corporation has for some months past been giving very serious attention to the advisability of effecting a change in its passenger transport facilities by the substitution of trolley-buses for the existing tramcar services in the town, and at last the question has been definitely settled by the decision of the general purposes committee of the corporation to recommend the authority forthwith to make application to the Ministry of Transport for permission to discard the trams, and to replace them by the more flexible mode of passenger locomotion. The significance of this latest development is that the committee in question comprises all the members of the council and, therefore, the motion having been agreed to with only two dissentients, the final confirmation of the resolution by the corporation will be merely a matter of observing certain formalities. The fact that Darlington would indeed "scrap" its tramways has for months been practically a foregone conclusion, for almost the whole of the tracks in the town are either due, or overdue, for renewal, and at present-day costs the relaying of these lines was almost out of the question, for it was computed that an expenditure of at least £96,000 would be necessary for the purpose, whilst the inauguration of a number of contemplated extensions to parts of the town not already served would have entailed an additional cost of about another £100,000. In order to leave no stone unturned in an endeavour to provide the best and cheapest facilities, the electricity and light railways committee, which deals with these matters, induced Mr. Baker, general manager of the Birmingham Tramways, to visit the town and prepare a report, in which he indicated trackless buses as being the most suitable form of public passenger conveyance for Darlington. In addition, deputations visited Wolverhampton and Birmingham in order to glean first-hand information on the operation of the two forms of transport under consideration, and having done so, they made the recommendation that railless traction be substituted for the tramways, a proposal which the general purposes committee has now endorsed.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They are not letting private enterprise hop in.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: My motion deals with local governing authorities, not private enterprise. The article continues:—

The estimated cost of replacing the existing tramway system by railless cars, inclusive of alterations to overhead equipment, is £35,000, and including the proposed extensions, it is estimated that the cost will be £60,000, which, as will be seen, represents a substantial saving. Petrol buses have had many staunch advocates in the town during the period of indecision, but against these the main argument has been on the score of operating costs, for it has been proved that trackless vehicles, drawing their power from the electricity works and supplied at the low cost of $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per unit, which is the rate ruling in Darlington, would prove about 3d. per mile cheaper to run, this being equivalent, on Darlington's car mileage, to an annual saving of about £7,000.

Here is another instance:—

The work of replacing the whole of the tramway system at Keighley with a system of railless traction has been commenced, and it is hoped to have the new transport facilities in operation in the course of a few months. The necessity for this step arose in consequence of the bad condition of the rails throughout the whole of the three routes radiating from the centre of the town. With prices at their present-day level, it was found impossible to reconstruct the whole of the tramway tracks with any hope whatever of the venture proving a financial success, and after careful consideration of local conditions it was decided that the tramway organisation should be abolished.

Another instance is found in Sunderland—

The Sunderland District Electric Tramways Co., who recently announced their intention of substituting motor buses for tramcars over a number of routes, are making excellent progress towards the completion of the scheme, and permission has been obtained from a number of local authorities to effect the change-over. These extracts show what is happening in England, and England in this respect is a long way behind America. We must admit that the Yankee is a keen man of business, who makes very few mistakes. In America there are 134 electric railways operating motor bus lines, or more than double the number there were a year ago. A hundred and fifteen street tramway companies are operating buses as feeders, auxiliaries or co-ordinated branches of the transportation systems; 13 bus lines have replaced street railway lines entirely, five electric tramway companies operate trackless trolleys as auxiliaries, feeders or co-ordinated branches of their transportation system; one trackless trolley system superseded electric railway service, thus making a total of 134 separate bus or trackless trolley lines operated in connection with, or superseding,

street tramways. The 115 electric tramway companies operate 1,110 buses over 1,280 miles of route in feeder, auxiliary or co-ordinated service. Of the 13 bus lines which have replaced street railway service entirely, nine are operated by the old street railway company, while four are operated by other organisations. Seventy-seven companies operate buses in city service, 15 companies operate them in inter-urban service, while 15 companies operate them in both city and inter-urban service. In addition there are three companies operating buses in both city and suburban service only, and one company in suburban service. Information is not available as to the type of service of the remaining companies. Trackless trolley service is operated in city service by four companies and in suburban service by two companies. The principal towns concerned are:—

	Buses.
Pacific Electric Railway, Los Angeles ...	112
Connecticut Company, New Haven ...	44
Chicago, North Shore, & Milwaukee B. E. Highwood ...	27
United Railway & Electric Co., Baltimore	36
Boston Elevated Railway Co. ...	31
Eastern Massachusetts Street Railway, Boston ...	31
Public Service Railway, Newark ...	27
Pennsylvania-Ohio Electric Co., Youngstown ...	26
Youngstown Municipal Railway ...	31
United Electric Railway, Rhode Island ...	28
Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Co. ...	100

Australia leads as an importer of motor cars but Japan is by far the largest importer of motor buses and motor transport vehicles.

Hon. J. Ewing: There must be good roads in Japan.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Japanese are evidently keen enough to appreciate the advantages of motor traction. The time is ripe for the Government to hand over these two public utilities. Expert advice can be obtained to ascertain the value, and having arrived at that value, negotiations can proceed. Personally I do not think the local authorities have altered their views. I know that they were prepared several years ago to assume control of the services, but the world over, at the present time—except of course in those countries that have made no progress—trackless vehicles have taken the place of trams, and therefore the local governing bodies may not hold precisely the same views as they did a little time back, and they may say that they do not want to be saddled with a tramway system.

Hon. J. A. Greig: They may regard the trams as obsolete to-day.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Precisely. With respect to tramways and water supplies, it will be necessary to borrow a lot of money within the next few years. That money should be borrowed, not by the Government, but by the people who use the services. It should not be a charge against those who derive no advantage from the services. A part of our loans is swallowed up in tramway extensions and providing water sup-

plies. That should not be. All our loan money should be devoted towards the development of the country and on reproductive works. It is not right that the Government should borrow money to enable them to carry on commercial concerns. It was never intended that that should be done, but in Australia we seem to have gone on experimenting in the direction in which commercial enterprise alone should have proceeded. In connection with Government undertakings it is necessary that so many different avenues should be gone through, and a considerable amount of time is thereby lost. In the case of a commercial firm, or a local governing body, a matter that would, in the hands of the Government, take up a great deal of time, would be disposed of very promptly. I have often heard people talk about Government methods and red tape. "Red tape" is a misnomer. What is it? It is merely a careful record that must be kept of everything that is done in the Government service, but for this record it would not be possible for the Government to carry on. The system, however, is not so cumbersome where local governing bodies are concerned, or even commercial firms which do not work on those lines. I do not know that much more need be said, except that I trust the House will give careful consideration to the question. The time has arrived when this House should say definitely that the Government should, if possible, come to some arrangement to hand over the concerns to which I have referred to the local governing bodies, who, as representatives of the people in the metropolitan area, are entitled to control them. I submit the motion.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [5.5]: I congratulate the hon. member on bringing forward this motion, which deserves every attention at the hands of the Government. If we think for a moment of the satisfactory financial position of Victoria compared to that of Western Australia, we must arrive at the conclusion that what has helped Victoria to a considerable extent has been the fact that the Government there has been relieved of a burden in the shape of activities such as those referred to in the motion. The borrowing of money by the boards controlling the utilities in Victoria has reduced the per capita indebtedness in that State to a great extent. On several occasions we heard Mr. Colebatch, when leading this House, refer to the satisfactory financial position of Victoria compared to that of Western Australia, and declare that it was due to the control by boards of the concerns which, in Western Australia, are in the hands of the Government. I sincerely hope that the Leader of the House will ask the Government to give consideration to the motion and to do something in the direction suggested. Some years ago our water supplies were controlled by

a board. My memory, however, does not serve me so well as to enable me to say exactly what happened to that board. I do not think it was a great success. The handing over of these concerns to local governing bodies may be better than appointing a board to direct them. While on this subject, I may express my satisfaction at the fact that the Minister for Railways has arrived at some sort of arrangement with the motor bus proprietors, and that no longer is there that friction which existed a little while back. We must recognise the fact that motor transport has come to stay. In America it is going ahead by leaps and bounds. In London the advisability of removing the trams from the city and substituting motor buses is receiving consideration. Therefore the Minister for Railways in this State has an important duty to perform in the direction of seeing that everything is done, not in the interests of the tramways, but in the interests of the travelling public. There are hundreds of people who would prefer to travel by bus than by tram.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: They can get a seat in the bus.

Hon. J. EWING: The Government's duty is to carry out the wishes of the people. I am certain that the trams have not suffered by the competition of the motor buses, and I hope the Government will not interfere unduly with those buses. Of course a great deal has to be done with regard to the roads, and if we are to have heavy traffic, greater taxation must be imposed. I may be permitted to offer a few remarks about the proposal to carry the trams over the Horseshoe Bridge. I trust members will realise the seriousness of the action of the Government in this respect. This bridge is practically an "S" curve, and on the north side three roads converge at the one point. Members representing the Metropolitan and Metropolitan-Suburban Provinces should be alive to the danger of having trams crossing the bridge. I have no doubt the Minister is acting on the advice of his responsible officers. I do not set myself up as being capable of combating the opinion of those expert officers, but I have a little common sense, and I realise the danger of taking trams over this bridge. Imagine what will happen when a big bogey car crosses the bridge! The end of the car will protrude three or four feet over the rails at every curve. The traffic on that bridge is sufficiently congested to-day without laying tramlines over it. I appeal to members to consider this matter at once and to express their opinions either for or against the construction of a line over the bridge, so that pressure may be brought on the Government to stay their hand. An hon. member in another place, speaking on the Address-in-reply, warned the Gov-

ernment about this danger and told them that if they went on with the work it would be necessary to pull up the lines again in three or four years' time, and not only that, but the Government would have to build a hospital close to the bridge to receive the casualties.

Hon. J. Cornell: It will be necessary to build a morgue, not a hospital.

Hon. J. EWING: No attention appears to have been paid to the warning given by that hon. member, because the work is now in progress, a commencement having been made with the removal of the big lamp at the Wellington-street end.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: And they are putting down manholes.

Hon. J. EWING: There is no doubt that if we do not interfere the work will be carried on.

The PRESIDENT: The question before the House is the transfer of the tramways and the water supply to local bodies, not the construction of a tramline over the Horseshoe Bridge.

Hon. J. EWING: Yes, but the local authorities will have to take over the control of the tramway traffic on the Horseshoe Bridge. I am sure, Mr. President, you will allow me to add a few more words on the subject so that we may come to an early decision. It is important that the matter should be discussed without delay. I am not speaking with any feeling, except the desire to ask members representing the Metropolitan Province to be up and doing. If they are of the opinion that it is right that this line should be constructed over the bridge, then their views differ materially from mine. I cannot believe, however, that anyone in this Chamber will endorse the action of the Government

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT (South-West) [5.15]: I support the motion. It brings back to my memory what occurred 14 years ago. I had just returned to the Old Country after many years absence, and was much struck by the changes that had taken place. When, as a boy, I left England the trams were being drawn by horses. Later they were electrified, and before my return to England they had been scrapped for the reason that it was found impossible to run trams with the ever increasing traffic. Take our own little place, Perth, a village: Here we have trams running up Hay-street. There is only one line, but when a tram stops at, say, the Economic corner, it stops, not at the edge of the pavement as would a motor bus, but on its tracks, practically in the middle of the road, and holds up all the traffic behind it. No motor car may pass until the tramcar moves again. Consequently the traffic is held up over practically the full width of the street; for if a motor car were to pull out on the wrong side of the stationary tramcar, it would meet the traffic coming in the oppo-

site direction. When Perth has double its population—which I hope we shall shortly see—we shall have the traffic held up from William-street to Barrack-street. On returning here from England and getting into conversation with members, I found they ridiculed the idea of trams interfering with the traffic. However, that has been learnt by experience in other places, and surely it is for us to profit by the experience of others. It may be said that we have erected a huge electric power plant at East Perth to supply the current necessary to the tramways, and that a great deal of that current would not be used if we were to scrap the trams. But we can use up all the current generated in East Perth by electrifying our railways from Midland Junction to Fremantle, so the idea of there being any waste of current cuts no ice at all. I do not wish to say anything about the Horseshoe Bridge, except this: As a motorist who frequently drives over that bridge, I drive with the utmost care, even with trepidation, every time I cross that structure. What with the grade and the sharp turn at Roe-street, and with a bulky lamp post shutting out all vision, I crawl down on that side. Other motorists pass me, but I care nothing at all about that. I have never yet killed anybody, not even a fowl, my bag up to the present being but a few cats.

Hon. J. Ewing: You do not think it would be safe to run the trams over that bridge?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: Most assuredly I do not. Only a few weeks ago the tram track along Newcastle-street was repaired; that is to say, the track adjacent to the tramrails was repaired. Men picked it out for 18 inches on either side of the rails, and filled it in with tarred macadam. That road to-day is in nearly as bad a state as it was before the work was done. I am not finding fault with the work, but I say it is impossible, except by wood blocking, to make a road stand up against the tramlines. I entirely agree with the motion. One company in Melbourne has already put on 50 motor buses to work in conjunction with the tramways, and in addition there are other companies operating. We have been told that our roads will not stand the bus traffic. That is apparently the great barrier erected against the motor bus. But it is nonsense to say anything of the sort. We could build roads that would stand it. Also it is nonsense to talk about the congested traffic in Perth. More vehicles go along Cheapside in one hour than go along Hay-street in a week. As for the condition of the road in Cheapside, you have only to go along there after seven o'clock in the evening to see boys enjoying themselves on roller skates. If roads can be built to withstand the huge volume of traffic in Cheapside—and they are put down on clay, a much worse foundation than is sand—surely we, with our huge hills of ironstone within reasonable distance of Perth, are not going to say we cannot build similar roads! We can afford to cut out the trams; at all

events we ought to refuse to extend them. Also we must increase the number of our one-way traffic roads if we are to walk through the streets of Perth in safety. In another place years ago I proposed that Hay-street should be declared a one-way traffic street. My proposal was laughed to scorn. Yet Pitt-street, Sydney, is a one-way traffic street, and at the very least it is just as important a street as is Hay-street, Perth. I will support the motion.

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

BILLS(2)—THIRD READING.

1. Standard Survey Marks.
Transmitted to the Assembly.
2. Unclaimed Moneys Act Amendment.
Passed.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS RATES.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—PRIVATE SAVINGS BANK.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.30] in moving the second reading said: The object of this Bill is two-fold. It is first designed to protect the interests of those who may deposit money in private savings banks, and secondly to preserve, as far as possible, the use of that money for the benefit of the State. It should not be necessary to stress the wisdom of action such as this. It has long been an accepted principle that governments should safeguard the public against the consequences of possible recklessness on the part of private banks. This can be said without any reflection upon private financial institutions, which have conducted their businesses on sound lines, and done so much for the development of trade and industry throughout the world, and particularly in Australia. There should also be no need of a special appeal to members regarding the second aim of the Bill. Since responsible Government our State savings banks have been a powerful factor in assisting the progress of the State. On the 30th June last the balance to the credit of depositors was £5,920,120; the accumulated savings of 196,881 depositors, including 43,749 children, with their deposits totalling £72,662. Interest amounting to £190,828 was credited to depositors during the year. The funds deposited by the public in the Government Savings Bank were invested as follows: £33,163 in mortgages on freehold securities; £35,680 in

municipal debentures; £508,207 in metropolitan waterworks and goldfields water supply debentures; £240,954 in debentures under the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act; £71,557 in water board debentures; £3,123,303 in local inscribed stock certificates; £2,304 in Land Drainage Act debentures; £14,994 in road board debentures; £746,113 in Treasury bills; £621,360 in Treasury bonds; £6,210 in Western Australian Government debentures; and £66,667 on fixed deposit. During the last financial year £10,500 was transferred from the bank's profit and loss account to Consolidated Revenue, and now £34,006 remains to the credit of the profit and loss account, and is available for transfer to the Consolidated Revenue fund this year. These figures show what a great help the savings bank has been to the State. It will be admitted, I think, that the benefits derived from the bank should be preserved as far as possible to the State. The Bill makes provision for the regulation of the carrying on of savings bank business by private persons and for the licensing of private savings banks, and prohibits the carrying on of savings bank business within the State by private persons except under the authority of a license granted by the Governor. It is proposed that applications for licenses shall be accompanied by certain information and evidence of the stability and bona fides of the applicant, and there shall be deposited with the Minister the sum of £10,000 to be invested by him in debentures, Treasury bills, or other securities of the State Government, or such other securities of the value of £10,000. It is also proposed that the licensee of a savings bank shall be entitled to receive the income derived from the investment of moneys deposited with the Minister, and from the securities deposited with him. The Bill provides that each private savings bank shall invest with the Minister, during the months of January, April, July, and October in each year, 70 per cent. of the excess of the total deposits made in such savings bank over the total withdrawals from that bank during the last preceding quarter. It is further provided that the sum so invested shall bear interest payable to the bank at the rate of one per cent. per annum higher than the rate per cent. that the bank has allowed, during such last preceding quarter, by way of interest on savings bank deposits. If during any quarter the withdrawals from a bank exceed the deposits, it is provided that the Minister shall refund to the bank concerned a sum equal to 70 per cent. of the amount of the excess of withdrawals over deposits during that quarter. The Bill further provides that the Governor for a period may exempt any bank from complying with the provisions set out, and that by a similar order the Governor may for a period reduce, in favour of any bank, the percentage of excess deposits the bank is required to invest with the Minister.

Provision is also made for the protection of the customers of a private bank. The Bill sets out that all moneys and securities invested or deposited with the Minister by a bank shall be charged with the payment and satisfaction of all final judgments against that bank in respect of deposits with it in this State which are otherwise not satisfied. A private savings bank that transacts other than savings bank business is required to keep a separate account of all moneys received on account of savings bank customers, and to establish a separate fund to the credit of which all moneys so received shall be absolutely the security of the savings bank depositors. I can give more explicit information when I am dealing with the clauses. Under Clause 2, the Governor may exempt any private savings bank, partly or wholly, from the operation of the Act, and the exemption may be revoked or varied by him at any time. It is hard to tell what circumstances might arise to warrant this step, and it is just as well to have that power. The Government would have to justify any action that it took in this direction if called upon to do so. That is the attitude taken up by the Colonial Treasurer. Clause 3 deals with interpretation. Clause 4 provides a stiff penalty for those who carry on savings bank business without a license. Clause 5 sets out the procedure to be adopted by an applicant for a license. Among other conditions to be observed, a copy of the last balance sheet issued by the applicant, or a certified statement of his assets and liabilities, must be supplied, and a deposit of £10,000, as provided for in Clause 6, must be made with the Minister. In addition to the stipulated requirement, the Minister may call upon the applicant to furnish any other information he may consider necessary. The Governor may then grant the license, subject to such conditions as may be prescribed. Provided the conditions of the Act are observed, the license cannot be revoked, but it may be surrendered. Clause 6 explains the nature of a deposit that will be acceptable. The deposit must be £10,000, to be invested by the Minister in debentures, stock, Treasury bills, or other securities of the State Government; or it may be securities of the same value consisting of debentures, stock, Treasury bills, or other securities of the State Government. The Minister has to decide as to the value of the securities offered. The licensed savings bank will be entitled to the income from investment of money or securities deposited. Under Clause 7 the bank must, every quarter, invest with the Minister a sum equal to 70 per cent. of the excess of the total deposits made with it over the total withdrawals during the last preceding quarter. For this money the private savings bank gets one per cent. higher than it has allowed its depositors during the preceding quarter. For instance, if it allows its depositors three and a half

per cent., it gets four and a half per cent. from the Government. Take sub-clause 2. Suppose it is discovered that the total withdrawals during the quarter have exceeded the total deposits, and the bank so informs the Minister, he must come to the help of the bank so that its stability may be preserved. He must refund to the bank from the 70 per cent. moneys he has taken a sum equal to the 70 per cent. of the amount by which the total withdrawals have exceeded the total deposits. With this provision the bank should always be in a position to meet its obligations to depositors. Under Sub-clause 3 the Governor may from time to time exempt any bank from complying with the provisions of the section for such period as he thinks fit, that is to say, the bank may be temporarily exempted from handing over 70 per cent. of its deposits; or he may make such further concessions in this respect as he may think proper. But if a bank contravenes the section, it is liable to have its license revoked. Clause 8 provides that in the case of a bank getting into difficulties, and being unable to pay its depositors, the moneys and securities deposited or invested with the Minister shall be used for the purpose, but not for any other contracts or debts of the bank. Under Clause 9, the bank, if carrying on any other business, must keep separate accounts of all moneys received in respect of its savings bank business. All moneys belonging to depositors must be placed in a separate fund to be called "the savings bank fund," and that fund, whether invested or not, cannot be seized by any persons who have unsatisfied judgments against the bank by reason of some other business that it has been carrying on. Under Clause 10 the bank must have a registered office in the State, and the office must be in charge of one or more of the principals, or of the principal attorney of the bank in the State. Clause 12 provides for a power of attorney to be deposited under Part VIII. of the Companies Act, 1893, or the Powers of Attorney Act, 1896. Under Clause 13, when a bank ceases to carry on business and satisfies the Minister that it can discharge all its liabilities as such, its deposits and securities will be returned, and its license will end. Clause 14 provides that a private savings bank carrying on business at the commencement of this measure will be exempt from the necessity of obtaining a license and of putting up a deposit within three months after the Act begins to operate. Clause 15 deals with regulations. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [5.46]: It seems to me that we could attain the desired object by a much shorter cut than this lengthy Bill. As I understand the measure, it practically prohibits any savings bank being established here at all. It begins with requiring a deposit

of £10,000, and then, when deposits come into the bank, the Government take 70 per cent. of the amount, leaving the bank just a little counter change to pay depositors when they want to withdraw money. If the withdrawals at any time approach the amount of the deposits, the Government will give the bank back a little bit of the 70 per cent. The Government will also allow the bank a margin of one per cent., which, I suppose, will not pay the management expenses. I do not know what the management expenses of the State Savings Bank are, but I should certainly say they are more than one per cent. of the total. No bank could possibly carry on under the conditions proposed by this Bill. Therefore I think the quickest way about this would be to insert one clause in the Bill saying that no private savings bank shall hereafter be permitted to be established in Western Australia.

On motion by Hon. H. Seddon debate adjourned.

BILL—TRADE UNIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 9th September.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [5.48]: The spirit in which I approach the consideration of this short Bill is founded on the old axiom, "Do the experience and practice of the past warrant a change, or make a change necessary?" The measure proposes a change with regard to the officer who shall be the Registrar of Trade Unions. The Registrar of Friendly Societies, whom the parent Act of 1902 appointed to be Registrar of Trade Unions, is displaced by this Bill from the latter position, it being proposed that the Registrar of Industrial Unions shall also be Registrar of Trade Unions. It rests with the House to decide whether past working warrants a change, whether the change would bring any improvement, or would be followed by harm. Reasons for the introduction of this Bill were given at a conference with the Employers' Union held at the then Premier's office in 1922, when the then Premier promised that this amendment would be made. In fundamentals there is a vast difference between the Trade Unions Act and the Industrial Arbitration Act. We know that both laws operate in Australia; but in many other British Dominions the trade unions have repudiated arbitration, and adhere to trade unionism only. Glancing at industrial and economic history one gleans that there were many centuries of strife over the recognition of trade unionism. Eventually the fight was won by the trade unionists of Great Britain. The Trade Unions Act we now have on our statute

book is purely a domestic measure, regulating the domestic affairs of trade unions. Of that Act it can be said that it has stood practically unaltered since it was passed in 1902. The same compliment can be paid to very few of our laws. The Trade Unions Act was passed in the same session of Parliament as the original Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act. The only three remaining of the stalwarts who fought with the James Government to secure the charter of trade unions in the form of the Arbitration Act are the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), the member for Forrest (Mr. Holman), and the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson). Of the Arbitration Act there have been many amendments, and we know there will be many more, accompanied by bitter and acrimonious discussions. Plainly, however, there has been no conflict of opinion regarding the Trade Unions Act. Probably that measure contains anomalies. In 1912 the Arbitration Act was amended and consolidated, and Parliament then in its wisdom decided, by Section 115, that the Registrar of Friendly Societies should be the Registrar of Industrial Unions until such time as the Government of the day might decide otherwise. Following upon Mr. T. F. Davies's appointment as a police magistrate, the present Clerk of the Arbitration Court, Mr. Walsh, was some time later made Registrar of Industrial Unions. After a lapse of some 13 years, the Registrar of Friendly Societies ceased to be Registrar for this measure. The Trade Unions Act provided in 1902, and provides to-day, that seven or more persons may register as a trade union. The Arbitration Act of 1902 provided that not less than 15 persons could be registered as an industrial union. The Trade Unions Act of 1902 also provided that a trade union might register under the Arbitration Act. From a fairly long and varied experience of industrial unionism in this State and in others, I am able to say that I knew of no friction between the Trade Unions Act and the Arbitration Act, but I found that greater protection was given to trade unions by the Trade Unions Act than was afforded by the Arbitration Act. The goal of every industrial union at one period was, not registration under the Arbitration Act, but registration under the Trade Unions Act.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That is not the goal nowadays.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The late Registrar of Friendly Societies, Mr. Bennett, held on numerous occasions that though the Trade Unions Act provided that a trade union might be registered under the Arbitration Act, still it was desirable that a trade union should not be registered under the Arbitration Act until it had at least 15 members. But the law under which

we are working to-day clearly lays down that a trade union registered in a specified industry, and having 15 members, can be registered under the Arbitration Act providing it conforms to the rules under the Arbitration Act. I have no desire whatever to misrepresent or harshly criticise the Minister; I know him too well. The Minister said that the necessity for the amendment arose from the circumstance that registration of a trade union could be effected under the Trade Unions Act, and from the further circumstance that the Registrar of Industrial Unions would, by reason of such registration, be compelled to register the same body as an industrial union under the Arbitration Act. That is news to me.

Hon. E. H. Harris: And to a good many other industrialists.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is news to me because I know of unions in this State which were registered as trade unions and which fought the registrar, not for weeks but for months, with regard to the right of political action. While they were registered under the Trade Unions Act and had political action among their objects, the registrar would not register them under the Arbitration Act. When Mr. Bennett was Registrar of Friendly Societies, his process of reasoning always was that if a trade union registered under the Trade Unions Act sought to obtain also the privileges of the Arbitration Act, it must comply with the provisions of the latter Act. That is fair and reasonable. I have the same confidence in Mr. Walsh, the present Registrar of Industrial Unions, as I had in Mr. Bennett, who was registrar for many long years. I hold that, in view of all the circumstances, the Trade Unions Act being purely domestic legislation, it might be unwise to confer the right of granting or refusing registration on one person, who would immediately find himself in the position of having to try to render justice to two policies which are separated by a very broad line of demarcation. If a union is registered to-day, there is nothing to prevent it being registered under the Arbitration Act as well, provided that the rules are amended to conform with the requirements of that Act. Under the Trade Unions Act of 1902 provision is made that unions "may" be registered; it does not set out that trade unions "shall" be registered. On many occasions the Registrar has been called upon to decide matters affecting the domestic policy of unions, particularly regarding how far and to what extent the funds of unions may be used in accordance with the law. During the time Mr. Bennett held the position of Industrial Registrar, he had to go to Gwalia to inquire into the question of a trades union expending their funds in connection with a picture show. He held that that expenditure was not legal. If hon. members can con-

vince me that there is any great hardship inflicted as a result of the conditions existing to-day, I will be amenable to reason and will vote accordingly. I have yet to learn that there is any necessity for a change. I have had 30 years' experience in Western Australia and I know that some of the unions registered under the Trade Unions Act would not agree to be registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act. I believe the same thing applies to-day, while the converse also obtains.

Hon. A. Lovekin interjected.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I did not say unions are non-political. Unions are all more or less political. I have had a rather lively experience regarding unions and I know that what may take place at a meeting is no criterion when members go to the ballot box. The fact remains that funds are used, and the law does not prevent them from being used, for political purposes. If it be deemed advisable, in the interests of the unions, to say that the funds of such unions shall not be used for political purposes, there is only one reasonable course open to those holding that view and that is to introduce the necessary legislation.

Member: But the unions will do it just the same.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Of course that is so. Some hon. members are probably more up-to-date regarding trade union matters than am I at present. I am still on good terms with many trade unions and take a lively interest in their affairs. I had the honour of being secretary of a trade union on the Eastern Goldfields for 7½ years. The membership of that organisation averaged from 240 to 250 members and I received £8 a year. Now men are connected with unions in similar capacities and although the membership is much smaller than the number I have mentioned, they get £5 a week and the assistance of a typist. That brings those individuals more up-to-date than I am. I approach this question in no carping spirit and I hope Mr. Kitson, who is qualified to express an opinion on these matters, will give his views as calmly and as dispassionately as I have. I know the Minister does not profess to be an out-and-out authority on industrial matters in Western Australia. Indeed, his native modesty would not allow him to adopt such an attitude. Every hon. member respects him for his honesty and manliness on that score. I think some other members who are acquainted with the position may express opinions that may assist in this matter.

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

PRESIDENT—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The PRESIDENT [6.6]: Before any further business is proceeded with, I would like hon. members to grant me leave of ab-

sence for three consecutive sittings. I have had a rather flattering invitation from Bruce Reek and from contiguous centres. I have not seen that part of the State and I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to visit those centres. In addition, I think I can do a little good from other standpoints as well. In passing, I would like to point out that this is the third session I have had the honour of occupying the Chair and I have not been absent for one day, with the exception of a week last year, through circumstances over which I had no control. That being so, I have taken the liberty of asking hon. members to grant me leave of absence for three consecutive sittings. In the circumstances, when the House meets on Tuesday next, it will be the duty of hon. members to elect a deputy President. I will formally move—

That leave of absence for three consecutive sittings be granted to the President on the ground of urgent private business.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.8 p.m.

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Thursday, 11th September, 1924.

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

QUESTION—NORTH-WEST DEPARTMENT.

Mr. LAMOND asked the Hon. S. W. Munsie (Honorary Minister): What has been the annual cost of administration of the North-West Department?

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE replied: The annual cost of administration of the North-West Department is as under:—1921/22, £2,243; 1922/23, £3,433; 1923/24, £4,011.