

VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Second reading.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS (Hon. R. S. Richards, Wallaroo)—This short Bill is introduced for the purpose of making some administrative amendments to the Vermin Act, 1914. Section 71 of the principal Act requires every Vermin Board to publish its half-yearly balance-sheet once in a newspaper published in the State and once in the "Government Gazette." The publication of the balance-sheet in a newspaper is the cause of fairly considerable expense to Vermin Boards and the Vermin Districts Association has therefore requested that, in view of the present stringent financial position of Vermin Boards, this requirement be deleted. This is accordingly provided for by clause 2, so that, if the clause is passed, the balance-sheet need be published in only the "Government Gazette." Section 150 of the principal Act provides that in the event of any difference occurring between Vermin Boards it shall be referred to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, who is then required to inquire into the matter, hear evidence, and come to a decision. Under the sec-

tion this must be done by the Minister himself, although it is obvious that in a case where many details are in question it would be most inconvenient for the Minister personally to conduct an investigation and hear the parties to the dispute. Clause 3 therefore gives power to the Minister to delegate to any person any of his authorities or powers conferred by the section. I move the second reading.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER (Wooroora)—I support the Bill, which contains two small amendments. Pressure must have been brought to bear on the Minister to induce the Government to submit the Bill.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands—We have not the power under the present law to grant this concession, and I think the board are entitled to it.

The Hon. R. L. BUTLER—It is only a small Bill, and I am prepared to let it go through.

Bill read a second time and taken through Committee; third reading, October 22.