HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Thursday, October 17, 1957.

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

QUESTIONS.

TEROWIE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. O'HALLORAN—Some time ago I approached the Minister of Works on behalf of the people of Terowie who are keen to have a connection (which was proposed at one stage) with the pipeline now being constructed between Jamestown and Peterborough so that Terowie might have a reticulated supply. Has the department provided estimates, will it be necessary to refer the scheme to the Public Works Committee and, if so, has any consideration been given to such a reference?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have the estimates, and it will be necessary to refer the scheme to the Public Works Committee, if Cabinet decided to do so, as a matter of policy, as the amount is £117,500. It is not a good scheme economically because the estimated revenue is £2,320 and the estimated annual loss is £17,473. The water would have to be pumped four times along the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline—once subsequently between Spalding and Jamestown, between Jamestown and Belalie North, and between Belalie North and Terowie, plus the increased pumping plant at Jamestown to take care of the extra consumption at Terowie. Many works have already been approved and are in course of construction, and any new work undertaken today can only be done at the expense of something already approved or deferred because it creates an additional call on Loan funds.

STANDARD TIME.

Mr. JENKINS—From today's *Advertiser* I noted that questions have been asked in another place on whether South Australian time could be standardized with that of the eastern States. What are the Premier's views on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will obtain a report for the honourable member by Tuesday next.

ASSISTANCE FOR COMMUNITY CENTRES.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—My question concerns an area of land owned by the Marion Corporation. A committee desired to establish a community centre and a hall, and in December, 1955, started a house-to-house canvass, and, with the assistance of the *Advertiser*, raised an amount of £1,072. Approaches were made to the corporation for it to become guarantor for a loan of about £7,000, but a legal opinion stated that this could not be done. The Superannuation Board was prepared to advance a loan, but the committee did not have the deeds of the property, and I believe that if it did that, too, would have had an effect on assistance being provided by the corporation. Will the Premier consider amending the Local Government Act Amendment Bill, which is now before Parliament, to enable councils to be guarantors for loans for the establishment of community centres, or would it be possible to establish a fund which could be administered through the State Bank to give such assistance?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I will examine the merits of the question and advise the honourable member in due course.

VISIT OF QUEEN MOTHER.

Mr. HAMBOUR—Has the Premier anything further to report on the possibility of the Queen Mother visiting this State early in the new year?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I cannot take the matter much further than I did in reply to a question by the member for Mitcham a few days ago. I believe there is an excellent chance of the Queen Mother visiting South Australia at the end of February or beginning of March. A programme has been drawn up and submitted by the Commonwealth authorities to the Palace.

SAVINGS BANK CHEQUE FACILITIES.

Mr. FRED WALSH—Some banking institutions, other than trading banks, are extending cheque facilities to their depositors, and yesterday it was reported that the Victorian Government had introduced a Bill to allow the State Savings Bank to do this. Has the Government considered extending cheque facilities to ordinary Savings Bank depositors of this State?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I saw the report that the Victorian Government intended giving that power for cheque facilities but it also stated that it was not yet decided whether the Savings Bank of Victoria would adopt that precedure or not. I concluded—and it may be a wrong conclusion—that this cheque facility would be used by the private savings banks rather than by the Government Savings Bank of Victoria. Members may know that in all other States,

with the possible exception of Tasmania, private savings banks have been established. As far as I can remember I have received no request from the South Australian Savings Bank for an alteration of its Act. There has been no recent request, but I will check to see whether there has been one in the past. If not, I will submit the question to the Savings Bank Board to ascertain whether it believes it would be of advantage to depositors and is the type of banking it should undertake.

TRANQUILLIZING DRUGS.

Mr. COUMBE—Recent reports indicate that supplies of so-called tranquillizing drugs in proprietary form are too easily available to the public and that this has led to considerable abuse. Will the Acting Minister of Health consider this position with a view to making the procurement of these drugs from a chemist possible only by doctor's prescription?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—An advisory committee advises the Government on these matters from time to time. I will have this matter placed before it and advise the honourable member in due course.

NAPPERBY SCHOOL TEACHER'S RESIDENCE.

Mr. RICHES—Has the Minister of Education discussed with officers of his department a request that consideration be given to making provision on next year's building plan for the erection of a school teacher's residence at Napperby?

The Hon. B. PATTINSON—As stated earlier, there is only a limited amount available for the building of school houses this financial year and all superintendents have forwarded long lists of requirements. Those recommended are great in number and will carry into the next financial year. It is too soon for me to make any final decision as to which ones will be constructed in the next financial year. I have discussed this particular school with the Director and if I can give any satisfaction I will do so, but I do not like making promises which I find later I cannot carry out.

EYRE PENINSULA ROADS.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—Can the Minister representing the Minister of Roads inform me when work will be resumed on the Lincoln Highway between Whyalla and Port Neill and whether improvements will be made to the Eyre Highway in the near future?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will make inquiries from the Minister and bring down a report as early as possible.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND ROAD MOIETIES.

Mr. FLETCHER—I have received correspondence from the Corporation of the City of Mount Gambier indicating that various Government departments have not paid moieties for roadmaking and footpath construction. The Railways Department and Housing Trust have paid these moieties, but over the last five years the Education Department has refused to do so and at the present time owes the corporation £60, and the Factories and Steam Boilers Department has an outstanding account for £11 1s. Can the Premier indicate whether Government departments are in duty bound to pay moieties, or are they by law excluded from doing so?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—No Act of Parliament actually binds the Crown. The Government is not legally responsible to pay roadmaking moieties and possibly the confusion over this particular matter arises from this fact. Actually the Government does not shirk its obligation in paying a fair amount. If the honourable member will let me know the circumstances of the outstanding accounts I will make inquiries, and if the amounts are fair and proper they will be paid. Government departments have been instructed that if such accounts are fair and proper they must be met.

DUPLICATION OF MORGAN-WHYALLA PIPELINE.

Mr. HEASLIP—I favour country towns being supplied with water where possible. Mention is made in the Governor's Speech of a possible deviation from the existing pipeline. In all probability those connected with the present pipeline could be rationed with water, but can the Minister advise whether the proposed deviation line will take priority over any other schemes which would drain supplies from the existing pipeline, causing severe rationing to those already connected?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Obviously, I cannot say which schemes will take priority, because the duplication of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline, at the very best, must be some years ahead. Much planning has to be done in the meantime and millions of pounds will be involved. Parliament in due time will decide; it is not for me to say now. I know people are very concerned about the position there, but, as the honourable member knows, when practically the whole State was under restrictions years ago

the area served by the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline was the only one which escaped restrictions. We are now pumping water into the Bundaleer reservoir to safeguard the position as far as possible. As to future priorities, a Minister today could not decide; it would be for a subsequent Parliament to do so.

Mr. RICHES—I refer to the proposal to duplicate the northern areas pipeline. For some time we have been looking for a definite statement since this project has been referred to in the Governor's opening speeches for two or three years, and the statement this afternoon that it is still years away will give no comfort to the people in northern areas. Will the Minister of Works call for a report from the department on the progress made in planning the pipeline so that the House may be informed, if possible next week, of the actual position?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I think I said—and *Hansard* will show it—that under the most favourable circumstances completion of that line will be some years ahead, because it must first be planned and approved, and the money appropriated by Parliament.

Mr. Riches—We thought planning was well on the way.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—It is going ahead consistently with work in other areas, some of which have not water at all. The honourable member's district has been well served indeed. It is one of the areas that escaped restrictions while the rest of the State was under them. The department has in hand a full programme that includes works which have been already approved and must be proceeded with. I am not in a position to say offhand how far the staff have been able to complete their surveys, but the work is progressing satisfactorily and I think the Premier said earlier that there was a margin of safety—and there still is—between the capacity of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline and the demand for water therefrom. This year, of course, has been extraordinarily dry and the various reservoirs have had to be supplemented from that supply. Usually it is only a reserve for those reservoirs rather than a main supply. The supply originally was intended for Whyalla, and later it was taken to Woomera, but it was never conceived in the first place that it should take the place of permanent reservoirs. The planning is going ahead, but there are other areas without water that will have to receive consideration before Parliament can give a priority to this scheme.

RESERVOIR ROAD BRIDGE.

Mr. LAUCKE—I am impelled to refer to a bridge on the Reservoir Road between Modbury and Hope Valley which is regarded by the people of the district as a virtual deathtrap. It is very narrow, constituting a bottleneck on a road carrying an increasing volume of traffic, its masonry crumbling and there is a deep fall to the creek below. I do not think the position is fully appreciated by the Highways Department, and I ask the Minister of Works representing the Minister of Roads whether a further investigation could be made with a view to having the bridge rebuilt and widened.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will have that done.

SUCCESSION DUTIES TAXATION.

Mr. STOTT—The State succession duties tax is a most iniquitous and vicious form of taxation and it has had a serious effect on some people, especially where an estate has been left to a widow and she has afterwards died and left a family in dire circumstances and unable to find the ready cash to meet the tax. Will the Treasurer place the matter before Cabinet with a view to reducing this tax to an absolute minimum?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—Only this morning I was examining the comparative succession duties levied in the various States. South Australia is getting an adverse adjustment by the Commonwealth Grants Commission because our succession duties are lower than those applying in any other State. Under our tax, if a person leaves an estate of £10,000 and leaves £1,000 to each person, the recipients pay at the £1,000 rate whereas in the other States it is more an estate duty and the rate is based on the total amount of the £10,000. I can give the honourable member no prospect that it will be possible to reduce the rates at present imposed. There was a time when if there were a rapid succession of deaths associated with one estate the tax fell very heavily on the survivors. The honourable member will perhaps have forgotten that we have already passed legislation on that topic providing that if deaths occur within a period of five years after a former death a reduction is made in the succession duties rate. Therefore, that part of the honourable member's question has already been met by legislation.

AGRICULTURAL LIME PRICES.

Mr. HARDING—Has the Minister of Agriculture a reply to my recent question regarding the price of agricultural lime?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—I have received a rather lengthy report from the Chief Agricultural Adviser, and I will make it available to the honourable member. It is of great interest and importance that purchasers of agricultural lime for use as a fertilizer on lucerne crops, sown on deep sandy soil, should realize that the quality and texture of the lime are of the greatest importance. In other words, the lime content must be of high availability to the plant and the texture must be extremely fine so that the maximum contact between seed and fertilizer is achieved. It is being produced in commercial quantities by a firm near Mount Gambier and is available from that point at about £4 10s. a ton in bulk and at Port Adelaide at a correspondingly higher price, taking freight into account. I take this opportunity to point out to potential purchasers that it is necessary that they should satisfy themselves that they are getting a product which is suitable to their requirements and which conforms to the Agricultural Chemicals Act.

BORDER FENCES.

Mr. KING—Can the Minister of Lands say who is responsible for maintaining the border fences on the eastern border of South Australia abutting New South Wales and Victoria?

The Hon. C. S. HINCKS—As the honourable member was good enough to tell me earlier that he would ask this question I have been able to obtain the following information. The fence on the South Australian-Victorian border, south of the Murray as far as the middle of the hundred of Senior, was erected by the Victorian Government. The South Australian Government neither holds any interest in it nor accepts any responsibility for its maintenance. The fence on the South Australian-New South Wales border was erected in 1913 at the joint expense of the two States. South Australia handed over to New South Wales all its rights and interests in this fence as from July 1, 1934, and since that date has declined to make any contribution towards maintenance.

SALE OF SUBSTANDARD COTTAGES.

Mr. DUNNAGE—Has the Premier yet received the report from the Registrar-General of Deeds that he promised in reply to my earlier question concerning the sale of multiple dwellings?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Registrar-General of Deeds reports:—

It has become quite common to find that a row of cottages each with very small area has been sold to various people, and it is clear that the purchase price paid by each purchaser is intended to represent a particular cottage. It is not possible, however, to obtain a certificate of title for each cottage because of the Town Planning Act, 1956. One certificate of title only therefore exists for say three or four cottages and this certificate of title is transferred to the three or four purchasers in the proportion to which each has contributed. Agreements (sometimes leases for very long periods) are then entered into between the purchasers in order that each will be able to maintain exclusive possession of one cottage. Contingencies, such as fire, are features of such a transaction and only emphasize the hazards of the venture. This may be contrasted with the City of Adelaide to which the Town Planning Act does not apply. Here a separate certificate of title may be obtained for a cottage however small. In case of fire or demolition, an area of land may be left which is below that set out in the Building Act. It is relevant to point out that if demolition takes place under the Housing Improvement Act, 1940-1950, and the land concerned is below the area prescribed by the Building Act, power is given to acquire further land adjoining.

PRICES DEPARTMENT OFFICER.

Mr. FRANK WALSH—Has the Premier, as Minister in charge of prices, a further reply to my question concerning the activities of an officer of the Prices Department?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Prices Commissioner reports:—

Investigation into this matter discloses that the officer concerned does not carry out business as a consulting engineer other than in an honorary position in his own time at the request of the executive committee of a certain institution with which he is actively associated. Other than this, the officer does a few odd jobs at weekends at the request of personal friends. He has never received or sought a profit for the few jobs he has done. The officer has also given a Statutory Declaration to the above effect. There appears to be little substance in the allegation.

The docket is available to the honourable member if he desires to see the declaration made by the officer.

ABATTOIRS PRICES FOR SHEEP.

Mr. HEASLIP—Yesterday's *Advertiser* reported that a Balaklava producer had received from 1s. to 1s. 6d. a head for sheep sent to the Metropolitan Abattoirs and there are probably hundreds of others in the same position. This producer could not understand why he received only that amount when the Government

scheme guaranteed 3s. 6d., plus the skin. Can the Minister of Agriculture explain the scheme?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON—The scheme is not a Government scheme. The Metropolitan and Export Abattoirs Board offered to treat, on behalf of producers, sheep which have been described as potter sheep and which are, in effect, sheep in poor condition, having little meat value. I saw the article referred to and I am glad of the opportunity to explain the position. If a producer consigns stock to the abattoirs for sale in the ordinary way they are sold under auction for whatever price they will bring. That is outside the scheme made available by the Abattoirs Board. If a producer desires to take advantage of the scheme the procedure is that he shall arrange with the secretary of the board to forward his sheep direct to the abattoirs for slaughter under the scheme, and not for sale by auction in the abattoirs yard. I think that is where the misconception has arisen. In its original announcement the board specified that it would, on behalf of producers, slaughter the sheep and it offered the return of 3s. 6d., plus the skin. It is therefore necessary for the producer to get in touch with the Abattoirs Board to arrange for the consignment to be dealt with under that scheme.

EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLIES.

Mr. BOCKELBERG—No doubt the Minister of Works is aware of the serious position, which was a near-catastrophe, that occurred last year regarding the water supply to Minnipa and places further north. Can he assure me that steps will be taken to see that there is no recurrence of this in the coming summer?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—If the honourable member will give me some details of what he calls "a near-catastrophe" I will investigate it. In such a huge undertaking as the water supplies of this State there must be some districts that are relatively short of water, but I will follow the question through to see what we can do to avoid any hardships.

DISCOLORATION OF WATER.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Complaints have been made to me recently with regard to the coffee-coloured water being obtained in certain parts of Elizabeth, Salisbury and Gawler. Will the Minister of Works have this matter investigated to find the reason? Many people claim that the water is repulsive on account of its nasty colour.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I have already had it investigated. Discoloration occurs in every system where we have cast-iron pipes because a certain amount of encrustation takes place. The discoloration occurs when the demand for water rises, and it occurs particularly at dead ends. I noticed that a newspaper reporter went into the district, but could find no evidence of discoloration, but I know it does occur in certain places. In years past it was customary to flush out all the mains each season, and during that period many people used to complain about discoloration, but this year water has been so short that it is only possible to flush out the dead-end mains. This has probably caused the complaints the honourable member mentioned.

Mr. John Clark—The discoloration lasts for weeks.

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—Not for weeks, but if the honourable member will give me specific instances I will have them investigated, and the department will flush out the mains that it is considered should be flushed out. He may have noticed that the district clerk said that usually there were several complaints each year, but that this year there had been none addressed to him. I have had no complaints addressed to me.

BEACHPORT-MILLICENT TRANSPORT.

Mr. CORCORAN—The Minister representing the Minister of Railways is aware of the fact that since the closing of the railway between Millicent and Beachport there has been no regular form of transport available to the general public. Instead of going ahead, Beachport is now slipping back. People with motor cars are not very worried, but others without motor cars think the Government should establish some form of transport between Millicent and Beachport. Will the Minister take up this question with his colleague to see whether road transport can be provided?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I will take it up with my colleague and bring down his reply.

KINGSCOTE WATER SUPPLY.

Mr. BROOKMAN—A reply that the Minister of Works gave me recently about the Kingscote water supply indicated that no new reservoir to supply the township would be constructed for some years at least. Kingscote's present supply has been provided by putting a weir across the Cygnet River. The value of this weir has always been suspected by

the Engineering and Water Supply Department, but those living in the area believe strongly that the supply is improved by having the weir. It does not take much to keep the weir in order from year to year, and as the council finds difficulty in maintaining it regularly, will the Minister consider the advisability of the department giving further assistance, or rebuilding the weir itself?

The Hon. Sir MALCOLM McINTOSH—I am not an engineer, though I have been Minister in charge of the Engineering and Water Supply Department for many years, and before giving a reply I shall have to consult the Engineer-in-Chief and his officers. I will treat this question as one of urgency and bring down a reply as early as possible.

OIL SEARCH IN SOUTH-EAST.

Mr. FLETCHER—The Broken Hill Pty. Co. Ltd. has been undertaking a systematic geophysical survey in the South-East and submitting quarterly reports of its activities to the Minister of Mines as required by the Mining (Petroleum) Act. No drilling has been undertaken by the company as at present. Can the Premier say whether these quarterly reports would be available to the members for Millicent and Victoria and myself?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The Government's policy is not to release reports of geological work undertaken by private companies at their own expense. Obviously this company could, in some circumstances, be prejudiced by the release of a report concerning its activities. As a matter of fact, I believe that one of the conditions under which the reports are supplied is that they shall be regarded as confidential to the department. The company releases reports from time to time to its shareholders. The reports are not available to honourable members.

MOTOR VEHICLE NUMBER PLATES.

Mr. COUMBE—Has the Premier a report on the question I asked on October 2 concerning the advisability of changing our present motor car numbering system?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I have received an extremely good and comprehensive report on this matter which indicates that certain advantages would accrue in adopting a new system. However, at the present time it would not be convenient and would certainly result in an increase in registration fees in order to provide the additional number plates. Another interesting matter is referred to in the report which will receive the Government's attention in due course and may be the subject of an amendment to the Road Traffic Act next year. At present the possession of a number plate becomes almost hereditary and is passed on from father to son. This involves the department in considerable work because whenever the vehicle is changed the number plate is changed to the new vehicle. The Registrar points out that from the point of view of checking on stolen cars and in other respects it would be advisable for the number plate to remain with the car in respect of which it was originally issued.

Mr. Fred Walsh—What happens when that car is scrapped?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—The number then becomes available for another car. The proposal has many administrative advantages.

ADVANCES FOR HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD and read a first time.

HOMES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

AMUSEMENTS DUTY (FURTHER SUSPENSION) BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

METROPOLITAN MILK SUPPLY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved—

That the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution:—That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Maintenance Act, 1926-1952.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

UNDERGROUND WATERS BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to enact provisions for the purpose of conserving and preventing the contamination of underground

waters, to amend the Pastoral Act, 1936-1953, and for other purposes.

Read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I move—

That this Bill be now read a second time.

Its purpose is to enact provisions to conserve and prevent contamination of underground waters within the State. In many civilised countries throughout the world it has been found necessary to introduce legislation in some form or other to control the use of underground waters. In some countries this legislation has been delayed to the critical stage, and remedial measures, although expensive to the State and drastic in their impact on the rights of citizens, have not always been successful. Most of South Australia has, unfortunately, a low annual rainfall, and in many areas we are almost completely dependent on the supply of underground water.

Since the end of World War II there has been a tremendous increase in the usage of underground water in this State for farming, industrial and ordinary township purposes, and the Government, acting on the recommendation of its experts, in particular the Director of Mines, considers that the time is now opportune for the introduction of a system of control so that the interests of the State may be protected. As a matter of interest, it will probably surprise honourable members to learn that in the 10 years commencing in 1946, 3,654 bores were sunk in this State by the Mines Department, yielding more than 81.3 million gallons per day. In addition, in the same period, thousands of bores have been constructed by many private boring contractors.

The Bill also includes a system of licensing well drillers which the Government considers to be an essential element of the scheme of control. In certain areas of the State hydrological conditions are such that incompetent or careless construction of a well could seriously jeopardise underground water supplies. The Bill is therefore designed to conserve the underground water supplies by preventing undue depletion and contamination, and as in all measures of this type the citizen is required to co-operate by seeking a permit before he can sink a well, or in the case of a driller, by seeking a driller's licence.

The explanation of the various parts of the Bill, including some of the more important clauses, is as follows:—Part I is the preliminary part containing the definitions. Clause 3 gives power for the Governor to exempt from the operation of the Act certain parts of the State, and subsection (2) of clause 5 provides that the Crown, other than the Minister of Mines, is bound by the obligations imposed by the Bill on owners and occupiers of land.

Part II deals with a permit system for well sinking. Many of the clauses refer to the prescribed depth, which is the depth proclaimed by regulation pursuant to clause 56, and which will, in most cases, vary from one area of the State to another. Any owner or occupier wishing to sink a well to a depth greater than the prescribed depth, or remove, replace, alter or repair the casing of a well which is already deeper than the prescribed depth, must seek a permit before commencing the work. Other clauses in this Part require the forwarding of information to the Minister regarding existing and future wells.

Clause 12 states that the Minister may refuse an application for a permit, but limits his discretion to those cases where he has reasonable cause to believe that the work would—

(*a*) cause contamination of any underground water; or

(*b*) cause inequitable distribution of any underground water; or

(*c*) cause undue loss or wastage of underground water; or

(*d*) unduly deplete the supplies of underground water.

Clause 13 gives the Minister power to include special terms and conditions in a permit for the purpose of preventing contamination of the underground water and controlling its use. Clause 14 gives any person who is unsatisfied with the Minister's decision regarding a permit the right to appeal to an appeal board against the decision. Clause 16 provides that no permit is required for urgent repairs to a well for the purpose of restoring the flow of water or preventing waste. Clause 17 deals with the maintenance of wells.

Clause 18 is an important provision. Under this clause the Minister may issue directions in the form of a notice requiring an owner or occupier of land on which a well is situated to take certain steps for the purpose of conserving and preventing contamination of the underground water and for the purpose of ensuring a fair distribution of the water. Any person to whom a notice is sent under this clause may appeal against the Minister's decision. Clause 21 states that all artesian

wells shall be capped or equipped with valves so that the flow of water may be regulated and clause 22 prohibits the wastage of underground water from wells. Clause 23 provides that the Minister must be notified of any artesian well discovered during the sinking of any hole in the ground other than a hole sunk for the purpose of obtaining oil or gas.

Part III provides a licensing system for well drillers who are required to work on wells deeper than the prescribed depth. The duty to hold a driller's licence applies to all drillers including those who work for the Government, but the obligation to be licensed does not extend to the owner or occupier of land drilling on his own property with the assistance of a servant ordinarily employed by him. Clause 30 deals with the right of the Minister to cancel a licence and clause 32 gives a right of appeal to any driller who is refused a licence or whose licence is cancelled.

Part IV of the Bill sets up an appeal board to hear appeals by a person dissatisfied with the Minister's decision. The appeal board has power to affirm, vary or quash the decision appealed against or to give any other decision as appears to it to be just. Part V contains general provisions which are complementary to the main theme of the Act as already explained, and which I think are self-explanatory. The Government commends this Bill for the favourable consideration of members as a means of preserving one of the State's most valuable natural assets—the supply of underground water.

Any honourable member with experience of the conditions under which water is found in many parts of the State will know that very often fresh water is found in a basin underlying salt water, or, on the other hand, salt water underlies the fresh water. In both instances, if the work of boring is not carried out under proper conditions, as soon as pumping operations start salt water is drawn in to pollute the fresh water supply, or the salt water percolates through. There have been a number of instances where, fortunately, the Mines Department was able to secure the co-operation of the landowners in filling up holes, which, if allowed to remain, would undoubtedly have resulted in wiping out a very valuable fresh water supply in parts of the State where no other existing supplies are known. The results would have been very serious.

Mr. Bywaters—Was that at Moorlands?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—It was further down, but I believe similar conditions apply at Moorlands. It certainly applies over a large area of the metropolitan plains. It is advisable to take a few precautions before serious pollution occurs underground. I can assure honourable members that the Bill is not designed to curtail or prevent the practice of securing water supplies, but to ensure that it will be possible to use these valuable supplies which are known to exist in many parts of the State. The legislation is rather advanced in its application, but nevertheless a real attempt is being made to see that any person who may feel aggrieved by any decision of the Minister will have an adequate right of appeal.

Mr. O'Halloran—Has similar legislation been passed in other States?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD—I believe it has and also in many parts of the world. My reason for saying that similar legislation has been passed in other States is that we have had numerous communications from one State pointing out the depletion taking place in artesian water supplies because many active bores have been sunk with no attempt made to cap them, with the consequence that millions of gallons of water a day are running to waste, to the serious depletion of the basin generally. I believe that the State concerned passed legislation along the lines of this Bill. I commend the Bill to honourable members.

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

PRICES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD, having obtained leave introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Prices Act, 1948-1956. Read a first time.

BUSH FIRES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON, having obtained leave, introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Bush Fires Act, 1933 to 1956. Read a first time.

VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTERS FUND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON (Minister of Agriculture), having obtained leave, introduced a Bill to amend the Volunteer Fire Fighters Fund Act, 1949.

Bill read a first time..

MINING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

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

That this Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill, to amend the Mining Act, 1930-1955, provides as follows:—Clause 3 deals with the registration of mining claims and provides that the Mining Registrar may, with the approval of the Minister, refuse to register a claim or title if he is satisfied after due enquiry that registration would cause severe hardship to the owner or occupier of any land included in the claim or title. The clause goes on to say that when exercising a discretion under this clause the Mining Registrar and the Minister shall have regard to the following matters:—

(*a*) the value of the substance for which the claimant proposes to mine or prospect;
(*b*) the importance of the substance for the development and maintenance of industry within the State;
(*c*) the availability of alternative supplies of the substance.

As the Act stands at present, there is no power to prevent a person who is the holder of a current miner's right from obtaining registration of a claim following pegging out on land on which the minerals are the property of the Crown (except certain lands exempt under the Act).

Several cases have come to the notice of the Government where the exercise of this right to registration has acted to the detriment of the owner or occupier of the land in question, for example, one particular section of land at Tea Tree Gully which had been surveyed, subdivided and provided with made roads, was in the process of being sold for building purposes, when a person holding a miner's right registered a claim relating to the mining of building sand.

The effect of clause 3, which inserts a new section 39a in the Act, would be that the Mining Registrar could, with the consent of the Minister, refuse to register such a claim. Clause 4 amends section 41 of the Act. Section 41 states that any person who neglects to register his claim or title pursuant to section 39 shall not be entitled to continue to mine the lands included in the claim, and that his claim shall be liable to forfeiture. The Director of Mines has found that this provision leads to uncertainty, as in many cases his officers find it difficult to decide on the available facts whether the claim is valid or not. The effect of the amendment to this clause is that any claim which is not registered, as provided by section 39, shall lapse.

Clause 5 enacts a new section 114a relating to special terms and conditions for mining leases. Under the Act, the only terms and conditions which are prescribed by regulation can be included in a mining lease, and the Minister is unable in an unusual case to impose any other conditions, although the circumstances demand some alteration.

A particular case which shows the need for this amendment is the holder of a lease who, by failing or refusing to work the land included in the lease deliberately produces less of a particular substance than he should. The effect of the amendment would be that the Minister could grant or renew such a lease upon special terms and conditions which would compel the holder to extract certain minimum amounts of any substance in a specified time. Whilst this clause gives a wide discretion to the Minister, I think that it is justified in the interests of the State, the development of which should not be retarded by holders of leases who, for one reason or another, do not intend to work their holdings in an ordinary businesslike manner.

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

MARRIAGE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 16. Page 1142.)

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh)—I support the Bill, which is one of the most important Parliament has had to deal with for many a day. It will affect the future home life of this State and no-one can estimate the value of a good home or the unhappiness caused by a bad one. Members have heard some interesting speeches in this debate. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. O'Halloran) foreshadowed certain amendments and gave some reasons why they should be considered. Although I find myself opposed to the member for Light (Mr. Hambour) on this Bill, I congratulate him on his thoughtful speech, which showed that he had given the matter much thought and was doing his best to submit evidence to support his case.

At present the minimum marriage ages prescribed by common law are 12 years for girls and 14 years for boys, but every person under the age of 21 who desires to marry must first obtain the consent of parent, guardian, or

Chief Secretary. Originally I thought the purpose of this Bill was to raise the minimum age to 16 in the case of girls and 18 in the case of boys, but I am not sure now whether the Bill, if passed in its present form, will have that effect.

The Bill will affect only a small proportion of our population, for the *Statesman's Pocket Year Book* shows that between 1951 and 1956 slightly more than 6,000 marriages a year were solemnized in this State, and in his second reading explanation the Premier said that statistics showed that in the last seven years 155 girls under 16 years and 133 boys under 18 had married. In other words, the average per year has been 22 girls and 19 boys, a very small number compared with the total number of marriages.

We have been told by social workers that many of these early marriages are unsatisfactory. When a similar Bill was before us last session I read much on this matter and came to the conclusion that many young people who contracted these early marriages soon found themselves on the rocks. Although we have been told that the Bill will prevent these very early marriages and the unhappiness arising therefrom, I am perturbed by new section 42a (4), which states:—

> The Minister shall in every case ascertain whether all parents whose consent is required under section 26 of this Act have so consented and if so then he shall make an order . . .

If that subsection becomes law the Bill will serve little purpose, so I trust it will be deleted. Where pressure is brought to bear by parents on either or both of a very young couple, the marriage may have disastrous consequences and the parties to the marriage may later regret it.

Mr. Hambour—Everybody agrees with that.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Such marriages are undesirable, yet this subsection makes it mandatory on the Minister to approve of such a marriage should the parents consent and unless special circumstances exist.

Mr. Quirke—There can be thousands of special circumstances.

Mr. HUTCHENS—Yes, and special circumstances should be defined. It should not be left to one person to determine what are special circumstances. There seems to be a real desire for a change in the law on marriage. Many other countries have seen fit to make changes. In 1929 Great Britain raised the minimum age to 16 for both sexes. In 1942 Tasmania fixed the same ages as are contained in this Bill. In 1956 Western Australia raised the minimum ages to 16 for girls and 18 for boys. The Leader of the Opposition has indicated that he will move to reduce the age to 15 for girls, but I am not inclined to support that. The purpose of the Bill is to raise the minimum age, and many young women are still school children at 15. Many of us want the school-leaving age raised to 16 as early as possible, and to be consistent we should not allow children to marry before that age.

Mr. Quirke—What about University students?

Mr. HUTCHENS—I do not say that we should compel married women to go to school, and people are not compelled to go to the University. The member for Light referred to what I said on this Bill in February, and I repeat that France, Germany, Norway, Japan, Turkey and Spain have fixed a minimum age for marriage, in some cases as high as 21. The Leader of the Opposition said that he would move a further amendment to change the word "Minister" to "Magistrate" to hear applications for consent to marry. There is every justification for supporting such an amendment. A Minister of the Crown should not be given the duty of hearing these applications, and that is no reflection on our present Chief Secretary. A Minister has a thousand other matters to occupy his thoughts and time, and this matter is too important to impose upon him. I know that he has all the facilities at his disposal for collecting evidence, but it would be far better for a special magistrate to hear these cases in chambers so that they will not receive publicity. The best interests of the parties concerned could then be served. Although the Bill stipulates a minimum age, most members think that it should not be applied in every case.

The member for Light made an excellent speech, but he created certain doubts in my mind, and that leads me to support the views expressed by the Leader of the Opposition that this Bill should be referred to a Committee that could hear the views of social workers and other people. These people have given more than a fair share of their time in the interests of other people. Last night we heard the views of one member who is just as anxious to serve the community as social workers are, and he put forward reasons why no change should be made to the Act.

I support the second reading, but I would be much happier if a committee were appointed to consider the legislation and furnish recommendations to Parliament.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa)—I support the second reading. I have no doubt that far-reaching social questions which have an intimate bearing on the happiness and freedom of individuals, such as the question now before us, present the heaviest of all responsibilities which devolve upon members of Parliament. When these questions come before us they must not be taken lightly. I have admired the approach to this Bill by those members who have already spoken in this debate. The results of decisions on these questions cannot be evaluated in monetary terms as can decisions on economic or business matters. The decision in this matter is entirely one of intangible, deeply personal implications. I can only view this very serious matter according to my own lights, and my view is given proper significance when one considers this matter as it would affect his own family, those nearest and dearest to him. I have a daughter of 12 and I cannot imagine any greater tragedy than a girl of her age marrying. Anything we can do, such as recommending to society that the minimum ages should be 16 for girls and 18 for boys, will help our young people on this question. All that the law can do is to make a recommendation to society, for we cannot legislate for personal weaknesses or strengths. It is only a recommendation that we feel that in this enlightened age girls under 16 and boys under 18 are not mature enough to face up to the heavy responsibilities of marriage.

I have admired the broad and wide approach shown by many members in this House and in another place. I feel that the Bill provides safeguards for the happiness of unfortunate young people. Parents should have as much say in the marriage of children as possible. Parents can be bad parents to their children, just as children can be bad children to their parents, but the Bill will do much to ensure the happiness of unfortunate young people who have an important decision to make that will affect their happiness throughout life. I am most concerned that any unborn child should not carry through life the terrible stigma of illegitimacy if that can be avoided. We are told that the sins of the fathers are transmitted to children for generations, but we should do all we can to alleviate distress caused through illegitimacy. Broadly, this Bill endeavours to overcome the frightful problem of child marriages. I support the second reading and in Committee I will consider any amendments that are moved.

Mr. JOHN CLARK (Gawler)—Honourable members will remember that when this legislation was last before the House I was one of its strongest supporters, but it has been so emasculated that I have grave doubts whether it is now worthy of support at all. I am pleased, as other members who are sincerely interested in this matter must be, that the Bill is not being debated on Party lines. I compliment previous speakers, especially the member for Light. He put his points forcibly, and was most sincere in his views. I do not agree with everything he said: indeed, with much I disagree. However, his speech was well worth hearing, particularly in view of the fact that when he spoke on similar legislation last year his approach rather repelled me. On this occasion he made a valuable contribution to the debate.

This is one of the most important measures that have come before us and that is why I was most disappointed when similar legislation was defeated in what might be described as a debâcle in another place last year. Our present lack of legislation on this subject is a blot on our social life. I believe in the sanctity of the marriage vows. Marriage means a great deal more than a licence to satisfy a simple biological urge. The family unit is the basis of our social life: indeed, it is the basis of our civilization as we know it. I like to visualize marriage as a family unit begun by choice and not by force and based on mutual trust and forbearance. We should try to prevent anything that brings the state of marriage into disrepute.

Like the member for Barossa (Mr. Laucke) I have a 12-year-old daughter, and the thought of a child of her age being allowed to marry or being forced by her parents to marry is appalling. Under present legislation girls of 12 and boys of 14 may marry. Theoretically, they can marry even younger. In 1951 one girl of 13 married. I have often wondered whether that girl should have continued to attend school until she reached the statutory leaving age of 14. Many young people at present being married are no more than school children. The member for Light suggested there was no real public desire for this legislation. Last year approaches were made by

several organizations seeking our support. These organizations function solely for the welfare of women and would not advocate anything that would be to their detriment. I commend to members the Attorney-General's speech in another place when replying on the second reading. It clearly and concisely sets out the points in favour of this legislation. He said—

The SPEAKER—The honourable member cannot refer to a debate in another place.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The Attorney-General said that absolutely no approach had been made to the Government not to proceed with this legislation. If, as Mr. Hambour would lead us to believe, there is no public demand for it, there is certainly no evidence of opposition to it. Similar legislation has been successful in other States and in other countries, and we would be foolish if we did not profit from the working of such legislation. In 1929, the statutory age for marriage was made 16 for both sexes in England which is a reasonably civilized country. In 1942, Tasmania adopted similar legislation and I have been informed by the Attorney-General that before this Bill was introduced he consulted Tasmanian authorities, who informed him that the legislation had been completely successful and most valuable. Young people in Tasmania are much the same as young people in South Australia and legislation successful there should be valuable here. Recently similar legislation was introduced in Western Australia. In many countries the statutory age for marriage is much higher than we propose. Indeed, in France and Spain, which are generally regarded as hot-blooded countries, the statutory age is higher. Turkey, Sweden, Norway and even Japan have introduced similar legislation.

Mr. Corcoran—Japan has legalized abortion.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—That is true, but we have not legalized it in South Australia. I do not think any member will blind himself to the fact that abortions happen in South Australia. We read of cases that have been discovered, but we hear nothing of those that are not detected and I suggest they far exceed the former. Although abortion is abhorrent to me I am not sure that from the point of view of the person undergoing or suffering it, legal medical abortion is not to be preferred. Most States of the United States of America have marriage ages as high as or even higher than those advocated in this Bill.

Mr. Corcoran—Have we any evidence that something has been achieved as a result?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—The Tasmanian authorities, who should be in a position to know, maintain that the legislation has been most valuable during its 15 years' operation. The Premier said that during the last seven years 155 girls under 16 and 133 boys under 18 years of age married. I wonder how many of those married of their own free will.

Mr. Quirke—Do you know how many of those marriages have succeeded?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—No, but I have figures relating to divorces in that age group. How many of these children were, except physically, ready for marriage?

Mr. Corcoran—We cannot legislate to overcome the frailties of human nature.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—We can attempt to do so. Most legislation is designed to prevent some of the frailties of human nature being made manifest in action and that is exactly what this legislation is attempting. That is why I support this Bill: I want to help these young people and not force them into hopeless marriages that are foredoomed. I have every sympathy with the arguments advanced by the member for Light and I sincerely appreciate his attitude toward the unborn child, but—and I do not know whether this is an argument—I am not convinced that it is better for the unborn child to be born legitimately into an unhappy home that will probably break up than have the brand of illegitimacy and be adopted into a home where better conditions prevail. Many famous people have overcome the stain of bastardy and become prominent citizens. These include kings, politicians, poets, and many other classes of men.

Mr. Quirke—Why force it upon them?

Mr. JOHN CLARK—Before I said that I said I doubted whether it was any particular argument, but it is certainly a fact. Much has been said about percentages and I understand from conversations with the Attorney-General and from figures supplied by him that 20 per cent of all marriages contracted by minors under these ages lead to the divorce court, whereas only 6 per cent of those contracted by parties over these ages do so. I realize, of course, that there are many more marriages over these ages than there are under them.

Mr. Quirke—The figures seem to compare very favourably.

Mr. JOHN CLARK—I find it hard to believe that 20 per cent failures compares favourably with 6 per cent. A large percentage of unhappy marriages are contracted

by very young people and it appears that the divorce rate rises steeply in respect of their marriages. Although I am not supposed to refer to the Attorney-General's speech on this Bill, I draw the attention of members to his reply in the second reading debate in another place. Before this measure was introduced a report was obtained from the Principal of the Women Police, a band of officers who should know the conditions obtaining among young women and girls, particularly in the metropolitan area. The report was made after the Principal had consulted her senior officers, and she stated:—

> Marriages such as these are contracted to save the good name of the parents or the children concerned and are seldom happy. In fact they are often most unhappy as one of the parents resents having been forced to marry and later in life frequently states this fact.

This is an obvious cause of unhappiness in the home, for during the course of home life many things come up that cause discord between husband and wife and such an atmosphere is not conducive to a happy marriage. I also understand that the Principal quoted illuminating cases that would make members think twice about child marriages. Such young wives usually lack the maturity and knowledge necessary to manage a home. They become confused because of their lack of success in handling finance and other domestic aspects, which often leads to a disgust with home life and their seeking distraction elsewhere from the cares and burdens of the home. That can lead to a sorry state of affairs.

What did the Bill introduced last session do? It fixed a minimum marriage age of 16 for girls and 18 for boys and gave the Chief Secretary power to prevent a marriage if he considered it was unlikely to succeed. The latter provision was inserted following on the expression of opinion by the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse). I agreed with him, but I doubted—and still do—whether the Chief Secretary was the most suitable person to be given that discretion. Although no Minister would undertake such a responsibility lightly without considering all aspects of the case, neither he nor any other Minister would like the job very much and, as other members including Mr. O'Halloran have said, it would be preferable to give that discretion to a magistrate in chambers. When we consider the far-flung parts of the State from which approach to the Chief Secretary might be inconvenient, some easier form of obtaining that discretion might be arranged, but certainly someone should have it.

I have heard it said that the supporters of this Bill are taking away the rights of parents and giving them to the Chief Secretary or some other person but, after all, under existing legislation the Chief Secretary has had that right as regards minors since 1936, and before that—indeed, since 1867—the Registrar had such a right. For 90 years some person has had this right of consent, this duty thrust on him whether he wanted it or not.

I have tried to show why I have always favoured legislation similar to this. I believe it is better for someone other than the parents to decide in such cases, for in the painful circumstances that arise on such occasions parents are so vitally and emotionally affected that their judgment tends to be not intelligent, but rather emotional, and who can blame them? I am afraid that they think only of what is best for the future of their child, but we must make up our minds whether they should decide. When these unfortunate things happen parents are not usually in the right mood to weigh matters properly and give an intelligent, balanced judgment. They are like a drowning man clutching at the proverbial straw, and in this case the straw they seize on is marriage. That solution is often the wrong one, as is proved, to some extent at least, by the figures I have given.

The Bill introduced last session rightly took the decision out of the hands of the parents and gave it to someone impartial who, however sympathetic he might be, would not be likely to have his judgment clouded by sentiment. Despite my extreme urge to support the Bill, I doubt whether it will have the desired effect, because new section 42a (4) states:—

> The Minister shall in every case ascertain whether all parents whose consent is required under section 26 of this Act have so consented and if so then he shall make an order under subsection (2) of this section unless there are special circumstances which would justify his refusing to do so.

We see there the obligatory "shall." That clause was inserted in another place, and I cannot support it. In his second reading speech the Premier said:—

> Another rule incorporated in the Bill by amendment is that if all parents whose consent to a marriage of minors is required under the Marriage Act have consented to a proposed marriage, the Minister must consent unless there are special circumstances which would justify him in refusing to do so.

That virtually puts the onus on the Minister, for he must give consent. There is no definition of "special circumstances." One member said that there could be dozens of special

circumstances, but whether there would be any important enough to sway the Minister, in view of that clause, I do not know; in fact I doubt whether there would. Although I support the second reading, I cannot support that provision because it defeats the purpose of the Bill. However, the Bill is an improvement on the present position. We should try not to allow disastrous marriages to be contracted in the first place. I am prepared to support any reasonable amendment that will give the legislation a chance of becoming a good law. The chief reason why this legislation has been shuffled from one House to another is that there are so many differences of opinion on it.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood)—I support the second reading, but like the member for Gawler, I consider that this legislation has been largely rendered futile by clause 4 (4). What was the purpose of this legislation when it was first introduced? It was to place a limit on the marriage age. An amendment was then moved by the member for Mitcham that a discretion be allowed to enable marriages to take place under the age limit where special circumstances existed. I indicated that I would be prepared to support such an amendment, but it only provided that a marriage of people under the age limit would be allowed if there were special circumstances. Only where it could be proved to the satisfaction of the authority that there would be no danger of the marriage going on the rocks would permission be granted, but this new provision has turned the whole thing around the other way. It provides that marriages shall take place, unless special circumstances show that they should not. It cannot be said that the legislation will now meet the cases that the Government has said it was designed to meet. What has been the experience of social workers and of legal practitioners with regard to early marriages where the first child has been conceived out of wedlock?

I have not had a substantial practice in the divorce court, but I have done some work in that jurisdiction. An extremely high proportion of those cases involve marriages where the first child was conceived out of wedlock. They were shotgun marriages: they were not contracted as the result of the real desire of the parents to live together but because the parents desired to avoid a certain social stigma. They were bad marriages as far as the children were concerned.

Mr. O'Halloran—Have you any statistics about the ages of the contracting parties?

Mr. DUNSTAN—No, but I have had experience of cases where the contracting parties were under age. They were very bad marriages, and the parents of the girl were responsible for those marriages taking place. Those parents came to me afterwards to get the girl out of the appalling mess into which they had got her.

Mr. O'Halloran—And they will still be responsible if this Bill is passed.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, if it is passed in its present form, and that is the bad thing about it. This Bill will not achieve anything while subclause (4) of clause 4 is there. What will happen is that the parents will give their consent to the marriage and unless the Minister can find some special circumstances why the marriage should not take place it must take place. That puts the Minister in a hopeless position. One case came to my knowledge of a young Italian girl who was under age. She was taken out by a young Italian man who was of an age to contract marriage without his parent's consent, and she became pregnant. Her parents complained to the police and to avoid a gaol sentence the man married her. A child was born, but within a short time the man so maltreated the girl that he was bound over by a magistrate to keep the peace. Subsequently he was imprisoned for criminal assault upon the girl. What sort of a home was that for the child? Eventually, the husband was ordered to be deported, and I took action to see that he was, but it was the girl's parents who forced that couple into marriage. Actually, the stigma of bastardy for that child would have been a much smaller hurdle for it to face than the home into which it was born. That case is not an isolated instance. The women police could cite case after case of that kind. Most of the cases of marriage under age covered by this legislation are marriages where the man consents to marry because by doing so he will avoid a gaol sentence.

Mr. Hambour—Don't you think that those statistics could be obtained and presented to the House?

Mr. DUNSTAN—I think they would be very valuable, but I have seen enough cases myself to satisfy me that this legislation is necessary, but it is essential to delete subclause (4). I stress that it is completely wrong for a community to regard a child born out of wedlock as being different from other children.

Mr. Quirke—But that still applies.

Mr. DUNSTAN—Yes, but we should see that it does not remain. We should point out to the community that people should not regard a child as sinful because its parents have sinned.

Mr. Hambour—I think all members agree with you. Do you think that the community believes in that?

Mr. DUNSTAN—There would be more people in the community who believed in it if this legislation were passed. Many parents of young girls who are pregnant take that attitude, but they are frightened of what other people think. It is far better to see that the child is properly cared for than to bring him into a home where he will face misery as a result of an unhappy marriage. I urge members to agree to the second reading, but to vote against subclause (4) of clause 4. We should provide that the only cases in which marriage should be allowed under the age limits prescribed should be those exceptional cases where the Minister considers that the parties are ready for marriage. The Leader of the Opposition says that a magistrate, instead of the Chief Secretary, should hear these applications, and I agree with him. Members must agree, I feel sure, that there are very few young men under 18 and young women under 16 who are ready for the responsibilities of marriage and parenthood. Anyone with any knowledge of the problems considered by the Marriage Guidance Council appreciates that much of the trouble in marriages today is caused by the immaturity of the contracting parties and the fact that they have entered into marriage with some extraordinary glamorized views of it and without realizing the personal adjustments that have to be made.

Mr. Hambour—That conflicts with the views of the Rev. Broomhead, who suggests that many young marriages are successful.

Mr. DUNSTAN—There are successful young marriages, but immaturity obviously exists at this age. Immaturity can exist at all ages, but where it so obviously exists at this age we should be careful about permitting marriages, and only where it can be clearly shown that the parties are not immature and are ready to contract a successful marriage should we permit it. I support the second reading.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield)—I support the second reading and desire only to express my personal beliefs. Generally, when we speak in this House we endeavour to influence other members, but I do not speak with that object in view now. When we consider legislation of this nature we realize that although we have been elected to Parliament because we subscribe to certain political views we must vote according to our own beliefs. I intend to oppose clause 4 (4) because it robs the Bill of any effect. I intend also to oppose the amendment indicated by the Leader of the Opposition to reduce the age in the case of females from 16 to 15. I can advance no more logical argument in support of my opposition to the amendment than the Leader advanced in support of it. Presumably the Leader will move to reduce the age from 16 to 15 because 15 is a year younger than 16. I propose to oppose the amendment because 16 is a year older than 15. The thought of a marriage being contracted between a girl of 12 and a boy of 14 is absolutely repugnant. Some members have children in this age group. Mine are much younger but it will not be long before they are of these ages and to even contemplate their marrying then is offensive.

I respect the views that have been expressed by all members. It is obvious that they were all sincere. Much has been said about the stigma of illegitimacy, but I do not think there is such a stigma nowadays. I believe we have gone so far along the road of civilization that we no longer blame a child for the sins of its parents. By interjection to the member for Norwood one member said that all members of the House believed this, but queried whether the community at large did. Members are a fair representative cross section of the community. They represent almost every shade of political thought and religious belief, come from different districts and have different backgrounds and I am certain not one believes there is anything different about a child born out of wedlock. I believe much worse than any stigma is the fact that marriages are forced, with the result that children are born into an unhappy atmosphere and a miserable environment. Young children are given a licence to live together for a few years, during which time possibly more children are born into an unhappy atmosphere. I hope this legislation will be passed because it has been messed around by Parliament too long.

Mr. CORCORAN secured the adjournment of the debate.

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT — AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 2. Page 913.)

Mr. O'HALLORAN (Leader of the Opposition)—This is a simple Bill dealing with a machinery matter and it overcomes a difficulty which resulted from amendments made to the law some time ago. When we relaxed the conditions regarding the transfer of property from an association which no longer desired to exist to another association of a similar nature we overlooked the point concerning the indefeasibility of title. I understand that apart from that difficulty the law is working most satisfactorily. The bodies incorporated under this legislation are of great value to the community and the law is of material benefit to those who desire to organize into charitable or other bodies. I support the second reading.

Mr. STEPHENS (Port Adelaide)—While I do not oppose the Bill I think the Government should have gone further and ensured that everybody registered under this Act should be compelled to present a balance-sheet to the Registrar of Companies. It was never intended that such societies should enter into competition with other organizations.

Mr. Geoffrey Clarke—They cannot trade.

Mr. STEPHENS—They can and do. They trade in the purchase and sale of land. How is the Registrar of Companies to know whether a profit has been made from a sale if balance-sheets are not presented? Every company or business has to present a balance-sheet, as does every friendly society or lodge. Trade unions must present balance-sheets. Some of the bodies registered under this Act compel their affiliated societies to present balance-sheets and I believe every organization covered by this Act should do likewise. It is no hardship for them to do so.

Mr. GEOFFREY CLARKE (Burnside)—I support the Bill. The principal Act, which is extremely valuable, has no exact counterpart in any other State. It enables bodies not carried on for the profit of their individual members to become incorporated and works extremely well in practice. In other States non-trading bodies can only become incorporated by the use of a difficult and complex procedure. Indeed, they have to go through all the ramifications of the Companies Act and they must get the permission of the Governor-in-Council to effect even the simplest amendments to their rules. This Bill is a machinery Bill to facilitate the working of societies and I am sure that if this legislation were abused and an incorporated society was found to be carrying on business for profit, as suggested by the member for Port Adelaide (Mr. Stephens), the Registrar of Companies could easily obtain information and draw the attention of the society to what appeared to him to be a breach of its rules.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 4.52 p.m. the House adjourned until Tuesday, October 22, at 2 p.m.