

far as gold mining was concerned. If the Colonial Secretary says it is not so I have no wish to press the amendment. I ask leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2, line 4, the word "six" be struck out and "five" inserted in lieu.

If the farming industry can only bear five per cent. interest, it is not right that the mining industry should be asked to pay six per cent.

Amendment passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Bill reported, and returned to the Legislative Assembly with a request that the suggested amendments be made; leave being given to sit again on receipt of a message from the Assembly.

BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

House adjourned at 10.40 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 2nd February, 1915.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—FRUIT FLY.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Agriculture:—1, What horticultural districts of W.A. were affected with fruit fly ten years ago? 2, What horticultural districts of W.A. are not affected with fruit fly this year? 3, What amount of money has been spent by the Agricultural Department during the past ten years in endeavouring to rid the State of the fruit fly? 4, What has been the result? 5, Did Mr. Compere introduce a fruit fly parasite into this State? 6, If so, is it doing effective work? 7, What was the cost to this State of Mr. Compere's searches for parasites? 8, Does the Agricultural Department permit of fly-infected fruit containing the maggots of the fruit fly being sold to a jam factory?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied:—1, Metropolitan and surrounding districts; also Pinjarra. 2, The areas South of a line running from Katanning to Kirup, with the exception of Albany. During the past few years outbreaks have occurred within this area, but have always been stamped out. 3, It is not possible to give these figures with any degree of exactitude. A very large proportion of the time of the administering officers, and the field, port, market, and metropolitan inspectors has been taken up in efforts to cope with the fruit fly. 4, The fruit fly has so far been pre-

vented from becoming a serious pest in the southern districts, but in districts north of the 33rd degree south latitude it has steadily gained ground, especially in back yards and non-commercial gardens, owing to the indifference and carelessness shown by householders generally, and many growers. 5, Mr. Compere introduced what he stated to be the parasite of the fruit fly. 6, No. Many large colonies were bred and distributed. They either did not acclimatise or were not effective, and no trace of them could afterwards be found. 7, £1,931 5s. 9d. 8, There is no reason why fruit slightly affected with fly should not be used for jam purposes, provided the infested part is cut out. The Department is not aware that badly infested fruit is being sold to a jam factory.

QUESTION—ASSISTANCE TO PROSPECTORS.

Mr. FOLEY asked the Minister for Mines:—1, What number of parties were being assisted with camels, etc., for prospecting in 1911? 2, What number are being assisted at present and under what conditions?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied:—1, Twenty-seven parties were assisted during the full year 1911. 2, At the present time 10 parties are being assisted with Government equipment under the usual conditions applicable to agreements with prospectors receiving such assistance.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS WATER SUPPLY, MEEKATHARRA.

Mr. HOLMAN asked the Minister for Water Supply:—1, What is the nature of the water supply at Meekatharra? 2, Is there sufficient water to supply the Railway Department in the event of running sheds being established at Meekatharra? 3, Has the Railway Department ever requested to be supplied with water? 4, If so, with what result?

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLY replied:—1, Supply is pumped from wells and delivered into service tanks

near the town. From the service tanks it gravitates through mains traversing the town and mining leases. The water is good potable water. 2, Yes; but the water is not suitable for loco. boilers. 3, No. 4, Answered by No. 3.

RETURN—RAILWAYS, CUE-MEEKATHARRA SECTION.

On motion by Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison) ordered:—“That a return be laid on the Table showing:—1, The total tonnage of goods carried over the railway section between Cue and Meekatharra for the year ended June 30th, 1914. 2, Total amount of revenue derived therefrom. 3, The number of passengers carried over the section for the same period. 4, Total amount of revenue derived from passenger traffic for the period. 5, The total train miles run and the expenditure incurred during the said period. 6, The train miles run and revenue from Meekatharra to Cue on Saturdays for the year ended June 30th, 1914. 7, The revenue from this source for the year ended 30th June, 1914.”

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Report of the Workers' Homes Board for the year ending 30th June, 1914. 2, Balance Sheet and General Trading Account of the State Sawmills for the period ending 30th June, 1914.

By Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Report of the Inspector General of the Insane for the year ended 30th June, 1914.

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE, MONEY BILLS PROCEDURE.

Extension of Time.

On motion by Mr. ROBINSON, the time for bringing up the select committee's report was extended to Tuesday, 9th February.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.40]: I move—

That for the remainder of the session the Standing Orders be suspended so far as to enable Bills to be passed through all stages in one day, and Messages from the Legislative Council to be taken into consideration on the day on which they are received; also, so far as to admit of the reporting and adopting of the resolutions of the Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [4.41]: I do not desire to oppose the motion, but the House will recognise the difficulty we are likely to have in dealing with Messages from another place, except those Messages appear on the Notice Paper.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [4.42]: We have always done this at the end of each session, and whenever it has been deemed necessary to have some notice, the matter has been satisfactorily fixed up. Of course Ministers would not force amendments through, except hon. members had a fair opportunity of grasping the meaning of such amendments.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe—in reply) [4.43]: If a Message was of sufficient importance and time would permit, the Government would certainly postpone its consideration, in order that the amendments might appear on the Notice Paper. The motion is only to provide that in the case of a Message of no great importance, we may be free to consider and adopt it on the day on which it is received.

Question put and passed.

Mr. SPEAKER. I have counted the House and I find there is an absolute majority present.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £488,270.

All Stages.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply, Mr. Holman in the Chair.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.45]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year ending 30th June, 1915, a sum not exceeding £488,270.

This is an amount sufficient to carry us on until the end of next week, when we hope to have passed the Estimates showing all the supplies granted during the present session for the period ending 30th June next. We only obtained supplies up to the end of January.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [4.46]: I do not propose to object to the Premier's getting supplies necessary to carry us on until the Estimates are passed and the Appropriation Bill also receives the sanction of the House. The amount, however, seems to me to be rather excessive—£338,270 to come out of Consolidated Revenue—unless, of course, this is the expenditure for the whole month. Perhaps a greater portion of it will have to be found in the first half of the month; the Premier might explain. Possibly, it is based on the expenditure that we have witnessed for the last month, namely, January. In view of the deficit the amount is pretty excessive.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe—in reply) [4.48]: The amount is based on the Estimates as submitted to Parliament. The hon. member will appreciate the fact that this, of course, is really no guide for the purposes of supply of the whole year. Some months our expenditure may be heavier and the revenue less, and in other months the expenditure may be light and the revenue more. Under the existing conditions there are many reasons which might be explained in regard to the expenditure for the month of January. On one item alone, we have had sleepers cut in the bush for stock in order to keep the hewers going, which represents an amount

of £80,000 in round figures and this has had to come out of revenue. Naturally, of course, that was largely paid out of the January month.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Was it paid for out of Consolidated Revenue.

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You might use loan money for that, I should think.

The PREMIER: If the Industries Assistance Bill becomes law we could deal with this item from another fund and have the burden of carrying interest, charges, etc., borne by those receiving the advantage of the assistance. We have had to do this out of revenue because the sleepers were being sold as opportunity presented itself. When we had to stop some of the work owing to the stocks getting too heavy we had to pay to the men some of the amount standing to their credit and not paid on the basis of so much per week. The result is that we have these sleepers in the bush, and nearly £80,000 has to be paid for out of revenue. The amount that we are asking for is to carry us on to the end of the session which will probably be after the first fortnight in this month.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You ask for £338,000 for a fortnight.

The PREMIER: The exact amount that is required I do not know. The Under-Treasurer assures me that it will be sufficient for the purpose. If we did not ask for this authorisation we should be left without the necessary appropriation of Parliament for the expenditure of money required.

Question put and passed; resolution reported and the report adopted.

Ways and Means.

The House resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Holman in the Chair.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.51]: I move—

That towards making good the supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1915, a sum not exceeding £338,270 be granted from the Consolidated Rev-

enue Fund and from monies to the credit of the General Loan Fund £150,000.

Question passed; resolution reported and the report adopted.

Supply Bill Introduced, etc.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions Supply Bill introduced and passed through all its stages and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILL—NAVAL AND MILITARY ABSENTEES' RELIEF.

Returned from the Legislative Council with an amendment.

BILL—BLACKBOY AND ZAMIA PALM LICENSE.

Third Reading.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford) [4.56]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Mr. FOLEY (Mt. Leonora) [4.57]: I would like to get an expression of opinion from the Minister before the Bill leaves this Chamber regarding the industry, so far as the blackboy is concerned. Most hon. members will know that there are many men in and around the city, especially, who make a living by gathering the blackboy and selling it for fuel purposes. I would like to hear from the Minister as to whether the chance of these men to gain a living would be affected, and, if it would be affected, in what respect?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford—in reply) [4.59]: The position is this: under the Bill we give no monopoly at all. We certainly give the right to this individual to remove blackboy. This blackboy, under the discovery made by Mr. Rowley, becomes too valuable for firewood purposes, and, therefore, if persons desire to remove it for such purposes they will have to pay a royalty upon it and, further, make application for permission to

remove it. We cannot permit the burning of this commodity in perpetuity, because the product of it, in view of the discovery made regarding it, has become too valuable to be used in this way.

Mr. Foley: They will pay a royalty just the same and make application?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Special provision is made for anyone else coming in and making application, and the Minister will consider all such applications.

Mr. Carpenter: Irrespective of quantity?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, irrespective of quantity.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—STATE HOTELS.

Second Reading—Defeated.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker—Kanowna) [5.0] in moving the second reading said: This is a short measure which is intended to facilitate the administration of the State hotels. At the present time when it is desired to transfer one of the managers of a State hotel to another district, in order to comply with the conditions of the Licensing Act we are obliged to approach the Court and ask for permission to make the transfer. The position, I take it, is that the State is licensee as well as licensor, and that the management practically of all the State hotels is situated in Perth. This Bill will enable us to deal with the managers of the State hotels as agents of the Government and to transfer them from one place to another, without having to follow the roundabout red tape way we now have to do of applying to the Court. It is a one clause Bill and I do not think I need detain the House further. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. ROBINSON (Canning) [5.2]: It has been the custom in Western Australia, in connection with licensing matters, that the control be not vested in the pro-

prietor but in the Court, and we have what is known as a Licensing Court, presided over by a special licensing magistrate, with special knowledge, who has been appointed for the purpose. The Hon. the Attorney General's first statement is sufficient to kill the Bill. He said that he regarded the State as licensee and licensor. The State certainly would be if this Bill was passed. At the present time the State is the licensee, and has to make application under the Licensing Act to the Licensing Court. As in the case of private licensees, a certificate of character has to be produced. As far as I know the State hotels are sufficiently well conducted but it occurred to me that there is a likelihood that a person unsuited to the position might be appointed as manager. A man who might be an undesirable character might receive an appointment as manager of a State hotel.

The Attorney General: Under this Bill we desire to get rid of him and to supplant him immediately.

Mr. ROBINSON: The State can already control that matter as the man would be a public servant; but so far as the question of the character of an individual is concerned surely the licensing benches are the best judges.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The general manager would have a good idea.

Mr. ROBINSON: He might have a good idea; but I submit that if this Bill is passed my main objection is that there would be no check on dealings with licensed men in connection with the State hotels. In fact, it would be no use calling a man licensed; he would simply be an employee of the Government. I do not think that such a state of affairs should be allowed. We have an old maxim which the Government sometimes apply to themselves—"The King can do no wrong." Possibly he cannot, but, in the conduct of a business such as that of an hotel I can see many outlets for doing wrong, and I think the licensing benches constitute a wholesome check. When it is proposed to transfer the licensee from one house to another, or from one district to another, I do not see any logical

reason why the State should not follow the same procedure as the proprietors of private hotels.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [5.6]: I believe that the State hotels at the present time are much better conducted than are the private hotels, and that they have got very good managers. That being so I see no reason why managers should not be under the jurisdiction of the licensing benches and apply to the Licensing Court in the same way. There has been a good deal of criticism lately regarding the licensing of the State hotels at Bruce Rock and Kwollyn, because the licenses were not reapplied for in December.

Mr. O'Loghlen: That was an oversight.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was not an oversight. The Court adjourned for a certain period in order to give the licensee an opportunity to apply; but he did not apply. Charges have been made in a reputable journal—

The Premier: What is the name of the journal?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: *The Reformer*—that the two State hotels are practically sly-grog shops as their licenses were not renewed for this year. I think that the Government should have reapplied for these licenses in December under the existing law of the land.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [5.9]: I intend to support the Bill for the reason that I think the responsibility rests all the time on the Minister in charge of the Department.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He disowns the responsibility.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: He does not. He has to answer to this House periodically for the conduct of his Department, and the leader of the Opposition would be the first to make complaint against the Minister if anything went wrong. Any Bill which aims at bringing about direct control of Government departments will have my hearty support. We have evidence of the necessity for this in several departments. It seems to me that Ministers are practically helpless. I do not think the necessity will arise very often for the

transfer of managers from one district to another. The Government, and the Public Service Commissioner in making recommendations, have an eye to the calibre of the man in view. Consequently anyone who has not a good character is unlikely to be appointed to the management, and my experience has been that when managers have been appointed they have been prompted by a desire to do the best they can for the State and to run the State hotels as they should be run. I admit a transfer has recently taken place the reason for which I am at a loss to gather. I gather now, however, from the remarks of the member for Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) that the conduct of the State Hotel at Wongan Hills has not been altogether what is desired. I understand that a strong temperance advocate visited the district and that he has since done a good deal of talking. He stated that he saw a drunken man on the verandah of the State hotel. Presumably he has never seen a drunken man in Perth. I think that we should give the Minister full power over his Department to run the hotels and conduct them in the best possible manner. If the conduct of a manager of a State hotel is not all that can be desired who is in a better position to judge—the Minister in charge of the whole department or the licensing bench, the members of which seldom if ever come in contact with the manager? The general manager of the State hotels knows the feeling of the district, and he knows also whether the hotel is being conducted in conformity with the Licensing Act. From the periodical returns he knows, too, whether the man is giving the State a fair deal. Consequently we are amply protected, and instead of going to the licensing bench periodically it would be a more simple and better method to allow the Minister to conduct the department, and more satisfactory to all concerned. For that reason I do not see any cause to oppose the Bill. I do not think any member of this House will lay a charge of improper conduct against any one of the managers of the State hotels. This House has absolute power even at the present time. If anything unsatisfactory

in the conduct of the department were known the Minister responsible for the administration would be called to book. I believe the Bill is necessary and useful, and trust the House will not be actuated by an article which I read in the *Reformer*. That article was typical of the journal, and altogether too irresponsible for anyone to take any notice of.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [5.11]: This small measure is likely apparently to excite a good deal of discussion. I very much fear that in this measure, if it be carried, we are likely to do considerable injury so far as the management of State hotels is concerned. I wish to emphasise my belief that the management of State hotels to-day is good. I do not go so far as the hon. member for Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) and say that it is a pattern to all other hotels. I would like to say, however, that when a change in the management is desired that is the only opportunity, when the matter comes before the Court, which the public has of judging these matters. It is not possible for the general manager to know exactly the position or the manner in which every hotel is being conducted. All sorts of objections might be raised and these objections could be heard if the matter is brought before the Court; and then if there be anything objectionable it could be rectified. There is just as much chance of an objectionable character being appointed to the charge of a State hotel as there is to any other business, and the application before the Court is the only opportunity the public have of bringing the manager before a tribunal. If the Bill be carried the effect will be to hand over the whole of the control to the head office in Perth.

Mr. FOLEY (Mt. Leonora) [5.13]: I desire to support the Bill because I think it will serve the interests of the whole State. Having had a little experience of those districts in which State hotels are established, I desire to congratulate the Minister on bringing a measure such as this forward. It is an absolute fallacy to think that the State should have to apply to a licensing bench for its licenses. The presiding magistrates in a Licensing

Court are agents of the State, representing the State there, and are in no better position, nor half as good, to gauge the merits or qualifications of a manager than is the general manager or superintendent of the State hotels. Again we are safeguarded, if we want any further safeguard. There are 50 hon. members in this House, and if there is anything wrong in any of the State hotels, this measure gives members an opportunity of debating the question in a higher tribunal even than if the question were brought before the Licensing Court.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You cannot bring the managers into this House.

Mr. FOLEY: They have been brought in. In putting this measure before this Chamber the Attorney General has put into the position of superintendent the man who now nominally holds that position; and if it is desired to change a manager from one State hotel to another he is the man best qualified to know whether such a change is better for the district. It is not a question whether a change for the people is better, but whether a change of management is better, and I trust the time will come when all State hotel managers will be moved from one place to another. In that way they will not be spying on each other, but the State will get the best results in the way of management of its hotels. If anyone took notice of what was said by Brother Tregear and the *Reformer*, and if we are satisfied to be led by a fanatic and a madman of that kind, we might as well close up Parliament.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Tregear has been away for over a year.

Mr. FOLEY: And a good thing, too, for the State. I trust that no one will attach any weight to any of the articles that may have appeared in the *Reformer*. I hope this measure will be carried, so that the department may have complete control of the State hotels, instead of merely having a partial control.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan—Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [5.19]: I want hon. members to consider the Bill calmly and not to be influenced by what they have read in any section of the Press.

What has not been remembered by hon. members is that the only point to be considered is, whether it is necessary for an individual to submit himself to a bench appointed by the Government, or whether the Minister shall say that a person shall act as his agent. No State hotel is established without the consent of the Licensing bench. An application is made to the bench for a provisional certificate for a building to be erected, and the license is granted when the building is completed. Having done that the State is in an entirely different position from any other licensee. Under the Act, as it is at present, one individual only can hold one license. Under the State hotels the Minister holds all the licenses, and he merely has agents who operate in his interests. The Crown is the holder of all the licenses. The member for Canning knows that we could do all this without the Bill, and that no one could take action against the Crown, but we considered that in order to settle this matter and have it once and for all disposed of, the position should be understood and a decision arrived at.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Are the State hotels subject to a local option poll?

The PREMIER: Of course. We passed a Bill enabling us to carry on a license at Dwellingup and we did not apply to the Licensing bench in that case. We can do that from time to time. The position that has arisen is that we have a number of managers who control a number of hotels, and we want, if possible, to train those men in all the branches of the conduct of hotels. Those men are under the supervision of the general manager, the officials of the department, the public, and they are under the eyes of hon. members and of the Press. Having done that, is there any necessity for the Minister to approach the bench and say "This man has a good character and I propose to appoint him to the management of such and such an hotel"? The hon. member for Swan knows that there are persons in the State who would not for a moment be permitted to manage a State hotel, even under the worst possible control that can

be imagined, and when the hon. member talks as we have heard him, I can only reply that he knows nothing at all about the subject: unless, of course, he is concerned in a privately owned hotel. I repeat that there are none of the mischievous carryings on in a State hotel which we find in a private hotel.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How do you get your knowledge; are you concerned in any privately owned hotel?

The PREMIER: I am not concerned in any private hotel, but I have sufficient knowledge of the State hotels to enable me to say that they are not conducted in the same way as private hotels. The State hotels adhere strictly to the Licensing Act.

Mr. Nairn: That is absolutely incorrect.

The PREMIER: It is not incorrect.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Well prove it.

The PREMIER: Are not the licenses frequently being taken from those who hold them?

Mr. Green: There is not a private hotel in the State in which you cannot get a drink after hours.

The PREMIER: Even admitting that private hotels are conducted up to the last letter of the law, what does it matter after all. The only argument is as to whether these men should appear before the bench. The bench consists of the police magistrate, and the Minister appoints two other persons, members of that bench. That same Minister appoints the manager of the State hotel. Surely, if the Minister is qualified to appoint two gentlemen to the Licensing bench, he should also be qualified to appoint a person straight out to conduct the management of a State hotel, and if he feels disposed to dismiss him or transfer him, he should have the power to do so. The member for Canning forgets that a referendum of the people was taken in regard to whether they were in favour of all new licenses being held by the State or otherwise, or whether they agreed that all licenses should be held by the State. I wonder whether he remembers the voting on that occasion. The member for Swan said that the proposal of the

Government might bring about harmful results to the State hotels. It is just possible that objectionable practices will creep into the management of State hotels as they do in private hotels, but it is not such an easy matter in State hotels as it is in private hotels.

Mr. Nairn: It is.

The PREMIER: It is not and the hon. member knows why.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The private hotel-keeper goes for his life.

The PREMIER: The member for Swan knows that with the private individual, it is a matter of profit or loss to him all the time, and he will find means of evading the loss, and he will introduce practices that no manager of a State hotel would ever dream of doing. For instance, up to date we propose as part of our policy that no barmaid shall be employed in a State hotel.

Mr. O'Loughlen: And no gambling.

The PREMIER: We do not permit gambling and we do not permit drunken men to be served at State hotels.

Mr. Foley: They get it in the country.

The PREMIER: The hon. member has not seen a drunken man being served in a State hotel. A man may have been seen drunk and near a State hotel, and it may have been assumed that he obtained the liquor on the premises. If a sober person goes to a State hotel and demands a bottle of beer or a bottle of whiskey, he is served with it. Then if he likes he can go into the bush, consume it all and get drunk, and return to the hotel where he may make himself objectionable. That however, is not evidence that he became drunk in the hotel. A drunken man is not permitted to go into the bar of a State hotel in order to get drink, and if hon. members know of any such instances they have only to bring them under notice, and I can assure them that the manager will get the sack the next morning. If the manager of a State hotel deliberately evades the notice which appears in the State hotels, he becomes liable to instant dismissal. It is all very well for a person like Mr. Albany Bell to make an assertion that he saw a person hanging on to a verandah post at Wongan Hills, but I

can assure hon. members that we have sly grog sellers all over the State, and we have been prosecuting them by the score during the past 12 months. While these sly grog places exist, men will always get drink, no matter what condition they may be in. So far as State hotels are concerned, I repeat they are conducted on lines that it would be quite impossible for private hotels to follow. They simply could not exist. In regard to the measure, who is better able to judge as to who should hold the license? The licensing bench never inquires into the character of an applicant; all they do is to deal with the certificate. Sometimes members of Parliament are approached.

Mr. Nairn: That is an absolute absurdity.

The PREMIER: That is quite correct, and the certificates are taken to the bench, and unless the police make some complaint about the individual, the license is granted. The only way in which a license can be taken from a person, is by the police making a charge against him before the bench for misconduct in the hotel. Under the proposed law, the Minister who will be responsible to Parliament can immediately suspend a manager in the event of misconduct.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Cannot you do that now?

The PREMIER: We can, and we can immediately appoint another person in his place. We have a number of State hotels and we are attempting to classify them. Our desire is to encourage the managers of "B" grade hotels to properly conduct them and so aspire to higher positions in the service and obtain those positions and higher salaries when vacancies occur. Why should we not do that? We are responsible to Parliament and the licensing bench are responsible to no one, and licenses have been granted by the benches during the last 12 months of which they should be ashamed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: One at Meekatharra a few days ago.

Mr. Nairn: You do influence them.

The PREMIER: We do not. We have never yet approached a bench.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What about Tood-yay?

The PREMIER: The bench at Tood-yay were not influenced any way whatever.

Hon. J. Mitchell: What about Yillimining?

The PREMIER: I say the bench were not influenced. We have never on any occasion—and I defy contradiction of the statement—when appointing an individual, inquired into his views politically or on State hotels or private licenses. Such a thing has never been dreamed of. Once a man has been appointed, he has never been influenced by the Government. Licensing benches have granted licenses, I repeat, which are a disgrace to those who granted them. Yet hon. members say we ought to submit to a bench appointed by a Minister, a bench who are responsible to no one after they have once been appointed, while the Minister is responsible to Parliament and through Parliament to the people.

The Minister for Mines: I am of opinion that benches have been bought before to-day.

Mr. Heitmann: I can give an instance.

The PREMIER: There is no comparison between the constitution of a licensing bench and the Ministerial control proposed under this Bill. A State hotel is continually under the eye of the public; members are primed regarding the conduct of the hotel, and if any act of misconduct is brought under the notice of the Minister and proved against the manager, no second consideration will be given him. The managers know this, as they have been so informed. I have a complete reply to the hon. member and I am satisfied that the Wongan Hills hotel is managed on the best possible lines. I pointed out to the general manager that it was evident someone had a personal grudge against this individual, otherwise he would not have been pursued in the way he was. After he was transferred from Wongan Hills to Gwalia, there was not a single complaint against the hotel either at Gwalia or Wongan Hills.

Mr. Hudson: There are disappointed applicants.

The PREMIER: There may be. I want members to recollect that such conditions frequently prevail. We received some sort of a statement at the outset about the Dwellingup hotel.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It was true.

The PREMIER: It was not. The hon. member made a statement which he had to withdraw.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is not so.

The PREMIER: The hon. member confused one hotel with another. The position in regard to this Bill is we are asking for a power which we already possess, but we want to remove any misunderstanding that the Minister may, when he once obtains from the licensing bench under the Licensing Act the right to establish a State hotel, which he need not do to-day—

Hon. J. Mitchell: And does not do.

The Attorney General: He does.

The PREMIER: We have done it in several cases. We have never attempted to establish a State hotel except when the bench have given permission. We have sought to establish these hotels where people have petitioned for them in preference to private ones and the bench have given preference to privately owned shanties of wood and iron. We were prepared to build an hotel in keeping with the place and with what a State hotel ought to be, namely a place to provide accommodation for travellers. Neither of those in question are suitable places to which to take a female, and even men should not stay there too long. At State hotels people obtain proper accommodation and every one conducts himself well.

Mr. Robinson: No one objects to that.

The PREMIER: No, but the hon. member wants to be critical of the Government.

Mr. Robinson: No.

The PREMIER: The hon. member wishes to show that he is sitting in opposition.

Mr. Robinson: Why depart from the existing conditions.

The PREMIER: What are the existing conditions. We have appointed managers and the benches on no occasion

have questioned the appointments made, notwithstanding that the leader of the Opposition occupied the House night after night for six months disagreeing with one of our appointments.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I did nothing of the sort. I criticised your action and properly so. You made a political appointment and I proved it.

The PREMIER: The hon. member knows we did nothing of the kind. We made an appointment which was a satisfactory one.

Hon. Frank Wilson: A political job, that is all it was.

The PREMIER: I wish members to appreciate the absurdity of the present position. A Minister of the Crown is responsible to Parliament and through Parliament to the people, and he is better able than a licensing bench to make inquiries and select a suitable person to manage a State hotel. If he selects a wrong person he can dispense with his services and appoint another, and if he does not do so, members can move Parliament. At present an undesirable person may obtain a license and continue in possession of it, and members, unless they can move the bench, will have no remedy, and they will be unable to move the bench as readily as they will be able to move the Minister if an hotel is not conducted in a satisfactory manner.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [5.37]: The Premier abuses all who oppose his proposals. While his hotels may be well managed, and my experience is that they are fairly well managed, still there is room for further improvement. It would be wrong if the public had not an opportunity to protest against any individual, no matter how he receives his appointment, no matter whether he is the manager for the owner of an hotel or the manager of a State hotel. The Premier says he can do as he pleases no matter whether this Bill is passed or not, and that is one objection I have to it. The Premier does not care a jot. To-day he does not hold a license for the hotel at Gwalia, as he did

not apply for a renewal of it. He is carrying on that hotel without a license. The bench have had no opportunity to say whether that hotel is satisfactorily conducted or in accordance with the law of the land, whether the manager is satisfactory or whether the travelling public are satisfied with it. I have heard complaints about State hotels and there is no doubt that complaints have been made. I quite agree that the appointments of these hotels are better than other hotels, but one does not always obtain the best appointments and attention in State hotels. I heard a complaint from a person who, in company with a lady, arrived late for dinner.

The Premier: Have you heard of any one taking a cheque to the manager of a State hotel and saying "When that is cut out, let me know."

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No; but in the case I mentioned the manager appeared to be powerless to do anything, and not so much as a cup of tea could be obtained. This is not in accordance with the Licensing Act. During the trading hours of an hotel, people have a right to ask for something to eat and to get it. The licensing bench should have an opportunity to hear any one who wishes to lodge a complaint. It is ridiculous for the Minister to assume the position that he is in his office on the 1st January and if anybody has an objection to the hotel at Gwalia, or to the quality of the liquor, or to the food supplied there, he can come along to his office with the objection. It is wrong of Ministers to reflect on the licensing bench. The Minister for Mines interjected that in a case lately the bench were bought. If he knows it, why does he not take action?

Mr. Heitmann: I can tell you of a case.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The licensing bench is composed of the resident magistrate and honorary justices.

The Minister for Mines: For the most part.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Altogether, I suppose.

The Minister for Mines: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: And the thanks of the community are due to these gentlemen for the work they have done in the past. They do not make an examination of each hotel in their district but as they control a limited area, they know a good deal about the conduct of these places. I will not say that the Licensing Act is perfect. We should be careful to see that the managers of State hotels are men who can be approved of by those who know them best.

The Attorney General: Hear, hear! Make the Minister responsible.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is idle for the Minister to say that he can know best what is going on at Dwellingup.

The Attorney General: I have better means than the licensing bench for finding out.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is idle for the Minister to say he can know what is happening at Wongan Hills or Dwellingup, but the bench will be in a position to hear and know what is happening, and it should be possible to lodge objections. There can be no hardship attached to this and no cost is involved in appearing before the bench. The Premier's managers should go to the bench just as the managers of other hotels have to do. When the general manager of the State hotels recommends the appointment of a certain person, it goes without saying that his recommendation is listened to. In regard to the license at Toodyay when an application was made on behalf of a private person a Government minute was read to the bench and evidence was produced by a Government official against the granting of a license to that person, on the ground that a license was not needed.

The Premier: That is not correct.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is absolutely correct, and within a few months the Government applied for a license at the very same place.

The Attorney General: You ought not to go on. That is not correct.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: What is not correct?

The Attorney General: Your statement that evidence was submitted by an officer

of the Government that an hotel was not needed. That is not what was produced.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Then what was produced?

Mr. Munsie: You are making the statement.

The Attorney General: It was proposed to shift the site of the station at that time.

The Premier: We were going to shift the site of the station and we pointed out that in view of that fact it was inadvisable to grant a license, and that we intended to erect a State hotel near the site of the new station.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: A minute from the Government was produced and evidence was given by a State official that the hotel was not needed.

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Then what happened? Is there a minute on the file?

The Premier: The minute on the file is that the bench were informed we proposed to move the railway station to its present site, and that would make a license on the site applied for absolutely useless, and it was stated that when the station was moved the Government intended to make application for a State hotel at the site of the new station.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: When the Government applied for a license it was granted by the bench. The Government told the private applicant that he was applying for an hotel on the wrong spot and that he should move on about 10 miles distant. Why should not private persons be granted licenses? At Toodyay the Government interfered to prevent a license being granted to a private person and shortly afterwards applied for the right to erect an hotel on the very same spot. I think we ought to leave these things under the supervision of the licensing bench.

Mr. Heitmann: Why, your Government sacked a licensing bench!

Hon. Frank Wilson: What do you mean? Sacked!

Mr. Heitmann: Well, packed.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I never packed a licensing bench in my existence.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Notwithstanding that the Government naturally have greater control over houses managed by Government officials than they have over private houses, I think we should have one authority to approve of licenses. Let it be the Minister for the whole of the State.

The Attorney General: That would be far better than the magistrates.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Let us have at least one authority licensing or controlling hotels. Let that be the system. It has worked well so far, and the Government themselves acknowledge that it has worked well in the case of their own nominees. They say their managers have proved satisfactory.

Mr. Heitmann: When you were Minister for Lands and you transferred an agent at Katanning to Geraldton, you did not want a board to decide whether or no that agent was capable.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I trust the House will agree that the Minister must conform to the law of the land. Let him amend the Licensing Act, and not bring in a Bill which asks for unlimited power, as this measure does. No one, under this Bill, is to have the right to object to the conduct of State hotels.

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Are we to agree to that?

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Are we to be refused accommodation at the State hotels and have no right to object?

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Have no right to enter a protest?

The Attorney General: No.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: But the Attorney General asks that he alone shall be permitted to decide what is to be done.

Mr. Heitmann: How many licenses have been cancelled in this State?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I, at any rate, intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill; and I hope a sufficient number of hon. members sitting opposite will vote with me to bring about the defeat of this proposal of the Government.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.48]: I am very much in favour of State hotels, but I intend to be brief on this measure. In my opinion, State hotels should comply with absolutely the same rules and regulations as private hotels.

The Attorney General: Would you allow the State, then, to have one license, and no more?

Mr. THOMSON: No.

The Attorney General: Then, in that case, the State cannot in this respect be in the same position as private individuals occupy.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Each manager should have one license.

Mr. THOMSON: Exactly; each manager should have one license. No one is foolish enough to suggest that there should be only one State license for the whole of Western Australia. I strongly believe in State hotels for the following reason: there are instances within my knowledge where a man, having obtained a license for an hotel, and having built it, has secured a relatively enormous sum in the form of ingoing. I know of an hotel being built at a cost of £3,500, and, on tenders being called, a sum of £1,000 being paid for ingoing. That instance in itself proves that in connection with hotel licenses there is unearned increment which the State should receive. I strongly favour the State receiving that benefit, and I wish now to emphasise that point in case the Bill does not go to a division but is decided on the voices. Further, I consider that when the Government enter upon the business of running State hotels, the Government should be subject to exactly the same rules and regulations as apply to private hotel-keepers. The Government should not, in my opinion, be in a better position than a private individual holds, in this respect. Private individuals are frequently called upon to comply with ridiculous requirements imposed by licensing benches.

The Attorney General: Would you have the Crown subject to ridiculous requirements?

Mr. THOMSON: I contend that the Crown should be subject to the same re-

quirements as those to which private individuals are subject.

Mr. Taylor: The ridiculous regulations are forced by the Crown.

The Premier: Do not be absurd. Would you have a bench requiring the State to put up a bond to complete the construction of an hotel within six months? If the bond were forfeited, who would get the amount?

Mr. S. Stubbs: The bench would not do such a thing.

The Premier: It has been done.

Mr. THOMSON: I know of cases where licensing benches have compelled private individuals to erect palatial edifices in centres where nothing of the kind was warranted. However, I maintain that the Government when applying for a license to a licensing bench should be subject to exactly the same rules and regulations as govern the application of a private individual; and for that reason I must oppose this Bill.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM (Greenough) [5.53]: I have a few words to say on the subject before the House. There are no State hotels in the electorate I have the honour to represent, but I have had some experience of licensing benches, and I am compelled to make some remarks not altogether complimentary to licensing benches. It must be borne in mind that a State hotel is owned by the State for the benefit of the people, and that the manager is appointed by the State to manage the hotel as an agent for the State. Similarly, a licensing bench is comprised of men generally well-known in their district, with the resident magistrate for chairman of the bench. My contention is that if a resident magistrate is qualified to adjudicate on other cases of importance occurring in his district, he should be a fit and proper person to preside over a bench which considers such matters as whether a State hotel license ought to be renewed, or whether the manager is conducting the State hotel satisfactorily. No matter what qualifications a manager may have had when first appointed, the bench must satisfy themselves that he is keeping things straight and giving satisfaction to the people who

require the conveniences of the hotel he manages. The State, I take it, will not establish an hotel without erecting a proper building, a building capable of affording adequate and proper accommodation for the people to be served. Further, I take it, the Government will not appoint a manager unless they have good grounds for believing him to be a fit and proper person to conduct an hotel as it should be conducted in the interests both of the Government and of the people. If a manager does not maintain the high standard with which he was credited on his appointment, the people of the district should have a handy means of bringing his deficiencies under the notice of some tribunal. A licensing court as at present constituted seems to me to give the people in every district such a tribunal. The licensing court sits in the district where the hotel is established and where the hotel conveniences are required; and that court is competent, I think, to judge whether or not there is ground for complaint against the manager. Further, I consider that the licensing court relieves the Government of a certain measure of responsibility; and we all know that Ministers, generally speaking, have sufficient responsibility already without being called upon to deal with small matters such as the conduct of an hotel manager. For these reasons I am unable to see the necessity of the Bill now before the House.

Hon. FRANK WILSON (Sussex) [5.55]: I do not wish to say a great deal on the second reading of the Bill, but I do wish to draw attention to the fact that the Premier, whilst asking us to consider the measure calmly and quietly, has immediately overstepped the bounds and delivered a very heated partisan speech on the Bill. In doing so the hon. gentleman has accused all and sundry who objected to the measure of being actuated by ulterior motives. To me it is passing strange that the party led by the Premier, whenever its opponents happen to be in power, is invariably fond of taking away the power of Ministers to exercise that direct action and that direct control which are sought for present Ministers by this measure. Now we find Ministers not

only asking for direct action and direct control, absolute power in the engagement and dismissal of State hotel managers, but chafing under the Public Service Act and under the Appeal Board they have created in connection with their great industrial system.

The Premier: What has that to do with State hotels, anyhow?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I am trying to make the point clear to the Premier. If he cannot see it, others will. All the restrictions which hon. members opposite are mainly responsible for having created—created, of course, when another party was in power—they now wish to get rid of in order that they may have a free hand. They want a free hand in the future so that they may save themselves from the dire consequences of their misrule during the past three years. I can quite understand present Ministers wanting a free hand.

The Premier: If we are to reply to your statements, it will take all night and there will be trouble. We cannot reply to your statements.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Attorney General has the right of reply. For my part, I am now replying to the Premier's statements.

The Premier: I do not see it.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not ever expect the Premier to grasp the relevancy of a criticism on his own remarks. It would never be his policy to do that. At any rate, the Premier has not the fairness to acknowledge it. With regard to this little Bill—

The Premier: That is right.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: It looks entirely harmless.

The Attorney General: It is not only harmless, but actually beneficial.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Its one clause would be decidedly beneficial to the administration of the Attorney General personally as regards State hotels, but whether the measure would prove so beneficial to the State as he wishes to make out, is a matter for the consideration of hon. members. There is just as much reason for coming to the conclusion that the measure is not of that be-

neficent character, as there is for coming to the conclusion that it is absolutely what the Attorney General and the Premier claim it to be. Hon. members sitting opposite have stated that the measure is not a beneficent one, and in my opinion it is not unreasonable to agree with them in that statement. I do not see why, if the Minister wants only the right to permit the transfer of a license duly acquired by his managers to a new manager from time to time, that should not be stated in clear and explicit language.

The Attorney General: It could not be stated much more clearly.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not see why the Attorney General should have drawn the Bill in language apparently vesting in his own personality the whole and the sole power, practically, of letting hotels in Western Australia.

The Attorney General: No. You have been misled by your legal adviser.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I have not consulted him. Here, in the Bill, is the Minister of the Crown who shall administer the Act for the time being permitted by the Governor without any other license or authority than this measure to carry on—

The Attorney General: To carry on.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: What is he to carry on?

The Attorney General: Carry on the business.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: A publican's general license, the trade and business of a holder of a publican's general license.

The Premier: Why do you omit certain words?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I will read the lot—

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Licensing Act, 1911, to the contrary, it shall be lawful for the Minister of the Crown to whom the administration of this Act is for the time being committed by the Governor, without any other license or authority than this Act, to carry on, by his authorised agent, in any State hotel established before the commencement of this Act—

The Premier: That is right; "by his authorised agent."

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The clause continues—

or hereafter lawfully established—

The Premier: "Lawfully established."

The Attorney General: Exactly.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: How lawfully established?

The Attorney General: In accordance with the provisions of the Act.

The Premier: The leader of the Opposition will understand the measure directly.

Hon. FRANK WILSON. I understand it. Why does not this mean that the Minister is to be the sole publican? He can appoint any person he likes. The Minister is going to be the man who, under the Bill, is authorised to conduct the public houses of Western Australia without reference to anybody, with the exception that the hotels have to be lawfully established. That infers that some of them have not been lawfully established in the past. There is one hotel mentioned by the member for Northam which is being run without a license now.

The Attorney General: Where?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The member for Northam mentioned it the other night.

The Premier: The only one is the Caves House, and you are responsible for that.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The Premier admits the soft impeachment; he is still running an hotel unlawfully.

The Premier: All that have been established since we have been in power have been lawfully established.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not know that I established any hotel.

The Attorney General: Our predecessors in office then.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I think Sir Walter James's Government established the first hotel at Gwalia, and the Caves House was established before I took office. We know the Government are anxious to increase their revenue as much as they can by the transactions of the State hotels. Attempts have been made

on previous occasions to establish hotels irrespective of the law: an attempt was made to establish an hotel at Rottneest.

Mr. Foley: That can be done now.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Then why do you not do it?

The Attorney General: The Crown can do no wrong.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Is it in the interests of the public generally that the Government should have this absolute control. The Minister cannot inquire into the individual characters of men who have been appointed or else why has he the Public Service Commissioner? Occasionally he over-rides that officer as he did once before. He over-rode the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner and went right through the list and picked out a special gentleman "a friend of our party." We must all admit that neither the Attorney General nor any Minister can possibly make a wise selection. They must take the recommendation of someone. It may be that the selection I have referred to was the recommendation of somebody else.

The Premier: What can the bench do without a recommendation?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: The bench is an open court, and the whole of the public of a district can come to the court, but they cannot have access to the Minister. If the Minister would grant them access they cannot travel down to Perth to see him.

The Premier: Who selects licensees in most cases now, but the brewers?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Yes, tied houses I admit, but the bench need not accept them. There is no necessity for the bench to accept the nominee of any brewer.

The Attorney General: When do they ever refuse?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: I do not know. The public generally should have the control in their own hands.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The police can bring forward an objection.

Hon. FRANK WILSON: Hon. members opposite are always saying the public should have control, and now they

want to take control from them. When we were in power their continual cry was that the country should have control, but now it is different. The licensee should apply to the proper tribunal so that the bench may inquire into the character of the licensee. Those opposed to the applicant can then come to the court and lay their grievances before the justices. The manager of any hotel should always be in the lime-light, should always be before the public because he manages an institution which can be carried on so detrimentally to the interests of the public. The court has the advantage of the police officers. If the justices have any doubt they can refer to the police and adjourn the application, and they can get first-hand information as to a man's character and antecedents, and see if he is a fit and proper person to be granted a license. Is the Minister to take all this necessary trouble?

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Does the licensing bench go to that trouble?

Hon. FRANK WILSON: If they do their duty they do; if they do not do their duty deal with the licensing benches as the Government have the power to do. I do not want for one moment to impune the knowledge of the Premier in regard to the hotels. He has obtained absolute knowledge, not only of State hotels, but of private hotels. He gave us an instance of a man who bought a bottle of whisky and consumed it in ten minutes. I may say I am sorry for the man who consumed the bottle of whisky in ten minutes; there would not be much left of him afterwards. The position as pointed out by previous members from the Opposition side, from their way of thinking, and from my way of thinking, it is not desirable that we should confer this power upon the Minister. You cannot get the same effective administration. I admit, as far as his officers are concerned, it would be nice if the general manager of the State hotels had the power to do as he liked. He would only have to write a minute to the Minister that a certain man's services should be dispensed with, and the Minister could put his initials upon the minute and the thing would then be done. The

Minister cannot inquire into these matters. If the manager makes a recommendation, and the Minister cannot back the manager up, then it is time to get rid of the manager. Is it not much better to let the proper tribunal adjudicate and give every man the right to appear in the open court and state his case? Is it not right that the public should have some say in this matter? But the Government want to take that right away. I think it is a wrong policy. The Bill might well be thrown out on the second reading.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret) [6.10]: I am sorry I was not present when the Attorney General moved the second reading of this Bill, as I did not hear his arguments in favour of it. I am also sorry I did not hear what the Premier had to say, but, so far as I can see, there is no justice in the measure if we take equity into consideration at all. The licenses granted to hotels in this State, and in every other State, are by the licensing benches, and these benches are appointed by the Government. The members of these benches are appointed by the Government for their integrity and their knowledge of the district, and any applicant for a general publichouse license, or a wayside license, or an inn license, appears before the bench, and if the applicant does not appear to be a fit person to hold a license the licensing bench can refuse.

The Premier: Do you know of any case where that has happened?

Mr. TAYLOR: I think cases have happened. I know full well that the licensing benches have at their command the police force of the district, and no matter how many police stations there may be in a district, the licensing bench have the police at their beck and call.

The Premier: Is it always advisable that they should be at the beck and call of the licensing bench?

Mr. TAYLOR: They should be at their beck and call for information. If the licensing bench is at fault then it should be replaced with men of integrity. What does the Bill mean? It means that the Government will be general publicans, and can hold as many licenses as

they like in Western Australia. Having once the hotels licensed the Government can transfer any manager from one hotel to another without asking the permission of the licensing bench.

Mr. McDowall: Does that not seem a commonsense arrangement?

Mr. TAYLOR: It does not. That is the crux of the measure, and to me it is not a commonsense idea. When the Government enter into competition with any section of the community they should enter into that competition on exactly the same lines. But the Government have an advantage. They have never established an hotel where there is competition. They have established hotels where they have a sure success, and there is no chance of failure. I oppose the measure, not because I do not believe in State hotels. I was responsible for the first State hotel being built in Western Australia—at Gwalia.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. TAYLOR: The State has made a good profit from the Gwalia hotel, and it has been of great service to the people in the district, which is the main object of the existence of that hotel and the extension of the principle wherever necessary. The State should control the liquor traffic. But the Bill has nothing at all to do with the nationalisation of the liquor traffic. However, it has this to recommend it, if recommendation it be: once a license is granted to the manager of a State hotel, the Minister controlling the State hotels is the licensee so far as the licensing bench is concerned; he can transfer his manager to any other State hotel for which a license has already been granted, and that without any consideration for the licensing bench. The Government should not seek that power. The manager transferred may not be acceptable either to the people or the licensing bench in the district to which he is transferred. For that reason I am opposing the measure. If there be any safeguard at all for the conduct of a hotel, it is to be found in the licensing bench, the members of which are on the spot. The chairman is invariably a police magistrate or warden, and in either case he

is thoroughly in touch with the whole of the district and the requirements of its people.

Mr. McDowall: He acts on the known character of the manager.

Mr. TAYLOR: That is so, but when the Minister transfers his manager, whose opinion will he take as to the character and fitness of that manager?

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): The head of the department.

Mr. TAYLOR: The head of the department is located in Perth, and the manager may be at Gwalia or Yallingup. How can the officer in Perth know that manager's character as the people in the district do?

Mr. Heitmann: The police reports are available to him.

Mr. TAYLOR: Frequently the police reports show that breaches of the law have been committed, although those breaches were not sufficiently serious to warrant the bringing of the manager into court.

Mr. Heitmann: The licensing bench can deal with the license after it has been granted.

Mr. TAYLOR: They cannot deal with the transfer, a power which the Minister seeks to monopolise. I hope the Bill will not pass the second reading, because it is unfair for the Minister to exercise any more control in running a business of this kind than is the privilege of any private person. Already he has a power which no other hotelkeeper has, namely, the power of appointing the licensing bench.

Mr. Heitmann: Thank God for that.

Mr. TAYLOR: I hope we will not have to thank Him for the second reading of the Bill. The Government appoint the licensing bench, but those who have to abide by the decision of the bench have no say whatever in its appointment. The Government are not satisfied to appeal for fair play to the bench they have appointed. Has the licensing bench ever prevented the Government from carrying on their business of hotelkeepers to the best advantage of the State? If the Government can give any concrete instance of the licensing

bench stepping in and preventing them from carrying on the State hotels in accordance with the Act and within the meaning of the Act, namely, that they should be modern hotels and should not seek to break the licensing laws, it may serve to modify my views.

Mr. Willmott: Has the bench refused the license for Yallingup?

Mr. TAYLOR: I do not know, but the Bill will not prevent the licensing bench from refusing the license. All the Bill seeks is, that the Government, having a license for a State hotel, can transfer their manager to any other State hotel.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Under this, they need not get a license for any new hotel they may establish.

The Attorney General: Yes, they must get a license for every new hotel.

Mr. TAYLOR: The Bill in clear language prescribes that "It shall be lawful for the Minister without any other license or authority than this Act to carry on by his authorised agent any State hotel established before the commencement of the Act." He must first get a license for the manager, and the Minister then, and not his agent, is the licensee. He is not subject to the licensing bench or the people of the district. The Bill will not affect the license of the hotel at all. The Government will have to go up for their license annually, but the Minister will be able to transfer his managers to any State hotels he likes, without having to go to the licensing bench for permission. It is not a fair proposition.

Mr. McDowall: He will have to go to the annual licensing court.

Mr. TAYLOR: I am sorry the mover did not make that clear in his remarks, because the Bill itself makes it clear in Clause 2. It is not interfering with the license, but only makes it possible for the Minister to transfer his managers to any State hotels for which licenses have been granted.

The Attorney General: That is all there is in the Bill.

Mr. TAYLOR: And that is my objection to it. No Government should

seek such a power; I am surprised that the present Government should ask for it. Why are they are not content to be amenable to the same law as everybody else has to recognise? They are carrying on the business under more favourable circumstances than any other people. They are not competing in large populated area where land rents are high and where supervision is close. They are carrying it on in outlying places. The only safeguard the people have is in their licensing bench seeing that the transfers are not effected without their sanction. I hope the House thoroughly understands the effect of this simple and innocent little Bill, which is only a leaflet after all. I am going to oppose the second reading for the reasons I have stated.

Mr. McDOWALL (Coolgardie) [7.46]: I have listened to the debate with very great regret indeed. There is no doubt that it was painful in the extreme to have listened to the extraordinary and extreme arguments advanced against this small Bill by the hon. member who has just sat down. Let me sum up the whole of the arguments which have been brought up against it. They are merely on the question that the person who holds the license for a State hotel should, if he is transferred to another State hotel, apply to the licensing bench in that district to be approved of. The fact that he already has a character and that this is approved by the department does not seem to weigh in the slightest degree with the hon. members who have spoken against the measure. It seems to me just a question once more of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Does it not strike any sensible member as being absurd that the Government should apply to themselves for these particular privileges? The argument has been advanced as to the bench having the right to do this, that and the other, and about the State having the right to select their managers or hotel keepers, as the case may be. To any man of experience these arguments are so much rot. No other word can express the position. If I sell a hotel to any person say in the Coolgardie district—

Mr. Heitmann: You could not sell one there.

Mr. Taylor: The State would not build one there.

Mr. McDOWALL: We do not want the State to build one there. What would the people of Coolgardie have to say about a man who bought a hotel there? Absolutely nothing whatever. The man simply comes along with a decent character and a fair report and the license is transferred to him without any question. Men who have dealt with businesses of this kind know that many applicants are granted licenses that one would scarcely think would be entitled to hold them. Yet here, when the State simply asks the House to transfer its manager, a manager whom the Government have taken great pains to inquire into the character of before making the appointment, and a man who certainly must have some reputation in order to get that position, it is said that the State or the Government must go to the licensing bench cap in hand, or to something of their own creation, in order to ask that body for a license. There is no difficulty whatever of getting a transfer, as I have explained, at the present time, for the simple reason that people never bother so long as the man has a fair and reasonable character. But there is this to be said: there is great trouble taken so far as the Government are concerned, which is not taken with respect to outsiders, for these do not enter into this particular question. This Bill, as the Attorney General has explained, is simply one to allow the Government to transfer a manager from one hotel to another without having to go to the expense, the bother, or the waste of time, of applying to the licensing bench to see whether they approve of his character, a character which has already been approved by the Government before the man's appointment.

Mr. Willmott: Is not the ordinary hotelkeeper in this position?

Mr. McDOWALL: There is a vast difference between the ordinary hotelkeeper and a State hotelkeeper. The private individual will apply for a

license whether he has a character or not. There is no question of a privilege as far as competition is concerned. This privilege is simply that of transferring a manager to another hotel.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It relieves the Government from applying only for the renewal of a license.

The Attorney General: It does nothing of the kind.

Mr. McDOWALL: The Bill practically only contains one clause and yet a considerable amount of misconception has arisen in connection with it. Let us take the words of Clause 2—

Without any other license or authority than this Act, to carry on, by his authorised agent, in any State hotel established before the commencement of this Act, or hereafter lawfully established, the trade and business of the holder of a publican's general license. There is nothing there to show that he is exempt from applying for his license at the annual licensing court. This clause absolutely and emphatically, if there is anything in the English language, deals with the transfer of managers from a State hotel to a State hotel. Hon. members, especially the hon. member for Mt. Margaret, have read into it that it means the selling of good liquor and deals with the quality of liquor, and various other extraordinary things that are not in the clause. How can such arguments as these be brought forward? They are enough to tax the patience of any reasonable man. As I interjected, common sense shows it is a reasonable way of carrying on the business of the State.

Mr. Heitmann: Speak up!

Mr. McDOWALL: It would be a very good thing if many hon. members in this Chamber were to speak up as well as I do, especially when the Chairman is in the Chair, or when you yourself, Sir, happen to be in the Speaker's Chair. Also, I am sure *Hansard* would deeply appreciate it. To return once more to the subject before the House, some hon. members have complained of the red tape business in connection with Government departments and the way we have to go

round, and all that kind of business, but as soon as the Government endeavour to introduce a slight measure that enables them to perform their business in a somewhat commonsense manner, we have arguments brought forward that are quite irrelevant to the particular clause, with the desire of defeating it.

Mr. Taylor: And giving privileges that no one else has.

Mr. McDOWALL: If the hon. member had a hotel does he mean to say he could not transfer his management? Of course, except for a limited period when he got his license, it is perfectly true that he must go before a licensing bench to get that privilege. That is a reasonable thing. But it is entirely different to this particular question. A man may hold a license who is of no repute and it is essential for him to go before the bench in order that his credentials may be inquired into. The manager of a State hotel is appointed after due inquiry by the Government and approved of by the people who are in charge of the administration of this department. It is a very different matter indeed to any man getting a license right off the reel.

Mr. Smith: It does not say so in this section.

Mr. McDOWALL: This section is one dealing with the transfer of managers. Somebody brought in the question of another person getting a transfer for an ordinary hotel. In answer to that interjection I explained the difference. I am sorry that the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Smith) is either deaf, or dense, I am not at liberty to say which. There is certainly nothing in the section about all this. Let me repeat what has been said before, that there is only the question of the transfer of a manager from one State hotel to another State hotel. There is nothing in the section about a manager applying for a license at the annual meeting of the licensing court. It is for common-sense purposes, and to enable the Minister to administer this department with less red tape than exists at the present time. I am going to vote for the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth) [7.55]: Unlike the hon. member for Coolgardie, I do not regard this as such an innocent measure after all. In the first place I do not agree that it will be any material assistance to the Attorney General in the management of the State Hotel Department.

The Attorney General: It will be; I say it is necessary.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I differ from the Attorney General and I say that it will be of no material convenience to the Minister in the administration of that department. Whether it be any convenience or not, there is a greater principle than that involved, namely, the principle of placing the Government above the courts. The member for Coolgardie said, "Why should a Government go cap in hand to a court of its creation?" The Privy Council of England is the creation of the Crown just as this licensing court is the creation of the representatives of the Crown of this State. We would be admitting a very dangerous and vicious principle indeed if we were to pass this measure.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There would not be much security for the citizens of the State.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It would be admitting a very dangerous principle indeed. Let us say, for the sake of argument, that it would be a great convenience to the department. Still, I could not feel justified in voting for this measure.

Mr. Heitmann: Where is the danger?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: As the hon. member for North Perth says, we are, with the aid of Parliament, dispensing with the courts. We are asking for the right to override the courts, and to set this court aside. That is a principle I think that no hon. member should vote for without very serious consideration. This, of course, may be a minor court but the principle is there. If there were no other reason for my voting against the Bill this reason would be sufficient for my doing so. Let me add that there is no real necessity, with all due deference to the Attorney General, for the enactment of this measure. If the Minister wants

to transfer a manager from one State hotel to another, he has not shown that there will be any inconvenience to the department, or inconvenience to the manager of the State hotels Department by his having to re-apply in a new licensing district. It may cause a little delay but certainly it will cause nothing more. What happens under the Licensing Act? One licensee goes out and the other licensee goes in. The latter goes in, and immediately applies for a transfer, as a matter of form. Within a week the Chairman may endorse the transfer, or even if they wait for the licensing bench—for it is at monthly sittings that transfers are given—the applicant receives the transfer he applied for. What great hardship is that for the manager of a State hotel? There are very good reasons for demanding that when a manager is proposed to be transferred he should go before the bench. I need not delay the House by mentioning those reasons. I wish to say, however, that I do not view this Bill in the same light as the member for Coolgardie (Mr. McDowall). It is not a simple little measure, the whole purpose of which is to allow the Minister to transfer a manager from one State hotel to another without appearing before the licensing court. It goes a good deal further than that. If it meant only that, why was it not stated simply in the Bill, this Bill gives the Minister authority to transfer a manager from one State hotel to another?

The Attorney General: That is all it does mean.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Let me draw the Attorney General's attention to the fact that this Bill does contain a great deal more than that. I am somewhat surprised, for the reason that the Attorney General has always been one of the most earnest champions of local option, and yet in this Bill he has struck a direct blow at local option. He is putting the State hotels, not just now, but later on in a few years' time, outside the control of the local option vote. What does the Bill state? It says—

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Licensing Act, 1911, to the con-

trary, it shall be lawful for the Minister of the Crown to whom the administration of this Act is for the time being committed by the Governor, without any other license or authority than this Act, to carry on, by his authorised agent, in any State hotel, established before the commencement of this Act.

In other words it gives the Minister power to continue all the State licenses already granted in perpetuity.

The Attorney General: No, it does not.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It says that by no other authority, and notwithstanding anything contained in the 1911 Act this Bill gives him a license to carry on hotels in any place for which a license has been granted under the 1911 Act. The point I am coming to is that in the 1911 Act provision is laid down for the taking of a local option poll, but the full local option vote cannot be taken until after the expiration of the 10 years period. In 1920 or 1921, I am not certain which; but at the end of, say, 1921, there will be a vote taken on Resolution (d). That means that a certain number of houses, if the vote be carried in the affirmative, shall be closed in certain districts. That provision will have no effect whatever as regards State hotels, if this Bill becomes an Act.

The Attorney General: That is nonsense.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Well, will the Attorney General consent to alter the wording of this Bill?

The Attorney General: I will consent in Committee. That is all the purpose I have in this Bill, just to enable me to deal with the managers.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Will the Attorney General look at the wording, which I have already quoted?

The Attorney General: Supposing a State hotel has been lawfully established, it only means the carrying on of the license.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: But it says by "no other license or authority but this Act."

The Attorney General: Yes, he can carry on the license of a lawfully constituted hotel.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: But the Bill points out that no other authority is required than this Bill notwithstanding anything contained in the Act of 1911. That is plain enough.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is right. It means no more than I have said. You can alter the words to make it clearer to your own judgment, but it means no more.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Can anybody take any other meaning from those words? That is the only meaning any person can take from them. For several reasons, and more particularly for that reason, I intend to vote against the second reading of the Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker—Kanowna—in reply) [8.5]: I am somewhat surprised at the length and tone of the debate which this small measure has created, at all the fire and talk there has been. I am afraid that some hon. members must have given rein to their imagination, and have been allowing their passions to run riot. As a matter of fact the Bill means no more than this, that it shall be lawful henceforth for the Government to manage its affairs by managers without going to the licensing court to ask permission. That is all that is contained in the measure. On that all sorts of ghosts have been raised. According to some hon. members, we propose to do something which will have the effect of over-ruling the sanctity of the courts, of belittling the licensing bench.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: The Premier did belittle that body.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That reference was only in answer to an interjection, and it is true of some occasions on which the court sat. I do not think that even the hon. member will deny that the courts have granted licenses for hotels which should have been closed and to licensees who ought not to have been permitted to hold a license. There have been occasions of that kind, but the licensing court stands in a position of demanding respect from the general public, and also from the Government. Licensing courts are the agents of government, in-

struments by means of which we manage our licensing affairs.

Mr. Smith: Why is it necessary to introduce a short cut for the Government?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Because the Government have a right to do things by the easiest means. Is there any harm in our endeavouring to avoid red tape? The hon. member, when he was in the position to direct my thoughts, used to instruct me to advise the Government to avoid red tape. He used to instruct me in my articles to condemn the red tapeism of the Government. Now the hon. member, the perfect example and paragon of simplicity and directness, would have all the obstacles he could get in the way of going directly at what you want to do, and would, if he could, have us go round the wall when we could get through the gate. The hon. member formerly was always strong on the point of avoiding circumlocution, but now simply because it is a little matter which seems to touch vested interests he is all for circumlocution.

Mr. Smith: I have no interests in hotels.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not mean the hon. member personally. Is it any crime on the part of the Government to want to do a thing with as little trouble as it can be done satisfactorily?

Mr. Smith: Why introduce an Act of Parliament to save a clerk a little trouble?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member cannot be speaking in earnest?

Mr. Smith: I am.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then he has less sense than I thought. I cannot credit that the hon. member has so little insight. A little trouble. Let me give an example. Supposing that three hon. members on that (Opposition) bench are my hotel managers, one at Wongan Hills, one at Gwalia, and one at Bruce Rock. One of them desires to leave Gwalia where he has been for six or seven years, and come down to Bruce Rock. The one at Yallingup has to go somewhere else, and I have to change the man at Wongan Hills. Then I have got three

magisterial courts to approach. I know someone will tell me that it is a simple matter to get a transfer. If that be so, it answers all the arguments and all the objections about magistrates having to hear all the evidence and get all the reports.

Mr. Smith: The application for the transfer could be dealt with in a month.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Even if I have to wait a month, would that be justifiable if the exigencies of my business demanded that it be attended to earlier? When hon. members are dealing with a question of State management it must be remembered that it is not a question of a single proprietary. The State has a number of hotels, has half a dozen licensed premises. The Crown is really the proprietor of all those hotels, and it has to manage them all and to manage them in such a way that each one contributes its quota to the proper running of State hotels. Managers were appointed to State hotels before this Government took office, and I may say they were doing their work well. All we want under this Bill is to be able to do our work easily, and with as little expense and loss of time as possible. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) asks whether the Government has ever been brought to task in this connection? We have had magistrates threaten us from the bench that if we did not apply for a license for our agents they would take certain steps. I know it would be absurd for them to take steps because, supposing without this Act we changed our managers as we pleased, just as we found the business required it, and suppose one of our managers was brought before the court, they would fine him.

Member: They might put him inside for three months.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Do you believe any Government would allow its manager to have three months gaol for merely doing the Government's work with the Government's authority? There would be nothing of that kind. It is the Crown that is the wrong doer if there be any wrong done. The agent is

not the wrong doer; he is simply obeying orders.

Hon. J. Mitchell: There is an evasion of the law.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is no evasion of the law. In the case of Yallingup I can send anyone—even the man in the street.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are doing that at Bruce Rock.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: At Dwellingup the law permits us to change our manager when we please; no law can say us nay. We have absolute right by statute to do that. All I am seeking to do in respect of managers is to put all the hotels on the same footing. We can say to the man at Bruce Rock "You are no longer suited to our service, we shall have to get rid of you at once," and it will enable us to send another man to fill his place.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Section 54 of the principal Act says that the chairman can endorse a transfer at any time.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Undoubtedly. There is no fear of the results that hon. members have spoken so loudly about.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Then, why the Bill?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Because we have to approach the chairman. In some of the magisterial districts the magistrate at the time may be at the other end of the district, and we have to await his return. Not only that, we may have to go to the other magistrates where we have shifted the other man from. Two or three magistrates will have to be approached.

Mr. Smith: The Bill does not limit you to these measures.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, but the hon. member must give the Labour Government some credit for the exercise of commonsense.

Mr. Smith: I do.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Under those circumstances men are appointed, and men should have the qualifications for the work they are doing. There is more; in the management of hotels I have laid down a principle,

rightly or wrongly, and alluded to by the Premier this evening, that we shall have promotions; that one man, starting at the least important of the hotels shall be able to work up, by good behaviour, and good conduct, and strict attention to duty, to the best hotel in the State.

Mr. Smith: It does not require a Bill to enable you to do that.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It does! We want to be able to do it as part of the work.

Mr. Griffiths: Will not that tend to make a manager run his hotel, which may not be a payable proposition, in such a manner as might be considered to be outside the law.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The man who will sacrifice the principles for which the State hotels are erected in order to show a profit is the man who first goes out of his billet. The excellence of the manager for his position, the good report of his house, the absolute adherence to decorum and the just treatment of his customers, the honourable and humane treatment of his customers, he is the man who will receive encouragement; but the man who will allow drunkenness on his place in order to show a profit will be the man to be doomed.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Is it humane to refuse a man a drink on a hot Sunday?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Let that man drink milk or water. Not only are the police at the service of the Department in this respect, but we have our travelling inspector, a man who visits the hotels continuously. And not only have we the inspector, and the manager, who pays surprise visits to all the hotels, but we have the liquor inspector.

Mr. Smith: How many samples does he ever take?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He takes as many from our bars as he does from those of private hotels. His reports have to be made regularly, and therefore we have a safeguard more than the licensing bench can ever have. If hon. members want to word this clause so as to make it clear in its reference only to managers, and not hotels, I am

willing to amend it in Committee. I wish members clearly to understand that outside the question of dealing with the managers and being able to make transfers, outside that, no part of the law is repealed or touched. What does this enable us to do? It enables us—

Notwithstanding anything contained in 'The Licensing Act, 1911,' to the contrary it shall be lawful for the Minister of the Crown to whom the administration of this Act is for the time being committed by the Governor without any license or authority than this Act to carry on.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: For ever?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, not for ever. I hope, with the aid of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) that we shall be able to do away with all hotels. The Act of 1911 renders State hotels subject to the Local Option Act as all the rest.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Not if this is enacted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes, because this deals with the "carry on by his various agents."

Hon. J. D. Connolly: So long as this remains an Act?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It says—

Carry on by his authorised agent in any State hotel established before the commencement of this Act or hereafter lawfully established.

If lawfully established it would be subject to the Licensing Act of 1911, which subjects it to the local option poll.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: That is for future licenses.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is lawfully established. It is established subject to Part 5 of "The Licensing Act, 1911."

Hon. J. D. Connolly: But it says "notwithstanding anything in the Licensing Act to the contrary."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is to say the Minister can carry on by his authorised agent in any State hotel established before the commencement of this Act or hereafter lawfully established. That is, subject to the provisions

of "The Licensing Act, 1911." The hon. member cannot make it any different from that. It is perversity to try and read something into it that the Bill does not say. If there are created any doubts in the hon. member's mind, in Committee we may be able to assist him.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Do you not think it nullifies resolution "D."?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not in the slightest. Any State hotel in the future must be established lawfully, and, to establish it lawfully, it must be established under "The Licensing Act, 1911." with all its provisions. The only thing that the Bill takes out of that Act is our power to carry on the business by our various agents. Nothing more nor less; yet there is all this fuss. It does not mean an insult to the Court; there is no reflection upon any public body. It is simply for the purpose of conducting business as expeditiously as possible and at the least expense.

Question put and a division taken with the following result:—

| | | | |
|------------------|----|----|----|
| Ayes | .. | .. | 21 |
| Noes | .. | .. | 22 |
| | | | — |
| Majority against | .. | | 1 |
| | | | — |

AYES.

| | |
|---------------|------------------|
| Mr. Angwin | Mr. Mullaney |
| Mr. Bolton | Mr. Munsie |
| Mr. Carpenter | Mr. O'Loghlen |
| Mr. Chesson | Mr. Scaddan |
| Mr. Collier | Mr. B. J. Stubbs |
| Mr. Foley | Mr. Thomas |
| Mr. Green | Mr. Underwood |
| Mr. Holman | Mr. Walker |
| Mr. Hudson | Mr. A. A. Wilson |
| Mr. Johnson | Mr. Helmann |
| Mr. McDowall | (Teller). |

NOES.

| | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Mr. Allen | Mr. Plesse |
| Mr. Connolly | Mr. Robinson |
| Mr. Cunningham | Mr. Smith |
| Mr. Jas. Gardiner | Mr. S. Stubbs |
| Mr. Griffiths | Mr. Taylor |
| Mr. Hardwick | Mr. Thomson |
| Mr. Harrison | Mr. Veyard |
| Mr. Hickmott | Mr. Wansbrough |
| Mr. Johnston | Mr. Willmott |
| Mr. Mitchell | Mr. F. Wilson |
| Mr. Nairn | Mr. Male |
| | (Teller). |

Question thus negatived; Bill defeated.

BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [8.32] in moving the second reading said: This is only a small Bill—

Hon. Frank Wilson: So was the last.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): But like several others passed during this session it has been found necessary owing to the altered conditions of the times in which we live. It is a Bill to give the Commissioner of Police power to appoint special constables. Under the existing Act special constables can only be appointed in times of riot or when there is a possibility of riot and they may be appointed by a magistrate or by justices of the peace. It has been found necessary in England as well as in Western Australia to appoint special constables without any particular riot having occurred, unless we can call the German attack a riot. For instance, we have found it necessary to appoint special constables to look after our water supplies. They are stationed at several dams and at various places to protect the pipes and the bridges. It has also been found necessary at times to appoint stewards and officers of a ship special constables for the purpose of looking after prisoners sent by sea to various places, and under the circumstances it is advisable that the Commissioner should have power to appoint special constables when he deems it necessary and to give certain rights and armaments to the persons appointed. There can be little question as to the advisableness of amending the Act to make provision for such appointments in the present circumstances. I assure the House that the measure has been found necessary in the administration of the Police Department and with a view to protecting the property of the State, I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth) [8.35]: While I have no objection to the Government attaining the end indicated by the Honorary Minister, I candidly confess that I do not like the Bill as drafted. It is somewhat like the Bill which has just been dealt with; the powers contained in it are altogether too wide. I do not agree with the Honorary Minister that the powers contained in Part III. of the Police Act in regard to the appointment of special constables are not sufficiently wide for all purposes.

The Minister for Works: Of course you know better than our legal advisers.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I administered this portion of the Police Act for some six years.

The Premier: You remind us about it frequently.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You require to be reminded.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: And I have been sent here to give the Premier and Parliament the benefit of my knowledge.

The Premier: It will be very helpful. What you do not know would fill a volume.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The electors of Perth showed their good sense and their appreciation of my knowledge by sending me here, and I intend to give the House the benefit of that knowledge whether it pleases the Premier or not.

The Premier: You ought to have a special badge on your back stating "I have been a Minister."

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have no objection to the powers sought being granted, but it is possible that under such a measure serious trouble would arise among the members of the police force. Part III. of the Police Act gives wide powers to the Commissioner with the approval of the Minister for the appointment of special constables.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): In time of riot.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, it is more particularly intended for such a time.

The Minister for Works: It is a question, not of what is intended, but what is in the Act.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Act provides that in all cases where it appears to the police magistrate or two justices upon the oath of any credible person that any riot or felony has taken place or may be reasonably apprehended the Commissioner may appoint such constables. Exceptional conditions prevail at present and if there is any doubt regarding the powers under that portion of the Act, it should be amended. This is the proper procedure to adopt, but the Bill goes further and seeks to confer on special constables all the powers and privileges conferred by the Police Act of 1892. These powers are necessarily very wide and the police authorities are so alive to the importance of those powers that men have to serve at least six months and sometimes twelve months probationary period before they are admitted as permanent constables. Under the Police Act, Section 46, I think, a constable has the right to approach any person and demand his name. If the person does not give it, he may be arrested. This is a necessary power to give a police officer, but should it be given to a special constable? The Honorary Minister referred to stewards on a boat—

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): It is absolutely necessary. It has been done again and again illegally.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: A ship's steward has not been drilled in the discretion necessary to be exercised by a police officer. It is essential to have special constables at this period.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Has not a captain on board his vessel those powers?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, but only the master. He is given those powers under the Merchant Shipping Act.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): He can arrest a person, but can he take charge of a prisoner arrested outside?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No, unless the person commits an offence on the ship,

but that is beside the question. I point out the danger of giving the ordinary man these powers. A man who has not been subjected to any examination, test or training—

The Minister for Mines: All the men sent out have been carefully selected.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, but it may be impossible for the Commissioner or his subordinates to exercise the same careful selection in future. So necessary is careful selection that men joining the police force are put on as recruits for six months or even twelve months.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Not as recruits.

The Minister for Works: They go out on duty.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, but they receive only recruits' pay.

The Minister for Works: That does not alter a man's knowledge.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: He is treated as a recruit just the same as a recruit is treated in the military camp.

The Minister for Works: It does not relieve him of his powers under the Police Act.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have every confidence in the present Commissioner who is an excellent officer. The whole of our officers and men compare very favourably with those in any part of Australia and because of my belief in those men I am the more anxious to maintain the efficiency of the force at the standard which has prevailed in the past. It would not be fair to those men already in the force to invest special constables indiscriminately with power as is proposed under this Bill. I am directing the Minister's attention to this and I urge him not to give these special constables in one fell swoop the powers laid down in the Police Act.

The Premier: Does not a recruit have all these powers?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, in a sense.

The Premier: And if he does not exercise them properly, he is fired out.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The recruit is not allowed away from the station unless he is with another man.

The Premier: Why should we send men out if they cannot exercise special powers?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The recruit is kept at the barracks under supervision and is trained in his work.

The Premier: So are the special constables.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The difference is just the same as between recruits at Blackboy Hill and a soldier at the front. A special constable would have to do full police duty.

The Minister for Works: Special constables are kept in the town and experienced men are sent out.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is a matter of administration and is what ought to be done, but this measure will give such men full power. The Bill states—

Any person appointed a special constable shall have all the same powers and be entitled to and enjoy all the same privileges and be subject to the same duties and obligations as any constable duly appointed under the principal Act.

The Commissioner and his officers would therefore be justified in retaining special constables and promoting them and giving them seniority over men already in the force. This would not be fair.

The Minister for Mines: Do you think those who are administering the measure will go suddenly mad?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We must be fair to the men in the force and not put a lot of special constables side by side with them and invest them with the same powers when they lack the training of the regular police. I say to the Government that it is not necessary to give special constables the whole of the powers contained in the Police Act. Let the Honorary Minister amend certain sections of the Police Act which deal particularly with special constables. After all, though, it is purely a matter of administration, no principle being involved; and I am merely pointing

out to the Minister that certain dangers exist. I should be wanting in my duty if I did not draw attention to defects of the Bill. Let me say again, I do not anticipate that any of these things are likely to occur.

The Premier: No more does anybody else who keeps sane.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister for Mines says that every care will be exercised in the appointment of special constables. But it is impossible to exercise much care in selecting them as proposed. There will not be time to give the necessary consideration. Therefore I ask, it being impossible to give the necessary consideration to the appointments, or to give special constables appointed the necessary training, is it wise to vest in special constables the same powers as are conferred on a regular police constable, and so possibly, as the result of indiscreet behaviour on the part of special constables, throw discredit on the excellent body we possess in the police of Western Australia?

The Minister for Mines: We will take a note of your warning.

Mr. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [8.46]: I support the second reading of the Bill; but I should like the Minister in charge of the measure to give an assurance that a special constable, so soon as he goes out on duty, will have a distinguishing badge, either by way of uniform or helmet or armlet, showing plainly to the public that he is a special constable. Otherwise possibly some person being interrogated by a special constable in ordinary attire may not believe that he is being addressed by a special constable at all.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He would be quite justified in thinking so.

Mr. TAYLOR: Exactly. If the special constable is not wearing the necessary distinction, the result may be that he will put the citizen concerned to serious inconvenience through no fault whatever of that citizen. It is for that reason I make the suggestion. In answer to the member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly), I wish to express my belief that under this measure more discretion, not less, will be exercised in the selection of special con-

stabes, because there will be more time to choose them than is the case under the existing law. Under the existing Act, special constables can be sworn in only on special occasions when there is a riot or a tumult in the streets, say, with which the regular force of the police cannot cope. In such circumstances, special constables are sworn in straightaway, and immediately sent out on duty full-fledged. Plainly, there is no time whatever for training in such circumstances. The present Bill is for the special purpose of giving the Commissioner of Police power to swear in special constables for special work without having to go before a magistrate or justices. That has already been indicated by the Minister in charge of the measure. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

[*The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.*]

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara—in reply) [8.50]: In reply to the member for Perth, it seems to me that whatever the Government propose to do, there is some member sure to see a source of danger in that proposal. We realise, and we have realised, that there is a source of danger in not doing things; and when we have the property, and it may be the lives, of the people to protect, we should be given power to appoint special constables to afford official protection. The member for Perth quoted Section 34 of the principal Act of 1892. It is the very wording of that section which has rendered this amending Bill necessary. The section of the principal Act says—

In all cases where it shall be made to appear to any police or resident magistrate or any two or more justices, upon the oath of any credible person, that any tumult, riot, or felony has taken place, or may be reasonably apprehended in any place in the said Colony, and any such magistrate or justices shall be of opinion that the ordinary constables or officers appointed for preserving the peace are not sufficient for the preservation thereof, and for the protection of the inhabitants, and the security of the property of such place

The measure continues in that strain—

Provided always that whenever it shall be deemed necessary to appoint such special constables as aforesaid . . . If there is a riot or a prospect of a riot, he can appoint special constables.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Or if there is a riot apprehended.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Yes. When we are protecting the Coolgardie water scheme works, or the Fremantle bridges, or other State property, we are not necessarily apprehending a riot.

The Premier: We take precautionary methods.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: But in such circumstances you are apprehending a felony.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Under the existing law we have to convince a magistrate or two or more justices that special constables are required, that there is some likelihood of a tumult or a riot. On the other hand, we propose by this Bill to give the Commissioner of Police power to appoint special constables. Let us consider the position of the Commissioner of Police. If one compares the Commissioner of Police with two or more justices, I think one must come to the conclusion that the greater degree of discretion would be with the Commissioner of Police. Now, as regards the other dangers feared by the member for Perth. One is that the powers under this Bill would be used indiscriminately. If we have a Commissioner of Police who uses his powers indiscriminately, the best thing we can do is to get rid of that Commissioner of Police.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I did not say the Commissioner of Police would do so.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The hon. member used the word "indiscriminately" clearly and distinctly.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I said the power might be used indiscriminately by the special constables.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The hon. member said that this power might be used indiscriminately.

If our Commissioner of Police uses this power, or any other of the powers conferred on him, indiscriminately—and there are powers vested in him greater than that proposed under this Bill—then we must get rid of our present Commissioner of Police, and obtain a Commissioner of Police endowed with some discrimination.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I rise to a point of order. The Honorary Minister has misquoted me. I did not say that I objected to allowing the Commissioner of Police to exercise this power. I said the recruits might exercise their power indiscriminately.

The Premier: What right have you to interrupt the Honorary Minister?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order involved.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: It is a point of explanation.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member should have waited until the Minister sat down, and then the hon. member could have made his explanation.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): I have no desire to pursue the matter. I took the word down, and there is no doubt of its having been used.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You put the word in the wrong place; that is all.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Yes; no doubt. That is what the Opposition always say. Again, as regards recruits, the member for Perth states that special constables, having been appointed, will not be under control as ordinary recruits are. As a matter of fact, recruits on joining the police force are almost invariably put upon special duty. The hon. member is right to a certain degree in stating that recruits are not always stationed away from supervision; but, in point of fact, recruits are frequently sent out into the country. One of the first duties on which many recruits are put is to look out for sly grog sellers, right away altogether from ordinary supervision. The special constables to be appointed by the Commissioner of Police, who undoubtedly is a judge of the class of men suitable for police duty, will not

be for any work of that nature, but for the work of protecting the property of the State and protecting the lives of the people of the State. This House will recognise, I think, that the Government absolutely require the powers proposed under this measure, not only for the purpose of appointing special constables in the future, but for the purpose of ratifying appointments already made in this connection. We have at the present time a good many special constables doing service.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How many?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): About 30. This measure will not only make provision for the appointment of special constables in the future, but will ratify appointments already made. As regards the desire expressed by the member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor), I entirely agree with that hon. member as to the necessity for special constables wearing some distinguishing badge. The matter is one which can be arranged by regulation; and I give the hon. member this promise, that if at the present time there is no regulation which provides for a distinguishing badge, a regulation to that effect will be made, and that all special constables will carry a distinguishing badge. I trust the House will pass the second reading of this measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. McDowall in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Appointment of special constables:

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have no objection at all to granting the Commissioner of Police all necessary powers. The powers which this measure proposes to vest in the Commissioner are quite necessary, and the Commissioner is a man fully able to exercise his powers judiciously. That, indeed, is exactly what I said on the second reading. Moreover, the powers contained in this clause are exactly those which the Commis-

sioner of Police has to-day. What I pointed out was that it would be unwise to give special constables the full powers of regular constables. Under a section of the principal Act, for instance, constables cannot be punished by the Commissioner of Police, but may demand a board of inquiry. Now, if each special constable is to have the same power to demand a board of inquiry, that, I say, is wrong.

The HONORARY MINISTER: As regards the powers to demand inquiry, this Bill provides that the Commissioner of Police may suspend or determine the service of any special constable at any time the Commissioner may think fit. The Commissioner has power to deal with special constables quite apart from the ordinary police regulations.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [9.2] in moving the second reading said: I desire to explain that a request was made by the Women's Service Guild that women should be empowered to sit on the children's court. That is all the Bill provides. I agree entirely with the request for, after all, women have to carry the baby and rear the children, and in my opinion they are more capable than men to sit and adjudicate in the children's court where children are tried for various offences. I promised to bring down the Bill, notwithstanding the short session, and that if hon. members were prepared to accept it, as I believe they will be, I would put it through. I made a further promise that if it did not pass I would endeavour to bring it down again next session, when we would have

more time to go thoroughly into the matter. After considering the question I may say it appeals to me as right, and I think it will appeal to most members. It is something that should have been done a considerable time ago. It will be to the benefit of the children who come before the court. I have every confidence in moving—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. D. Connolly, debate adjourned.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1914-15.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 28th January on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the Annual Estimates; Mr. McDowall in the Chair.

Vote—His Excellency the Governor, £1,750:

Mr. FOLEY (Mount Leonora) [9.6]: In the speeches of various hon. members there has been much criticism, mostly adverse, but occasionally kindly. Scarcely any hon. member has offered any suggestion to the Government as to how a better state of things can be brought about.

Mr. Male: Are you going to do so?

Mr. FOLEY: Before I finish I will prove to the hon. member that at least I can give my ideas as to how best the ship of State should be run, at all events for a little while. When we denounce something as wrong it is always well to offer a suggestion as to a road out. I am not going through all the intricacies of the financial position and the deficit; other members have spoken on that phase of the question, and whether the Government have derived from them any enlightenment is for the Government to say. Most of the time of this session has been taken up in legislating for the benefit of one industry alone, namely that of agriculture. The deficit shown by the Government has been caused largely by the assistance the Government have given to the farming industry. No representative of the gold

mining industry, the greatest industry in the State, has spoken a disparaging word of the farmer. We do not intend to do it. We have ever given as freely as possible our support to any measure calculated to help the agricultural industry when it was needing assistance. When conditions again become normal we are going to ask the representatives of those whom we are helping now to help those in the gold mining industry, and thus show that they are at least grateful for what we have done for them. Many suggestions have been put before the House as to how best to relieve the burden of the farmer, and I am sorry to know that, after the intention of the Ministry to give many more thousands to the assistance of the agricultural industry has been declared, some who represent that industry in this and the other Chamber have failed to give their whole-souled support to the industry they are representing. Although we are kindly disposed towards the farmers, and wish them well, and although we know that the Government and the State are gambling on a good season next year, I think it is time the Government told the farmers that they require to do something for themselves. I do not say that in any unkindly spirit. When, recently, certain legislation was brought down, the farmers' representatives voted with the Government for a measure proposing that after the Government gave them assistance it was only right the farmers, when the good times came again, should recognise the Government that had put them in a position to continue working their land. I am positive that when the farmers realise their indebtedness to the Government, and when that indebtedness is put into one debt, those farmers will bless the day the present Government brought down such a measure. The member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) declared it was time the Government "took a pull." But the hon. member went on to say that they should have a financial "blow out," that the Government were doing nothing for the farming or the mining or any other industry, and that these Estimates should have contained

thousands of pounds more for the assistance of each of the industries. To be logical, if we "take a pull" how can we have this "blow out"? We cannot have both. It is time every hon. member supported the Government in avoiding a "blow out," in conserving the interests of the State, and seeing that every penny is expended in the direction of developing the State's industries.

Hon. J. Mitchell: They had a "blow out" last month, according to the financial returns.

Mr. FOLEY: That is unkind, for the hon. member knows there was a big deficit last month, and that there will be still greater deficits; but the greater the shortage the greater the need for the policy I have laid down. The leader of the Opposition, and the member for Moore (Hon. H. B. Lefroy) stated the Government should shut down altogether on State trading concerns. I ask those gentlemen whether they are going to shut down on the agricultural railways as well? They used as an argument that the deficit was brought about largely by State concerns. If that was so, and they are not paying, are these same persons going to use as an argument that because the agricultural spur lines do not pay they should be shut down also? There is a loss on agricultural spur lines, of course, but when the Bills in connection with them were before the House hon. members said that they would pay from the start. But, as a matter of fact, there never has been a railway line in the agricultural areas which has paid from the start.

Mr. S. Stubbs: The Dumbleyung line did.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The Wongan Hills line did.

The Premier: No, no.

Mr. FOLEY: Several hon. members have made assertions in regard to different lines. The hon. member for Nelson (Mr. Wilmott) says there is one line that pays and put up two fingers to signify it, but he referred to a timber line which is, of course, different from an agricultural spur line, and has to do with an industry quite apart from the agricultural industry. I am not going to deal with our land from

the legislative point of view. I only want to make these few remarks on the land questions. Before leaving the matter, however, I want to say that I trust that all members of this Chamber, whether they represent an agricultural industry, or not, will continue, as long as the necessity arises, to give assistance to that industry, and that, in return, those members representing that industry will give assistance to those industries which other hon. members of this House represent. The hon. member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) in speaking about our railways quoted figures to show that the English railways were not as good as ours. I am not in a position to combat that argument.

Mr. Thomas: I cannot admit that I said that.

Mr. FOLEY: At all events the hon. member used figures to prove that we got a better return from our railways on the money expended than did the English railways, and he reckoned that our fares were cheaper than the fares existing in England. I am not prepared to combat that argument either. He said that there was a sum of £75,000 that could be saved to the State if the rates on goods were raised and that there was a sum of £50,000 which would accrue to the State by the raising of fares. Whatever may be said about that question, I do feel that it is a bad argument to use at the present time. When times are good and we get money to burn, we can talk about raising prices. There is one suggestion that I would like to make so far as the railways are concerned. There is a line in this State, the Kurrawang wood line, that runs in direct opposition to the Government line for about 80 miles.

Member: Where is that?

Mr. FOLEY: The hon. member knows. The Kurrawang wood line runs almost parallel with our State line and to save paying the Railway Department, which is entitled to the rates on the wood, they run in opposition to our railways for 80 miles and come in on the Government line a few miles from Kalgoorlie. If the Government wish to save a great deal of money to the State, or get what the State

rightly deserves, they should at least see that the company operating now over 100 miles from Kalgoorlie should bring their wood into Bullabulling—wood that is grown on Crown lands, by the way—and that the State had the benefit of the rates. These people are taking wood and getting it practically for nothing, and it is the right of the State that we should get something in return to add to the State revenue. It will mean many thousands of pounds to our railway revenue. So far as the railways are concerned, ours are not going to pay as they did during the past few years. We are building, and intend building, more railways and the greater the number of railways that we build, as our Budget statement shows, the greater will be our liability as a State. We only have a few people in this State and the greater the number of railways that are built the greater will be the strain upon those few who make up the population. We trust when the agricultural areas are opened up and other areas, such as timber and so forth, are also opened up, that railways will eventually come back to be those paying propositions they were a few years ago. It is very hard to listen to some of the arguments as to how certain people in the State are affected by our railway system. The hon. member for Perth one night in the Chamber, when I was speaking, interjected that there had been no differential rates since Federation. The differential rates on our railways, however, hit the men who are outback, and the further outback these men are the more are they hit, and to a greater extent than in any other part of the world.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Where are they?

Mr. FOLEY: If a man is, say, at Leonora and wants to go to Southern Cross and to take two tons of furniture with him, he puts it on the train and gets it down to Southern Cross for £6 15s. But if he is in Southern Cross and wants to go back to Leonora, on that same two tons of furniture he has to pay £13 10s. according to our railway rates. That is bad enough, because the further outback a man goes the more likely he is to open up new country, and we are, therefore, putting a

tax on the industry of those men who have the enterprise to go outback and open up the country.

The Premier: It seems to me to be an encouragement for them to go outback and not to return.

Mr. FOLEY: To show how these differential rates would bring about centralisation, I say that if a man wants to bring two tons of furniture from Leonora to Fremantle it costs him £10 8s., but if he is in Fremantle and wants to go to the goldfields it would cost him £20 odd for his furniture, according to the railway rates. We do want people of this State to go on to our goldfields, and if there are people living down here who have husbands or wives on the goldfields, as the case may be, any Government that puts a bar in the way of people rejoining their relatives is doing, in my opinion, a wrong thing. These different rates are certainly working against the development of the country at the present time.

The Premier: What about back loading?

Mr. FOLEY: I am glad the Premier interjected on that point. I am coming to backloading. If a man in business in Leonora wants to get some chaff up there and he gets three tons of it on a truck at Fremantle, he has to pay from Fremantle to Leonora £5 8s. 6d. Now, we come to the question of backloading. If a man is outback and is getting sandalwood and wants to send his sandalwood from Leonora to Fremantle, instead of his paying £5 8s. 6d., which the farmer or the merchant has to pay for his chaff, this unfortunate individual pays £18 8s. 9d. Whilst these anomalies exist, whilst the difference between £5 one way and £18 the other, whilst the difference between £6 one way and £13 the other, and whilst the difference between £10 one way and £20 the other way exists, I say the department is not doing justice to the people who are outback in our State.

The Premier: You would not compare sandalwood with chaff.

Mr. Taylor: Not for horse feeding.

Mr. FOLEY: I consider that the Premier was very unhappy in his interjection. If these trucks are to go to Leonora to take the necessary produce up

there, and the machinery for the development of the country, and these trucks have got to come down empty, and things are taken to Fremantle for half rates, why should they not take sandalwood at the same rate instead of charging three times as much.

The Premier: He would not get any more for sandalwood if we charged him less.

Mr. FOLEY: If that man could get his sandalwood down here for £10 a ton would he not get something of that difference? I do not say he would get the full result of his labours because no worker ever does.

The Minister for Mines: It is all bought by the same people.

Mr. FOLEY: It does not matter who buys it. It does not matter if there is one combine buying all the sandalwood in the world, or whether there is competition among 20 sandalwood buyers; it does not matter whether there is one buyer or 20, they have to pay the Government rate for the carriage of the sandalwood. I have always believed that the price paid to the railways for the carriage of sandalwood was too high. Many of those men who go out prospecting are perhaps able to get a little sandalwood so as to assist them in going further with their prospecting.

The Premier: There is more sandalwood than they can find a market for. What is the use of their finding more?

Mr. FOLEY: It does not matter what the production of sandalwood is the Premier cannot get away from the fact that the railway rates are there. I contend it is the duty of the Government to see that something in the direction of doing away with these anomalies is brought about. The Government also should see that the men outback get a little more consideration than they do, as compared with the consideration that is extended to the cities. As far as our railways are concerned, I only trust, when we have the next Budget statement, that it will contain an amount for the construction of the railway from the head of the Esperance line to Norseman

The Premier: What we are considering is the cutting out of a lot of our newspaper trains.

Mr. FOLEY: I am not considering what the Government are going to do.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I notice that some of the goldfields lines are not paying, but that most of the agricultural lines are.

The Minister for Works: A lot of them are not paying.

Mr. FOLEY: As soon as the goldfields lines stop paying they begin to stop the number of trains right away.

The Premier: I saw a train going down to the South-West which only had two passengers on it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member for Leonora has the floor.

Mr. FOLEY: I trust that when the next Estimates are brought down they will contain an amount for the construction of a railway from what I hope will be the head of the line right through to Norseman, thus linking up our goldfields with Esperance. And I hope that every member representing the goldfields area will keep fighting for this until it is secured.

Member: What about the coastal members?

Mr. FOLEY: We will ask their help. The Estimates show several items for officers in our various departments, and I wish to congratulate the Government on doing away with special allowances to the various officers who went on military duty. I think it is to the credit of the Government that when those men were going away to get a fair living wage for their military duty, they conserved the interests of the State by stopping the salary men were getting. For that they are to be commended by every elector of the State. There is one measure I contend the Government should have brought forward, that is a Bill dealing with weights and measures. The purchasing power of earnings to-day is not so great as it was 12 months ago. Had the Government brought down a Bill dealing with weights and measures they would have been giving to the consumer, to the poor man for whom every one seems to have a thought

at the present time, to the housewife and the man on low wages, an opportunity of getting fair treatment from our store-keepers, which they undoubtedly are not getting at present. In this Chamber some time ago I gave a clear and definite illustration how a set of scales can be faked, and how a man, although he might be as honest as the sun, if he does not understand the scales, cannot know whether he is giving away a pound more or less than the correct weight. But the dishonest trader will soon find out and will work his scales so that he will give the buyer less weight than he should. It is the duty of the Government to bring down a measure such as I have mentioned, even if we have to stay in this House another month. We would be doing for the housewife and the man of low wages a greater amount of good by passing such an Act than by passing many of the measures which have been brought before this Chamber. I trust the Administration will, even at this late hour, bring down such a measure. In looking over the Estimates I notice that several hospitals are not getting as great support as before. I want to say that the hospitals in the metropolitan area and the hospitals in many other centres should take an object lesson from those districts which are doing so much themselves towards the upkeep of their own hospitals.

The Minister for Works: The vote is larger than it has ever been.

Mr. FOLEY: I know that. But next year it will not be possible for any Government to give away as much as has been given in the past, and I think it is the duty of every district to do a little in the direction of assisting themselves. If every district in the State did as much, or nearly as much, as Sandstone and Leonora have done towards the upkeep of their hospitals, the burden on the general taxpayer would be considerably lightened. As far as schools are concerned, I trust that no matter how bad times are, or how bad they are going to be in the future—if I know the Attorney General, the Minister for Education, rightly, he will do all in his power to keep up the education vote.

The Premier: He has to get past the Treasurer.

Mr. FOLEY: I trust that when the education vote comes before the Treasurer, and the Minister for Education asks the Treasurer for support in this direction, the Treasurer will consider very seriously before he cuts that vote down at all. If this vote has to be cut down, I trust means will be provided whereby children will have that education we all wish them to have, irrespective of what part of the State they are in. There is another matter I should like to bring under the notices of the Premier. I do not think we are getting all we should from our State Savings Bank. I have had it told to me, and the people who told me are willing to make a statutory declaration on it, that where State Savings Bank business is being conducted at the ordinary or assisted banks some of those banks are endeavouring to cajole State Savings Bank depositors to come over to their bank. That is wrong. If the bank is going to do the State Savings Bank's work it is not within their province to tell depositors in honeyed words to take their money away from the State Savings Bank. If they do not want to do the work they should be told clearly and plainly that they will not be paid for it. I believe that a few thousand pounds a year can be brought in if racing in the State were controlled and a board of three men who thoroughly understand racing were appointed by the Government to absolutely control racing, to control the number of days, to control the meetings, and generally to take control of the whole thing. That would be conferring a benefit, not only from the financial viewpoint, but it would be putting money into the many homes which at the present time is not going there because of what takes place. I have been on each of the metropolitan race courses at least half a dozen times, and as one who has taken in the past a deep interest in all classes of sport, I believe that in the law of chance the odds against you are about 1,000 to one every time.

The Attorney General: I think you are quite right.

Mr. FOLEY: My point is that people will gamble, whether it be registered, or unregistered, or any other class of racing, and the Government could get some thousands of pounds out of it by putting in the totalisator on every race course in the State.

Member: How about abolishing the bookmaker?

Mr. FOLEY: If a fair system of totalisator were brought on to the race-courses, and instead of paying on one winner it paid on first and second, as is done in New Zealand, then an owner wishing to back his own horse could take as many tickets as he chose. We would then be catering for the owners as well as for the betting public generally. By this means we could so minimise bookmaking as to make it practically impossible to make a living. Not only that, but the public would be getting a fairer chance of winning than at present. Much has been said on the subject of our various industries, and I note that the Minister himself has done a great deal in the furtherance of prospecting. Although there has been no Mines Regulation Bill or any amendment to any Mining Bill, and although we have scarcely heard mining spoken of during this and last session, I want to say that in my opinion the Government have, to a very large extent, looked well after the mining industry. At the present time when all the gold that we can produce is made good use of, and while the Government are running themselves short in other directions, I trust the Government will look well into the mining industry and that every penny that can possibly be spared will be put into prospecting under the system at present in vogue. In answer to a question to-night the Minister for Mines said the department would send parties out prospecting. This is only February. There were 27 prospecting out in 1911. At that rate there will be a lot more out this year. The recent rains have made it possible for prospectors to go out further than for a long while past. The more we can develop the industry by means of prospectors the better it will be for the State.

There are old fields and old mines to which there could be brought a revival by proper administration of the mines development vote. Those old fields and old mines could be brought into a state of productiveness again. Although I have heard members say nothing has been done for mining, if there is a party or company in a district at the present time which is willing to do a little, and if there is a chance in any mining district of proving a lode, if the company will come forward and spend, say, £250, the Government will spend £750, provided the officers of the Government think it likely to be well spent in the district; but the Government always to have a first mortgage. I may say there are many mines lying idle over which the Government have a mortgage, and these have been lying idle for years and years, nothing being done upon them, the machinery obsolete and absolutely useless. In my own district I have been able on two or three occasions to persuade the Minister to throw such mines open. In one case, in particular, one such mine is in a state of productiveness to-day which, had it been allowed to lie idle as was, would still have remained vacant land. As far as the renewal of leases is concerned, I am glad to know that the Government have not put any obstacle in the way of their being granted. The party to which I belong, and the party that put this Government into power, are the only party who can say that they have given equality of opportunity in regard to mining, whether the man happened to be a worker in the industry or a part owner in one of the rich companies. The Government have done a great deal for mining, and I believe by allowing these leases to be renewed under the conditions under which they have recently been renewed, the Government have done the right thing. I am sure that if a vote were taken on the goldfields there would not be a hundred men who would vote against what the Government have done in this respect. The member for Perth (Mr. Connolly) said that a great deal of money might have accrued to the State if the conditions that he proposed in regard to

the renewals had been carried out. The hon. member said that the amount of £20,000 would have accrued by the renewal of the leases under the conditions he suggested. We say that when the Dividend Duty Bill goes through, if the companies were at that time willing to pay the £20,000, they can easily do that under the new measure. It will be a very fair proposition to expect those companies that are able to do so to pay this amount, and it is a fair thing for the State to ask them to pay it. It will also be a great incentive for the other Chamber to send the Bill back to us without amendment. Before I finish with the question of mining, I am going to make a few remarks in regard to the sanatorium, and I am going to ask the Government to take particular notice of what I intend to say. No matter what our brand of politics may be, we cannot get away from the fact that the conditions under which the men have to work on the goldfields have resulted in hundreds of them finding their way into the sanatorium. At Subiaco at the present time there are men suffering from all stages of miners' complaint and consumption; men who a few years ago were the flower of this land; men for whom no job or task was too hard. They are dying to-day, and they are dying because they have not been given the opportunity, many of them, of getting right under the conditions which will exist in the new sanatorium at Wooroloo. In Dr. Mitchell in this State we have a great authority on pulmonary diseases, and when I saw an advertisement the other day offering a little over £500 for the services of a medical man as superintendent of the new sanatorium, I came to the conclusion that it was one of the worst, if not the worst, action which had been taken by the Government. I am surprised to think that the Government would offer such a small salary for so important a position.

The Minister for Mines: It is the Public Service Commissioner who is offering it.

Mr. FOLEY: If any argument were needed that the Public Service Commis-

sioner had no capacity for dealing with an important question, we have it here, and I trust that hon. members will take notice of it whenever an opportunity presents itself to discuss the occupant of this position.

The Minister for Works: There are privileges also.

Mr. FOLEY: No matter what the privileges may be, the superintendent of this institution has not the scope for private practice that a man has, say, in my electorate, and in my electorate the medical officer there would be drawing a salary of £500 with the right to practice privately. If the Government were to offer £1,000 to a man of the ability of Dr. Mitchell, they would not be giving one penny less than the State could afford to give.

The Premier: You should tell us that privately.

Mr. FOLEY: I am here representing a mining district, and I want to say that after having worked with many of those men who are now broken in health, I know the worth of an officer of Dr. Mitchell's ability, and I trust the Government will reconsider the matter before offering such a paltry salary. We have the best man with us, and he is worthy of the highest salary that we can give. There is no sum on the Estimates which would do a greater amount of good than the money paid for the services of an authority on tuberculosis to take charge of our new sanatorium. I desire to make a few remarks in regard to the action of the Government in reducing the number of hours in a portion of the Government service to 44, and then having done that I want to conclude by speaking about the civil service. It has been argued that the lowly paid man is the easier to get at, and that he is the least likely to cause any friction by having his hours reduced. Before this trouble is over, however, I believe that every servant, whether he be employed by private enterprise or by the Government, will be employed on a fewer number of hours than even 44, and if the Government have reduced the hours of some employees to 44, thereby shortening the hours of the workmen, they are also short-

ening the hours of supervision. I contend that they have done the right action, and I trust that they will continue to take firm steps, irrespective of the ravings and vapourings of many men in the State at the present time. When the Government have done this I trust that every member will stand solidly behind them. There is no doubt that times are bad, and there is need for economy if the various Departments are not doing the same work that they were doing in normal times. There is not the need for the same number of civil servants that were formerly employed. If the lowly paid men have to suffer reduced hours, then the service generally must suffer correspondingly, and so pay their share towards the difficulties we are labouring under at the present time. My opinion is that if the Government kept this session going regardless of the summer and brought down a Bill to provide that all civil servants in the State should be brought under the conditions that apply to the temporary civil servants during the war, they would be conferring a great boon on the State, and I do not think there would be much opposition to the measure. There is not one member who would dare to oppose it. I believe, and always have believed, that there should not be any permanency of employment in the public service. Merit alone should count, and on merit only should advancement be made. It should be the duty of the Government in power to send ahead as far as they possibly can those who deserve promotion.

Mr. James Gardiner: You cannot do that.

Mr. FOLEY: Of course you cannot do it under the Public Service Act. But no matter whether you can do it in normal times or not, it is the duty of the Government at the present time to bring down a measure to make every Government servant a temporary officer, and if his services are not required to the extent that they are being availed of at the present time the number of hours should be reduced.

Mr. James Gardiner: Would you reinstate him after this trouble is over?

Mr. FOLEY: Yes, but if I had any say in the matter there would be a jolly good inquiry regarding the positions of some of the civil servants. I believe some of the men in the service at the present time are not giving of their best to the State. I have seen a Minister catch the 8.30 tram into Perth, and I have seen that Minister's Under Secretary catching the 10.30 train from down the line and landing in Perth at 11 o'clock in the morning waving his stick. It is the duty of the people in the State at the present time to see that that man does something for his salary.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Ministers have power to do that now.

The Premier: Ministers have something else to do besides running after civil servants.

Mr. FOLEY: The only thing that would keep me from sacking that man would be the dignity with which he waves his stick when he goes along the street to his office. If the Public Service Commissioner has been told about things like that, it is his duty to do something. The civil servant is in a better position than the ordinary wage earner at the present time, and the Government have not the remotest chance of saying what private enterprise shall pay to its employees. This State, however, demands the right to say that it shall pay only for services rendered. Labourers do not have long service leave, or sick leave, or annual leave, and all classes of other leave; and if such a Bill as that to which I have referred were brought in, and all were made temporary employees, the Government could do away with the services of a lot of men they have at the present time. Another thing I would do is to sack all the married women in the service whose husbands are in employment. It should be the duty of a husband, especially at this time, to keep his wife or turn it up and go and fight for his country. I trust that hon. members who may think that a man has no right to speak at this late hour will remember that it is the duty of everyone at the present time, if he has any suggestions to make, to give expression to them. I hope that good times will come again and that when

the next session of Parliament opens we shall be fighting again on party lines.

Mr. NAIRN (Swan) [10.0]: At this late hour I do not propose to detain the Committee long, but it is the duty of every member to express his opinions while he has the opportunity to do so. I agree with the member for Leonora in regard to railway rates. There can be no doubt regarding their unfairness, not only on the goldfields line, but on almost every branch of our railways.

The Minister for Works: Do they want levelling up?

Mr. NAIRN: I will not go so far as to say that, but they need to be corrected and arranged in a commonsense way. Many articles carried over the railways requiring the same amount of care and handling are charged at entirely different rates. That is not fair. The farmer, in sending his produce to market, is allowed a reasonable rate, but if he requires iron with which to roof his house, he has to pay an exorbitant rate on it. That is one of a hundred inconsistencies to be found in the rate book. Speaking generally on the Estimates, the one thing that strikes a new member first and most forcibly is the few and meagre details given in the general statements. When one realises that large State enterprises involving two or three hundred thousand pounds of State money are dealt with in a space of only five or six inches, it shows how utterly impossible it is for anyone to obtain a grasp of the situation. The only department of which there is anything like an intelligible statement is the Railway Department, in which it is easy to trace which branch is not paying. In regard to other enterprises, however, that information which is so essential to business enterprise and necessary to permit of intelligent discussion, is lacking.

The Minister for Works: The statement regarding sawmills is on the Table.

Mr. NAIRN: I hope to look through that later on. With regard to the general position of the finances, there can be no disguising the fact that the State is going to leeward at a rapid rate. The

State in three years has increased its indebtedness three times as fast as it has increased its population and there is only one destiny for such a State: it is galloping along the road to ruin. I am reminded of the State's assets, but the only possible test of their value is the return obtained from them. The Premier endeavoured to get over the position by a roundabout sort of statement that in other States of Australia many of the departments here administered by the Government are controlled by boards. I cannot see how any benefit can be gained or how any consolation can be extracted from that statement. If it proves anything it proves only that the more money we borrow and the more we invest in State enterprises, the greater our deficit becomes.

The Premier: How absurd!

Mr. NAIRN: What possible advantages would there be in taking over departments controlled by boards and placing them under State enterprises?

The Premier: Are you referring to water supplies?

Mr. NAIRN: I am referring to State enterprises, no matter whether they are water supplies, brickworks—

The Premier: Or the Agricultural Bank.

Mr. NAIRN: If the money, which is the people's money is invested in undertakings which are not paying interest and sinking fund but are leaving the people with a great load of liability, there is no consolation in the statement that in other parts of the Commonwealth those concerns are conducted by boards. I am speaking now of the general financial condition of the State. The more money we borrow and spend in State enterprises, the more we seem to get into debt.

The Minister for Works: The same debt prevails in other States, except that it is under different heads there.

Mr. NAIRN: But the one is a paying proposition.

The Minister for Works: They are paying propositions here.

Mr. NAIRN: If they were paying propositions we would be all the better

for them, but since they are not paying propositions—

The Minister for Works: They are.

Mr. NAIRN: Is that why we have a deficit, then, and have touched the million mark?

The Premier: Admitting all that, the amount of State enterprises is nothing compared with that controlled by boards elsewhere.

Mr. NAIRN: So long as the Premier admits that, it is all I desire. The system under which the money is invested here is not satisfactory.

The Premier: Do you know that in three years we have provided over a million for the Agricultural Bank which money is not provided in any other State?

Mr. NAIRN: This is not the only State which provides that assistance to people so much in need of it.

The Premier: What other State does so?

Mr. NAIRN: If other States do not make this provision in one form they do in another.

The Premier: It is not tacked on to their national debt.

Mr. NAIRN: The higher our national debt becomes the further we get behind with our financial undertakings. The Premier laughs. If he could laugh away his deficit, it would be excellent to continue laughing.

Mr. Bolton: The State enterprises do not contribute much towards the deficit.

The Premier: You are criticising a statement I made and I did not include State enterprises.

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier included those enterprises which in other States are conducted by boards, and the more we bring them under Government control the further behind we get. There is no escaping from that. Otherwise, why the deficit?

The Premier: Do not be absurd! Victoria has as big a deficit after one year of drought.

Mr. NAIRN: And Victoria has three times the population to pay it. I wish to refer to a statement made by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) the

other evening, and if I quote him fairly frequently my reason is because he more nearly stated the attitude of his party than any other member has done during this debate. The hon. member said it was necessary in order that people might be prosperous that they should be taxed. It seems to be a new principle in economics that we should tax people to make them prosperous. When a depression is prevailing and every penny is of greater importance than hitherto, the only suggestion of the hon. member is to add more taxation and to justify his statement he made a further assertion, which, on analysis is proved to be incorrect, namely, that we are more lightly taxed than any other State of the Commonwealth. As far as the average taxation from land and income is concerned, Western Australia stands third on the list, and in that respect it would not be fair to describe us as being the most lightly taxed State.

Mr. Thomas: I referred to the total taxation.

Mr. NAIRN: Yes, but we have fewer people. In New South Wales the land tax represents one penny per head of the population; in Victoria 4s. 3d. and in Western Australia 2s. 11d. In regard to the income and dividend duty tax, the figures are—New South Wales 15s. 3d.; Victoria 7s. 6d.; South Australia 11s.; and Western Australia 10s. 10d. If we take into consideration the exemptions granted in this State, the general average of taxation here will be found to be quite as high as it is in other States.

Mr. Thomas: Why do not you take the total taxation per head of the population?

Mr. NAIRN: I have done so.

Mr. Thomas: There are other taxes besides those you mention.

Mr. NAIRN: These are the traceable taxes and as my figures are taken from a return issued by the Commissioner of Taxation in this State, they may be regarded as fairly accurate and up to date. The hon. member seemed to derive some pleasure from the statement that people of this State were more lightly taxed than those in other parts of Aus-

tralia, but, to be fair, who ought the hon. member to credit for the fact that we are so lightly taxed. Surely he has not forgotten that prior to the last elections, an attempt was made by his party to impose upon us a load of taxation unprecedented in Australia.

Mr. Robinson: Or in the British Empire.

Mr. NAIRN: I cannot go so far as to say that.

The Premier: We came here to increase things, not to follow your party.

Mr. NAIRN: And the Premier has done so, especially in regard to the deficit.

The Premier: You do not take into account our production per head of the population.

Mr. NAIRN: The production of this State in the last three years has fallen £7 10s. per head of the population which represents over two millions of money in the aggregate.

The Premier: That is so, and you wonder why we have a deficit.

Mr. NAIRN: What has brought that decrease about?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Bad seasons.

Mr. NAIRN: Last year was a record season in the history of the State. Never had there been such a year when all our industries, with the exception of gold mining, were so flowing with prosperity.

The Premier: You need to tell that to your friends on the benches in front of you.

Mr. NAIRN: There is no need to tell them what is obvious to anyone who reads.

The Minister for Mines: Will you take the four seasons and deny that three of them have been failures?

Mr. NAIRN: I want to be fair. The Minister is referring to the wheat seasons. In the three seasons during which the Labour party have been in power, the difference in the average production of wheat per acre was only one-tenth of a bushel. These figures have been compiled by the Government statistician. In face of last year's bounding revenue we are piling up an unprecedented deficit.

The Premier: I am prepared to make the people pay up if you think they have the money, and you ought to know.

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier is ever ready to make excuses. The member for Bunbury said that by increasing every first-class fare 2d. and every second-class fare 1d. an additional revenue of £51,000 per annum would be derived. The hon. member went on to say there was no reason why the people should not be asked to pay twice as much for their railway fares.

Mr. Thomas: That is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. NAIRN: I am quoting the published report.

Mr. Thomas: I saw it, and it is not correct.

Mr. NAIRN: If the hon. member denies the accuracy of the statement I will not pursue it further.

Mr. Thomas: I refer you to the *Hansard* report.

Mr. NAIRN: I am merely taking the statements that were made, and I have no desire to misrepresent the member for Bunbury. To deal with the first statement, which is the more important of the two; its effect was that by increasing every first class fare by 2d. and every second class fare by 1d. the State would be in a better position to the extent of £51,000 per annum. That, I say, is a statement made without the slightest regard for the application of principle. I wish to ask the member for Bunbury what his proposed increase means to residents of the metropolitan districts. In many cases the increase would be one of 100 per cent, and in a great many other cases it would be equivalent to 50 per cent.

Mr. Thomas: I said experts would adjust the increases accordingly.

Mr. NAIRN: What is the use of the hon. member's wasting the time of the House by making a statement of that kind?

The Premier: Do you not think that, with the expanding business of this State, commercial travellers could afford to pay a little more for their tickets?

Mr. NAIRN: My friend the Premier is always pleased to be personal.

The Premier: But you are not a commercial traveller now.

Mr. NAIRN: I have carried a traveller's pass for ten years and have always paid for it. More than that, I always paid what was asked, and if the Premier has any proposition to make with regard to commercial travellers' passes—

The Premier: I am asking you a fair question. Do you not think that, with the expanding business of the State, travellers could pay something more?

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier does not appear to know the position. Last year commercial travellers were asked to pay a little more. I paid £5 more for my pass.

The Premier: Did you protest?

Mr. NAIRN: No. However, I do not wish to be inconsistent, or to allow the Premier to place me in a position of apparent inconsistency. I made no mistake or complaint as regards paying £5 more, because there was an increased mileage of railway to be covered. It appears that 19 millions of passengers were carried over the railways of Western Australia last year; and I should say, from the figures available to me, that of this number at least 12 millions were carried in the metropolitan area; and it is out of these 12 millions that the member for Bunbury proposes to take his increase.

Mr. Thomas: You are a trifle unfair in overlooking the fact that I said the figures should be adjusted by experts.

Mr. NAIRN: I would point out to the House, and particularly to the member for Bunbury, what his statement meant. It meant that every fare paid in this State was going to be increased on the average by 10 per cent—an increase of 10 per cent right throughout the whole of the State.

Mr. Thomas: Would there be any harm if the increase were made in order to give a fair return for the services?

Mr. NAIRN: Let me remind the member for Bunbury that hitherto the railways of this State have paid, and that it is only because of the advent to power

of the party with whom he is associated that they are not paying now.

The Premier: You are against reduction of wages?

Mr. NAIRN: Yes; just as conscientiously as is the Premier himself.

The Premier: Are you in favour of paying a living wage?

Mr. NAIRN: I do not follow the Premier. However, I understand that the present wage is a living wage.

The Premier: But was the wage paid before the advent of the present Government a living wage?

Mr. NAIRN: Let me say that the question of wages has no application whatever to the argument. I cannot for a moment follow the Premier's logic. What has the question of reduction of wages to do with making the railways pay? I hear the loud laugh that speaks the vacant mind.

The Premier: That is an old quotation; you should get a new one.

Mr. NAIRN: It is old, but it is applicable; and if I wanted a new quotation I would not go to the Premier for it. With regard to the increase, we have had increases of railway fares, and increases on excursion fares equal to something like £1,900, and, further, an increase on the district railways, about which we have heard so much. According to an extract I have here from the report of the Public Works Department, the increase made on district railways last year returned to the State additional revenue amounting to something like £14,500. What I desire to emphasise, however, is that a general statement of this kind, to the effect that we shall make the country right and bring it back to its proper financial position merely by the imposition of an extra bonus or an extra fixed charge on every railway ticket sold, quite regardless of the amount which the purchaser has to pay for the particular ticket, conveys a proposition which is not worth very much consideration. Next, with regard to wages, I do not want to be misunderstood so far as the Premier is concerned. His party, I believe, are rightly not in favour of making any reduction in wages so far as the men employed by the State are concerned. I do not wish to

be confused with regard to hours of labour. Unfortunately, it is necessary that there should be some reduction in the cost of controlling and working the railways of this State. That is obvious to every man, because, with the season which has just come upon us, when the whole of our railways should be fully engaged, unhappily that is not the case, nor is it likely to be the case, although the men are there and prepared to do the work.

The Premier: Over £40,000 less was earned in the past two months than in the corresponding months of last year.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not lend my voice any more readily than does the Premier in favour of reduction of wages, because I realise thoroughly that, wages having once been reduced, it is a matter of great difficulty to get them up again. I shall lend no assistance towards reducing wages. But the hours of labour, as the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) has pointed out, must be reduced; otherwise the department will be run at an even greater loss than hitherto. However, the alternative suggestion of the member for Bunbury, namely to raise fares, seems to me about as childish a proposal as was ever made in this House.

The Premier: Do not be personal.

Mr. Thomas: The member for Swan is most courteous in making the remark that my proposal is childish.

The Premier: It has taken him four days to prepare that phrase.

Mr. NAIRN: I want to draw attention to another statement of the member for Bunbury, that if an increase of 6d. per ton were made in the charges on all goods carried over the State railways, an additional revenue of £75,000 would accrue. I do not think that estimate is correct, or nearly correct; because, to begin with, so far as I can calculate, the estimate has been based on the records of the Railway Department for last year, during which three million tons of goods were carried.

Mr. Taylor: Who made that statement?

Mr. NAIRN: The member for Bunbury. I am quoting the railway authority of this Chamber.

Mr. Taylor: I thought you had struck a new railway authority.

Mr. NAIRN: The member for Bunbury is the railway authority for the time. The statement which I have just quoted was, plainly, based on the quantity of three million tons of goods carried last year. This year, however, there is every reason to believe that not nearly three million tons of goods will be carried by the railways.

Mr. Thomas: The increase in revenue would be in proportion.

Mr. NAIRN: The member for Bunbury made the statement straight out. If we are to adjust our expenditure to our revenue, what is the use of basing our estimates of revenue on something absolutely fictitious—something which occurred last year, but will not occur this year?

Mr. Thomas: Who knows what sort of a season we are going to have this year?

Mr. NAIRN: We know at the very least that we are not going to get within 300,000 tons of last year's wheat alone. There is a tremendous slice immediately cut off the £75,000 of the member for Bunbury. Similar conditions apply in the case of timber. The timber industry of this State will not be so good this year as it was last year. It will not be possible for the Government, so far as I can see, to readjust their freights on timber, more especially as the larger proportion of timber likely to be carried over the railways this year will be consigned to the goldfields. The price of the trans-Australian sleepers, I believe, is a price for delivery at Kalgoorlie. Therefore it would not be possible, even if it were desirable, to increase the railage on those sleepers by 6d. per ton. So, immediately another £10,000 or £15,000 is whittled away from the estimate of the member for Bunbury. I do not wish to pursue this line of argument further, except to say that, so far as the great Railway Department is concerned, this State has always looked upon that department as being the main factor not only in the development of the country but also in carrying the financial burden of the State

resulting from other non-paying departments. This year, I take it, we know the Railway Department is not likely to meet those requirements. So far as I know, the present year is the first one that we shall be in that unfortunate position so far as the railways are concerned. There is no reason why we should increase freights just because of one bad year in the Railway Department. Surely, we can make some provision by which next year, when times are normal again, our railway fares and railway freights will be at the same level as before. The member for Forrest is not here, but there is an item I selected from the report of the Railway Department which would be of interest to him—

Powellised Karri Sleepers.—It has been decided that the majority of sleepers for the requirements of maintenance and construction will in future be of powellised karri, and arrangements are being made to obtain supplies through the State Sawmills Department. This decision has been arrived at in view of the joint recommendation of the Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. James Thomson), and the Chief Engineer of Existing Lines (Mr. E. E. Light), who report that karri is a much superior timber to jarrah after treating with the powellising process. Although this decision will involve initial costs on a higher scale than would apply if the use of jarrah were continued, it is expected that ultimately it will effect considerable economy.

This is another instance where an industry of this State, or the livelihood of those engaged in an industry of this State, is being to a large extent whittled away. The means of livelihood of many men at present working in the timber industry, I say, are being whittled away. The men who have been cutting jarrah sleepers for the State, and cutting them at a price which undoubtedly represents a lower cost than that of the powellised karri sleepers, are, to some extent, about to find their occupation gone; and all that is being done in order to boost up the karri mills. Is that something in the best interests of the State?

The Minister for Works: You know all about it. Do you think that karri sleepers are going to be transported from the mills to the Eastern railways when there are sleepers to be obtained alongside the Eastern railways?

Mr. NAIRN: I know I have seen powellised sleepers carried hundreds of miles, to be laid in the middle of a jarrah forest, where jarrah sleepers could have been obtained right alongside the line.

The Minister for Works: That was done for a trial.

Mr. NAIRN: But there have been innumerable cases of it. Surely the Minister is not experimenting any longer with karri sleepers.

The Premier: Where did that happen?

Mr. NAIRN: In various parts of the State, and particularly on the Karragullen line.

The Minister for Works: How many powellised sleepers were there?

Mr. NAIRN: Sufficient to prove my argument.

The Premier: The argument is that they were put there for experimental purposes.

Mr. NAIRN: Next, with regard to the Public Service, I understand the problem of the Public Service is causing the Premier some considerable agitation of mind.

Mr. Bolton: He is worrying.

Mr. NAIRN: In this connection I wish to quote a statement made by the member for Irwin (Mr. James Gardiner), who said that if the Premier were given a free hand, and if cocaine were placed on every nerve of human sympathy possessed by the Premier, he would be able to reduce to a reasonable amount the great cost of administration. Although in some measure I subscribe to that statement—as regards, for instance, the necessity for adjusting some inconsistencies in the Public Works Department—yet I think that to attack the problem from the standpoint suggested by the member for Irwin would not be in the best interests of the State, nor in sympathy with the general sentiment of the House. Strange to say, the Premier was quite prepared to support

the member for Irwin in that attitude. That seems to me passing strange.

The Premier: I have not yet replied to the member for Irwin.

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier replied immediately the statement was made.

The Premier: What did I say?

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier said, "My hands are tied; there is the Public Service Act."

The Premier: That is right.

Mr. NAIRN: I want to ask the Premier why did he not tell the public servants before the last general election that he wanted to get at the Public Service Act? I think on that occasion his tongue was tied, if his hands were not. Now, the Premier is extremely ready to point out the inconsistencies of Liberal members. A statement was made here the other evening that one member made a speech to suit the occasion.

The Premier: We used to do that. I remember someone making one or two speeches at a Labour congress.

Mr. NAIRN: I am dealing with the Premier just now, and I wish to tell him that the attitude which he has developed towards the Public Service is not in keeping with the attitude he adopted prior to the general election.

The Premier: You have not changed your opinions on preference to unionists?

Mr. NAIRN: No; nor towards the Premier. After all, only £361,000 of the public money goes to pay the public service, or so much of it as is controlled by the Public Service Act, whereas for those not coming under the Act there is a sum of £1,361,000.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: You got those figures from the newspaper.

Mr. NAIRN: As a matter of fact they are lying on the Table. According to the report of the Commissioner of Railways, there is not much reason to suppose that we are going to get a very big reduction in that department, for the Commissioner says that practically every officer is fully employed. I do not subscribe to the sentiment expressed by the member for Irwin (Mr. James Gardiner) and corroborated by the Premier, namely, that the proper thing to do is to cocaine the

nerves of the public servants. If the Premier proposes to put all the public servants on the same footing, I will assist him in that direction.

The Premier: I am not suggesting anything of the kind.

Mr. NAIRN: You inferred that you were going to do something desperate; you said that you would deal with the public servants if your hands were not tied.

The Premier: Not in the way the member for Irwin suggested.

Mr. NAIRN: It might be well to put yourself clear. Anyhow, I believe it is imperative that many branches of practically every department in the State will have to be adjusted in view of our financial difficulties. I would not endeavour to raise any party opposition to a reasonable suggestion, provided it reaches from the highest to the lowest of the service. If they are all to be treated impartially I will give the Premier my assistance.

The Premier: Why stop there? After all, the public servant is a citizen, so why should he carry the whole burden?

Mr. NAIRN: I am only pursuing the suggestion made by the Premier the other evening. The Premier said he would be one of the first to assist the member for Irwin in dealing with the public service but that his hands were tied. The inference is that he proposes to deal with them if he gets sufficient assistance, and I say that if he comes along with a reasonable proposition I will assist him. The attitude of the Premier towards the public servants is a revelation to me, and probably to every other hon. member. Because, three or four years ago, this was the method by which the State was to be lifted on to a higher plane: Men were to be led by the attractiveness of Labour principles into State enterprises, and consequently become State servants; they were to give the best in them, and the State was to be more easily directed because we would have so many more men immediately under State control.

The Minister for Works: These men are not under the Act.

Mr. NAIRN: I am speaking of State employees. The fortunes of those men

were to be made more prosperous, and their conditions improved by their working for the Government. It has been a revelation to the House that the members on the Ministerial side, who to a large extent have fostered and encouraged the public service, now begin to realise the danger of having a public service growing up almost large enough to overwhelm us.

Mr. Green: But have you been in favour of that principle in the past, say, in the remote past?

Mr. NAIRN: If the hon. member has a definite statement to make, why does he not make it like a man?

Mr. Green: I asked a straight question.

Mr. NAIRN: I call it a very crooked one. Let the hon. member be more direct.

Mr. Green: Were you not in favour of Labour principles in the past?

The Premier: Even when we discover an incompetent officer in the service, the difficulties of getting him out are altogether too great.

Mr. NAIRN: Why do you not ask for the necessary power? If the Premier says that is all he meant the other night—

The Premier: No; it is not.

Mr. NAIRN: To attack the public servants in the spirit displayed by the Premier the other night is not just; it was almost the spirit of revenge.

The Premier: That is unfair; I made no attack on the public servants.

Mr. NAIRN: I am only quoting the words of the hon. member.

The Premier: No; you quoted the member for Irwin.

Mr. NAIRN: And the interjection by the Premier, "My hands are tied; there is the Act." Following on that, the Premier said he would be one of the first, if he could get the opportunity, to deal with those people. Turning to the question of the State Savings Bank, unfortunately there is every indication that we are going to lose a great deal of the benefit derived from this institution which has been of so much service to the people of the State. I do not think the Premier could possibly extricate himself from the charge that

either by his silence or his over-advocacy he has to a large extent put that bank in the parlous position in which it is. When did the Premier ever raise his voice in defence of the rights of that institution?

The Premier: Don't you know?

Mr. NAIRN: No, and the people do not know. The Premier was always priding himself on being a big Australian, and he carried it so far as to forget his own State Bank, which has done so much for the people. The cost of his being a big Australian is that we are to-day on the high road to losing our own State bank. That institution has been of great benefit to the State, and it was, and is to-day, the duty of every responsible man to stand up and defend it, even at the risk of offending some of his friends in the Federal Government.

The Premier: That is absolutely incorrect. On one occasion I attacked the attitude of the Commonwealth on this question.

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier claimed to be a big Australian.

The Premier: I still claim that.

Mr. NAIRN: And the State is paying the penalty for it.

The Premier: That is absolutely incorrect.

Mr. NAIRN: I do not wish to do the Premier an injustice.

The Premier: Well, you are doing it.

Mr. NAIRN: The Premier never gave that strenuous support to the State bank which he should have done. The harvest following the policy of the Premier and his colleagues is now coming right home to us. If anything has divided the House it has been the contrasted attitude of this side and of that towards the question of defending our State's interests. I still believe the Premier can do better to-day by telling the worker that his interests will be best conserved by his handing over his savings to the State bank. It is the duty of the Premier to appeal to those men. It is not a question of State rights, although there are some rights we should stand up for. If the sacrifice of the State Savings Bank is the price of being a big Australian, then I am going to be a "State's righter."

Mr. Green: That was not your attitude when you are running for Federal honours.

Mr. NAIRN: The hon. member has the remarkable faculty of putting in a bomb without powder. I am unaware of what he means; I am unaware of having said anything during the Federal campaign which is inconsistent with what I am now saying.

The Premier: You are a "State's righter," and they turned you down.

Mr. NAIRN: It is the bounden duty of every responsible man to stand up for those interests of the State which must come first; if we do not defend our possessions we will always be in a condition of financial embarrassment. While I am a member of this Parliament my conduct will not be in the direction of attempting any embarrassing criticism. This is one of the occasions when it is the duty of every member to place himself in a correct position and allow his views to be understood.

Mr. WANSBROUGH (Beverley) [10.45]: My contribution to this debate will not be very long. Since the House rose last week, we have had an opportunity to scrutinise the monthly statement of receipts and expenditure, and if any one desired anything more stringent to impress upon him the seriousness of the financial situation of the State, he would have to go a long way to find it. In perusing the statement, it has been borne home forcibly to me that the problem before the Government and the State to remedy the existing condition of affairs is a very serious one indeed. I have examined the position and, boiled down, there is only one thing to do and that is to get rid of our State trading concerns. Let them go by the board.

The Minister for Mines: What will you do with all those employed by them?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: What about the implement works?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: This is my conviction, and I claim I am justified in giving expression to it.

The Premier: Shall we let our railways go too?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: No; I said our State trading concerns.

The Premier: The railways are our biggest trading concern.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The railways are a necessary trading concern, and comprise the only one which is anywhere near paying its way. Last month the railways went to the bad to the tune of £26,000, and that in the best month of the year. Allowing for a similar falling off in other departments, I am forced to the conclusion that the Treasurer is at present out to the extent of £274,000 in his Estimates for the year. There is still another five months of the financial year to go, and what can we expect by the end of that period?

Mr. Bolton: Spend less on agricultural railways. They are making the deficit grow.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I know my outspoken criticism will not be relished, but I am expressing my firm conviction. Although some of the concerns have in them the germ of success, the present is not a fitting time to ask the State to carry the burden of such enormous expenditure for the chimera of a State monopoly.

Mr. Green: The money is going to assist your class—the farmer.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Nothing of the sort. We desire our fair share, and there is a reasonable prospect of the Government getting something back in return for it, but in the case of a majority of the State trading concerns there is no immediate prospect of any return. They are experimental concerns pure and simple.

The Minister for Works: You might mention a few others.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: If we except the railways, all the rest may be put into one category. I wish to refer to the Premier's contemplated efforts to reduce the expenditure on the railways. He is expecting to effect a saving of £47,000 during the year by the introduction of a 44 hours week. While I agree that this is necessary, and that the railway men should bear their portion of the burden,

the Premier should be particularly careful not to tack on other unnecessary conditions. I was a railway man for years and I went through two strikes in this State in order to fight for the very principles which the railway men of to-day are working under, and those principles were won from Liberal Governments. It is only fair to ask the railway men to contribute their share to relieve the present burden, but we should not interfere unduly with their hard won principles because they were won only after a very long and strenuous battle.

Mr. Heitmann: What were those conditions?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: They were laid before the Commissioner of Railways in Perth yesterday.

The Premier: What are they?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I am not altogether conversant with them, but they are objectionable in the extreme. A majority of the railway men are quite prepared to accept a 40 hours week, if necessary, but they do not wish to have their hard won conditions interfered with.

Mr. Thomas: There is no proposal to interfere with them. Kindly give us one instance.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The Commissioner proposes to introduce the 44 hours a week or 88 hours a fortnight, and he makes a stipulation that the week's work shall not stand alone. He wants the right to bring a man on at any time or to make him stand off at pleasure. There are many other similar conditions which have been won by the men and which ought not to be interfered with.

The Premier: That is under normal conditions. Do not you think it is right to ask a man to stand down for a full day if necessary?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I do not think it is necessary to interfere with them beyond effecting a reduction of time.

The Premier: That is all that is intended. Should not a man stand down for a full day?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The Commissioner wishes to cut down the time credited for Sunday work.

The Premier: Then you are wrong.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: And instead of allowing one week to stand alone—

The Premier: It is evident some members of the conference have been getting to work on you.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I know the facts.

The Premier: They talk about standing behind the Government and then get to work on you.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It is interesting to contrast the vote for State trading concerns with the grant to roads boards. For State trading concerns a vote of £571,000 is shown while for roads boards there is a miserable pit-tance of only £27,000.

Mr. Thomas: You will not pay taxation and yet you want the money for roads boards.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The taxpayers are contributing their share, and the roads board vote should not have been curtailed so greatly when such a considerable vote is allowed for trading concerns. The sum of £27,000 might be a fair thing for roads boards this year but it is not fair in comparison with the other vote.

The Premier: I hope before you have finished you will show where we can effect economies.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I have already told the Premier that he might do so by sinking State trading concerns. That is the fly in the ointment at present.

The Premier: Would it help us very much to close down our State mills and throw those men out of work?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The Government would be saving money if they did so.

The Minister for Works: No. There would be no saving of money.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: We have heard references by the representatives of mining constituencies to neglect of the industry on the part of the Government but the speakers did not make

themselves clear as to what they desire. If there is anything needed to assist the industry let them lay it before us in definite terms and if it is a straight proposition we will do our best to assist them.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.57 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday 3rd February, 1915.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION — ESPERANCE SETTLERS, INDEBTEDNESS TO GOVERNMENT.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How much is the indebtedness to the Government of the settlers at Esperance for manures, seed, etc? 2, How much money is owing for rents, interest, etc.?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Total indebtedness, £9,972 9s. 4d. 2, Interest, £502 17s. 10d. (included in above); rent, £2,771 19s. 9d.

QUESTION — GOVERNMENT ANALYST, VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, Was Mr. Mann, the Government Analyst, granted leave of absence last year? 2, If so, on what terms? 3, Was the sum of £2,100 paid by the Scottish Whisky Exporters' Association for Mr. Mann's tour of investigation received by the Government or by Mr. Mann? 4, If by the Government, what amount thereof was expended; if by Mr. Mann, has he rendered any statement to the Government of the expenditure of same?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, On the terms laid down in "The Public Service Act, 1904," for long service leave. 3, The money was paid to the Agent General. 4, The whole amount was allotted to the Government Analyst, who had to defray all the expenses of the investigation, including salaries and passage money for himself and assistant, travelling, laboratory, and all other expenses in Great Britain. No statement of expenditure has been rendered by the Government Analyst since his return, as the disposition of the amount was decided prior to his departure.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. D. G. GAWLER, leave of absence for 12 consecutive sittings granted to the Hon. J. Duffell on the ground of urgent private business.

MOTION—WONGAN HILLS-MULLEWA RAILWAY.

To hand over to Working Railways.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central) [4.35]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House it is necessary in the interests of the settlers that the Wongan Hills-Mullewa Railway be immediately handed over to the Working Railways, or that not more than the ordinary rates chargeable by the Working Railways be charged by the construction department pending such handing over of the railway.