

or in any way touched by the Bill under consideration—the power of refusing dates, and of, therefore, practically obliterating such clubs as offend by the passing of offensive by-laws.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MOTION—SELECT COMMITTEE.

HON. M. L. MOSS moved that, the Bill be referred to a select committee of five members.

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Bill had already been inquired into by a select committee.

THE PRESIDENT: The evidence taken by the select committee (Assembly) accompanied the Bill.

HON. M. L. MOSS: It was necessary to have a select committee of this House. When the evidence was taken by a select committee of another place, no members of the W.A. Turf Club were called to give evidence. He had been interviewed by a number of members of the W.A. Turf Club who were anxious to express an opinion as to the matters contained in the Bill, and particularly in regard to Clause 16, which enabled the goldfields clubs to make by-laws in reference to the matters contained in Sub-clauses (e) and (f). The passing of these by-laws might be the means of having divided control of racing clubs in the State, which would be prejudicial to the best interests of racing. There should be one governing body as in Victoria and New South Wales. Here the W.A. Turf Club was recognised as the governing body. He had discussed this matter with Mr. Hale, the solicitor for the goldfields clubs, and Mr. Hale had given him (Mr. Moss) the assurance that Mr. Dempster had pointed out; but on this matter we should be entitled to take evidence, while being satisfied we were doing nothing to interfere with the best interests of the clubs. There was no reason why the Bill should be rushed through Committee this afternoon. It would be better to hear the evidence of two or three members of the prominent racing clubs.

Question put and passed.

Bill referred to a select committee, consisting of Hon. W. Kingsmill, Hon. R. Laurie, Hon. R. D. McKenzie, Hon. R. F. Sholl, with Hon. M. L. Moss as mover; to report on the 6th December.

BILLS, FIRST READING.

LOCAL COURTS ACT AMENDMENT, MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT, received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

PRIVATE BILL.

KALGOORLIE RACECOURSE TRAMWAYS, received from the Legislative Assembly and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.38 o'clock, until the next afternoon.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday 29th November, 1904.

Petition: Roads Act, to amend	1451
Questions: State Nursery, Hemel	1452
Railway Loco. Branch, Wages by cheque	1452
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Bills: Transfer of Land Act Amendment, second reading moved	1452
Factories Act Amendment, in Committee, resumed, reported	1458
Truck Act Amendment, in Committee reported	145
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Assent to Bill: Mines Regulation	1457
Report (interim): Hamel Settlement, to adopt, debate resumed	1462
Annual Estimates resumed; Treasury vote, London Agency, progress	1469

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PETITION—ROADS ACT, TO AMEND.

MR. BATH presented a petition from 170 ratepayers of the Kalgoorlie Roads Board District, praying that the Roads Act be amended to entitle roads boards to levy rates on unimproved values over and above the maximum fixed by the Act.

Petition received.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR WORKS: 1, Return giving detailed information as to rabbit-proof fencing already completed, moved for by Mr. Burges. 2, Return giving detailed information as to the Claremont and Cottesloe Water Supply, moved for by Mr. Foulkes.

## QUESTION—STATE NURSERY, HAMEL.

MR. BURGESS asked the Premier: 1, Is the State Nursery at Hamel paying its expenses? 2, If not, has the Government any intention of making it self-supporting? 3, Are tenders called for supplies of manures, fodder, etc., for use at the Hamel Nursery Experimental Plots?

THE PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, No; it was established for the purpose of introducing and forming plantations of exotic timber trees: it was never expected to be directly self-supporting. 3, No; the requirements being so small and varied it has not been considered necessary.

## QUESTION—RAILWAY LOCO. BRANCH, WAGES BY CHEQUE.

MR. BOLTON asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that employees of the Loco. Running Branch of the Railway Department are being paid by crossed cheque marked "Bank a/c.," and payable only at Perth? 2, In view of the Fremantle branch of the Bank having refused to cash these cheques, and storekeepers without a banking account also refusing, will he take steps to pay wages otherwise than by cheque, or arrange that cheques be cashed at the nearest railway station without refusal?

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Crossing the cheques and marking same "Bank a/c." has been discontinued since 20th inst. 2, The staff were notified at the time the necessary change of system of pay was made that the local station-masters would cash the cheques.

## QUESTION—AUDIT, TEMPORARY OFFICERS.

MR. LYNCH asked the Treasurer: 1, How many temporary officers have been employed in the Audit Department during the last six months? 2, What

are the names of such officers and what salaries have they been receiving? 3, Is it the intention of the Government to give preference to those casual officers over the members of the permanent staff? 4, If so, is it because the officers of the permanent staff are considered incompetent or inexperienced?

THE TREASURER replied: 1, Three. 2, Bell, A. B.; Beal, H. W.; Waterhouse, E. F. Five pounds per week each. 3, No. 4, Answered by No. 3.

## PRIVATE BILL, THIRD READING.

KALGOORLIE RACECOURSE TRAMWAYS, read a third time and transmitted to Legislative Council.

## TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

## SECOND READING (MOVED).

THE MINISTER FOR MINES AND JUSTICE (Hon. R. Hastie): If members consult this short Bill they will see that the schedule refers to the Municipal Institutions Act, the Roads Act, the Goldfields Water Supply Act, the Waterworks Boards Act, and the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Act. These Acts contain provisions enabling lands to be sold in default of payment of rates. Before the sale of land for payment of rates, it is necessary that a notice should be given in the *Government Gazette* and in a newspaper stating that rates are in arrear, and warning the owner and the persons interested that, in default of payment within two months after notification, a petition will be presented to the Supreme Court. Then it is further necessary that the Judge of the Supreme Court should, on the hearing of the petition, sanction the sale, and on the sale being effected the rates and expenses are deducted from the proceeds of the sale, and the balance is paid into the Supreme Court to be held in trust for the person proving himself entitled to it. These provisions, I may mention, go back for a considerable period. They are in the Roads Act of 1888, the Municipal Institutions Act, and also in the former Municipalities Acts that were repealed by the Act now in force. Similar provisions are found in the laws of the Eastern States. Under these Acts many sales and transfers have been

effected for years past ; but recently, in a case before the Supreme Court to which the attention of most hon. members must have been called, the Commissioner of Titles refused to register a certificate of sale as a transfer. The case was heard on the 5th October last before the Full Court, and the question for the Full Court to decide was: Could the Registrar of Titles register a certificate of sale of land without the production of the certificate of title. The Court ruled that, although it was clear Parliament had intended that the purchaser of the land should have a good title, yet Parliament had omitted to provide for that being done. This we must hold as being the law until the decision is reversed or until an amending Bill is passed. Meanwhile, land sold by auction for default of payment of rates cannot be very readily transferred, as Parliament always desired it should be, until this alteration is made. The Bill briefly is to remove any doubts that on such a sale a good title passes to the purchaser free from encumbrances, and to enable the title to be registered without the production of a certificate. The clause is the same as in the Queensland Act, which has been the law in Queensland for years, and no question has arisen there. It is with the belief that this amendment is necessary to enable roads boards, municipalities, and water trusts to levy rates that are due that I hope the House will pass this comparatively small Bill, which only carries out the laws we have passed in former years. I beg to move the second reading.

On motion by Mr. GREGORY, debate adjourned.

#### FACTORIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from the 24th November; Mr. BATH in the Chair, the MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS AND LABOUR (Hon. J. B. Holman) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 27, Subsection 6:

[Mr. Rason had previously moved an amendment that the following words be added to the clause: "and by inserting the following words in lieu thereof: Provided, however, that such reserved space shall not be required to exceed 450 cubic

feet for each person working therein, and provided the Minister may, on cause shown, except any factory or workroom from the operation of this section."]

DR. HICKS, in disagreeing to the amendment, asked members to accept the basis of calculation laid down by those best qualified to judge on the subject of air space in factories, that air should not contain more than .04 of carbonic acid gas. It then remained to be determined what amount of air per hour should be allowed to each adult in order to ensure perfect health. Each person at every respiration drew in and gave out  $30\frac{1}{2}$  cubic inches of air, doing this on the average about 17 times a minute, which gave 5,130 cubic inches per minute, or 18 cubic feet of air expired during each hour. In respiration the difference of the air coming out was to the extent of 4 per cent. of carbonic acid gas. Consequently each adult charged 18 cubic feet of air to the extent of 4 per cent. of carbonic acid gas, or .72 cubic feet of carbonic acid. That was theoretical. By actual experiment each adult gave off .6 cubic feet, which distributed throughout 1,000 feet of air would give a percentage of .06, or .02 of carbonic acid gas in 3,000 feet of air. The ordinary air contained .04 of carbonic acid, which added to the .02 each adult emitted would give .06 cubic feet of carbonic acid gas. Consequently, in an hour a man would vitiate 3,000 cubic feet of air to the extent of .06, and this was the limit that experts in ventilation placed down as not to be exceeded without affecting health. From this argument members would see that 3,000 cubic feet of air space should be supplied to each individual per hour. How could this be supplied to get the minimum cubic space in a room. If there was a room 10 feet by 10 feet by 10 feet, or containing 1,000 cubic feet, the air would have to be renewed three times in the hour. This could be done without inconvenience to the persons in that room, but if the air were renewed six times per hour there would be an excessive draught created which would be injurious to health. Of course that would not apply in a hot climate, but one had to consider the winter temperature. He did not think it would be injurious to renew the air four times per hour in winter here; therefore the minimum

could be placed at 750 feet. One had also to take into consideration that in addition to the carbonic acid gases during respiration, other organic impurities were evolved, and it was from these that the injury to health was due. These organic impurities did not divest themselves with that ease or with that equality that other gases did. Their great specific gravity tended to keep them to the lower part of the room; therefore one must take into account only the space below a certain height, he thought 12 or 14 feet. In a building such as the Assembly Chamber, roughly 40 or 50 feet high, for ventilation purposes one could not count any space above 12 or 14 feet. He was about to suggest 750 feet as the minimum, but he did not wish to harass any industry, therefore he would place the minimum at 500 feet of air space. Working out on the 500 feet basis, a room 14 feet high should have a floor space of 36 feet to make up the 500 feet; or if a room was 10 feet high, the floor space should be 50 feet. He had referred to the organic impurities that were the real cause of the injury to health, but they were produced in a fair ratio to the carbonic acid gases, and it was usual to accept the carbonic acid gases as determining the organic elements. Inasmuch as the gases were placed at .06 in respirated air, if we raised that amount to .07 there would be more injury to health but not too much. We might make the minimum 500 cubic feet of air with a floor space in a room, 14 feet high or higher, of 36 feet.

**THE MINISTER FOR LABOUR:** It was pleasing to hear the member for Roebourne giving his professional knowledge to the Committee. Having looked up authorities on the question, it was evident the member for Roebourne had brought forward all the arguments which he (the Minister) had picked out. Although the hon. member said we ought to provide 500 feet as the minimum, it was not wise to lay down any hard-and-fast rule on the matter, because all over the world where factory legislation obtained there was no minimum or maximum laid down. The fault in the Act was discovered when the regulations were being framed, and it was intended to insert in the regulations a minimum of 400 feet and not to count the air above a height of 13 feet; that was practically what the member for

Roebourne suggested. It was impossible to lay down a hard-and-fast minimum of air space in a factory, for in a dress-making factory it would not be necessary to have as much air space as in a boot-making factory. In the *Law of Factories and Workshops*, by Ruegg and Mossop, it was stated:—"By the second order an exception is granted to ship building works, gun factories, engineering and machine shops," and it provided that "the special exception shall not apply to such part of a factory as does not afford clear 2,500 feet for each person employed therein." So that in that special case the minimum was fixed at 2,500 feet. In another case, in the spinning of artificial silk this authority says, "In every room in which any child, young person, or woman is employed in the spinning of artificial silk there shall be at least 1,000 cubic feet of air space to each person employed." There was no desire to lay down any hard and fast rule which might harass the owners of factories. Provision would have to be made so that in every factory there was proper ventilation; that could be ascertained by a simple instrument. Every factory would have to be tested as to the purity of the atmosphere. He hoped members would allow the clause to pass as printed. Nothing would be done to harass factory owners, but proper ventilation must be supplied to the workers.

**DR. HICKS:** One point he had omitted. The calculations he gave to the Committee were worked out on the basis of a man being completely at rest. In factories the carbonic gases given out were two and a-half times as high as the figures he had given; therefore 400 feet would be too low. We could safely fix the space at 750 feet, and then be below the mark. If we were to deal with this question it should be on a scientific basis, or we should leave it alone.

**MR. RASON:** Members of the Committee were indebted to the member for Roebourne for his remarks on this question. The only object which he (Mr. Rason) had was that there should be perfect ventilation in every factory. We were dealing with only one section in the parent Act, and we were seeking one amendment to one section. Members would realise that a factory should not be overcrowded, that there must be sufficient ventilation, that at any time an inspector

could determine whether there was or was not a sufficient supply of fresh air. Would it not be possible to reserve 1,000 cubic feet of space for each individual in a factory, and yet have the ventilation so bad as to have the life of each individual in that factory in danger? So long as we left entirely to the inspector the question of what was and what was not a sufficient supply of fresh air, the amount of working space set apart for each individual was a question we could almost determine without very great scientific knowledge. If we first determined that there should be, under any circumstances, a sufficient supply of fresh air, complete ventilation, and no overcrowding, in the opinion of the inspector, it seemed to him only a question of common sense what actual space should be allowed to the persons employed. We had it that the regulations in the other States provided 400 feet, and therefore he thought we might be reasonably safe in providing that here it should be 450 cubic feet.

THE MINISTER: Theirs was the minimum. What the hon. member proposed was the maximum.

MR. RASON: If there were no regulations at all as to the amount of air space to be reserved, we should still have a perfect Act, because the inspector and inspector alone would determine at all times what were the healthy conditions for the worker. The inspector, with the aid of the instrument the Minister had referred to, could determine whether there was or was not a sufficient supply of pure air, and whether there was or was not an undue predominance of carbonic acid gas.

MEMBER: There would be different rules in different districts.

MR. RASON: The inspector would determine.

THE MINISTER: Did the hon. member desire to leave it to the inspector?

MR. RASON: Much sooner would he leave all these questions to the determination of an inspector than arbitrarily fix by regulation just the bare amount of space we had to allot in a factory.

THE MINISTER: We fixed a minimum.

MR. RASON: It would be quite impossible, he took it, to have in this room, if it were not properly ventilated, ten persons who would not, if they remained for any length of time be in

very unhealthy conditions. No one could say there was not a superabundance of air space reserved for them, and yet their surroundings would be totally unhealthy. It was ventilation and proper appliances, and not the mere reserve of air space that would provide healthy surroundings.

THE MINISTER: Did the hon. member not realise that ventilation was controlled by air space?

MR. RASON: By no means with regard to a factory. It might hold good in underground workings. It might hold good where we could apply no ventilation except artificial ventilation; but where we had natural ventilation it was not so much a question of air space reserved to each individual worker as it was a question of having the ventilation properly arranged. By leaving it an open question as to what might or might not be the reserve space to be provided in a factory we might frighten people away from embarking in enterprises here. We did not want to do that; and if we could possibly arrive at something whereby a person embarking in an enterprise would know what he would be called upon to do, it would be well.

DR. ELLIS: The member for Guildford forgot that there was another item besides carbonic acid gas which held in factories, and which was of the greatest importance—that was dust; and in considering dust the question of minimum might be very desirable, but the question of a maximum was an impossibility. We must allow as much space as was considered requisite from a health point of view, and in some cases it went to a very high amount indeed.

MR. RASON: What?

DR. ELLIS: Two thousand feet.

MR. RASON: Let it be made 2,000 feet.

DR. ELLIS had no objection if the member for Guildford would accept an amendment to that effect. Perhaps we might prevail on the Government to limit it to that amount. He agreed with the hon. member that to deal with the matter by regulation was a very unsatisfactory method. The member for Roebourne had very clearly shown that science in general had come to the conclusion enunciated by him so carefully. It had been found, so

far as he (Dr. Ellis) knew, that 500 cubic feet of air space was the minimum which ought to be allowed to people who were at rest in factories. There was one problem to bring before the Committee, namely the fact that tuberculosis was in this State highly infectious, and in factories where there was much dust the danger of tubercular infection reached a maximum. Consequently we should do anything we could in this State to help to get rid of what was, to medical science at least, the greatest danger, the greatest terror—dust. It would require everything we could do in a country like this. At home in the old country many people held that tuberculosis was not infectious to anything like the extent it was in this State. But in this State the mortality from tuberculosis was very nearly, if not quite, as great as in the old country, with its fogs, rains, and wet; and that was on account of the extraordinary infection of tuberculosis with reference to dust. Consequently the member for Roebourne might be followed on the point that 500 cubic feet of air space was the smallest that should be allowed, and above that any figure the inspector considered necessary for the proper carrying on of that factory. We could not name a maximum in this matter, because one very often could get over the difficulty by applying special means, expensive means of ventilation for increasing the cubic feet of space, and it would be a serious matter for the consideration of a manufacturer as to whether it would not be more expedient to increase the space than to bring in many of the expensive methods at present existing for removing dust from the air. Whilst not seeing the necessity for removing that section from the Act, he considered the less restriction there was with regard to a maximum, the better. The questions of draught, the nature of employment, the sanitary condition of the building and how it had been closed in, and whether the building was in the middle of a large number of high buildings or standing by itself, all came into consideration, so that we could not fix a definite maximum. Any maximum fixed would have to be so high as to practically amount to no maximum at all. He thought it would be advisable, if possible, to fix the minimum at 500 feet.

Dr. HICKS agreed with the remarks of the leader of the Opposition as to doing away with the air space. It would be far more scientific if there were estimated the amount of carbonic acid gas emitted. That was the scientific basis, but then it occurred to him we were just saying there should be certain cubic space in a building, so much area per person, for the convenience of people building factories. He had suggested 500 feet because that was the minimum space for registered lodging-houses in Perth, and a very small minimum. The leader of the Opposition forgot to mention that the Bill made no provision for heating the air before its admission. We could with impunity increase the number of times per hour that the air must be renewed, if the air were heated.

THE MINISTER: The by-laws of the Perth Local Board of Health provided as a minimum in common lodging-houses 500 cubic feet to each person in a sleeping room. For private hospitals the minimum was 1,000 feet. By the existing Act it was impossible for any inspector to insist on a factory-owner providing more than 154 feet per head; and to keep the air pure in such circumstances it would have to be changed at least 16 times per hour. This was practically impossible without seriously injuring the health of the workers. All could perceive the absolute necessity for ample air-space.

Dr. HICKS: The air-space in hospitals ought to be 1,200 cubic feet. As in prisons the maximum was 800 and in barracks 600, surely more than 600 ought to be allowed in factories. The minimum for sleeping rooms in common lodging-houses was 500 feet; and a man working would emit twice the quantity of impurities given off by a sleeper. The basis should be .06 of carbonic acid; but if for convenience it was thought better to specify a certain air-space, 1,000 feet was a low enough minimum if it were desired to be thoroughly sanitary.

Amendment negatived, and the clause passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

## ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read, assenting to the Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill.

TRUCK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.  
IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BATH in the Chair; Mr. C. H. RASON in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Amendment of 63 Vict., No. 15, s. 6:

MR. A. J. WILSON: The clause ought to be struck out. The reasons for the amendments on the Notice Paper were given fully by him on the second reading; and these amendments would be really advantageous to the timber companies. Any provision for conniving at a continuance of wrongdoing was objectionable. If the clause passed as printed, the Combine, instead of being relieved of all unclaimed liability from the time of the passing of the Bill, would still be liable; whereas the passing of the amendments would have the effect of preventing the commencement of actions after the passing of the Bill; and as it was understood that the Combine had ceased to violate the parent Act and had no desire to continue deductions from wages, no good purpose could be served by passing the Bill as it stood.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member, instead of moving that the clause be struck out, had better vote against it.

MR. RASON: All would recognise the generosity of the member for Forrest in going out of his way to benefit the timber companies now and in the future. The striking out of the clause, though it would not have the effect intended by the hon. member, would make future evasions of the Truck Act impossible. But it would not relieve the timber companies of the obligation mentioned by the hon. member. Companies would in future be unable, save for cash, to supply goods to any of their workmen, unless the companies were prepared to take the full risk of non-payment. Not wishing to see the Truck Act evaded, he (Mr. Rason) would not oppose the deletion of the clause.

Clause put and negatived.

(Clause 2—Short Title:

MR. A. J. WILSON moved an amendment:

That all the words after "1899," in line 2, be struck out, and the words "hereinafter

referred to as the principal Act" be inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

New Clause—Exemption of certain actions from 63 Vict., No. 15, s. 6:

MR. A. J. WILSON moved that the following be added as a new clause:—

Section six of the principal Act shall not apply to any action brought or commenced after the passing of this Act for the recovery of any sum of money due to a workman as his wages before the passing of this Act. And notwithstanding anything contained in the principal Act, the defendant in any action brought or commenced after the passing of this Act for the recovery of any sum due to a workman as his wages before the passing of this Act may make a setoff or counterclaim by reason or in respect of—(a.) Any goods had or received by the plaintiff as or on account of his wages; or (b.) any goods sold, delivered, or supplied to any shop, store, house, or premises kept by or belonging to the defendant, or in the profits of which the defendant may have any share or interest; or (c.) any goods supplied to the plaintiff by the defendant or by any person under any order or direction of the defendant or his agents.

The object of the amendment was as far as possible to avoid the evil of retrospective legislation that would interfere with the legal right of any person already established by a statute in operation. There could be no question about the legal right, but there would be a good deal of question as to the propriety of passing a retrospective measure that would interfere with established legal rights. True, the carrying of this amendment would not necessarily stop any person who had wages deducted on account of stores prior to the passing of the measure from taking action; but it would practically nullify the utility of taking action because it allowed the defendant employer to successfully make a setoff on account of goods supplied, whereas the parent Act prevented him from making that setoff. The amendment would absolutely prohibit the man with the claim from taking an action that he could successfully urge under the parent Act, and it would remove from the shoulders of the people directly interested in the liability the whole of the responsibility for the passage of this amending Bill. Of course the amendment would have the effect of making it come into operation from the date of the passage of the Bill; but he (Mr. Wilson) was pre-

pared to compromise and make the amendment operate from to-day. He understood the additional amount in which the company were likely to be involved was a comparatively small sum, being somewhere between £700 and £1,000; and as it was proved in all other cases that the liability was only about a tenth of the amount claimed, the additional liability would really only be about £100.

MR. RASON: The amendment would only apply to goods supplied before the passing of this Bill. The future was a blank. In other words the employer would have to observe the Truck Act religiously for the future.

MR. WILSON: That was wanted.

MR. RASON: The House had previously agreed that in regard to unjust claims the company were to be protected, and he (Mr. Rason) had referred to the number of claims submitted prior to the 21st October, the member for Forrest then saying that though it was possible it was extremely improbable any more claims would arise. However, more claims had been lodged since the 21st October. Should the words, "until the passing of this Act," be retained, still more claims would be lodged. No member wished that state of affairs to arise; though he (Mr. Rason) would be the last to prevent any man having recourse to legal rights. No matter what date might be fixed in the Bill, any man could bring an action against the company; but the parent Act provided that the company could not plead as a setoff any goods supplied to the man whether in good faith, compulsorily, or not. The member for Forrest was hardly correct in his description of the parent Act. That Act admitted repudiation, which no member desired. Under the parent Act a man could bring a claim against the employing company, and although the employing company had supplied him with £5,000 or £6,000 worth of goods they could not plead it as a setoff.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Of course, there was an object in that.

MR. RASON: It enabled the man who had the goods to repudiate the supply. That was the plain English of the provision.

MR. WILSON: It was not there for that purpose.

MR. RASON: That was at any rate what it amounted to; and no member desired such a state of things to continue with regard to the past. By fixing a date we prejudiced no man's claim. When an employee brought a claim against an employer, the employer would be able to plead as a setoff that he had supplied the employee with certain goods at certain prices. If the argument advanced by the member for Forrest the other day, that the company had claimed for goods that were not supplied or that had been grossly overcharged, were correct, then the employee could prove it.

MR. A. J. WILSON: That would not be a successful setoff.

MR. RASON: There was never a successful setoff *per se*; it must be proved. If A brought an action against B, and B said A owed him £200, B must prove it. It enabled the one party to say that the other owed money, and also enabled the party sued to say that the party suing owed him money. Each party must prove his own claim. If the company pleaded one of these setoffs, the person bringing the action against the company could prove that goods were charged for twice over, or that there was a gross overcharge; and no Judge would allow a claim as a setoff that was admittedly and provably unfair. Surely there was no injustice in allowing each party to prove his case. Each side was left entirely free. But the parent Act tied one side down altogether and said "No matter whether you have supplied £2,000 or £3,000 worth of goods, it does not come into the question. You had no business to supply them; therefore there is no setoff." The operation of the amendment was only as to what had happened in the past. By fixing a date it provided that from and after a certain date only in any action in regard to goods supplied in the past could the man who had supplied goods attempt to prove a setoff. That was equity. If there had been overcharging, or if goods had been charged for twice, this could be proved, and no claim of that kind would be blocked. He did not seek to stop anyone's right to make a just claim, nor to interfere with any man's right of remedy if a case could be made out. As to the past, there would be no



interference with justice and no claim against the company would be blocked; whereas if the words proposed in the amendment were adopted, what would happen?

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** What he wanted was a compromise?

**MR. RASON:** If those words were left in as proposed in the amendment, what would be the effect? The amendment if adopted by this House would have to go back to another place to be considered, and three or four weeks might elapse before the two Houses came to an agreement on the point. He was sure the hon. member did not want to see any claims lodged to which there could be no legal or moral defence. He (Mr. Rason) was willing to make a compromise, and he wished to arrive at what was fair. It was only due to the company to say that he had at his elbow what he believed to be a complete and satisfactory answer to every one of the charges made against the company by the member for Forrest, in his speech on the Bill the other evening. He (Mr. Rason) did not wish to introduce this matter unless he was forced to do so, because he regarded it as being really outside the main question before the House.

**MR. A. J. WILSON:** The company could not contradict anything he had stated.

**MR. RASON:** That being so, it would be as well that members of the House should be made aware of the company's explanation to the charges made against it. The hon. member had given one side of the question, and the other side would now be put before members in the form supplied by the company as follows:—

*Re Mr. Tim. Rogers.*—With reference to Mr. A. J. Wilson's statements with regard to the position of Mr. Rogers, Mr. Wilson, in speaking of a witness who gave evidence as to the value of stores and the freedom of employees to deal at other stores besides the company's, referred to Mr. Tim. Rogers, who has had a store at Yarloop since 1895. To say that Mr. Rogers was ever in the company's employ or ever received a penny from it either to settle or conduct a case or to give evidence is absolutely false.

*Charges for Bread.*—With regard to Mr. Wilson's allegations as to charges for bread being exorbitant, the company are in possession of a letter from the opposition baker in which he seeks to arrange some method whereby an increased price for bread could be obtained. This letter is now being used as

evidence in the appeal case of Millars' Company v. J. D. Smith. We have further to state that the same baker wrote to the manager at Yarloop, asking him to put up the price of bread from 3½d. to 4d., whilst at the same time he was secretary to the Yarloop Workers' Association. Again he wrote to the company on the 4th September, 1902, offering to take over the whole of the bakery business; and after offering a sum of £12 per month for the privilege, he says:—"If you look into the matter, I think you will find this is more than can be made out of it by the company, and I can show you good reasons why I can do it." The company, however, did not treat with him, and rejected his offer.

*Dockets.*—With regard to the question of dockets, this has never become before the notice of the company, nor can the company believe that there ever was an employee whose account was incorrect who could not get it rectified without any trouble at all. At all events we have never heard of any such case, and cannot think there can be one existing without our hearing of it.

*Union Secretary.*—The company is in a position to prove that the secretary of the union at Waterous has been the prime mover in working the men up to take action under the Truck Act, as far as our Waterous Mill is concerned. It is common knowledge on the camp that this man (Doherty), who was secretary of the union up to within a month or six weeks ago, has approached a number of men and urged them to take action, and in the successful cases he has always got from £5 to £10 out of each individual.

*Trading at Company's Stores.*—With regard to compulsory trading at the company's store, the company deny this allegation emphatically, and the following figures will prove its assertions:—From the 1st September, 1902, to 31st October, 1904, the sum of £690,009 6s. 1d. was paid in wages to the employees, and the following were the total deductions:—For stores and bakery, £73,482 19s. 11d.; for butchery, £8,014 10s. 10d.; total £81,497 10s. 9d.

So that this leaves about 88 per cent. for the men to spend elsewhere, or only 12 per cent. of their total earnings have been deducted for stores supplied. The total profit on these stores amounted to 11 per cent. This is without making any allowance for managerial expenses, interest, rent, goodwill, or other charges; so that Mr. Wilson's authority for stating that goods could be obtained from opposition stores at 15 per cent. cheaper than the company's must be taken for what it is worth.

*Mrs. Thornton.*—With regard to Mr. Wilson's statement regarding a woman who, because she did not deal at the company's store, had her rent raised to such an extent that she had to clear out, the facts of the case are these. Mrs. Thornton, whose husband was employed at the Waterous Mill since 1896, and up to September, 1904, lived in an employee's cottage, and paid 4s. per week rent up to

1901. Mrs. Thornton then requested us to erect a little shop to enable her to sell sundries, such as soft drinks, lollies, biscuits, toys, eggs, cigarettes, etc.; she also kept two or three boarders; and the total rent paid by her for her private dwelling and shop was 10s. per week. In addition to the dwelling-house, we put up a bedroom at the back of her house for the use of her mother, which the old lady occupied up to the time of her death, and for which no rent was charged, nor was any charge made for the coffin in which the poor old lady was buried. Any of the private dwellings used as boarding-houses had to pay a rental of eight shillings per week; so that all Mrs. Thornton paid for her shop was 2s. per week. All her goods, whether obtained from the company's store or from Perth, as the bulk of them were, were taken by our trains free of cost, and farther were carted from the trains to her shop without any charge. Mrs. Thornton spoke to the general manager about her rent and about her keeping a few boarders; and he distinctly told her that he was not prepared to allow her or anyone else to compete with the *bona fide* boarding establishments, which paid 30s. per week for their places and had to hold a boarding-house keeper's license, without paying an extra rental. Mrs. Thornton remained at the Waterous Mill until about 12 months ago, when she went to Kirup to keep a boarding-house there. Her husband remained at the Waterous Mill until, as already stated, the end of September last. Her husband earned at Waterous equal to £3 18s. per week, as he had two separate jobs. Mrs. Thornton and her husband were treated absolutely as well, if not better than, any others on the mill, which may be accounted for by the fact that the foreman of the mill—a man who has been associated with the company for 16 years—was Mrs. Thornton's brother-in-law.

Appended to this statement prepared by the company were figures showing that at 11 mills the total amount paid in wages was £690,009 6s. 1d.; total expended on stores and bakery, £73,482 17s. 11d.; total expended on butchery, £8,014 10s. 10d. This statement which he had read as supplied to him by the company was at all events a setoff against the statement made by the member for Forrest, and the one must be balanced against the other to arrive at a fair conclusion. This, however, had nothing to do with the main point. The House had decided that the company should be protected, and the only question was as to the date from which the protection should operate. The Bill as introduced provided that no claims of this kind against the company should be lawful if lodged after the 20th October, while the hon. member proposed in his amendment that

the date should be "the passing of the Act." Let us say, then, that the 1st October should be the date for the blocking of farther claims, that being the date when the Bill was actually read for the first time in another place. The hon. member had suggested a compromise. He (Mr. Rason) now offered this as a compromise, and believed it was one which ought to be acceptable to everyone concerned.

MR. FOULKES rose to point out an instance where it was necessary for a Bill to be passed which was practically retrospective legislation. That was the case of a Treasurer announcing his intention to impose new or increased taxation on certain articles passing through the Customs; and, as hon. members were aware, it became practically necessary in such case to make the new or increased taxation operative from the date on which the announcement was made to Parliament. This was an analagous case in regard to fixing the date, and making the legislation retrospective in its operation. Members were aware that if the Treasurer of a State proposed fresh taxation on particular articles passing through the Customs, unless that taxation was made immediately operative from the date of its announcement, many merchants in the State would import large quantities of the particular articles so as to get them passed through the Customs before the new legislation could come into operation. In such circumstances, the Customs officers invariably commenced to collect the duties immediately after the introduction of the Tariff Bill. This case was analogous; for the introduction of this Bill, and each stage through which it passed, was practically a notice to all possible claimants to hurry up with their claims. There was so little difference between the member for Forrest and the leader of the Opposition, that the former should give way.

MR. A. J. WILSON courted the fullest inquiry as to his allegations made on the second reading. They could be thoroughly substantiated. He had to-day received from a particular centre of the timber trade a letter entirely approving of his action in the House, and intimating that all his statements could be proved. The official shorthand notes of the Arbitration

Court proceedings between a union and Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company contained the evidence of Mr. Charles McPhee, a storekeeper at Waroona, which evidence the company had been unable to refute. Mr. McPhee stated that he came into competition with the mill's stores at Waroona. The differences between his prices and those of the company were:—Starch, company 8d., McPhee 6d.; egg cups, company 2s., McPhee 1s. 6d.; cuticura soap, company 1s. 6d., McPhee 1s. 3d.; sugar per bag, company 17s. no brand, McPhee 14s. 6d. A1 brand, best in market; jelly, company no brand 2s. 3d. for three jellies, McPhee, White's (best jelly) 1s. 3d. for three jellies; sheep's tongues, company no brand 3s. 4d. for two tins, McPhee 1s. 6d. a tin; Amgoorie tea, company 2s. 3d., McPhee 1s. 6d.; sago, company 4d., McPhee 3d.; tomato sauce, company 9d., McPhee 5d. and 8d.; jam, company two tins 1s. 8d., McPhee 8d. and 9d. per tin; rice, company 4d. per lb., McPhee 3d.; beans, company 1s. 4d. for two tins, McPhee 6d. per tin; peas, company 8d., McPhee 6d.; avena, company 2s., McPhee 1s. 10d. Mr. McPhee went on to state that the figures just quoted were from his public price list; and that the company's prices showed an increase of at least 15 per cent. on his, and on some items 50 per cent. The price list was put in as an exhibit at the proceedings. This evidence was not successfully controverted by the company's representative. Mr. McPhee farther stated that the company having closed its mill at Waroona, he, being unable to trade with the employees at the mill seven miles back in the hills, was compelled to remove the bulk of his business to Yarloop, where he served men at the workshops. It was only these men and the settlers near Yarloop and Waroona who now kept him going.

MR. RASON moved an amendment:—

That the words "passing of this Act," wherever appearing in the new clause, be struck out, and "the first day of November, 1904," be inserted in lieu.

MR. TROY: The member for Forrest would be wise to accept the amendment. No section of the House wished to countenance dishonesty. Probably it would have been better had the names of the recent claimants on the Combine been

mentioned here, as well as in another place. From the report read by the leader of the Opposition, it appeared that a union secretary had been guilty of dishonest practices. The member for Forrest, in whose electorate the majority of those interested resided, should inquire into this, and action should be taken if the secretary were found guilty. Unfortunately, secretaries of unions were sometimes, like certain other secretaries, dishonest; but for such dishonesty the Labour party were not to blame, and they would be the last to countenance it. The House should take action if secretaries had been guilty of urging men to make these claims, and of sharing in the profits. He (Mr. Troy) had some hesitation in accepting all the statements read by the leader of the Opposition; for he had seen similar statements. Not long ago, when he was conducting a case in the Arbitration Court at Perth, a balance-sheet of a certain store was submitted; and scarcely had he left the court when one of the principal witnesses for his opponent said that the balance-sheet was "faked." If that could be done before the Arbitration Court, it could be done in this instance.

MR. CONNOR: It was regrettable that the amendment had been moved. An injustice had either been done or it had not. If certain men wished to get money to which they had no right, it was not advisable to condone their dishonesty. He (Mr. Connor) would have been glad to vote for the Bill as it came from another place. It was better to agree with the amendment.

MR. P. J. LYNCH: There was no reason why a line should be drawn. Because certain persons were early in the market, so to speak, that was no reason why they should have their claims paid. He would go farther and invalidate those claims which had already been made to the court. Touching the stigma attaching to the working men of the State, we were not entirely without parallel in history. He referred to the maritime trouble when ships were laid up on the coast and when men left those ships and sacrificed a month's pay. This money had not been paid by the ship owners from that day to this. He (Mr. Lynch) sacrificed £12 on that occasion. The amount of money held by the ship

owners around the coast must total some thousands of pounds. The court said the men broke their agreements, and gave the ship owners a legal right to the money in their hands, and the unscrupulous employers retained the money. Perhaps the 24 men who had put in unjust claims in connection with the timber industry were acting in a retaliatory spirit.

Amendment (Mr. Rason's) put and passed.

MR. A. J. WILSON: In regard to the statement made by the leader of the Opposition as to the secretary of the union, he had every reason to doubt the veracity of the statement, but he would communicate with the secretary, and no doubt that officer would be able to justify the statement made.

MR. RASON: When a member made a statement in Committee, it was to be expected the other side would reply. The statement made by him (Mr. Rason) was given to him; no comment was made on it, and he asked the Committee to accept it for what it was worth. However, he would like to make this statement in reply to the remark that a storekeeper was willing to supply goods at 15 per cent. less than the price for goods supplied by the company. The books of the company showed that in their stores transactions they had made a profit of only 11 per cent.; so it followed that this storekeeper was in a position to sell goods for 4 per cent. less than the goods cost Millars. The storekeeper must be a large buyer and have intimate knowledge of the home markets.

Question (Mr. Wilson's new clause) as amended agreed to.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

#### REPORT (INTERIM)—HAMEL SETTLEMENT, TO ADOPT.

Debate resumed from the 23rd November.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): I do not intend delaying the House. Members are in possession of the report of the committee and of my remarks in introducing it; and I feel satisfied that those more experienced in land matters than most members of the House who were on the select committee with me will have a little to say on this report. I have asked

the House to come to a decision on the matter, and I hope the Government will give the House a lead on the subject. There was urgency in introducing this matter, and it is important that we should deal with the matter promptly, first and foremost in the interests of the settlement itself, and because the country has to face the policy at the present time of land settlement on more vigorous lines than in the past. I look to that policy as being the main factor of the country's progress in the future. The Hamel settlement is an object lesson. We should view it intelligently and draw object lessons from it. Outside of being chairman of the committee I have no interest whatever in this matter. The members of the select committee are officers of Parliament, and have taken some of the responsibility off the shoulders of the Government. We have justified our action, and we consider that the action will have to be very much increased. There will have to be no "mark time" policy in regard to the Hamel settlement, because if there be there will be depression of values, and the people on the settlement will have to be pulled through. The Government will have to wait until the end of two years for the expiration of contracts: they cannot shift the settlers at the present time. Is it wise to sit hard down on a bargain or to help these people through? I regret one statement which was made in the *West Australian* newspaper this morning. Any reference to party might have been left out of this question. It would have been better if the member for Boulder had come to the House and made his statement where it could have been replied to in his presence. I deprecate his reference to party. The committee was appointed, and although I did not move for the committee, the gentleman who moved for it asked me to take the chair, thinking perhaps that I had a little more experience in the management of select committees. Not that I knew as much of agriculture as that member, because I do not; nor do I know nearly as much as the three members from the Opposition side of the House on the committee. But after being 10 or 11 years in politics I am scarcely going to extract political capital from an old friend who has acted from the highest principles

in starting this settlement. If he had been better advised he might have done better.

**THE SPEAKER:** I do not think the member's remarks are quite relevant to the subject. I assume the hon. member proposes to move the adoption of the report.

**MR. MORAN:** I cannot see that I am irrelevant; but if the Speaker says that I am, I shall drop any further remarks. I am dealing with the report of the select committee, and that report has been commented upon by a member of this House in the Press, which perhaps the Speaker did not know. I think I am entirely in order in making reference to these comments because they may influence members one way or another. I think I am within my rights in referring to the remarks of the late Minister for Lands who comments on the report of the Hamel select committee in the Press. However I do not wish to pursue the matter farther, only to say I would scorn any imputation of that character in connection with any select committee with which I am connected. So far from that being the case, four members of the committee came from the Opposition side, and I do not think the late Minister for Lands required a greater champion than myself when at Hamel. I formally move the adoption of the report.

Question put, and passed on the voices.

#### MISUNDERSTANDING.

**MR. MORAN:** I think members of the select committee wish to speak.

**THE SPEAKER:** I paused and looked around the Chamber before I put the question.

**MR. HAYWARD:** I intended to say a few words. I did not think the question would be put so quickly.

**THE SPEAKER:** If there has been any misapprehension on the part of members, I will put the question again.

Question stated.

#### RESUMED.

**MR. T. HAYWARD (Wellington):** As one member of the select committee I must endorse what has fallen from the member for West Perth. We have done our very best. There was great unanimity on the part of the committee; I do not think we disagreed on a single point. This is a

matter of urgency. Whatever is to be done must be done quickly. As to this being a party question, it never occurred to us in any shape or form. We went to work unprejudiced, with the object of doing our best for the Government and the people of Hamel. This is only an interim report; when our final report is presented we will give perhaps farther information to the House. I can only say I hope the report will be adopted and acted upon as soon as possible.

**MR. R. G. BURGESS (York):** I desire to make a few remarks on this interim report. I thank the chairman of this committee for the great interest displayed and for the way in which he put his energies and abilities into this matter. I think the committee has backed him up, and I hope now the Government will take some steps to assist these settlers farther than they have done, as in my humble opinion what they have agreed to do is not going to be of more than little help to the settlers. They gave them a bag or two of potatoes and a little manure, but they will have to do something more than this. I say, as I said down there, I never was more surprised in my life than to see what those men have done there, after the reports circulated in this House and outside it. I consider that those men, whatever may be their position at present, have done excellent work, almost in every case. There are one or two cases in which, as every member of the committee knows, the settlers have had outside assistance, and they have called for that. There is no doubt some of these men will not be able to carry out their contracts or the settlement of the blocks without assistance, unless portion of the land is taken away from them. These blocks are too large for these men to combat successfully, unless they are able to divide them, and the Government sell or otherwise dispose of them, giving to the late holders something for their improvements. I agree with the member for West Perth that the work done is an object lesson to the country, and it is a credit to the men on that land; because any man idle or worthless would never have done the work which has been accomplished in that settlement. I know a little bit of this settlement work. Where they have cleared timber, one had to do a little bit

of steeplechasing or something of that sort to get along at all, for the country is nothing but a mass of holes where trees were cut out. We went over every one of these blocks and saw what they had cleared, the buildings they had put up, and the little plots which they possessed, the little paddocks they had attended to in some places where they had a plough and in others where they had a horse. Although these men were in difficulties, is not that the case all over this country where men are settling? It always has been so, and always will be at the beginning of a settlement such as this. If the late Minister for Lands originated the idea, we may be thankful that we have such a man in the country to do it, because I consider it is one of the best lessons any Minister for Lands ever put to the test in this State as regards country down in that part of Western Australia. We have a system there of drainage, and it has astonished me. Although I have been all over the State I had never seen any country suitable for irrigation, nor have I thought there was such from statements I have heard in conversation with men who understand the business. My opinion is that there is very little land suitable for irrigation purposes in this country, but we found it there, undoubtedly. That very creek has forced itself by the wash from the hills and formed a rise of level along that channel which is almost higher than a lot of the ground. Where could we have anything more suitable for irrigation, at any rate in that part of the country? The member for West Perth went farther and saw other lessons and works the Government are carrying out, which I believe he highly approves of. This is a matter one might speak on for hours, but it would not be much good. We have this report, and we shall have the evidence before us, which will show that these men have done good work. There are of course a few grumblers, but some of these grumblers have done satisfactory work. It is a satisfactory work which the whole of these men have done. But good workers have often a bad system and cannot carry out their ideas in a new place like that. Where they have to make experiments they make some failures. The main object of the report is to secure that special assistance shall

be given to these settlers, and I might go even farther than this report. We want, however, to go with this report to the extent of every letter to try and make that settlement a success, and those men on it a success. Of course the matter will want careful looking into. We have already pointed out—it is pointed out in this report, at any rate it is in the evidence, and I think it is in some of the clauses here—where that country will grow over and become partly in as bad a state as ever, if these men cannot clear and work their blocks. It is necessary to keep down undergrowth, and that is a thing which wants careful watching. We have already pointed out it will be necessary for the Government to look carefully into this, and even if we have to give these men something for what they consider their improvements, it is far better to do that than to let the country go to waste. We should have to take evidence from those who know that country. I am not going to give an opinion on it, although I have been engaged in farming nearly all my life; but we must take the evidence of men outside who have a knowledge of this work. We must ask their opinion. Their opinion has pretty well proved that what the Government have spent here is not going to be wasted. That evidence is coming forward, and it is one of the strongest proofs. I am satisfied we have good evidence, and although this is not a financial success at present it will be so, I believe, if it is carefully worked from this time out. It will be one of the greatest successes which Western Australia ever carried out in that part of the State. We are spending money there, and we are told that the country will be superior, and that no doubt it will carry the bulk of our population some day, when we have the money to work it. It is the duty of Parliament to try and prove this thing, even if they lose a little, and we have plenty of proof that these men must be pretty well satisfied. Although some may grumble, they have not much to grumble at. I think the one who has been there the longest has been there fourteen months, yet men have comfortable little homes established, and they have little plots. As far as party purposes are concerned, I do not think that question ever cropped up, or that we ever

thought of such a thing. It was not our duty to consider parties. It was our duty to go there unbiased, to do the best we could to satisfy the people there and meet their requirements, and not forget the interests of the country, because it will be a greater advantage to the country than it will be even to those worthy settlers. I trust the Government will be careful, as I do not believe in a waste of money. They should aid these men all they can, and see if they can assist them in working out their ideas as much as possible. We do not want to lose an acre of the land, and it is for the Government to consider when assisting these men whether these men can each individually carry out what is necessary to occupy that land and prevent it from going into a state pretty well as bad as it was in before these men were put there. I cordially support the chairman's remarks in this matter, and also the report in almost every detail. There may be some matters we differed on, but I do not think any committee was ever more unanimous than this. As I have already said, I was most agreeably surprised at the work done there, and I hope the Government will assist the settlers. By assisting them they will not only be doing good to that establishment, but they will be doing valuable work as to settlement throughout this State and in other parts of the world.

MR. N. J. MOORE (Bunbury): As one who has a considerable knowledge of that part of the country referred to in this report, I would like to compliment the committee on their promptness in dealing with this question, and I hope the House will bear out the paragraph in which the committee recommend immediate action, and say they will be glad to consult with the department so that action shall be taken at once. I should like, however, to make a suggestion in connection with this matter, and that is that these men may be afforded some employment. I consider that employment could be given to these men which would be of a beneficial nature to the Government.

MR. MORAN: That is in our report. We recommend that fully. Roads and drainage want doing very badly.

MR. N. J. MOORE: I was going to indicate in what way these men can to

a certain extent be employed so that the settlement may be self-supporting, because I am of opinion that it is necessary that these men should derive some income from sources other than the land they occupy.

MR. MORAN: They have had to do it.

MR. N. J. MOORE: I propose to indicate one manner, in which, it strikes me, that might be done. There are several leases which have been thrown up by Millars' Company in the vicinity of that settlement. All leases within an area of five or six miles of Waroona have been thrown up; and there is any amount of timber there which would be suitable for sleepers. The department are getting sleepers all over the country, and I think it might be arranged that men settled on the land in the vicinity of Waroona might be given an opportunity of cutting on those leases, which at the present time are doing no good to anybody, and that these men by that means might be enabled to earn some money to help them along while their farms are being developed. I only throw this out as a suggestion, and I think it will be found on inquiry that it is a feasible recommendation. I do not want to criticise the report at all, but there are one or two suggestions. I think that the price of £4 per ton mentioned in the evidence for fertilisers is too high.

MR. MORAN: That is the unanimous opinion.

MR. N. J. MOORE: I am under the impression it is about £4 a ton on trucks at Fremantle.

MR. MORAN: There is no doubt they are paying through the nose all the same.

MR. N. J. MOORE: Economy may be effected in that respect. If, instead of allowing people to buy small parcels, a decent quantity of fertiliser were bought, a certain amount of money might be saved. However, I think that the House very much appreciates the promptness with which the committee have brought in a report, and I have very great pleasure in supporting the adoption of that report.

MR. J. P. McLARTY (Murray): I rise to briefly support the remarks of the member for West Perth, and to say that I agree with what has fallen from other members of the House. We went down to Hamel, examined the land, took

evidence on the spot, and thoroughly investigated everything else having reference to the settlement; and the result of that investigation was to convince us that, unless the settlers could be helped, they could not possibly go on. The member for West Perth does not claim any practical knowledge of land, but I think he seemed to have a pretty good grasp of it on the spot, and we are under great obligations to him for the energy and ability he showed in dealing with the whole matter.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. W. D. Johnston): I do not think it is necessary for me to state anything more definite than what I stated when the member for West Perth moved the adjournment of the House in connection with the production of this report. As I stated then, the Government have already decided to give some immediate relief to these settlers. It is true we did not intend to go to the extent recommended by the committee, but the Government are sincere in their desire to make this settlement a success. I agree with the member for West Perth and the other members of the select committee that any member of this House visiting the settlement cannot but be impressed that it can be made a success. It is true that, in principles of this kind and when introducing schemes of this nature, there are matters of detail that do not receive the consideration they deserve, and which subsequently after a little experience of the working of these settlements, are found out. These matters of detail were overlooked, and I think members will realise that, no matter who was Minister for Lands at the time, there would be matters of detail overlooked. I feel confident that they are only matters of detail that have been overlooked that the committee are now recommending should be attended to. Members who visit the settlement cannot but be impressed that the settlement can be made a success, and members cannot go away from the settlement without feeling that the member for Boulder who introduced the scheme deserves the thanks of the community. Several matters in this report came under my notice when I visited the settlement; and to an extent, I brought somewhat the same report back to the Minister. It is true I did not go

to the extent the committee have gone. I was rather moderate in my opinion, because I did not profess to have that expert knowledge that members of the committee have. With the report of the committee before us, I am confident the whole question brought before the House will receive the immediate attention of the Government, and the Minister for Lands will give every detail that consideration it deserves with a view to immediately assisting the settlers on the settlement, and with a view to making it the success it undoubtedly can be made.

**MR. J. SCADDAN** (Ivanhoe): I do not intend to criticise the report in any way, although in visiting the settlement I came to very much the same conclusion as the committee. There is one matter that came under my notice, I thought privately, that seems to have come out before the select committee, and I think it is due to the goldfields public that it should be brought out considerably clearer. Many settlers complain of misrepresentation in being induced to give up good jobs on the goldfields to settle on the area. I have vivid recollection that, when the then Minister for Lands (Mr. Hopkins) placed the scheme before the goldfields public, it was generally understood it was to settle the unemployed difficulty on the goldfields to some extent, and that only legitimate unemployed were to be taken on the area. To my surprise, although I did not place much credence on the remarks of the settlers, it seems to have turned out they really did leave good jobs on the goldfields to settle there. I hope the committee in their final report will clear this matter up, and find out who is to blame in the matter if there was misrepresentation. If there was misrepresentation, the public will more clearly understand this part of the report.

**MR. A. J. H. WATTS** (Northam): I would like to make a few remarks on this report, because of the great interest it has for me, and particularly because the condition of the settlers at Hamel represents so closely the condition of the settlers at Nangeenan, a settlement of a similar kind. The condition of the settlers at Hamel, as shown by the report of the committee, is indeed a deplorable one; and I must congratulate the committee on the



speedy delivery of their report. We must look on the matter as being urgent. There is necessity with regard to these settlements that we should make inquiry into them, make reports, and give the relief it is possible to give in the shortest time possible. The report, indeed, shows the urgent necessity for this. Expectations, according to this report, have not been realised. I presume these are the expectations of the settlers.

MR. MORAN: Nobody's expectations have been realised.

MR. WATTS: What is interesting to those who were, perhaps, most sceptical in regard to the work done there, we find the committee unanimously testifying to the energy that has been displayed by the settlers on this Hamel settlement. This reflects the greatest credit on the settlers. There is, however, one serious statement which I notice in this report. In not a single instance can a settler get along without farther assistance from the Government. This, I think, speaks volumes as to the necessity for our granting immediate relief.

MR. MORAN: The report does not say that.

MR. WATTS: I think it does. If not, the hon. member's remarks showed it.

MR. MORAN: No settler has sufficient to enable him to utilise without assistance all the land he has fit for ploughing.

MR. WATTS: I should also like to draw the attention of the Government to the statement made that two horses had been hired, and not satisfactory ones, at £2 a week. I think all practical farmers must think it a most unsatisfactory condition of affairs that such a price should be paid for the hire of two horses which are not satisfactory. I think any party would be prepared to supply horses at a less rate. We are also informed that starvation is staring the settlers in the face unless they are helped at once, and that there is danger of the abandonment of the settlement. The Government should recognise the necessity for giving immediate relief to these settlers. Another point is that the settlement will not be a financial success and that, in order to save the large amount already expended, it is necessary to expend farther money. This appeals to me as a most important item.

If a settlement of this kind is not likely to be a success, and if the chief reason for finding more money is to save the great amount of money spent there already, I think it reflects a great deal on those responsible for the starting of this settlement. Another point is the statement of many of the men in regard to misrepresentation, and this resembles very closely the statement made by the settlers at Nangeenan that so many of them left good employment on the gold-fields to go to that settlement. I would urge upon the Government and the House the necessity of looking closely into this class of settlement. I can assure members that it is necessary for us to give urgent help to this settlement, and also to another settlement, to enable the settlers to continue on them.

MR. MORAN: They are all satisfied at Nangeenan, according to the Government.

MR. WATTS: There are two settlers at Nangeenan who are satisfied out of thirty on the place.

MR. BURGESS: They are all satisfied down at Hamel not to give up their land.

MR. WATTS: They are not satisfied at the other place.

MR. MORAN (in reply as mover): I may briefly thank the members of the committee for their support on this motion, and also one or two members who have made remarks on the matter. Things will probably be found not quite so bad as the member for Northam paints them. The House must remember that I have looked very much farther than the matter of the interim report, and have looked into the future. There are many difficulties ahead, the greatest of all being the absolute inexperience of the settlers there in the very rudiments of agriculture. Against that we have this double advantage, that hard by they have the services of two of the best men in Western Australia, Mr. McFarlane, who is in charge of the State nursery, and Mr. Berthoud, who is in charge of the experimental farm. They are at the settlers' disposal to tell them when to crop and what to crop, and all about the water, and what manure to put in, and everything else. That must be taken into consideration in this very advan-

tageous attempt at a village settlement. The conditions since the settlement took place have entirely altered. The settlement was started to provide produce for the sawmills next door, but Mr. Paterson foresees the greatest difficulty in their marketing what that land is best suited for—market garden produce. They cannot compete with the Perth market gardeners. It will not pay them to do it, and they will not be able to do it; but the experiments which have taken place next door prove the adaptability of the land for the growth of grasses such as cocksfoot, *paspalum*, and the two *fescues*. They are growing there and look splendid, as my colleagues will bear me out. That experimental plot there predicts a great future for the dairying industry in the South-West, though it will be many years before it is on a permanent and satisfactory footing. In addition to this settlement the Government have in hand there the work of drainage. As Minister for Lands I really initiated the work of draining that area. I had an opportunity of getting a saddle horse on the Sunday afternoon I was at Hamel, and riding a good many miles over the land; and no member has any idea of the splendid work done in the drainage of that area. The only member who has been over it besides myself is the member for Wellington (Mr. Hayward). It is astonishing. One would not think that such an extraordinary belt of land existed in Western Australia. I did not think so. It is mathematically level. Drains are running through it in all directions, and now it is nearly completely drained. The soil is not rich for the greater part of it, and I rode over it all; but with fertilizers and the possibilities of drainage, there is room for great developments in that Harvey country. I saw some soil which I think very few in this country have seen. I am very much deceived if it is not the true black soil which I have not seen anywhere here except in Kimberley. If this work is to be carried on it should be given largely to the settlers on the land. There are men at Hamel unsuited to agriculture who have to be educated as children in agriculture. The State has gone into this experiment, and here is one of the great deficiencies of village settlements, that the settlers and the storekeepers look to the Government as a

milch cow. That is one of the experiences in connection with village settlements, and always will be. These people have to get more assistance from the State than the ordinary settler can get. They expect it because they say they have been led into going on the land. They have been planted down at Hamel, and the State cannot act the part of the harsh landlord. One could pick out settlers at Hamel who will never make successful farmers, men who have striven for 14 and 16 hours a day clearing the land. They have a little home, and the Government cannot turn them off the land at least for 12 months. The settlement requires roads badly; it is a quagmire in the winter time and is impassable. The drains require bridging and a lot wants doing. I predict that this settlement will never be a financial success, but there is no reason why it should not be a fine object lesson. Why should not the men be settled in comfortable homes? The State should not be unwilling to afford a few thousand pounds in a lesson of this kind —

MR. NANSON: A lesson what to avoid?

MR. MORAN: Principally what to avoid—to avoid taking men straight from a windlass on to a farm, and trying to make farmers of them on ground where they require special knowledge. Some errors have been made and the State should know now what to avoid. I am sorry this matter has not been discussed at that length that one might have expected for a matter of this kind. The House is committed to the adoption of the report, and the Government are strengthened by a unanimous vote of the House to put more money into the settlement. All I have to say, in conclusion, is that I doubt very much whether the men who have cleared the land have been given a living wage. I think some of the valuations have been under what the country was worth, and in no case was the valuation too highly placed. I doubt if the temporary assistance which the Government are going to give this year will be sufficient unless that assistance be carried on for five years at least. There is much work to do in pulling this village settlement through. I have known many village settlements in Australia, but I have not known of one which has been a success. I have known

of many which have been abandoned. I do not want to see this settlement abandoned.

Question put and passed.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1904-5.

##### IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from the 23rd November; Mr. BATH in the Chair.

#### COLONIAL TREASURER'S DEPARTMENT (Hon. H. Daglish).

*London Agency*, £5,946 (partly discussed):

**THE TREASURER:** When the Committee rose after dealing with the Estimates on Wednesday last, we had listened to two very interesting and very able speeches, which had considerably raised the tone of the debate: he referred to the speeches of the members for Katanning and West Perth. It was very interesting indeed to hear speeches like those delivered, coming immediately after pettifogging quibbles in regard to individual votes of a comparatively unimportant nature. Specially was this the case when in this instance, to his mind at all events, the members struck a keynote of a very important nature. Both speeches dealt at some considerable length with the question of immigration, a question that had been talked of considerably for years past in the history of the State, and a question which, he admitted, personally he had, during his short term of office, talked of to some extent; a question of the most vital interest to the State. Unfortunately, up to the present nothing had been done beyond talk. There had been no practical scheme of immigration adopted, and while from time to time a small annual sum was provided on the Estimates for expenditure in this direction, it had been expended and little benefit had been derived by the State. It was of the highest importance that we should settle our enormous territory to the greatest possible advantage. As the member for West Perth pointed out, it was essential, if we were to construct works of an important nature and if we were to build a number of agricultural railways, we must immediately have the line of route peopled by settlers who would contribute

to make the railways pay. He had recognised this in his public utterances in the past, and he was prepared as far as possible during his term of office to recommend Parliament to recognise it in a practical way by providing the sinews of war which were essential to the carrying out of an efficient scheme of immigration. He recognised that we must have an enormous population to adequately develop the resources of the State. He did not believe in a scheme of general immigration which introduced to the State all sorts and conditions of people. He did not agree in a scheme of immigration which introduced people to the State who were below the standard of our average workers, either morally or physically. He did not believe in a system of introducing new residents into our towns in order to farther swell the already more than sufficient population congregated in the few centres; but he heartily indorsed the idea that we should, if possible, make our agricultural lands available to the people who came here and bring people here in order that the agricultural lands might be utilised. He would be very glad to recommend Parliament to assist by the provision of the needful funds, a substantial sum, for the purpose of bringing to a practical issue some immigration scheme. Having this in view, before the present Agent General left Western Australia he had several conversations with him on the subject, and as it seemed to him (the Premier) essential that a large amount of information should be obtained in regard to the possibility of obtaining the class of immigrants we desired from the older countries, he asked the Agent General to make it his first business to prepare a report dealing comprehensively with the whole question. It might be the case, before the report was received, that Parliament would have passed out of session. He was prepared on his part to endeavour to submit to the House or to confer with members in order that some adequate scheme could be provisionally adopted for the purpose of initiating the work without delay. It would be possible, if we could get a temporary scheme to carry over the next few months, that when Parliament met again we might adopt a comprehensive

scheme of a permanent character. One matter for consideration, and one matter alluded to by the members who had spoken during the discussion on the question, was that of the fitness of our London staff to carry on the work of securing these immigrants, and it had been represented to him that to a large extent our London office was not so staffed as to render the greatest service to the State. It seemed, in order to give the fullest satisfaction, it would be necessary to adopt some scheme such as that hinted at by the member for Menzies, and interchange our officers from time to time, sending officers to serve under the Agent General at home for a certain time, just as the Agent General was sent to England to serve a certain time and return. Officers could be appointed for a fixed time from amongst the servants of the various departments, and when they returned they could take up their old avocations or do work in the department to which they formerly belonged, and other officers could then take their places at home. He believed adequate arrangements had already been made to supply our Agent General with the latest information as it was acquired by the departments, and in this connection, apart from the direct expenditure for the passages of immigrants, it would be necessary for Parliament to arrange to deal more liberally with the London office as to the provision of funds for advertising purposes. Complaints had been made repeatedly by former Agents General that there was not adequate provision made in this direction; and he thought, in order that good work might be done, it was necessary for efficient advertising that funds should be supplied. In this connection he did not refer to that advertising which took the form of providing columns of newspaper advertisements, which to a large extent were very rarely read, but in appealing to the agriculturist of the old country or other lands by means of lectures and direct advertisements in the shape of views and so forth, which could be thrust under the immediate gaze of those persons whom we sought to attract. Unfortunately we had had here a large number of immigrants assisted to reach this State from the immigration vote, who had followed their time to a trade,

who had followed some particular commercial line of business; and in many instances it had been necessary for them, after living here for some time and failing to do anything like as well as they expected, to make appeals to the Government to find them occupation which they themselves had failed to obtain. This indicated, he thought, the necessity for us to confine our immigrants to the one particular class, those willing to settle on or work on the lands of the State. He had every hope that after this discussion was over it would be possible for him, as a result of the hints which fell from different members of the Committee, to submit, as he said a little earlier, some tangible temporary scheme, and he felt quite satisfied that, should such be the case, the Committee would be prepared to assist him by voting such funds as were necessary to carry on this scheme, until a more permanent one could be adopted. He heartily sympathised with the views which had been expressed by the members for Katanning and West Perth, and he appreciated very strongly, as he said at the outset, the fashion in which they had raised the tone of this discussion.

Mr. FOULKES hoped that the Premier would not regard the speeches made by the members for West Perth and Katanning as "hints" for the Government to take up this immigration question; for nothing could be more plain or straight than the expression that the Government should take up this subject. He hoped the Premier would not look upon it as a hint, but as an evidence of the strong desire of the Committee that this immigration question should be seriously taken up by the Government. He could remember when the late Premier, Sir John Forrest, about six or seven years ago, in bringing forward various public works schemes, said he hoped the population of this State—which he (Mr. Foulkes) believed at that time was 100,000—would, when those varied works had been carried out, be increased to at least 300,000.

Mr. BURGESS: Two hundred and fifty thousand.

Mr. FOULKES: Two hundred and fifty thousand. The population of the country now was something like 250,000, and we could understand how far we had

come within the anticipation of Sir John when he expressed the hope that the population of this country would, by the time the Coolgardie Water Scheme was finished, be 300,000. We must agree that this important question had, ever since we had had popular government, been neglected. All Governments had devoted an enormous amount of time to the question of the construction of various public works. They had advocated the construction of railways here and there frequently, but never at any time had a single Premier thought it necessary to have people here to use those various public works, the construction of which they advocated.

MR. MORAN: The present Government seemed alive to it.

MR. FOULKES: The present Government had probably good intentions. He was sure the Premier would agree with him that every Government had a certain amount of good intentions, and he had no doubt the Government would also have their fair share. He was glad that the leader of the Government had expressed his sympathy with the desire of members who had spoken on this (Opposition) side, that the question should be attended to. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] When he was in England in 1898 he saw the active steps the Dominion of Canada was taking in Great Britain to induce people to settle in Canada, and he realised then how far back and deficient were the steps taken by ourselves in this country. It was first of all in 1888 and afterwards in 1898 that he had the advantage of seeing in Great Britain what steps the Dominion of Canada was taking. He remembered the great sensation caused in England when he was there in 1888 by the fact that the Government of Canada had sent an invitation to every agricultural society in Great Britain to send two farmers to Canada to inspect their land and see the conditions of living. People then, for the first time, realised that there must be some fine agricultural land in the country, and naturally the question was felt to be of great importance and interest by the various agricultural societies throughout the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. Every care was taken by those agricultural societies to select two practical farmers from each society, and

within a short time of the issuing of the invitation a large contingent of farmers was sent from Great Britain and Ireland to Canada to inspect the agricultural districts there. The Dominion of Canada entertained them, and they were treated as guests of that country. All they were asked to do was to inspect the land there and to go back to Great Britain and tell the truth, and nothing but the truth, in regard to the agricultural industry of Canada. Those farmers went there and returned, and no doubt they were thoroughly satisfied; and they gave the expression of their views to the various newspapers throughout Great Britain, calling attention to the fact of what fine land it was in Canada, and warmly recommending the people of Great Britain, particularly the young people, to go and settle in Canada. That had a great effect, and the result was that the attention of Great Britain, and not only of Great Britain but other European countries, was called to the fact that Canada was a ripe field and a splendid field for immigration. A steady stream of emigrants started from Europe towards Canada. Hundreds of thousands of people left Europe for the dominion, and it was owing in a great measure to that invitation extended to farmers of Great Britain and Ireland to go over and visit Canada. The last time he (Mr. Foulkes) visited England was in 1900. He had occasion then to see the farther steps taken by the Canadian Government, with a view to setting the advantages of their agricultural districts before the people of Great Britain. Instead of asking the people of Great Britain to go over to Canada to visit them, they sent a great number of farmers from Canada to visit Great Britain and Ireland, and he could remember very well attending a market in the West of England where he saw three or four Canadian farmers, who attended that fair with a view of giving information to the various agriculturists who were also attending the fair. And he remembered as well as possible seeing a large crowd of farmers asking those Canadian farmers for information with regard to agriculture and their experiences in Canada. A great number of Canadian farmers was sent throughout the whole of Great Britain and Ireland to give information

and to tell farmers what to expect in Canada. We could understand how forcibly that was brought forward, and how wise the Canadian Government were to take these steps to induce people to settle in Canada. It was again brought clearly to his mind how negligent we were in this country in our treatment of the subject. Here we did practically nothing whatever. We saw a small sum set down in our Estimates year after year; perhaps £500 put down for advertising in various newspapers. He believed that we spent something like £100 in a paper called *Tit-Bits*.

MR. GREGORY: It was said that was the best advertisement of the lot.

MR. FOULKES: But what was it, after all—these few steps taken to advertise in the papers? People were not satisfied with newspaper advertisements. They wanted to see face to face persons who could give information. We could not rely altogether on newspaper advertisements. Newspaper advertisements did not give sufficient information. He would like this Government, or whatever Government was in power, to take exactly the same steps as the Canadian Government. He would like to see a lot of farmers sent from here to tell the people of Great Britain what kind of a country we had here. No doubt this would take some money, but let us not be afraid of that.

MR. MORAN: If we were not prepared to spend money on it, better not start.

MR. FOULKES: It was useless to trifle with the subject. It was no good to think we could carry out a big scheme of this kind unless we were prepared to spend money. He (Mr. Foulkes) read the speech of the member for West Perth, who said the right thing when he stated that he would be prepared to see the Government spend £100,000. One was quite in accord with that proposition, and £100,000 was indeed a mere bagatelle on a question of this kind. He would not object even if we spent it for the next ten years, and no doubt the investigation would pay us handsomely. A calculation was made some years ago, before federation took place, pointing out what it meant as regarded commercial value, and it was estimated that each immigrant who came to this State would be worth £8 per annum. Looking at it from that

aspect, we could see how much benefit the system would be to this country. He had the good fortune to travel not only in Great Britain and Ireland, but also in other European States, and he knew from experience something about how agriculture was carried on there. He knew the hard lives led by a great number of the agriculturists in those European countries, and it only required information to be given to these people to tempt them to come out here. He was speaking now more particularly of Germany. He knew something of how agriculture was carried on in that country, and also in the north of Italy. Those people would make splendid colonists for this State. But there was one thing which had to be taken into account, that being that we still had Canada to compete against with those people, and Canada had in its favour the fact that it cost very little indeed for people to pay their passage money from Europe to Canada as against the passage money required for Western Australia. The passage money to Western Australia was a much greater sum, and he was prepared—and it would pay us handsomely, although he dared say some people would think it was going to too great an extreme—for the Government to tell practical agriculturists that we would see that they had no more to pay for their passage to Western Australia than they would have to pay to go to Canada.

MR. MORAN: Hear, hear. That ought to be the best test, too.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.  
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. FOULKES (continuing): The Government should without delay appoint a large number of practical lecturers to disseminate in Great Britain, Ireland, and European agricultural countries like Germany, Austria, Norway, and Sweden, information as to our lands. In our present Agent General we had great confidence, he having been for some time leader of this House; and we relied on him to do his utmost to encourage immigration. But unless he was armed with sufficient funds and a proper staff, his efforts would be in vain. Moreover, it was necessary not only to advertise, but to prepare the ground for immigrants,

who should not be dumped suddenly on our lands without being given all possible assistance to make a living. About three years ago Dr. Jameson, then Minister for Lands, said he had had a proposal by a gentleman from Sweden, who promised, if appointed by the Government to lecture in that country, to induce a large number of his countrymen to come to this State. But the Minister had no suitable land on which he could immediately put such immigrants so that they might make a livelihood within a reasonable time after arrival. Great obstacles were placed in the way of even those long resident in the country, if they tried to take up land. They had to wait several months before their applications were approved. In April last a man applied for a piece of land in the Great Southern district; and his application was not yet approved. It was the duty of the Government to see that applications were more promptly dealt with. We could not expect people to sit down quietly eating up their small capital waiting for their applications to be decided. When a man applied for land he should be informed at least within a week of the fate of his application. The Government should set aside a large area of land for immigrants; and to improve their lands every possible assistance should be given them. Considering the general impression that the Labour party turned a cold shoulder to immigration schemes of the kind suggested, he (Mr. Foulkes) heartily welcomed the Premier's disclaimer. The desire was to promote the immigration of agriculturists. We had already a fair number of artisans; and their undue increase was not desirable, for it would add to the ranks of the unemployed. But the small population of Australia was a source of great danger. Hostile nations were not far distant; and in a few years one of them might attack us. Only a few months ago it was cabled that Russia offered to give Japan a free hand with regard to Australia, if Japan would allow Russia to do as she liked with China. The independence of Australia would not be worth a week's purchase but for the protection afforded by the mother country, which protection was given practically free of charge, the small contribution of Australia being a mere fleabite com-

pared with Britain's share of the expenditure. From a section of the Press and from the Labour party came a continual cry for better encouragement to our manufactures. But however high the duties we might impose to protect our own industries, those duties would be of little value without a consuming population in this country. Therefore, if it were desired to encourage manufactures, encourage the increase of an agricultural population. The Government should create some kind of department to control immigration. Apparently this matter was not now within the province of any particular Minister, except perhaps the Colonial Secretary; and the small fund placed at his disposal made it impossible for him to take any active steps. The Government should appoint a committee or advisory board of say ten capable men likely to take an interest in the subject. The board would be continuous; and then its recommendations would perhaps have greater weight than those of a politician. If one Government went out to-day, the board would still exist and could impress its views on the incoming Government. He hoped the Government would not allow the question to be neglected. Let such a board be at once appointed; and on the Supplementary Estimates place £25,000 at the disposal of the Colonial Secretary. He felt certain that even if they exceeded the sum, the next Parliament would condone the increased expenditure. He hoped the Government would give their utmost attention to the matter.

MR. McLARTY approved of the proposal to introduce immigrants. The sum of £100,000 judiciously spent would not be too much. Nearly every speaker had made reference to Canada, and the member for Northam had previously said that he had been told by a gentleman from Canada that Australia was altogether superior to Canada for wheat growing. He (Mr. McLarty) had been through Canada a few years ago and, though a patriotic Australian, he did not think there was any comparison between Australia and Canada. Everything was to the advantage of Canada. The immigrant was whirled 800 miles up the country and put on the land. If we took an immigrant 300 miles inland in Australia we should place him perhaps on

good soil, but in a district where there was no rainfall. It was the reverse in Canada. There they had rivers navigable from their mouth to a great distance inland; they had broad lakes, and no droughts, and the lakes and rivers teemed with fish, and there was plenty of game. Of course the land was covered with snow for five months of the year, but the Canadian enjoyed himself, and while snow was on the ground his crops were growing. He (Mr. McLarty) had seen in Canada farms of 5,000 acres yielding 46 bushels to the acre.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The average was very much lower.

MR. McLARTY: In some cases the average was very high. In Manitoba out of 15,000,000 acres of good land only 3,000,000 acres were worked. Immigrants were pouring into the country, while 20,000 farmers had crossed over from the United States in two years. The Canadian Government were getting quite concerned at this influx from the United States, because they thought it would affect the voting power. Capitalists were buying up the land fast. It was simply the products of the soil that had sent the place ahead. In Winnipeg they were giving 37s. 6d. a day to carpenters; but of course these did not work in winter. The whole country seemed to be prosperous. Here in West Australia we complained of a few free passes given to people looking for land. In Canada settlers were taken over the railways wholesale. The railways of course were owned by private capitalists who had their own steamers. They took immigrants over cheaply, ran them up the country, and did not charge them railway fares. There was every convenience on the railways. There were elevators along the lines. In fact the lines were so blocked when he (Mr. McLarty) was in Canada that they could not get the wheat away. In the circumstances we could not compare Canada with Australia. We had droughts here; and not only that, Canada was so much nearer to the old country. Even if we grew wheat here for export, look at the freight. We must consider these disadvantages on a question of bringing immigrants here. There seemed to be an impression that the people in England knew nothing of Australia; but the English people knew a

good deal about us. He found people in England, wherever he went, who had been to Australia, and they knew a lot about it. At one place in Scotland a returned Queenslander had been giving a lecture endeavouring to induce immigrants to go to Queensland. One hard-headed old man began to cross-examine the lecturer, and asked if there had been droughts in Queensland, and if cattle had not been dying by thousands, and if the country had not been dried up like a brick. The lecturer had to admit it, and the old man said that instead of it being a good country, it was a rather warmer climate than he wanted. He (Mr. McLarty) desired to show that Australia as a whole could not be compared with Canada. In one respect Australia had the advantage over Canada, for in Canada people could not keep much stock. A man with 2,000 sheep was considered a great stock owner. In the cold seasons Canadians had to keep stock in sheds, so that they had to depend more on wheat-growing than on stock-raising.

MR. NEEDHAM did not desire this vote on the Estimates to be passed by without recording his opinion. Though there was an increase of £1,078 for the London Agency, he considered that the sum provided was not at all proportionate to the work we expected from the London office, nor to the good the country expected to derive from it. It was stated that the vast resources of the country had been kept prominently before the people of Great Britain; but speaking from personal experience, he knew that West Australia was scarcely known. He spoke of a big district in the west of Scotland. If anyone there desired to emigrate to West Australia, he had to go to considerable trouble to find any useful information to help him to come to a conclusion as to whether he should go to West Australia or to any other part of Australia. If there were a vigorous system of advertising in vogue, these people would not be put to any trouble or expense. No doubt it would cost the State more to do this, but the results would amply justify the expenditure. Our mineral resources were well advertised, but the gold yield was simply transitory; and if we desired to build up a successful State, it must be through the land. The success of any country



depended upon the land settlement, and this feature of the question had been shirked too long. The London Agency was blamed for not having advertised the State sufficiently well, but the Agent General had never had a sufficient amount of money allowed him. If we desired to put before the people of the old world the possibilities of Western Australia and our vast resources, both agricultural and pastoral, leaving aside for the moment the mineral resources, we must spend a greater sum in the future. Although he agreed with the necessity of farther advertising our State and its possibilities and resources, and although he agreed with the necessity of inviting to our shores desirable people, he considered the immigrants should be confined as far as possible to people who would immediately settle on the land. He did not wish to encourage all sorts and sizes of people. That would be disastrous. He was against an indiscriminate influx of people, and was desirous of seeing people come to the country who would immediately tackle and settle on the land. It was an imperative duty to give them every encouragement. He sincerely hoped this would be done. A certain amount of money would have to be expended, but he could not say what that would be. The beneficial results would certainly justify the expenditure. Mention was made of Canada and of the amount of money Canada expended in inviting people to her shores; but Canada was more easily reached from Great Britain than Australia. People desiring to emigrate looked at the distance they had to go; and considering the disparity in the distance, and the cost of passages, Canada had a great advantage over Australia. People in Great Britain who considered the advisability of going to Australia, and especially to Western Australia, were considered bereft of their senses. In justice to the London Agency and in justice to the Agent General, it was absolutely imperative in the near future to increase this vote, and the sooner we faced the question the better. If we did, we would get to our shores people not only willing and ready to settle on our lands, but able to give us the benefits of the vast territory at our disposal.

MR. WATTS, as one of the first to do practical work in endeavouring to

induce settlers from other lands to come to Western Australia for the purpose of settling on our agricultural lands, congratulated the leader of the Government on his speech. It was only a natural corollary to the advent of a Labour Government that they should attempt to induce agricultural settlement. He was pleased the leader of the Government had announced his intentions in this respect.

MR. GREGORY: That was why provision was not made on the Estimates.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member did not make much provision when on the Government benches.

MR. WATTS: There was a great deal to be done before we could bring settlers here from the old land, and before lecturers were engaged in the work of inducing people to come to the State. The London Agency was in a most advantageous position to induce men of small means in all branches of agriculture and horticulture to come here. For that reason the Government should be able to do solid work in introducing settlers. Provision should be made for permanently settling men of small means on the land. If we were to induce men of small means at the present time to come here, it would be found that many would get away from the land again; therefore it was the imperative duty of the Government to go thoroughly into the question of land settlement and arrive at some conclusion to enable the House to deal in a satisfactory manner with the settlement of men of small means. Our present condition would not be conducive to settling men of experience with small capital on the soil.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member would be more in order in introducing that question on the Loan Estimates. Practically the whole of the discussion had been wide of the item. Members should confine their remarks to the question of immigration, and if there was anything to be said in regard to land settlement that should be dealt with under the proper heading.

MR. WATTS: This was a part of the question of immigration.

THE CHAIRMAN: Almost anything under the sun could be brought in under the question of immigration by a slender thread. Almost every item on the Estimates could be brought in under that

heading. The discussion should be strictly confined to immigration. Really the whole discussion should come under the item of immigration.

MR. GREGORY: There was a special vote dealing with immigration.

MR. MORAN: Why stop a discussion at an interesting stage?

MR. WATTS was dealing with a subject that had already been discussed at some length. There should be some scheme laid before the Committee for inducing men of small means to settle on the land. There should be some definite proposal advanced which would enable the Government to offer inducements for men to come here. As far as Canada was concerned, although that country had large tracts of land which were held out to settlers as an inducement, we had perhaps as large an extent of agricultural land as could be got in convenient districts in Canada. There was not the slightest doubt that we had millions of acres of land available to settlers who would be able to open up many new industries. People from the old lands with a knowledge of the industries of fruit-growing, cane and cotton-growing, should be induced to come here and settle permanently. The central office at home was in a position to lay before the people the natural facilities of Western Australia. The settlement of agriculturists would tend to increase the growth of all other trades and industries. As one of the Labour party, he thought it was the duty of the Government to settle agricultural immigrants on the land as far as possible. It was to be hoped the Premier would give this question every consideration. At present there were men with small capital in the country who had a knowledge of agricultural work, but they could not go on the land under the present conditions. New legislation should be brought forward to make it possible for these settlers to take up land.

DR. ELLIS: Although a member for the goldfields and one who held that a large sum of money should be expended in developing the gold-mining industry, he still held that agricultural development was almost equally important with the gold-mining industry. It was advisable for the Premier and members to consider an increase in the funds at the disposal of the Agent General, so

that agricultural immigrants could be brought into the State. We did not want more immigrants of the class of which we already had too many; but we had an unlimited area of land, so fruitful compared with the rest of Australia that it was advisable that we should do all we possibly could to increase the number of desirable people coming here. Instead of there being a flow of population from the old country to this State, the flow was the other way. During the last nine months nearly 300 more persons left the State for the old country than came from the old country to this State. We held an exceptionally good position in regard to the value of our land. The average value of our land per acre cultivated in Western Australia was £3 15s., whilst in New South Wales it was £2 7s.; in Victoria, £2 5s.; in South Australia, £1 6s., and the average of the Commonwealth was £2 7s. These were recent statistics taken from Coghlan. A good deal had been said about Canada having a very high wheat yield. The average yield for this State for the past ten years was 10½ bushels per acre.

MR. BURGESS: It was 14 bushels last season.

DR. ELLIS: Yes; but one had to take the average for a number of years. Last season's average in New South Wales was 19 bushels to the acre.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in dealing with these matters under this vote.

DR. ELLIS: These questions had come up, and they were matters that the Agent General should bring under the notice of the people in England.

THE CHAIRMAN: If these matters had come up, they had not come under his notice.

DR. ELLIS: The average wheat yield—

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in discussing these matters on the vote under consideration.

DR. ELLIS wished to show why we should encourage immigration and why this State was the best in Australia, except Queensland, from an agricultural point of view. He desired to show that the yield per acre in this country was greater than in any other part of Australia: therefore it was reasonable that emigration should be induced from the old lands.

**THE CHAIRMAN :** These matters had not come under his notice, and the hon. member was not in order in discussing the question under the vote.

**DR. ELLIS :** These were reasons why we were in a better position to go in for immigration than any State in Australia. We offered to those who came here greater facilities, a better class of land, a more remunerative class of land, and it was essential that these facts should be brought before the English people. Except Queensland, we had the best wheat productive country in Australia. He did not take into consideration New Zealand and Tasmania. Our wheat yield was 10 bushels per acre compared with 8-46 bushels for the rest of Australia. The wheat yield in Canada was only 18 bushels per acre, against 14 bushels last year in this State. The United States only had 13 bushels per acre; therefore these countries had not such a great advantage over Western Australia. It was true these countries had better means of transit, but it was a matter that should certainly come under the notice of the Agent General how to facilitate the transport of our wheat, of which after next year, in the ordinary law of increase, we would have a quantity for export.

**MR. WATTS :** Ocean freights were not higher here.

**DR. ELLIS :** That was a question he did not know much about, but it was a matter for the consideration of the Agent General. The whole of these points should be put carefully before the people in the old country. The same held in oats as it did in wheat. We were getting £2 13s. per acre for oats, while New South Wales and Victoria only got £2, and the average for Australia was only £2 3s.; consequently we were much better off than the other States. One observation of the member for West Perth had appealed to him very much, that being the enormous increase of our railways in regard to population. The railways now stood at a mile to every 142 of the population, and that was very high when we knew that the average for the Commonwealth was 289 to the mile; consequently we were half the average of the Commonwealth, and if we intended to maintain that position, if we intended to give to the man who lent us money

adequate security, it was necessary that we should have a population scattered through this land from one end to the other. There was no way which would appeal more satisfactorily than by letting the Agent General make arrangements for lectures through the old country as to how exceptionally good this country was from an agricultural point of view. Recent developments on the land had to a very large extent removed certain prejudices which he personally had had on the land question. When he first came here the average yield was only about seven bushels to the acre, and that was so for three or four consecutive years; but the recent rise had altered the whole view with regard to settling the land. Five or six years ago the question of bringing the matter under the notice of the English public might have been one of doubt, but now with the increased wheat yield, the increased fertility of the soil, the increased capacity and knowledge in dealing with it, the matter became a proper one for advertising and for the expenditure of money. It was no good to tinker with the question. We must spend money properly, if at all. The suggestion of the member for Claremont was a matter for consideration, whether it would be advisable to appoint from this House a more or less permanent body to keep before them the constant information about immigration. At present the amount of information available to the House, if we really wanted it, was comparatively small. There was very little definite knowledge of the whole position, even if we asked ourselves. If that was so, how much less knowledge must there be where the information had to be sought for without the same opportunities. It might be very advisable to have a board appointed to say how much money would be wanted for a reasonable immigration scheme, how much would be annually required, and what would be the probable advantage to this State of adopting such a system. For that purpose it was necessary that the Agent General should be informed of the trend of public opinion out here. It was necessary that funds should be put at his disposal, and for the State, and the House to have the requisite information as to the advantages we should derive from increasing the popula-

tion here. The increase of the population was going to be in the near future not only a Commonwealth question, but one might say an international question. As the great question of settling the Russo-Japanese war came along, the subject of increased population assumed great and menacing importance, and it was absolutely necessary that within the next 10 or 15 years, if we wished to see Australia in an adequate position of protection, we should increase materially the amount of population, especially along the seaboard, and bring Australia into a sufficiently powerful position to at least hold her own should she be attacked and should difficulties arise in the near Orient.

MR. T. HAYWARD: For some time he had taken great interest in this question of immigration, and speaking on it in the early part of last session, when he had not long returned from the old country, he gave it as his opinion that it would be almost impossible to get farm labourers from England to come here, for the simple reason that there was a scarcity of agricultural labourers in England, and that they were not available. He had been in correspondence with a number of farmers since then, and his opinion had not been altered in the slightest degree. He had an extract which he would read, and which he thought illustrated pretty well what he had stated. This appeared in July last:—

The length of time that has been occupied in gathering the hay crop is indicative of two things. It signifies in the first place that the crop is a big one and heavy to handle, and in the second that the staff of workers is not competent to deal with it in the time usually assigned to the operation. Without a doubt the yield is a weighty one in the great majority of cases, and, what is more, the quality is of the best description. Under any circumstances the making and carting of so bulky a crop would have been a heavy undertaking, especially since the area under hay is, owing to the productive character of the season, and the comparative scarcity of grazing stock, probably above normal. In modern conditions when labourers are few, and not of the best description, the work, of course, is doubly arduous. Most farmers have in some degree replaced the missing hands by modern mechanical contrivances, and, as a rule, with economic advantage, but even the best appliances in the market require a certain number of hands to work them, and moreover, their capabilities are limited in overtaking an

abnormal amount of work in a given time. A very few hands can accomplish wonders in the way of harvesting crops with these labour saving contrivances in the course of several weeks, but time is an essential factor in the success of this system of farming. The ingenious implements and machines that are at the disposal of farmers nowadays, are of the utmost importance to them—indeed, they may be regarded as practically indispensable—but the loss of the day workers cannot be altogether atoned for when a rush of work has to be attended to.

This was an extract from the *Field*, one of the leading agricultural papers in England, and he thought it put the matter plainly before us. There was, in his opinion, more probability of getting small farmers; especially would there have been last year. The last harvest in England was one of the worst ever known, consequently a very large number, especially of small farmers, had been ruined. Had there been an effort made at that time, there would, he thought, have been a better chance of success than there was at the present time. His opinion was, and he had expressed it before, that if we were to get population that would go upon the land, which he would like to see, we should have to go to the Continent of Europe. That, in his opinion, was our only chance of getting the sort of men we wanted. As the member for Katanning said the other night, a large proportion of emigrants who went to Canada were not from the soil, but were mostly people from the different towns. He (Mr. Hayward) had a friend in England who took great interest in this question, and who mixed a great deal with farmers in the northern part of England and in the eastern counties. He had asked that friend to communicate with the Agent General and give him all the information he could. He was sure his friend would give the Agent General some very valuable information. He sincerely hoped the Government would provide a sum of money for the carrying out of this important work, and he was sure that in our Agent General we had a man who would do his very utmost in regard to this State.

MR. BOLTON: In dealing with this vote many members would appreciate the remarks which fell from the Premier when speaking on immigration in connection with the London Agency vote. It was somewhat strange how it had got

into the minds of members that the Labour party were opposed to immigration. He could not understand how it was; yet the member for Claremont explained that it was in his mind that the Labour party discouraged immigration, and the hon. member said, after he had heard the speech of the Premier, that he was very glad to say that speech had disabused his mind. The peculiarity was that shortly we should have the same thing coming from the hon. member, that he had thought the Labour party had discouraged immigration, and that he was very glad to hear it had not. He (Mr. Bolton) was entirely in favour of immigration without limiting the number, providing it was for settlement on the land, because he believed that would advance this country more than anything else could do. He agreed with the member for Claremont that when immigrants of that class arrived here they should be looked after in a proper way. Each speaker told us some way in which a fairly substantial sum of money could be spent with advantage. Some urged that money could be spent by the London Agency, and some that it need not be spent directly in connection with the London Agency. If he remembered the Premier's words correctly, the hon. member said he wanted to get the feeling of the Committee as to whether a fairly substantial sum should be used for the purpose of immigration. Every member who had spoken had decided in favour of a vast increase of the vote as prepared on the Estimates. He was sure it must be encouraging to the Premier to see that the Committee dealt with the question in such a way. Each member seemed to suggest a different way. He (Mr. Bolton) thought one of the best ways to use a substantial sum of money, which he believed it to be the duty of the Committee to say in no uncertain terms should be set apart for the object of immigration, would be to place a fairly good amount in the hands of our Agent General. Mr. Walter James must be acknowledged as one of the greatest patriots this State had ever produced. One saw no reason why the passage money should not be reduced to the same figure as it would cost people to go to Canada, and, as he had stated, he agreed with the member for Claremont that when immigrants arrived here

something should be done for them. The member for Menzies interjected, "Is that why you place such a sum on the Estimates for this immigration?" It was only such a discussion as the Committee had had on this vote that led the Government to understand that it was the wish of the Committee to increase that vote, and he believed that if ever an item on the Estimates should be discussed fully by members it was this vote of the London Agency.

MR. KEYSER: Apparently the question had advanced to this stage, that it would be wise to attract population. The question now was one of means, and in order to bring population here we required money. The member for West Perth said we ought to spend at least £100,000 per annum in attracting population. At the present time we were anticipating in revenue a deficit of no less than £52,000, and if the hon. member's suggestion were carried it would mean a deficit of £152,000. Either the money must come out of general revenue or loan money. Did the hon. member argue that either we should increase our revenue or raise a special loan for the purpose?

MR. MORAN: Let us increase the population and decrease the deficit.

MR. KEYSER: Money required could only come out of revenue under our present system of taxation or out of loan money. The question which presented itself to him was that in order to raise money to attract people here, we must have fresh taxation. He favoured an unimproved land tax and an income tax, which taxes were perfectly justified if they would induce immigration from Europe. One of the reasons why we were unable to cope with Canada was that the passenger fare to Canada was now £2 10s. as against a fare to Australia of £16. A family of seven could go from Britain to Canada for £17 10s.; but their fares to Australia would total £112.

MR. MORAN: No. A family of 10 could come for £50 in a German steamer.

MR. KEYSER: That was not in accordance with the quotations by steamship companies. Even with the assistance given by the Government to-day, a family of seven could not come to Australia for less than £62. Moreover, when immi-

grants arrived here, how were they to settle on the land? The Government ought to ringbark and clear the land in order that settlers might proceed with its immediate development. Even our present residents who might wish to take up land were met with the insuperable difficulty that their means would not permit of ringbarking and clearing. How much more must this difficulty hamper immigrants from Europe, whose whole capital would be swallowed up in reaching Australia. While strongly favouring expenditure to attract population, he must ask, where was the money to come from? Would the member for West Perth float a loan for the purpose?

MR. MORAN: Yes. There was no more reproductive work in the world.

MR. KEYSER was almost inclined to follow the hon. member, unless the House agreed to fresh taxation; for certainly general revenue would not stand the expense. None who favoured immigration had yet suggested any scheme for raising the money. He suggested fresh taxation—a land and income tax.

MR. NELSON: A protest must be entered against what seemed a somewhat indiscriminate eulogy of immigration. The other side of the question should be heard. The member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis) said one reason for an immigration policy was that without a large population we could not successfully resist possible Japanese encroachment. But by the hon. member's argument, to make that resistance effective we must within a few years increase our population 10 or 20 millions. [DR. ELLIS: No.] Did the member mean it would be sufficient to increase our population by the number likely to be attracted by the schemes now suggested? If population was our only protection, we were not likely to be protected; for we could not sufficiently increase our population to enable us to fight Japan. One member said we should encourage immigration without limit, provided we settled the immigrants on the land. Surely there must be some reasonable limit. In every country there was always a favourable ratio between population and the industrial possibilities of the country. It was possible to have too large as well as too small a population. Australia had now four millions of

people; but had they been dumped down in Australia 50 years ago, most would have died of starvation. Population, to be a benefit and not a curse, must increase at a healthy and normal rate. And even admitting that some kind of immigration was necessary, we must be careful that it be carried out with judgment, and with rational limitations. Queensland from 1886 till 1892 pursued an immigration policy. The "Quetta" and other large vessels emptied out loads of immigrants from the old country. These were imported on the distinct understanding that they should go on the land. As a rule they came as agricultural labourers; but when they found that the remuneration for agricultural work was small, and that, at any rate in those boom days, the pay in the towns was higher, instead of settling on the land they went into the towns; and largely in consequence of that indiscriminate immigration, there was in 1892 and 1893 a great commercial and industrial disaster from which Queensland had not to this day recovered.

MR. MORAN: It was the floods and the droughts that hurt Queensland. Queensland could support as many million people as she now had thousands.

MR. NELSON: No. It was marvellous to note how slightly those floods hurt Queensland. In considering a country's capacity for sustaining population, we must consider its floods and droughts.

MR. MORAN: Neither of which we need fear in this State.

MR. NELSON: If money were indiscriminately spent in bringing men to a country which had its good and its bad seasons, then during a drought, instead of hundreds of hungry mouths to feed, there would be thousands.

DR. ELLIS: No drought had ever been known in this State.

MR. NELSON: As highly as anyone he appreciated the agricultural possibilities of this country; but these did not justify indiscriminate immigration, and at a time like this it was doubtful whether they justified any immigration.

MR. WATTS: How could there be too many people on the land?

MR. NELSON: The deepest misery, the most squalid poverty, the most degrading surroundings he had ever seen, were in the agricultural districts of Queensland, where poor men without

capital had been induced to settle on land which could not adequately remunerate them.

MR. MORAN : Surely a libel on Queensland.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : In what part of Queensland was this ?

MR. NELSON : In the Musgrave district, and about Rockhampton.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY : That was very poor agricultural country.

MR. NELSON : Precisely. The good agricultural country was taken up previously, and the immigrants got the inferior. By an elementary economic principle, if one grew a potato near a railway line, with an infinitesimal cost in labour, and put it on the market, it would bring as good a price as a potato produced in the wild west at a cost of hundreds of pounds. That was a simple illustration. He had due regard to the intellectual limitations of some of the interjectors. What determined profitable agriculture was not the value of the land or regular seasons, but the possibilities of a permanent and growing market. An old friend of his took up land about ten miles from Brisbane, and cultivated pineapples and oranges and that sort of thing which he carted into Brisbane and did very well out of. Unfortunately for his friend, other people found out that they could do this, and the result was that so many people went into the thing because it paid well that through the competition prices fell so low that it did not pay his friend to cart the fruit into town.

MR. MORAN : It was the same all over the world.

MR. NELSON : Yes. Unless one could guarantee a good market and cheap means of getting produce to market and that the man with capital could find better remuneration for his capital by coming here than by going to Canada or other agricultural countries, the wise agriculturist would simply laugh at us. The member for Murray truly pointed out that people went to Canada, not because we did not spend sufficient money on advertising ourselves, but because of Canada's magnificent agricultural resources, her nearness to the market, the absence of droughts and her close proximity to the United States ; thousands of agriculturists from the United States having been attracted there. If we spent

all our revenue in bolstering up our agricultural resources, the wise farmer in England and elsewhere would put his finger to his nose and go to Canada. One admired the patriotism of the member for Northam, but deplored his ignorance. One was sorry the member for North Fremantle seemed to repudiate the doctrine that as workers we should wisely watch any policy of immigration. No step was more important to the well-being of this community. He (Mr. Nelson) did not believe that in a matter of this kind the great consideration was quantity. The great consideration was quality. He would rather live in a community with two or three hundred thousand people living healthy, free, and independent lives, than in the dense populous cities of the older land. Bigness was not greatness, and the House would pardon him for this unconscious piece of egotism. There was folly in advocating indiscriminate immigration. The member for North Fremantle said we wanted immigration without limitation, and another member said we wanted it to fight Japan when Japan came along. He (Mr. Nelson) once saw a splendid cartoon in the *Sydney Bulletin*. An old man was lying on the couch evidently dying. By the side of the couch stood the wife. The doctor who had just arrived said, "How did he come to be like this?" "Well," said the lady, "he was reading a story: the hero of the story was a man who came out to Australia and made a fortune out of farming. When he read that he started laughing, his laughing grew louder; and then he went into fits, the fits followed one after the other, and there he is at his last kick."

MR. WATTS : A few had done well out of farming in Australia.

MR. NELSON : Yes ; but Victoria had concentrated her energy and intelligence in developing her agricultural policy. She used to boast of her remarkable agricultural resources that were undoubtedly good ; but as a matter of fact, to-day the population of Victoria was the only population in the States of the Commonwealth that was going back.

MR. MORAN : Had agriculture anything to do with Victoria going back ? As a matter of fact agriculture had saved her.

MR. NELSON: Having succeeded in refuting some of the absurd fallacies advanced, he would point out the danger to the workers. We would not get many small farmers with capital to come here. He was quite willing to support the expenditure of money to try and get them, and would have no objection to any man coming here with some capital if he went on the land; but on the whole he thought that the clever man with capital would go somewhere else, because, while Western Australia was a great pastoral and gold-mining country, it was not a great agricultural country.

MR. MORAN: That remained to be seen.

MR. NELSON: Yes; but one had only to study geography to see it. These matters were determined by comparison. We had some splendid land; but unfortunately, other countries had better land and were nearer to the world's markets. These were facts, and the man who ignored such facts was incapable of forming an intelligent opinion on such issues. Whilst the small farmer ought to be welcomed here, he (Mr. Nelson) did not think he would come, because that small farmer was not stupid. The small farmers who were likely to come here and be most successful would not be the small farmers from England, who would have to come in contact with circumstances and conditions entirely different from what they were accustomed to. The small farmers who should come here would be those from the Eastern States, who would get better land here than they succeeded in getting in the other States. There was danger to the workers of this community. If we desired to bring people in large numbers, in all probability we would bring in the agricultural labourer. One gentleman said we could not get the agricultural labourer. In fact there were few agricultural labourers in England now. The great attractions of Canada not only took those men from us but also from England. If we brought those men from England and put them on the land, there was no guarantee that they would remain on the land. The ordinary sensible human being brought out to be an agricultural labourer even by a Labour Government, would make the discovery that if he remained an agricultural

labourer he would earn about £1 a week, and that if he went to the goldfields he would have a chance of earning £3 or £4 a week.

MR. WATTS: The hon. member should not make that mistake.

MR. NELSON: The result would be that the men would go to the fields and compete with the wage-earners already there, which would tend to bring down wages.

MR. BURGESS: Oh!

MR. NELSON: The hon. member regarded that as a subordinate consideration, but it was a supreme consideration.

MR. BURGESS: It would create more work.

MR. NELSON favoured less work and more wages. The end of our civilisation was to get the greatest possible return of all the good things of life with the least possible expenditure of energy.

MR. WATTS: Was that why the hon. member came to Parliament?

MR. NELSON admitted having expended a considerable amount of energy.

MR. WATTS: Wasted.

MR. NELSON: Considering the capacity of some of his auditors, no doubt the remarks were utterly wasted. He was afraid they were now on the eve of a serious depression.

MR. BURGESS: What was making it?

MR. NELSON was not here to explain the whole mysteries of the universe, but to state facts. He felt we were on the eve of a depression. He had received only the other day a letter from the fields telling him that an exceedingly large number of people were out of employment. One gentleman even blamed him for not solving the unemployed problem, and wanted to know when he was going to do it. He (Mr. Nelson) had written to the effect that he was going to do it on the 15th inst., at 8 o'clock sharp, and told the man that if he had any other little problems, such as the origin of the universe, to wire at once, because he (Mr. Nelson) might as well settle all at once. It would be an exceedingly grave danger to the workers of the State to have at a period of this sort anything like an immigration policy on a drastic scale.

MR. MORAN: What did the hon. member propose to do for the unemployed here?

[MR. QUINLAN took the Chair.]



MR. NELSON favoured doing all he could for the workers. The best thing was to take all sorts of care that nobody came along to take from the workers the small avenues of work that now existed. The hon. member for West Perth put the cart before the horse in wanting population first and prosperity afterwards. He (Mr. Nelson) put the horse before the cart. The hon. member said, "Let us have population and we will have prosperity." He (Mr. Nelson) said, "Let us have prosperity and we will have population." If we adopted the policy which he for one advocated, we should go in for wise public works, for he recognised in a community like this we ought to prepare the way for the developments of the future; we should do development work. He recognised that should be done, but it could not be done without money. The only way he could see of getting money was by a land and income tax, and from that revenue we would carry on a policy of development which would ultimately absorb all our surplus labour and bring real prosperity to the country. We should not start, directly or indirectly, any policy of immigration unless we had an adequate guarantee that our policy would be one to settle men on the land, men who were likely to remain there and who had some capital to enable them to be successful when they got there. We wanted a class of people who would not enter into competition with the workers already in the country, and even now not getting sufficient employment.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The speeches, so far, were at variance with the question which was before the Committee. The debate had drifted before he took the Chair, but while he occupied the Chair he wished the speeches to be confined to the subject before the Committee.

MR. NANSON: Although the debate had so far, strictly speaking, been out of order, he thought the indulgence afforded by the Chair had been welcome to every member who followed the discussion. There were times when we might, with advantage, disregard ordinary considerations of what was or what was not in order, and might address ourselves to those larger questions which struck at the very root of national prosperity. It

would seem a platitude of a flagrant description if he were to say that the question of immigration was a vastly important question; and yet we could not shut our eyes to the fact that, not only in this State to a less degree than in any of the others, but in the Commonwealth as a whole, the position in regard to this vastly important question of population was not one that we could regard without a certain amount of disquietude. The Premier mentioned in the Budget Speech the significant fact that during a series of years, coincident with the discovery of gold in Western Australia—a discovery that brought this country into the position of being the largest gold-producing country in the British Empire—the departures from Australia actually exceeded the introductions. In now peating that fact, he termed it a significant fact, because if we looked back to an earlier period in the history of Australia, to the period of the Victorian gold discoveries, when it was a very much more difficult matter to reach these shores than to-day—when the great bulk of the population came here by sailing ship after a voyage extending over something like 80 to 120 days—we found that at that time the gold discoveries in Victoria were sufficient to attract to Australia a very considerable, in fact enormous population as contrasted with the utter lack of immigration at present. We might have thought that the gold discoveries which, he had said, brought this country into the position of being the greatest gold-producer in the British Empire, would have had the result of attracting a large population from outside Australia. But what did we find? Although at the time of the introduction of responsible government, coincident with the gold discoveries, our population was about 40,000, and to-day it was considerably in excess of 200,000, practically the whole of that population had come from the Eastern States. Our increase of population had not therefore been the advantage to Australia that it would have been if the population had been brought from outside, and represented an increase from the old world. We found during that period, as the Premier mentioned, the departures from Australia showed a decrease of several thousands compared with arrivals. And farther, in Western

Australia, with all its advantages, he was much struck with the fact mentioned by the Premier that during the first eight months of this year, 83 more people left Western Australia to go to the old country than arrived from the old world. This fact brought him to a branch of this question with which he desired to deal briefly and which had already been dealt with to some extent by the member for Hannans—the difficulties we had to face in inducing population to come to our shores. He welcomed the speech made by the member for Hannans, not that he agreed by any means with everything that member said, but because the speech of that member like most of his speeches had invariably the quality of stimulating thought. It occurred to him that the hon. member, unintentionally no doubt, was somewhat unfair with regard to some members who had taken part in the discussion, when he took the view that they had advocated indiscriminate immigration. One supposed there was no member in the House but believed that while we should encourage immigration, we should go about the work with a very great amount of discrimination. The first thing we had to do if we were to persuade people in the mother country and on the continent of Europe that Western Australia or the Commonwealth was an admirable country to live in, was to endeavour to explain to them why it was, during the last 10 years, Australia had been unsuccessful in holding its population, instead of attracting a large amount of population from Europe. The trend, so far as Europe and Australia were concerned, had been in the other direction, and we had lost population instead of gaining it. That was a most momentous problem, and one to which we should direct attention; because the people in England and other European countries did not always discriminate between one Australian State and another; and when they were told, as they had been told, that the population of Australia so far as immigration was concerned was practically a stationary one, they would not discriminate between Western Australia and other parts of the Commonwealth. They would argue, no doubt, in this fashion: “If this is so fine a country to live in, if you have so many inducements to offer, how do you explain

the circumstance that more people left your shores during the last ten years for Europe than have come here.” There could be no question that not merely the Labour party in Australia, but all parties in Australia had to a considerable extent been responsible for the idea that had got abroad in the mother country, that here in Australia we were at infinitely greater pains to keep out undesirable immigrants than to induce desirable ones; a circumstance which might be quoted with varied degrees of exaggeration by the English Press and English speakers; all going to show that the idea that Western Australia and Australia as a whole did not actually desire immigration had taken a firm root in English imagination. That should be our first point of attack. We wanted to show that we welcomed to this country, not merely small capitalists—and we had heard a great deal about the small capitalist—but we wanted to go on the same lines that had made the United States great, that had made Canada great, and that at present was making a country like the Argentine great, and even bringing forward the more backward South American republics. We wanted first to imbue Australian people themselves with that great truth—a somewhat neglected truth, no doubt, but none the less a great truth—that the very best capital that could be given to a new country was that of a man who brought to the country a sound mind in a sound body, and who was willing to labour. It had been his (Mr. Nanson’s) conviction from the time when, in this House on his first entry into Parliament when he lifted an unholy and ineffective voice against the principle of compulsory arbitration as against the right of the individual to make the best bargain in his power, to sell his labour for the highest price obtainable for it, that really to attract a large population we must let it go forth to the world that the same principle that governed Canada, and the same principle which governed the United States, equality of opportunity and the fullest reward for the most able man, must be the bedrock principle governing society in Australia. We could not forget that if we were going to have in Australia and in this particular State a successful immigration, it must be, from the very nature of things, to be

successful an immigration that attracted the most enterprising people in the world, the kind of enterprising man in whom there was a thorough reliance on himself, and who was convinced of his ability to advance his own interests and only asked for the most perfect freedom of action. That was his conviction, unpopular as that belief might possibly be. It was very largely that because in Australia this idea was to a large extent obscured, that we saw the tide of population from the old world going to countries where there were no such restrictions. Another point on which he noticed a good deal of stress had been laid was that care must be taken to see that undesirable persons were not allowed to enter. With that contention he was thoroughly in sympathy, but of course there was room for a difference of opinion as to what might or might not be desirable persons. He could remember when General Booth and the Salvation Army were bringing under public notice in Australia a scheme for raising the submerged tenth, opposition, natural no doubt in many respects and to some extent deserved, was brought against the proposal that we should have introduced into Australia the sweeping of the London slums. There could be no question that the best training for colonists was not the training that was to be obtained in London slums. But what General Booth and the Salvation Army had in their minds at that time was not the idea of sending to Australia wholesale the submerged tenth, but to send out what he (Mr. Nanson) might call the regenerated twentieth. Because we should not forget, and least of all those members whose sympathies went with labour, that a man's position in life was very largely governed by his surroundings and by his opportunities; and that many people in England who seemed wedded to a perpetual poverty were wedded to that poverty not because of qualities adverse to success inherent in themselves, but because they were denied the opportunities that were to be given in a new country like Canada, or even in Australia, despite the shackles which had been put on individual liberty. And we had at present in England a very good exemplification of that fact. He was interested the other day in reading some of the

remarks by a member of the English Labour party, Mr. William Crooks, a member for one of the constituencies in the London Metropolitan area, as to what was being done there by English boards of guardians in relation to people in slums who seemed utterly unable, many of them, to obtain a stable footing in the industrial world. Boards of guardians there had in some districts, at any rate, instead of making the great mistake made in days not so very far distant, of making a workhouse merely a place distasteful where a man could learn nothing, had started the experiment of labour farms in various parts of the country, to which they drafted off men willing to go there and to receive an agricultural training; and he had it on the reputation of Mr. Crooks, who was a member of the board of guardians to which he had been referring, that the experiment had been in many cases successful; that many men who until that opportunity was given were failures in the battle of life, and who were unable to secure a foothold in the industrial world, had even in England, where the competition was so much more severe than here, been able to make a fresh start in life and were doing well. If a social experiment of that kind had succeeded in the old country—and it was on precisely the same lines as the social experiment inaugurated by the Salvation Army and other religious bodies—he could see no reason at all why in Australia, and in Western Australia we should not welcome to our shores that class which he had termed the regenerated twentieth, because these men had first gone through a period of probation. They had been tested and they had shown that, given the opportunity, they were capable of doing good work in the old country; and a man who could do good work in the old country where the competition was severe would, when introduced to the better conditions prevailing here, succeed in making a living for himself and ultimately for those who might become dependent upon him. We had heard a great deal in the course of this debate as to what Canada was doing. He did not wish to go at great length into that aspect of the question, but it might be interesting to remember what Canada was not doing; and Canada, at

any rate, whilst she was just as opposed no doubt as Australia was to introducing undesirable immigrants, wished immigration to be based on broad and generous lines. Her immigration policy and the immigration policy of the United States was based primarily on recognition of the great truth that the actual possession of money was a very small factor so long as a man was willing to work and at the same time had health and strength. Of course we could not lose sight of the fact of Canada, being so very much nearer to England and to Europe than was Australia, could at the very outset offer a bigger inducement to persons who wished to make a start in a new country. Whatever inducement we might offer, even in the way of passage-money, to some extent that objection would remain, because a man who went to Canada from the north of England, where presumably most of the immigrants came from, went there knowing very well that if he had in the course of a year or two leisure to take a holiday, within the space of a month he could go to the old country and back; and therefore when he left for Canada he was only doing what thousands of people in the Eastern States did when they made a journey from Sydney to Western Australia. Recognising that we could never perhaps wholly overcome that difficulty, it should make us all the more determined to meet the handicap which existed by effective measures, and the very first practical step that we must be prepared to take was, it seemed to him, to give a very substantial subsidy to the steamship companies who would bring emigrants out to Western Australia. He did not for a moment suggest that the subsidy for each immigrant should be given entirely without restriction. If we were to give an inducement of that kind, it would have to be administered in the most careful manner possible, and there would have to be thoroughly reliable officers in connection with the business of the Agent General in London, officers conversant with local conditions. Every person who wished to come to Western Australia and avail himself of the cheap passage we offered, would have to be examined and his fitness tested. If we were to turn people away—and we must turn some away, because we did not wish merely the flotsam and jetsam to

come to our shores—at least let us turn them away in the old country. Let us not bring them across the ocean and then point out that they were not the kind of people wanted. He could conceive nothing which had done more harm to Australia than the fact that in some cases persons were brought to Australia, and when about to land had been informed that because of the laws of the country they could not land upon Australian soil. However necessary a restriction of that kind might be, it should as far as possible be avoided, and that could be the case so far as immigration was concerned only if whatever checks we imposed were imposed at the port of embarkation instead of at the port of debarkation. The member for Hannans seemed to indicate that he dreaded an influx of population because it would intensify the unemployed difficulty; and it was impossible not to sympathise with that view to some extent. One could well understand that a man who was going about the streets looking for employment, and possibly unable to find it, would look with anything but a sympathetic eye upon proposals to introduce a large number of people into Australia. But he (Mr. Nanson) very much doubted that we were going to solve the unemployed problem by simply keeping a check on population coming into Australia. We should hear, on the night which the member for Hannans had set apart for himself, how the hon. member proposed to deal with the problem.

MR. BURGESS: That time was past.

MR. NANSON: Perhaps the hon. member would give us another opportunity. But there could be no question that if we took the countries into which population was pouring we found those countries in a more favourable condition than a country like Australia, in which increase by immigration was virtually at a standstill. And if we could see that by keeping population out we were diminishing the unemployed difficulty, no doubt there would be very good reasons for adopting a policy of what seemed to be masterly inactivity; but we did not find that the unemployed difficulty grew less acute in Australia. We did not find that it was less acute to-day than it was 10 years ago. Therefore he asked, what was the remedy we were

to apply? Were we simply to preach a sort of doctrine of hopelessness? Were we to preach that doctrine because we had the unemployed with us; that Australia must permanently condemn herself to be a country capable of supporting only a very small population, when we had evidence on every side that Australia was capable at any rate at the very lowest computation of supporting at least a million more people than she had to-day? If we could bring out to this country any considerable number of people who were prepared to go on the land and would render it more productive, we should immediately be finding employment for a large number of persons in the towns; and the difficulty to which the member for Hannans had referred was due not to the fact that we had too much population here, but to the fact that for several years past we had been narrowing instead of enlarging the avenues of employment. It was a big question to open up, but whether we looked in the State or whether we looked throughout the Commonwealth, we found it equally true that instead of encouraging employment we were lessening the opportunity for giving people work.

MR. NELSON: Our population was increasing rapidly.

MR. NANSON: The population might be increasing by the increase of births, and it would be a deplorable state of things if it were not; but the opening of avenues of employment was not increasing so rapidly as it should increase in a new country like Western Australia. Only the other day we had an instance on the goldfields. A large mine considerably reduced the number of its employees because it got down to low-grade stone which the proprietary declared could not be worked at a profit; and whilst he did not propose to contend that if we had had no rate of wages fixed by law, that mine would necessarily have been kept open, still he thought many of us would feel satisfied in our own minds that there would be more avenues of employment if it were felt that every man who wanted work was at liberty to go to every man willing to give work and make a bargain as to the terms on which he would work. Even in his (Mr. Nanson's) own business he was brought face to face every day with

instances where goods were imported into this State that might easily be produced here. We saw a great readiness on the part of people who had capital to put money into enterprises such as public-houses, theatres, and even racecourses; but did we see an equal readiness in Western Australia to put money into industrial enterprises which would give employment to the people? And yet that was a kind of investment we should encourage—investment which would increase the productive power of capital. Everyone conversant with the employer's view of industrial conditions knew that one reason for hesitating to embark in industrial enterprises was the high cost of labour and the inability to make a bargain with the individual employee. The Premier's remarks to-night and in the Budget Speech also were gratifying; and we might accept them as an assurance that he and the Government looked at this question from a national and not from a party point of view, and duly recognised the issues depending on it. Though he (Mr. Nanson) had, like the member for Hannans, introduced controversial elements to the discussion, he had no idea of attacking the Government or their supporters, but simply of helping discussion and leading to a recognition of the difficulties which beset the immigration problem. Apart from those larger questions, much could be done to stimulate agricultural immigration. Here the Government and the Opposition were on common ground. Much more could be done than had been done to advertise the State. The new Agent General would doubtless ascertain at once whether the fullest use had been made of the literature supplied to the London office, or whether it had been allowed to accumulate in the stores. Whatever might have been the shortcomings of past Governments in this State, there was reason to believe the shortcomings in the Agent General's office had been greater.

THE TREASURER: Apparently the literature had been well used, for the postal expenditure was heavy.

MR. NANSON: Though not at liberty to go fully into the question, he recommended inquiry on that point. It was essential that the country should be advertised by men in touch with local

conditions. Instead of having as permanent officials in the Agent General's office men so long in England that they had lost touch with Australian conditions, we should have men who from time to time renewed their acquaintance with this State. While judicious advertising would do much good, careless advertising would mean great waste. The Government might well imitate the advertising methods of the Chicago and St. Louis Exhibitions, and the great railway and steamship companies in America, where, when it was desired to attract attention to such enterprises, those concerned started what they called a publicity department. Though it would not become him (Mr. Nanson) to recommend gratuitous advertising, these publicity departments had a wonderful knack of getting much matter into English newspapers without paying for it. This was done by employing capable journalists to write readable paragraphs, articles, descriptive letters, and generally good journalistic "copy." This copy was printed in leaflets and distributed by scores of thousands in the countries it was desired to reach. Possibly only one-fiftieth of the matter was actually published; but the fraction published reached a large number of people, and was sure to be read. If we followed that course in advertising our State, and took care that only good, readable copy was prepared, the advertising would be very effective and not enormously expensive. There were other methods of advertising the country; but time would not permit of mentioning them. So long as immigration was suitable it was desirable; for immigration which did not increase the poverty of the country unquestionably increased the revenue, to which every immigrant must be a contributor. The more work done in a country, the greater the increase of its capital. Perhaps the most correct definition of capital was "the surplus production of labour." As to English ignorance of Australia we had heard more than one opinion. The member for Murray (Mr. McLarty) said he found that much of the ignorance had been exaggerated. Doubtless opinions would vary with the class of people whom the inquiring Australian met in the old country. Some years ago, when visiting the north of England, he (Mr.

Nanson) found quite a number of people who, having relatives in Australia, were well informed about the country. But he found large numbers whose recollections of Australia were anything but pleasant; for a short time previously the Melbourne land boom had burst, and a large number of British people had lost every penny they had placed in the Victorian land banks. Hence for one who had a good word for Australia he had met 10 whose opinions were the reverse of flattering. Moreover, many others had invested in certain of our mines which had got into the hands of stock manipulators, who had benefited themselves at the expense of the speculating public. There would always be difficulty in securing the immigration of any great number of small capitalists, if only for the reason that if there was one man now sought after more anxiously than another, it was the small capitalist. Canada and the Argentine Republic would do anything to attract him; and if we were to compete with those countries it was essential to assure the small capitalist that he would be able to get here a regular supply of labour. It was no use saying we wanted none but capitalistic immigrants; because the small capitalist would ask, what would be the use of his capital without labour? and would point out that the effect of a disproportionate immigration of capitalists and the virtual stoppage of labour immigration would be to raise the price of the very commodity which capitalists wished to buy cheaply. If therefore we were to have a successful movement of small capitalists from the old country to cultivate the soil here, we must ensure to them an adequate supply of agricultural labour. From what one could learn from agriculturists now at work here, it was not very easy to obtain a suitable supply of agricultural labour. If so, we must not be content with bringing the small capitalist, but must bring also the men content to work for him. Bring labourers also, and we might have a chance of adding on a small scale to our population. But one could not be sanguine of any large immigration until we removed the British distrust of Australian methods. To remove that did not appear impossible. Now that we had an Agent General of

the capacity of Mr. Walter James, one might hope that such misconceptions would disappear. But we must be careful as far as possible to avoid doing anything which would heighten that distrust at the very time when our Agent General was trying to remove it. It was not an altogether favourable circumstance that we should have a Royal Commission sitting to discover whether foreign immigrants were coming to our shores in undue numbers, or whether too many of these immigrants were being employed in our mines. We must make it clear to the English public that our objection to foreign miners was based mainly, or as it ought to be altogether, on the danger of having in the mines men unfamiliar with the language used by other miners. Do not let the impression get abroad that we objected to Germans or Italians of the right sort coming to our shores, or that when they came here they must inevitably be tied to the soil. True, we wished them to, go on the soil; but if the small farmer here led a more laborious life and earned less money than the wage-earner, no power on earth would keep him on the soil if he found greater attractions in other walks of life. If we bore those facts in mind, and if the Government would, before we passed from this subject, announce that they were prepared to provide a definite sum of money for the purpose of giving assisted passages to suitable emigrants, there would be a unanimous voice that, of all the sums on the Estimates, no sum would be more readily voted than it.

MR. TROY welcomed the suggestion thrown out by the Treasurer that a sum should be placed on the Estimates for the purpose of encouraging immigrants to settle on the agricultural lands of the State. Having lived for many years in an agricultural settlement he (Mr. Troy) claimed to have some little knowledge of agricultural matters. People who came here as immigrants to settle on our agricultural lands had to work very hard, but ultimately succeeded in building up permanent and prosperous homes for themselves and their families. It was well known that the person who settled on the land had to overcome many difficulties, and that success did not come in a week or in a year, but that, if he persevered, success came in time. The

agricultural settler must be prepared to work many years before reaping the benefit of his labours. One member claimed that the Government should undertake a spirited public works policy to encourage immigration. He (Mr. Troy) disagreed with that sentiment. We had sufficient public works now to last for many years. What would be the good of spending £6,000,000 on public works without any population? We had immense lengths of railways through land only partially settled, and it was the duty of the State to have these lands settled before undertaking more public works, especially works unnecessary at the present time. He would not be a party to any immigration which would bring people in search of work, such as artisans and people engaged in laborious employment, because there were too many people of that sort in the State at present. We had thousands of people unemployed, but not people who were willing to settle on the land. They were people who had not the experience to settle on the land. That was really the trouble in regard to these settlements. People were settled on the land without experience, and they must be a burden on the State until that experience was acquired. The tilling of the soil was an occupation that required a little experience. He agreed with the member for Albany that the Government should bring in a system of unimproved land taxation: for there were many valuable estates in this country which could be broken up and thrown open for settlement. It was the duty of the Government to acquire the Midland Railway lands and settle them. There was no necessity for public works there; the railway already existed. All the district needed was that the land should be settled. We need not go to Great Britain to get settlers. There were many people in the Eastern States who had not the advantages of getting on the land that they would have here, and many who would be willing to come here if sufficient inducements offered. He knew people in New South Wales who could not get land because the price was too high. It was the same thing in Victoria, where the depression was due to the fact that all the best land was in the hands of a few people. That did not obtain in Western Australia to any great extent. We

could hold out that inducement to the people who came here. It was recently mentioned in the papers that many people were leaving France because of religious differences. These were the people we ought to get. People who left their homes on account of religious differences made other countries prosperous. The Pilgrim Fathers had made America prosperous, and the Huguenots had made the prosperity of England. All over the world these people proved the best settlers, and they were agriculturists who would bring wealth to the State. We would be wise in getting those people. Although many would take exception to them, it was known that the French were the most thrifty people in the world.

MR. WATTS: As agriculturists they were second to none.

MR. TROY: In regard to Canada, any student of geography knew that Canada had immense rivers, that her climate during part of the year was better than that of Australia, and that she had advantages in all directions. At the same time Australia had advantages, and particularly Western Australia. Australian lands could be utilised for the whole of the year. Western Australia had better conditions than any other Australian State, comparing Western Australia as a whole with the Eastern States as a whole. Of course there were portions of the Eastern States with which Western Australia could not be compared; but as a whole, Western Australia had advantages that no other State offered. We had a good rainfall, no drought occurred; and good crops could always be depended upon in certain parts of the State which had not yet been settled. People should not be asked to come here and settle on portions of the State where they could not get a living. In New South Wales people were sent out to the western districts and put on land where no man could make a living; and in Victoria people were settled on the mallee lands and became a burden to the State when a drought came on. In Western Australia we had no need to send people out to settle on lands such as Nangeenan, Kalgoorlie, or Menzies, because there was plenty of land available near the coast, where there was a good rainfall.

MR. A. J. WILSON: There was plenty of land about Guildford that could be thrown open.

MR. RASON: Where?

MR. WILSON: There was plenty uncultivated.

MR. TROY: Western Australia was nearer the home markets and had other advantages over the other States; and we had an almost permanent market on the goldfields. If we could grow produce and supply people on the goldfields with cheaper provisions, there would be a bigger population on the goldfields and a better market in consequence.

MR. HARDWICK: They were now producing their own crops on the goldfields.

MR. TROY: So they did in the mallee. The member for Greenough said that Australia was in bad odour in the older countries, and cited the example of the land boom in Melbourne. The land boom and other swindles in Australia had done much towards putting Australia in a bad light; but that could not be laid at the doors of the people on the Government side of the House, who were the people that discouraged that sort of thing and brought about a better state of affairs. He had yet to learn it was ever the intention of the Labour party that our shores should be closed against immigrants. It certainly and rightly objected to a certain class of immigrants, because we had already sufficient of that class of labour here.

MR. RASON: Name the class.

MR. TROY: Those in search of work, such as town workers. He had always been in favour of the immigration of people willing to settle on the land. That should be the chief policy of any party.

MR. RASON: No competition?

MR. TROY: No competition would be bad for the hon. member. The Government were to be congratulated on their desire to place a sum on the Estimates for immigration purposes. It was the intention of the Government, he believed, to go farther and tax the unimproved value of land, which would do a great deal towards land settlement. If such a tax were imposed, large blocks of land in the country, such as the Midland Company's land, would be settled. Money should be expended from loan funds for immigration purposes, for it really was a work of a reproductive nature.



**MR. HEITMANN:** The question of settling people on the land had been a burning question for many years, also the question of how to attract population to the country. Governments had assisted the agricultural industry, but without success. This industry had been fostered in every State, and it was being fostered in Western Australia at present; still, this country was not a success from an agricultural point of view. New South Wales had spent millions of money on agriculture, and what was it to-day? This season Western Australia would be exporting soil products; still, that was for one season only. While there was a great cry to settle people on the land, members had not given a thought to encouraging other industries. Up to the present time the agricultural industry had been a failure in Western Australia. New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland had spent large sums of money on the agricultural industry, but it had not been the salvation of those countries. No country had ever lived on agriculture unless it was built up side by side with other industries. Until the people of Australia realised that they were keeping populations in other countries of the world, the unemployed problem and the problem of how to attract people to these States would continue. He suggested protection as a means of settling the unemployed difficulty. Members had stated that a large number of people went to Canada. Only the other day he read in a newspaper that Canada had placed a tax of 28s. a ton on steel rails, which was the best thing that country had done, the result being to cause an influx of population to Canada. Whilst we were crying out for population we were keeping thousands of people in England, America, Germany, and in China. It would be far better to have the cheap labour of these countries here, even blacks, Japanese and Chinese, than to have their cheap goods.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The hon. member must realise that this was a Commonwealth matter.

**MR. HEITMANN:** It was of the greatest importance to the State. The member for Greenough appeared to think that the restrictions placed on capital in this State went a long way to keep people

from the State. Would the hon. member go back to the days before we had the Arbitration Act? In Victoria before the advent of democratic legislation men and women could not, by the greatest stretch of imagination, be said to be earning decent wages. In Western Australia would the mine-owners go back to the old days when we had no Conciliation and Arbitration Act, when they did not know for a day that the miners would go out on strike? Yet the member for Greenough wished to go back to the old state of affairs. It was useless spending large sums of money in assisting immigration to this country as long as we allowed the cheap products of other countries to come here.

**MR. N. J. MOORE:** In connection with the question of immigration the Government appeared to have started at the wrong end. There was an increase of only £500 on the Estimates for immigration, yet the Lands estimates had mounted up by some £30,000, much of which would be spent on inspectors and other officials, while nothing had been done to provide means for bringing the right class of immigrant to this country. It was a mistaken policy altogether, and one he was surprised the Government should have gone in for. We had an Agent General in London who was being paid £1,500 a year, and there were other officials in London: what were these officials doing for the salaries they received. One Agent General not so very long ago represented that there was no necessity for officials in London, their duties consisting principally in attending social functions and perhaps financing one or two loans, which probably would have been as well done by a commission agent. If Mr. James had gone home to carry out advertising, it was necessary that he should have some assistance. His (Mr. Moore's) idea was that a man who was encouraged to come to this country should be taken in hand from the time he left his native village until placed on the soil here. It was no use paying a man's passage and leaving him alone when he arrived in this country. He agreed with the member for Albany, that if we assisted people by paying their passage-money, we should, when those people arrived, place them on land that had been cleared previously, so that

there would be a chance of getting a return at once.

MR. HETTMANN: Why not do it for the unemployed?

MR. MOORE was an advocate of the policy of clearing before selection. It was not every man who could take to agriculture; a mining man did not always make a successful farmer. We must have agricultural labourers, but it was impossible to obtain them from the old country at the present time. There was a dearth of agricultural labourers in the old country at present, and if we desired to look for agricultural labourers we should go to other countries for them. The members for Northam and Cue had pointed out that the French peasantry would be admirable agricultural labourers. He did not know if that was the idea of all members of the Labour party. The class of people there was a possibility of obtaining from the old country were men with small capital, and these were the men we should encourage. Up to the present time our agricultural population had come from the Eastern States, and it was a regrettable fact that our prosperity should be advanced at the expense of our neighbours. As a matter of fact the population of Australia had not increased during the last two or three years, and although our population had gone up it had been at the expense of the sister States. In any immigration scheme encouragement should be given to bring people from the older lands. When the Lands estimates were under consideration he would indicate what his views were. There was too much money being spent on surveys and on inspectors. What was the use of putting four pegs in the ground, and thinking our responsibility then ceased; that would not tend to develop the land. It was well to keep up the surveys, but we must go farther than that in assisting people to settle on the land. He was glad to see that the policy of clearing before selection had received indorsement from other members.

MR. CONNOR did not wish the opportunity to pass without thanking the Premier for the suggestion the hon. gentleman had brought forward in connection with these matters. The remarks made by members who had spoken on both sides of the House were in favour of this movement, that facilities should

be given to people from the older countries to come here and settle on the land. If the member for Hannans were here, he (Mr. Connor) would tell him that the worst use we could make of the lands of this country was to keep them idle. He thought it had been the general impression for many years that certain parts of our country in the South-Western district, and along the South-Western line, were not of much use as agricultural country, and certainly an impression existed that they would not pay for farming. Whether by chance or not he did not know, but it had been proved satisfactorily that this land which had been despised a short time ago was in fact really excellent land for wheat-growing. Consequently in his opinion there was not the slightest doubt we had suitable country here to settle people on. He did not think we had country here which would be suitable to put people on for the exclusive purpose of growing wheat. His opinion was, we must teach the people we wanted to place on the land here to go in more for mixed farming. We had been told by some experts in this House in connection with this matter since the debate had started, and by others perhaps, that the rainfall or supply of water would not be sufficient for stock-raising purposes. In his opinion, unless the Government were prepared to go in for a policy of helping people when they went on the land, and for the conservation of water if necessary, and if needed even going farther and helping them towards clearing the land and settling them properly on it, it would be almost a mistake to spend money in asking people to come here. It was no use to put people on land where they could not make a living. He knew as a matter of fact that the lands which were being discussed were able to carry people, but they were not sufficiently good to allow people, except with a good deal of capital, to go straight upon them and kill timber, clear it, and conserve water or sink for water, so that they could have sufficient water to carry on with. The lands were not quite rich enough, and the cost of clearing them was too much for us to expect the average emigrant to come out here and settle on the land. If there were people in the country at present who wished to go on

the land and make homes for themselves, we ought to help them first. He had intended to speak on two or three points connected with this matter, but would reserve his remarks for the general debate which he presumed would take place in connection with the estimates for the Lands Department, because this question of immigration and the question of land laws and land settlement went hand in hand. There must be a very material change in the land laws and land regulations of this country before we could have a position here justifying the expenditure of a large sum of money to bring people to Western Australia as immigrants.

MR. A. J. WILSON rose to draw attention to the remarks made by the member for Greenough, which he thought had always been the source of whatever opposition had existed amongst the workers in regard to immigration. The hon. member told us there had been too many restrictions on the liberty of the subject, which had been responsible for restricting immigration, and that he himself was unable to do certain things because certain workers were not free to contract themselves to him at a price beneath what he as an employer was compelled to pay by a fair and equitable award by the Court of Arbitration. When the workers of this country read things like that from a man like the member for Greenough, who doubtless was a man who was esteemed, and whose opinion generally on most questions, and particularly on a question of this nature, would carry a very considerable amount of weight, was it not reasonable and justifiable on their part to come to the conclusion that the only object some people, perhaps many people, had in desiring to assist immigration to this country was to get a greater amount of liberty of contract in the country than at present existed. The battles which had been fought by the industrial masses not only of Australia but throughout the whole of the civilised world had resulted very largely in a general improvement in the position of the people as a whole; and it was interesting to note, so far as New Zealand was concerned on this particular question, that notwithstanding the fact that since 1891 there had been an entire abolition of assisted immigration, and notwithstanding the fact that New

Zealand had been more pronounced and more progressive, and should he say restrictive on the liberty of the subject in the matter of industrial legislation than any other country, there had been a very considerable increase in the number of immigrants into New Zealand during the decennial period 1891-1900. We found that in New Zealand, despite this advanced and progressive legislation, there had been an increase of 27,211, as compared with 26,515 for the whole Commonwealth of Australia.

MR. NANSON: Where did they come from?

MR. A. J. WILSON: That was not very material. Taking the whole of the people who might be included in the list, the excess of immigration over emigration—

MR. NANSON: Had they come from Australia?

MR. A. J. WILSON was not interested in that particular question, nor did he think it had a bearing on the matter in dispute. He was only debating the contention of the hon. member himself when he said that what had operated against the progress of immigration into Australia had been the restriction of the liberty of the subject, and the restrictions which had abolished the iniquitous system of freedom of contract that the hon. member so much deplored.

MR. NANSON: Would the hon. member say Australasia instead of Australia, and argue the matter on that ground?

MR. A. J. WILSON thought the hon. member ought to be able to thoroughly appreciate the figures that he was giving. In the period 1901-1902 the disparity was much greater, and whilst the excess of immigration over emigration for the whole Commonwealth for that period was 6,187, for the same period the number for New Zealand was almost twice as great—12,113. But in view of that fact, and in view of all that had been said of this State, the matter called for very serious consideration and very minute investigation. Before the Committee were justified in making a departure in the direction that had been suggested by some members, we first of all should make the most careful, accurate, and detailed scrutiny into the arrangements which had been made in other parts of the world for the purpose of inducing and attracting population. No one, he

thought, would gainsay that we desired to have population, but there was a good deal to be said against the introduction of a class of people which would prejudicially affect the people already here. Members were exceedingly interested in the lucid and eloquent way in which the member for Greenough placed his facts and figures before us. The hon. member told us, and probably with a good deal of justification, that the best immigrant we could possibly have was not necessarily the small capitalist and not necessarily the man with any capital at all, but a person of sound intellect and sound body, who had the capacity to labour and was not afraid to do so. Were there not plenty of those men in the country to-day, only too anxious to work if an opportunity was given them? Why was it, in face of the magnificent opportunities offered to people in this country, and in spite of the most liberal land laws in operation in this State, there were strong, able-bodied, and experienced men who were for some reason or other unable to go on to our agricultural soils and become successful farmers? He thought there was a variety of circumstances, amongst them in all probability being the very heavy and excessive cost of clearing agricultural land. Then, again, the poor nature of our soil could not be gainsaid. In all the agricultural centres a very heavy amount had been expended by agriculturists in phosphates and other artificial manures, for the purpose of improving the capacity of our soils.

MEMBER: Was it not done in the Eastern States?

MR. A. J. WILSON was not saying whether it was or not, but it proved conclusively that there was first of all the initial expense of clearing our soils, making them ready and fit for the plough, and the subsequent heavy cost of supplying the land with a certain amount of fertiliser to enable a satisfactory crop to be produced. These were probably reasons why the immigrants whom the hon. member for Greenough had referred to were unable to solve the question which they put to themselves, why it was that there were so many strong, able-bodied, and experienced men in this State who were not in a position to go on to our agricultural lands. We must all deprecate some of the utterances of the member for Greenough

(Mr. Nanson) regarding freedom of contract. Was it not a strange coincidence that there was a dearth of agricultural labour, though in that industry there was absolute freedom of contract? Yet we were unable, with so many unemployed in our State, to supply the demand for agricultural labour. In view of the abandonment of assisted immigration by all the States of the Commonwealth excepting Queensland and Western Australia, and in view of the unsatisfactory character of that assisted immigration, we, before making any new departure, should be absolutely sure of our ground, and should make thorough investigation so as to avoid foolish expenditure. The fullest inquiry was necessary before a large sum, whether from loan or from revenue, was devoted to assisting immigration.

MR. GREGORY: Better adjourn the discussion. Was it supposed to conclude on the London Agency vote, or would it be renewed on the immigration vote, or on the Lands estimates? Some members held that they could again debate the matter on the Lands estimates. On the Colonial Secretary's estimates was a special item for immigration, and on that item the discussion should have arisen.

THE TREASURER: It would be necessary to renew the discussion at a later date, because he intended to make a recommendation quite apart from any item on the Estimates. There could then be a discussion on a tangible proposition. He purposed recommending a new departure, on which there must necessarily be a new discussion. He hoped there would be no renewal of this discussion on any other item in the Estimates. On the Lands estimates members would discuss land settlement generally, but not, he hoped, immigration generally. Land settlement was involved with the question of the introduction of land settlers; but the Committee had devoted a fair time to the immigration question, though the debate was far from a waste of time, and would doubtless have a valuable effect; so its having arisen on one item rather than another need not be deplored. He asked the Committee, before reporting progress, to pass a few additional items.

MR. MORAN: Presumably it was the Treasurer's intention to ask the Com-

mittee to vote a substantial amount to permit of a vigorous immigration policy.

**THE TREASURER:** Yes.

**MR. RASON:** Then the Premier could not object to reporting progress. When we had the Estimates we were supposed to have the Government policy; but if there was to be a departure from that policy, to report progress would be more in accordance with the fitness of things.

**THE TREASURER:** Any question of policy should be available for discussion on the Estimates, and he intended that it should; but he denied the hon. member's contention if it meant that every question of policy must be discussed before disposing of any particular departmental estimates.

**MR. RASON:** The Treasurer proposed a totally fresh departure from the Government policy.

**THE TREASURER:** No; but simply an elaboration of an expressed policy that had been before the country ever since he took office, and had been mentioned at almost every public gathering he had addressed. But that policy had no connection with the particular vote now under consideration.

**MR. RASON:** Did the Treasurer object to reporting progress?

**THE TREASURER:** Yes. It was only reasonable that we should make a little progress before reporting any.

**MR. RASON** moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result.

Ayes	...	...	...	12
Noes	...	...	...	22

Majority against	...	10
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AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burges	Mr. Angwin
Mr. Carson	Mr. Bolton
Mr. Diamond	Mr. Connor
Mr. Gregory	Mr. Daglish
Mr. Hardwick	Mr. Ellis
Mr. Layman	Mr. Hastie
Mr. N. J. Moore	Mr. Heilmann
Mr. Nanson	Mr. Henshaw
Mr. Piesse	Mr. Holman
Mr. Rason	Mr. Johnson
Mr. Frank Wilson	Mr. Keyser
Mr. Gordon (Teller).	Mr. Lynch
	Mr. Moran
	Mr. Needham
	Mr. Nelson
	Mr. Taylor
	Mr. Thomas
	Mr. Troy
	Mr. Watts
	Mr. A. J. Wilson
	Mr. F. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gill (Teller).

Motion thus negatived, and the discussion continued.

**MR. RASON:** The procedure to-night was most extraordinary. Apparently an immigration policy had either been accepted by or dictated to the Treasurer. Though the course the Treasurer proposed to take was justifiable, yet with that honesty which was characteristic of him he would surely agree that this policy was a great departure from any policy previously expressed by him, and from the policy of the party he represented. When a surprise of this kind was sprung on the Committee, an opportunity was generally given members to consider their position. But now we had an admission that the Treasurer intended to adopt a course totally different from what anyone in the House could reasonably have anticipated; and that he intended to put an item on the Supplementary Estimates, or to increase an item on these Estimates, so that we might discuss at a later date the new proposal. As the member for Menzies pointed out, this discussion on the question of immigration was a little premature, because there was an item on the Estimates providing for immigration. The Treasurer need not have been so anxious to get rid of the vote (London Agency) to-night, because any member wanting to say anything on the subject would have an opportunity of saying it later. No matter what the Treasurer might do, whether he sought to increase the item of immigration or whatever new item of policy he might bring along, there would be an opportunity of discussing its merits and demerits when the item was introduced. It would have been at the best only an act of courtesy to have reported progress. Nothing would be gained or lost by opposing the motion to report progress, because an opportunity for discussion would be presented in dealing with the Colonial Secretary's Department, item 9, no matter how the Treasurer might try to avoid discussion. Until that opportunity did occur, the fit and proper time for the discussion of the question of immigration, he (Mr. Rason) would refrain from any more remarks.

**MR. DIAMOND** differed somewhat from his leader in this respect, when he found that there was no mention of an item which he expected to see provided

for under this department. From other sources he found that there was a highly-paid officer in London, not attached to the Agent General's Department, called the Government Freight Agent, who received a considerable emolument distributed as a percentage on the amount of freight on orders from the Government to the Agent General's Office in London. Something must be radically wrong if this considerable amount did not appear on the Estimates at all. Such an officer should be attached to the Agent General's Office.

MR. MORAN: Did the officer get a salary or commission?

MR. DIAMOND: The officer received an emolument; and if he was doing the business of the State in London, his emolument certainly should be included in the amount put down for the London Agency. Why was this item not on the Estimates? The emolument of a Government officer in London should appear on the Estimates under the heading of the London Agency. The item did not appear in the Agent General's Department or anywhere else on the Estimates. Whether the appointment was made by the present or a previous Government was not a matter of much concern. The emoluments of this agent had been kept out of the Estimates in the past, but the fact remained that there was no provision on the Estimates for the payment of this officer. Before the Committee had finished with the Estimates, members should be acquainted with the emoluments that this officer received and should know how he was paid.

THE PREMIER: There was no salary item in connection with the work referred to for the simple reason that a charge was made against indents. It had been the custom to so treat the matter in the past, and it seemed a somewhat wise custom. The office was one terminable at a given notice and not a permanent office, though its permanency would be more assured if a salaried item appeared on the Estimates. The practice was to charge against any particular indent what was estimated to be a reasonable proportion of the remuneration. When the full remuneration had been provided, no farther charge was made. That was the position so far as this particular work was concerned.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: The member for South Fremantle seemed to speak somewhat in an enigma, and to treat the item as if he were afraid of it. Although the Premier had said this was a wise custom, that might be so; but he disagreed as to the agent filling the position, as he obtained an undue advantage over other large firms in the State. A firm transacting the Government business was able, from the indents placed in his hands from other firms, to follow the source of supply, which gave him a great advantage over other firms. Presuming a firm in the State tendered for the supply of a large quantity of steel goods, underquoting other tenderers, the firm in which the broker for the Government was interested gained an advantage, as the invoice would pass through his hands and he was thus able to ascertain the source of supply. Merchants always desired to get at the bedrock of purchase, and anyone placed in the position of broker to the Government had an advantage which he should not possess, and the sooner some arrangement was made for the discontinuance of the present practice the better. Whoever made the arrangement was misguided, for it was not in the interests of the country to give an undue advantage to a prominent firm in this State. Although this appointment had stood for some time, it was the duty of the Government to look into the matter. If the Government had to appoint an agent in London to act as broker and to deal with shipping and with purchases, that agent should be a person not connected with a business in this State.

MR. MORAN: The member for South Fremantle in dealing with this matter was prompted by feelings of delicacy, because he was chairman of a select committee under whose purview this matter now came. The hon. member knew more about this matter than anyone in the Chamber. In considering the question in its full bearings it would be found a most reprehensible practice. The appointment was a bad one, and had been made he believed under misrepresentation.

MR. BOLTON: The appointment could be cancelled.

MR. MORAN: It should be cancelled.

HON. F. H. PIESSE was not aware that an inquiry was being held into this

matter, otherwise he would not have touched on the subject. Further information no doubt would be gained. The practice should be discontinued.

Item—Agent General, £1,500 :

MR. NANSON: As the new Agent General had assumed office within the last few days, it would be interesting to have from the Premier some indication of the general instructions given to that gentleman by the Government. In the case of New Zealand particularly great advantage was derived by that country in having an Agent General who kept himself very prominently before the country, not only in the newspapers, but also on the lecture platform. In England there were innumerable opportunities throughout the provinces, during the winter months more particularly, of delivering lectures. Often a number of associations were on the lookout for suitable lecturers on subjects of general interest. At very little expense to the country, practically no expense beyond travelling expenses of the Agent General, it would be possible for that gentleman—and there was no one better fitted for the task—to arrange to deliver a series of lectures upon Western Australia under the auspices of these various associations. If that were done, we should be taking a valuable step towards spreading a more general knowledge of this State in the mother country. Of course there were several gentlemen who might be appointed by the Government to do this work; but it would be much more effective if it could be done in the first place by a person holding the high office of Agent General. Naturally, any remarks the Agent General might make would command more attention than remarks from an ordinary lecturer employed by the Government. Then we had the farther circumstance that in the present Agent General we had a gentleman who—apart altogether from his official position—was eminently fitted to undertake that kind of work. He felt sure, and he thought most members who knew Mr. James would feel equally certain, that personally Mr. James would be only too glad to undertake this branch of work, and would feel that essentially belonged to him the duty of spreading a knowledge of Western Australia. Evidently it was a suitable time whilst we were

on the vote for the London Agency to have some information from the Treasurer as to whether any general instructions had been given to the Agent General, so that he might feel, if he took every opportunity of bringing the State under notice, more particularly in the direction he (Mr. Nanson) had indicated, that he would be carrying out the expressed wish of the present Ministry.

THE TREASURER: The point the hon. member alluded to was one of those on which the wish of the Ministry was conveyed to the Agent-General, who was requested to as far as possible get into the provinces and do all he could to spread a knowledge of Western Australia; particularly to get outside the large manufacturing centres and as much as possible into the agricultural centres. The Government were fully impressed with the advisability of having an Agent General who did not stop in his office in London all the time, but would get about as much as possible in order that he might advertise the State, its resources, and its requirements; and the Agent General himself was fully impressed with the desirability of this proceeding. In fact it was scarcely necessary that the matter should be brought under Mr. James's notice in order that he might recognise it. Another matter conveyed to him was the desirability of thoroughly examining the administration of the office with a view to making any reorganisation that might be necessary; and in the event of any change of positions being necessary, the Government would endeavour, as far as possible to provide positions in accordance with the relative value of the positions held in England to those officers who were now in England, and who could with advantage be transferred and be replaced by officers from here. Then, of course, there were instructions in regard to looking after the financial well-being of the State by means of keeping the financial possibilities and the financial needs of the State well before the public, and protecting the interests of Western Australia when its credit might in any way be assailed in any of the various financial or other newspapers. This was one of the main general points brought under the notice of Mr. James. Then there was a general instruction to which he had already alluded, that he

should at that end inquire as speedily as possible into the question of immigration, and furnish the Government at the earliest possible date with his views thereon, and any suggestions he might be able to make on his added knowledge after reaching England in regard to the direction that any proposals emanating from here might take.

Item—Secretary, £650 :

MR. GREGORY: The other night he drew the attention of the Premier to what he thought would be a good innovation, that we should have two officers sent from the principal departments of Western Australia, one from the Mines Department and one from the Lands Department, for the purpose of filling those positions. He would like to know whether the Premier had considered the question, and whether he would be likely to give effect to it.

THE TREASURER: That question had been dealt with by him when the hon. member was temporarily absent. He (the Treasurer) was quite convinced of the wisdom of having in the Agent General's office only persons who were competent to give any information that might be required in regard to the exact position of our industries in Western Australia.

MR. GREGORY did not know the hon. gentleman had dealt with it. It was all right.

THE TREASURER: Then, again, one of the subjects on which he conveyed to Mr. James the views of the Government before leaving our shores—although he was not specific in regard to the question of obtaining officers from any particular department—was that any officers who were sent should be those thoroughly versed in regard to local matters, and able to supply the fullest information to any of the public who might call on the Agent General.

MR. DIAMOND: It appeared that this large amount for secretary could be better used. We had had a deal of discussion about immigration, and we knew that there was an outside person who was employed at considerable remuneration in London to attend to Government freights. Why not have someone holding the position of officer of immigration and shipping agent?

Why not put this gentleman in the position of that secretary? He respectfully submitted from the little knowledge he gained of the Agent General's office in London by two visits—one in the winter of 1887-8 and the other in 1897—that the gentleman entitled to the emolument of £650 a year could be very much better employed as the head of a department in this State, and that he could be replaced by an officer who would be of some tangible use to the State, who could in the absence of the Agent General go out into the provinces and lecture to the people upon the advantages offered by Western Australia, and could with a free hand arrange with the shipping people in London for the rates of freight to be charged on Government goods shipped to this State. A complete change was wanted in the Agent General's office in London. The place had got too sleepy altogether. One of the last places one would go to in London to learn anything about Western Australia was the Agent General's office. He was sorry to say it, but he was sure he was right in doing so. Why not substitute for this gentleman, who no doubt performed his duty to the best of his ability, an officer with some knowledge of the requirements of the State in the matter of immigration, and who also was capable of arranging with the shipping people without having himself any personal interest in the freight charged on goods shipped to Western Australia? That was felt to be a matter of primary consideration. No doubt when the report of the select committee mentioned by the member for West Perth was presented to the House, some such recommendation or a similar recommendation would be made. A considerable sum was being paid to the freight agent for nothing at all; merely for his aggrandizement at the expense of the freight-payers and of the Government.

THE TREASURER: As soon as the report of the select committee was available, the whole question would be investigated; but as the committee were still dealing with the matter, it would surely be a mistake if he were to anticipate their recommendations. The evidence they would submit would doubtless be of considerable value; and he could with greater advantage deal with the question on re-



ceiving the report of the committee, rather than when he had only the bare official file to guide him. As to the hon. member's remarks regarding the secretary, it was impossible to reorganise the office from this end. He again assured the Committee that any recommendations for reorganization by the Agent General would receive the immediate attention of the Government. Mr. James, before he left, expressed a very strong opinion on this subject.

MR. LYNCH: As to giving information to provincial residents in the old country, he had it on authority which he had no reason to doubt, that Western Australia had been backward in the past. Queensland was the only colony sufficiently known at the post offices in remote places.

THE CHAIRMAN: The discussion must be confined to the item "Secretary."

MR. LYNCH: Was not the Secretary the vehicle for disseminating information as to our mines and lands?

THE CHAIRMAN: That matter had been discussed on the preceding item.

Items (2)—Inspecting Engineer £733, Assistant Inspecting Engineer £367:

MR. N. J. MOORE: Why this increase of £650? What economy had been effected? The increase seemed large in view of the few public works now being constructed.

MR. LYNCH: For an inspecting engineer £900 was none too much. While it was our duty to assess the value of the work done by this officer, it was for the Government to see that the State got fair value for its money. From knowledge he had lately obtained he believed the officer set down for this high and important position was certainly not the person suited to it. The officer was the late Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. Palmer, who might have been eminently fitted to fill the post he had been entrusted with in this State and also in India; but his duties as an inspecting engineer would be largely confined to inspection of machinery, and he was altogether misplaced in London. Was it the intention of the Government to retain him in the position?

THE TREASURER: The late Engineer-in-Chief was eminently suited to the position.

HON. F. H. PRESSE agreed that Mr. Palmer was eminently suited to the position.

THE TREASURER: A considerable amount of indenting was going on, and it was necessary there should be provision made for efficient inspection. A few pounds saved in regard to inspection might mean a great loss in regard to the material supplied, and it would be a mistake to cheesepare in regard to such an item.

MR. N. J. MOORE: How was the work paid for previously?

THE TREASURER: By commissions. The money voted this year represented a saving on the amount paid in past years.

Other items agreed to, and the vote passed.

On motion by the TREASURER, progress reported and leave given to sit again.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 22 minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next afternoon.

### Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 30th November, 1904.

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Question: Kookynie Lockout Prosecution ...	1500
Motion: Kookynie (etc.), to Disapprove ...	1500
Bills: Local Courts, second reading ...	1503
Factories Act Amendment, first reading ...	1510
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Motion: Payment to Members of Council, to Reduce, debate resumed ...	1510

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, Public accounts for the financial year ended 30th June, 1904. 2, Department of Agriculture—Annual report for the financial year ending 30th June, 1904. 3, Report