

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, November 1, 1956.

The **SPEAKER** (Hon. B. H. Teusner) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

ASSENT TO ACTS.

His Excellency the Governor, by message, intimated his assent to the following Acts:—Enfield General Cemetery Act Amendment, Fruit Fly (Compensation), Loan Money Appropriation (Working Accounts), and Homes Act Amendment Act.

QUESTIONS.**NUCLEAR POWER STATION.**

Mr. O'HALLORAN—On October 18, in reply to my question on the possibility of establishing a nuclear power station in South Australia, the Premier said:—

I have discussed the matter with the chairman of the Electricity Trust, and the general decision reached was that it would be advantageous at this stage to select two sites, one which would be suitable if we have to introduce another ordinary thermal unit, and the other suitable for a nuclear fission unit.

I noticed in last Sunday's *Mail* a statement attributed to the Premier on the establishment of a nuclear power station. He is reported to have said:—

We are in fact acquiring the land for the site now.

Has it been determined that a nuclear station will be established instead of an orthodox station, as mentioned in the Premier's previous reply, and if so, what site has been selected?

The **Hon. T. PLAYFORD**—I did not see the article mentioned, but there has been some misunderstanding if it stated that the site had been acquired. I have discussed this matter with the chairman of the Electricity Trust. There have been phenomenal developments overseas in the use of nuclear power and it seems that predictions made some years ago that nuclear power was a thing for the distant future were completely wrong, and that nuclear power will become an everyday form of power in the near future. The result of discussions I had with Mr. Drew was that it would be advisable to select two sites, one for a nuclear station and the other for a thermal station, and that we should do some preliminary planning on both so that, when a decision has to be made in about two years, we shall be in a position to go ahead with either. We have not yet selected or acquired a site, but those matters are being investigated.

SPEED LIMITS ON HEAVY VEHICLES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier received a report from the Commissioner of Police on the question of increasing the speed limit on certain heavy vehicles by 5 miles an hour, and if so, does the Government intend to introduce legislation on this matter?

The **Hon. T. PLAYFORD**—Yes, and I now give notice that on Tuesday next I will seek leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act, 1934-1955.

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. LAWN—Last Monday evening a meeting was held in the Adelaide Town Hall, allegedly to protest against the Prices Act Amendment Bill. One speaker complained that the Bill had been rushed through Parliament with indecent haste. Can the Premier say how long the Bill was before Parliament before being passed?

The **Hon. T. PLAYFORD**—The Bill was not rushed through the House with any undue haste. The first public statement about the Bill was made on May 8 in the Governor's Speech, paragraph 26, which stated:—

My Ministers are of opinion that it is in the public interest to retain the legislation for the control of rents and prices and will seek your sanction to Bills for this purpose.

The Bill merely extended prices legislation for another year. It was introduced in the Assembly on August 15 and passed on September 19. It was returned from the Legislative Council on October 30, so there was a period of 11 weeks before the legislation was passed.

GAWLER BELT-DAVEYSTON ROAD.

Mr. LAUCKE—Last week-end that portion of the Sturt Highway between Gawler Belt and Daveyston was closed to traffic to enable road and bridge reconstruction, and traffic is being diverted through Freeling. Can the Minister representing the Minister of Roads say how long it is expected that this section of the Sturt Highway will be closed?

The **Hon. C. S. HINCKS**—The Minister of Roads has supplied me with the following statement:—

The road between Gawler Belt and Daveyston on the Sturt Highway will be closed to traffic for approximately nine months to enable the reconstruction of the road and bridges through this section. The reason for the deviation is that there is insufficient room on the one-chain road reserve to permit widening of the road, maintenance of the drainage and construction of side tracks. Two-thirds of the deviation will be bitumen and the remaining length can be maintained in good condition at reasonable cost. The deviation will be clearly indicated by signs.

GEPPTS CROSS HOSTEL RENTS.

Mr. JENNINGS—I understand that the Housing Trust has recently increased the rents of flats in the Gepps Cross Migrants Hostel. On several occasions in the last few years when I requested that the rents be reduced the Premier said that the hostel was barely balancing its budget and that a reduction in rents was not justified. Will the Premier investigate the present position to ascertain whether there has been a change in the hostel finances that justifies the rent increases?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have personally investigated this matter. Last year the Housing Trust did not receive sufficient in rents to maintain the area and pay what was due to the Commonwealth. I wrote to the Prime Minister pointing out that the Housing Trust was operating at a loss and sought permission to increase the rents by, I think, 2s. a week; and that increase has been approved.

UNSIGHTLY CHATTELS AND STRUCTURES.

Mr. COUMBE—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Local Government a reply to the question I asked last week concerning a model by-law relating to unsightly chattels and structures?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The Minister of Local Government has furnished the following reply:—

On August 6 last Cabinet approval was granted for a draft by-law to be made available to interested local government authorities and the necessary action has been taken. I have a copy of the suggested draft by-law regarding unsightly chattels drawn up by the Crown Law officers which I shall be glad to make available to the honourable member if so desired.

PORT PIRIE HARBOUR IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. DAVIS—Can the Premier indicate what progress has been made in the programme for deepening the Port Pirie harbour and renovating the wharves there?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have a report on the work proposed to be undertaken which I will make available to the honourable member.

DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Recently I asked a question concerning an incident on Anzac Highway when a revolver was discharged. Has the Premier the report he promised to obtain from the Crown Law Office concerning the discharge of firearms in a public thoroughfare?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes. It is a lengthy report but it may be of general interest to read it all:—

The answer given by the honourable the Premier substantially sets out the position. The offence created by section 51 of the Police Offences Act, 1953, consists in discharging a firearm "without reasonable cause, and so as to injure, annoy or frighten or be likely to injure, annoy or frighten any person or so as to damage or be likely to damage any property . . .". There are a variety of circumstances which will amount to reasonable cause for the use of firearms. For example one may lawfully shoot a mad dog or other dangerous animal. Shooting at a human being can only be justified as a reasonable and necessary measure of self defence or to prevent the commission of a violent or dangerous crime. In some circumstances it may be lawful to shoot in a man's direction to frighten him as a measure of protection of property.

There are, of course, stringent restrictions on the mere possession of firearms apart altogether from their use. It is an offence, for which imprisonment up to twelve months may in some circumstances be imposed, to have possession of or carry a pistol without a licence from the Commissioner of Police. Other firearms may not be carried or kept unless registered with the police. I understand from the police that the person referred to in the honourable member's question did in fact hold a pistol licence. Irrespective of whether any offence is committed, the use of a firearm in a public place may well give rise to civil liability if some innocent person is injured. People who use dangerous things like firearms even for legitimate purposes are required to exercise very great care to see that damage is not done to others.

ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIES.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Can the Premier indicate what funds are available for assisting rural industries and what procedure must be adopted in seeking such assistance?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—We have legislation in this State which enables industries to be assisted. The Industries Development Committee recommends on the proposals submitted to it by the Government. The method of providing assistance is that the Government gives a guarantee to a bank or a financial institution to enable it to lend money in cases where the security may not be sufficient to justify a loan; and this legislation has been extensively used. Under it assistance was given for the production of cement in South Australia, the Nairne Pyrites mines were opened and the cellulose industry in the South-East was assisted at a time of financial difficulty. It has been used in a number of cases to assist industries both in the city and in country districts.

MURRAY RIVER FLOOD RELIEF.

Mr. JENKINS—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently whether loans would be made available to settlers on the high ground in flooded areas for irrigation purposes?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—This matter is still being investigated, but ultimately each case will have to be considered on its merits.

Mr. KING—Has the Minister of Irrigation any information to give following on his recent visit to Berri and Barmera relating to land and accommodation for people who have been flooded out?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Some time ago, following on an invitation from the honourable member, I made an extensive tour of the river areas. At Berri, with the honourable member and the chairman of the district council (Mr. Nitschke), we made an extensive inspection of the area, and considered particularly the housing problem. We located an area where there were amenities, such as water and power, and which was near a school. When I was at Barmera with the chairman of the district council (Mr. Foot) we located an area of Crown lands that would be very suitable. The whole question will be considered by Cabinet in the near future.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Treasurer received a reply from the Commonwealth Government saying what amount it will make available to the State for flood relief, and has he any information from the Prime Minister or the Federal Treasurer that they may visit the flooded areas shortly to make a personal inspection of those areas?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received no information on either of those topics.

Mr. BYWATERS—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked last week relating to financial assistance for rehabilitating producers on the River Murray who have been flooded out? I referred particularly to vegetable growers who are trying to get back into production by irrigating high land.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Sir Kingsley Paine has supplied the following report:—

Up to the present only one settler—not in Mr. Bywaters' electoral district—has submitted an application to be assisted to grow vegetables on land not likely to be flooded. A report is being obtained from the local district officer as to the practicability of the scheme and the probable cost of piping and pumping equipment. If that report is favourable I will be prepared to assist the applicant to meet that cost. Any person desiring to submit such a proposal should submit an application

through the local committee who will furnish me with a confidential report and especially as to practicability and cost.

SALK VACCINE INJECTIONS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier obtained a reply to the question I asked on October 11 regarding Salk vaccine injections being made available to people who neglected earlier to make application for them?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following reply:—

The poor response referred to applied only to pre-school children of the metropolitan area offered poliomyelitis immunization in the last September school vacation. The response from metropolitan school children and country pre-school and school children has been very high. In nearly every case it has been 90 per cent to 95 per cent, and in many cases 100 per cent of those eligible. While so much of the State has not yet had an opportunity to receive injections the mobile units cannot return to areas already visited. However, in the next school vacation two mobile units will be located in the city itself to immunize pre-school children residing in the metropolitan area. Parents from areas already visited who previously did not give consent will be permitted to bring the pre-school children to these units. There have been no ill effects reported following the injections although more than 100,000 have been given in South Australia.

MURRAY BRIDGE RAILWAY CROSSING.

Mr. BYWATERS—The following is an extract from the *News* of last Thursday under the heading "Crossing Signal Refused":—

The Railways Department has declined to erect a wig-wag warning device at the Cyprus Terrace detour crossing, at the north-east outskirts of Murray Bridge. It is now the only outlet and approach to and from Murray Bridge, Mannum, Mypolonga, Wall Flat, Caloote, and Palmer, having taken the place of the main road since the flooding of the Mannum road near Murray Bridge some weeks ago. It is likely to remain so for many weeks, perhaps months, before the river level drops. The approach to the crossing is bad and visibility poor. There is a stop sign on both sides of the level crossing, but there have been several narrow shaves since the detour has been in general use. One motorist who ventured too close to the lines in driving rain had a headlight, parking light, and bumper bar fender torn off the car. Others have reported just getting across before a train has passed.

This crossing is dangerous because of the high bank on each side of the road, making it almost impossible to see an approaching train. Will the Minister representing the Minister of Railways ask that the matter be taken up again with a view to a warning device being put there, or, if one cannot be installed, removing some of the high bank to make visibility better?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will refer the matter to the Minister of Railways.

MURRAY VALLEY DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. KING—Yesterday I said that a number of fruit trees in other parts of the State along the higher reaches of the Murray River had gone out of production and that many had died. In view of that, can the Minister of Lands say if a survey has been made along the River Murray regarding areas that may be suitable for irrigation for fruit trees, vines or pastures, together with processing facilities, and, if not, will the Minister cause one to be made?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I think I indicated yesterday that a survey had been made along the river from one end to the other. The information is at my office. I will look at it and ascertain what areas, if any, would be available, and advise the honourable member.

HOUSING TRUST HOMES.

Mr. QUIRKE—Can the Premier indicate the minimum amount of money a man must have in his own right to purchase a trust home costing £3,200 today?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will get a report for the honourable member.

KOONIBBA WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Has the Minister representing the Minister of Works a reply to my previous question about a water supply for Koonibba Mission Station?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have obtained the following reply from the Acting Minister of Works:—

As the honourable member knows, several suggestions for the provision of a water supply for the Koonibba Mission Station have been made from time to time. A proposal for a supply from the Tod River system was investigated and found to be too costly. Other schemes have, however, been examined subsequently. One proposal provides for a graded catchment area with a 500,000 gallon reinforced concrete tank and the other is for a galvanized iron artificial catchment with a number of squatters' tanks. I believe the latter proposal is the one favoured by the Mission authorities, and the Engineer for Water Supply considers that it would give the greater annual yield. Both schemes, however, would involve the laying of mains from the storage tanks to the Mission Station and an up-to-date estimate of the cost has shown that either project would require a total expenditure in the vicinity of £23,000 which represents a very high capital outlay in relation to the quantity of water which would be impounded. In view thereof, the point to be decided is whether either scheme is within the bounds of economic practicability, having regard to the Mission's views of what it can

afford as its contribution towards the total cost. When a decision has been reached, the honourable member will be advised.

PUBLIC SERVICE SALARIES.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Has the Premier examined, as he promised, the matter of laying on the table the Government's submissions objecting to the decision of the Public Service Board on salaries of senior Public Service officers, and can the papers be laid on the table today?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The papers reached me only this morning and I have not had an opportunity to examine them, so I cannot advise the honourable member.

ONION WEED.

Mr. HEASLIP—Some time ago I asked a question regarding the eradication of onion weed, and later I was informed that the C.S.I.R.O. had taken up the matter and was making investigations. Recently I was told that the C.S.I.R.O. had dropped the matter because of more urgent investigations. Can the Minister of Agriculture say if that is so, and, if it is, what are the matters that are more important than the eradication of onion weed?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I do not know whether or not the C.S.I.R.O. has ceased its investigation into the matter and, if it has, what are the reasons, but I will make inquiries and let the honourable member know.

PETROL PRICE.

Mr. STOTT—Has the Treasurer conferred with petrol companies and the Prices Commissioner on a possible rise in the price of standard petrol?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Last Friday the petrol companies waited on me as a deputation to appeal against a decision of the Prices Commissioner and pointed out that the margin at present provided in this State is not adequate to return costs and a reasonable margin of profit. I informed the deputation that the Commissioner had already recommended two increases in the price of products sold by the companies, but that I would give them a copy of his report so that they might study it and then send officers to interview the Commissioner and see whether their submissions could be supported by him. That was acceptable to the companies. A copy of the report has been sent to them, and I believe that officers of the various Melbourne companies have come to Adelaide today to confer with the Commissioner. I express no

view at this stage on my conclusions in respect of their submission: I prefer to wait until the result of the conference is conveyed to me, but I believe an announcement will be made, perhaps next week.

CEMENT FOR ROAD MAKING.

Mr. GOLDNEY—Has the Minister of Lands a further reply to my recent question regarding the use of cement for roadmaking?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Minister of Roads has forwarded the following report:—

Roads have already been constructed by using cement. Descriptions of the work carried out by the Highways Department have been contained in the last two annual reports.

OTTOWAY FLOOD WATERS.

Mr. STEPHENS—Has the Premier a further reply to my question concerning floodwaters at Ottoway?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Although the discharge of these storm waters is primarily the responsibility of local governing bodies, assisted in some cases by a grant from the Commissioner of Highways where a main road is concerned, the disposal of such water would interfere with the developmental work being carried out by the Harbors Board in that area. In consequence, the board was asked to design a scheme which would not only satisfy its requirements, but also be acceptable to the other parties concerned. In the scheme as designed floodwaters would be collected from the vicinity of the wool stores area and conveyed by means of an open channel in a northeasterly direction to a proposed pondage basin in Magazine Creek. The proposals have been drawn up so that they will involve the minimum capital cost necessary to ensure an effective scheme. Even so, the estimated costs are: (a) Initial scheme, £90,000; and (b) Final scheme, £131,000. The proposed pondage basin would be moved from further downstream in Magazine Creek. This would not be needed until the Harbors Board completes its reclamation of the area to the North Arm water front alignment. The scheme has been under active consideration, but because of the limitations imposed upon the Government in regard to Loan funds, it has not been possible to allocate any money to this scheme up to the present. The matter will, however, receive consideration in connection with next year's Loan programme, and as a preliminary thereto the Minister of Marine will convene a conference of the Harbors Board, the councils concerned

and the Commissioner of Highways to work out a plan for distribution of the costs involved.

NARACOORTE-KINGSTON RAILWAY.

Mr. CORCORAN—Has the Premier a reply to my question of September 26 concerning the progress made on the broadening of the railway line between Naracoorte and Kingston?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Earthworks are complete from Naracoorte for about 23 miles, and 90 per cent complete to 30 miles from Naracoorte. Work is in progress at localities not affected by floodwaters as far as 38½ miles towards Kingston. The broad gauge track with third rail has been laid from Naracoorte to within a few chains of Stewart Range, and rails are laid out further. The new track has been given the first lift on ballast as far out as 6½ miles. The new bridge across Baker Range drain has been completed and substructures of bridges and culverts have been constructed or strengthened between Naracoorte and Lucindale. Substantial progress has been made with the laying of tracks and construction of buildings at the site of the new station yard at Lucindale.

BOOLCUNDA CREEK RESERVOIR.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Has the Minister of Irrigation a reply to my recent question concerning the practicability of constructing a water scheme on the Boolcunda Creek near Quorn?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—The Assistant Director of Lands states:—

The investigation of the scheme proposed for the storage of water in Boolcunda Creek for irrigating land on the plain between Quorn and Willochra has been advanced to the stage where plans have been produced from aerial photographs, showing the drainage features and the catchment area. The Engineer-in-Chief has now been asked to report on the possibilities of obtaining and storing sufficient water for the project. If the Engineer-in-Chief's reply is favourable, investigations into production and costs will be undertaken immediately.

EGG INDUSTRY.

Mr. LAUCKE—Has the Minister of Agriculture any information on the problems confronting the egg industry?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I took this matter up with the Commonwealth authorities and I have received a reply from the Commonwealth Minister for Primary Industry (the Hon. William McMahon), which states:—

The Commonwealth Government has carefully examined proposals to subsidize the poultry industry but has not been able to accept them.

It has taken the view that the future stability of the industry lies along the lines of lower costs of production rather than dependency on Government subsidies. In order to achieve greater efficiency in the industry, the Commonwealth is, as you know, providing substantial financial assistance to State Departments of Agriculture to enable them to introduce poultry improvement plant. I anticipate that about £59,000 will be provided for this purpose from the Commonwealth Extension Services Grant during the current financial year. As part of the drive for increased efficiency a three-man investigation team from Australia is at present abroad examining all aspects of poultry production, especially in the U.S.A. where the efficiency of poultry farming is of a high order. One of the officers in that team (Mr. A. A. McArdle of the Department of Agriculture) returned to his duties in Adelaide early this week. Because of pressure of work I have been unable to confer with him on the results of his trip, but I hope to do so soon.

DRUNKEN DRIVING.

Mr. TAPPING—Has the Premier a reply to the question I asked recently about an apparent increase in the number of cases of drunken driving?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I have received the following report from the Commissioner of Police:—

The following convictions have been recorded for the offence of "driving under the influence of liquor":—

Year ended 30/6/54	407
Year ended 30/6/55	372
Year ended 30/6/56	496

For the quarter ended 30/9/56, 119 persons were convicted for this offence compared with 121 for the same period in the previous year. I am of opinion that the present law is adequate.

TRAMWAYS TRUST BY-LAWS.

Mr. HUTCHENS—On September 4 I asked the Premier whether it would be possible to reprint the Tramways Trust by-laws. Has he a reply to that question?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Mr. Keynes, general manager of the Tramways Trust, has advised me that the board has under consideration the question of a complete revision of the by-laws to meet modern public transport conditions. Accordingly, it would seem that no good purpose would be served by making a re-print of the present by-laws.

TEROWIE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Terowie has no reticulated water supply. Some years ago investigations were made into the possibility of securing an underground supply, but the report was not favourable. Now that a

pipeline is being laid from Jamestown to Peterborough to connect with the Morgan-Whyalla main, will the Minister representing the Minister of Works investigate the practicability of a connection with that pipeline to provide a reticulated supply for Terowie?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I shall be pleased to refer that question to my colleague, the Minister of Works.

MURRAY RIVER TOURIST TRADE.

Mr. KING—Will the Premier ascertain whether the Transport Control Board recently refused a permit for a passenger bus to take tourists to the Murray River areas on week-ends, and will he consider asking the board to relax its attitude so that week-end tourist traffic to the river can be assisted instead of frustrated?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—I will inquire into that matter.

HENLEY BEACH-GRANGE RAILWAY SERVICE.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Has the Premier received a report in reply to several questions I have asked this session about insufficient seating accommodation on the Henley Beach-Grange service since the changeover from steam to diesel trains?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—The Railways Commissioner reports:—

When the new service came into operation, as from August 26 last, the number of trains between Adelaide and Henley Beach was increased from 35 to 39 in each direction, with an approximately even spacing of 30 minutes between trains. Concurrently with the new service operated by the diesel rail cars, the running time between Henley Beach and Adelaide was reduced from 36 to 30 minutes. It is true that with the present availability of new diesel rail cars, sufficient seats are not available for all peak hour trains. It is not unreasonable to expect a certain number of standing passengers during the peak periods. However, when more of this equipment becomes available it will be possible to ease this position somewhat.

CEDUNA FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE.

Mr. RICHES—I wish to direct a question to the Premier on my own behalf and also on behalf of the member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday), who will not be able to attend the sittings again this session. During the Budget debate Mr. Loveday spoke at some length on the grant to the Ceduna Flying Doctor Service. A line on the Estimates was passed on the understanding that the Treasurer would consult the Chief Secretary with a view to

considering the claim put forward for an increased grant. Has this matter been considered yet?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—No. It is not possible towards the end of a Parliamentary session to investigate particular claims when it is necessary to get detailed information. However, I will carry out my promise as soon as I get the opportunity, but it will not be before Parliament rises next week. I think all members realize that with such a lot of detailed Parliamentary work during a session it is not possible to spend much time on administrative work.

DELAYS IN COURT HEARINGS.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Will the Minister representing the Attorney-General ascertain whether it has been brought to the notice of the Attorney-General that serious delays are being experienced in the Supreme Court in hearing civil cases, particularly matrimonial cases? I have been told that a case set down for hearing last July has now been listed for hearing in February, and one of the solicitors concerned has been informed that the case may not be heard even then. If this information is correct will the Government consider appointing another judge or taking administrative action to expedite the hearing of civil cases in the Supreme Court?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I will refer the question to the Attorney-General for report.

BOOKPURNONG SOLDIER SETTLEMENT SCHEME.

Mr. STOTT—Last week the Minister of Lands said that the Commonwealth Government had refused to grant assistance for the proposed soldier settlement scheme at Bookpurnong. He indicated, however, that the matter had not been finalized. Will he have a survey made to ascertain whether a pipeline could be constructed from the Loxton pumping station to Bookpurnong to avoid the cost of establishing an additional pumping station further upstream? If sufficient applications are not forthcoming from ex-servicemen, will he consider making land available to other persons who are anxious to take up blocks?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—I think I told the honourable member that a survey of applicants is being made. Information as to whether they are prepared to take blocks is due today. It may be costly to connect the scheme with the Loxton pumping station, but I will examine the suggestion.

AGE LIMIT FOR EMPLOYMENT.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—I have had a complaint that recently unskilled male workers approaching the Commonwealth Employment Bureau have been told that there are no vacancies for men over 45 years of age. Will the Premier ascertain if employers seeking labour are stipulating that men over 45 are not eligible for engagement?

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD—Yes.

METROPOLITAN TAXICAB BILL.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to provide for the control of taxicabs in the metropolitan area and for incidental purposes. Read a first time.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move:—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its presentation has been delayed to get substantial unanimity among the bodies affected. I realize that it is not desirable to introduce a major measure of this nature at this late stage, but it is not the Government's fault. Complete unanimity on every point has not been accomplished, but the matter has been discussed with the councils and other interests concerned and the degree of difference between them is now slight. I think I can say that they all desire the passage of the Bill. I will give the second reading explanation now so that members will have an opportunity of studying the Bill and consulting interested parties over the week end.

It will be recalled that, in 1954, the Government introduced a Bill for the control of taxicabs in the metropolitan area. It was based upon the recommendations made by a representative committee appointed in December, 1952, the chairman of which was Sir Kingsley Paine. The committee, in its report, pointed out in detail the disadvantages of the existing method of control in the metropolitan area, which is exercised by councils under by-laws made pursuant to powers conferred by the Local Government Act. The committee pointed out that many metropolitan councils have made by-laws with the result that a taxi-driver who wishes to ply for hire throughout the metropolitan area must comply with the by-laws, as to payment of licence fees and otherwise, of a number of councils.

The committee recommended that there should be one and only one licensing authority for the

metropolitan area, and recommended that this authority should be the Adelaide City Council. The 1954 Bill gave effect to this and other recommendations of the committee but, after its introduction, it became apparent that, although it was generally agreed that there should be one authority, there was considerable difference of opinion as to who should be the controlling authority. As a result of these divergent views and, in view of the fact that the Government was not prepared to proceed with legislation unless it was generally acceptable to those concerned, the Bill was not proceeded with.

Since then, the councils and others interested in the taxi business, have joined in the membership of an advisory committee formed to advise councils. Upon this committee are representatives of the Adelaide City Council, suburban councils, sections of the taxi business and the police. This advisory committee is fully convinced of the desirability of constituting one controlling body in the metropolitan area and has had many meetings and consultations with the Government with a view to evolving a form of control which would be generally acceptable.

The advisory committee has suggested that the controlling body should be one upon which are representatives of the Adelaide City Council, suburban councils, the various sections of the industry, and the police. On the assurance of those concerned that these proposals are acceptable to all the various interests concerned, the Government has had the present Bill prepared, which provides for a controlling authority on the lines suggested by the advisory committee but which otherwise closely follows the provisions of the 1954 Bill.

The provisions of the present Bill are as follows:—The metropolitan area is defined in clause 2 to mean the area within 10 miles of the General Post Office at Adelaide. In addition, the part of the City of Port Adelaide outside the 10 mile radius is included in order to bring the Outer Harbour district within the licensing area. Power is given to the Governor by clause 3 to include within the metropolitan area any other contiguous areas. "Taxi cab" is defined to mean a motor vehicle which seats up to eight people including the driver. The effect of this definition is to limit the Bill to ordinary motor cars of the kind usually used for taxis or hire cars. The Municipal Tramways Trust Act and, to a lesser degree, the Local Government Act, provide for the control of motor omnibuses and the effect of the definition of taxi cab in the Bill will be that

the control of these larger vehicles will remain with the Municipal Tramways Trust or the council, as the case may be.

Clauses 4 to 24 provide for the constitution of what is called the "Metropolitan Taxi-Cab Board." It is to consist of 12 members. Of these, four will be councillors of the Adelaide City Council and elected by that body. Four will be councillors from one or other of councils mentioned in the schedule, who will be appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Municipal Association. The councils mentioned in the schedule are all the municipal and district councils whose areas are wholly or partly included in the metropolitan area as defined by clause 2. It is provided that no councillor members can have any direct or indirect interest in the taxi-cab business. Two members are to be appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the section of the Employers' Federation known as the Taxi-Cab Operators' Association. One member is to be appointed by the Governor on the nomination of the Taxi Owner-Drivers' section of the Transport Workers Union. The remaining member will be appointed by the Governor and he is to be either the Commissioner of Police or an officer of police.

Members will hold office for four years and will receive such fees as are fixed by the Governor. The chairman, who is to be appointed by the Governor, will be one of the Adelaide City Council members. The board may appoint a deputy from the members. Six members will constitute a quorum of the board, which may appoint committees of its members and delegate powers to any committee. The board will receive all the licence fees payable under the Bill and fines for offences and it is required to meet the cost of the administration of the Bill from its revenue.

The board is given power to appoint officers and provision is made whereby it may, by arrangement with the council, use the services of officers or equipment of the Adelaide City Council or any other council. It is expected that the board will arrange with the Adelaide City Council for the services of the taxi licensing staff of that council, which has had considerable experience in dealing with this matter. In order to enable the board to raise funds required for its initial expenses, power is given to the board to borrow on overdraft. The board is to make an annual report to the Minister which is to be tabled in Parliament. Other usual provisions relating to boards of this kind are included. It is provided by clause 25 that the licensing provisions of the

Bill will come into force on a day to be proclaimed by the Governor. Prior to this day, it may be expected that the board will be appointed and the regulations necessary to give effect to the Bill and the requisite administrative arrangements will have been made. Clause 26 provides that, after the proclaimed day, it will be an offence to drive, own or keep a taxicab in the metropolitan area unless it is licensed under the Bill, whilst clause 27 makes it an offence to drive a taxicab in the metropolitan area without a taxicab driver's licence. In its report, the committee previously referred to stressed the necessity for preventing unlicensed taxis from plying for hire and has recommended that, if a driver of an unlicensed vehicle is convicted, the court should have power to disqualify him from holding a driver's licence under the Road Traffic Act. Section 38a of that Act already provides that such action may be taken if a person is convicted of an offence in the commission of which a motor vehicle was used, when the court may disqualify the defendant from holding a driver's licence for the period fixed by the court or until further order by the court. Clause 28 makes it clear that section 38a and other relevant sections of the Road Traffic Act will apply if a person is convicted of the offence of driving an unlicensed taxi or of driving a taxi without holding a taxicab driver's licence.

Clause 29 authorizes the board to issue taxicab and taxicab drivers' licences to fit and proper persons, whilst clause 30 authorizes the issue of temporary licences. It is obviously most necessary that licences should be issued only to fit and proper persons and clause 31 provides that the board is not to issue a licence to a person unless satisfied that he is a fit and proper person to be licensed. The clause also provides that the board may obtain from the Commissioner of Police a report upon an applicant for a licence. In addition, it is provided that in any case where he thinks fit, and whether a report has been asked for or not, the Commissioner may report to the board on the suitability of a licensee or an applicant for a licence.

Clause 32 gives the board a discretion in the issue of licences. It also provides that a transfer, lease, or other dealing in a licence must have the consent of the board. This matter is one of some importance and it is most desirable that there should be a check on unrestricted dealing in licences. Subclause (3) of clause 32 provides that if a taxicab licence in respect of a taxicab is issued to a

person other than the owner of the taxi, or if the board consents to the licence being transferred or leased to such a person, it must report to the Minister its reasons for so doing, and the report is to be laid before Parliament. In general, it is expected that a licence for a taxicab will be held by the owner of the taxi and the clause therefore provides that, where there is a departure from this rule, the reasons for so doing must be made public. Clause 33 provides that if at the proclaimed day an applicant for a licence under the Bill holds a corresponding licence under any council by-law, the term of which still has some time to run, that licence will cease to have effect but he will be entitled to a refund from the council of a proportionate part of the licence fee.

Clause 34 provides that the Governor may, on the recommendation of the board, make regulations for a variety of topics. These include the conditions upon which licences may be granted, fees to be paid, the testing of taxicabs, appeals to the board from decisions of officers of the board, fares to be charged to passengers, conduct of drivers and so on. In general, these regulation making powers are similar to the by-law making powers now given by the Local Government Act to municipal councils. It is provided, however, that regulations must be made laying down the conditions upon which licences may be transferred, leased or otherwise dealt with. As pointed out when dealing with clause 32, this question is of importance and it is therefore made obligatory by clause 34 for regulations to be made dealing with the matter.

The effect of clause 35 is to provide that the board will have exclusive control over the licensing of taxis and drivers within the metropolitan area and that the existing by-law making powers of metropolitan councils in this regard will come to an end. However, section 370 of the Local Government Act provides that a council may appoint stands for taxis in its area and other sections provide that a council may make by-laws dealing with this matter. In accordance with the recommendation of the committee, this power is still left with the councils so that, whilst the licensing of taxis and drivers and the regulation of incidental matters will be solely for the board, councils will still have the right to fix taxi stands and to charge fees for their use.

Clause 36 provides that the Bill is to read subject to the Municipal Tramways Trust Act, the Road and Railway Transport Act, and the

Road Traffic Act. However, it is provided that the Road and Railway Transport Act is not to apply to the carriage of passengers in a licensed taxi cab for a journey from the metropolitan area to a place distant not more than 25 miles from the General Post Office. This provision will not entitle the taxi cab to ply for hire outside the metropolitan area but it is considered that the exemption in question should apply to a journey which starts in the metropolitan area. Clause 37 enables members and officers of the board to enter premises and examine vehicles suspected to be driven or kept in contravention of the Bill, and clause 38 makes it an offence to obstruct any person in the exercise of his duty under the Bill. Clause 39 deals with the service of notices.

Clause 40 provides that the certificate of the chairman, deputy chairman, or secretary of the board that a vehicle was or was not licensed as a taxi or that a person was or was not licensed as a taxi cab driver or that any person was the owner of a specified vehicle is to be *prima facie* evidence of the fact alleged. Clause 41 provides that the allegation in the complaint that any place is within the metropolitan area or that any vehicle is a taxi cab or a motor vehicle is *prima facie* evidence of the fact alleged.

Clause 42 provides that if evidence is given that any motor vehicle is driven which has displayed on it a sign or device that it is a taxi or hire car or available for hire, it is to be deemed to have been driven for the purpose of carrying passengers for hire. It is also provided that if passengers are in a motor vehicle, they shall be deemed to be carried for hire unless the defendant satisfies the court to the contrary. This latter provision is similar to a provision in the Road and Railway Transport Act. In recommending the provisions contained in clause 42, the committee pointed out that evidentiary provisions of this nature are necessary to prevent what is called "pirating" by drivers of unlicensed taxi cabs. The remaining clauses do not call for special comment.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

BUSINESS OF HOUSE.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:—

That for the remainder of the session Government business take precedence over all other business except questions.

Motion carried.

MARRIAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The Hon. T. PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer)—I move:—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to raise the age of marriage. It is in substantially the same terms as a Bill introduced last year which, owing to pressure of business and its controversial nature, was allowed to lapse. At present there is no legislation in South Australia fixing any minimum age for marriage. The matter is regulated by common law. The position at common law is that girls who have attained the age of 12 and boys who have attained the age of 14 are capable of contracting a completely valid marriage. In theory a valid marriage can be contracted by a girl or boy under these ages, but the marriage is not binding unless affirmed after both parties have attained the ages mentioned. Although girls and boys have thus full capacity to marry on attaining the ages of 12 and 14, under the Marriage Act they cannot marry without parental consent until they attain the age of 21.

Last year the Government was approached by representatives of a number of organizations with the request that the age of marriage should be raised. The principal reason advanced for so doing was to protect young people from unhappy early marriages. It was submitted that the provisions of the Marriage Act prohibiting minors from marrying without parental consent do not protect children adequately. It was argued that where an unmarried girl becomes pregnant the parties are often forced into marriage by their parents, and that such marriages are not usually satisfactory. Attention was also drawn to the great difference between the age of consent under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act and the age at which persons can marry. It was also pointed out that the age of marriage is 16 for both sexes in Great Britain and 16 for girls and 18 for boys in Tasmania.

As a result of these representations, the Government investigated the matter, and came to the conclusion that the minimum age for marriage should be 16 for girls and 18 for boys. Information obtained by the Government indicated that in modern times girls under 16 and boys under 18 were too immature to undertake the responsibilities of marriage and that boys under 18 did not, in most cases, earn enough to marry. It also appeared that marriages of young girls were very often entered into to save the reputation of the parties, and in many cases only to save the man from prosecution.

Such marriages frequently failed, and when they did the children of the marriage became the responsibility of the State or charity. The Government found that in the previous five years 94 girls under 16 and 86 boys under 18 had married.

The Government has not altered the opinion which it arrived at last year, and accordingly is introducing this Bill once more. Honourable members may be interested to know that last year 21 boys under 18 and 32 girls under 16 married. The Bill provides that all marriages contracted after the commencement of the Bill between persons either of whom is a girl under 16 or a boy under 18 shall be void.

If the Bill went no further one of its effects would be that a child born of parents prevented from marrying by the Bill would be incapable of being legitimated by the subsequent marriage of its parents. This is because under the Births and Deaths Registration Act a child cannot be legitimated by the subsequent marriage of his parents if there is a legal impediment to their marriage at the time of his birth. The Government considers that it is desirable in the public interest that offspring of parents who are prevented from marrying only by their youth should be capable of being legitimated by their subsequent marriage after attaining the prescribed age. The Bill accordingly provides for this. The Bill will come into operation on a day fixed by proclamation. This will enable its provisions to become known before they come into force.

Mr. O'HALLORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

METROPOLITAN AND EXPORT ABATTOIRS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

TRAVELLING STOCK WAYBILLS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

LAND SETTLEMENT ACT EXTENSION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1243.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—Unlike some recent Bills, this one is comparatively short and deals with a

specific matter. Under the present Act the Land Settlement Committee would have ceased to function at the end of this year, but it is now proposed to extend its life for a further 12 months. My only complaint is that the extension should be for a longer period. Indeed, I should like to see the committee and the legislation made a permanent feature. When this committee was established in 1944 I expressed the opinion that it could do valuable work in promoting land settlement. I admit that I had some doubts about the provisions under which the committee was expected to work, and unfortunately, the passage of time has confirmed those doubts, for although the committee has done excellent work in investigating and reporting on matters referred to it, it has not had the opportunity to do as much good work for the State as it should have, largely because of the administration of the Government.

The original legislation provided for the compulsory acquisition of under-developed land after it had been inquired into and reported on by the committee, and in the early stages the committee was active in that regard. Then a former member for the district of Victoria made some serious and fulsome charges against the Government of the day, accusing it of all kinds of crime including that of using Communistic tactics against South-Eastern landholders. Although his charges were indignantly—and, I believe, truthfully—repudiated, I am afraid that at the time they influenced the Government in its administration of this legislation because, so far as I know, since then there has been little inquiry by the committee into under-developed land.

Although I appreciate the considerable development in the South-East and other parts of the State of land that may have been classified as under-developed in accordance with the provisions of the legislation, I believe there is more scope for inquiry into this matter; therefore I would be more enthusiastic in my support of the Bill if it extended the life of the committee for a longer period. We are not making sufficient progress in settling people on the land in South Australia. Although good work in settling ex-servicemen has been done by the present Minister of Lands, often on the advice of this committee and particularly on the advice of the Land Development Executive, nothing has been done to promote schemes for ordinary closer settlement.

The war has now been over for 11 years, during which time a new generation of potential primary producers and land seekers, who could not serve during the war because they were too young, have come of age and are seeking opportunities for settlement. I frequently receive inquiries from excellent types of young men who have saved considerable money and want to go on the land, but I have to point out, disheartening as it is, that there is no scheme to help them at present. I mention this, not in criticism of the Bill, but in the hope that the Government will consider the urgent need for further land settlement schemes so that next year we shall have a Bill to enlarge the powers of the committee and make it a permanent feature. The committee could do work which might not be as spectacular as that of the Public Works Committee, but could lay a sound basis for the establishment of closer settlement schemes and the maintenance of closer settlement. I support the Bill.

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS (Minister of Lands)—I always appreciate the Leader of the Opposition's interest in land settlement. I thought he would touch on certain topics this afternoon and I have secured some figures that I am sure will please him. In the last 10 years we have made 3,626 allotments, apart from allotments under soldier settlement. I am sure the Leader would not have expected there had been so many.

Mr. O'Halloran—Were they new allotments?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes. Under the War Service Land Settlement Scheme the Commonwealth had purchased from us 678,472 acres up to June 30, 1956.

Mr. O'Halloran—Have you any figures showing the amount of holdings lost by re-aggregation during that 10-year period?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—No, but I will get that. About four-fifths of that 678,472 acres was virgin or semi-virgin country. When fully developed, those areas will be a great asset to the State.

Mr. O'Halloran—Where is the bulk of that country?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—There are big areas on Kangaroo Island and in the South-East. We have settled about 1,000 dry land and irrigation settlers on the land, and, speaking from memory, another 1,200 settlers have received various types of loans to assist them on their blocks or to get on to blocks. I am in sympathy with the Leader of the Opposition's suggestion that next year we extend the term of the Land Settlement Committee, and I will

discuss it in Cabinet. From its inception the committee has done excellent work. It is now investigating a further 5,667 acres on Kangaroo Island that may be purchased from a private owner, and the member for Millicent will be pleased to learn that it is making a further investigation of some 8,000 acres on Fairview Estate which may be suitable for soldier settlement.

Mr. Corcoran—Will that be a State or a Commonwealth scheme?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—We think the Commonwealth Government should accept it, but the State may go ahead with it if the Commonwealth does not. Recently we received a report on 140,000 acres in the western drainage area. Those figures show the type of work that has been done by the Land Settlement Committee. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will agree that the marginal areas scheme has been of great benefit to the State. No farmers in the marginal areas are in debt to the department. The Land Settlement (Development Leases) Act made it possible for the Australian Mutual Provident Society to take up considerable areas for development, I think between 150,000 and 200,000 acres. Several settlers have been placed on blocks and I understand that they are doing very well.

Mr. Corcoran—Will the society continue to develop land in the area it has been opening up?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—Yes. I think it has up to 100,000 acres more to develop. South Australia is essentially a primary production State and we should do all we can to assist land settlement.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1241.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—The main provision of this Bill is one extending the time within which an officer may take advantage of the privilege conferred by the 1954 amendment of the Act. The necessity for the proposed amendment arises from the fact that wage and salary adjustments did not allow all Government employees sufficient opportunity to avail themselves of the intended privilege. When we passed legislation for this privilege we should have made it a general provision instead of a specific one. Then, instead of having to amend the Act again,

officers would be able to take up additional units automatically when their salaries or wages were increased.

The other provision concerns Government employees who at the time of their engagement are over the age of 55 years and who normally would not be entitled to contribute for pensions. The Bill proposes that if, in the opinion of the Public Service Commissioner, presumably at the time of engagement, any such person should in the public interest be so entitled, the Commissioner may exempt that person from the ten-year service provision. I do not propose to raise any strong objection to this as I assume that the Commissioner would, if necessary in any particular case, have to justify his opinion that such a relaxation was "in the public interest" and not merely in the interest of the employee concerned. I support the second reading.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

SURVEYORS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1242.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is not a lengthy Bill, but it is of considerable importance as it changes the method of ascertaining the qualification of applicants for surveyors' licences and sets out more clearly the conditions under which they shall be issued by the board. The main part of the Act was passed in 1896 and it is obvious that it is time we re-examined the legislation. The principle intended to be incorporated in the Surveyors Act by this Bill is, possibly, the principle which was intended to be expressed in the original legislation—or at least in the consolidating Act passed in 1935. I understand that it is because of the uncertainty existing in the minds of those concerned regarding the power of the Surveyors Board to dispense with examinations that has prompted the introduction of an amending Bill. Thus the Bill is what the Premier would call "remedial legislation," and it is remedial in the sense that it seeks to clear up the doubt which has existed for a long time as to the meaning of the relevant provisions in the Act.

Sections 18, 19 and 20, as they now stand, are somewhat contradictory. Section 18 lays down that the Surveyors Board "shall" conduct examinations, whereas section 20 empowers the board to licence persons as surveyors without examination. One of the reasons for this apparent inconsis-

tency may be that when the original legislation was passed in 1896—and even when the present Act was passed—there was no local educational institution providing a course of instruction in surveying. The Surveyors Act implies that any local person wishing to become a licensed surveyor would become articulated to a licensed surveyor and struggle on as best he could with his studies until he felt qualified to present himself for examination by the board. This conception of the needs of the profession was no doubt inherited and, of course, conditions under this system could not be improved until some local institution undertook to provide courses of study designed to supply the necessary graduated and organized instruction. Now that that has been arranged through the School of Mines, conditions governing the training of surveyors in this State will approximate conditions obtaining in most of the other skilled occupations. In future, persons desiring to become licensed surveyors will be trained under a system combining principle and practice; and that represents a very considerable improvement on the system—or lack of system—that has obtained in the past.

The ordinary examinations will be conducted by the School of Mines and the appropriate certificates of that institution will be accepted by the board, but I understand that the board desires to retain the right to examine any applicant for a licence to ensure that he possesses the required qualifications. As this Bill seeks to give legislative sanction to these proposals I have no objection to it, but I would like to say a few words about the actual amendments included in the Bill and about the Act itself. I must confess that I found the provisions in the Bill somewhat difficult to follow until I realized that the Act does not confer upon the board the power to make regulations on these matters. Without going into the question whether the board should have this power, subject to disallowance by Parliament, I merely suggest that this is a matter that might be considered in the light of provisions made in other Acts for regulation-making powers.

There is one amendment in particular—contained in clause 5—which I do not think achieves the purpose it is intended to achieve, and perhaps the Government will examine it with a view to expressing it in some other way. I do not suggest that the clause will fail in its intention, but it might be better if the section it aims at amending were re-drafted to achieve greater clarity. The original provision was enacted in 1896 and

conditions have changed since then. At that time there was no educational body that could certify to the educational competence of future surveyors. I will not press my suggestion to the stage of amending the Bill, but the Minister might consider it with a view to obviating the necessity for amendments in the future.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

NURSES REGISTRATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 18. Page 1104.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is essentially a machinery Bill, concerned partly with validating practices which have been followed by the board and partly with changing the procedure regarding registration and retention of registration. The Bill has already passed through the Legislative Council, where there was practically no debate, and it may therefore be assumed that it is comparatively innocuous. However, it would appear that clause 7 introduces a new principle. The Act at present provides that if a nurse fails to renew her registration, that is, fails to pay the prescribed renewal fee, the board may cancel the registration after two years. The Bill provides that the registration shall continue to be effective until the board cancels it. No reason has been given for the proposed change unless it is implied in the fact that the board has not been strictly observing the provisions of the Act. The change in principle appears to be that once a nurse has been registered she may be regarded as remaining registered, unless she intimates that she wishes to be deregistered, and liable to be sued for arrears of retention fees. In view of the very small amount involved, 5s. a year, it does not seem likely that the board will prosecute for the recovery of arrears of retention fees, and it is somewhat difficult to understand why the Bill makes reference to such legal action if it gives the board power to deregister a nurse who has failed to "pay a retention fee."

As far as I have been able to ascertain, except for the fact that registration confers upon nurses certain privileges and advantages, making registration desirable, a nurse need not register so long as she does not hold herself out as a registered nurse. This Bill is dealing mainly with the formalities of registration, but we should not lose sight of the fact that the legislation is concerned with

other matters than the mere payment of fees. In this connection, I draw attention to the provisions of section 22 of the Act, and in particular to paragraph (c) of that section which provides that no person is to be registered who is not "of sound health or of such a state of health that no danger would be involved to the patients of such person." There are two considerations arising out of this provision. In the first place, section 29, which sets out the conditions under which registration may be cancelled, makes no obvious reference to the health of a nurse in conformity with section 22. In the second place, if the renewal of registration or retention is the mere formality of paying and receiving a fee, and retention fees may be paid four years in advance, this question if not already properly under control should be provided for.

Regarding the proposal to exempt nurses who are registered in another State, and who are employed full-time by the Commonwealth, from paying any fee for registration or retention of registration, it is to be assumed that this privilege will apply while such nurses are employed in South Australia.

Clause 7 provides *inter alia* that the retention fee shall be "five shillings or such other amount as may be prescribed." This provision seems somewhat anomalous. The amount should be settled in the Bill itself or left to the board to decide. The amount has been virtually settled in the original Act because it provided for a fee of £1 for registration and 5s. for the retention of registration, or such lesser amounts as the board may prescribe. We may be sure that under this Bill the amount being charged now will continue to be charged. I see nothing wrong with the legislation. It will legalize some of the things the board has been doing for a while without much sanction and make it a little easier to administer the legislation in future.

It will, however, do nothing to solve the great problem of the shortage of nurses in South Australia. I would have preferred, in this legislation, to introduce new methods of training nurses, such as the establishment of a nurses training school where for a period they could receive theoretical training prior to going to hospitals for the practical training. I have made this suggestion before and I hope the Minister of Health will accept it one day and provide a school or schools on a basis similar to that now operating in Tasmania. In that State the practice brings nurses into the profession two years earlier

than in South Australia and it also enables the girls to go immediately from high school to the nurses training school without having to do other work, which probably detracts from the desire to become nurses.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1244.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is another Bill that has been the subject of erudite scrutiny by members of another place and therefore comes to us with a certified pedigree; so far be it from me as the humble Leader of the Opposition in this place to question the wisdom of the Bill. In another place it did not receive much discussion. Everybody seemed to be of opinion that because of the radio-active substances produced from one type of stone or another coming into more general use something ought to be done about it; therefore, it was necessary for Parliament to enact laws to protect peaceful and law-abiding citizens from the effects of atomic bomb explosions. All States are to pass similar legislation and under it regulations are to be promulgated. This is desirable and I support the proposal. Of course, if a power-drunk Ministry gets out of hand in making regulations we will have the opportunity of disallowing them, both through the Subordinate Legislation Committee and in this House. The Bill also amends certain penalties that were made years ago and are now due for overhaul. They are increased in conformity with other penalties provided to meet prevailing circumstances. I support the Bill.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 25. Page 1247.)

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I support the Bill, which clears up a number of anomalies existing in the procedure of courts of summary jurisdiction. The first provision enables articulated clerks to appear before police courts. This is particularly wise, for it is necessary that persons entering the legal profession shall have some professional experience before they are admitted to the bar. Once admitted, a barrister is legally qualified to lose his client's case, but unfortunately he usually has insufficient experience to win it. Such experience is essen-

tial to court practice because it is only through experience that a barrister can develop that close knowledge of court procedure that must become second nature to him if he is to be successful.

Learning all the rules in the world is of no use to a man if he cannot go into court to gain experience of their application, and the experience that may be gained by an articulated clerk in a court of summary jurisdiction is of great use to him. Of course, he would only be directed by his principal to appear in cases that he could handle adequately with his knowledge and training at that stage. For a long time articulated clerks have been able to appear in local courts, but for some reason or other, although they could appear before justices, they have been prohibited from appearing in courts of summary jurisdiction before a Stipendiary Magistrate.

The other provisions of the Bill are useful amendments. Clause 5 deals with problems concerning the detention of children and inserts new sections 92a and 92b, which provide for the position of default by juveniles. They empower the justice to see that a default order is carried out and that this is not prevented by the juvenile's turning 18 years of age. That is a desirable amendment. Further, the power given to the justice to take a plea of guilty in the case of minor indictable offences is also extremely wise, because in many cases under the old law one had to sit for hours listening to evidence that everyone knew was agreed to before being given an opportunity to plead guilty. This meant a waste of time and public money, and the power to take a plea of guilty at any stage in such cases is a sensible one.

The amendment relating to minor offences cognizable by justices also rules out certain anomalies that arose between indictable offences and offences which, although treated summarily, were much more serious than those classed as minor indictable offences; yet a much more complicated procedure was applicable in the latter cases, which meant an obstruction to the speedy course of justice.

Provision is made for a court to take a plea from juveniles without evidence, and that, too, is a satisfactory procedure. The right of a justice to discretion as to the allowance of bail on appeal from a court of summary jurisdiction is also wise. Bail should be in the discretion of a justice where an order for conviction has been made, as it is unwise to allow people to be able to get out on bail merely by applying for it, regardless

of what harm may accrue in the opinion of the justice. The alteration of the procedure so that an appeal will automatically come on for hearing after notice of appeal is served irons out something that at present may result in technical procedural hitches and is a wise provision. None of these provisions is in any way earth shaking: they are all minor and sensible, and the sooner we have them on the Statute Book the better for all concerned.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages without amendment.

WEEDS BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 31. Page 1338.)

Clause 19—"Contributions by owners and occupiers towards cost of destroying weeds on roads"—which Mr. Laucke had moved to amend by deleting all the words in paragraph I of subclause (1).

Mr. LAUCKE—This, and other amendments that I shall move, relate to the cost of destroying weeds on roads. The effect of the amendments is that the cost shall be borne equally by landholders abutting a road on either side.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Agriculture)—I have examined the amendments and their effect is quite clear. They will bring this legislation almost precisely back to the provisions of existing legislation. The Government is prepared to accept them.

Mr. HEASLIP—I am pleased that the Minister is accepting these amendments, but I deplore the fact that the legislation will be practically the same as it is today, so the Bill will not accomplish anything. The only difference is that there will be an advisory committee with certain duties, but the Bill will not work.

Mr. SHANNON—I am pleased that the Minister is agreeing to the amendments. If the clause were passed as it stands a ratepayer who had cleared weeds on his property would have to contribute, through his rates, to the cost of destroying weeds on a road if another person with property abutting the road had not cleared weeds. The amendments are just, and will encourage district councils because they will not be burdened with one-third of the cost of clearing weeds from roads. I do not agree with Mr. Heaslip that the Bill will be valueless. It is a bold attempt to deal with a difficult problem.

Mr. QUIRKE—I am pleased that the Minister is accepting the amendments because they will remove one strong objection I had to the Bill. I, too, do not agree with Mr. Heaslip

that the Bill will not work. These amendments will make it work. Councils could not undertake the obligations placed on them by this clause.

Mr. HAMBOUR—The amendments completely satisfy me, and I am sure they will satisfy district councils in my area. I disagree with Mr. Heaslip's view. The appointment of authorized officers will greatly assist in the fight against noxious weeds because they will help councils in carrying out their duties. The amendments remove any opposition I had to the Bill.

Amendment carried.

Mr. LAUCKE moved—

At the beginning of paragraph II. of subclause (1) to delete "remaining two-thirds of the"; to delete "one-third" twice occurring in paragraph II. of subclause (1) and insert "one-half"; and to delete "as to one-third by the council and as to two-thirds" from paragraph III. of subclause (1).

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clauses (20 to 43) and title passed. Bill read a third time and passed.

METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act, 1946-1955. Read a first time.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Agriculture)—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It has been rendered necessary by the flooding of the reclaimed dairy lands along the River Murray. In the ordinary course of events the metropolitan area would during the first five months of next year require large supplies of milk from these areas, amounting to 15,000 gallons a day at the maximum. The Metropolitan Milk Board has reported to the Government that the flooding of the reclaimed areas has resulted in the dispersal of the herds to various localities both inside and outside the present metropolitan producing district, while others are being held on the high lands adjacent to the homesteads. It is clear that production from these herds will be considerably reduced, because the dry pastures will not have the same feed value as those grown under irrigation. The Milk Board anticipates that the production from these herds may, during the autumn months, be approximately 5,000 gallons a day short of requirements.

The board will accordingly be obliged to seek supplies from areas outside the normal metropolitan producing district and has already made inquiries about this matter. Although no definite assurances have been received, the board has good reason to believe that it will be possible to obtain the necessary milk. In order to do so, however, the board will be obliged to go outside the usual sources of supply, that is to obtain milk produced by producers who are not licensed under the Metropolitan Milk Supply Act. The milk will be purchased by wholesalers in the metropolitan area from wholesalers in country districts who receive milk from producers not licensed under the Act. At present milk produced by an unlicensed person cannot be sold as whole milk in the metropolitan area. For this reason it is necessary to have legislation to enable the additional milk to be obtained from abnormal sources of supply.

The chairman of the Milk Board has already carried out investigations in the districts south-east of the River Murray as to whether milk

supplies can be obtained, and he is hopeful that from that source the necessary supplies will be forthcoming. The machinery proposed in the Bill is that the board will issue permits to the holders of milk treatment licences—*i.e.*, wholesalers in the metropolitan area—authorizing them to buy chilled milk from factories or milk depots in country areas. The permits will contain conditions as to the amount of milk which can be bought, and requirements as to its quality and price, and any other matters required in the public interest. The milk purchased in accordance with a permit will be legally available for retail sale within the metropolitan area in the same way as milk produced by the holder of a milk producer's licence.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.56 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, November 6, at 2 p.m.