

APIARIES BILL.

Second reading.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS (Hon. R. S. Richards—Wallaroo)—This Bill is introduced for the purpose of regulating the beekeeping industry, and is introduced at the instance of the Beekeepers' Association. There is an Act in force in South Australia called the Foul Brood Among Bees Act, which provides for the destruction of bees infected with foul brood. No provision is made in this Act, however, for the cost of administration, and the Government have been unable to provide the necessary funds for the proper administration of the Act. The necessity for the proper control of the industry and the taking of proper steps for the eradication of diseases among bees has been made apparent by certain action in other States of Australia. Western Australia at the present time prohibits the importation of honey unless accompanied by a certificate to the effect that it comes from a district free from disease. Under the present legislation in this State, it is impossible to comply with such a requirement. In past years South Australia has worked up a large export trade in honey to places such as Western Australia, and consequently these interstate restrictions have had a considerable effect upon the export trade of South Australia. The main object of this Bill, therefore, is to provide the necessary machinery whereby the persons engaged in the industry in this State may contribute various fees sufficient to provide for the cost of administration, and whereby steps can

be taken to secure the eradication and control of disease and to give the necessary certificates required for the purpose of export trade. The main provisions of the Bill are as follows:— Clause 2 repeals the Ligurian Bee Act and the Foul Brood Among Bees Act. Clause 12 also deals with the matters dealt with in the Ligurian Bee Act. This Act was passed in 1885, and provides that no bees, other than pure Ligurian or Italian bees, are to be introduced into Kangaroo Island. This legislation was passed for the purpose of providing that Kangaroo Island should be reserved for the purpose of breeding this kind of bee only. This Act is repealed by the Bill, as it is considered that the whole of the legislation dealing with bees should be contained in the one Act, and the substance of the 1885 Act is re-enacted in clause 12. Clause 3 is the definition clause. "Disease" is defined as any of the diseases or pests affecting bees enumerated in the schedule. These are foul brood, bee moths, Isle of Wight disease, and *Braula coeca*. In addition, under clause 19, power is given to the Governor to prescribe from time to time by regulation other diseases which may be diseases for the purpose of the Act. Clause 4 gives the Governor power to appoint inspectors necessary for the purpose of administering the Act. Clause 5 provides that no person is to keep bees except in a frame-hive registered under the Bill in the manner prescribed. The registration fee will be three-pence for each hive, but no person will be required to pay more than £5 for registering any number of hives in one year. The registration will be annual.

Mr. Nicholls—More fees.

The COMMISSIONER of CROWN LANDS—This legislation has been asked for; to carry it into effect it will be necessary to appoint inspectors, and the Government is of the opinion that the people who are concerned in the industry and who are desirous of having this protection should at least be prepared to pay the cost of administration. I suggest that the honorable member listen very intently because the sting of this Bill is in the tail. Clause 6 places upon every beekeeper in whose apiary any disease occurs the duty of notifying that fact in writing to an inspector within seven days after it comes to his knowledge. Clause 7 requires every beekeeper to take the prescribed steps to eradicate disease and to remove all infection from his apiary, and upon receiving

notice from an inspector, to attend him at his apiary and render any assistance necessary for the purpose of the inspection of his hives. The beekeeper must, upon receipt of notice that his apiary does not comply with the regulations, remedy such defect, or that any disease occurring in his apiary has developed too fully to be cured, destroy by fire all bees, hives, &c., infected with disease. Clause 8 gives the necessary powers to the inspector to enter upon premises in which there is an apiary and upon which he has reasonable grounds for believing there is any hive or swarm of bees. The clause also empowers the inspector to give to the beekeeper any notice contemplated by clause 7, or to require the beekeeper to take any such steps or precautions as may be prescribed for the prevention or eradication of disease in his apiary. In addition, the inspector is given power to destroy any bees, whether kept by a beekeeper or not, which he has reasonable grounds for believing to be so infected with disease as to necessitate his so doing. If the bees are the property of a beekeeper and the beekeeper has failed to destroy the bees after having been given notice as provided by the Bill so to do, the inspector may recover the cost of so doing from the beekeeper. In the case of a swarm of bees upon premises which are not kept in any way by the occupier of the premises, the inspector will have the necessary power to destroy such bees when infected by disease, but there will be no claim against the occupier of the land for the cost of so doing. Clause 9 provides penalties for infringements of the Bill. No person is to keep any bees in contravention of the Bill, to fail to notify any disease, to knowingly remove any bees, or hives infected with disease from his premises or to sell, barter, or otherwise dispose of any such infected bees or hives. No person may expose to the open air any bees, etc., or in any place where bees may have access any frames, combs, hives or appliances which are infected with disease. The penalty for any infringement fixed at any amount not exceeding £20. Clause 10 provides that in any case in which the Governor is of the opinion that it is desirable so to do, in order to prevent or minimise the spread or introduction of disease in any part of the State, he may, by proclamation declare that no bees or hives shall be removed from any specified part of the State or be taken into any specified part of the State. This I

vision is designed for the purpose of enabling any outbreak of disease among bees to be localised as far as may be possible. The clause provides for penalties for any contravention of any such proclamation. Clause 11 is inserted for the purpose of affording protection against damage by bees caused in fruitgrowing areas, and provides that in any case where the Governor is of opinion that the keeping of bees in any part of the State is harmful to the drying of any fruits, he may prohibit the keeping of bees within that part of the State. The prohibition may be for any specified period or periods. The keeping of bees on the settlements on the River Murray during the time when fruit is being dried has led to considerable losses to fruitgrowers, and it is hoped that under this provision some arrangements will be able to be arrived at suitable to beekeepers and fruitgrowers alike, so that at the time when fruit is being dried the bees will be removed from the settlement in question to other areas. Clause 13 enables the Governor by proclamation to declare that in certain parts of the State specified in the proclamation no bees other than those mentioned in the proclamation shall be brought into that part or kept there. It is considered that at some future time it may be desirable to reserve certain remote parts of the State as reserves for the breeding of various pure strains of bees, and this provision will enable the necessary reserves to be so constituted. Clause 16 provides for the necessary protection of inspectors acting in the course of their duty. Clause 19 gives the Governor power to make regulations dealing with various matters, including the grading, packing, marketing, &c., of honey, the examination of bees and hives imported into the State for the purpose of ascertaining whether the same are infected with disease, the issue of certificates certifying that any honey is free from disease, and the conditions which may be fulfilled in respect of honey which is intended for export from the State, and the prohibition of such export unless the same are fulfilled. The Governor will also have power to make regulations dealing with fees to be charged for any such certificates. The remaining clauses deal with machinery matters, and do not require any special comment.

The Hon. G. R. LAFFER secured the adjournment of the debate until August 19.