

rence. This was an important measure, and he had discussed it more than once with the Fruit Industries Commissioner and the chief inspector, and they had pointed out that if anything whatever was to be done to cope with the fruit-fly this power in the Bill was necessary.

Mr. GEORGE: There was no intention on the part of the member for Northam or any other member, so far as he knew, to block the Bill. All that was desired in discussing the measure was to try and improve it, and if there were positions created in the Bill that would be irksome surely the Minister could listen to arguments in connection with them. With reference to what had been said on a previous occasion about fruit-fly in his own garden, might he be permitted to explain the position. Some two years ago the manager of the place went for his holidays and brought back with him from Pinjarra a case of peaches infested with fruit-fly. He (Mr. George) was not informed of the matter until two months afterwards, and then he discovered a late peach tree had the fruit-fly. Every bit of fruit was destroyed and the part fenced around, and ducks and fowls put there, since when there had not been a trace of it.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.20 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th December, 1913.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Annual Report of the Surveyor General for the year ended 30th June, 1913. 2, Annual Report of the Charities Department for the year ended 30th June, 1913. 3, By-laws relating to system of Valuation—Dundas Roads Board and Northam Roads Board. 4, Return of buildings rented for school purposes (ordered on motion by Hon. W. Kingsmill). 5, Annual report of the Department of Agriculture and Industries. 6, Annual report of the State Charities Department.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. M. L. Moss leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. R. J. Lynn on the ground of urgent private business.

BILL—EVIDENCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—BOULDER LOTS 313 AND 1727 AND KALGOORLIE LOT 883 REVESTING.

Second Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill introduced to validate

the granting of some land to the Federated Miners' Union at Boulder, and the Australian Labour Federation of Kalgoorlie. In 1901 a piece of land was vested in the trustees of the Boulder Workers' Association, and a workers' hall was built upon it, and in 1903 a piece of land was also vested in the trustees of the Amalgamated Miners' Union at Fimiston, that is, Boulder block, and a hall was also built upon that land. In 1904-5 an amalgamation was brought about between these two bodies under the name of the Boulder Federated Miners' Industrial Union of Workers. Since that time efforts have been made to get the land transferred to the new union, but unfortunately the trustees of each body have become separated; some of them have died and some have left for other parts, and it has been impossible to trace the trustees in order to secure a transfer of the land. The Solicitor General has advised that the best way out of the difficulty, in order to secure this land to the Federated Miners' Union, the amalgamated body, would be to surrender it and then re-vest it in the names of the new trustees. The same thing applies to the Trades and Labour Council and the Australian Labour Federation. A block of land was vested in the trustees of the Trades and Labour Council in Kalgoorlie and Boulder at Kalgoorlie, and since that time the Trades and Labour Council has been merged into the Australian Labour Federation, and the same trouble existed there as was experienced in connection with the miners' union and the workers' association. It is now desired to vest that land in the Eastern Goldfields Districts Federation. I do not think there is anything else I need explain in connection with the Bill. We have had considerable trouble during the last few years in order to try and fix this matter up.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Are you giving them the fee simple?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): A 999 years' lease similar to what they had prior to the surrender. We are

simply re-vesting the land in the name of the trustees of those bodies which have become amalgamated. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—MONEY LENDERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I secured the adjournment of this debate for the purpose of merely ascertaining the effect the Bill might have on some of the mercantile contracts which deal with the sale of manure and machinery. I am satisfied that they will not come under the operation of the Bill. There is one matter, however, that I may point out and it is a matter which I think is of considerable interest to traders here. It is that we shall have to be careful because if interest is charged on a tradesman's overdue account and that interest is more than 12½ per cent., the trader will become a money lender under this measure, and will therefore have to register.

Hon. W. Patrick: Will not that mean per annum?

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: It may be for any short period. It will mean that some of these traders who charge compound interest on overdue accounts will be charging more than 12½ per cent.

The Colonial Secretary: Are they entitled to any sympathy?

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I am not saying anything as to that. I am merely pointing out that it is the practice, and that possibly some of those traders have to recoup themselves for the bad debts

they make. I believe the practice does exist, and that those tradesmen will bring themselves within the provisions of the Act. No doubt the Act will apply to cases of that sort. In other respects, in regard to the principle of the Bill, and the extending of it to men who lend money although it is not their business to do so, I have every sympathy, and I think the Government are to be commended for taking up this remedy so soon in view of the extraordinary circumstances which came out in the bankruptcy court the other day.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT
BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Report.

Resumed from the 25th November on the motion of the Hon. W. Kingsmill, that the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Bill be adopted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I have read the report and carefully perused the evidence, and have come to the conclusion that an amendment of our banking laws is really necessary. I have reported to that effect to Cabinet, and the Government have promised that during recess they will give this Bill consideration and introduce legislation next session.

Question put and passed.

SELECT COMMITTEE, CAPTAIN
HARE'S RETIREMENT.

Consideration of Report.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban) in moving the adoption of the report of the select committee said: I do not think it is necessary for me to go into the evidence, be-

cause it has been gone into fairly fully in the report. It may be urged that as we have given Captain Hare the right of inquiry into the circumstances of his retirement the same privilege should be extended to other dissatisfied civil servants. But the circumstances in Captain Hare's case are, I think, considerably different from those in many other cases of civil servants. Captain Hare had served 36 years in the Public Service and had worked himself up to a very high position. Again, Captain Hare did not come under the provisions of the Public Service Act of 1904 and, therefore, he had no right to appeal against his retirement. His retirement, we are told, was based on the fact that he had reached 60 years of age. In the case of an officer who came under the Public Service Act of 1904 it is quite obvious that the Government could shelter themselves behind the recommendations of the Public Service Commissioner, for it is provided in the Act that such retirement can only proceed from the recommendation of the Commissioner. In a case like that it could not be suggested that any wrong influence was at work. I submit to the House that if this report be correct it fully justifies the inquiry. In other words, if the House adopts the report the select committee can say that the inquiry was fully justified. The sole question the committee had to consider in the case of Captain Hare was why was he retired. If he was retired for State reasons there would be nothing more to say. The policy of the Public Service is clearly shown by the policy of the Public Service Act, and also by the very strong evidence given before the select committee by the Public Service Commissioner. The effect of that evidence was that where a man attained the age of 60 the Public Service Commissioner would not recommend his retirement unless it was in the interests of the State to do so. In Captain Hare's case we have it admitted by the Colonial Secretary that the only reason for the retirement was that Captain Hare had arrived at the age of 60. We have it also that no inquiry whatever was made into Captain Hare's adminis-

tration or his mental or physical fitness. It was sufficient that he had attained the age of 60, and under the strict letter of the Act the Government retired him. No question at all of the interests of the State was brought into the retirement in any way whatever, and the Public Service Commissioner himself says he was not consulted as to the desirability of the retirement. We also have it in evidence that there are at the present time 28 officers in the Public Service who are over the age of 60. If that is so, it is a strange commentary on the fact that Captain Hare—with, perhaps, one or two others—should be the only one to be retired on the grounds that he had reached the age of 60. Not only were the interests of the State not regarded in this case, but they were positively disregarded, because Captain Hare's retirement means that we have to pay the salary of the present Commissioner of Police and £468 per annum pension to Captain Hare. If Captain Hare was still in the position of Commissioner of Police this £468 per annum would be saved to the State. If there were no State reasons in connection with Captain Hare's retirement we can only fall back on what the committee suggested weighed in this case, namely, party political reasons. And in the first place the evidence goes to show that a matter which certainly requires considerable elucidation took place, pointing to party political influence. This was in connection with the report of Dr. Roth. Captain Hare injudiciously and unwisely made comments on that report, but he fully and frankly apologised, and the apology is on the file. Five days after the apology was received he was suspended from office. That took place under a Labour Administration.

The Colonial Secretary : It was more like a defiance than an apology.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER : It was an apology, and was very full and frank, and on the file Dr. Roth eulogises Captain Hare for his manly and honourable apology.

Hon. J. D. Connolly : The only one you received, and on which you reinstated him.

The Colonial Secretary : That is not correct. One was withdrawn.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER : At any rate the apology is dated 16th October, 1904, and the suspension is dated 21st October.

The Colonial Secretary : That is the real apology. The one he sent five days afterwards.

Hon. J. D. Connolly : There was only one.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER : So far as I can see there is only one apology on the file. That apology was there five days before the suspension took place, and the apology is full and ample and is frankly accepted by Dr. Roth. Yet in face of that Captain Hare was suspended. That required explanation. It suggested to the committee party political reasons. Again it is shown in the evidence that during the tramway strike statements were made by certain members of the Labour party, including two members of the present Government, to the effect that Captain Hare was acting like a czar and would have to be put in his place. Another point is this : we have it that the Honorary Minister, Mr. Angwin, was sworn in at 6 p.m. on Saturday, 7th October, and on the 9th October, the earliest possible moment afterwards, he called for the files dealing with certain charges relating to Constable Campbell. The Committee very rightly asked "why this precipitancy on the part of the Minister?" and they naturally desired to elucidate the circumstances. They sent the usual formal and courteous message to another place to ask for the attendance of Mr. Taylor, who could have given evidence in regard to Dr. Roth's inquiry, and Mr. Angwin, who could have given evidence in regard to the last matter I have mentioned, and another place took no notice of the request. The committee could be driven to only one conclusion, which was that no explanation could be given as to the circumstances, and they were rightly or wrongly forced to the conclusion that those reasons which were given before them had strong weight with the Government in retiring Captain Hare. The committee would have been only too

glad if the matter could have been further sifted but it was not possible for that to be done owing to the attitude of another place. I do not wish to dwell at any length upon the report, but I ask the House to say that in the face of the evidence given before the committee the report was a moderate one. The committee could have gone further and couched their report in stronger language. The report is a moderate one, and it has had the effect of clearing what was certainly a stain on Captain Hare's character by dissipating any idea that this was, as it appeared to be, an ignominious ending to an honourable career. Without dwelling further on the matters connected with the inquiry I would like to ask the House to adopt the report. I am fully satisfied that every possible opportunity was given to elucidate the circumstances and the committee could have come to no other conclusion. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West): I second the motion.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): I would like to know if I would be in order in moving the adoption of the minority report?

The PRESIDENT: There is no minority report. A select committee submits a report, and if there is an addendum it is called a dissent.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I intend to oppose the adoption of the report, and I would have liked copies of it to have been available for myself and other members.

The PRESIDENT: I must explain to hon. members that the Government Printer promised to have the reports ready at 12 o'clock to-day, but through press of work he was not able to make them available. They will be here shortly.

Hon. J. CORNELL: As a member of the committee my opinion was when the matter came before the House, and when I became a member of the committee, that Captain Hare was under the impression that a stigma had been placed upon him, by inference or otherwise, because he was retired. To my way of think-

ing there was only three points at issue, namely, was there a stigma placed on Captain Hare by his retirement, what was the reason for his retirement, and has his retirement been detrimental to the administration of the force over which he presided for so many years? I find that no stigma has been placed on Captain Hare. The committee have found, and I agree that the charges levelled by Constable Campbell had nothing to do with Captain Hare's retirement. The only evidence brought forward was by the Colonial Secretary who stated that Captain Hare was retired because he had reached the age of 60. The Public Service Commissioner and the Crown Law authorities held that under the Public Service Act the Government had power to retire Captain Hare, and I think that is a very wise provision. It is stated in the report that there are 28 other officers who have reached the age of 60 years and who have not been retired and probably will not be retired until they reach the age of 65. Mr. Gawler said that Captain Hare appears to be the only officer in the service who has been singled out for special treatment.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: I said one amongst very few.

Hon. J. CORNELL: But there have been others who have received similar treatment.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Which ones?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Mr. Stronach, for instance.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: On the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Superintendent Lawrence was another.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: But his office was abolished.

Hon. J. CORNELL: He was retired. I suppose if I went to the electors and was beaten my office would be abolished. There is somebody else in Superintendent Lawrence's billet to-day. Had the Government power to retire Captain Hare? I say undoubtedly they had that power. Captain Hare inferred that through the Government retiring him a stigma had been placed upon his character, but there

is nothing in the evidence to prove that any such stigma was placed upon him. Captain Hare seems to have been under the delusion that his troubles dated from the inception of the Daglish Government.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: And he is not far wrong.

Hon. J. CORNELL: He dates his persecution from the days of the Daglish Government, when he was suspended for commenting on a Royal Commission; and then again in connection with the tramways affair his action again led to his being persecuted by Labour members. He referred the Committee to pages of *Hansard* where Labour members had commented adversely on his administration. If *Hansard* is to be taken as a guide, Captain Hare is not the only one who has been commented on, not only by members of the Labour party, but by members on the Liberal side also. I therefore put *Hansard* out of my mind altogether. What public man has not been open to criticism, or can object to criticism in Parliament? The Government were in the position that the statute allows them to retire a man at 60, and as administrators they did so. The next point that requires consideration is whether in taking that step as administrators they acted wisely or otherwise, and I defy contradiction when I say there is nothing in the evidence submitted to the committee that will prove that in retiring Captain Hare the Government did not act in the best interests of administration. I have very little further to say except that the only member of the Government who gave evidence was the leader of the House, who said that Captain Hare was retired because he had reached the age of 60 years. Other members of past Governments said that Captain Hare was physically and mentally fit while they were in office, and they were of opinion that he was still able to carry out the duties of Commissioner of Police, but there is nothing in the evidence, no statement was brought forward, to show that in retiring Captain Hare and appointing Commissioner Connell, plus the pension paid to Captain Hare, there has not been an economy effected in the Police Department. No

witness tendered that evidence, and Captain Hare himself did not tender it. I oppose the adoption of the report, and I think that the committee have gone outside the province for which they were appointed. They have gone much further than they should have gone in framing their report, and I could have gone much further than I have done in dissenting from it. I did not allow my own personal opinion of Captain Hare to enter into the matter at all. I was there as a committeeman to bring in a finding on the evidence brought before the committee, and in my opinion all that the report should have brought out is that Captain Hare had no stigma placed upon him and that nothing was proved that his retirement, plus his pension, was not in the best interests of the police force. I hope the report will not be agreed to, and that will end the matter. In conclusion, I would like to say that this is my first experience on a select committee. As a young and green member when I first entered this Chamber I did venture the opinion that I had very little time for select committees, and after sitting on one I have not altered that opinion. In my own personal opinion, if we are going to inquire into any subject thoroughly and get the full benefit of evidence and documents that can be brought forward, the only sensible and logical course is to appoint a Royal Commission. The committee, as limited by the Standing Orders, are powerless to call whom they desire to call. I do not want to comment on the action of another place in not allowing members to attend, although I personally suggested that those men should be called, but I say that so long as the procedure governing select committees permits certain persons, no matter who they may be, to dodge giving evidence before the committee, we are not going to arrive at concrete and tangible evidence.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH (East): I had not intended to say anything in support of the motion moved by Mr. Gawler, but I do feel called upon to correct certain statements made by the member who has just sat down. I have no doubt that

these misstatements of fact have arisen from the fact that Mr. Cornell, due to reasons to which he is entitled to our sympathy, not our blame, was not able to attend many meetings of this committee.

Hon. J. Cornell: I read the whole of the evidence twice.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: The hon. member said Captain Hare was not singled out for particular treatment. I am going to make a statement and endeavour to prove that Captain Hare alone was treated in this fashion. The hon. Mr. Cornell has quoted the case of two other public servants, one Mr. Stronach, whose case was entirely different since he had not reached the age of 60, and the other that of Captain Lawrence, who was retired because his office was abolished. It is known to every hon. member that there is provision for retirement of any members of the public service on the abolition of their office. Captain Hare was retired for the sole reason that he had reached the age of 60 years, and no other officer of the public service has been retired for that reason except on the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner or by his own desire. The policy of the country is set out in the Public Service Act, which is in force at the present time, and Clause 66 says—

Every officer having attained the age of 60 years shall be entitled to retire from the public service if he desires so to do; but any such officer may (unless called upon to retire as hereinafter provided) continue in the public service until he attains the age of 65 years. If any such officer continues in the public service after he has attained the age of 60 years, he may at any time before he attains the age of 65 years be called upon by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Commissioner, to retire from the public service; and every such officer so called upon to retire shall retire accordingly.

The policy is clearly set out there, and was endorsed by the Public Service Commissioner (Mr. Jull) when he was giving his evidence. The policy is that a public servant having reached the age of 60 years is not retired until he reaches the

age of 65 years unless there is some other reason for it.

Hon. J. Cornell: He can be retired.

Hon. H. P. COLEBATCH: Between the age of 60 and 65 he cannot be retired without the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner. In the case of Captain Hare the Government took up this extraordinary position: they said that the Public Service Act of 1900 did not contain these provisions but merely said that any person having reached the age of 60 years might be retired. That Act was repealed in its entirety by the Act of 1904, and therefore is not the law of the country, and it is not the policy of the country. The Government said because the Act of 1900 did not exclude the Commissioner of Police from its operation and the Act of 1904 does, therefore the Commissioner remained under this repealed Act, and could be dealt with under this repealed Act. I am not going to argue with the Crown Law authorities as to whether it was a legal action or not, but point out that it was not action taken in regard to any other public servant, and was an action directly opposed to the policy of the country as laid down in the Public Service Act and set forth by the Public Service Commissioner. The latter said that in this particular case he did not recommend the retirement of Captain Hare, but if he had been under the Act of 1904 the Government could not have dismissed him without the recommendation of the Public Service Commissioner. He went on to say that if he had been asked he would not have recommended the retirement of Captain Hare. During the course of his evidence he was asked—

What is the policy of the public service at the present time in regard to retiring officers after they reach the age of 60? Is it the policy to retire a man as soon as he reaches 60 unless he is unfit for duty?

And this is his reply to that question—

Perhaps I could best answer that question by saying what I do. I never recommend a man for retirement on reaching the age of 60 unless, from my

own knowledge or from the evidence conveyed to me by responsible officers, it would be in the interests of the State to retire a man when he attains the age of 60. If it is not within my knowledge that it would be in the interests of the State that he should retire, or if no representations are made to me by responsible officers whose opinion I accept that it would be in the interests of the State for him to be retired, I say nothing about it. I take no action, and he therefore continues in the service.

So that it is clearly set out, both in the Act and in the evidence of the Public Service Commissioner, that it is the present policy that a man shall not be retired at the age of 60 unless he is unfit for duty and is recommended for retirement by the Public Service Commissioner. The Government went behind the Act and made a very flimsy excuse in saying they could deal with Captain Hare under the Act which was repealed years ago. It is not accurate for the hon. Mr. Cornell to say that other members of the Public Service have been treated in the same way. Captain Hare was treated in absolutely an exclusive fashion. No other person was treated in the same way, and no other person could be treated in the same way, as there is no one else who could be taken from the 1904 Act and placed under the Act of 1900. I support the adoption of the report.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): I do not propose to deal with the merits or demerits of the report. In my opinion my opposition to the appointment of the committee, which I expressed when the motion was before the House, has, so far as I can see, practically been justified by the result, because I do not think the appointment of the committee has done very much good, nor very much harm. At all events, however, it has pointed to one thing that requires the earnest attention of the present Government, or any other Government who may be in power, and that is the necessity to make the position of the Commissioner of Police, who occupies

unique position in the service, more fixed and stable and of better tenure than at present. It is stated in the report that Captain Hare was retired not on account of his age or incapacity, but for certain political reasons. Whether that is true or not I do not know, but in some of the other States, in Queensland for example, the Commissioner of Police has fixity of tenure. He is appointed there during good behaviour, and his position is very much the same as that of one of the judges of the Supreme Court, and that accounts for the manner in which the Commissioner of Police in Queensland, during recent industrial troubles, was able to act in the manner in which he did act. These are days of industrial troubles, and furthermore days when industrial troubles appear to be accompanied by more violence in Australia at any rate than has hitherto been the case. I do not say one side or the other is responsible for it, but that these troubles do arise there can be no denying, and the one man upon whose shoulders it falls to deal with these troubles is the Commissioner of Police. The calling out of military to quell industrial troubles is not desirable, and is going out of vogue altogether. The police are there in order to preserve the peace within the State, and furthermore they are within the control of the Government of the State, which the military forces are not. It is therefore specially fitted that they should be on hand and ready to quell any disturbances of that kind, and it is a wrong thing that the head of the police force should at any time owe his position to the will of any political party. I would earnestly appeal therefore to the Minister, when he speaks in this debate, to give some indication of the Government's intention in this direction. I would like to hear him give the House an assurance that at as early a date as possible the Government will bring in a Bill to make the position of the Commissioner of Police fixed and safe, in order that no more innuendoes of the sort contained in this report and that have been flying around ever since certain industrial in these times of trouble an almost

come to an end, and the Commissioner of Police, whoever he may be, may feel that whatever action he takes he is acting as one independent of the fear of being dealt with by any one political party or another. If the report of the committee will have done no more than this, it will have led to a good result. I earnestly hope the leader of the House will bring this matter before Cabinet, and make a recommendation so that the position of Commissioner of Police may be made safer and of more fixed tenure than it is at the present time. It would be much to be deprecated if we should drift into a state of affairs which would resemble the traditional American state of government. I am sure we all wish to avoid that. As I have already said, the Commissioner of Police is an officer who from the very nature of his duties in times of unrest is liable to be placed in an extremely difficult position, and if we can relieve the difficulty of that position by allowing that gentleman, whoever he may be, to feel that he may use his best judgment, irrespective of consequences which may follow, I think we will have taken a step in the right direction.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East): I am very anxious to hear the Minister on this question, and I think the House has a right to hear him. This report embodies a very grave reflection on the Ministry, and if the leader of the House is going to let it go by default, I think he will fail in his duty to the Ministry. But that is a small matter. He would fail in his duty to the administration of the country, a very much graver consideration. Ministers for the time being have in their hands the honour of the administration of the country, and if the report embodies a very grave reflection on that administration, as this report does, there ought to be forthcoming some defence, some explanation. As the hon. Mr. Gawler has pointed out, this report is exceedingly mild in view of the evidence on which it is based. It might have said very much stronger things than it has said, and I do not think any reader of the evidence will fail to read into this

report a very much stronger censure of the Government than the report itself embodies. In fact, what does this report mean? It means this: that a number of gentlemen have used their high offices to carry through reprisals against a public servant. We have it in evidence that Ministers were not sworn in until six o'clock on a Saturday evening, when all offices were closed and no business could be done: Sunday followed, when all decent men would rest. Early on Monday, the Honorary Minister sets about—

Hon. J. Cornell: I rise to order.

The PRESIDENT: What is the point of order?

Hon. J. Cornell: That the hon. member refers to members of the Government as not decent. He said, "On Sunday when all decent men should rest."

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member is in order.

Hon. J. Cornell: By inference the hon. member infers the Government did not rest on Sunday.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I did not suggest that the Ministers did not rest on Sunday. I assume they did as they were perfectly entitled to. What I want to point out is the moment the Ministry could get to work the Honorary Minister as his first act starts on Captain Hare. Why? The evidence supplies the only explanation that the committee could get. The committee very properly said, "This is a matter that the Honorary Minister should have an opportunity of explaining," and in the usual course they requested another place to consent to that Minister's attendance. The other place ignored the request in a most undignified way and the Honorary Minister did not appear before the committee. The committee I think took a dignified course. The members of that committee said, "We have invited this gentleman to come and explain his action. If he prefers to let that action go by default the committee cannot take any blame for it. What will be the natural conclusion of every fair mind with regard to this. The conclusion must be this, that the Ministry stood by and al-

lowed this Honorary Minister to use his opportunity, to use his high office for the persecution of an honourable civil servant. What did he do? He was fully acquainted with the case of Constable Campbell. I believe they are what is commonly known as pals. He knew all about Campbell's case, and apparently he thought he had in the Campbell file a stick wherewith to beat an honourable civil servant out of his office, so his first act is to call for the Campbell file. There is no doubt about the motive of that Minister. There is no need to assume; the motive is clearly standing out to try and get evidence against a public official who had incurred the ill-will, the animus of a certain party in this country. It appears before the Minister got far he managed to get the assistance of a number of his colleagues. This constable was sent for behind the back of his superior officer. He was brought to Perth and treated as a person who deserved the greatest attention. He was made an assistant to this Honorary Minister in the effort to oust a public servant. He was granted not only full pay, but free permission to come and go in order that he might help to establish a case against this public servant, and this all behind the back of the public servant. But there came a point in the inquiry when Ministers to their horror discovered that they dared not use this man. The man's record, the man's whole manner and all the things which he had written were of such a character that the Government dared not use him and they quietly sent him back, paid all his expenses and gave him some little gratuity, I believe. Sent him back, let him loose again on the public service. The Committee were not trying Constable Campbell. When the Ministry found they could not use this kind of man against Captain Hare they said, "Oh, very well, we will strain Ministerial authority; we will get him out of the service somehow." They could not get a recommendation from the Public Service Commissioner. They could not get it. It is very clear they tried to get it, clear as noon-day, but the Public Service Com-

missioner could not go beyond his duty. The Minister said, "He has to go; we will not only strain the law, we will violate all precedent in the public service and retire this man." Then came this remarkable thing. When the matter came before the Chamber the leader of this House asked us to believe that it was real economy to retire Captain Hare. He spoke of some savings of £2,000 a year. How were these savings made to appear. A number of changes were made in the service. On the whole the expenses were going up; but certain changes were made and through these changes there were certain alterations of expenditure, even though they were only transfers from one part of the service to another. The Minister asked this House to believe that a saving of £2,000 a year was effected by the retirement of Captain Hare. As a matter of fact instead of a saving, there was the inevitable and clear, and open increase of the amount of Captain Hare's pension. As for any economy Captain Hare's successor may have effected in certain directions, it was not different from what Captain Hare had effected in many other directions. In this country certain districts diminish and other districts increase. On the goldfields certain towns diminish in importance and other districts increase, and more police protection is required in the increased districts. Because in some cases there are diminutions the Colonial Secretary asked the House to believe this was a clear saving, attributing it to the change in the Commissionership. I take leave to say the Colonial Secretary has not done himself justice in so speaking to this House. It is entirely foreign to his ordinary course. He is trying to screen his Administration from an undignified, unmanly, and cruel act towards Captain Hare. This House owes it to the public service, owes it to the honour of that service to adopt this report by the largest possible majority, and see that the report is not shelved in any way, but that it is openly adopted, and I trust whatever other effect it will have it will remain on record as an effective instruction to all Administrations that

high office shall not be used as a coward's castle. That high office calls upon those who fill it to rise to the dignity and the magnanimity, not to say manliness, that the office should have. I hope such a case as this will never occur again. To me it was a painful thing to sit on that committee. I have never had to do with such a humiliating use of a high public position.

Question put and passed.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) : I now move—

That the report be transmitted to the Legislative Assembly and their concurrence desired therein.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) : I second the motion.

Question passed.

BILL—FACTORIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) : In moving the second reading of this Bill I must direct attention to the drafting of it. There is a somewhat peculiar method adopted in the drafting, but there is very good reason for that method being adopted. I do not know that it is necessary for me to explain exactly why the Bill is drafted in this way, but I think all members who know the circumstances under which the first Bill was introduced will realise that some different drafting had to be adopted in this measure. I may point out that the Act as it will appear if this measure is carried, will be placed before members. If it is not before them at the present time I will see that it is placed before them to-morrow, that is, the Act as it will appear with the amendments effected by this measure. This Bill is intended to bring the factories legislation in line with that of the Eastern States and New Zealand. The present Act is only a shell of a Factories Act and I think it will be recognised by everyone that when that Bill was introduced it was to deal largely with the Asiatic competition; consequently many of these provisions which have

found their way into the Acts in other parts of the world were not included in the Act here. Since 1903, when the first factories measure was introduced here, no legislation except one very small amendment has been made. In all the other States factory legislation has been brought up to date. In Victoria there was an amendment of the Act last session, and right through the Eastern States attempts have been made to introduce a thorough and efficient measure of factory inspection and legislation. Though sweating is not so apparent here as in other States, the need for legislation is just the same. We have found it very necessary indeed that some more up to date legislation should be introduced to bring us into line with other countries. The scandals which took place in New South Wales and Victoria especially, in connection with factory workers, were sufficient to induce the legislators of those States to do all they possibly could to prevent that hideousness of factory life which was so apparent. They made every effort to bring about improvements which would tend to the better working conditions of those who were the least organised and the worst organised work-people in the world. It is almost impossible to organise factory hands in the same manner as we can organise those working in other avocations. For instance, miners, carpenters, and other tradesmen can be easily organised, and as a rule they are in a very fair position to take care of themselves, but with factory employees it is entirely different. Many of them are women, many children, many young girls, and it has been impossible to bring about any organisation by which they, of their own accord, or by their own volition, could secure better conditions. So it has been necessary to introduce this measure to bring their conditions somewhere approaching those of other workers. It may be said that we are seeking to bring about too great an improvement in the working conditions, and that this will result in harm to the employer. I want to point out, without going into quotations, which I am sure it is unnecessary for me to do at this stage of the business, that the more

improvements which are made in the workers' conditions, the more efficient is likely to be the work which will be secured. I could read a quotation showing that in some parts of England the employers are even carpeting the factories to make the conditions more comfortable for the operators, and as a result they are securing a greater efficiency of labour. I might point out the improvements which have been made at Lever's factories at Port Sunlight, and also at Cadbury's, where almost every possible condition for the improvement of the workers has been made. There are garden cities which have been instituted to bring about ideal conditions for those working thereunder, and the employers have not been the losers by reason of the introduction of those conditions. I might also refer to an advertisement from the O.T. Company appearing in almost all the papers pointing out that in England they have introduced a system of 48 hours because they say they can get better work from a 48 hours' week than from 52 or 60 hours as the case may be. They point out that better results are being obtained in the factories in those countries where shorter hours of labour are being worked. This Bill will not penalise the humane employer in any way. There has been an amount of stage fright caused in connection with this Bill, as with all other Bills which seek to place any restriction upon employers, and this stage fright, I am afraid, has been used as an influence to try to bring about the defeat of this measure. In order to emphasise what I said just now about the present Act being only a skeleton, I may read a minute from Mr. Sayer, the Solicitor General, to the Chief Inspector, issued in May, 1905. Mr. Sayer then said—

All provisions of the New Zealand, New South Wales, and Queensland Acts were before the Government at the time this Bill was drafted.

That was the 1903 Bill.

A good deal, however, had to be omitted to secure the passing of the Bill, which was necessary as a first step in factory legislation in this State. When the Act has been in force for a little while I

have no doubt its provisions will be extended.

That is what Mr. Sayer wrote eight years ago. No attempt whatever has been made to amend the Factories Act since that time. I do not propose to say anything further by way of introducing this measure. Perhaps in the course of my reply and after hon. members have criticised the measure and stated their opinions, I may be able to deal a little more fully with the general terms of the Bill. I will now explain a few of the provisions. In the first place, we have made considerable alterations in the definitions, which have been extended in many directions. We have extended the definition of "factory" to mean that any two persons employed will constitute a factory. The existing law provides that the number shall be six. We propose to reduce it to two, and that will bring our law into line with the Acts in several of the Eastern States, and I may say that only as late as to-day a very large employer of labour expressed the opinion that it would be better if we limited the number still further and provided that any one person should constitute a factory. That is in connection with the work which is undertaken in factories. However, the Bill provides that any two persons shall constitute a factory. One of the chief reasons for making that provision is this: very often the Chinese and others, especially those engaged in laundry work, have only four or five persons employed, and by reason of being below the statutory number they would not constitute their premises a factory. In many instances people can evade the conditions of the existing Act by employing fewer than the number prescribed as constituting a factory. Therefore, we are seeking to reduce the number to two. In addition we have made an alteration in the definition of the word "child." At least the term is not defined in the present Act, though in certain instances a person under the age of 14 may be employed. In Victoria "child" means a boy under the age of 14, and a girl under the age of 15. We have also defined a bakehouse as a factory. The

word is not defined in the existing Act but it is thought desirable to define it in this measure, in order to remove any doubt which may exist. We have been subject to some criticism in reference to the definition of the word "employed" in this measure. The reason for defining this word is to counteract the action of Chinese laundrymen who in many cases claim to be partners in the business, and register as such. Under this measure the word "employed" means every one who is working, whether for wages or not. Any two persons, whether working for wages or not are held to be employed in a factory. This should counteract the Chinese, who, in many instances, claim to be partners in a business, and as a result of which we have been unable to deal with them. We have also made certain alterations to the definition of the words "furniture" and "handicraft," and several others which are too numerous to mention at the present time. The word "owner," which is not defined in the present Act, is defined in this Bill in order to give the department power to enforce any structural alterations or additions to bring factory premises into conformity with the law. In the past there has been extreme difficulty to get power to insist upon these alterations being made. Again, the word "boy" is defined as distinct from the word "child," and the reason is that it is considered that a boy under the age of 16 should be subject to the same conditions as are women and girls. Fewer hours are fixed for women than for adult male workers and the age of a boy has been fixed at 16, in order that all boys under that age will be required to observe only the same conditions, and work the same number of hours, as women. Further reverting to the word "bakehouse," of all food factories bakehouses are recognised as needing the closest supervision and there is more danger to be feared from an inefficient inspection of bakehouses than from any other institution or establishment for the making up of food. We have defined "bakehouse" here so that every bakehouse shall come under the jurisdiction, as it were, of this measure. Considerable trouble has ex-

isted in reference to laundries and there is quite a large number of small laundries which are exempt from the provisions of the Factories Act, but these laundries are competing very unfairly against those who are employing a sufficient number of hands to constitute a factory under the present law. It has been thought necessary to include every laundry employing more than two hands, in order that we may insist on fair competition not only for the sake of the employee but of the employer. We have exempted charitable institutions from the provisions of this measure. This has been done in Victoria and in one or two other States. In New South Wales charitable institutions are brought under the Act, but it was thought desirable here to exempt them from the operations of this measure, because there is no doubt some of the provisions would probably be difficult of enforcement in regard to charitable institutions. On the other hand, where an institution is coming into competition with outside firms, it might be necessary to frame some amendment by which we can meet the needs of those institutions without making them subject to every other provision of the Factories Act. I am sure we all recognise that many of these institutions are doing their best and are doing a great deal of good work on behalf of the State, and on behalf of the people they are trying to help. At the same time we have to be careful that we do not allow so much latitude that these institutions will come into competition with deserving firms and possibly work them out of business altogether. The administration of the Act will be the same as at present. It will be under the Factories Department and the Minister will have the power to appoint inspectors from time to time. These inspectors are given fairly large powers, which it is necessary they should have in entering and examining factories at reasonable hours by day or by night, and making inquiries into the laws and regarding awards governing the factories. Provision is also made that an inspector may take an interpreter with him. Inspectors have found it difficult, in connec-

tion with Chinese, to make inquiries, and for that reason an interpreter will be given the same power as an inspector, and the inquiries which will be made by the interpreter will be taken as inquiries by the inspector. Then in Clause 16 it is provided that when an application for registration is being made, the applicant shall deliver to the chief inspector a sketch plan of the intended factory. The reason is that very often considerable expense would be saved to the owner of a factory by the plan being in the hands of the department, because the department may be able to say what alterations should be made or how the factory should be built or constructed. This will obviate a good deal of expense which may be necessary afterwards in the way of alterations. I think in one factory here several alterations had to be made after the place was built, but if this provision had been in operation considerable expense would have been saved. There is nothing entailing hardship by the depositing of such a plan. It must result in considerable benefit to the owner of the factory. Clause 21 provides that every registration of a factory shall operate only during the current calendar year, and after the 31st December of that year the factory shall, unless registered, become unregistered. The fees are not exorbitant, and the revenue which will be derived from them will help to pay the cost of administration. The provision which is made for all registrations expiring on the 31st December each year will mean a considerable saving in the work of administration, and it will not be necessary to continually point out to the employer that their registration expires. By making all the registrations expire at a given time, it will materially help the administration. Some objection has been raised to Clause 26, which relates to notices in regard to the closing of a factory. An occupier of any factory who intends to close and cease to use such factory shall serve on the chief inspector at his office notice in writing of such intention at least seven days before carrying it into effect. This is desirable for statistical purposes, and

also in order that the department may be in close touch with the factories. Only to-day a deputation waited on me and complained about the paucity of statistical information in regard to factories. Both employers and employees have complained and it is necessary to make this provision in order that the department may, for statistical purposes, know where they stand, especially in presenting a report to Parliament each year. Clause 27 provides for records being kept by occupiers of factories. This provision is also necessary to enable inspectors to obtain reliable information for the annual report, and it is also necessary for the information of employees, to enable them to be conversant with the conditions under which they are working. An occupier has to post a notice showing the name and address of the chief inspector or the inspector for the district, the holidays and the working hours of the employees, and true copies or abstracts of such parts of the Act and regulations as may be prescribed. This is not a new provision; there exists a similar provision in the Mines Regulation Act. The notice has to be posted at such place as the inspector may approve. These notices consist of the name of the occupier or, if the occupier is a company, the registered name of the company, or, if the occupier is a firm, the name of the firm. In Clause 28 it is provided that a male worker shall not be employed for more than 48 hours in any one week, or for more than 8¼ hours in any one day. There is a proviso which does not make this rule apply to any male worker employed in getting up steam for machinery, or in making preparations for the work of the factory. If the Bill gets into Committee, it is my intention to submit several amendments to some of these clauses, and it may be that an amendment will be required in this direction to allow of work being carried on by a continuous process. In the Mines Regulation Act there is provision made for continuous work, such as on reduction plants, batteries, etc. In Clause 29 it is provided that no woman or boy shall be employed in or about a factory for more than 44 hours, excluding meal times,

in any one week, or for more than 8½ hours in any one day, or on any holiday or at any time after one o'clock in the afternoon of the working day in each week on which a half-holiday is to be allowed, or, in the case of women, at any time between the hours of six o'clock in the evening and eight o'clock in the morning following; and, in the case of boys, at any time between six o'clock in the evening and a quarter to eight o'clock in the morning. There is very little alteration in this respect, except that the hours of work are somewhat reduced. In New Zealand the hours women work are fixed by factory legislation at 45 per week, and I think in including 48 hours for adult males we are only seeking to bring about what is now a generally recognised institution. In Clause 32 provision is made for the modification of the provisions in the case of fruit-canning factories and jam factories. We have been met with the argument that we have no right to make a limitation regarding overtime. I want to point out that the overtime allowed here is exactly the same as in Victoria, and I think also in New Zealand. It is a generally accepted principle, as far as the worker is concerned, that we should try and abolish overtime altogether. There are very few instances indeed in factory work, excepting in such factories as canning factories, where overtime is really necessary. So long as employees are allowed to work overtime, so long will overtime be worked, but in very few instances, despite what may be said to the contrary, is it necessary; consequently we have only sought to limit it to the same number of hours and days as exist in the Eastern States? Then again a minimum rate of wages is provided in regard to overtime, wherever it is necessary to be worked. In doing that we were guided by the fact that employers of young labour pay the very low wages sometimes of five shillings per week, and they base the overtime on that five shillings, so that what these youthful employees receive is very often hardly worth consideration at all. We have provided that the overtime rate shall not be less than sixpence for those persons whose

ordinary wages do not exceed ten shillings, and not less than ninepence in the cases of other employees. In Clause 33 it is provided that it shall not be lawful to extend the working hours of any woman or boy unless the occupier of the factory has first obtained from an inspector a warrant in the prescribed form. This proposal is one of the most important in the Bill. Under the present Act a reliable check cannot be kept by the department on the number of nights on which overtime is worked. We are told that employees may be required to work overtime without any notification, and it is easy for the employer to evade the provisions of the Act, but it would not be very inconvenient for him to get the necessary permission in order to enable overtime to be worked. Exceptions have been made in the case of newspapers, because it has been thought almost impossible to apply the whole of the provisions of the Bill to newspapers. Another provision which has excited some comment is that in relation to the prohibition of premiums. No premium in respect of the employment of any person is to be paid to or received by the occupier of any factory, whether the premium is paid by the person employed or by any other person. No premium shall be received by the employer from his employees. This is not an imaginary danger, but a very real one. Very often it is found that persons have been charging something in the way of a premium in order to avoid the other provisions of the Act. In any case where a premium is received in breach of this clause, the amount so paid may be recovered from the occupier in civil proceedings. This also is no innovation, for it exists in New Zealand, and there is a similar provision in New South Wales.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: You will not have a decent mechanic in the country.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): This is in relation to factory employees, and not to mechanics. I do not know that there are a great many premiums charged in factories to-day, but it is very difficult indeed to repress the practice under existing conditions.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Where will they learn their trade?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): It will bring about the system of indenture to a greater extent.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: You will not get a master to indenture a boy, teach him his trade and pay him a man's wage.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): What trades are there in factory employment?

Hon. J. D. Connolly: But this covers everything.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): No, only the factories. The provision here is only in relation to the objects of the Act. It does not apply to everything and everybody.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: But factories cover trades as well. How is a boy to learn a trade?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): The very fact that a premium is charged in respect to the learning of a trade means that it is not possible for a lad to learn a trade unless he has somebody behind him; that we are restricting the number of those entitled to learn a trade; because only those whose parents can pay can learn a trade. As I have said, it is no innovation, but is copied from the New Zealand Act, and is to be found in the Act of New South Wales. It prevents the employer, by means of a subterfuge in charging a premium, evading other provisions of the Act. Clause 39 deals with sweating in factories. The provisions of this clause are specially intended for the better suppression of what is commonly known as the sweating evil. All its provisions are for the better suppression of the sweating evil. It is provided that the occupier of a factory who lets or gives out work of any description in connection with textile or shoddy material to be done anywhere but within the factory shall keep a record of the full name and address of such person to whom the work is let out and the situation and place where the work is to be done, together with the quantity and description of the work to be done and the nature and amount of remuneration to be paid therefor. It is further provided

that any person to whom the work is given out shall not sublet the work or do the work elsewhere than on the premises. This also is a repetition of the legislation in New Zealand. There is no class of work in connection with which so much sweating is indulged in as the out-work, and no class of worker who is sweated so much as the outworker. Anything we can do to prevent the sweating that is going on in all trades and places in connection with the outworker, we would be quite justified in doing. This out-work exercises a detrimental influence, not only on the employee, but on that other employer who is seeking to observe fair and honourable conditions, and it also enters into competition with those who try to carry out the business in a right way. In Subclause 7 of the same clause it is provided that no person shall be paid a lesser sum than 5s. a week, and it further provides for a grading to cover five years with an annual increase of 5s. This is the absolute minimum which any person can be paid. There is quite a number of employees, especially girls, not only in the City, but throughout Western Australia, who are not being paid anything at all, while some are paid as low as 2s. 6d. a week for the work they do. I do not think any hon. member would agree that such a state of affairs is desirable.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Are they being taught a business or trade?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Some may be receiving tuition in some degree, but in connection with dressmaking, very often the girls are brought along for two years and as soon as they are qualified to draw wages they are discharged and others put on in their places. I remember sitting on a committee some years ago inquiring into this sort of thing. It was the hardest job in the world to get the girls to give any information in respect to this, although it was perfectly well known that the system was going on to a large extent, because the parents could tell us what was being done. A great difficulty in connection with this measure is to deal with those people who are unorganised and cannot look after

themselves. That is the object of the Bill. In Clause 41 outside workers are compelled to register their names and addresses. Every person who does work outside the factory is required to make application for registration to the chief inspector in the prescribed form, and specify the situation of the premises where it is intended to manufacture the article, and the number of persons who may be employed in the manufacture of such articles. It amplifies the provision in regard to sweating.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Subclause 2 is novel.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Under that subclause the inspector has power to refuse to register any applicant who can without hardship be employed in the factory. If the applicant can be employed in the factory then he should be so employed.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Of course the inspector should know the best place for him to work in; he does not know himself.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Sometimes, in order to evade provisions of a measure of this kind a person may prefer to be employed elsewhere than in a factory.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Under the Bill it will be an offence for a man to think after hours, will it not.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): To which clause is the hon. member referring?

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: To the definition of employee—which makes reference to mental work—read in conjunction with Clause 28, which makes it an offence to work more than a certain number of hours.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Of course if a man is engaged in mental work the provision must be exercised just the same.

Hon. W. Patrick: Does it apply to members of Parliament?

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): The Bill further provides for certificates of fitness for boys and girls. It is very desirable that no boy or girl shall

be employed in a factory unless certified as fit to be so employed.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: How may they be fitted; where are they to learn?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): It is the physical fitness of the boy or girl which is referred to. It is not desirable that we should allow a number of unfitted boys and girls to be employed in factories, which would make them even more unfitted to carry out their duties as citizens.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: What are we to do with the unfitted ones?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): The same as is done in other places. Those who are best fitted to work in trades are those who survive the work of such trades. There is no doubt that some will turn up at all times, but they may not be the fittest, the best able to do the work. The hon. member would not be agreeable to seeing a boy or girl who may be physically unfitted working in a factory. For instance, a boy or girl may be predisposed to consumption, and his or her presence in the factory would be a positive danger to the others working there. This is no innovation; it is to be found in almost every Act of the Commonwealth and New Zealand. In order to prevent deterioration in the race we should see that those working in factories are well able to do their work. Certain provisions are made in Clauses 52 and 53 in relation to health, sanitation, and safety. Some of these provisions exist in the present Act. They are here extended. In Clause 55 no factory where any person is at any time employed shall be used as a sleeping place, and no room or place connected with or in the same enclosure as any factory shall be used as a sleeping place. Here again, the employer is asking us to go further. In order to minimise the effects of Chinese competition, the employer is prepared to go very much further in the direction of preventing anyone from sleeping in the factory. I can only say this is a very necessary provision indeed, because very often many Chinese would, if they could, sleep in the factory, have their meals there, and in fact live their whole life on

the premises, and it is a very hard job in such circumstances to find out whether they are complying with the provisions of the Act or not. In Clause 56 provisions are made regarding the meal times of women and boys, and no person is allowed to take his or her meals in any room where any handicraft or manufacturing process has been carried on during the previous two hours. There are other provisions in reference to women and boys—"No woman or boy who is entitled under this Act to an interval for meals, shall be permitted to do any work or to remain in any workroom during such interval." And it is provided that a room shall be set apart in any factory where the number of women and boys exceed six, wherein they may take their meals. I am pleased to say that many employers have already carried this provision out and have provided rooms where women and boys may take their meals. It is also enacted that there shall be provided a dressing room for women where it is thought desirable; this also is a very necessary proposal because many of the factories in Perth are making regulations providing that all female employees shall be dressed alike, and consequently when they come to work they have to change. It seems only a reasonable provision that where they are compelled to change their costume a room should be provided in which to do that. Then in Clause 59 restrictions are made in reference to males under 18 years of age and females cleaning any part of the machinery in a factory while such machinery is in motion, or working between any machine which may be operated by steam, gas, oil, electric, water, or other mechanical power. Further on, women employed at machinery in a factory are to be compelled to have their hair protected by nets; this may seem a somewhat extreme clause, but it is also one that is very necessary indeed. One young lady in this State had the top of her scalp taken off through her hair being unprotected and catching in the belting. I should be quite prepared to throw some of the responsibility on the employee also in this respect. The employer has to provide the net, and I

think the employee should also have some responsibility to wear it.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The secretary of the union will see to the putting on of the nets.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I do not know whether he will or not. But often in the mines the management provides some sort of material to wear under the nose, in order to minimise the dust trouble, and it is a hard thing to get the miner to wear these respirators, because anything that limits the breathing power is very inconvenient. Nevertheless, it may be necessary at times to compel miners to do that, and it is necessary that girls working about machinery should have their hair fixed securely in nets. Further on provision is made that persons employed about aerated water bottling machines are to have their faces and heads suitably protected. This is done at the present time, in some places, and it should be compulsory in this instance too, that whilst there should be proper appliances provided by the employer for the protection of the employee, the latter also should use them. In Clause 65 it is provided that sitting accommodation shall be provided for women employed in factories, and subclause two reads—

The occupier of any factory shall allow every female employed there to make use of such sitting accommodation at all reasonable times during the day, when such use would not necessarily interfere with the proper discharge by such female of her duties. I think it is unnecessary for me to point out how desirable it is that female employees should have seating accommodation whenever it is possible for them to take advantage of it. In Clause 68 provision is made in reference to accidents, that the occupier of a factory shall send written notice to the nearest inspector when an accident occurs which causes loss of life or incapacitates an employee, and such notice shall be sent within 24 hours. This is only a repetition of what appears in many Acts of this kind, that whenever an accident occurs notice shall be given to the inspector.

tor. It is the same in our Mines Regulation Act. When an inspector receives the notice he shall proceed to the factory and inquire into the cause of the accident, and the Minister may direct an inquiry before a magistrate in order to ascertain the cause of accident, and possibly bring about some alteration which may obviate a repetition in the future. In Clause 72 it is provided that in every factory worked by machinery bandages shall be provided for use in case of accident. This also is not a new provision; it is in the Mines Regulation Act, and also in other Acts in Australia dealing with this class of work. There is also special provision in Clause 75, for bakehouses. As I have already pointed out, there is no class of factory that needs more supervision in regard to cleanliness than bakeries; in this direction we are not going quite as far as they have gone in Victoria. It is enacted also that no bread shall be baked between the hours of six o'clock in the evening and six o'clock in the morning, which briefly is doing away with night baking.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): In this respect also we are met with considerable opposition, but I believe it is possible to bring about some amendment which may be acceptable to both the employer and employee. Whenever an attempt is made to bring about an alteration in such a custom as this we are immediately met with a storm of opposition; that has been so right through all the phases of industrial history. In this case the employers are of opinion that they cannot possibly carry out the provisions of this section.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: What will the public think of it?

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): I do not think the public will be affected in any large degree at all. It may happen that there will be a certain amount of inconvenience, but in the introduction of legislation of this kind there is always a certain inconvenience resulting at the commencement. I have had two or three deputations during the last few days in connection with this matter, and I honestly believe that it is

possible for the employer and the employee to make some recommendation for an amendment of this clause which will be acceptable to both. I know of nothing more degrading to men than night work. We had a good deal of discussion on the Mines Regulation Bill on this subject, and it was said that it was necessary that night work should take place, but for a man to work year in and year out on night work is even worse than working his shift in the mines.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: We have some awful examples of the effects of night work in the pressmen.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): Perhaps Sir Winthrop Hackett can enlighten us in that respect.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: The Minister says they must be degraded.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister): There is no doubt about it that continual night work brings a man down to a condition that he never should be brought down to. I know of nothing in the world worse from a physical point of view than to be continually working at night. It is bad enough to be doing it for a few weeks, but when a man has to do it year in and year out it is hard for that man to retain his physical stamina. In spite of all that has been said of this clause, I do not think that any undue hardship will be done to anybody by day work being introduced into bakeries. It is already in operation in parts of Australia. Throughout Central Queensland, and at Charters Towers, day work in bakeries is in operation, and it is only the fear of the inconvenience that may arise that has caused opposition to this clause. In regard to the stamping of furniture we have provided that both European and Asiatic-made furniture shall be stamped. Asiatic with the words "Asiatic labour," and the European with the words "European labour only." Here again it may be necessary in the interests of the employer to effect some alteration in the direction of making the clause even more drastic than it is at the present time. We desire to restrict Asiatic competition as much as we possibly can, and if it can be shown that the labelling of

furniture will achieve that object to any better extent than what stamping will, or even if we have labelling and stamping as well, I do not think any serious objection would be raised. Asiatic competition is not fair to either employer or employee, and anything we can do to bring about better results we should try and do. I do not know that there is much more in the Bill that needs explanation. I have already stated that charitable institutions are exempt; we apply that in Clause 94. I have also stated the reasons for that exemption. At the same time if it is necessary to take any action to prevent unfair competition I do not think any objection would be raised to any reasonable amendment. I hope the Bill will receive favourable consideration by this Chamber and that hon. members in looking at it will not be led away by any criticism they may see in the papers outside. I trust they will not be led away by any outside influence that may be brought before them without first going into the measure themselves and considering its effect upon the industries of this State, also inquiring into the proposals in the Bill as to whether or not they are in existence elsewhere. There is no provision in this Bill, with the exception, perhaps, of one or two small points, that is not in existence in some one or other State of Australia or in New Zealand. Although the argument will certainly be used that there are matters here which the Arbitration Court should deal with, I desire to point out that so far as many of the workers under this Bill are concerned, the employers have opposed their registration and opposed it very bitterly indeed in quite a number of instances of employees in factories, and have succeeded in their opposition to going to the Arbitration Court. The tailoresses, for instance, have not yet been able to secure an award under the Arbitration Act, and the shop assistants up to now have been unable to get a case before the Court, so the plea that we are usurping the functions of the Arbitration Court, so far as the employers are concerned, is a very hypocritical plea indeed. I desire to say nothing further at this stage, but in my

reply may be able to deal with any objections that may be raised.

On motion by Hon. H. P. Colebatel debate adjourned.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

1, Local Option.

2, Electoral districts.

3, Permanent Reserves Rededication.

Received from the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—PEARLING ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

BILL—FREMANTLE IMPROVEMENT.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that the amendments requested by the Council had been made.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX.

Second Reading—Amendment, six months.

Debate resumed from the 4th December.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN (South-East). The Minister in introducing this Bill said it was practically the same as that rejected by this House in the closing days of last session and that the lateness of its introduction afforded some excuse for its rejection.

The Colonial Secretary: I said that was the excuse given.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I think I have correctly reproduced that part of the debate and I submit that in saying what he did the Colonial Secretary suggested to this House that it may be the best possible thing to take similar action on this occasion, because, in spite of the lesson this House sought to convey the Government have held back this Bill until the closing days of this session. If, however, the Minister assumed that the lateness of the Bill last

year was the sole reason for its rejection, then he was in error. The hon. Mr. Moss, who was the only spokesman for the opponents of the measure, said something to this effect: that he believed it was the opinion of the majority of members that the Bill should go out if only on account of the time at which it had been introduced, but doubly because of the injustices it would perpetrate. Both these reasons for rejecting the Bill have only been intensified. A second time it is brought down as the session is closing and the little changes that have been made have all been in the direction of further injustices, and I see no other course but to ask this House to reject this Bill with an intimation, as given last session, that the House will be prepared to concur in the continuance of the present scale of taxation. This Bill is intended to replace the Dividend Duties Act of 1902 and its amendment of 1906 and the Land and Income Tax of 1907, and it involves a lot of disturbance, a lot of bother, and yet the estimated outcome is only £24,000. An estimated gain of £24,000! I think any economist in this House will say that the disturbance the measure would cause is out of keeping with the estimated return. The Colonial Treasurer lays down a very sound rule so far as it goes when he says that he entirely disbelieves in the principle of exemption. As a matter of logical administration I think every hon. member will agree with that thesis of the Treasurer. Exemptions are in themselves dangerous. They take away the sense of responsibility, they make exempted people ready to pile taxes freely on the other fellow. It is a dangerous principle in taxation. But the present law makes exemptions on two grounds. First the humanitarian ground that the weak should be relieved of taxation, and, secondly, on what may be called a partly economic ground, that it is good business to nurse beginners and young industries. On these two grounds the present law exempts the income taxpayer up to £200 per head and exempts the land owner up to £50 of land value, and for five years on conditional

purchases, a fairly important form of exemption. When the Colonial Treasurer comes to apply his disbelief entirely in exemptions to these two forms of taxation, how does it work out? He wipes out all the exemptions in land taxation, but does not believe in corresponding treatment of exemptions at all when he comes to the income tax payer. He not only does not wipe out the exemption of £200, but raises it to £250. Mr. President, what a manifest contradiction! When one looks a little more closely into the matter what does one discover, that the land owner in 99 cases out of 100 is an enemy to the Government. He is "the other fellow" to be taxed. The small income tax payer, the wage earner, is the Government supporter, and this change that the Treasurer makes will exempt 98 per cent. of the Government supporters. It is easy to understand how the Government supporters were eager to put the Bill through. Here is a measure which exempts the Government supporters, but imposes a tax on their opponents. Of course the Government supporters say it is a good Bill. This is the Premier's little way of showing that he disbelieves in exemptions entirely. There is another change in this Bill which further hits the enemy, but hits him in a most uneconomic and unsound way. The present law levies a halfpenny in the pound on improved property and a penny in the pound on unimproved property. This Bill makes all pay one penny in the pound. It is not only a further burden on the other fellow, but it is an utterly unsound principle. The differentiation of the present Act puts a premium on the person who has productive land. This Bill wipes out that premium and makes the man whose land is unimproved just as good as the man who improves his property. It is unsound and untenable. Following the attack on the enemy further, this Bill proposes to increase the surcharge on the absentee land owner. Under the law now he pays 50 per cent. more than the resident land owner. Under this Bill he is to pay 100 per cent. more. I cannot understand Labour's hatred of

the non-resident investor; I cannot understand it at all. I can understand Labour's hatred of the competing foreigner in the industries of the State; that is only too palpable, too manifest, but why should Labour hate the man in London who sends his money here for investment to help to develop this country? Do Ministers think for a moment what this country owes to the absentee? Where would our mines be but for the absentee; where would any of our public works be but for the loans from the absentee. If an absentee is unfortunate enough to have put his money, not into mines or public loans, but into the purchase of land—from which in many cases he is getting no return—why should he be hated and penalised at every point? What effect would this change have if, by an act of folly, the Legislature enacted this measure? It would prejudice every future attempt at borrowing in this country. This country cannot afford to quarrel with the absentee capitalist who has been sending his money here. Instead of that we want all the money we can get, that we can attract by any honest means into this country to help us to develop it. I want to draw the attention of hon. members to a few specific clauses. Take Clause 13, Subclause 3: this clause says that anyone not a jobber in land, not a trader in land, not a man who makes his living by operating in land, but anyone who sells his property, the profits immediately become income on which he has to pay an income tax. In the case of a private sale of property it is only a change of the form of an asset on which he pays tax. It may be turning the land into money, or turning the money into land, but there is no loss to the Treasury because in whatever form that capital is it would be got at either as land or money. There is a possibility of far greater injustice than that. The Bill exempts legacies; that is all right. But a young man inherits property on which heavy death duties have been paid. He holds that property for a year or two, and then turns it into money. On the whole of the proceeds the commissioner can then collect income tax. The thing

is monstrous, unjust, utterly unsound and uneconomical. I want members to pass on to Clause 42, which I will call a "bogey" clause.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is always finding them.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: It is a real bogey. Clause 42 says in effect: if the commissioner thinks a land owner has under-stated the value of his land to the extent of 25 per cent. to evade the payment of taxation, the commissioner can apply to the Supreme Court and get an order to take that property and do what the Crown likes with it, at the price that the owner put on his land plus ten per cent. for forced sale. I detest these little rogueries; these little detective tricks; these Shylock tricks; I detest them, they are beneath the dignity of Parliament. This is a pure bogey clause. Suppose the commissioner thought that certain land was undervalued 25 per cent.: what would be his procedure? He would have to get several valuations to back him up. It is no good the commissioner thinking something. He would have to get some supporting valuations. Suppose he got five valuers to maintain his position, and went to the Supreme Court, then I say the owner of the land could get ten valuers to swear to his value of the land, and no court in the world would confiscate a property on the balance of evidence between one set of valuers and another set of valuers. The whole thing is a bogey. It has been inserted probably to frighten some people in the thought that they would then be more honest than otherwise, and the Ministers have said let it go into the Bill. It is beneath the dignity of the Legislature to do this. I invite the attention of the House to something far more serious. If members will turn to Clause 46, here is a provision that a stop-watch is to be set on all reserves of all the companies of the State as at the 1st January last. All those reserves have a stop-watch set on them, and when they come to be dealt with they are to be taxed as income. These reserves may be an accumulation of 10, 20, 30, or even 40 years, long before any such legislation was dreamt of. These reserves

have been accumulating, and this Bill says that all these reserves as at the 1st January last—there is no chance for distribution and putting them to the use for which the reserves were effected—are to have a stop-watch set on them, and they are to be regarded as income, and when they come to be distributed a tax is to be collected on them. This is a monstrous provision to put in an Act of Parliament. I have one more clause for criticism which, to my mind, is the most serious blunder of all, an economic blunder as well as a manifest injustice. It is Clause 47, which comes down on our great insurance companies. I want to remind this House that all our insurance companies are mutual, even that American company, the Equitable, that was so cried out against at one time and for some reasons, perhaps justly, even that is only proprietary in name. To all intents and purposes it is a mutual society. All our great societies operating in this State are mutual insurance companies, mutual for the benefit of the thrifty people of the State. That is the whole explanation. Surely it is the wisdom of the State to encourage the thrift of its people. I admit that several of the States showed the way in a different direction, and the Commonwealth in its haste adopted their false method—I mean their unsound method with regard to old-age pensions. But it is only just a little episode. A little later on a statesman will arise in the Federal Parliament, and will introduce a sound system of old-age pensions, a sound system of national insurance. Apart from that little mistake made by two or three of the States and adopted by the Federal Parliament, all these States are anxious to encourage the thrift of their members, and they all recognise that the great insurance companies are amongst our best thrift institutions, and they say we must help them to encourage them all that we can. But what does this Bill say? This Bill says that 20 per cent. of all the premiums are to be taxed as income, in addition to taxing all the distributed profits, and so on. I want to point out that in the strict sense of the word there is no

income in an insurance company; it is simply the receiving of money in trust for the thrifty element of the population, to see that it is kept safely and wisely invested in their interests, and that they get the benefit; it is purely a co-operation in thrift. It is not income, and to tax 20 per cent. of the premiums of an insurance company is the rankest of false economy, the worst of blunders. It is an absolute penalty on the thrift of the people, and I want to impress upon hon. members that what are called distributions of surplus profits are not profits at all under life insurance. What are these moneys which, for the sake of a handy name, are called profits? They are margins between what is absolutely necessary for fulfilling the undertakings of insurance companies and the actual amounts paid in by the members. It is essential that there should be margins. How could any institution work to the fine line of balance between its undertakings and the money it calls in to meet its undertakings. Every properly managed insurance company each year has a margin left over and every wise insurance company says, "We must not lock up this margin; we will either hand it back as money that we need not have collected, or we will invest it in the interests of those people from whom we have collected it." But this Bill says all these moneys are profits to be taxed, and that 20 per cent. of the premium money is taxable income. I say it is a misuse of the English language; it is a misuse of economic terms. While I am blaming the present Government for trying to increase the tax on insurance companies—the penalty I should rather call it—I recognise that preceding Governments have erred to a less degree. It is the falsest economy to bring a mutual insurance company under an income tax Bill. I want now to say a few words generally about land taxation, and Ministers will understand that I am not blaming them any more than I am blaming their predecessors. It is only a little while ago that the old mother State, New South Wales, launched a second land tax. All sound economists recognise that the

land owner should bear a tax in addition to his share with all the rest of the population in the burdens of the country. The land owner gets an advantage as a result of the growth of population and the development of trade for which he should make return in the form of a special tax over and above his common share with the rest of the population. In New South Wales it was only 15 or 20 years ago that an attempt was made to bring in the second tax. I happened to be there at the Premier's elbow and I said, "You are making a blunder. You should not levy this second land tax; you should reserve it for an emergency tax, perhaps 50 years in the future. It is false economy to bring it in now." He said, "What would you advise me to do?" I said, "You are handing to the local authorities some £700,000 or £800,000 a year. You expect to raise from this second land tax £300,000 or £400,000. What a foolish business it is to set up another system of tax collection, to collect this £300,000 or £400,000 and then hand it back in the form of subsidies and grants and as much more with it to the local authorities when the local authorities could collect all that is needed for local government including present subsidies and grants at a cost of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. That is about the cost of local government assessment, valuation, and collection. You are going to set up State machinery which will cost anything from 10 to 12 per cent. for valuation and collection, and you will cast on the land owner the worry and trouble of making returns and resisting over-valuations. He will lose another 5 to 10 per cent. in the cheapest way. Why should you incur a cost of 15 to 20 per cent. on the second tax, when there is no need for it and the whole thing could be accomplished through the local governing bodies?" He said, "That seems all right, but look at these fellows behind me." There was a knot of single-taxers. If hon. members know the difference between an empty cart rattling over a road and a full dray, they will understand what the single-taxers behind the Premier were like. They were making such a rattle and noise that he assumed

they were numerically strong and he brought in the second tax. In this State a previous Government made the same blunder here, and I am only blaming the present Government for making the blunder tenfold worse. The Government which preceded the present one brought in a second land tax when there was absolutely no need whatever for it. If they had wanted to raise £100,000—they did not expect to raise anything like that—but supposing they had they would simply have had to say to the local governing bodies, "We give you power to tax a little more, and instead of our raising this tax we will allow you to raise it. It will cost nothing because you have the machinery and you can do it." I forgot to mention—and it is a very interesting fact—that a few years after I left New South Wales my successor in my old constituency came to be Premier and brought in this principle in the shire councils' law of New South Wales. Any shire levying up to a certain minimum ousts the State land tax from that shire. It is a simple thing in economics, as simple as is possible. I feel certain that the time is coming when there will be statesmanship enough in some Government or Parliament in this State to go back to the one land tax, which every land owner willingly pays. The land owners really levy it and distribute it themselves by their simple machinery of local government and there is no need for any other land tax. I am not forgetting that the Commonwealth in a time of folly entered into the State domain and started a third land tax—a piece of absolute intrusion, an act that was utterly unconstitutional. However, I am hoping there is a time not far distant when this Parliament will abolish the State land tax, a large part of which is wasted in the machinery of collection and in the worry that is cast upon the land owner. Now just a few words to impress the House with the difference this Bill would make to the land owner. The present law exempts the new settler for five years, and anyone who has been on the land can understand how much the new settler needs that exemption in the first five years. The

Treasurer stated the other day in an off-handed way that every farmer must be making at least £250 a year or he would not remain. There is nothing so glib as inexperience; I was going to say ignorance, but that is a hard word. If the Treasurer only knew the truth there are many of our very best men on the land to-day who have had years when they would have been glad to receive one-fifth of that amount of money. There are many who have survived years when instead of one-fifth, they have received no profit at all. Why do they stay? Because they cannot honourably run away. They have undertakings and obligations, and like men they stick to their posts in the hope that one day they will be able to win out and fulfil their undertakings. The present law exempts them for five years, but this Bill comes down on the young settler during the first year he is on the land. I want hon. members to picture a young settler and his wife out in their tent or humpy, as I have often seen them. Picture them on their first New Year's Eve when this enormous four-paged document that would take a Philadelphia lawyer to interpret arrives and they look at it and the very worry of having to fill up that return is nearly as bad as having to pay the tax. The Treasurer himself admits that. On their first New Year's Eve they are called upon to pay what is not a tax on their interest in the land, but on the whole price which they have contracted to pay. Suppose they have taken up 2,000 acres of land, and in this country settlers cannot do with much less, they pay 6d. an acre on that land and that represents their interest in the land, but what are they taxed on? They are taxed on the price they have agreed to pay for the land during the next 20 years—it might be 10s. it might be 20s. an acre. Some of the land has been actually sold at 27s. an acre and some down at Denmark has been palmed off on new immigrants and inexperienced men from the goldfields at anything from £2 to £10 and £12 an acre.

The Colonial Secretary: Who did that?

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Not the present Ministry.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: But you could reduce the price if you liked.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: I thought it hardly necessary to mention that it was not the present Ministry because I attacked a previous Government for doing it at the time.

The Colonial Secretary: It is just as well for the public to know.

Hon. J. F. CULLEN: Quite right. It was a blunder of a very strong Government whose optimism ran away with them. However, the ordinary new settler has on his first New Year's Eve this long form to fill up, and very often he cannot get the information except by going 40 or 50 miles to the Lands office, and probably he may have to pay a fee also to get that information. Let us see now what he has to pay tax on. Not on his interest in that land, which is 6d. an acre, for that is all that it is worth to him; he has to pay on 10s., 15s., or 20s., the price of the land. All but 6d. of that amount to all intents and purposes represents a mortgage on that land. But this Bill takes no notice of mortgages. Do hon. members want me to say more in urging them to throw out this Bill and not waste time over it? Let the Government bring down a continuance of the present law which I myself will vote for, although reluctantly, because there should be no second land tax in this State. Owing to the present financial stress, however, I am not going to vote to cut off any of the Government revenue, however badly they are making use of it. The Government are making ducks and drakes of scores of thousands of pounds of this money which is being taken out of the poor settler for their wretched steamers and their twopenny meat-shops, and rubbish of that sort. But, in spite of all that, this is not the time to cut off any part of their revenue, so that if the Government bring down a continuance of the present law I will vote for it. I invite this House to throw out this measure, and, with that object in view, I submit as an amendment—

That the word "now" be struck out, and "this day six months" added to the motion.

Hon. C. A. PIESSE (South-East): I second the amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): The hon. member who has just sat down impressed me very much by the manner in which he delivered his speech, and the attitude which he adopted carried me back to my boyhood days when I read of the ancient Roman orators. He however spoiled his address by his references at the conclusion to cheap meat and sausages.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Is that what the hon. member calls the Government meat shops?

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is what the hon. member calls them himself. I claim there is a wide analogy between a land and income tax and sausages, and though the hon. member has boxed the compass in his remarks, I do not intend to do likewise, or to take up much of the time of the House. I recognise that the principle aimed at in this Bill, and it is one of the main objects of the Government, is to get more revenue. It must be patent to any hon. member who thinks for a moment, that the sources of revenue in this State were practically all tapped two or three years ago, and hon. members will agree with me when I say that as population increases the demands of the people likewise increase, and, in consequence of that, we must have an increased form of taxation.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: Why? The revenue is increasing rapidly.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The revenue is not increasing sufficiently to cope with the development which is going on.

Hon. C. Sommers: Development do you call it?

Hon. W. Patrick: Waste.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am glad hon. members think there is waste in some direction, because I consider there is waste in another direction. We must have other forms of taxation, and the object of this Bill is to increase taxation. The hon. member who has just sat down laughingly referred to the fact that if the Bill became law we would only receive an extra £24,000.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That is the Treasurer's estimate.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If this Bill becomes law we will get an additional £24,000, which means a reduction of the deficit by that amount.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Not necessarily.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Let us estimate that that would be the case. The main object why I oppose the amendment is that the Bill proposes to alter the incidence of taxation, that is, it proposes to do away with exemptions on land. I think hon. members will agree that there is practically only one factor which adds to the value of land, and that is population. Population alone enhances the value of land; we can build up castles but if the population of the State does not increase the value of the land will not increase. It is a sound doctrine adopted by many eminent writers of the day, and by that grand Liberal that all Liberals look up to, Lloyd George.

Hon. W. Patrick: It is the population of England that is enriching the land there.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That does not alter the argument. The hon. member must admit that if population is increasing the value of the land there it will increase the value of land here also.

Hon. W. Patrick: It is the man on the land who makes the value.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was a long while on the land and I did not increase its value very much.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Exceptions prove the rule.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Probably I was too young and inexperienced. That land, which I held, in New South Wales, the upset price of which at the time was £2 an acre, is to-day worth £12 an acre, and that is inside 20 years. Population and its close proximity to railways as well have increased its value, but the fact remains that for agricultural pursuits that land was as valuable 20 years ago as it is to-day; in fact it was more valuable then because it was virgin soil. Another thing that has enhanced the value of that land is the growth of the dairying industry. I maintain that the proposal of the Gov-

ernment to impose this land tax and apply it without exemptions will not affect the farmers one iota.

Hon. W. Patrick: It will double the tax.

Hon. J. CORNELL: My opinion is that the farmer not only in Western Australia but throughout Australia is the gull that everyone is out to pluck, and the big financial gentlemen who have residences in the terrace or in other parts of the State pluck the gull more than this land tax will. If we apply the land tax in its fullest extremity, who is it going to strike the hardest? The man on the land or the owner of City property? I venture to say that land to-day in the city of Perth, which was taken up years ago perhaps for a bag of flour—

Hon. J. F. Cullen: That was all it was worth then.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is all it would be worth to-day if the population had remained as it was, but the population of the place has increased, and the value of the land has increased until perhaps it is worth £300 or £400 a foot to-day, and the owners of it have not done one iota towards improving it.

Hon. W. Patrick: It may have been sold fifty times in that period.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It may not have been sold at all. There were two blocks of land in Melbourne for which no owner could be found, and eventually they reverted to the Crown. The value of that land when it was taken up was in the vicinity of £30, and when it was re-valued by the Crown the amount was set down at £100,000. For 60 years that land remained idle, in the heart of Melbourne; there were no improvements, but the community gave a value to the land.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: The community were doing something.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Exactly, but the only argument the land tax brings forward is that the community take back what they create.

Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Before tea I had almost concluded my remarks. I was then dilating on the added value given to land by population. I propose to leave that

question and to deal with the phase of the Bill which Mr. Cullen has referred to, namely, Clause 46, by which it is proposed to tax undistributed profits of companies from the 1st January of next year. Mr. Cullen, during the course of his remarks, said that some of these profits have been accumulating for 50 years. Granted they may have been, that is no argument why the Government should not proceed to tax the undistributed profits of any concern, because a company need only distribute a certain amount of its profits. In many cases profits of gold mining companies, for instance, have been put in to other mining concerns, so that, after all, whether these profits are distributed or not they should be liable to taxation. As for going back 50 years, though the clause may be construed to mean that, I do not think it is the intention of the Government to do so, but it is the intention of the Government to provide that in future companies shall not evade their measure of taxation by not distributing their profits. Mr. Cullen dealt also with a phase of the land tax that happened in New South Wales, and he referred to being at the elbow of the then Premier and proffering his advice. I am pleased to know that the proffering of advice has not been the virtue of the hon. member only since he entered this Chamber. From what I can judge from his remarks on this and every Bill, he has a penchant for offering advice, but on that occasion the Premier of New South Wales did not accept his advice.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: His successor did.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I hope this House in voting on the amendment will do the same as the Premier of New South Wales did. The hon. member referred to single taxers as an empty vehicle travelling over a rough road, which I suppose means that the single taxers are all noise. That is characteristic of many politicians also, but there is a considerable amount to be said in favour of the single taxer. One thing in his favour is the consistency of his advocacy of a reform, which has many things to commend it. Without going into the merits and demerits of the single tax, I desire just to say that I do not

think the hon. member was just to the single taxers, for whatever their virtues or faults may be they cannot be charged with want of consistency. I do not propose to say anything further on the Bill, but I hope the amendment will not be agreed to, and that the second reading will be carried. So far as the taxation of unimproved land value is concerned, we have already precedents to guide us, inasmuch as the Roads Act of this State makes it optional to tax on the unimproved value or the annual value. The same state of affairs prevails in the shires of New South Wales, where the two forms of taxation are optional. As a land taxer, I think the only sound system of land taxation is taxation without exemption.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary debate adjourned.

BILL—ESPERANCE NORTHWARDS RAILWAY.

Second Reading—Bill defeated.

Debate resumed from the 3rd December.

Hon. E. McLARTY (South-West): I regret I have been unable to hear the debate on this question, but I desire to say a few words before recording my vote. The Esperance railway is an old friend that crops up every year, although in perhaps a little different form on this occasion. I have always felt it my duty in the past to oppose the construction of this line, and my reason for doing so was that this State having constructed a railway from the metropolis to Kalgoorlie and many other goldfields centres, I considered the State had some right to a return for that expenditure, and to construct a railway from Coolgardie to Esperance would be building a line in direct competition with the existing railway. At that time, the chief reason adduced in favour of the Esperance line was the necessity for giving the people of the goldfields access to the coast. In my opinion that was a very poor reason, certainly not sufficient to warrant incurring the expenditure that

would have been required in the construction of a couple of hundred miles of railway. Then, again, it appeared to me that by building that line to connect Esperance with Coolgardie we were simply giving away the markets of the goldfields to the producers in the sister States. That, I considered, was not a right thing. We had the best right to the markets, and I could not see the wisdom of supporting a railway which would deprive the farmers of this State of a market to which they were entitled. Again, it would have been the means of diverting traffic from the existing line, because the residents of the goldfields visiting the Eastern States would naturally have taken the railway to Esperance and embarked on boats there, which would have been a much shorter and convenient route. Today, many of my objections have disappeared. We are building the Transcontinental Railway, which will give the residents of the goldfields direct communication with the Eastern States, so that if they want to go direct they will be able to do so. Another reason is that at the present time the justification offered for this line is that there is one and a half million acres of rich land available for wheat growing in the vicinity, and if that is the case such a huge extent of good agricultural land certainly deserves a railway to develop it. It is very certain that without railway communication, no matter how good that land may be, its development is impossible. I understand that a good deal of land has been taken up and settled upon, and in fairness to those people, we can hardly deny them the right which other portions of the country enjoy, that they should be able to look forward, at all events, with some hope to having a railway, if not at the present time, at any rate at no distant date. We have had very contradictory reports with regard to this land, and for my part I have never been satisfied in the past that it was suitable for agriculture. The scarcity of water seemed to be another fatal drawback. However, with the information we now have, from people who have made it their business to examine the country, I must admit that

the land seems suitable for settlement. I feel that I am bound on the present occasion to give my support to this Bill, and I can do so conscientiously. I do not in the least regret my action in the past, because I think there was then no justification for the line, but this country has now progressed to such an extent that the objections which I have mentioned have disappeared. The country has outgrown these objections. We are able at the present time to compete even with the South Australian market in the production of grain and fodder and many other things, even though a railway is established to Esperance, and communication given between that part of the country and South Australia. I think that this State can hold its own very well at the present time. I do not want to labour the question, but make these few remarks to justify my action. It is a different proposition now to start a line at Esperance and extend into the wheat growing belt. Of course I recognise that it is the thin edge of the wedge, and that the line will be pushed on to connect with Norseman and the whole of the railway system of the State before many years. I may say that the Coolgardie-Esperance railway is the only one that I have ever opposed during all the years I have had the honour of having a seat in this House. I always felt it my duty to oppose the Coolgardie-Esperance line, and there is another railway which, if I had the opportunity, I would be very glad to oppose, and for preference I would vote a hundred times for a line from Norseman to Esperance before I would vote for what I consider a wicked waste of money at the present time. I refer to the proposed duplication of the line from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle. It has been said that we cannot bear the cost of a line to Esperance, but what about the enormous cost of the duplication of the line from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle? I do not anticipate for one moment that the Esperance line is going to pay for some time to come, except in an indirect way by opening up practically a new province altogether, but the construction of this other railway is not going to be of any benefit

at all that I can see. Where are we going to get interest and sinking fund for the construction of that line? As a matter of fact I think we are suffering from what is commonly known as swelled head, and want to appear very big by having a 4ft. 8½in. line to connect with the Trans-Australian railway at Kalgoorlie, and we are a little premature in this direction. For many years there has been a break of gauge between the two principal capitals of the Commonwealth, and the traffic is ten times greater than it is going to be on this line for many years. I simply refer to this as I want to record my opinion that it is a scandalous waste of money which the country is not in a position to expend. We have enormous requirements at the present time. There are the harbours from Geraldton to Albany, including Fremantle and Bunbury, which want large sums expended on them. The Fremantle harbour is one of the most urgent works at the present time, yet we are told, and know it is a fact, that we are in straitened circumstances, and that it is difficult to carry out anything. I presume that the railways that have already been authorised will take precedence over this Esperance line, and that it will be a considerable time before any attempt is made to build it. There are a great many railways awaiting construction, but in due course I hope the day will come when this line will be built, and that my hon. friends who represent the goldfields will have their fond hopes realised, and that a number of people from the fields will drift on to that land and become permanent settlers. I have thought very seriously over the remarks of the Hon. J. E. Dodd, and I can join with him in the sympathy he has always shown for miners who have been incapacitated at an early age from carrying on their calling. If this railway will be a means of opening up a large expanse of country where they can settle and have comfortable homes in their declining years, I think a great deal of good will be accomplished. I feel in duty bound to support the measure. There has been in the past a good deal of feeling that members of this House were

opposing the Esperance railway in opposition to the goldfields, but I think I may say that was not the case. For my own part, I entertained no such feeling, and would only have been too pleased if I could have conscientiously supported the Bill long ago. I have visited the goldfields a few times, and I have very agreeable recollections of my treatment there. I was never treated more kindly or more lavishly in my life, and therefore it affords me additional pleasure to give my support to this railway, which I know my friends on the goldfields so much desire. I think I have said enough to make my position clear, that under the altered conditions I feel justified in giving my support to the Bill.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) : What I have to say regarding this Bill will take a very short time indeed. I have to thank the members of this House, both those who have approved and those who have disapproved of my views on this question, for the patience with which they have listened to me on many different occasions when expounding my views, and I think I cannot better show my appreciation of their consideration than on the present occasion cutting my remarks very short, and making them as clear and concise as possible. I can follow the remarks of those hon. members who have pointed out that this Bill is quite a different one from the previous measures which have been before this House in connection with supplying the port of Esperance with railway communication. The proposal is now for a railway merely for 60 miles north of Esperance, and in that connection it is an agricultural railway purely and simply. I think it was the hon. Mr. Colebatch who said that he would prefer to vote for the Norseman-Esperance railway than vote for the Bill now before the House. I would remind that hon. member, and those who were here when the question was previously before the Chamber, that several hon. members expressed their intention to vote for a railway 60 miles north of Esperance. They expressed regret that the Government did not see their way to bring in a Bill to

carry out the recommendations of the Advisory Board, and now I presume that the Government have adopted the suggestions that were made by so many hon. members of this House, and have brought forward this Bill for the construction of the railway over the distance recommended by the Railway Advisory Board. The arguments that have been advanced are on quite a different basis from those previously used in this House. I have not heard any hon. member who has so far spoken question the value of the agricultural lands that this railway would serve. I think the question of the value of the agricultural lands has now been settled. Anyone who cares to look up the debates in this House will find that so far back as 1887 there were men in this Chamber who had been over that country, and said that it would some day be a prosperous and well settled agricultural province, and although a railway has been advocated to unite the goldfields with Esperance on many different occasions since then, I think on no occasion in the debates I have examined was the agricultural value of the land ignored. In practically every instance some reference was made to the value of that land, but of course it is only within comparatively recent years that agriculture has become fashionable in Western Australia, and consequently it is only within recent years that the full agricultural value of the land in the Esperance district, and not only there, but in other parts of the State, has been fully recognised. If any doubt still remains regarding the value of the lands, I may mention that I have here some seven official reports, and there is not one of these reports but recommends the land. The only report that was at all doubtful was that of Mr. Paterson, but he did not condemn the land. It is only fair to him to say that one cannot find a single sentence condemning the land. He made certain recommendations, which have since been carried out. One was that Mr. Thompson, owner of Grass Patch, should be asked to sow experimental plots with wheat, and so be able to test the value of the country. Mr. Thompson has

never been a year without putting in wheat, and he has been doing it since Mr. Paterson made his recommendation, and not only Mr. Thompson, but other farmers in the neighbourhood. Dr. Richardson and his son during last year had no less than 400 acres in. I think at Grass Patch Mr. Thompson had something like 70 acres in, and the Colonial Secretary read out in the course of his speech the result of the yield from those particular districts. I think it was something like 16 bushels to the acre. Surely that is a test that ought to satisfy. The only other point in Mr. Paterson's report was regarding the holding capacity of the land, and since then about 30 dams have been put down, and every one of those holds water as tight as a bottle. There is only one dam in the district which does not hold water. That was put down 12 or 15 years ago, and was a dam that anybody could see would not hold water. It was built on a reef which contained a fault, and the water escaped through the fault. Regarding the question of holding capacity, several men in a position to judge say that the land is the best they have seen for holding water.

The Colonial Secretary: There is a good dam within 15 chains of that had one.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Yes, that is so. I would like to refer to one or two arguments advanced in opposition to the railway. Mr. Sanderson seemed to discover in this railway something in the nature of a design on the part of the goldfields people.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Hear, hear.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: He seemed to think they were putting it forward as what he described as an agricultural mask; and Mr. Cullen spoke very much on the same lines. Suppose the goldfields do desire the railway, is that any reason why it ought not to be built? Have the goldfields proved such enemies to the State but merely because they wish a railway, had in itself is sufficient argument against it? The speeches made by those hon. gentlemen are lacking in ordinary generosity to a portion of the State which

I think, has done good service to Western Australia generally. I agree that the goldfields desire the railway, and I will tell hon. members why. There is nothing sinister about it, nothing objectionable or which could be used as an argument against the line. Most of the people of the goldfields have come from the Eastern States. Many of them were originally farmers, some are farmers' sons, and although they are concerned in the mining industry there are many who have a thorough knowledge of the agricultural industry. These men know something about the mallee lands of Victoria and of South Australia. They know what the mallee lands in this State have done for the people who settled upon them. Some of them have seen this particular district. They recognise in it land similar to the lands which have proved so productive in the Eastern States. They have great faith in that land. I have met many of these men with a knowledge of agriculture who have been all round Western Australia. They do not condemn the land elsewhere in the State. The goldfields people do not condemn the land in any part of Western Australia; but what they do say is that they like this particular country, which from their point of view is second to no land which they can get at present in the State. And that view is supported in the official reports which I have mentioned. The majority of the railway Advisory Board—which was appointed, not by the present Government, but by the Moore Government—say that in the Esperance district there is a million and a quarter acres of the best wheat-growing land at present in the possession of the Crown in this State. The people of the goldfields are in touch with the locality and hence it is but natural that, as the desire of most miners is to end their days on farms of their own, they should be interested in this particular line, because they know more about it than the people anywhere else in the State. That is the reason why they feel so very keen on this particular railway. Many have shown their good faith by going down there, taking up the land, living upon it.

and spending their money in endeavouring to prove its value. There is at present a considerable number of settlers, probably 70 or 80, down there, and not one of those settlers—I have met a great many—has expressed a single word of dissatisfaction regarding the quality of the land. The longer they have been upon the land the more enthusiastic are they concerning it. But their position is that there is between them and Esperance a stretch of 15 or 20 miles of sand through which it is practically impossible to cart their produce or receive their supplies, while to the north, between them and Norseman, there is what is known as the Glue Pot, which is at times an almost impossible place to get through. In consequence of this the cost of carting, as the Colonial Secretary pointed out, is something like £7 a ton. However, they are there battling bravely on. They have not a word of dissatisfaction in regard to the quality of the land. Indeed they are more enthusiastic on that point than ever. That is why the goldfields people are interested in this railway. They want an opportunity of putting their energy and money into this land, to make of it a province of which the whole of the people of Western Australia will have good reason to be proud. Mr. Cullen does not deny the value of the land. His contention is that a railway should run east and west. I sincerely hope the day will come when a railway will run east and west from this particular line which we are now considering. I am always glad to hear of good land in this country, and I hope Mr. Cullen's expectations will be realised. But what I cannot understand about Mr. Cullen's statement is this: while he was advocating that east and west line I asked him which would be the port for Grass Patch. I could not get an explanation from him, but some settler in the Esperance district has sent me a copy of Mr. Cullen's paper, the leading article in which deals with the question of Esperance. That article speaks of Albany or Perth as being the best port for Grass Patch. Albany is some 300 miles distant and Perth is about 500 miles, and to

people who are only 45 miles north of a port such as Esperance this proposition must seem absurd. I cannot understand the meaning of a contention such as that. It is either a case of ignorance of geography or a desire to centralisation run mad.

The Colonial Secretary: Surely your reading of the article is not correct.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I shall pass the paper on to the Colonial Secretary that he may read it for himself. The article runs as follows:—

Investigation shows that the line through to the Great Southern would ensure for these Esperance lands much speedier communication to the great ports of Perth and Albany, while at the same time bringing the line within practicable carting distance of every part of the area of land to be served.

I do not think there is need to dwell further upon that. Another speech to which I shall refer is that made by Mr. Colebatch. I am sorry the hon. gentleman made that speech, because we all look to him to some day occupy a high position in the affairs of this State, and as an old colleague and friend of that hon. gentleman I personally wish him every success and good luck in the road along which he is following. But if he will pardon me for saying it, his reputation will not be enhanced by the repetition of speeches such as he made with regard to the Esperance railway. The first essential of any speech in political life is, in my opinion, accuracy. I think no one who has considered that hon. gentleman's speech can regard it as in any way accurate. He said that this line would cost a million pounds, or that the expenditure it would entail would mean a million pounds. The engineer who has gone thoroughly into the matter points out that this project will cost £102,000. Surely the multiplication of that amount by 10 is not in accordance with facts.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: You know that is a mis-statement.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I do not know anything of the kind. The hon. member then went on to explain that the railways which would follow on from this

project east and west and the harbour works would probably entail an expenditure of a million pounds. We are discussing a question which involves an expenditure of £102,000, and to multiply it by ten times is surely not a fair line of argument.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: You know that the two estimates refer to entirely different works.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I do not know anything of the kind. I know what the hon. member said. He went on to say the railways east and west and the expenditure upon the harbour would mean a million pounds. As far as the expenditure on the harbour is concerned there is no man in Western Australia who knows more about that harbour than Mr. Cuthbert McKenzie, who has been in and out of the harbour in connection with his duties as a seafaring man hundreds of times, as he has explained to the House. What he said in his speech was that the alteration of the jetty at Esperance would provide all the requirements of Esperance for many long years to come. So far as the east and west railway is concerned, I only hope it will be necessary to extend railways in all directions, because it will show the value of the land. I have always been delighted to vote for agricultural railways in every part of the State. When the Government have said that the building of an agricultural railway would advance the interests of the State I have cheerfully and gladly voted for it, and I think every goldfields member in both Houses of Parliament has been only too delighted to do something for the agricultural industry. Go up to the goldfields to-day and attend any public meeting. You will never hear one word of condemnation because of what the Government are doing or have done, or what any other Government have done to assist the agricultural industry. Agriculturists have no better friends in the State to-day than the goldfields people. Here is the one railway which goldfields members have asked for because they know it is an agricultural railway—and there has never been a railway before the

House for which a stronger case has been made out—and they plead with other members to give to this railway the same consideration as goldfields members have given to agricultural railways in other parts of the State. Mr. Colebatch went on to exaggerate in a wildly absurd fashion the financial position of the State. He referred to the Fremantle dock.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: I never referred to it.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Well of the Fremantle harbour, at any rate. He spoke of the bulk handling of wheat, of all that would be necessary in connection with that—which no doubt in its time will be very necessary—and he also spoke of the duplication of the Kalgoorlie-Fremantle railway. All the work that the hon. Mr. Colebatch has outlined would cost many millions to construct. It is work which will be spread over a great many years, but the expenditure of these millions will neither be hastened nor retarded by the expenditure of £102,000 on the construction of the railway which the goldfields people ask for and which will add a new province to Western Australia.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch: The goldfields people are not the settlers.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The settlers are asking for the railway and the settlers are goldfields people. The goldfields people know more about this railway than any other people in this State. They know a good deal about the mallee lands and they have faith in this district and want an opportunity to open it up to the advantage, not only of themselves but of the State, if this Council will give them an opportunity. The hon. Mr. Gawler said that this railway might be unproductive. I have voted for numbers of agricultural railways, none of which was said to be productive straight away, but I have done so cheerfully and gladly, and will do so again. I am always glad to hear of good land in any part of the State which may be served and opened up by a railway. It is by building railways that we will be able to develop this country and make it the great and prosperous country which we all desire to see it. There

was an inference in the speeches of the hon. Mr. Cullen and the hon. Mr. Sander-son that goldfields people do not regard themselves as West Australians. Whatever feeling may have existed in the past concerning the people who settled on the goldfields, the bulk of them, nine out of every ten, will live and die in this State and are as much interested in the State as if they were born here. They are not opposed to the interests of Western Australia either in sentiment or desire, nor will they intentionally do anything that will be contrary to the interests of the State, and anyone who says anything to the contrary says something which is untrue of the goldfields people. I live on the goldfields and have lived there since 1895. I know the people of all classes and I say they are loyal to Western Australia and are desirous of advancing the State's interests, and any inference contained in those speeches that this railway, or any other project of theirs, is detrimental to the interests of Western Australia, is absolutely wrong and without the slightest foundation.

Hon. J. Cornell: The goldfields people are big West Australians.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The goldfields people never forget that they are here in Western Australia in a State that covers one-third of the Commonwealth. They view the whole question in a broad way and their desire is that all the vacant spaces of Western Australia shall be filled. The most serious problem we have is to fill the vacant spaces in the south and north of this great and vast State. This is a chance to fill one of the vacant spaces in the south and I only hope that the time may come when we will have a chance to vote in the direction that will tend to fill the vacant spaces in the north, which represent one of the biggest problems of this State. What will be the meaning if this Bill is to be rejected again? I do not know exactly how the attitude of this House in respect to this railway should be regarded, unless it is to be an instruction to the Government not to go on with any further expenditure on developmental work. That is the only possible construction I would be able to place

upon the rejection of this Bill. I for one would be very sorry indeed to see the developmental work of this State stopped. At no time is it more necessary to go on with developmental work than when the financial position may not be as bright as it ought to be. At such a time it is all the more necessary to open up the new districts of the State. Those who talk about the financial obligations which will be entailed by this line evidently have not read Mr. O'Brien's detailed report of what the financial position would be in the event of this railway being constructed. Here is the estimate by Mr. O'Brien, Engineer for Water Supply in the Mines Department, who was sent into the district. He estimates that if this particular railway were built it would open up land to the following value:—

Agricultural land within 15 miles of proposed railway and between 25 miles and 80 miles road survey, excluding salt lakes, 922,000 acres at 10s., £461,000; sand plain south of mallee (25 miles) to the coast, including swamps, 412,000 at 4s. 6d.; and sand plain within mallee belts, 22,000 at 4s. 6d., £97,650; total £558,650.

Hon. M. L. Moss: What qualification has he to pass that opinion?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Is not that sufficient answer to those who object to this railway upon financial grounds? The hon. Mr. Moss has asked what qualification Mr. O'Brien has in regard to this particular matter. The hon. member is evidently not aware of the number of land classifiers, expert men, who have been down there. There are Messrs. Hawby, Middleton, O'Brien, Johnston, Muir, and numbers of others, and I could supply the hon. member with their official reports. There has never been an agricultural railway over which so many reports have been supplied and so many reports so invariably favourable, as this particular line. I hope this House will see its way to help the struggling settlers who are making a hard battle to provide homes for themselves and their families. It will be a very acceptable Christmas box to them if this Bill is passed. They are waiting anxiously for to them it

means everything in the world; it means all the difference between ruination and prosperity, whether the line is constructed, and I hope a majority of the members of this House will extend to this proposal the same consideration which goldfields and other members have extended to other agricultural railways in the past.

Hon. F. CONNOR (North): I have listened with intense interest to the speech which has just been delivered by the hon. Mr. Kirwan and I am more than pleased with it inasmuch as it has proved to me that the people of the goldfields and the coast are going to live in peace and amity and good will, and to be neighbours in the true sense of the word. I would dearly like to support this Bill. As a representative of the people I am in somewhat the same position as the hon. Mr. Kirwan. I have been longer in Parliament than any other hon. member who is in the House at the present moment and I have been fighting for the rights of the people I represent, but up to now with very little result; in fact up to now with practically no result. Consequently I sympathise with the hon. member at the other end of the State, but before the people of the North, or their representatives, can distribute the charity demanded for other parts of the State, justice must be done to the portion I represent. If it were not for the fact that justice has not been done, inasmuch as requirements have not been attended to, I would without hesitation vote for this Bill.

Hon. C. A. Piesse interjected.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The hon. member is one of the most generous members of this House. He says he will vote for the Bill; and why should he not? His constituency is covered with railways; he could not ask for any more.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: We want a dozen more yet.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I once heard the hon. member called a name by an hon. member named Simpson in another place, but I will not repeat it. It was something which meant that the hon. member wanted everything. The hon. member is most generous and I appreciate the fact inas-

much as he wants nothing, and consequently can say to his constituents, "We have all we want; we can let them have this railway." I am speaking on this proposal from the standpoint of a representative of the North of this State. I cannot put myself on the same plane as the hon. Mr. McLarty, who is not a representative of the North-West, but who is a big property holder in the North and who, no doubt, looks to me as a representative of his interests to study his interests in casting my vote. I listened with pleasure to the hon. Mr. McLarty, but I cannot help saying that, in face of his speech, he would blame me for not doing my duty if I took any other stand.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member is hard.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am saying what I believe is the truth and I stand by every word I say. I have a very hard task. I say honestly I would like to vote for this Bill but I will give my reasons why it is impossible for me to vote for it. In the first place, will the finances of this State stand any proposal such as this? Have we any proof that there is sufficient land of a quality to produce enough wheat to make the railway pay? I say we have not that proof. I do not say that we have not the land but there has not been sufficient proof brought before the House. If there is one authority we must bow to, one who has seen this land and who ought to know, and on whom we may depend both from the financial and the practical point of view, it is Mr. Paterson, whose opinion I would take before all the rest.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: He did not condemn it.

Hon. M. L. Moss: But he made a recommendation which has never been carried out.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It has been carried out.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The finances of the State at the present time prohibit any fancy propositions such as this. It is not my intention to give a detailed account of the State steamboats but I do know that they will not pay and I do know that at the present time the furnace

tops of the "Western Australia" have fallen in, and it will take a lot of money to put that vessel into commission after she goes into dock. It has been publicly said and I hope it is not true, that up to the present time the loss on the steamship venture is considerably over £100,000.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It is over that.

Hon. F. CONNOR: And we have had no statement whatever from the Government in regard to these steamers.

The Colonial Secretary: You will know all about them in a few days.

Hon. F. CONNOR: We have been promised a balance sheet so often that I am beginning to think that we will not get one at all. I am one of those now who in consequence of the long standing promise is beginning not to believe anything that is told to me. We have to face a loss as I have said of over £100,000 and we have vessels which are depreciating in value. That is one item. We have also a proposition by the Government to build bush pubs; I do not know how many. We have timber mills which are not yet producing sawn timber and which are supposed to be employing steamships and sailing ships to carry timber away from the State. We have brick plants which have not yet produced bricks for the building of houses. I am mentioning these things to show my friend Mr. Kirwan what the State is undertaking. None of these plants which the Government have started have yet produced anything. We have dairies and I might mention here that though the father of the gentleman who runs these dairies comes from the same town as I do, he is no relative of mine. We know that these dairies have not proved the success that was predicted for them. We have these dairies now and no milk is being got from them. I would like to impress these matters on hon. members who are supporting this measure. Then again we have in the City of Perth the purchase of the tramways by the Government, and we know that they have not yet been paid for. A far more important proposition than this railway is the upkeep of the Agricultural Bank. We

want money for that institution. We want money for it even more than we want it for the development of the North, South or any other part of the State. That is an institution which the Government must keep going, and must have established on the best basis possible, and must make the best use of, because that bank, to my mind, is the salvation of the agricultural industry, and the agricultural industry will be the salvation of the State, independent of the fact that at present mining has a big standing. We do not hear much from the supporters of this Bill at the present time that the proposed railway is a goldfields' one. The proposition has developed into an agricultural line. I am not running it down as an agricultural proposition, and I do not say that there is not good land there, but at the present time the State has no right and the Government have no right to embark upon a new proposal like this which will cost more than the country can afford. We have to look forward, as an hon. member pointed out, I think it was Mr. Cornell, to the construction of our section of the Trans-Australian railway. We have to find at least a couple of millions for that and in the face of it all, and I do not mind being accused of reiteration, I ask how we are going to do it. It might be asked what on earth has the North, which sent me here to represent it, to do with this proposition? The only thing that it will mean to the North will be additional taxation without getting any benefits. Then again to continue the propositions which the Government have taken in hand, we have the implement works at North Fremantle. Are they paying or are they going to pay? I contend they are not going to pay. This is another entrenchment in the domain of private enterprise, which could make a success of a venture of this kind; the State certainly will not do so. Then we must remember too, that harbour improvements at Fremantle must be taken in hand and at an early date too, unless we want to lose to a very large extent the trade of the whole world. We must deepen the harbour and provide more wharfage accommodation, and not only

must we do that at Fremantle, but we must consider the question of improving the harbours at Geraldton, Albany and Bunbury. How on earth are we going to face all these propositions which amount practically to starting a new State? And yet the Government propose to embark on a venture such as that of building a line from Esperance 60 miles Northwards. It is not even a spur line which my friend Mr. Piesse often advocates the construction of. It is not even a line wanted by Mr. McLarty who does not care what happens to the North. Of course I do not blame the goldfields members in this House for advocating the construction of this line. I have no doubt that if I were in their place I would do the same with all the eloquence at my command. Further, when we consider the works which have to be undertaken and which are urgently needed, there is the renewal or duplication of the pipe line between Mundaring and Kalgoorlie. There is no disputing the fact that this is an urgent work and it is entirely a goldfields matter. Then, again, we have another proposition in which Mr. Kirwan is interested. That is the erection of a university building here. Still another matter which will cost a lot of money and which must be considered is the building of workers' homes. These must come before the Esperance railway. Then we have the metropolitan water scheme which is urgently required. Again, there is the bulk handling of wheat. I have mentioned all these things and shown hon. members how I feel towards them in view of the financial condition of the country. I would like to say a few words in connection with the Esperance harbour. There we have an open roadstead. There is a jetty constructed at which steamers cannot berth in rough weather. They have to clear away and find an anchorage, and even then they experience a difficulty in doing that.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: Who told you?

Hon. F. CONNOR: About 14 or 15 years ago when it was thought Esperance was going to become one of the great ports of Western Australia my firm had three steamers running in the cattle trade.

On one of these steamers was Captain Clark, who in England is looked upon as a high authority on harbour matters. My company sent him down there to report on that harbour and he was not prejudiced one way or the other, and what he told me was there was no harbour at Esperance, that it was merely an open roadstead, and that before you could berth ships to load cargoes it would be necessary to build a jetty two or three miles out. The hon. member opposite might laugh, but I might say to him that where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise. He might know more about tailoring than harbour works, but if he does not he would be a bad judge even of tailoring. Esperance harbour, according to Captain Clark, is an open roadstead and it would be necessary to construct a jetty miles long before it would be possible to get sufficient water in which to take the class of vessels which would trade there, and they would have to clear out to sea. He told me there is no anchorage there, but I do not wish to dilate on that any further. Suppose we pass this Bill for the building of the railway, there comes the question, what is the use of a railway without a harbour, and what will be the cost of the harbour? I am told it is possible to abandon the present jetty and go to some other point. Mr. Cuthbert McKenzie knows the other point.

Hon. C. McKenzie: I know it well. The jetty is in the wrong place.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Is there a place where we can build a harbour?

Hon. C. McKenzie: Yes, and get 30ft. of water.

Hon. F. CONNOR: Land locked?

Hon. C. McKenzie: Well you could go there at any time.

Hon. F. CONNOR: My opinion is that this railway will be a very great advantage indeed to South Australia. I do not object to South Australia getting an advantage over us, because we are all Australians, but although South Australia does not produce coal, fuel will be wanted for the railway, and it will come not from Collie, but from Newcastle or the southern coalfields; the steamers will call at Adelaide on their way to Esperance, and

thus a certain amount of trade will go to South Australia. I do not object to that, but I would point out the nice generous feeling shown by South Australia towards Western Australia when the Transcontinental Railway was under consideration. Now we are turning the other cheek. I would turn the other cheek if I thought it was necessary, but I do not think it is necessary, and I would not help them any more than I could help. This will not be like an ordinary spur line, it will be an isolated railway and we will have to build rolling stock especially for that particular portion of the line; we will have to build workshops there and it will be a new railway system.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Like Pilbara.

Hon. F. CONNOR: The people of Pilbara got tired of the hon. member at one time and he was not asked to go back again. I ask the hon. members who are such earnest supporters of the Bill why, if this land is so good and can produce such fine wheat crops, there is no stock raised there? There is no land between here and Esperance that can be worked in a large way on one particular crop unless it is in the hands of one hard-working family. There is no question about that. There is no large proposition in connection with farming that can be made to pay except by mixed farming.

Hon. C. A. Piesse: We will have it there.

Hon. F. CONNOR: But they have been settled down at Esperance for 14 years, and have they produced any meat in the shape of mutton or beef?

The Colonial Secretary: Yes.

Hon. F. CONNOR: How much?

Member: They have some goats.

Hon. F. CONNOR: They may have goats. We have obligations to other parts of the State. We have yet to consider the opening up and development of the North of the State. Generations before Esperance was thought about the North-West of this State was opened up by brave and bold pioneers, yet people of yesterday or the day before send hon. members to ask us to coddle them up and build railways for them. If this Esperance country is

the great wheat-producing land it is said to be, why in fourteen years have they not produced something in the way of sheep, lambs or cattle? Nothing has been produced, and consequently I cannot see why the country should be developed when the North, which has been able to produce the whole of the beef for the population of the State for nine months in the year, and has been doing it for many years past, has nothing done for it. My idea is justice for all parts of the State, and when the time comes that the finances of the State can stand it, and the North gets even a little justice, we will no doubt support the building of the Esperance Railway. Suppose the financial position to-day was as it was two years ago, and that taxation was not being jumped up like it is in the Bill we have had before us this afternoon, and that there was not a deficit of half a million pounds, I would vote for this Bill unhesitatingly, even allowing for the fact that within the last two years nearly six millions of money has been borrowed and spent in this country. But the Government having spent nearly six millions of borrowed money, having exhausted the credit of the country, and having on hand all those works which have been passed by Parliament and are not yet started, we are asked to take on a new railway system and almost a new province, and I do not see how we can do it. Then there comes the question of whether the railway can pay, but I am not going to work that out. I have worried a good deal over this railway, and I have said "suppose I could put myself before the whole of my constituents, how many would put up their hands if I said I was going to vote for the Esperance railway." I give hon. members my solemn word of honour I do not believe one hand would go up, and that being so, I must vote against this railway. I want now to refer to something which is somewhat personal. Some years ago a very representative deputation came down from the goldfields to put before the people of the coast their reason why there should be a railway from Coolgardie to Esperance. When they arrived in Perth they were somewhat in a difficulty because no Minister of the Crown or member of

Parliament would take the chair for them at their public meetings. I was approached and I said "certainly."

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: You were good enough to join in the deputation, too.

Hon. F. CONNOR: I am coming to that. I took the chair at the public meeting, listened to the arguments, and next day there was a deputation to the then Premier (Sir Newton Moore), and he heard the case for the railway. I went with them, and it has been put up against me ever since that because I did that I had committed myself to this railway. I am this minute committed to the railway, provided I can see that it will not be an injustice to other parts of the State, but because I took the chair at the public meeting and because I went on that deputation to the Premier, surely that does not bind me to cast my vote in this House in any particular way, surely it does not bind me to do something which is against my conscience and against the interests of those people who sent me here. On the occasion of that public meeting, after the speeches were over, Mr. Burton exhibited some lantern slides to describe the beauties of the country. Showing the pictures he said "This is bush, and this is where the land is cleared, this is the beautiful Grass Patch, and here are the horses, this is a wheatfield, and these are the beautiful sheep we grow there." I looked up, and I could not refrain from laughing. They were all goats! I just mention that little incident because of an interjection made a few minutes ago. I read the debate on this Bill in another place, and the whole crux of the speeches of the Minister for Lands, the Attorney General and the other speakers was to do justice to Esperance and be fair to other parts of the State. I want the fairness to start in the North. I have been the representative of the North for 20 odd years and I want it to start there where the first settlement was, where before Esperance was thought about people went and spent their money and their lives and did violence to their health; a country, which in regard to soil and climate and possibilities of development, is richer

beyond compare than this district we are talking about, and nothing has been done for it. I am really sorry that I conscientiously find it my duty to vote against the second reading of this Bill.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (North-East): I do not know whether it is altogether necessary for me to take up much time in speaking on this railway Bill, as a great deal has been said on the subject already. More particularly was I led into this opinion by the speech of the hon. Mr. Kirwan, for this reason, that Mr. Kirwan said in his opening remarks exactly what I was going to say, and the speech delivered by the hon. member—I refer again to the first portion—will save me the trouble of making perhaps a somewhat lengthy explanation. The remarks I refer to are those in which the hon. member stated that this is an entirely new proposition from the old Coolgardie-Esperance railway. It is an entirely new proposition, and in the phrase of the hon. member, is an agricultural railway. These remarks I agree with, and as they will save me from traversing the whole ground in regard to the Coolgardie-Norseman railway, let me deal with this new proposition. I do not think it is necessary that I should say anything further except that, whatever opinions I had on the goldfields having a separate port, they do not apply to this at all. I will simply look on it, as the hon. member said, as an agricultural proposition, and let me say straight away that as an agricultural proposition—I judge it solely on the information supplied to us by the Colonial Secretary—it does not appeal to me, and I intend to vote against the Bill. This line affects the province I represent perhaps less than it does almost any other province in the State. The nearest it will go to any part of the province I represent is about 200 miles away. One thing that struck me as rather peculiar was the attitude of the hon. Mr. McLarty. I hope that at any rate I can adduce better arguments for voting against the railway than that hon. member adduced for voting for it. Among other things the hon. member referred to expenditure in other directions, and particularised that

in regard to one railway, that is, the duplication of the Fremantle-Kalgoorlie railway. I clearly remember that the hon. Mr. Colebatch and I fought very hard to prevent that Bill from being passed, and we had not very strong support. On that occasion I find that Mr. McLarty was one of those who voted for carrying that Bill for the very expenditure the hon. member complains about now. In regard to this agricultural proposition, let us first analyse the cost of this railway. We are told by the Colonial Secretary that it will cost £102,000. I doubt these figures very much, and do so for this reason: that the present Government in constructing railways of a similar kind, according to the reports, the cheapest they have constructed is over £2,000 a mile, and they run up to £3,000 a mile, so if we take the cost at £2,500 we get a total for the railway alone of £150,000. It is idle to close our eyes to the fact that if we build this railway our duty does not end there. I think that I and every other hon. member if we voted for the railway should feel ourselves in honour bound to vote for the deepening of the harbour. We would be only committing the people to a life of drudgery and poverty if we did not do so, as without proper harbour facilities it would be impossible for them to grow wheat at a profit. With regard to some remarks made by hon. Mr. Kingsmill, I have a certain veneration for the opinion of that gentleman in regard to navigation matters, but I cannot on this occasion agree with him. The hon. member referred to South Australia, in parts of which they grow wheat very successfully, and carry it away in shallow draught boats or schooners. The conditions in that regard, however, are entirely changed. In years gone by we had no Navigation Act and certain provisions applying to seamen and it could be done very much cheaper than at the present time. There was also a great difference in the cost of production, and therefore I say that if we are going to grow wheat successfully here we must have the same facilities as they have at ports like Albany and Geraldton.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They are doing it to-day in South Australia.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It cannot be done in this State as we know it is almost impossible to make it pay under favourable conditions if we depend on wheat and wheat only. The hon. Mr. Kirwan took Mr. Colebatch to task in regard to the cost of this harbour. All the reports I have seen regarding it are to the effect that it is more or less an open roadstead. With reference to the cost, I do not think after all that we could accept a better authority than the Colonial Secretary. That gentleman told us when I introduced the Coolgardie-Norseman Bill that it would cost one million pounds.

The Colonial Secretary: That is an opinion I had received from some of those opposed to the line.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am sorry the Colonial Secretary treats information so lightly and uses words in this Chamber so lightly that he presents information of that kind without being sure of his facts. I want to say that if it would cost one million pounds in 1906 the cost would certainly not be less to-day, as we know that the cost of work has increased and not decreased. So if we take the probable expenditure on the railway at £150,000 or £180,000, and the harbour at even half a million, we get an expenditure of about three-quarters of a million. What are we to receive for this expenditure? In the words of the Colonial Secretary in 1906, it would open up 30 miles of agricultural land.

The Colonial Secretary: Sixty miles of agricultural land would be taken up.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I would readily support this agricultural proposition if I thought it was a good business one, but the evidence put before the House by the Colonial Secretary does not show it is anything like approaching a good business proposition. What reports have we on this line? We have a report from Mr. O'Brien, and one from a Mr. Middleton. Who is Mr. O'Brien? We were told here to-night that he is the engineer in charge of the Goldfields Water Supply. It seems very strange that the report which we have is from an engineer

controlling the water supply on the Eastern Goldfields for the past ten or 15 years. Mr. O'Brien, I think, is a very good man at the work of constructing dams and small water supplies on the goldfields, but why should he be sent to report on this land?

The Colonial Secretary: From the standpoint of water supply.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: What judge is he of the land? You quoted his opinion on the land.

The Colonial Secretary: I did not; I spoke of Mr. Middleton's opinion.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: What are Mr. Middleton's qualifications? We are told he is an engineer surveyor.

The Colonial Secretary: He was a surveyor in the Lands Department for a number of years.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is passing strange that although we have in this State three agricultural experts, and one, —Mr. Sutton—especially for wheat growing in the dry districts, that Mr. Sutton was not sent to report on this land. We are told that the Agricultural Bank will not advance money on these farms. That fact alone is sufficient for me, because if there were good farming propositions down there the Agricultural Bank would not refuse to assist.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The doubt was as to the building of the railway.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: For the sake of argument I will let that go, and say it is strange indeed and wrong that Mr. Paterson was not sent down there and asked for a report; because these settlers cannot hope to succeed without advances from the Agricultural Bank. Therefore, was it not but a business proposition to have sent Mr. Paterson there first and to have obtained his opinion as to the land and the extent of settlement. One additional reason why I would not vote for the line is that, beside all the expenditure the Government are liable for, the expenditure authorised in other parts of the State, and that which in justice has been promised in still other districts, we now get this proposed line and harbour at Esperance. The Government are in duty bound to first give proper har-

bour facilities to Albany, Bunbury, Geraldton, and other ports. From these ports lines have been built out into the country and surely the farmers in those hinterlands are entitled to reasonable facilities at those ports.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Is the hon. member game to face his constituents after this speech?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I will face my constituents as readily as the hon. member, and will come back with as big a majority as he.

The PRESIDENT: The question is the Esperance Northwards railway.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: An additional reason for voting against the line is that we have it from the Colonial Secretary that the lines authorised by Parliament aggregate nearly 500 miles partly constructed, and nearly 200 miles not yet started upon; then we have it from the Minister for Works that it is not possible to build more than 200 miles of railway per annum. That being so, we have more than two years' work ahead of us in authorised railways alone, and we know that there are districts in the Great Southern which have been promised railways, and in which much more agricultural land can be opened up with less railway than is the case in the Esperance district. The case put forward by the Colonial Secretary is not one which I can conscientiously support. It is not a goldfields line, nor are the goldfields people much concerned about it.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The hon. member's constituents are very much concerned about it, and he dare not face them.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The case put forward in the House does not appeal to me, although as put forward in other directions it might appeal to certain hon. members.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: This was not the way the hon. member got into Parliament.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I will tell the hon. member how he got in. He got in with my assistance and the assistance of the Liberals, or he would not have been here to-day.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: That is absolutely false. I rise to a point of order. I wish to contradict the statement of the hon. member. At every meeting which I addressed during my last campaign—

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Is this a point of order?

The PRESIDENT: I am listening for the point of order.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: It is really a personal explanation I desire to make. At every meeting I addressed during my campaign—

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Is the hon. member entitled to interrupt my speech to make a personal explanation.

The PRESIDENT: Yes.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: At every meeting which I addressed throughout my campaign I always prefaced my remarks by saying that I was not a Government candidate nor was I attached to the Labour party, and the constant challenge to which I was subjected everywhere—Mr. Dodd was my opponent, and he will support me—the charge I had to answer at every meeting was that I was a Government candidate. I was falsely accused of it, and on every occasion I stated in public over and over again that I was not a Government candidate, and that I wanted to go into Parliament with a free hand; and those were the terms on which I was returned, to support what I thought should be supported and oppose what in my opinion ought to be opposed.

The PRESIDENT: I think that is sufficient.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I wish to make a personal explanation. I have listened to what the hon. member said in his personal explanation, and my reply to that is that my case is sufficiently supported by the fact that the hon. member stood at the request of the then Government, particularly at my request, accepted my assistance and the assistance of the Government and opposed Mr. Dodd.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: But Mr. Dodd came out after I was a candidate.

The PRESIDENT: I think this subject must be dropped and we will go on with the Esperance Northwards railway.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Can these statements not be contradicted?

The PRESIDENT: They have been, by both of you.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: They are absolutely wrong and this speech we are listening to shows the quality of the representative we have.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Do not cry about it.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The hon. member will cry before his constituents.

The PRESIDENT: I think the hon. member had better go on with his speech.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I will if I get the opportunity. I do not see how I can get on. If the hon. member has made all his personal explanation, and I cannot make any more, I will go on. Let me say by way of personal explanation that the hon. member opposed Mr. Dodd, who is a labour Minister to-day and this is sufficient answer to him. The case as put forward to the House by the Colonial Secretary does not appeal to me. The case as put forward by the Government in another place does not appeal to me. I do not know the case which may have been put forward in other places outside the House, but any promise or understanding made to or with any gold-fields member or newspaper, does not appeal to me in the least.

Hon. J. E. Dodd (Honorary Minister): Has the proposed change in your province made the alteration in your views.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have not altered my views in the least. I was never pledged to the Norseman-Coolgardie railway. I explained my position last time. I thought they were entitled to their port. But this Esperance Northwards line is an entirely different proposition, an agricultural railway 200 miles from Kalgoorlie. For the reasons given in the House I cannot support the Bill, and the promises given outside by the Government do not appeal to me.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: A worthy speech of a worthy member.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan): I consider the Bill comes at a very unfortunate time, particularly as the deficit

has already grown to such an extent and the money is badly needed for more pressing works. As for the million acres or more referred to as being equal to the same area in any other part of the State, such a statement must be taken with a grain of salt. Many of the lands in this State can never be rated as first-class lands as compared with the timber districts, and must be rated as second or third-class land. To create a separate railway system such as this and undertake the extension of a harbour, is absolute madness at this time in view of the state of the finances.

Hon. R. G. Ardagh : You voted for the railway years ago.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : Yes, long before you ever thought of being here.

Hon. R. D. Ardagh : And now you have ratted.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : I object to that.

The PRESIDENT : It would be far better if hon. members would keep to the subject.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : We are led to believe that the residents of the Eastern Goldfields are clamouring for the building of this railway. I do not believe a word of it. I think the people of the goldfields are absolutely indifferent about the construction of the line. We have been told in the past that if the line was constructed the people of the goldfields would go down to Esperance for their summer holidays. That is not much inducement for a Government pestered as this Government are for money to build the railway, and I venture to say that if the line was built the goldfields people would not go down there to spend their holidays. A man and his family who have lived a year on the goldfields do not go down to an uninhabited part of the sea coast for their holidays, but like to go down where their friends are. So even from that point of view the line would not be a success. Outside Kalgoorlie and Boulder the people, in my opinion, are utterly indifferent in regard to the construction of this line. I have not perhaps the same opportunities of judging

the people as has Mr. Kirwan, but this is his particular baby and he has nursed it so long that he is afraid to drop it.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan : How is it that the Assembly voted so strongly in its favour. They voted two to one in favour of it.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : Have you finished?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan : Yes, you can go on.

Hon. C. SOMMERS : The metropolitan area is crying out for an improved water service. We have been promised it for years, and we must face the responsibility of providing the money for it. Then we are in trouble with our sewerage system. There is a great fear that the septic tank system may be condemned altogether. If it is we are faced with an enormous expenditure, and the money must be found for it. The system is bad, and if it is to be altogether removed in the interests of the health of the people, an enormous amount of money will be required. The Fremantle harbour, on which we are all so much dependent, and on which the agricultural industry is so much dependent, is calling for an immense expenditure. We have a tremendous harvest in view and we cannot expect decent freights if we have not a decent harbour. The Harbour Trust Commissioners are telling the Government in every report that an enormous amount of money must be expended without delay. When we think of all we are committed to in the way of railways already authorised for thickly populated centres I say that these people in these sparsely populated districts must be content to wait awhile. When the works already authorised and other more pressing works have been completed and we have a non-political independent report of the Esperance district which will recommend the construction of this line I will gladly support such a line, but not until then.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew, in reply) : The hon. Mr. Cullen enlivened the debate on the second reading of the Bill by telling us another of his funny stories. The hon. gentleman was in an allegorical vein and re-

lated an anecdote of an importunate widow who had to deal with a curmudgeon. The curmudgeon was what would be called in these days a hard case. We were told that he feared neither God nor man. Yet after a battle of wits I have come to the conclusion that the calous, hardhearted old rascal was no match for the widow—he could not withstand her persistent importunities. I have pondered over my notes, and have endeavoured to discover the points which the hon. gentleman endeavoured to make. I had no difficulty in finding the widow, but I cannot find the curmudgeon. Surely the metaphor is not intended to apply to our beloved Legislative Council. To even hint such a thing would be simply shocking. The hon. gentleman tells us there is a widow in this case also, and he says she is not an emaciated Esperance widow but a fat, buxom Kalgoorlie widow. If report be true, she is neither the one nor the other, but she is a brokenhearted Norseman widow who recently shifted her abode to Grass Patch. The good old lady has harrowing tales to tell of blighted hopes and crushed affections, of broken vows and cruel desertion. Intensely wooed by one whose charming manners, persuasive eloquence, and alluring epistles touched the tenderest chords of her heart, this worthy goldfields matron was afterwards forsaken, and jilted in the most remorseless fashion, and utterly abandoned in favour of a bucolic damsel whose hopes were centred not on golden stone but on golden grain. The story would be bad enough if it ended there, but it does not. The inconstant lover added insult to injury; he sneered at the widow, he implied that she was not a good figure, and in fact was a bit on the weighty side. My only hope is that time, the great evolutionist, will touch the conscience of the deceiver, and lead him to take the only step which will bring joy and gladness to a lonely cottage in Grass Patch, where a poor old widow suffers silently, looking forward to the day when the iron horse will enter Grass Patch. But let us leave the parable of the fat widow, and turn our attention to more

serious business. Whatever the fate of this Bill may be, it will be a source of gratification to the supporters of railway communication with Esperance to know that this question has made considerable advancement during the last two years. The tone of the debate, the tactics of the Opposition, have shown that they have deserted all the trenches which they occupied during the last two years. It is no longer questioned that there is a large area of good agricultural land near Esperance; it is no longer questioned that that land is capable of growing wheat, and growing wheat profitably; it is no longer contended, as it was once, that there is not a good rainfall, and that the holding capabilities of the country are unsatisfactory. If such impressions still influence the great bulk of those who are opposing the line, they have been eminently successful in disguising them; they have kept them diligently in the background. The old argument was that the land was not fit for settlement. The argument to-day is that financial stringency will not permit of the work being undertaken. I have not the time nor the inclination to deal with all the assertions under this head, but what I wish to emphasise is that if the monetary situation is half as blue looking as has been represented by the suddenly arisen pessimists of this Chamber we are confronted with an argument not merely against this undertaking but against many of the proposals which the Government have in contemplation. We should close down on the construction of agricultural railways; we should stop public works on every side, we should cry a halt all round. But the critics of the Bill do not want us to do that; they want us to do it only in regard to the Esperance railway. I can assure hon. members that the Government do not propose to pursue any such policy, we are not disposed to adopt any such line of action. We recognise that the claims of Esperance are entitled to consideration equally with the claims of any other portion of Western Australia, and we should be unworthy of our trust if we took any other view of the situation. Here we have a district with an immense area of agricultural land clamouring for a recogni-

tion of its rights. These rights have been investigated, they have been proved to exist beyond a shadow of a doubt, and we shall certainly be no party to sacrifice Esperance in order to feed fat other portions of Western Australia. If there is to be a slackening of public works, it must be a slackening all round, and if the financial position is such as it is represented to be, it is an ordeal to which all should be subjected in fair proportion. Transparent selfishness is to a large extent at the bottom of the opposition to this project. Some hon. members no doubt think that if they support this line some day it may go right through to the goldfields and take trade from other parts of Western Australia. That is a sentiment which is unworthy of statesmen and it is unworthy even of politicians. Then again the impression seems to be abroad that other agricultural railways which have been agitated for—not those which have been authorised, because certainly those would have to receive prompt recognition—but those which have been agitated for will be kept back for many years owing to the construction of this 60 miles of railway. I regret to think that such a view should be taken, and that gentlemen who have occupied positions as parliamentary representatives for so many years should be influenced by such considerations. One can admire the statesmanlike attitude adopted by the hon. Mr. Piesse and Mr. McLarty. They have both been true to their traditions, they have always taken a broadminded view of public questions, and they are anxious to do justice to every portion of the State without distinction. I think the support of these two hon. gentlemen to this railway proposition will be a considerable tower of strength to this side. I stated that the argument that the land is no good had been dropped, but I had not forgotten the hon. Mr. Cullen. That hon. member said the land was suitable only for growing fat lambs, mutton and wool.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I said the conditions.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member's derogatory references in regard to the land were pulverised by him-

self before he sat down. He said in effect that the land is no good if the line is built from Esperance.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: I did not say that.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I took full notes of the hon. member's remarks, and the effect of them was that the land was no good if the line were built from Esperance northwards, but that it is magnificent land if we tap it by running a railway east and west, describing a semicircle and ending up at some point on the Great Southern Railway.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: Deliberate misrepresentation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Once the line reaches the Great Southern the land is transformed from barren country into beautiful wheat growing land. If we judge from the hon. member's remarks, if we attach any value to them, we should say that the Esperance lands were so good that it would be wise to build a line of 250 miles in order to open them up, but if we do that hon. members must bear in mind that the railway must always connect with the Great Southern. The financial stringency question does not trouble the hon. Mr. Cullen in the slightest. I am very glad to see that is one direction in which I can honestly compliment him in connection with his address. The hon. Mr. Piesse very pertinently interjected "Where is the port?" and that is what everyone wants to know. Where is the port for this new proposal propounded by the hon. Mr. Cullen? The hon. member in his opening remarks asked "Do the Government intend before the echoes of the debate on this Bill are off the air to bring in a further proposal to bridge the gap of 60 miles?" I hope the Government are not lunatics; they certainly would be lunatics if they pursued such a course of action. Supposing that we were so devoid of common sense as to follow the course suggested by the hon. member would members of this House be such puppets as to obey their action? The Bill would have to come before this House and receive the consideration of this Chamber, and this Chamber would have a vote in deciding its fate. The reason the Bill is introduced for the 60 miles is because the settlers told

me when I paid a visit to the district that they would be satisfied with 60 miles. They said all they wanted was connection with the port; they said they wanted no harbour improvements, that there was 18 feet of water at the end of the jetty, and that the wheat could be lightered. Since my return I have made investigations as to the probable cost of lightering. I know what it cost some years ago when they had to lighter goods from Geraldton to the big ships, a distance of three miles; the cost was only 5s. a ton. I have discovered that it will cost only 5s. a ton to lighter wheat from the wharf at Esperance to a boat lying a quarter of a mile out. Five shillings a ton means $1\frac{3}{4}$ d. a bushel. the railway freights would be low as they could not possibly be on more than 60 miles, and with mixed farming agriculture should certainly pay well under such conditions.

Hon. F. Connor: What plant would do that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. Mr. Cullen insinuated that the Esperance land had been dummed by Kalgoorlie people; he insinuated that goldfielders were holding it in order to deceive Parliament. He gave the impression that it was all bogus settlement and not genuine settlement. He said this could easily be done as it would cost only 6d. an acre. I do not think the hon. member entered into a calculation; if he had performed a simple sum in arithmetic he would have found that it was an almost impossible proposition. There are at present something like 200,000 acres of land selected along the route of the proposed railway. This land has been held for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, and during that time, assuming that the rents had been paid, and I believe in a great many cases they have, a sum of £12,500 would have been contributed to the Treasury chest in the shape of rent. And in order to provide an argument to deceive Parliament, the people of the goldfields have during the last two and a half years, so it is suggested by Mr. Cullen, contributed something like £12,500 to the Treasury. If this money has been contributed by dummies, if this sacrifice has been made, in my

opinion human nature on the goldfields must be very different from what it is in any other part of the world, and the question arises, who is finding all this money with which to dummy the land. The mining companies are not because from what I can learn they are opposed to the railway and I do not think the working miner would be able to find such a considerable sum.

Hon. J. F. Cullen: How much has been deposited?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I believe in every case the money was paid in the first instance, and it has been so to a large extent except where exemptions have been granted. If exemption had not been granted the applications would have been forfeited. Perhaps Mr. Cullen would regard as dummies the two women who are clearing and cultivating the two holdings near Grass Patch, while the husbands are working on the mines in Kalgoorlie. There is not the slightest doubt there is a fair quantity of land in the vicinity of Esperance which is held and which is not improved. At Seaddan, 30 miles from Esperance, a deputation of settlers waited on me and asked me to report to the Minister for Lands that there were many of those who had taken up land who were not complying with the conditions and they wished that forfeiture should be imposed. I told them I would not make such a recommendation. It was unfair to expect those people to improve their holdings in face of the fact that the Legislative Council had twice turned down the proposition to provide railway communication to open up that country. I made such a report to Mr. Bath when I came back. Mr. Cullen then went on to say that it would take 20 to 25 years to develop the traffic that would bring shipping to Esperance. This shows that Mr. Cullen did not study his subject. There are one and a half million acres of wheat land within 15 miles of the proposed railway, and if only one-twentieth of that land were cultivated it would bring shipping to Esperance. Last year the whole of the Victoria district as far south as Carnamah had only 64,860 acres under wheat. A lot of that

wheat went down the Midland line to Fremantle, but despite that fact several ships came to Geraldton to load wheat. I will come nearer home. Last year Northam had 305,409 acres under wheat, and York, Beverley, Pingelly, Narrogin, Wagin, and Tambellup combined had 375,266 acres under wheat. So that it will be a remarkable thing indeed if Esperance with its million and a half of acres of agricultural land, so easy to clear, will not attract shipping as Geraldton has done. Mr. Gawler belongs to the financial stringency section of those who are attempting to kill this Bill. He says there is a scheme in hand for spending £600,000 on the Fremantle harbour and he wants more spent there. I suppose he would be prepared to support the Government to provide these funds, the financial stringency notwithstanding. This argument must be stowed away every time where the interests of Fremantle are concerned.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: The interests of the whole State are concerned there.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would also remind hon. members that if the argument used by Mr. Gawler against this line holds good, it must hold good in regard to many other proposals which the Government have under consideration, and everything I have said in that direction will apply equally to the remarks made by Mr. Colebatch. If short rations are to be handed out there should be no favouritism at all. One district should not get roast duck and another district none at all, but I do not think there will be any necessity for restricting the menu. The Government have had no difficulty in raising money. The rate of interest is high to be sure, but it is so right throughout the world. If this Bill be passed it will be some time before the railway can be started, but the passing of the Bill will enable the Government to throw open the land, and it will be taken up within a comparatively short time. That will mean a big revenue to the State; it will give heart to the settlers and will justify the Government in rendering them further assistance until the State is prepared to carry out the un-

dertaking of building the line. It must not be imagined if this Bill passes that the Government are going to construct this line straight away. All we require is to secure the passage of the Bill so as to give heart to the settlers, that they may be assured that some day they will get railway communication and justify the Government in giving them every assistance. Mr. Cuthbert McKenzie gave some valuable testimony in regard to the Esperance harbour the other evening. Mr. McKenzie is a gentleman who knows what he is talking about. He is a practical man and his integrity is undoubted. He said in his remarks—

I have entered that harbour at all hours of the night and day and in all sorts of weather, and if it is the intention of Parliament to build this line of railway they need have no fear in regard to the harbour.

Struck by the weight of Mr. McKenzie's definite statement the prognostications of the opponents of this measure fall to the ground with considerable force. The paucity of settlement along the proposed line has been referred to. There are 53 settlers and counting their families they make up a community of over 100. These people have 53 holdings and they have 9,000 acres of land ready for next season. This number of selectors may be regarded as small, but under the circumstances how can we expect more? Can we expect people to go there from the goldfields or from other agricultural districts in view of the fact that this House has rejected the proposition for a railway every time it has been brought forward? Do hon. members think that those people would go there, take up land, pay rents, and spend money in development when there was no prospect of getting railway communication or of getting facilities to enable them to reach the market? Mr. Connolly's speech came as a considerable surprise. I know perfectly well that circumstances may justify a change of front in connection with any public question. There was a time when I myself strongly opposed the construction of a railway from Norseman to

Esperance, but at that period there was no suggestion that it was to be an agricultural proposition. It was then simply for the purpose of providing a port for the Kalgoorlie goldfields. In view of the fact that there was no reliable evidence before me showing that there was good agricultural land in that district, I opposed the project, but since the Advisory Board's report was made public early in 1911, I announced myself as a supporter of the construction of that line. We find Mr. Connolly in 1911 supporting the Esperance Railway Bill when it came up for consideration, and again last year we find that he was still of the same opinion. I will admit that the propositions are different, but they are only different to this extent, that under the circumstances we ought to have expected stronger support from Mr. Connolly than we received from him last year. He says that the proposal does not appeal to him as an agricultural one. But I would like to ask him from what point of view did he regard it in 1911? He states that it does not appeal to him as an agricultural proposition, yet for two years he supported, not merely a line of 60 miles from the coast, but a Bill for the construction of a railway 120 miles in length.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan : We did not expect him to turn dog on us when there was a chance of winning.

Hon. J. D. Connolly : I am voting against this because of the poor case you have made out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : Then the hon. member said why did not the Government send down Mr. Sutton to report on the land. Mr. Sutton is not an authority on agricultural land; he is only an authority on wheat.

Hon. J. D. Connolly : And is not this wheat land?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY : The hon. member cannot see any distinction between an authority on wheat producing land and an authority on wheat itself. I have already dealt with the paucity of settlers in that locality, and I may say that my sympathy is with the settlers in the Esperance district. I can

realise their feelings because the province I represent had a similar experience. For 10 years we repeatedly endeavoured to get the Government then in power to throw open the lands in the Victoria district, but Sir John Forrest for many years turned a deaf ear to our request, and only when Mr. Throssell became Premier was the first 28,000 acres of land thrown open. The surveyor who went there recommended that 128,000 acres should be thrown open, but Mr. Throssell owing to influences which were brought to bear upon him, owing to numbers of people going to him and saying that the land was no good, decided to only throw open 28,000 acres. Then in 1903 we urged the Government to purchase the Mount Erin estate. There were 60,000 acres of land there, 9,300 acres of freehold, 10,000 acres of conditional purchase, and 40,000 acres of pastoral land, and all was offered to the Government for £9,000, but the proposition was turned down. I have been going through some of the files and many of the arguments which were used against the land in that district are now used against the land at Esperance. The unanimous report of the Lands Purchase Board was against the purchase of the Mount Erin estate, but it was subsequently secured for £9,000 and cut up and sold for £28,000 and settled within 12 months, and now it is producing 13 bushels to the acre. This is what they said—

The area comprised in this estate embraces such a considerable amount of rough and inferior land unsuitable for agriculture that the board have unanimously decided not to recommend its purchase. We consider the freeholds and C.P.'s, assuming the latter to be fee simple, worth 9s. per acre. We believe there is a limited demand for agricultural land in the neighbourhood. The land is unsuitable for subdivision for agricultural purposes.

I shall not give the names of the individuals who signed that report. I will draw the veil of charity over them, but that is one of the most flourishing portions of the Victoria district to-day, and

there is no single acre of the estate which is not taken up and cultivated.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: Perhaps your present advisers may be wrong in this case.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Our present advisers say the land is good. I am sorry that, despite what they say about the land, the old idea still exists here, that nothing which does not bring grist to this portion of the State is worthy of consideration. I thought that old policy had died a natural death and I was staggered when Mr. Kingsmill, by an interjection the other night, reminded me of it. The day is long past when such a policy will receive the endorsement of the people of the State. A grave responsibility is cast upon the members of this Chamber; the making or marring of the Esperance district is in the hands of the Legislative Council. There is no doubt about that, and if this Bill goes out there will be probably an abandonment of settlement and that district will not have another opportunity for years of proving itself. And all for the sake of 60 miles of railway! Never in the history of Parliament has there been opposition to an agricultural proposition submitted by the Government of the day. This is the only one that has met with hostility, despite the fact that we have reports from all classes of public officials stating that there is an area of 1½ million acres of wheat-growing land, and despite the fact that there has been no mention on this occasion that there is not good wheat-growing land there. Even Mr. Cullen says I misquoted him; he says the country is good for other than sheep and lambs and that it is good for wheat, so that every member who has spoken has admitted that this is good wheat-growing land. I hope members will take the logical bent of the conclusions they have come to, and support the carrying of this Bill.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	13
				—
Majority against	..			2
				—

AYES.

Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. F. Davis	Hon. E. McLarty
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. B. C. O'Brien
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. C. A. Plesse
Hon. Sir J. W. Hackett	Hon. R. G. Ardagh
Hon. W. Kingsmill	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. A. G. Jenkins
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. M. L. Moss
Hon. J. D. Connolly	Hon. W. Patrick
Hon. F. Connor	Hon. C. Sommers
Hon. J. F. Cullen	Hon. T. H. Wilding
Hon. D. G. Gawler	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller).

Question thus negatived; the Bill rejected.

House adjourned at 10.7 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 9th December, 1913.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ELECTORAL—KALGOORLIE SEAT.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to announce to hon. members that I have received the resignation of Mr. Green as member for Kalgoorlie.