

issued. This Bill merely gives the department legal authority to do this, and to publish the correct and clear definition of the boundaries in the Gazette. Outside these two alterations, the Bill consists of corrections which will make effective the consolidating measure. I think the Bill will require very little discussion or argument. The sooner it is passed, the sooner can the new print of the consolidated Act be brought out. Most of the local authorities are pressing for a new print of the whole measure.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Are these amendments due to faulty drafting?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In some cases a misprint has occurred, and in other cases there has been faulty draftmanship. In one section reference may be made to another, the number of which has been wrongly quoted. The provision regarding the description of "chairman" is consequential upon what was done before. When we deprived the chairman of a casting vote and gave him only a deliberative vote at sittings of the board, we should have applied that also to meetings in committee. There is a more correct definition of "chairman" and "deputy chairman." There is nothing of a contentious nature in the Bill, which merely makes the law effective, so that the Crown Law Department may get on with reprinting the Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

#### BILLS (10)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Financial Emergency Tax Assessment Act Amendment.
- 2, Financial Emergency Tax.
- 3, Workers' Homes Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Premier.
- 4, Land.
- 5, York Cemeteries.
- 6, Industries Assistance Act Continuance.
- 7, Returned Sailors and Soldiers' Imperial League of Australia Incorporated, W.A. Branch, Headquarters Building.  
Introduced by the Minister for Lands.

- 8, Yuna-Dartmoor Railway.  
Introduced by the Minister for Railways.
- 9, Health Act Amendment.  
Introduced by the Minister for Health.
- 10, Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Further Amendment.  
Introduced by Mr. Sleeman.

*House adjourned at 8.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 3rd August, 1933.*

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

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY DUPLICATION.

Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Railways: Is it proposed to duplicate the railway line from Spencer's Brook right through to the East Northam station?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: No, to Northam only at present.

#### QUESTION—EASTERN STATES MANUFACTURES.

*To encourage local branches.*

Mr. HAWKE asked the Minister for Employment: 1, Will he take early steps personally to encourage Eastern States manu-

facturers—who are asserted to be dumping goods into this State—to establish branches of their manufacturing industries in Western Australia? 2, Will he keep in mind Northam as an inland town where manufacturing industries could advantageously be carried on?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT replied: 1, Yes. I am hopeful that the definite move now being made in favour of local production will indicate the advisability, in their own interests, of Eastern States manufacturers becoming established in this State. 2, Yes. Northam in conjunction with other towns will receive consideration in this respect.

#### QUESTION—ROAD RAILWAYS.

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has he any information regarding road railways, which are stated to have been successfully used oversea? 2, If so, will he make it available for the use of members? 3, Does the information available show that this method of transport is more economical than the ordinary railways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, No.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY, MEEKA-THARRA-HORSESHOE.

*As to pulling up.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier: 1, Is the report correct that the Meekatharra-Horseshoe railway is to be pulled up? 2, If so, in making use of the materials pulled up, will the claims of other railways already authorised be considered and railway transport provided more particularly for the Yarramony and Dale areas, which has been promised for 25 years?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, Yes.

#### RETURN—RAILWAY COAL, COLLIE AND NEWCASTLE.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, ordered: That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing—1, The weekly coal tonnage orders given by the Railway Department to each of the following mines (separately): Proprietary, Co-operative, Cardiff, Stock-

ton, and Griffin; and the weekly supplies received from the above-mentioned mines (separately) from 1st January, 1932, to 30th June, 1933. 2, The monthly tonnage orders of Newcastle and other imported coals (separately) used by the Railway Department from 1st January, 1932, to 30th June, 1933. 3, The average price paid per ton for the local coal as from June, 1932, to June, 1933. 4, The average price paid per ton for imported coal as from June, 1932, to June, 1933.

#### QUESTION—COLLIE COAL ARBITRATION.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Railways: Arising out of the motion just carried, I desire to ask what progress has been made by the board of arbitrators inquiring into values and prices of Collie coal, and when a decision may reasonably be expected?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: The board of arbitrators appointed to deal with this matter have been taking evidence for some considerable time. The evidence of one side has been completed, and the evidence of the other side is being heard. I do not know when the board's decision will be available, but the utmost expedition is being used in the interests of all concerned.

#### BILL—HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT.

*Second Reading.*

THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH (Hon. S. W. Munsie—Hannans) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill, mainly machinery, and involving no important principles. Nevertheless its passing is of great importance to many local authorities. The measure has seven clauses, but only three of the amendments proposed affect any principle whatever. The first amendment relates to health boards, local authorities, road boards and municipalities. Where the owner or occupier of land has installed a septic tank which has been approved by the local health authority, the local authorities are empowered, by an entry in the rate-book to exempt such property from the ordinary sanitary rate struck by the local authorities. Under the principal Act as it stands, a sanitary rate

struck by a local authority must apply to all houses in the locality except such as are connected with a sewer. The object of the amendment is to empower the local authority to exempt an owner or occupier who has installed a septic tank approved by the local health authority, the property in such a case to be treated in the same way as a sewered property and to be exempt from double rating, sanitary in addition to health. Provision for this is made in two clauses, because one section of the Act deals with road boards and municipalities and another section with local health boards, which likewise have the power to strike rates. Hence the seeming duplication in the Bill. The second amendment proposed is one that was unfortunately omitted when my predecessor, the present Leader of the Opposition, introduced last year's amending Bill. Undoubtedly the Health Department's intention at that time was to delete the words "health rate" from Subsection 2 of Section 43 of the principal Act. This was stressed by the then Minister in introducing his Bill. However, when last session's Act was printed, it was found that the words in question had been retained. They should be deleted, and "revenue of the local authority under this Act" inserted in lieu. The reference is to a section empowering local authorities to obtain overdrafts from banks or other financial institutions for the purpose of carrying out health obligations, the amount of the overdraft to be limited to one-third of the actual revenue of the health authority. Thus no danger is involved. Under the Act as it stands, however, local health authorities can obtain overdrafts only to the extent of one-third of their health rates, and in many cases such rate is only a farthing in the pound; so that the overdraft would amount to very little indeed.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: How did the words get back into the Act?

Mr. Latham: Owing to a mistake in drafting.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Undoubtedly. The third amendment proposed deals with cases of infectious disease. Most hon. members will recollect a controversy in the metropolitan area, lasting some time, as to who was responsible for payment for the treatment of infectious cases. The same question has arisen in country districts. Eventually an arrangement was reached in

the metropolitan area whereby the local authorities sent their infectious cases to the Subiaco Infectious Diseases Hospital, which is practically the only hospital of the kind in the metropolitan area. There was difficulty as to payment for treatment of the cases. Eventually it was agreed that the local authorities should do their utmost to collect from the patient, or the patient's guardian, the amount of the hospital fees. A quarterly statement was to be submitted of fees which had not been collected, and then the total amount recognised as uncollectable was to be charged equally to the Health Department and the local authorities. When the dispute was at its height, there were threats that the local authorities would not contribute anything towards the uncollectable amount, and eventually my predecessor agreed that the Health Department should pay two-thirds of that deficit and the local authorities one-third. In many cases that arrangement was carried out during the last financial year. However, the Auditor General has queried the arrangement, contending that it is illegal, and has disallowed it because of the distinct provision in the principal Act that only one-half of the uncollectable amount shall be paid by the Health Department. Accordingly Clause 5 asks for the insertion in Section 266, paragraph (x), after "half" in line 1, of the words "or such greater proportion as the Minister shall in every case decide." Each of the amendments proposed has been requested in the interests of local authorities throughout the State. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Sampson, debate adjourned.

#### **BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT.**

##### *Message.*

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

##### *Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.46] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill that is easily understood. It deals with the Financial

Emergency Act of last year in which were laid down the terms and conditions under which the tax was imposed. The Act itself provides for the payment of the tax by all those in receipt, in the case of single men, of 21s. a week and upwards, and, as regards married men, of £2 per week or more. The amending Bill provides that there shall be no payment of the tax on the part of single men who are in receipt of a wage or salary of less than £2 a week, and that there shall be no payment of the tax by married men who are in receipt of a wage, salary or income of less than £3 10s. per week. Those are the two points dealt with in the measure. I shall have something to say with regard to the next Bill I will place before members, which imposes the tax, and that, of course, is quite a different matter. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

## BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY TAX.

### *Message.*

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.50] in moving the second reading said: This Bill may be regarded as somewhat more important than that which I have just placed before the House. It deals with the rate of the tax; that is to say, with the rate that will be levied on the wages, salaries and incomes of the people of this State. It differs from the tax of last year, which, for convenience, may be described as the 4½d. tax in the pound, in that it abolishes the flat rate of tax. Under the Act, the tax of 4½d. in the pound was levied on the salaries, wages and incomes commencing with single men in receipt of 21s. a week and, in the case of married men, with those in receipt of £2 a week. The Bill does not continue the flat rate of tax, but imposes a tax on a graduated scale. I need not delay the House in saying that the amount of money collected by means of the financial emergency tax last year, is still necessary for carrying on the affairs of the State, and so the present tax is jus-

tified, although it is on an entirely different scale, in order to bring in an amount similar to that which was expected to be collected by the tax of last year. Dealing first with the single men, the Bill provides that those in receipt of less than £2 a week shall be exempt from the tax and those who will have to pay the tax will be levied on the basis of the following graduated scale—

- £2, and less than £3 10s. per week—4d. in the pound.
- £3 10s., and less than £6 per week—5d. in the pound.
- £6, and less than £7 per week—6d. in the pound.
- £7, and less than £8 per week—8d. in the pound.
- £8 per week and over—9d. in the pound.

So, with respect to single men, the tax begins with a minimum of 4d. in the pound, and ends with a maximum of 9d. in the pound. Regarding married men, those in receipt of less than £3 10s. per week are to be exempt, while others will pay on the basis of the following graduated scale—

- £3 10s., and up to £4 10s. per week, inclusive—4d. in the pound.
- Over £4 10s., and up to and including £6 per week—5d. in the pound.
- Over £6, and less than £7 per week—6d. in the pound.
- £7, and less than £8 per week—8d. in the pound.
- £8 per week and over—9d. in the pound.

Thus, with married men, the tax commences with a minimum of 4d. in the pound and ends with a maximum of 9d. in the pound, just as with the single men, as I have already indicated.

Mr. Stubbs: Will the usual deductions for insurance and so forth be allowed?

The PREMIER: I think the hon. member will understand that the financial emergency tax is collected at the source, and therefore no deductions are allowable. The tax has to be paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly, as the case may be, on all wages and salaries. It applies to those who pay their income tax yearly, just as it does to those who pay weekly. There are no exemptions or deductions allowable in respect of this tax. In that regard the Bill does not differ from the Act of last year. At this stage I do not propose to enter into a defence of the provisions of the Bill. I shall content myself with having explained them, for there will be ample opportunity during

the discussion of the Bill both at the second reading stage and when we deal with it in Committee, to justify its provisions. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

## BILL—YORK CEMETERIES.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.55]: The object of the Bill is to re-vest in the Crown certain cemetery sites at York, held respectively by the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the Wesleyan religious bodies, together with adjoining land, portion of which has been purchased by the Crown for the purpose. The whole area, which contains 13 acres 3 roods 15 perches, will be declared a cemetery under the Cemeteries Act, 1897, and will be placed under the control of the York Municipal Council as trustees. In 1914 a cemetery reserve was declared to the north of the site, which is coloured blue on the plan that I will lay on the Table of the House. That land was found to be unsuitable for burial purposes, and no burials took place there. In order to rectify the position and to declare an adequate area suitable for cemetery purposes, land was purchased by the Government, covering an area of 7 acres 39 perches, adjoining the cemeteries, which it is now sought by the Bill to re-vest in the Crown. This area will form a new cemetery at York. The different religious bodies, who at present own Lots 13, 15 and 16, which are the areas dealt with by the Bill, have given their consent in writing to the surrender of their land to the Crown, in order that it may be included in the proposed public cemetery and placed under the control of the cemetery board that is to be appointed. Notwithstanding these letters of surrender, it was considered advisable to deal with the matter by way of legislation. I understand it is the intention of the York Municipal Council, as a cemetery board, to raise the necessary funds to fence the new cemetery reserve and to improve it in other directions. The plan, which I lay on the Table, shows the position of the two sites. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

**MR. LATHAM** (York) [4.58]: I offer no objection to the Bill. It is desirable that there shall be some control over the York cemetery. Many of those who are trustees have removed from York and it is difficult to exercise any control under existing conditions. Recently the sporting bodies at York raised over £100 for the purpose of erecting a new fence around the cemetery, but it was found that there was no authority for the work to be carried out on the property. The York Municipal Council were asked to take control of the cemetery but that was found impossible without recourse to the cumbersome procedure of hunting up the executors of deceased persons, and so forth. The Minister has adopted the most simple way of achieving the desire of the people at York. It is desirable in the interests of the relatives of those buried in York, and also in the interests of the town of York, that the cemetery should be maintained in good condition.

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—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

### *Message.*

Message from the Lieut-Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.4] in moving the second reading said: The continuance of the principal Act is imperative if the department is to continue to provide sustenance for settlers for whom adverse conditions of the past three years have closed other avenues of credit. The position in this regard has not improved since the Bill was before the House last year, and although the recent upward trend in the prices of wheat and wool justifies the hope that the crisis which has been threatening the existence of these industries has now passed, the

question of credit for many farmers remains a difficult problem, and if the department is to continue past assistance, it must be armed with the necessary legislative powers. As an emergency measure, the Industries Assistance Act contains machinery for the provision and control of credit which does not exist in the Agricultural Bank statutes. There is no intention of re-uming general operations under the Act, though it has been found necessary to use its provisions in connection with the establishment of the miners' settlement at Southern Cross. Owing to the absence of commercial credit, and the inability of those settlers to obtain machinery on hire purchase terms, the bank is finding it impossible to develop, equip and provide harvest requirements for them within the limit of the £2,000 prescribed by its Act, and has had to have recourse to the Industries Assistance Act to enable the guarantees demanded by merchants to be given. With regard to the payment of sustenance, there is no provision in the Agricultural Bank statutes, nor is it the policy of the bank trustees to grant loans for that purpose. These advances are made from funds raised under the Finance and Development Act, which enables the bank trustees to exercise the powers contained in the Industries Assistance Act. By the operation of this Act, moneys so advanced become automatically a charge on the crops as well as on the land and chattels of the borrower. Both the Industries Assistance Act and the Agricultural Bank Act are administered by the one set of officials, and the only effect of using the machinery of the Agricultural Bank Act would be to hamper the operations and increase the work of the department, while at the same time putting the borrower to the cost of registering securities which under the Industries Assistance Act are automatic. It is not intended to make use of the Act, except where its provisions can be more effectively employed to provide harvest credit than is possible under the powers contained in the bank's statutes. Under the Industries Assistance Board the number of accounts last year totalled 1,339, to which have been added 83 new accounts, representing the miners' settlement at Southern Cross, or a total of 1,422 accounts. Then there were four clearances, which reduced the total to 1,418. Of the liabilities outstanding, principal represents £511,478

and interest £81,132. There has been funded £1,070,311 in principal and £220,388 in interest. The advances last year amounted to £1,027, while the refunds represented £25,552, and total collections £56,736. Those figures cover the operations of the board during last year. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Ferguson, debate adjourned.

## BILL—YUNA-DARTMOOR RAILWAY.

### *Message.*

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

### *Second Reading.*

#### THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS

(Hon. J. C. Willecock—Geraldton) [5.10] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is somewhat similar to others that have been introduced in past sessions for authorising the construction of railways. The Railway Advisory Board were asked by the late Government to report on the country to be traversed by this railway, and in August of 1932 the board made an inspection and subsequently furnished a report, which I have here and will lay on the Table of the House. That report goes into the questions of quality of the land to be served, number of farms and quantity of produce. After considering the necessity for the railway, the board came to the conclusion that the building of the proposed railway was eminently justified, an opinion that is embodied in the report. This is a district where excellent farming operations may be carried out. It has been entirely successful in the past. The soil consists of deep red loam capable of conserving water, and moreover it is rich in lime, while being free from a disadvantage suffered by certain other lands in this State in that it is free from salt. The rainfall, of which records have been kept for a number of years, is well suited to wheat growing, as are also the climatic advantages of the district. It is estimated that when the railway is constructed there will be over 300 farms to be served, that the wheat yield will be 36,000 tons, while the wool clip will reach 240 tons, all produced within the area. The board

considered several alternative routes. First it was suggested that the area to be served should be reached by an extension of the Northampton-Ajana railway, while other people in the district requested the board to make the line run first in an easterly direction and then north. However, the board have recommended that the railway start from the station yard in Yuna and go generally in a northerly direction for about 50 miles.

Mr. Ferguson: Will it go near the experimental plot?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Yes. The railway will serve an area of 840,000 acres, of which 225,000 acres are first-class and 153,000 acres second class, while the balance is third-class and unclassified. Last year there were in the district, 4,534 acres under crop, and the average yield was 18.16 bushels. At Wandalong, on the route of the railway, 79.5 acres farmed on fallow averaged 25.38 bushels. There was no proper farming on the large area north of the rabbit-proof fence, except at the experimental plot 53 miles north of Yuna, which the ex-Minister for Agriculture has mentioned and which was well known to the ex-Minister for Lands. There is a huge area of land, some 400,000 acres, in which the experimental plot is situated. A year or two ago 100 acres of that land were cleared and cultivated, 50 acres being put in as virgin land, and 50 acres as fallow. On the 50 acres of virgin land the average yield was 19.20 bushels, while on the fallow land the average was 20.50 bushels. I understand that a lot of damage was done to the crops by birds, but even so the average was about 20 bushels. As an indication of the damage, on the area of land sown in its virgin state, sufficient seed was left for a self-sown crop after the 19 bushels had been harvested.

Mr. Ferguson: I think what was left was too thick for a crop.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not wish to speak disparagingly of other land in the State, but this area has a distinct advantage in that the northerly latitude and proximity of the land to the coast give warm days and good growing weather. The wheat produced is hard and of excellent quality. One disadvantage suffered by some of our agricultural areas is that insufficient late spring rains fall to top off the crops.

That disadvantage is not apparent in the Dartmoor area because the crops ripen about the end of September and can be harvested before the end of October. Consequently a fall of rain in the late spring, or its absence, makes little difference in the Dartmoor area. Practically all the land in the area is within 70 miles of the coast. This is the only considerable area of land within 100 miles of a port that is available for settlement. We have carried our wheat areas eastward, north-eastward and south-eastward from Perth. On Friday last I opened a railway from Lake Grace to Hyden Rock, which is nearly 350 miles from the port. With the Dartmoor line the farthest point will not be 100 miles from Geraldton. Taking the whole of our agricultural areas the average haul for wheat is 153 miles, whereas in the Dartmoor area it will be less than half of that. The settlers there, once given a railway, will enjoy a distinct advantage for all time inasmuch as their railway freights will be at least 25 per cent. less than that paid on the average by farmers in other districts. What applies to wheat applies also to super—there is a superphosphate factory at Geraldton—and the advantage will also apply to other commodities required on the farm. The natural advantages enjoyed by the district should make possible production on a cheaper basis than in average areas elsewhere. When the whole of the line is built, the point farthest distant from the port will be 98 miles. It is not proposed to build the whole of the line immediately. As with other railways, it will be constructed in sections. The first section will be carried as far as Dartmoor, which is 25 to 30 miles from the head of the present line. The cost of construction will be cheap, the estimate being £3,250 per mile. There are no known engineering difficulties such as creeks to be bridged or big cuttings to be made. The line will be comparatively level, the ruling grade being one in eighty throughout. This will make for economical working in that the trains will be able to haul heavy loads. From the head of the line to Geraldton the load will go with the grade, except for a distance of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  or two miles at a point some 20 miles from Geraldton, and there a refuge siding is provided so that the full load may be hauled over the rest of the line. Thus the line will lend itself admirably to cheap working, whereas wheat from some agri-

cultural areas has to be hauled over the Darling Range, which makes for increased working costs.

Mr. Stubbs: Would not motor transport be cheaper during the earlier stages of development in the district.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Motor transport is being used now. The experience is that where there is no railway, motor transport is dear, but where there is a railway, motor transport costs are reduced considerably. Beyond Wiluna a charge of 1s. is made for carting wool into that town, but from there it can be carried 400 or 500 miles at 4d. or 5d. per ton. However, I do not wish to digress into discussing transport charges.

Mr. Stubbs: The cost of rails is so high that there is no chance of the line paying interest on the money.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The rails are available; they are to come out of the line running north from Meekatharra to the manganese deposit at Horseshoe. In the six or seven years since that line was constructed, it has not been used, and we consider it an economic waste to leave £100,000 worth of steel rails lying on the ground and giving no service when they could be used to provide facilities for settlers who are burdened with heavy transport charges through lack of a railway.

Mr. Latham: Was the Press statement correct that it would cost £100,000 to take up those rails?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No; that was the original cost.

Mr. Latham: I read a statement to that effect.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Somebody got mixed over the figures. It will cost £400 or £500 to put the line into sufficient order to enable the rails to be pulled up and brought away. I am sorry that the optimistic views regarding the manganese deposit have not been borne out by experience. The price of manganese, like that of other base metals, receded considerably. Whereas manganese was worth about 3s. per unit when the railway was built, it is now worth less than 6d. What would have been a wonderfully good commercial proposition at 3s. per unit becomes a failure at one-sixth of the price. So far as can be judged, the price of manganese is not likely to rise to a remunerative level, at any

rate for a considerable time, and we would not be justified in allowing the asset represented by the line to remain idle while the material is needed to provide transport facilities for settlers. It may be said that the building of agricultural lines is not warranted at present owing to the position of the wheat industry.

Mr. Mann: We must have railways.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Perhaps we would not be justified in launching a new developmental scheme, but the Dartmoor settlement already exists and the settlers are suffering hardships owing to lack of railway facilities. To enable them to produce crops economically, they need a railway. The company operating in that area have been able to make farming pay, although they have had to send their wheat 30 miles by motor to the port.

Mr. Mann: How far has settlement extended along the route of the proposed railway?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: About 25 or 30 miles. Various members on both sides of the House have an intimate knowledge of the country. It was inspected by the ex-Premier, the ex-Minister for Lands and the ex-Minister for Agriculture; it has been inspected by the present Minister for Lands, and the Chairman of the Development and Migration Commission was favourably impressed with it. In fact all who have inspected the area have been impressed with the quality of the land and its capabilities. The Leader of the Opposition, who inspected the district at the end of summer, found that by kicking up an inch or two of the soil, moisture was still present. The peculiar qualities of the soil are borne out by the experience of people who have kept stock on this land. We know that it has been possible to produce 25 bushels of wheat to the acre there. If the land is capable of producing crops yielding that average, although the price may remain low, it should prove to be a commercial proposition to grow such crops. I will place a map on the wall, following the usual practice, so that members may be able to get an indication regarding the country. I will also lay on the Table of the House the report of the Advisory Board and conservative estimates prepared by the Railway Department as to the financial side of the proposal. Members will thus be



equipped with all the information it is possible to give them to warrant the building of this line. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Ferguson, debate adjourned.

**BILL—RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS' IMPERIAL LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA, W.A. BRANCH, INCORPORATED, HEADQUARTERS BUILDING.**

*Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [5.32] in moving the second reading said: This Bill relates to a piece of land which was granted by the previous Government to the Returned Sailors and Soldiers' League as a site for the headquarters building of that body. The land is situated on portion of that which was previously held by the University. The league now wish to raise funds for building purposes through one of the Associated Banks. The bank desires that the security shall be such that if at any time it is forced to foreclose under the powers of the mortgagee the land with improvements may be sold free and absolutely discharged from any trust or restrictions of any kind. The land is held in trust, and the manner in which it is held, in the opinion of the bank, would prevent its sale in the way considered necessary by the mortgagee. The purpose expressed in the deed is that the land shall be utilised for the erection upon it of a headquarters building for the Returned Soldiers' League. The organisation concerned desires to spend a considerable sum of money on the erection of the building. The necessary finance is forthcoming, provided the mortgagee is freed from all restrictions regarding sale, so that if necessary the bank may dispose of the property in the event of foreclosure having to be made. Without such security, the league could not raise the necessary funds. In view of all the circumstances, the Government have agreed to bring down this legislation. In these difficult times it is desirable to give the league the necessary facilities for spending this money, as it will lead to the employment of a fair number of

men, a very desirable state of affairs. That is the sole purpose of the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Latham, debate adjourned.

**BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.**

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the previous day.

**MR. DONEY** (Williams-Narrogin) [5.36]: I do not propose to offer any objection to this measure. It seems to me desirable, and I have nothing to say against it. Each of the 14 clauses can readily be understood, and none that I can see is in any way contentious. Of all the Acts which have been passed during the last few sessions, this one stands most in need of consolidation. The parent Act is very long and rather cumbersome, and the amending Act, brought down by the Minister for Works in 1932 is another very long one. It must be difficult for the ordinary layman to co-ordinate the two. I know that road board members and other people connected with road board work generally keep a copy of the Road Districts Act. They are withholding the purchase of such Act, however, until the consolidation, promised last year, has appeared. It is obvious that this consolidation must be made, and equally obvious that it cannot be made until the several parts of the Act have been perfected. I can see nothing in the Bill except minor corrections, and a reference to a few misprints that have occurred. Although the Bill seems to be free from objections, it may be that certain members wish to add some further amendments, although after carefully studying the Bill, I can see nothing that it is imperative to add to it. Seeing that the Act is going to be consolidated, now is the time to make any further amendments that may be required. We do not want to tinker with this legislation after the consolidation has taken place.

**MR. PIESSE** (Katanning) [5.38]: I have no desire to delay the passage of the Bill which, I understand, contains nothing of a contentious nature. We should perhaps be given sufficient time in which to send copies of the Bill to the various local authorities.

I have, however, sent out copies, and other members, I understand, have also communicated with the various boards.

Mr. Doney: You can be guided by the decisions of the conference.

**MR. SAMPSON** (Swan) [5.39]: I hope the consolidation of the Act will include the publication of a manual to embrace the Traffic Act and its amendments. That would be very greatly appreciated by the road boards.

**MR. STUBBS** (Wagin) [5.40]: I have read the Bill carefully, and listened to the speech delivered by the Minister for Works. I agree that the amendments are very necessary. The mistakes and misprints associated with many of the sections of the previous Road Districts Act have on several occasions been brought under my notice. I urge upon the Minister the necessity for consolidating the Municipalities Act at an early date. That is controlled along much the same lines as the Road Districts Act. I am sure the Minister has a grip of many amendments to that Act that are required. I hope before the session closes that not only will this Bill be on the statute-book, but a consolidation of the Municipalities Act as well. The latter Act is, in many respects, on all fours with the provisions contained in the Road Districts Act. I shall look forward with pleasure and interest to an amendment of the Municipalities Act during the current session, and meanwhile have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

**HON. W. D. JOHNSON** (Guildford-Midland) [5.42]: This Bill can be commended, because it will reduce administrative costs and simplify matters for the road boards. There is one regrettable feature about it, emphasised by the Minister, namely, that the proposed consolidation had to be held up because of mistakes in drafting. It would appear that on a previous occasion several mistakes were made in conveying the deliberations of Parliament. I hope the Government will realise it is a rather serious matter that these mistakes should occur and these weaknesses appear, either in the drafting or in the conveyance of the decisions of Parliament to the Printing Office. This afternoon we heard the remarks of the Minister for Health about another Bill. I do not say he initiated it, but he had to admit

that mistakes had occurred in that connection too. It was found essential to come to Parliament again in order to insert in that Bill something which the Minister in charge of it at the time thought had been inserted. It will not be long, I think, before a Bill will have to be brought down to amend the Miners' Phthisis Act, because of similar reasons. We had an experience in regard to an even more important question, that of the Financial Emergency Act. Parliament came to a definite decision, which was distinctly understood, as emphasised by the member for Fremantle last night, by all members of the House. The faulty draftsmanship has cost the workers of the country many thousands of pounds. I use these illustrations to point out how serious it is that mistakes of this kind should occur. Whilst in connection with this particular Bill the mistakes seem of small moment, carelessness in this regard may cost the people of the State a great deal of money. I am one of the old members, but I have never had any previous experience like this. We have always prided ourselves on the fact that our measures were drafted on a very efficient scale, and that the considered deliberations of this Chamber concerning various measures were faithfully conveyed to the statute-book. It seems we cannot count upon that to-day. I therefore appeal to the Minister for Justice to appreciate how dangerous it is to allow this matter to drift any further. This is the second Bill of the kind we have had to deal with, and there are others to come. I have taken this opportunity to draw attention to the matter, because I think some inefficiency is being displayed in the drafting of Bills, or some inefficiency in the conveyance of the draft as submitted by the draftsman to the Government Printer. Even if the draftsmanship is correct, it seems that measures are not reaching the Government Printing Office in the form intended by Parliament.

*Question put and passed.*

Bill read a second time.

*In Committee.*

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Amendment of Section 13:

Hon. N. KEFXAN: I should like the Minister to explain what is meant by "on

the district being redivided into wards, the members of the board or such of the members of the board as the Minister may think fit and determine, shall go out of office on a day to be appointed by the Minister, but shall be eligible for re-election." Is it necessary that other than those affected by the new provision shall be liable to submit themselves to re-election? The amendment will give the Minister authority to declare that certain members whose districts were not in any way affected shall go out of office.

**The MINISTER FOR WORKS:** The position at the moment is that the Minister has no discretion. If there is an alteration of the boundaries of any ward the whole of the members must go out. It frequently occurs that two wards are divided into three, and the idea is that the Minister shall say that the sitting members of those two wards shall go out, and that the other members shall not be interfered with. The Minister will have the discretion to do this. At present he has not this discretion.

**Hon. N. KEENAN:** The Bill will not be confined to members of the board who are sitting in a district that is affected, but will apply generally to all members of the board. I admit that the position to-day is impossible, but what I want to achieve is that only the members who are affected by the redivision shall retire. If the Minister is satisfied, I have no further objection to offer.

**Mr. SAMPSON:** I know of a case where the boundaries between two wards were varied, and under the Act all the members were affected and an election had to be held for each ward. The amendment gives the Minister discretionary power, and that is a great improvement on the principal Act. I appreciate the argument of the member for Nedlands, but it would be difficult to provide in a section for every possibility that might arise in connection with the variation of ward boundaries.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 5 to 14—agreed to.

New clause:

**Mr. SAMPSON:** I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—Insert after Clause 9 of the Bill a clause to stand as Clause 9A as follows:—9A. Section seventy of the principal Act is amended by deleting from Subsection (2) all

the words after the words "such declaration shall be made" in the second paragraph of the subsection, and inserting in lieu thereof the words "on the nomination day, but in the case of an annual election the person then declared to be elected shall not take office until after the day appointed for the annual election."

When the Bill came down last year, Section 70 of the principal Act was amended by adding to Subsection 2 a paragraph as follows:—

Such declaration shall be made (a) in the case of an annual election on the day appointed for such election, (b) in the case of an extraordinary election on the nomination day.

The reason for postponing the declaration in the case of candidates nominated for the annual election was to prevent an anomaly that occurred. Say a man was elected unopposed on nomination day, and subsequently attended a road board meeting actually before the date fixed for the election notwithstanding that the term of the retiring members had not expired. The amendment that I have submitted will get over the difficulty. I have submitted the new clause at the request principally of a member of the Road Boards Association who explained to me this particular difficulty. As returning officer he attended the road board office on the day nominations closed. The nominations submitted were just what were required to fill the vacancy. Section 32 of the principal Act did not permit him to declare the candidates elected; consequently he returned to his home, a distance of 20 miles, and on the day appointed for the election—of course there was no election—he was required specially to attend at the board office and travel another 20 miles to declare elected the persons who had been returned without opposition. So that he had to do 40 miles of unnecessary travelling.

**The MINISTER FOR WORKS:** I do not know of any occasion when a board has met immediately after nomination day. The case cited by the member for Swan could arise only if a meeting was held on the day after nomination.

**Mr. Sampson:** But there might be a committee meeting, or a special meeting.

**The MINISTER FOR WORKS:** The difficulty could not arise in connection with a committee meeting, because the new member could not be on a committee until ap-

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pointed to it by the board. Last year's measure was examined by the Road Board Conference and by the secretary of the conference, and ran the gauntlet of both Houses, and finally was approved. If the amendment is necessary, surely it would have been put forward at that time.

Mr. SAMPSON: This new clause was not considered by the Road Board Association, either in conference or in executive meeting. In connection with the 1932 measure this matter was not mentioned either by the Minister in introducing the Bill or by any member in speaking to the Bill. Perhaps the Minister will report progress.

The Minister for Works: You might try the new clause in another place.

Mr. SAMPSON: As the Minister has such a grip of local government, I would greatly prefer that he should deal with this matter. Undoubtedly an error was made last session in rendering it obligatory on a returning officer to come in, many miles perhaps, for a mere formality.

Mr. Latham: He could easily appoint a substitute.

Mr. SAMPSON: Yes; but returning officers do not always make a close study of the Act.

New clause put and negatived.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.*

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

### QUESTION—MINISTERIAL TRAVELLING ALLOWANCES.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the total amount of travelling allowances drawn by the Ministers of the Crown in this State during the following periods:—12 months ended 30th June, 1928; 12 months ended 30th June, 1929; 12 months ended 30th June, 1931; 12 months ended 30th June, 1932? 2, How many visits to the Loan Council were made by the then Premier during the above-mentioned respective periods?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1 and 2, Efforts were made some months ago to obtain the information sought, but a recent review, followed by deeper investigation, shows that wider and apparently interminable research would be necessary in order to reach anything like exactitude. Ministerial expenses are so widely distributed according to the department affected and the nature of the business upon which Ministers may be travelling—as in some cases the expenses of one visit may be spread through the ramifications of the accounts of various departments—that it would involve infinite labour to furnish the information with any degree of reliability. Moreover, the allocation of payments which have been made between the cost of separate items such as cars, and the expenses paid to the Ministers, and the segregation of the charges into the various years asked for, present very great difficulties. Again, ministerial car accommodation is normally regarded as a substitute for travelling expenses, conditional on avail-