

Legislative Council.*Wednesday, 20 March, 1935.*

Farmers' Relief Amendment (Debts Adjustment) Bill—Bills Annulment Bill—Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill (second reading)—Dubbo Gas and Electricity Franchise Bill (third reading)—Centenary Celebration (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill (second reading)—Business of the House—Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill (third reading)—Safety Traffic Zones, Macquarie-street (Ministerial Statement).

The PRESIDENT took the chair.

The opening Prayer was read.

**FARMERS' RELIEF AMENDMENT
(DEBTS ADJUSTMENT) BILL.**

Bill read a third time, and returned to the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

BILLS ANNULMENT BILL.

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [4.32], moved:

That leave be given to bring in a bill to annul the passage of the Mortgages Taxation Bill and certain other bills passed during the twenty-ninth Parliament; and for purposes connected therewith.

He said: This is a motion to introduce a bill that will enable the House to deal with certain measures which were passed through both Houses of Parliament before the dissolution of the last Parliament, and which have not yet received the Royal assent. They are measures of an important character, and it is desired that they should be removed from the region of measures that may be susceptible to subsequent treatment. Accordingly, it is desired that their passage through both Houses of Parliament should be annulled. I need only mention the Mortgages Taxation Bill, the Abolition Bill, and the measure that was designed to repeal section 7A of the Constitution, to acquaint hon. members with the desirability of once and for all ridding the records of such legislation.

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON: I rise to a point of order. Is the Attorney-General in order in referring to the nature of the bills to be dealt with by this measure? The hon. member used

the phrase "ridding the records of such legislation." Is he in order in discussing the merits and demerits of those measures?

The PRESIDENT: The Attorney-General is in order in advancing any reason why leave should be given to bring in this bill. It is not usual to go fully into the measure. The position is that the Attorney-General is asking for leave to introduce a certain bill, and he is entitled to submit to the House any reason why that leave should be given.

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [4.35] in reply: I do not desire to labour the matter. It is merely my object to put before the House the real nature of the bills that are the subject-matter of this motion.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

METROPOLITAN WATER, SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE AMENDMENT (ELECTIONS) BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [4.37] moved:

That this bill be now read a second time. He said: Hon. members will be aware that under the provisions of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill, which was recently passed, it became necessary to hold an election to elect the board of that organisation. In the ordinary course of events that election would have taken place to-morrow. The preliminaries were gone through for the purpose of holding the election, and it is in reference to certain events that occurred in connection with those preliminaries that this bill is being introduced. The matter is one of the gravest importance, because before long I shall make hon. members acquainted with the fact that steps were taken by an organisation whereby some of the electors were to have been made mere ciphers to act for a certain body, which is referred to in a circular that I propose to read in a few minutes.

The elections were to have been carried out pursuant to regulations that are already in existence, which

provide for their conduct. Those regulations make it perfectly plain that the elections were to have been conducted in such a manner as would allow electors to exercise their votes and express their views freely as to the candidate whom they considered should be returned. I suppose that there is no power which the electors are more anxious to preserve than their right to exercise their own individual opinions at an election such as that which we are now considering. It is really for the purpose of enabling that end to be achieved that the present bill is introduced. The regulations make provision for the carrying out of these elections, and the regulation in question relates to the conduct of the election of members. These regulations come under the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board Act of 1924, and if reference be made to them it will be seen that regulation No. 7 relates to the ballot-papers to be used at these elections. It reads:

7. (a) For the purposes of any contested election the Returning Officer shall cause ballot-papers to be printed or written, or partly printed and partly written, in or to the effect of the form in the Second Schedule hereto, and shall provide a sufficient number of such ballot-papers to be issued as hereinafter provided.

Such ballot-papers shall contain the names in full of all the candidates set out in alphabetical order of the surname.

(b) Ballot-papers shall be so prepared that the elector may effectually conceal the names of the persons for whom he votes.

Before leaving that matter I wish to describe what the ballot-paper is. It is contained on one sheet, and on top of the sheet there is a space occupied simply with directions as to how to record votes. In the middle of the ballot-paper is what might be described as the ballot-paper proper, being an enumeration of the names of the candidates nominated for election. At the bottom of the sheet appears a declaration which it is necessary for each elector to make in order that the vote shall be valid. He is then directed to fold the sheet in such a way as the top part of it covers the ballot-paper which he has marked, and then the sheet is gummed down so that the

person receiving it will not be able to see the manner in which the preferences have been recorded. That leaves the declaration exposed to the returning officer, so that he may be in a position to see whether the ballot-paper is valid. He is then instructed to tear off the declaration, its purpose having been served, and to place the sealed ballot-paper in the box. That is the procedure which must be observed in order to secure to the person who is recording his vote the secrecy which is ordinarily observed in matters of this kind. The directions are given in the second schedule to the regulations, and are headed "Read directions before voting: How to vote."

The first direction is to fill in and sign the declaration at the place provided in the presence of certain persons who shall verify the signature. After that has been done the elector is directed to go off alone and to mark his vote. Then follow directions as to the manner in which preferences are to be recorded. In regulation No. 7, which has the force of law under the Act, there is a specific direction, and also a direction in the schedule to these regulations as to how to mark the ballot-paper. Both of these directions are designed to ensure to the person who is recording his vote the necessary privacy to enable him to exercise his judgment in a manner which he thinks proper, and not in a manner which he is dictated to observe by persons who arrogate to themselves the right to give those directions. When the ballot-papers were ready for distribution among the persons who are entitled to vote, certain facts were suggested in the form of questions in the Legislative Assembly, and subsequently a certain circular came to the hands of the Premier. That circular refers to the election to the Water Board, and reads:

Australian Labour Party—State of New South Wales.

Room 32, Trades Hall, Sydney,
5th March, 1935.

Dear Sir,—A meeting of the Labour Aldermen of the No. 1 Constituency will be held in the Trades Hall on Sunday,

17th March, at 10 a.m. The purpose of this meeting is to give effect to the Local Government Rule 8 (b)—

That is not a local government rule, but a rule of the Australian Labour party.

The Hon. J. F. COATES: The circular is not accurate in referring to the Australian Labour party. It should say "the Lang Labour party"!

The Hon. H. E. MANNING: That is not material to this discussion. I merely wish to refer to the exact terms of the circular, so that hon. members may be put in possession of the facts. The rule referred to as "Local Government Rule 8 (b)" is not a rule made under the Local Government Act, but is merely a local government rule passed by the Australian Labour party for its own purposes. The circular continues:

wherein each Alderman is obliged to satisfy a responsible A.L.P. Official that his or her vote is being recorded for the Labour Candidate for this constituency of the reconstructed Water Board. The President, Mr. Keller; Vice-President, Mr. E. Boland; General Secretary, Mr. J. J. Graves; Organising Secretary, Mr. J. B. Martin, and the General Returning Officer, Mr. H. E. O'Regan, have been appointed responsible officials, and the vote is to be recorded in the presence of any one or more of these officials.

You are to bring your ballot-paper to this meeting for the purpose of recording your vote in the presence of the officials mentioned. If it is inconvenient for you to attend this meeting you should arrange to call at Head Office to record your vote in the presence of one or more of the officials mentioned. If you have not received your ballot-paper on or before the 17th March you are directed to call at the A.L.P. Office, Room 32, Trades Hall, Sydney, immediately upon receipt of same and record your vote as mentioned above.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) JAS. J. GRAVES.

Circular No. 8/35. General Secretary.

Members will see from the terms of that circular just what it is. Hon. members will be aware, from the fact that this circular was sent round to the people entitled to vote, what effect it might have had on the minds of the people by whom it was received. Members may be in a position to judge of the coercive effect of a document like that being received from the Trades Hall on the eve of an election of this importance, and from

the people whose names appear in the circular. It is under those circumstances that the Government of New South Wales, entrusted with the proper conduct of public affairs, is called upon to say whether a state of affairs such as that shall be allowed to continue or should at once cease. If it is allowed to continue the election becomes no election at all. The electors, the so-called electors, are mere ciphers. They are called up and directed by people who arrogate to themselves the right to give these directions as to how they shall record their votes. Secondly, members reach the position where a considered scheme, passed by the Parliament of New South Wales securing to the people who are electors on this occasion the right to vote, is to be frustrated and circumvented in the way set out in this circular. The question for the House is whether that state of affairs is to be allowed to continue, or whether it is to cease. If it is to continue, well and good. If it is to cease, there is only one way of doing it, and that is by the adoption of the method which the Government proposes to adopt, namely, the introduction of a system whereby this coercion and this direction of people to subordinate their own views to the views of those who occupy the position of dictators shall be rendered impotent, and the election carried out under the method contemplated by Parliament.

The Hon. W. E. V. ROBSON: Are these votes of any value, seeing that they were given on a Sunday?

The Hon. H. E. MANNING: The electors were asked to go to the Trades Hall to have their ballot-papers marked.

The Hon. W. E. V. ROBSON: Did they not put in the names of the candidates for whom they wished to vote?

The Hon. H. E. MANNING: That is a moot question, but it does not arise here. The question for this House is whether these electors are to exercise their right as electors, or whether they are to be the servants—the docile servants—of people who demand the right to give them their orders. That is the question;

these are the only matters that come up for consideration, and I accordingly ask the House to pass the second reading.

The Hon. A. M. HEMSLEY: How does this bill prevent a repetition of the occurrence?

The Hon. H. E. MANNING: It is not proposed that this bill shall prevent a repetition. This bill is being introduced for the purpose of postponing the elections for a month, and the reason why it has been presented in such a short form is that the information only came to the Government yesterday, and the elections, in the ordinary course of events, would take place to-morrow. Accordingly, the elections will be postponed to enable the Government to consider the position, and see what steps should be taken in order to remedy this state of affairs.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1 verbally amended and agreed to.

Clause 2.

(3) The Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage (Amendment) Act, 1935, is amended by omitting from subsection two the words "thirty-first day of March" and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "thirtieth day of April."

Amendment by the Hon. H. E. Manning agreed to:

That after the words "subsection two" there be inserted the words "of section three."

Clause as amended agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

DUBBO GAS AND ELECTRICITY FRANCHISE BILL.

THIRD READING.

Motion (by the Hon. J. Ryan) proposed:

That this bill be now read a third time.

The Hon. J. M. CONCANNON [5.1]: It is not my intention to oppose the third reading of the bill, but I take the opportunity to make a statement that

has been supplied to me by certain residents in the Dubbo district who are vitally concerned with this matter. I regret I was not present in the House last evening during the debate on the second reading, when I should have had the opportunity of speaking, but I thank the Minister for giving me the chance to do so at this stage. On 1st February, 1935, the Assistant Minister for Local Government, Mr. Fitzsimons, is reported as having said that:

The Dubbo Council had power under the Local Government Act to enter into a franchise agreement with the company, but in this case the agreement provides for the sale of the gasworks, and that requires validation by Parliament. Had the council simply granted a variation of the franchise there would have been no need for this validating bill. The sale of the gasworks has been determined by the public policy of the council.

If the above is correct, why has there been two years delay in bringing into effect the reduced prices authorised by the Electricity Commission on 1st January, 1933? Why was not the Dubbo Council advised to arrange the franchise with the lighting company, and why was not Parliament asked to put through a short bill for the sale of the gasworks? The sale of the gasworks is not the public policy of the council. When the conference with reference to the new lighting franchise was being held in Sydney the Minister in charge said it was a conundrum. It has been a conundrum ever since.

On 23rd October, 1934, ten members of the Dubbo Council considered the matter. Five admitted they did not understand it and two were silent, showing that they also did not understand it, otherwise surely they would have enlightened their ignorant fellow-aldermen. So that seven aldermen did not understand it. Only three spoke in favour of it, yet it was passed by seven to three. Ignorance predominated. That is how the Dubbo Council tied up the ratepayers for the next thirty-five years.

The year 1935 saw six new aldermen asking to see the franchise, which they have now had for a couple of weeks. Before they had even seen the proposals

they were asked to vote in favour of them. The request was rejected by six to five at 1 a.m. on 13th February. Then the matter was rushed on again at a special meeting two days later, and was again rejected by six to five. Then it was brought on again a week later, and was again rejected, by seven to three. On Tuesday, 5th March, the three members of the Electricity Commission arrived in Dubbo. These were Mr. F. W. Kitching, chairman, Mr. J. J. Richardson, technical expert member, and Mr. J. Duncan, secretary. When they arrived at the station they were introduced to the aldermen by the secretary of the lighting company, Mr. F. W. Duesbury, who had travelled from Sydney, and who also returned on the same train. At 11 a.m. the aldermen met the Commissioners, and at the same table were the secretary and manager of the lighting company. They were asked why the Dubbo lighting plant cost £100,000, whereas the cost for a bigger town, like Orange, was only £58,000. An answer was not given then, but next day Mr. Richardson explained that Orange had bought its plant more economically. Mr. Kitching had previously said in Sydney that the Dubbo works were 100 per cent. too big, and that they were large enough to supply Narromine and Wellington, as well as Dubbo. Excess rates have to be paid by Dubbo in consequence, and the franchise gives Dubbo no control over such expenditure.

It was then pointed out that the new charges in Dubbo were 7½d. for light and 3½d. for power, less 2½ per cent., while in Orange the charges are 3½d. and 1½d. respectively. Of the £58,000 originally borrowed by Orange, only £12,000 is now owing. There are 8,344 people in Dubbo and 9,632 in Orange, or 12 per cent. more people in Orange; yet Orange sold 3,000,000 units of electricity last year against 1,000,000 sold in Dubbo. Orange sold 23,000,000 units of gas last year, while Dubbo sold only 8,000,000 units. This shows plainly how the Dubbo consumers give expression to their definite grievance by refusing to use the supply. Out of 1,842 residences in Dubbo only 780 are connected to the gas service.

When the disparity in prices charged in Dubbo and other towns, like Parkes, Armidale, Narromine and Orange, was mentioned, it was stated that the lighting company for the last six years did not get its full dividend of 10 per cent. The actual figures supplied showed that the permissible dividend between 1928 and 1934 was £46,293, and the actual dividend paid was £26,994, but in 1932 bonus shares of £19,707, added to the dividend, made the total received £46,701, or just over 10 per cent. for six years. It is generally understood that during the first few years of the life of any company dividends are hard to pay, but it is difficult to find a shareholder of the Dubbo lighting company who is anxious to sell his shares. Yet in the face of these figures Dubbo was told that under the old franchise the rates would have to be increased from 8d. to 11d. to enable the lighting company to pay a 10 per cent. dividend.

I could mention other figures, because many of the residents of the town of Dubbo think that this legislation is quite unfair. It may be said that the Dubbo Municipal Council has by a majority agreed to the introduction of this bill, but hon. members should be very careful to protect the interests of minorities. I cannot oppose the third reading, because the Government has been informed by the Dubbo Municipal Council that it agrees to the bill being introduced.

I thank the Minister for affording me an opportunity of placing these facts before hon. members, because they show that measures are sometimes passed at the request of majorities—in this case a majority of the members of the Dubbo Municipal Council—whereas a large minority of the people oppose them. I make no objection to the third reading of the bill beyond placing on record the disagreement of a substantial minority of the people of Dubbo.

The Hon. J. RYAN (Assistant Minister [5.9], in reply: I regret that the Hon. Mr. Concannon was not present during the second-reading debate, because in my speech I gave the whole history of the Dubbo undertaking. I understand the matter has been before the people of

Dubbo during the last two years or more, and that as the outcome of a series of conferences and discussions an agreement, which this bill seeks to validate, was signed and sealed by both parties to the contract on the 24th October last year. The Parliamentary representative of Dubbo, acting in pursuance of his obligations, then urged the Government to introduce a validating measure as early as possible. The Government did so, but owing to the pressure of more important business the bill was not taken through the Legislative Assembly until January of this year. It came up to this House on the 5th of last month, when the first reading stage was passed. Then a communication from Dubbo indicated that more time was desired by those concerned for the further discussion of the agreement. The Government, acting agreeably to that request, postponed the later stages of the bill in order to give the aldermen, also the ratepayers who were satisfied or dissatisfied, further opportunity to consider the measure. Of that opportunity they availed themselves. I ought to have said that whereas the agreement by the old Council was ratified by a majority of eleven to one, it has been adopted by the new council by eight to three.

The point that stands out prominently is that the Government is not submitting a matter of Government policy, but is simply acceding to the request of the people of Dubbo who, after two years' consideration and a series of conferences, meetings of aldermen and others, have asked that this agreement should be ratified by Parliament. If the people of Dubbo have made a mistake it is their fault, and not that of the Government. They will have an opportunity of ridding themselves of any incubus that may result from this agreement, because, although it is for a period of thirty-five years, the council has the option of taking over the business at the end of fifteen years or twenty-five years, according to the terms of the agreement.

The Hon. G. NESBITT: If the ratepayers were dissatisfied with the decision of the former council they had an opportunity of expressing that dissatisfaction when the elections occurred last December, but they did not do so!

The Hon. J. RYAN: That is so.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a third time, and returned to the Legislative Assembly with amendments.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION (AMENDMENT) (No. 2) BILL.

SECOND READING.

The Hon. J. RYAN (Assistant Minister) [5.15], moved:

That this bill be now read a second time.

He said:—This short measure is designed to divest certain small portions of land from the Chief Minister and vest them as I shall indicate. Hon. members who have a close acquaintance with Centennial Park will be able to keep in touch with my explanation by studying the map.

The first schedule of the bill provides that an area of 2 acres 3 roods 9 perches shall be vested in his Majesty. This land is portion of the main drive extending from Anzac-parade to Robertson-road and Cook-road. It lies between two parcels of land, which were dedicated for a public road on the 22nd August, 1906, and the Municipal Council of Sydney was appointed trustee of these two parcels on the 26th September, 1906. It is proposed, after vesting this area in his Majesty, to dedicate it for a public road in accordance with the provisions of the Crown Lands Consolidation Act, 1913. The map shows how this narrow strip is to be dealt with. On each side of it there is a still narrower strip, and it is simply proposed to vest in the Municipality of Sydney, which controls the narrow strip on each side, the additional area that I have mentioned. It is really a widening of a thoroughfare.

Schedule 2 provides for the vesting of 5 acres 3 roods fronting Anzac-parade, at the corner of Dacey-avenue, and adjoining the golf links, to be also vested

in his Majesty. It will be deemed Crown lands, and will be dedicated for public recreation under the Crown Lands Consolidation Act. It is proposed to make the City Council trustees. This area is quite detached from Centennial Park proper, and is between two parcels of land vested in the City Council for recreation purposes.

Schedule 3 of the bill deals with another parcel of land, comprising an area of 3 roods 35 perches. It is proposed to vest this in the Municipal Council of Waverley for the purpose of the construction of a roadway of connection between the high and low level carriage-way. This portion is within the part known as Queen's Park. The estimated cost of this road work is about £3,200. The high and low level sections of Victoria-street are now connected by a series of ramps and flights of steps, and the provision of the new road will undoubtedly be a convenience to local residents. The completion of the road will provide a through connection between York-road, Centennial Park and Cowper-street at Charing Cross. This work will be undertaken by the Waverley Council and paid for by that body at a cost of £3,200, so that employment will be provided to that extent, and increased facilities will be given to the residents.

The Hon. W. E. V. ROBSON: With which street will the road connect?

The Hon. J. RYAN: It will connect with Victoria-street. The fourth area comprises two small strips, one $2\frac{4}{10}$ ths perches and the other $5\frac{9}{10}$ ths perches, fronting Oxford-street. These small parcels are right on the outskirts of the park, and are required by the Main Roads Board for a road-widening scheme that it proposes to undertake. The scheme includes the elimination of tramway crossings near York-road and Centennial-square, and for some time past it has been pressed for by councils in the vicinity. There is nothing in this small measure to which any reasonable objection can be taken. It is designed to provide additional facilities for the public in certain areas, to remove

existing disabilities, and to increase the areas available to the City Council for public recreation purposes. I commend the bill to the favourable consideration of hon. members.

Question resolved in the affirmative.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 5. The land described in the fourth schedule to this Act is hereby divested from the Chief Minister and vested in the Commissioner for Main Roads for an estate in fee simple for the purposes of a roadway.

The Hon. J. RYAN (Assistant Minister) [5.24]: I move:

That the words "Commissioner for Main Roads" be struck out, and there be inserted in lieu thereof the words "Municipal Council of Randwick."

As I have already explained, this piece of land is required for the purpose of road widening by the Main Roads Board, but the Commissioner for Main Roads does not hold the freehold title to any roads, but only controls and manages them. The title to public roads is vested in the local council under the Local Government Act, 1919, and this portion of land should therefore be vested in the Municipal Council of Randwick, although the necessary work to be done to it will be carried out by the Main Roads Board. The amendment, if accepted, will regularise the matter.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Title consequentially amended.

Bill reported with an amendment and an amendment in the title; report adopted.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [5.29]: The Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill will be available printed with amendments in the course of not more than half an hour. I understand that I have the concurrence of the House with respect to the third reading, and accordingly I suggest that you, Mr. President, leave the chair.

[The President left the chair at 5.30 p.m. The House resumed at 6.15 p.m.]

**METROPOLITAN WATER, SEWERAGE
AND DRAINAGE AMENDMENT
(ELECTIONS) BILL.**

THIRD READING.

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [6.15]: I move as a matter of urgent necessity:

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would preclude the passing of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage, and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill through all its remaining stages during the present or any one sitting of the House.

I have already pointed out that tomorrow is the date fixed for the elections. I am also anxious to spare hon. members any possible inconvenience, and if it suits their convenience I am quite prepared to go on with the rest of the measure at the present time.

The PRESIDENT: This motion cannot be moved except by concurrence. Standing order No. 264 reads:

Any Standing Rules or Order of the House may be suspended on motion made in accordance with notice given, and in cases of necessity may be suspended on motion made without notice. The question of necessity may be decided by the House upon motion without notice in debate except a statement by the mover limited to ten minutes.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Legislative Assembly with amendments.

**TRAFFIC SAFETY ZONES,
MACQUARIE-STREET.
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.**

The Hon. H. E. MANNING (Attorney-General) [6.17]: With reference to the question asked at the adjournment of the Council on the 7th instant by the Hon. Mr. Nesbitt, regarding the provision of safety islands at the intersections of King and Hunter streets with Macquarie-street, I am advised by the Commissioner for Road Transport and Tramways that the islands in question were removed at the request of the State Director of the Royal Visit to New South Wales in order to eliminate obstruction during the procession held at the time of the visit of his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester. These islands were recognised as being of considerable value to pedestrians during the day time, but there does not seem to be any apparent

necessity for them after dark. As there were several collisions with the island refuges prior to their removal, it is considered that this type of refuge is not suitable for the locality, and it is proposed, therefore, to provide two refuges of design similar to that at the intersection of Park and George streets, which is defined by painted lines and provided with four standard notices worded "Pedestrian refuge." These refuges should be of great assistance to pedestrians crossing Macquarie-street during the hours of daylight, and, provided the City Council concurs, the Department of Road Transport and Tramways will arrange for their provision and maintenance.

Certain other matters were referred to by the Hon. Mr. Robson, the Hon. Mr. Grant, and the Hon. Mr. Gardiner. These matters have been referred to the departments concerned, but at present I am not able to make any statement with regard to them. I will do so at the earliest opportunity.

House adjourned at 6.24 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 20 March, 1935.

Questions without Notice—Gas and Electricity Bill—Dubbo Gas and Electricity Franchise Bill—Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill—Co-operation (Amendment) Bill (second reading)—Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Amendment (Elections) Bill—Warehousemen's Liens Bill—Moratorium (Amendment) Bill—Wool, Hide and Skin Dealers Bill—Adjournment (Unemployment: Guyra and Gloucester—Shelter Sheds, Waterfront).

Mr. SPEAKER took the chair.

The opening Prayer was read.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE.

PRICE OF BREAD.

Mr. W. DAVIES: Is the Minister representing the Premier aware that the Master Bakers' Association intend holding a meeting to-morrow night for the purpose of putting into operation the recommendations of Sir Herbert Gepp, who is acting as a Royal Commissioner, with regard to the price of bread? Is the