

some statistics which give food for thought have been quoted respecting the railway deficit. I feel sure that in this respect an alteration will come in the very near future. Twenty years ago, let me point out, one could go from Perth to Busselton per train once daily, to Bunbury thrice daily, and from the South-West to the metropolitan area twice or thrice per day. The very heavy capital cost of our railways, involving huge payments for interest and sinking fund, leaves a very narrow margin of profit on the comparatively small traffic being run latterly; for the standing charges have become disproportionately high. But the termination of the war will bring a return of prosperity. During the first three months of 1919 there should be from 100 to 150 steamers passing through Fremantle and Bunbury. In normal conditions the traffic on our railways will increase so as to spread the overhead charges over a much wider field, and prosperity will again dawn on our Railway Department. I am prepared to admit there is a good deal in the proposal that we should appoint one Commissioner of Railways at a high salary. But there is another side to it. If we bring a man from overseas he will know nothing about our local conditions, or about political influence. If he were installed in the Railway Department as an autocrat or a Czar, he would not last many months, it is safe to predict; and in the upshot the Government would probably be compelled to give him a large sum of money in consideration of the cancellation of his agreement. This place is too small for the appointment of a railway autocrat. One cannot walk down the main street without being known to everybody that comes along. I fear a single imported Commissioner would not prove the success some people anticipate. I would like to see the Government give this chance to a man already in the service, a young man if possible. Put him in the office of Commissioner, give him increased power and responsibility, and let us see whether we have not amongst us someone capable of filling the Commissionership of Railways worthily, and with advantage to the State of Western Australia. If the Government would adopt this suggestion, and at the same time invest the departmental sub-heads throughout the system with larger responsibilities, the results would, I believe, prove beneficial. Let the Railway Department appoint, for instance, a goods agent at Fremantle. It is years since the Fremantle Chamber of Commerce and other public bodies of Fremantle interviewed the Minister for Railways on this very subject, and said to him, in effect, "Here you have a place like Fremantle with a tremendous amount of traffic and work going on morning and night; and with all the regulations you bring in we are at times unable to gather exactly where we stand. Place a goods agent at Fremantle, and give him authority to deal with us without having to refer matters to Perth to the extent that is required to-day, and you will find that greater satisfaction will result." The same argument applies to Kalgoorlie. I say, appoint such officers and pay them reasonable salaries, and if they prove unequal to the work, if the jobs are too big for them, put them out and get

other men. By reforms of the kind I have suggested, the Railway Department of this State would be enabled to make good. But that department will never make good, even under the best railway man in the world, if the man in supreme control is curbed by the policy of the Government. If the Commissioner is hampered by regulations, he is bound to hamper every man under him who wants increased responsibility. I do not know that the Government have any particular man or men in view for the Commissionership or Commissionerships, and I do not know that the rejection of this Bill would embarrass them very much. I certainly shall vote against the second reading, in the hope that the Government will give prompt consideration to the advisability of affording our own local men the opportunity of proving their fitness to control our Railway Department under conditions of enlarged responsibility in administration.

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart, debate adjourned.

#### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [11.27] : I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 3 p.m. to-morrow.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.28 p.m.

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## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 17th December, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

### BILL—WHEAT MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous sitting.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Postponed Clause 5—Ratification of agreement, First Schedule:

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This clause was postponed, and, having considered the matter, I am prepared to agree to the amendment suggested at the last sitting by the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: This clause is really the Bill. Our friends on the cross benches have assured us many times during the discussion of this measure that the associa-

tion which they represent in this Chamber has nothing whatever to do with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd. Yet the very man who takes up the cudgels in this morning's newspaper on behalf of the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., is the general secretary of the Farmers' and Settlers' Association. This gentleman tried to prove that under this agreement Western Australia will pay considerably less than is being paid in the Eastern States, on like quantities. But such comparisons are quite inconclusive, and indeed useless, unless one knows the conditions that apply, and what work is being done for the money. The gentleman I refer to stated that the total amount of money received by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., last year for wheat handling was about £45,000. The actual amount paid up to the 30th June last was £44,734 9s. 1d., but there is outstanding an amount of £1,000 odd. The actual amount to be paid in respect of the handling of wheat last year will be £46,127 6s. 10d. In the Eastern States, however, the agents have to provide covering, whilst here the Westralian Farmers were paid for labour only in moving a small portion of the wheat crop no less than £2,049 in addition to the other £46,000. Then there were further amounts totalling £916 14s. 10d. paid in connection with that part of the last harvest. The total amount paid the Westralian Farmers, therefore, was £50,000; and not £45,000 as stated in this morning's newspaper by the gentleman to whom I have alluded. Not only that, but owing to the Scheme taking over the whole of the wheat to the 31st December, 1917, and only one firm dealing with this work, arrangements had been made for the express purpose of handling the wheat which was taken over by the Scheme, and there was a sum of £13,831 16s. 5d. additional paid by way of extras in the handling of wheat taken over from the other agents. Thus it will be seen that considerably over £60,000 was paid last year to the Westralian Farmers for the handling of wheat.

Mr. Maley: But not for the handling of last year's harvest?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No; £50,000 was paid for that. If hon. members will refer to page 178 of the evidence taken by the Royal Commission, question 3864, they will find there a comparative statement in regard to the handling of the crop last year, with the year before. That statement was prepared by Mr. Keys, and it reads as follows:—

In the 1916-17 crop the charge for complete services providing for wheat shipping was 3½d. per busel. This was based on payments to sub-agents of 1½d. per bushel, leaving 2d. per bushel for payment of agents' own services and responsibility, if any. As the payments to sub-agents for the two seasons were defined, we can now compare them and find that the average amount per bushel paid to the acquiring agents for sub-agents' services for the 1916-17 crop was 1.35d. per bushel, and the amount paid for 1917-18 wheat averages .866d. per bushel, showing a saving of .484d. per bushel, or practically

½d. per bushel in favour of this year. For the 1916-17 season, however, the sub-agent did duties over and above those performed this year. In view of the different work performed by the agents in the two different years, it is a very hard matter to make a comparison. In 1916-17 the agents got 2d. for all wheat shipped (that is, over and above the 1½d. allowed for sub-agents, if incurred). For this 2d. they had to caretake for 1-2 months, provide stacking grounds, use of dunnage, curtains, iron, wire and timber; also check railway accounts, ship the wheat and incur re-bagging risks up to seven per cent., as well as take full responsibility for certain losses. This year the sub-agents get ½d. simply for issuing certificates and checking weights at depôts, and under the system of checking by a running bulk sample they cannot possibly incur any liability for inferiority. Taking as our starting point the ½d. paid to agents this year, and adding to that the estimated cost of services which the Scheme has to perform, which were previously performed by the agents as follows:—Amount paid to agents ½d. per bushel, caretaking at depôts for 12 months, say, ½d., shipping wheat, say ½d., providing dunnage and roofing incurred this season, say, ½d., re-bagging previously done by agents, say 3 per cent., equal to ½d.—we find that the estimated cost for handling the 1917-18 harvest is 1½d., as compared with the amount paid to agents for the 1916-17 crop of 2d., or a saving on the present year of ½d. per bushel. There is, however, to be considered the cost of handling wheat in and out of depôts, also the cost of depôts. The depôts were specially provided so as to have fresh storage ground free from weevil, and this extra cost that has been incurred this year as against past years should be considered in the nature of an insurance against weevil damage over a long storage period. The amount of double handling in past years was about 50 per cent., and the amount of double handling this year caused solely by this system of long storage is about half the crop. The cost of all depot work to date amounts to ½d. per bushel.

I have read that statement for the purpose of showing that the conditions under which wheat was handled in connection with last agreement were different from the conditions under the 1916-17 agreements. I want to show that it is impossible to make a comparison in regard to the bulk price paid between one year and another. The same thing applies in regard to the other States. It has been found there that the conditions are entirely different. In dealing with the question there we find also that while Mr. Keys says there is a possibility that they are paying one farthing more in Victoria than in Western Australia, he points out also that the conditions are very different, because there they have several agents working at the one siding, and consequently it is necessary to have increased expenditure because of the duplication of the work. It is impossible, therefore, for any person outside

the Scheme to try and lead the farmer to believe that more is being paid in the Eastern States than in Western Australia. Unless the work is done under almost similar conditions and the responsibilities are the same, we cannot make a comparison. If we turn to question 4065 we find that Mr. Keys was asked this question, and he gave the reply which is stated—

We wanted to know what it would cost the Scheme, that is to say, the farmers as a whole, and we also wanted to know what the difference was so far as the agents were concerned?—It is hard to work it out exactly. The agents for the 1916-17 harvest had to cartake for 12 months at one-eighth of a penny.

It is difficult to find out the exact position. If we take away the responsibility which the Government are carrying, there is very little difference between the cost paid this year and the cost paid previously, for the full handling and responsibility. It is true that the price, as far as sub-agents are concerned, is less. They are doing the work cheaper, but the sub-agents are the people who at the present time are bearing any burden there is to be borne. I thought when a letter was published like that which appeared in the paper this morning, it was just as well to explain that it was impossible to strike a comparison with regard to the payments made in this State and the payments in the Eastern States.

Mr. MALEY: I realise that it is possible, by taking a portion of the evidence here and a portion there, to make things appear in a different light. I would draw the attention of the Committee to questions 3895 to 3897, asked by Mr. Allen, of Mr. Keys, and Mr. Keys' answers—

What amount per bushel do you estimate for the reduction in charges this year, deducting from what was paid to the agents last year, 3½d., what it is costing this year?—There is one halfpenny saving on the country sub-agents, and seven-eighths of a penny on the other portion of the work; a total saving of 1¾d. The charge for extra service represents a precaution against weevil. When I say we make a saving of 1¾d. I do not wish you to assume that the sub-agents made so much profit before, because they did not. From the Scheme agents' point of view, the case wears a different complexion.

If the agents did not make it, how was it saved?—In this way, that the Scheme is working with only one agent, instead of with five, whose expenses were much heavier.

The Scheme as a whole has saved that amount?—Yes.

This shows that we can take other extracts from the evidence which will convey another impression.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No amount of dissecting of the evidence will put the matter in any different light from that which was explained by the member for North-East Fremantle. Even if the member for Greenough goes through the whole report he cannot justify that

which the writer of the letter in this morning's paper seeks to establish. This letter bears out the statements made from this side of the House ever since the Bill has been under discussion. The Westralian Farmers, Ltd., have been on trial, and in defence of that body the secretary of the Farmers and Settlers' Association wades in this morning, and that of course is evidence of what we have been contending all along, that the two bodies are one and the same. I welcome the letter. If the secretary of the Farmers and Settlers' Association cannot make out a better case than he has done, it were wiser that he had remained silent.

Mr. MALEY: He has made out a pretty good case.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Nonsense! His first paragraph is in defence of the Westralian Farmers, Ltd. The secretary of an association which, we are told, has no connection with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., steps in to prove that the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., are not making undue profits. He says the figures given are figures supplied by Mr. Keys. They are no such thing. In any case, what is the use of them unless we have detailed information of the work done in the several States.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The services are totally different.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course they are. This is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public of this State. What other purpose could the writer have in view in quoting the cost of handling the harvest in the various States, and endeavouring to show from that alone that it is lowest in Western Australia; and to argue that, therefore, the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., have made a saving to the Pool. The comparison is of no use unless we can compare like with like.

The Minister for Works: Is it not a proof of the danger of mixing politics with business?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have been reiterating that until I am tired of it. What is the object of the writer? Merely to mislead the public into the belief that the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., have handled the harvest more cheaply than has been done in the other States.

The Minister for Works: It shows that he does not know his business.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Either that or he believes the people are gullible enough to swallow his statements.

Mr. Hickmott: Why do they not work in open competition?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is what we want to know.

Mr. Hickmott: The Westralian Farmers are quite prepared to work in open competition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So much are they so prepared, that only a month or two ago they circularised their local agents, instructing them not to handle the harvest unless the Government gave a monopoly to the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.

Mr. Hickmott: We shall soon see who gets the handling of the wheat if there be open competition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Was not the hon. member at the conference of the Farmers and Settlers' Association? Is he not aware of the resolution carried at that conference, demanding that the Government should give the work to the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.? That is the way they express a wish to have open competition. The hon. member should not neglect the instructions he received from that conference, else he will land himself in trouble before the next conference comes around.

Mr. Hickmott: I say, let them all come.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the hon. member takes fine care that they do not all come. If the hon. member pursues those lines there will be a new candidate on behalf of the association at the next election in his district. We remember the consternation created amongst the members of the executive when the Government invited quotations from all the other agents. No fewer than 70 letters were sent out by the executive of my friend's association, demanding prompt action to have that decision upset. That is how much they want open competition. However, I propose to move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (b) of Clause 6 of the agreement, "with" be struck out and "or" inserted in lieu.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We cannot amend the agreement.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We have already amended it, and we are going to amend it further.

#### Point of Order.

Mr. Draper: On a point of order. What is the actual motion before the Chair? At the last sitting an amendment was moved on Clause 5, and a vote was taken on the question of striking out part of the schedule, which, of course, was irregular. That led to several hours of discussion, and the whole clause was postponed. I anticipated that some amendment would be moved on that clause to-day. I understand that the leader of the Opposition is moving an amendment to the agreement. The only question before the Chair is Clause 5.

Hon. P. Collier: I wish to move an amendment that Clause 5 be agreed to, subject to an amendment in Clause 6 of the agreement.

The Chairman: As far as I can see, the amendment is in order.

Mr. Draper: I merely wished to know where we were. I take it from your ruling that no amendment has yet been made in paragraph (d) Clause 11.

The Chairman: That is correct.

Mr. Pilkington: I take it that Clause 5 is to be amended by adding certain words providing for an alteration to Section 6, paragraph (d) in the agreement, and that the whole of the words of this amendment will appear in Clause 5.

The Chairman: Yes.

#### Committee resumed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: At present the agreement made by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., and their sub-agents for the performance of

any of the work required in the agreement shall be subject to the approval of the Minister. The sub-agent, however, lets the work again. I want that contract by the sub-agents also to be subject to the approval of the Minister.

The Attorney General: Will that give you what you want?

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, not entirely. I do not desire to altogether prevent sub-letting, because in some cases it is desirable that this should be allowed. The next best thing I can do is to ensure the approval of the Minister being given in the case of the sub-agents, so that he will have to accept the responsibility. If the Minister approves of a contract at sweating rates, or if the sub-agent is getting the middleman's profit without doing any of the work, he will have to be responsible to Parliament.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In supporting the amendment, I would read from question 2626 of the report of the evidence before the Royal Commission, the witness being Mr. Brewis, manager of the Dumbleyung Farmers' Co-operative Company. This witness said—

I have had suspicion that Mr. Sabine has had bias, but I had no proof until this particular instance came under my notice. We had cleared up all the stacks in the Dumbleyung yard with the exception of one which was erected by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., and contained wheat for the 1916-17 season. The lumpers up to this point had been paid at the rate of 10s. 6d. per 100 bags, or roughly 1¼d per bag. When it came to the removal of the Westralian Farmers' stack the lumpers came to me and asked me to increase the rate. I asked them on what basis they wanted the advance and they said, "The stack has been standing longer than any in the yard and it is likely there is weevil in the stack, and mice are certainly in it, and our opinion is that it will break down worse than any of the other stacks." I thought there was justice in what they said. I knew the breaking down of the stack was to a large extent one of surmise, but I thought it was reasonable on their part to suppose the stack would break down worse than the others.

On the 17th May he also wrote to the Westralian Farmers asking them to give another farthing. The Scheme was paying 12s. 6d. per hundred bags plus 10 per cent. and they were paying the men who were handling the wheat only 10s. 6d. These words put very plainly the necessity for the amendment. The men who have to do the work have to do it below its proper value.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think the suggestion is a good one. The object of the clause is to provide that, not only the agreement made with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., but the agreements that they themselves make with others, shall be subject to the approval of the Minister. I suggest that instead of altering the word "with" the leader of the Opposition should add after "sub-agents" the words "or made by the sub-agents." I think this will make the position stronger than that suggested by the leader of the Opposition.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I agree to that. I move an amendment—

That the following words be added, "subject to the following amendment in Section 6, paragraph (b) of the agreement" after the word "sub-agents" in line 1 insert "or made by the sub-agents."

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The case put forward by the member for North-East Fremantle is a glaring one. Apparently the Westralian Farmers keep the 10 per cent. in Perth and paying the 12s. 6d. to their district agent, who in turn passes the work on to someone else at 10s. 6d. The people who lose the money are those who grow the wheat, and these are paying 33 per cent. for the super-vision of the job.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The whole thing works out at a profit of 33 per cent. to the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I think the amount paid for the work under the agreement for receiving the wheat, sampling, weighing, and so on, is not too much, but if the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., are allowed to dip into the Pool and get 33 per cent. more than they pay for the work that is done, in addition to other things, it is a pretty good agreement for them. It will be impossible for the Minister to give his consent to performance of work which will often have to be done by contract, such as the loading of a thousand bags at a siding here and there, and the covering of stacks.

Hon. P. Collier: But he can easily notify the sub-agents beforehand that he will not approve of unreasonable contracts.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Evidently 33 per cent. is utterly ridiculous; but we ought to be able to limit the commission which the agent is to receive. If I were a member of a Government that had made the agreement, and if I had told the people concerned that this was the final agreement, I would stick to it.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister tried that at the last sitting, and we were up all night in consequence.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I now move a further amendment—

That the following be added to the clause as amended:—"In Section 11, Subsection 1, paragraph (d), the words 'checking sample, verifying depot tally notes three-eighths' are omitted, and 'one-fourth' inserted; also a new paragraph, to stand as (f), 'For actual checking of sample and verifying of depot tally notes at depots, one-eighth penny per bushel.'"

My object is that definite prices shall be fixed for definite services, as I explained at considerable length at the last sitting. In the past the Government have done all the checking and weighing and the acquiring agent has merely received payment from the Government. Thus the farmers paid twice for the same work, to the extent of £6,000 last year. This year, if the same conditions apply, the farmers will have to pay £10,000 unnecessarily. If the Westralian Farmers Ltd. provide the men to do the work under Government inspection, there will be no necessity for the Government to have a full staff for that work. If I were controlling the Scheme, I should tell the

Westralian Farmers, "If that ½d. is put down there, you will have to find men to do the work; you will have 13 men there, and the Government will have two men there."

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Postponed Clause 10—Wheat not to be gristed unless with previous authority of Minister:

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: At the last sitting the member for Murchison pointed out that this clause prevented the farmer from gristing wheat in a little mill, and so forth, and I undertook to draft an amendment which will meet that objection, an objection which, in point of fact, is never raised in practice. I now move an amendment—

That the following be added to the clause:—"Provided that this section shall not apply to the gristing of wheat by farmers and other persons on small grinders of a milling capacity not exceeding one bag of wheat per hour."

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Under this clause a farmer can have his wheat gristed. Last year permission was given and while the Scheme paid 7d. to the millers they charged the farmers 1s. Could anything be more monstrous? The Attorney General should give an assurance that the Government will not charge the farmer more than they pay the miller.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I regret I cannot give such an undertaking. If the hon. member had raised this point before I should have taken up the question. I am not the Minister administering the Act. I have to see other people about these matters, and I cannot agree to make any further alterations.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Then report progress.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: We have had one all-night sitting on this Bill, and I have noted what every hon. member has said. I have answers for all the arguments that have been raised, and I have endeavoured to comply with the reasonable wishes of hon. members. Now at the eleventh hour something else is sprung upon me, and I propose to resist it.

Mr. TROY: In my opinion this question of charging is a question of administration. I know that the millers charge farmers 8d.—that has been my experience. If the Wheat Scheme is charging the farmer 1s. the matter should be given consideration by the Minister in charge of the Scheme. What we want is that the actual cost only shall be charged.

Amendment put and passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Schedules, Title—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

# BILLS (5)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

1, Postponement of Debts Act Continuation.

2, Roads Act Continuation.

3, Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation.

4, Licensing Act Amendment Act Continuation.

5, Church of England Diocesan Trustees and Lands.

# **BILL—VERMIN.**

## **Council's Message.**

Message received from the Legislative Council notifying that it did not insist on its amendments Nos. 4, 5, 8, 19, 32, and 34, that it insisted on its amendments Nos. 2, 3, and 35, and that as regards Nos. 1 and 7, it proposed the new amendments set out in the schedule as alternatives to its own amendments Nos. 1 and 7 to which the Legislative Assembly had not agreed.

# **BILL—CONSTITUTION ACT FURTHER AMENDMENT.**

## **Second Reading.**

Order of the Day read for the resumption, from the 11th December, of the debate on the second reading.

Question (second reading) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	20
Noes	..	..	..	18

Majority for .. .. 2

## **AYES.**

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munroe
Mr. Brown	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Roche
Mr. Collier	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Davies	Mr. Troy
Mr. Foley	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Jones	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)
Mr. Mullany	

## **NOES.**

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Draper	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Duff	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Durack	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. George	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Lefroy	(Teller.)
Mr. Maley	

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members will see that on the vote the House has ordered the Bill to be read a second time. I think that should be done. But I cannot declare the question carried, because it requires an absolute majority of the House, namely 26 votes, to amend the Constitution Act. I think it would be obviously stupid for me to allow the Bill to go into Committee when it would require that absolute majority to carry it through the third reading.

# **LOAN ESTIMATES, 1918-19.**

## **In Committee of Supply.**

Resumed from the 12th December; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; the Colonial Treasurer in charge of the Votes.

Vote—Departmental, £29,257:

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [6.8]: It is regrettable that Parliament should be called upon to deal with the Loan Estimates in the last week of the session. After all, it is merely repeating an axiom to say that finance is business and that government is finance. Dealing with the loan expenditure for the year is not less important than dealing with the revenue expenditure. When we have regard for the volume of business that is crowding in on the members of another place, it will be readily understood that those members will have but very little opportunity for discussing the financial position. Indeed, if members in this House were to give adequate consideration to the business now before us, it would involve our coming back after Christmas. It is a somewhat weary House, anxious to get through before Christmas, which is faced with the responsibility of dealing with the Loan Estimates. The Treasurer said that but for the ending of the war the Estimates would have shown how little we could have got on with. I do not know what amount the Treasurer would have brought down had not the war concluded but, judging by the expenditure for the first financial quarter of the year, £175,000, if the expenditure for the remaining nine months had been on a proportionate basis, the Loan Estimates for the year would not have exceeded £700,000, or about one half the amount the Treasurer now asks for. It will be agreed that the cessation of hostilities involves the Government in the expenditure of a greater amount of loan money than would otherwise have been the case. There will be many problems of reconstruction facing the State during the next year, all of which involve additional expenditure. I can readily understand that the Government felt it to be their duty to provide for the expenditure of a greater amount of loan money for the second half of the year than they would have done had the war continued. After all, we must be careful not to get back upon the road of loan expenditure, which it has generally been contended by members of the present Government and others have been responsible for the present financial position. I remember that, during the last year of the Labour Government's tenure, the present Colonial Secretary said on one occasion when addressing a meeting in Northam, that this State ought not to expend in loan money more than £1,000,000 in a year.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I should guess that the earlier estimate for the loan expenditure was something in the region of £700,000. Now the Estimates provide for a total expenditure of £1,375,000, as against £1,054,000 last year, or an increase for this financial year of £321,000, which, having regard to the position of the State, is a pretty substantial increase on that

which was found to be sufficient last year. Of this sum the Treasurer points out that £170,000—the Estimates show £150,000—is to be recouped by the Commonwealth for soldier settlement purposes.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is loan all the same.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, for which we are responsible. After all, it is not money that the Treasurer will have to find. That leaves the Treasurer having actually to provide for £1,220,000. Of that sum, allowing for the £100,000 being taken in bonds for repurchased estates, we have a sum left of £1,120,000, the actual cash which has to be found for the year's loan expenditure. Of this sum £176,000 is expended for the first three months of the year. That leaves the Treasurer, from the end of September, a sum of £943,000 in actual cash that he requires. Perhaps the Treasurer could have given us the figures, but he did not do so, of what his loan indebtedness has been for the second quarter of the year which has nearly expired. The Treasurer should be able to state what his loan expenditure has been for the first half-year, seeing that we are almost at the conclusion of it. Taking the £943,000 mentioned by the Colonial Treasurer as being required for the nine months of the year, I would remind hon. members that he expressed the opinion that he would have no difficulty in finding the money, because of the £700,000 he had already obtained from the Commonwealth, and the £250,000 he could obtain between now and December.

The Colonial Treasurer: That is to take me on until 1919.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not clear as to the £700,000.

The Colonial Treasurer: I got £96,000, but I have not yet got the £600,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Where does the Treasurer expect to get the £943,000 in actual cash required for the year? The £250,000 the Treasurer expects to get before the end of December will be for the latter half of next year, and not for the present financial year. I think it will be agreed that not one penny of loan money should be expended at this period in our history except on absolutely essential work, work of a reproductive character. We are faced not only for the remaining portion of the financial year, but for the next twelve months with problems just as great as, if not greater than, those we were faced with during the war period. We have our soldiers coming back within the next 12 months, and there is an obligation cast upon the State to provide for them openings in the way of employment, so that they may be absorbed back into the economic and commercial life of the community. I am prepared to justify any increased expenditure of loan funds on the ground that it would be almost impossible to provide work except by the expenditure of loan funds. We have not got the manufactories controlled by private persons, or the industries in the State which would absorb these men as they return. Unfortunately, the State is in the position of having to provide something in the nature of public works from loan funds in order to absorb our returned soldiers. This renders it necessary for us to

see that the works are carefully considered, and that they are of a reproductive nature. I cannot see, on looking down the items, that those which have been selected for expenditure are of the wisest character. We find that it is proposed to expend this year on railways and tramways £293,000 as against £194,000 last year, or an increase in round figures of £100,000. I have an idea that the increase is due to some extent to neglect in providing money last year or in previous years. Much of this money goes not on new railways but on existing railways, and on belated repairs, rolling stock, and other things which are in no sense reproductive. Expenditure of this kind should be cut down to the very bone, so that there might be a greater amount left to be devoted in other directions, which would give, if not an immediate, at least an early return. The £100,000 increase on the railways and tramways is, therefore, a considerable one. Harbours and rivers show an increased expenditure of £17,000. Although I recognise the necessity for making provision for the increased trade which may come to our shores—the harbour and river expenditure is an annual recurring one, particularly in Fremantle, where work must be kept going continuously in order to cope with the increased trade and the deeper draft of vessels which come to our shores—it is the duty of the Government to say whether, on the advice of their officers who are in a position to judge, an increased amount of £17,000 for this item is justified or not. On water supply and sewerage there is an increase of £30,000. I do not know how this is made up. These items should be kept down to the lowest penny. Except for the provision of a water supply in agricultural districts, mainly in the districts where new railways have opened them up, and where the expenditure is necessary, a considerable sum, I think £38,000, is to be expended in the metropolitan area.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If you saw our part of the world you would know whether money was required to be spent there or not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The hon. member will not get much of this spent in Fremantle, I expect.

The Minister for Works: Oh, will he not?

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know if additional money is to be spent on bores in Fremantle. There should be no increases other than those which are absolutely necessary.

The Colonial Treasurer: Reproductive increases.

Hon. P. COLLIER: These are not reproductive increases in the true sense of the word, because they will not bring in any additional revenue. The rates will be the same if there is a smaller supply of water as if there is an increased supply. There is an item of £60,000 for the development of goldfields, an increase of £50,000 over last year. Whilst I welcome that increase, I shall want to know, when we get to the items, from the Minister for Mines, whether he has any definitely conceived ideas of policy, or a scheme for the expenditure of the money. It would be a waste of public funds to provide an additional £50,000 for expenditure in min-

ing development, if there is no idea of a policy behind it, if it is going to be a mere casual handing out of £1,000 here and £2,000 there to a friend or to some person whom one does not like to refuse. I hope the Minister will be able to show that he has been at work with his officers in devising a scheme. Otherwise, it will be utterly impossible advantageously to expend practically £50,000 between now and the end of June. As regards roads and bridges, there is an increase to enable the farmer to struggle against his adverse circumstances.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It is for the goldfields roads boards.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Precious little for the goldfields. There has been very little expenditure in that direction on the goldfields for years. Fortunately, having better natural roads, the goldfields do not need it. In the goldfields towns, moreover, the residents supply their own roads. As regards the £164,000 for "Other Undertakings," the Treasurer has explained that £155,000 of that amount represents working capital for the Wyndham freezing works. The amounts set down for expenditure upon soldier settlement are only misleading to the public. No less a sum than £370,000 is proposed to be expended on soldier settlement, £220,000 being for advances to settlers, and improvements generally, and purchase of estates. From all I can gather I venture the opinion that the Government have not the organisation in train which would enable them to expend anything like the sum of £370,000 between now and the end of June; for only a very small amount has been expended up to date. The £150,000 from the Commonwealth will be disbursed at the rate of £500 for each settler.

The Colonial Treasurer: We have 311 settlers already.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Three hundred and eleven settlers each entitled to £500?

The Colonial Treasurer: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Have the Government received any of the Commonwealth money up to date?

The Colonial Treasurer: Very little.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Government may see their way to place a sufficient number of settlers upon the land between now and the end of June to absorb that £150,000. I only hope they are able to do it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The soldiers do not absorb £500 each in the first year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No. The Government do not make provision for the whole amount in one year. But even if the Government did, I do not think they will be able to place on the land a sufficient number of returned soldiers by the end of June to entitle them to the £150,000. I hope it will prove so. It will be many years before the 311 already settled will be entitled to draw the full £500. The £500 advanced to each settler must be spread over a number of years—I do not know how many. Then there is £60,000 for improvements generally, and advances, and purchase of estates. Here again, if the settler will not be able this year to draw the full £500 which the Commonwealth are advancing, how can the State Government be

called upon to furnish the £60,000 extra which they propose to add to the £500 from the Commonwealth?

The Colonial Treasurer: The department asked me for £75,000, which they said they could expend this year. I cut the amount down to £60,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: One would think the £60,000 of State money in this connection would not be required until the Federal Government £500 per settler had been expended. No doubt, in connection with the purchase of a property the £700 might be required in one year—say for the purchase of an improved farm. But soldiers commencing farming for themselves will not require the full amount for some years. At any rate, if we are going to find ways of expending all these amounts of money between now and the end of June—no estates, or very few estates, have been purchased up to date—the Government will be going in for repatriation wholesale, and also for wholesale repurchase of estates if they are going to repurchase to the extent of £160,000 between now and the end of June next. Whilst it will be necessary to repurchase large estates for soldier settlement, it seems to me that this going on the market by the Government with £160,000 to be spent in one half-year must of necessity create a boom in values, create inflation of land values. And the Government will have to pay correspondingly. The point is one which will have to be very closely watched, because we do not wish to see returned men placed upon repurchased estates burdened with such high prices for their land as will be a millstone round their necks for the remainder of their lives. In this connection I have no faith whatever in any Act of Parliament; it seems to me that no Act of Parliament will secure land for this purpose at fair or reasonable prices. All the tribunals that have ever sat to decide questions of land values, whether by way of arbitration or as courts, have invariably fixed prices at such a level as has been considered higher than the true value. For that reason I regret that the House did not insert in the Repatriation Bill a safeguard for the returned soldier in that respect. Certainly, if the Government are going to buy estates at £2 or £3 or £4 per acre, we shall be faced with a repetition of the present condition of things relative to the Avondale, Narra Tarra, and other estates familiar to hon. members—estates left on the hands of the Government. For nearly ten years the Government have been holding the Avondale estate, purchased at £5 5s. per acre, have had it on their hands simply because the cost of the land was too high. Whilst with other members I am prepared to see £160,000 of State money spent for the purpose of settling returned soldiers on repurchased estates, I consider myself justified in calling attention to the circumstance that the Government can place a considerable number of soldiers on Crown lands without any of this expenditure. In this connection I am sorry to observe that the Loan Estimates do not provide for the expenditure of one penny for the construction of the Esperance Railway. That is a railway

which has been inquired into and investigated more searchingly than any railway ever built in this State—and the same remark applies to the land which the railway will serve. The result of all the various inquiries has been to confirm the utility of the Esperance railway. The Government, I observe with interest, are able to find money and also rails to complete the construction of lines in other parts of the State. I want to know what explanation the Premier has to offer regarding the promise he made to the goldfields people in Kalgoorlie when, in July of last year, he was there assisting Mr. Scaddan in seeking re-election. The report of the Esperance Lands Royal Commission came to hand right in the middle of the election, a few days before polling day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Mr. Scaddan lost.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes; the goldfields people are not to be bribed by the promise of the construction of a railway. Notwithstanding the Premier's undertaking that the matter was to be regarded as finally decided, and his declaration that he concurred in the Royal Commission's recommendation to construct the Esperance railway not only through the agricultural districts but right through to Norseman, and his promise that the Government would regard it as a duty to construct the railway at the earliest possible opportunity, these Loan Estimates do not show an item for that purpose. No doubt, the Premier did say at Kalgoorlie that the work could not proceed rightaway, because then it was almost impossible to secure rails. But, obviously, that difficulty has been overcome, because the schedule contains other railways which were to be constructed during the last financial year, and some of which have been going on during the last financial year. Surely, in common fairness, having regard to the Royal Commission's recommendations and to the resolution of this House declaring that the Esperance railway should be the next to be constructed, and to the fact that the railway would serve a stretch of agricultural unalienated land some 30 or 40 miles square which has been reported to be suitable for settlement, and on which a large number of returned soldiers could be placed—

The Minister for Works: Placed down there, on that land?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes; on the Crown lands there. That is the place where the largest area of agricultural lands in the hands of the Crown is, yet we find on the loan schedule that £160,000 has been set down for the purpose of acquiring estates for the settlement of soldiers. No mention is made of the Esperance district. It is a positive obligation on the part of the Government to give effect to the vote of the House and to recognise the decision of the Royal Commission, and also to give effect to the promise made by the Premier when endeavouring to secure the election of a colleague 13 or 14 months ago. I admit the difficulties of financing during these times. I believe that the Commonwealth Government have an obligation now and for the next 12 months, to finance the States dur-

ing the period of re-construction and that obligation is equally as strong as their obligation was to finance the States during the period of the war.

The Colonial Treasurer: More so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And it would be a disastrous thing for this country and for the other States of the Commonwealth if, because the war is now over, the Commonwealth were to shut down on the borrowing of money. There is an obligation on the part of the Commonwealth Government to continue to raise the money necessary to enable the States to absorb the large numbers of men who left our shores and who will be returning shortly. If the Commonwealth Government do not recognise that duty, there will be serious times ahead for the various State Governments. I hope strong representations will be made to the Commonwealth Government. They would be justified in going to the extent of raising a compulsory loan, doing as they did in connection with the last loan which was so successful. The problems which have to be faced now are greater than they were before the war ended. The Commonwealth would also be justified in raising money at a reasonable rate of interest. If the war had continued for another 12 months, the Commonwealth would have been obliged to raise another 80 millions to enable them to carry on, and that 80 millions would have been absolutely thrown away. Not one penny of it would have been used on reproductive work. If we could afford to raise the necessary funds while the war was in progress, if we could afford to raise the necessary funds for another year, which we would have had to do and which we would have done, surely it is a thousand times better proposition to raise this money now that the war is over so that we may spend it on reproductive works. Australia has the resources; all we require is capital and population. We read in this morning's paper that we have in the last century only added to our population to the extent of five million people. This continent is capable of maintaining a population equally as great as that of the United States of America, but if we only increase it at the rate of five millions in every century, it will take us 2,000 years to reach the total population of America. The future of Australia demands population, and we must have it at a greater rate than we have had it in the past. We cannot, however, get it without the expenditure of capital. There is one thing the war has taught us and I hope it will be taken to heart by the powers that be, and it is that for all future requirements of Australia, the money we need can be raised within our own shores. Surely the utter stupidity of borrowing in London has come home to us. Whenever we wanted a million or two in the past, we rushed straight to London for it. Now we know that we can borrow from ourselves and when we do that we keep the money in Australia.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You send half of it away for material.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But we keep the interest here.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And we know how strong that makes the country. The strength of Great Britain throughout the war was due to the fact that she was the bondholder of nearly every other country in the world. Let us be our own bondholders. That can be done by the Commonwealth Government with the aid of the Commonwealth Bank. It will be a good thing for the Commonwealth also to consider the question of taking over the State debts.

The Minister for Mines: At the time Federation was being advocated that was used as a great argument in favour of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: And like many other proposals at that time, the glamour has worn off it.

The Colonial Treasurer: I raised the question 12 years ago.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is time the State debts were taken over. If our requirements are not met by the Commonwealth during the next 12 months, so as to assist us to place our returned men and generally to set the wheels of industry going, Western Australia will be in for a bad time, particularly because we are likely to lose another half a million at the end of next year.

The Colonial Treasurer: I hope not.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Having regard to the treatment we have received even in small matters from the Commonwealth authorities, I have very little confidence that we shall be met in anything like a generous manner at the end of next year. When the question arises I only hope that the Government will be able to raise the necessary money without being extravagant or without again indulging in over-borrowing. We must never lose sight of the fact that over-borrowing, whilst it brings years of boom during the time the money is being spent, is always followed by years of difficulty. We should always spend our money wisely on works of a reproductive character. I sincerely trust that the Government will be able to find the necessary funds to carry them on to the end of June and also to the end of the next financial year.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [8.12]: I do not know why the Treasurer followed the unusual course of bringing down the Loan Estimates before the Loan Bill. However, the Treasurer has assumed that the House would be satisfied to have the information for Ministers in regard to the details of this proposed expenditure. It is a good policy not to borrow more than is required. This is what should have been done in the past because we would then not have depleted those resources required for ordinary development. If we had raised loans locally while we were constructing railways in the State we should all the same have had to send half the money out of the country for material.

Hon. P. Collier: We need not do that now.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We still buy largely from the old country.

Hon. P. Collier: A big expenditure has been on the purchase of rails and fastenings which can now be got in Australia.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Up to now we have had to buy material in the old country, and not only has Western Australia had to do this but the whole of Australia as well. We require cheap money in Australia and it is not only necessary that it should be cheap but that it should be plentiful if the country is to progress. When it comes to compulsory loans, even the Treasurer will find them immensely unpopular. And they fall almost exclusively on those who are enterprising and have money to invest. What we want most is enterprise. We have to find employment for a large number of men. We have raised a tremendous lot of money in Australia, but it has to be remembered that we have also earned a tremendous amount during the last four years. Wool alone has been an immense help to Australia. I suppose that, prior to the war, we never sold more than seven million pounds worth of wheat in the Commonwealth in a year. Yet now it can be said that we have sold 27 million pounds worth within a year. Many things have been done in these abnormal times which would not have been possible in a normal period. When we look through the Estimates and find, as we do, the amounts spread over such a vast range of requirements, the total does not seem so very large. Someone declared that the Colonial Secretary had once laid down as the limit of loan moneys to be spent in this State in one year, one million pounds. As a matter of fact that was the average for a long time after Responsible Government.

The Colonial Treasurer: During the last 10 years the average has been brought up considerably.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Even in the Treasurer's year of 1903-4 it was above the average by about £100,000. Since 1911 the amount has been considerably increased. However, we have a great deal to show for our expenditure. Some railways are proposed in the Estimates. I notice that the Esperance railway is still on the list, to please the heart of the member for Kanowna. However, I am not going to back up the remarks of the leader of the Opposition in respect of that railway. The sum of £293,000 is set down for the building of new lines and the improvement of existing lines. This includes a considerable sum for the building of a line from Bolgart northwards. I do not know for how many miles it is intended to extend that line, but I hope it will open up some good country, notwithstanding that the country there belongs to the Midland Railway Company. Of course we have the right to take that land at a valuation. I notice a small amount for the Merredin-Emu Hill line. In this connection I am sorry the Treasurer has not placed on the Estimates an amount sufficient to take that line to some point on the existing system, and so do away with the dead end.

The CHAIRMAN: We can deal with the details when we come to them.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes. I am sorry, too, that there is not an amount of money provided for the surveying of new lines. I think we ought to survey the lines that are needed. It is necessary that those surveys should be made some time before the actual construction of the line.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: To fool people into thinking that they are going to get the line!

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Money spent on the survey of a line is well spent.

The Minister for Works: Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been thrown away in this country on wrong surveys.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We are facing a continuation of the harbour expenditure at Bunbury without knowing what is going to happen there. If all that one hears be true, it is likely that we are wasting money in going on with that scheme.

The Minister for Works: The harbour is all right.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Even the proposal of the Minister had to be modified, because of the shifting sand. I should like to see the harbour constructed in the estuary. The South-West certainly will justify a first-class harbour at Bunbury. If this country is to prosper it must be by increased production through increased population, and if increased population is to be brought in it ought to be sent down to the South-West. On the subject of the development of mining, it seems to me that if we could find a good mine at the expense of £50,000, it would be money well spent; but it is hard to know in which direction the money should go to secure the best results. We require to know from the Minister for Mines what he proposes to do. Now is the time to go in for mining development. It would be a pitiful thing indeed if we had to put men out of the industry in order to provide positions for the returned soldiers. Not only our own men, but thousands of British soldiers will probably be coming to Western Australia. I notice the evergreen freezing works at Wyndham are still here, and I hope this latest amount will complete the expenditure.

The Colonial Treasurer: So do I.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope, too, that we shall pretty soon start exporting, in order that the works may pay some portion of the interest and sinking fund. We require facilities for exporting from the southern portion of the State. We do not seem to be getting any definite announcement about the construction of these proposed works. We have an enormous expenditure at Wyndham, and the Treasurer is hesitating about providing the necessary expenditure at Fremantle. We have some eight million sheep in the State to-day. While it is quite true that the percentage of export from Australia is very low, yet New Zealand before the war was able to export 25 per cent. of the total number of sheep and lambs. If the leader of the Opposition desires compulsory loans, let him appeal to the Government to give us facilities to convert our produce into money.

Hon. P. Collier: Do not misunderstand me. I am not an advocate of compulsory loans in the general sense.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I understand that. You propose it only as a temporary expedient. The suggestion first came, not from the leader of the Opposition, but from the Federal Government. However, if we are to get money, it must be by the sale of our products. We require freezing works at Fremantle. Having regard to the evidence as to the number of

stock in the State, and to the fact that the British people want the produce so badly, I cannot understand why the Government have not gone on with this work. The Treasurer has placed in the Estimates an amount of £25,000 for the purchase of sheep for farmers who have not any. That is a step in the right direction. Much can be done towards keeping the works busy by improving the quality of the stock. We can hold in the South-West all the sheep that we have in Western Australia to-day. We can easily keep eight million sheep down there. Some day we shall have that number, and when we do the position of the country will be very different from what it is to-day. I notice an item on the Estimates of £20,000 for a pine plantation somewhere north of Perth. Is it the intention of the Government to run a railway out to that area? I would point out that it will take many years before the timber becomes marketable. The Treasurer will not get much back from this expenditure for a long time. There is no chance of this investment being made commercially sound with the difficulties confronting the Government in the preparation of the land for planting. With wages as they are the outlay will be considerable, and the Treasurer may have to wait 30 years for a return. The plantation at Hamel has been there for 15 years, and the trees are not very big even now. Every member of the Committee should give this matter of loan expenditure his earnest consideration. We should do with the money the best that can possibly be done. It is not enough to so spend our money that it will bring back interest and sinking fund. We want to spend our money in such a way that it will be returning benefits to the State all the time. We want to provide facilities to increase our enterprises, so that the energies of the people may be utilised for the development of the State. We want work to beget work, and that is of more importance than an undertaking which will produce interest and sinking fund on the loan. I agree with a good deal of what has been said by the leader of the Opposition in regard to soldier settlement. The amount the Treasurer asks for, £150,000, is not very much, and will soon go. We have, I see, settled something like 300 people on the land in the last two or three years. We expect a large number of men to come back during the next six months, and the Treasurer is right in looking ahead. Instead of putting down £150,000, however, he should have put down a very much larger sum. No doubt, as the Commonwealth Government are pledged to raise the money for this, he feels that he can get money if he needs it without loan authorisation. I am glad that he has strengthened the funds of the Agricultural Bank. If we do have a number of men out of employment, as was the case in 1907, the best means of employing them is to allow people who have land unimproved to improve it. This will mean that our railways will be a better proposition. The Agricultural Bank can provide the work of supervision, which will also save a good deal of money and trouble. I have no fault to find with the amount on the Estimates. Probably we shall make some alter-

ations in Committee. It is a bad custom to bring down the Loan Estimates ahead of the Loan Bill. We should have the general discussion on the Bill and the detailed discussion on the Estimates. I hope to hear from the member for Kanowna that the Esperance railway will open up the country for the settlement of the thousands of men who are coming back. Western Australia has a fair opportunity of settling the soldiers who are desirous of going on the land in Australia. I understand that 19 per cent. of the men, judging from the return which has been received, are desirous of going on the land. We have a magnificent area of untouched Crown lands in this State for this purpose. If members would visit the south-west they would see how justified I am in saying that there is probably no better land in any portion of the Empire from the point of view of climate, and other opportunities for settlement. Then we have the Midland Railway Company's tract of land, which is so far untouched. There is some two million acres there, and half a million acres of wheat land included in that. We should certainly call attention to the lands that we have in the State. This ought to be made known to the Federal authorities. I should have liked to have seen the Midland Railway added to our State system. It does not matter whether the wheat is produced on Midland Railway lands or Crown land, the advantage to Western Australia is exactly the same. The directors of the Midland Railway Company have treated this State without much consideration, judging from the reports of the addresses by the chairmen at the annual meetings in London.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was your Government they were talking about.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: We will take one-third of the blame, and apportion two-thirds to the Government of which the member for North-East Fremantle was a member.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You must take all the blame.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope the Government will use every endeavour to settle the Midland Railway lands as far as possible.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [8.37]: I desire to express my gratitude for the way in which the leader of the Opposition has drawn attention to the gross neglect on the part of the Treasurer and the Government in omitting to make any provision whatsoever for the continuation and completion of the railway line already commenced at Esperance. Some hon. members are of opinion that an injustice has been done to their particular districts, because there is upon the records of the House a resolution stating that in the order of precedence as passed by Parliament the Esperance railway shall be constructed.

Mr. Harrison: We are not discussing that at present.

Hon. T. WALKER: There is a motion on the Notice Paper now to rescind that resolution.

Mr. Harrison: I do not see it on the Estimates.

Hon. T. WALKER: There ought to have been some provision for this railway.

The Minister for Works: There is a sum of £150.

Hon. T. WALKER: There ought to be provision for its continuance and completion. The war is now over, and rails will, I hope, be speedily available.

The Minister for Works: So do I.

Hon. T. WALKER: The manufacture of material from Newcastle will not be required henceforth for war purposes, and I trust that very soon we shall be able to get the material, not only for the construction of this railway but for the construction of other lines which will assist mining and agriculture. We have had our period of destruction. Since 1914 we have been destroying not only the beauties of the world but its utilities. The Treasurer and the leader of the Opposition have rightly said that the work ahead is now of infinitely greater importance, and will make larger demands upon our abilities, our energies and our wisdom than anything which has called upon those qualities before. We have to provide for our returning comrades, our valiant defenders, those of them who have been spared. These will be coming back speedily. The provision in the Estimates will not adequately meet the requirements for those men. What I object to is the provision on the Estimates for purchasing land already alienated, and which should be worked when we have at present such an enormous tract of country in the Esperance district calling for settlement and waiting for it. The land is of a quality and area which have no comparison in any other area in the State. There is no area with such uniformity of land—I do not say it is the best possible land—so easily cultivable, so fit for wheat growing, as in the Esperance district, as compared with any other portion of the State that has been surveyed.

Mr. Maley: With a good reliable rainfall.

Hon. T. WALKER: As reliable as in our wheat belt. That being so, we have no reason to decry it. I cannot understand hon. members seeking to decry that portion of the State, which is of such immense value to it as an asset.

Mr. Maley: No one is.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Hon. T. WALKER: Why disparage it? We know the arguments which have been used against this portion of the country are those which were used against the Wimmera in Victoria and the mallee land of South Australia. The testimony is that the Esperance land compares more than favourably with the mallee country of South Australia and Victoria. We know also that the mallee lands of South Australia have been practically the salvation of that State. In the circumstances I fail to understand the anathy of the present Government. Some long time ago the late Mr. Wilson announced to the public that the Labour Government had deceived the people by passing the Bill for the construction of the Esperance railway without revealing the fact that the Esperance land was salt. The Royal Com-

mission appointed to inquire into that matter declared, however, that the country had been maligned, that it was capable of settlement and suitable for wheat production, and that a railway was an absolute necessity. Peace has been declared, and there is not the slightest provision made upon these Estimates for the continuation of that railway in accordance with the present Premier's promise made at Kalgoorlie. The construction of the railway was illegally, wrongfully, and maliciously stopped for political purposes.

The Minister for Works: No.

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes. The promise was made that the wrong done should be undone, that we should have the construction of the line at the earliest possible moment. But faith has again been broken with the people of that district, who have been reduced almost to penury and have been subjected to all kinds of privation—many of them driven, broken-hearted, from the soil. I trust that we are misled by these Estimates, that there will be provision made for the completion of the Esperance railway, the authorisation of which has been passed by Parliament. But the Government apparently prefer spending borrowed money in buying land, already alienated, for the settlement of soldiers, to spending it in developing by a railway this great portion of the State.

Mr. Lutey: Where the soldiers would have a chance of succeeding on the land.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am afraid the Government will continue in their policy of maligning and wronging the Esperance district. But if hon. members hold the conviction that principle and truthfulness and pledges should be adhered to, then they will endeavour to hold the Government to their promise of building that railway, thereby affording the returned soldier a chance of successful settlement on the land of that important district of the State.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [8.51]: I join with the last speaker in deploring the small amount proposed by these Estimates for the Margaret river-Busselton railway. If there is any railway in this State which is justified, it is the Margaret river line, in order to give the people who have been pioneering that portion of Western Australia for 60 or 70 years an opportunity of getting their produce to market. A sum of £300 is provided for burning off timber that was cut down two years ago. I thank the Treasurer for his generosity, though I feel the expenditure of the money will be anticipated by bush fires. Unfortunately, the system of burning off is not in the best interests of the country, as unless the work done is carefully watched, the money is likely to be wasted. The Margaret river railway has been approved by two Parliaments, though my views differ from those of the two Parliaments as regards the route. However, the people beyond the end of that railway line deserve railway communication; and I hope the line will be pushed through at the earliest possible moment. There is the question of the extension of the Busselton jetty, for which no provision appears on the Estimates. For the proper handling of tim-

ber over that jetty, it is necessary that the jetty head should be widened so as to enable a vessel to be loaded on either side.

The Minister for Works: The Commissioner of Railways differs from you on that point.

Mr. PICKERING: But I have the opinion of the Minister for Works, on whose authority I more readily rely.

Hon. P. Collier: After that, the Minister for Works cannot refuse to go on with that work.

Mr. PICKERING: If I get some consideration in this direction, I shall be satisfied; and if the Margaret river railway is properly surveyed it will, when constructed, prove a source of great prosperity for Busselton and the surrounding country, instead of the town being a place of contumely, as indicated by the Minister for Industries. I shall not move to interfere with the present rout of the Busselton-Margaret river railway unless my constituents desire it. I hope the Minister will be able to make available a small sum for the establishment of a drainage scheme at Ludlow. That has been under consideration for some time, and the residents are prepared to take it on. The Minister for Mines in his speeches is invariably silent regarding the oil industry. It has become the practice of members rather to ridicule the idea of oil being obtained in Western Australia. But I am ready to believe that the indications are not so dismal as hon. members are prepared to accept. In view of the wonderful development in America consequent on the discovery of the oil, the Government ought to take some step towards promoting the industry in Western Australia, where the indications, more particularly in the portion of the State I represent, and also at Pingelly, and I believe in the neighbourhood of Esperance, are favourable to the finding of petroleum. The money required for boring purposes varies in amount from £500 to £10,000; but even the latter expenditure, if it resulted in a payable discovery, would be a comparative trifle. The greater portion of the country upon which the indications of oil have been found is, I understand, pastoral country. I listened with much interest to the remarks of the leader of the Opposition on the amounts which it is proposed to expend on the settlement of discharged soldiers, and I should like the Minister in replying to state what steps the Government have taken to secure wire and iron required in the settlement of returned soldiers.

The Colonial Treasurer: There will be any quantity of iron available.

Mr. PICKERING: I shall be glad to know that iron is available at a reasonable price for the erection of soldiers' dwellings. I hope also that fencing wire will be available at reasonable prices. In conclusion, I wish the Minister for Works to note that out of the sum on the Estimates for roads and bridges he should give my electorate a fair proportion. It has been an unfortunate district in the matter of floods during the past two years, and in the absence of substantial assistance from the Government the bridges which have been destroyed cannot be rebuilt.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [9.58]: I am rather disappointed to observe that no provision is made on the Loan Estimates for the supply of another steamship for the North-West trade.

Mr. Lambert: State socialism!

Mr. ANGELO: That is one of the State enterprises which I consider absolutely necessary for the development of the North-West of this State, and one of the State enterprises which have warranted themselves and have become payable. When, some years ago, the Labour Government introduced the State Steamship Service for the North-West, they purchased two or three vessels for the trade. That had the result of driving off the coast several regular boats running in that trade.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They would have gone in any case.

Mr. ANGELO: Probably. But it is now up to the Government, who have continued the policy of State steamships, to provide a better service than we have at present. We are now supposed to have two steamships running on the North-West coast, the "Bambra" and the "Kwinana"; but whenever the Country party require the services of one of those boats to carry manure or anything of that kind, she is taken off the coastal trade, even if at that very time she is most needed. The development of the North-West is most important for the future progress of the State. How is it possible to develop that part of the State without either railways or steamers? The Government should immediately take steps to see whether a new boat cannot be procured or they should place an order for the laying down of the keel of one as soon as possible. I know hon. members opposite are in favour of what I say.

The Colonial Treasurer: You surely would not buy a boat at the present prices.

Mr. ANGELO: Unless we do something shortly, we will be in that position that we will be progressing backwards; unless we can get the commodities that are necessary and unless we can send our stock down to the southern markets, we may as well close down.

Hon. P. Collier: We very nearly had the money through for another boat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We nearly had the boat without the authority.

Mr. ANGELO: I only wish the present Government would follow the good example set by members opposite in that direction. I agree that railways are necessary for the development of the State, but so are steamers for the development of the North-Western districts. The difference, however, is that while the railways are not paying, the steamers have been paying handsomely.

Member: Look at the freights.

Mr. ANGELO: In spite of the high freights, I do not think a single complaint has come from the North-West about the freights charged by the steamship service. We have only to experience one bad season up there, and if we cannot get our stock down to the market, there will be a tremendous loss. I urge the Government on behalf of the development of the State in the North-West to give this matter serious consideration and see

whether it is not possible to secure another vessel for the North-West trade.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.5]: I regret that that provision has not been made on the Loan Estimates for the goldfields which should have been made. I notice under Water Supply and Sewerage a sum of £5,000 has been set down for boring on stock routes and while that provision has been made, nothing has been done for the goldfields areas where stock is being raised.

Mr. Duff: Which district?

Mr. LAMBERT: My own district and others as well. This Government went to the country and said their policy was one of "produce." We have millions of acres of grazing country in the auriferous belt of Western Australia to-day which is capable of cattle production, and this country is right alongside the goldfields water main. We know that the goldfields water supply is being run at a loss and while the engineers are sitting down and the pumps of the water scheme are idle, the Government who said their policy was to "produce," are charging those people who require water for their cattle 7s. 6d. per thousand gallons. I ask the Minister for Water Supply, that seeing there is provision for £5,000 for boring on stock routes in the North-West, to see also that the cattle raisers in the goldfields areas, most of whom have only small herds of perhaps a hundred or two hundred head, get some assistance. Those people have been battling against adverse conditions imposed by the Government. It is a shame to say that this Government is in favour of increasing production when there are millions of acres of reasonably good grazing lands which cannot be turned to account because the Government will not supply water at a reasonable rate.

The Minister for Works: How much did you say they paid?

Mr. LAMBERT: The Minister knows how much they pay. It does not matter whether they pay 7s. 6d. or 5s. The Minister knows it is mere hypocrisy and humbug to say that the Government favour production when they expect the small cattle raisers to pay 7s. 6d. per thousand gallons for water. There is no regard shown for the water scheme or for production which can be assisted by the utilisation of the works which cost such a huge capital amount. The water scheme and the water mains have only a limited life and it is for the Government to realise that fact and to do the greatest good by utilising them to the fullest extent and not by allowing the mains to rust and the pumps to remain idle. We should supply water to those pastoralists who are trying to raise small herds adjacent to the water mains at a couple of shillings a thousand gallons.

The Minister for Works: What about the extra "tanner" and making it half-a-crown?

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not going to state any arbitrary amount but I would like to have the assurance of the Minister that he is prepared to give the pastoralists in that part of the State water at half-a-crown per thousand gallons. Whenever I have had the opportunity I have pointed out to the Premier, who I be-

Heve is sympathetic towards these people, the necessity for giving them water at a reasonable rate. Naturally it is realised that the goldfields water supply should be utilised to the fullest extent. It is a crying shame that we have a big scheme on which a huge sum of money has been spent, not being utilised to the extent that should be the case. I ask the Minister what he is prepared to do?

The Minister for Works: You trot those pastoralists along and I will deal with them.

[Mr. Stubbs resumed the Chair.]

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not think it calls for my trotting any pastoralists along. The Minister knows full well that this country granted to him and his political associates the guardianship of the State's affairs at the last elections and that they submitted a definite pledge and that it was that they would encourage production. I asked those associated with the Minister for Works to support that policy of production at every opportunity not only by further expenditure of loan moneys, but by using the resources possessed by the State at the present time. There is an amount on the Estimates of £3,000 in connection with State hotels and tourist resorts. I observed in this morning's newspaper a report by a constable on some reference I made to the State hotel at Gwalia a little time back.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it not be better to deal with these matters when we come to them? If we do not follow that course, the debate will be interminable.

Mr. LAMBERT: I claim my right in speaking generally on these Estimates to refer to the State hotels or anything else that is contained in them. I was about to refer to the State hotels and tourist resorts in connection with which there is a sum of £3,000 on the Estimates. It appears to me that unless these hotels are conducted on different lines, it may be necessary to lease them, that is unless they perform the functions it was originally intended they should do. It is right for the House to demand that we should secure from them reasonable interest and sinking fund upon the capital expended. In this morning's newspaper a Constable Pilkington—I do not know whether my friend the member for Perth knows him or not—stated that the conduct of the State hotels at Gwalia on the occasion referred to by me was no worse than it was on ordinary pay days. Possibly I will have an opportunity of dealing in greater detail with the conduct of that hotel at a later date.

The Colonial Treasurer: What has this to do with the general discussion? You might be in order in discussing this on the items.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; the hon. member is scarcely in order in dealing with the items on the general discussion.

Mr. LAMBERT: My criticism of the Gwalia hotel can be replied to by the Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing the Gwalia hotel. The Treasurer introduced the Estimates, and the rule is that when he has finished, a general discussion is taken up by hon. members. A number of members

have spoken without referring to the particular items. When we come to the items the hon. member will be able to discuss any item in which he is interested. Just now it is only general principles that we are dealing with.

Mr. LAMBERT: The leader of the Opposition discussed every item, and other members have done the same. However, I will not refer to this item again at this juncture. In connection with the increased amount for mining development, I hope some definite policy will be formulated and that the Minister for Mines will call in the best possible advice in order that the money may be spent to the greatest advantage, and that we may have a continuous policy with a definite idea in sight. I have here a letter from the secretary of the Esperance Railway League. The Premier last year in Kalgoorlie made a definite promise to the people of the district that this railway should be constructed at the earliest possible moment. I hope, for the sake of the settlers there, the Premier will fulfil that promise, so that when the boys who went to the war from that district come back they will find employment.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Suppose they had not gone to the war, would the railway have been justified?

Mr. LAMBERT: I am not posing as an authority either on railway construction or on the possibilities of the district. It was good enough for the Scaddan Government to enter upon the construction of the line, and good enough for the Wilson Government to stop that construction and appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the question. That Royal Commission was unanimously in favour of the construction of the line. I am pleased to see that the Treasurer, with the Minister for Mines, has made some reasonable provision for mining development, and I hope there will be a continuity of policy in respect of that development.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.24]: I am very much dissatisfied with the Loan Estimates in respect of railways. On the 18th February, 1915, a Bill was passed authorising the construction of the Nyabine-Pingerup extension, and in 1917 a Bill was passed for the Bolgart extension. I have no desire to detract from the urgency of the Bolgart extension, but I should like to point out that the settlers in the eastern Katanning districts are just as much entitled to consideration as are the settlers of Bolgart. I think something should be done in connection with the Pingerup railway.

Mr. Harrison: What traffic would there be?

Mr. THOMSON: There was sufficient traffic in 1915 to warrant the passing of the Bill, and there is much more traffic now. People were sent out 30 miles from the existing line on the promise of a railway, and they now see other lines being constructed before their own. They have the right to ask why their railway has not been constructed. I should be lacking in my duty as their representative if I did not ask why that railway is not being constructed. The late Minister for Works (Hon. W. C. Ansell) assured me, and I know he was sincere, that the line was to be constructed im-

mediately. How are the people down there to carry on without the railway, especially seeing that they are eaten out by rabbits? The Minister will say that the rails ordered have not come to hand. Yet those settlers have the mortification of seeing other railways being constructed. The sum of £22,450 is set aside for the Bolgart extension. I know the Lake Grace railway and the Wagin-Bowelling lines have been completed.

The Minister for Works: How long has that line been going?

Mr. THOMSON: A little over four years. Of course I understand it was stress of circumstances that prevented the late Minister for Works from carrying out his promise. I hope the present Minister will be able to give me a satisfactory reply which I may communicate to the disappointed settlers in the district. Dealing with the amount here set down for the repurchase of estates, I feel somewhat dubious. I think we should consider the advisability of expending that amount on the opening up of our virgin lands. The land proposed to be purchased is a taxable asset, and we can compel the holders of that land to pay an increased revenue to the State.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.30]: The presentation of the Loan Estimates shows the necessity for the development of the State. We have heard that large sums of money have been expended from loan which would be a burden upon the State. Western Australia is very scattered so far as its population is concerned, and any Treasurer would have to find money for its development. The propositions may not be payable right away, but eventually the money which is spent in development work will result in a return to the Treasury. We have to be careful that no money is expended out of loans that can be postponed for a while. The member for Northam referred to the expenditure of approximately £20,000 on forests. If the matter were held over for 18 months or two years it might be possible to get money at a cheaper rate than six per cent., and a year or two will not make much difference so far as the trees are concerned. The same thing applies to other works. I am pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit to carry on the work in connection with the Fremantle harbour. It is not so much for Fremantle as for the State generally that this should be done. I regret that funds are not available for a new dredge at Fremantle in order to deepen the Harbour to 40 feet instead of 36 feet. We were warned by the Royal Commission appointed by the British Government that ships in the future would require water to a depth of 40 feet in the harbours, and that they would use the Cape route instead of the Canal route. Unless we can accommodate vessels of that draft here they will go to other ports in the Commonwealth, and will leave us in the cold.

Mr. Harrison: And that will mean transhipment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. I am told that Hobart alone can accommodate vessels of that draft. Ships that would have come to this port during the war have had to go

to Tasmania for the purpose of coaling. It is necessary that we should provide for the new class of vessel, which in all probability will be produced very shortly. So many vessels have been lost during the war that it is very likely the new type of vessel will come in earlier than was anticipated by the British Royal Commission. With regard to water supplies touched upon by the leader of the Opposition, I had an instance only yesterday of a man who had been coaling all night on board a ship, who when he returned home at 7.30 in the morning was unable to get any water with which to wash. I am pleased that the Minister is making provision to get over this difficulty.

The Minister for Works: Is that the "Palmyra"?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes. I see there is an amount on the Estimates for advances for agricultural development. We have to be very wary in regard to these advances on works in connection with which it is proposed to give Government assistance. We have heard a good deal of condemnation of State trading concerns. We have been told of the losses which have been incurred in those concerns. Some of them have brought about losses, but others have proved profitable undertakings. At the same time, we hear nothing about the losses which have been incurred through advances made to private individuals from loan moneys in order to start some particular enterprise. I do not think there is more than one case in which a penny of the money advanced was returned to the Government, or in which even the interest was paid on the money loaned. There is in the air the question of establishing freezing and canning works at Fremantle. I regret that the Government have not taken the responsibility on their own shoulders. I do not believe in handing such things over to the meat trust, nor in using State money to assist private individuals who will eventually take control at the expense of the great majority. If the work is started through any advance made by the Government, then I would point out that the very best and most convenient site in Western Australia is being offered for the carrying on of these works. In future if they repay the loan the Government will probably find that the undertaking is being worked to the detriment of the settlers of the State.

The Colonial Treasurer: I do not think that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Once this site is taken over by this concern there is every possibility of its getting into the hands of the American meat ring. Armour and company are working to this end to-day.

The Colonial Treasurer: We know that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They are offering £40,000 if private people will put no another £60,000. Are the Government satisfied, after the reports they have seen in America and after the warning which has been given by the British Government, as to the necessity for keeping control of the meat trade for the benefit of the British people, that every care has been exercised to see that the American trust does not get into Western Australia? One of the primary reasons why the State Government started the Wyndham freezing works

was to combat the meat trust. It was their intention to come down the coast by degrees, and was intended to establish such works at the smaller ports in order to accommodate the pastoralists around those areas, as well as to erect freezers at Fremantle to provide for the farmers inland. We sent an officer to the Eastern States to make inquiries as to the erection of freezers. In all probability had we remained in office another 12 months the works would have been completed at Fremantle. If we are not careful we shall be handing over to the American meat trust the best site in the main shipping port of the State, one of the best possible sites for the economical working of an industry of this nature, from the point of view of the farming community surrounding the port. The pastoralists will look after themselves, but the small farmer cannot do so. I do not think the pastoralists care at all whether the State has control or a private company, so long as the works are there. It is in the interests of the small settler that the State should retain the control. This is the first Government since the Newton Moore Government which ever suggested that works of this nature should be controlled by a trust or company. If my vote can stop it this site will never be handed over to a private company. There is the gravest risk of its eventually being controlled entirely by the American meat trust.

Mr. Maley: Which site do you mean?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I mean that at Arthur Head, Fremantle. These people will repay the money thus loaned by the Government for the purpose of squeezing it out of the small settler as soon as he begins to send his stock to them. There was a paper tabled this session dealing with the jam factory. Several thousands of pounds have been loaned to this undertaking by the Government, and money is still being loaned.

The Colonial Treasurer: We got £700 of it back.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Advances are still being made. When the receiver was sent there the door was shut in his face. Before he was admitted, two days later, approximately £1,000 worth of material had been sent out of the factory by different persons who had been responsible for borrowing the money. I was told that a great deal of this was block tin, which at the time was realisable and people in the metropolitan area were keen to get it. This shows the system which is being adopted, and is another instance in which the State has loaned money to assist industries. In my opinion this sort of thing is a thousand times worse than a State trading concern, because with State trading concerns the people know what they are losing, but in a case of this kind once the money is handed over to the private people the State does not know what it will lose. I hope this question of advances will be dealt with by the Government in such a way that the State will be safeguarded. I would not lend a penny in this direction if I had my way. If it is in the interests of the State that an industry should be started it is better for the Government to take the responsibility of it, than to leave it to

private individuals who pay high salaries and who, if the advances are not continued, close down the works.

Mr. Troy: Will that not happen in the case of the freezing works?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am afraid that Armour and Company will buy out the Government. I say the Government should protect the settler and the small farmer.

Mr. Maley: Do you not think the settler will protect himself against Armour and Company?

The Colonial Treasurer: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is no possible chance.

The Colonial Treasurer: Read the history of this business and you will not be so certain about it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There are one or two items to which I intended to refer later. As soon as money gets cheaper, instead of stopping borrowing, we shall have to borrow more, for that is the only way to develop the State. In regard to that expenditure I hope the Government of the day, whoever they may be, will devote some considerable attention to the encouragement of immigration.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.47]: I do not know that I shall have an opportunity of discussing the improvement of the Geraldton harbour in these Estimates, since there is no amount set down for that purpose. But I would ask the Government to make known what is their policy in regard to that matter.

The Minister for Works: The circumstances are the same as they were upon the declaration of our policy 12 months ago.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I desire to know whether even in the dim and distant future there is likely to be something done for the port of Geraldton. Have the Government any intention in this matter, and when is improvement likely to take place? The Geraldton district suffers in trade from the want of harbour improvements. On the Wheat Marketing Bill I pointed out that we will have to send wheat 50 miles—Mullewa to Fremantle—because during the last three or four weeks vessels which, had there been decent harbour accommodation at Geraldton, could have been loaded there, went to Fremantle.

The Minister for Works: What were those ships drawing?

Mr. WILLCOCK: There were some ships of 4,000 or 5,000 tons, and the average depth of a vessel of that tonnage is about 20 or 21 feet.

The Minister for Works: You have plenty of water at Geraldton.

Mr. WILLCOCK: But that is one of the reasons why those vessels were not allowed to go to Geraldton—that the harbour was not supposed to be good enough for them. Boats which in the past it was considered safe to send to Geraldton, are now not permitted to visit that port. In the matter of wool appraisement, the Federal Government desire to have all the wool appraised at Fremantle on the ground that that is the one port of the State from which wool can be exported with convenience. Because no harbour work is being done at Geraldton, the reputation of the port is going down.

The Minister for Works: Is not the lack of vessels calling at Geraldton due to shortage of shipping?

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, not altogether. As regards wool appraising, the only excuse given for taking it away from Geraldton is that Geraldton is not a favourable shipping port. The policy of the Government should be to develop the out ports of the State. If we want Western Australia to be a one-town State, let us continue spending money around Fremantle and Perth. But if there is to be development in half a dozen different portions of the State the out ports must receive fair treatment, so that export facilities may be available close at hand to the people of the various districts. Development work should be carried on, not only in one portion of the State, but in every portion of the State. Geraldton is an established port which has done a certain amount of trade for the past 40 years; and it has been the policy of successive Governments of Western Australia so to develop that port as to enable it to handle the trade which rightly belongs to it. But owing to the want of improvements at Geraldton the port is losing trade that is its rightful due. Unless something is done, the position will become even worse than it is now. Five or six years ago Geraldton was the second shipping port of Western Australia; but now Geraldton has only one little steamer per fortnight. To some extent that dearth of shipping may be due to the shortage of vessels; but, still, the wool appraisement business proves my contention.

The Colonial Treasurer: The reason given us was that if Geraldton was given wool appraisement it would have to be given to a lot of little out ports in the Eastern States.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There is a difference between allowing a port to retain a trade it has always had and giving to some little centre what it demands in the way of establishment of an industry it never possessed. There is some money set down for water supply to towns, and I shall defer my remarks on the subject of the Geraldton water supply until that item is reached.

Mr. DUFF (Claremont) [9.55]: I wish to mention the great satisfaction of the mining community at the Treasurer's placing upon the Loan Estimates £50,000 extra for prospecting and other mining development work. No doubt, some fixed policy on the part of the Minister for Mines has been brought about; because, I believe, there are any number of ways of spending the £50,000. If it is spent well, our mines are going to benefit. The Minister should take into consideration at once the removal of the embargoes at present existing in connection with abandoned leases which in days gone by were pledged by small owners as security for an advance of a hundred or two. Men come along now anxious to take up those abandoned leases, and it is unfair that they should be asked to lift the burden of the embargo before being allowed to touch those mines. With regard to water supply, many questions arise affecting the mining industry; and the Minister for Works might get in touch with the Minister for Mines on that subject.

The Minister for Works: We are in touch.

Mr. DUFF: The Minister for Mines had it well drilled into him, during that little trip of his five or six weeks ago to the goldfields, that there are mines which are struggling and which should be helped in connection with water supply. The matter should be looked upon as a national effort to encourage the mining industry. The Bullch mine is now struggling along on 24s. or 25s. dirt, and paying large sums for water. If there is any chance of keeping that mine going by granting it a cheaper water supply, that should be done in the interests of the State. I shall have a word or two to say when the items come along.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [9.57]: I do not propose to speak at great length on these Estimates, because they have already been very fully discussed. However, I also desire to express my pleasure at the amount provided for mining development, which amount has been so largely increased. I do hope that when the Estimates are again presented next year it will be found that the greater part of the Vote has been expended, because I understand it is there for that purpose. I do not suggest for a moment that the Minister will spend the money merely for the sake of spending it. In my opinion he is, if anything, over-cautious.

Hon. P. Collier: It all depends. There has not been too much caution in some directions. There has been favouritism in some directions.

Mr. TROY: I shall come to that. When referring to the Minister's over-cautiousness, I speak from personal experience in regard to proposals in my own constituency. Still, there is time for him to act yet; and I am exercising that patience which is due to him and due from me. The leader of the Opposition has stated that there has been occasional favouritism in regard to the expenditure of this Vote. Whilst I shall not bring that charge against the present Minister, let me say that such a policy would be disastrous to himself in this House, as well as injustice to the country. I have more than a suspicion that a previous Minister for Mines, in the person of Mr. Gregory, was very prone to that policy. In fact, there is little doubt about it. Anyone perusing the Estimates submitted during Mr. Gregory's tenure of the Mines portfolio, will find that 75 per cent. of the funds appropriated to mining development was spent in the Minister's electorate—a policy undoubtedly unfair and unjust, and also discreditable for any Minister to pursue. I do not suggest that our present Minister for Mines would be responsible for such a policy; but if he was it would lead to very strong criticism in this House and to a considerable amount of unpleasantness. I noticed a paragraph worthy of attention in this afternoon's "Daily News," a paper which is not to be altogether relied upon, which is perhaps notoriously unreliable, but which to-day presents its readers with a reference worthy of note, namely that the British Government are giving considerable attention

to the stimulation of the gold mining industry. I know that this matter has been given considerable thought ever since the beginning of the war, and if the British Government do decide on the purchase of the whole of the gold production of the British Empire, I hope it will have the effect of giving a decided impetus to the gold production of Western Australia. The difficulty facing the mining industry in this State just now is that most of the prospectors are out of the country. All the young men who were engaged in the industry went to the war and, in addition, the costs of production have become excessive. The industry therefore is very much hampered. Though the war is over there is not an immediate prospect of normal conditions returning at an early date. Until those conditions come about no one can tell what will happen. We may lay plans but until there is a settled state of affairs obtaining in Europe, our position will not be satisfactory. If there is a possibility of the British Government securing the gold production, we may be able to enter upon such terms and conditions as will give the industry greater encouragement. I hope it will be so, because if the industry is encouraged, there will be a great future for the State. I would like to say a few words regarding the money which has been provided for land settlement for returned soldiers. There is a sum of £150,000 provided for the repurchase of estates and £220,000 for advances to soldiers generally. I notice already quite a stir in the land market. A number of people are offering their properties for sale to the Government in the hope of getting what undoubtedly will be more than a fair price for them.

The Premier: That has been going on for the past four years.

Mr. TROY: I was not aware of it. That is evidence of the unsatisfactory state of that particular industry. If people are doing well there is no disposition to sell, but if they are not doing well and they are burdened with debt and are in difficulties, there is every desire to get out, and I know a number of people are putting before the Government propositions out of which they themselves are not making a living. If the Government are paying more than what is a fair price for those properties from which the present holders cannot make a living, a returned soldier who may be without experience cannot be expected to operate them successfully.

The Colonial Treasurer: It hardly follows. He may go in for intense culture.

Mr. TROY: That could only apply to localities close to the metropolitan area since intense culture means the production of vegetables and products largely perishable.

The Colonial Treasurer: In South Australia, a long way from Adelaide, they produce all kinds of things.

Mr. TROY: I do not think we will get many soldiers who, having come back from an adventurous life, will settle down on the land and be content to make a bare livelihood. I hope the Government will not be influenced by political agitations to induce them to pur-

chase sand patches around the City. That can only end in failure and discontent. That was the experience in connection with one piece of land which was repurchased and on which returned soldiers were placed. That piece of land was stated in this House to be a sound proposition. If I were to be guided by the experience of settlers on repurchased estates and the success they have made, I would urge the Government not to repurchase any more estates. Take the settlers at Bowes and Narra Terra; they are not satisfied, and have not done much good. In many cases they have had previous experience, while in other cases they invested a lot of capital in their propositions. I am not altogether in favour of repurchasing estates unless they can be bought back at a moderate figure. I am inclined to think that before an inexperienced man learns all about a farm, buys machinery, and pays rent and interest, he will be faced with a difficult proposition. I would rather see returned soldiers settled on pastoral areas with a few thousand sheep. We know that a man in such a case would be able to get a return in the first year. Everyone knows that the people who are doing best on the land are those who are going in for grazing. The pastoral land is cheap land; the agricultural land is dear land. Any hon. member who has had experience of grazing knows that with 500 sheep a soldier or settler could get a return in the first year.

The Colonial Treasurer: Unless he strikes a drought.

Mr. TROY: Even then he gets a return.

The Colonial Treasurer: We bought a station, paid £50,000 for it, and lost nearly every head of sheep in the first year.

Mr. TROY: I am not going to be influenced against my own knowledge by pessimistic utterances of that character. In my opinion, the pastoral lessees have not had a worse time than the agriculturists. Besides, the pastoralists recover quicker because they have cheap land. In my opinion, agricultural land is too dear. The cheap land is the basis of all success. If I can get 30,000 acres at £50 a year, and I can run 3,000 sheep on that area it is a safe proposition, and is much better than a c.p. lease of 2,000 acres which will not run 50 sheep in its natural state, and which will cost me the same amount of money. The cheap land is the basis of successful settlement in this country. If I had 50,000 acres of pastoral land to-morrow I could get backing the next day from a firm like Elder, Smith & Co. for the purchase of sheep. Of course, that would be if I were a man with a sound reputation, but if I had five or six thousand acres of agricultural land, I would not be able to get any help. I am perfectly satisfied, if we are going to give these men all we promised them—and it has been urged that nothing is too good for them—if we are going to give them a decent chance we must give them cheap land where they can get a return in the first year of settlement. Considerable discussion has arisen regarding the freezing works at Fremantle, and the question has been raised as to who shall conduct those works. In my opinion

the people who build the works are the people who should own them, and if the Government lend £40,000, which it is proposed to do, the Government should have some say in the administration of the conduct of the works. The member for North-East Fremantle has expressed the opinion that the American meat trust may get a grip of them. It is for the Government to see that that does not happen. I think the Government should control the works if only they can get the proper man for the purpose. I hope that if the Government are to lend a large sum of money they will have a say in the administration and will see that the works are not operated for the benefit of any particular section of the community. I can support the remarks of the member for Geraldton in respect of the harbour works at that port. The one thing that deprives Geraldton of the trade of the country behind it is the want of harbour facilities. In these days, when shipping is very scarce, it is too costly for steamers to go to Geraldton for half a cargo, and the one thing that stands in the way of developing that part of the country is the want of adequate harbour facilities. Given those facilities, all that is due to Geraldton will come. There is on the Estimates a sum for the purchasing of sheep for farmers. I support that whole-heartedly, because I know that the farmer who proposes to make a living out of wheat alone is doomed to bankruptcy. The only men doing any good to-day are those who are growing sheep as well as wheat. I am surprised that in this State, where a large number of old settlers have been farming for many years, and where those responsible for land settlement must have had some experience, such poor advice should have been given to the later settlers. The policy has been to encourage those men to grow wheat, whereas the policy should have been to encourage them to stock their land before growing wheat. This State is badly off for expert advice. In the Eastern States—

Mr. Hickmott: The same thing happened there in the early days.

Mr. TROY: Well, we should have profited by their experience. However, I have no recollection of its happening in the Eastern States, because where I was reared the earlier settlers ran stock before they grew crops or went in for dairying. It was a wrong policy to encourage settlers to put all their work into the growing of wheat, and I am amazed that there was not available sound advice for the newer settlers. I understand that a large number of the farmers in the eastern districts have not even fenced their properties.

The Colonial Treasurer: Therefore they are not ready for sheep.

The Premier: No sheep will be purchased for any man unless his land is fenced and supplied with water.

Mr. TROY: I am merely contending that the settlers have been advised on wrong lines. Those who have been responsible for giving that advice should have known better.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough) [10.20]: I wish to sound a note of warning in regard to the repurchasing of land for returned soldiers. We

have had bitter experience of the repurchasing of land at too high a figure. The Bowes estate was purchased for £54,000, and by the time it was subdivided and thrown open for selection its cost had been added to by another £52,000, making the total value of the estate £106,000, a price altogether too high to allow of the settlers making a living. When we remember that the interest charges alone on land selected at £1 per acre amount to 11s. in the pound, it is seen that wisdom will have to be exercised in the repurchasing of estates. In the Geraldton district we have succeeded in floating a local company with a capital of £4,000 for the manufacture of butter and bacon. But a new situation has recently arisen, an enterprising private firm having established a very large bacon factory at Midland Junction, which will have a tremendous influence on all the small co-operative companies in the eastern districts. Possibly that influence will reach as far as Geraldton. An assurance has been given to those small companies that the Government will provide a subsidy for them. At this juncture some word from the Treasurer in regard to those subsidies would be both interesting and instructive to those of us who are endeavouring to promote the formation of those companies. I have in my electorate a little railway project which is not represented on the Estimates. I am sorry the member for Williams-Narrogin is not here to advocate the claims of certain railways in his electorate which do appear on the Estimates.

Hon. P. Collier: Has your railway project been authorised by Parliament?

Mr. MALEY: No.

Hon. P. Collier: Then it cannot be discussed on these Estimates.

Mr. MALEY: I am merely referring to it in passing. I have listened to-night to the leader of the Opposition and the member for Kanoona on the question of the Esperance railway. Those hon. members have demanded to know why that railway has not been proceeded with. This attitude does not appear to be consistent with their argument that the first policy of the Government should be to force into use the unused lands along the existing railway system. The Esperance railway has been delayed for reasons entirely beyond the control of the Government. With both these hon. members, I hope that in the future it will be the policy of the Government to bring the unused lands into use before committing the country to a further extension of the railway system for land settlement.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [10.28]: I am pleased to see on the Estimates an amount for the settlement of returned soldiers. I should like to see an attempt made to settle the returned soldiers on our pastoral lands. From Pindar right through to the Murchison the land is well watered and, with the assistance the soldiers will have from the repatriation fund, it would be scarcely possible for them to make a failure. I know of many miners who, during the last six or seven years, have taken up pastoral land and are making a success of it. As pointed out by the member for Mt. Magnet, there is no trouble in getting assistance

from the financial institutions for stocking purposes on the part of those who are prepared to take up pastoral leases. I think that if the land was repurchased alongside our railways, and cut up into small holdings, not only would returned soldiers make a success, but it would mean a considerable difference to the revenue of our railways. Up as far as Meekatharra the country is well watered, and the holdings are practically all big ones. I am pleased to see there is an amount of £50,000 on the Loan Estimates for the purpose of assisting mining. I trust the Minister will not ask the people who are engaged in the development of this industry to justify the expenditure which has been made from the commercial point of view; if so, I am satisfied that nothing will be done for the mining industry. It is languishing for want of assistance already. A matter of £9,000 was spent on the industry last year, and there is a fair increase provided for this year. I think this amount will be the means of opening up other mining towns in the State. With regard to the amount set down for State batteries, of £10,000, I say this is a small amount, but judiciously spent would probably give crushing facilities for some of the shows which are now in sore need of them. The Minister gave us a promise in our district that a State mill would be erected. The miners have carried out their compact, and I find that the Mines Department have made every preparation for the erection of the battery. All that we require is that the Minister shall give his authority for the starting of the work. I feel sure the miners will play their part, and I believe the battery will be the means of reviving the Cue and Day Dawn fields. The Minister also promised assistance to the owners of the Big Bell mine. This is one of the biggest propositions in the State. I believe that the £300 may possibly prove sufficient to show that there is enough water in the present basin from which supplies are drawn. Any money which is lent on this property will be repaid from a percentage of the gold that is won. This is a proposition the State could well back up. There is no risk about it, and every ton of ore that is treated pays. I think this mine could manage a very big plant if sufficient water was forthcoming. The greater development of this mine would give a big impetus to the industry in the Cue district. I trust that the money that has been promised will soon be forthcoming. I have had letters from different people who have been prospecting previously in the Murchison, saying that immediately a start is made with the foundations of the mill they are prepared to go back to the Murchison and develop those shows which were previously opened up by them.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin—in reply) [10.36]: I thank hon. members for the kindly manner in which they have treated these Loan Estimates. They supply an opportunity for members to advocate the claims of their districts, which gives us a broader view of some of the sub-

jects intimately connected with these Loan Estimates. The member for Northam said it was a pity I did not bring in the Loan Bill before the Loan Estimates. If the Committee did not pass some of the items on the Loan Estimates it would not be worth while bringing forward the Loan Bill. If they did pass them the Loan Bill would come on as a matter of course, and that is why I put the Loan Bill afterwards. The hon. member also said, "Get money." It is all very well to say that. Prudence says, "Do not buy money." That is what we may be doing at the present juncture if we are not careful. I have brought money before to-day, and do not want to put the State in that position. The member for North-East Fremantle referred to two subjects, one being the jam factory. I think there are sufficient assets now left to pay the Government in full. There is just a tendency, which he noticed, to say "Pay everyone else and leave the Government alone; they will not press you; they dare not do so, so long as we have the influence of members of Parliament, who say that if the Government do not keep this going it will be a bad thing for the State." In that instance it was a shocking piece of commercial immorality. We will recover the money if we can. When the State does show its inclination to help these industries it ought not to bring such a result as that. One would think that the directors would say, "We are not only playing with our own money, but with the money of the people of the State." So far as the question raised by the member for Greenough is concerned, up to now we have not lent any money, except to the Banbury butter factory, to any bacon or butter factory. We have to recognise what the member for Pingelly said, that if we are going to establish bacon factories we cannot do so in every district. I have made it clear that we are prepared to advance pound for pound, but that they have to put their money up first of all. They also have to convince us that they have sufficient capital to carry on with, and that they have the necessary supplies. If they do not do this we would have all these factories on our hands. It is the overhead charges that have to be regulated. They can only be regulated by the company operating to the full the particular undertaking. There has been a great deal of criticism about the £160,000. It shows how difficult a problem it is to deal with the settlement of our soldiers. It is easy to say, as the member for Kanowna has said, that he wants us to settle soldiers on the Esperance lands. If we tell them to go there they would not go. We have to a great extent to be guided by the desire of the soldier himself. It is idle to say to the soldier, "You must take virgin country," because members would say, "How brutally you are treating the soldiers." I took a great deal of interest in the soldiers going to the Front, and I take a great interest in them when they come back. I agree with the leader of the Opposition on this point. I have said to the Lands Department officers, "If you make any mistakes in buying now you have no right to do so. If you do, the

House will sit on you and someone will have to answer for it." I am providing this money because the House says we must have this money, and as I see districts that are suitable, I am providing the money. I told the Lands Department officers that if they buy at an advanced or a high price there will be trouble. Too many people want to sell their land to the soldier because they say they are patriotic. I thank the leader of the Opposition for taking me into a higher realm of finance in referring to the general outlook of the financial position. He said that if the Commonwealth could afford to raise 80 millions, as they might have had to do for another year or two for war purposes, they could afford to take up such a stand as would enable them to raise money for purposes of productiveness. The hon. member may not have known how close he was to the resolutions of the Paris conference in that direction. The Paris conference has said, "We will lend the money for the development of those countries which have the raw material." They will lend it to a central body—such as the Commonwealth would be—which will re-lend it to the States, and the States will then be in a position to get the keenest men in every one of the particular branches that want development, and lend the money, not always giving the best security but occasionally taking a risk. They argued that if we could afford to pay five millions a day for devastation, we could afford to pay five millions a day for some months longer in order to reconstruct. The Commonwealth expenditure now must go down; consequently its taxation, too, must come down. They were contemplating that they would have to raise 80 millions, and the probability is that they may have to raise 80 millions in addition. Knowing that the money is in Australia, and knowing that there will not be a proportion of that money going out of Australia, which has gone out so far as loans which have been raised are concerned, we think there ought to be no difficulty in raising sufficient money in Australia to develop Australia. I agree with the leader of the Opposition and disagree with the member for Northam. I say, "If you raise your loans, what happens"? Say that we take up so much loan money. We put the money back into the bank again, and it goes into circulation. We do not alter its trend worth talking about. The reason for Britain's financial strength to-day is that Britain owns her own national debt. Whatever she has to pay in respect of her huge borrowings, she pays to her own people, and it continues in circulation among her own people.

Hon. P. Collier: Who owns our railways to-day? The British bondholder; not we.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: For argument's sake, if the bonds representing the capital expenditure on our railway system had been floated here, the people of Western Australia would own the Western Australian railway system. To-day the British bondholder owns the entire system apart from the sinking fund. My task is now done.

Hon. P. Collier: We shall be pretty hot on some of your colleagues.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: As regards the items, my colleagues can get on the grill, where hon. members will be able to extract the fullest information from them.

General debate concluded: votes and item discussed as follow:—

Vote—Departmental, £29,257—agreed to.

Vote—Railways and Tramways, etc. £293,627:

Item—Rolling stock, Railways, £54,200.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Last year this item stood at £36,269; this year the amount is £54,200. Can the Minister give any explanation, in connection with this large increase, as to the rolling stock to be built this year? Is it passenger or goods rolling stock and is it going to be built departmentally or by contract, or portion by each method?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The bulk of the item is for work already in hand consisting of 12 corridor cars and two dining cars. It is also for miscellaneous improvements to existing stock. The additional rolling stock is absolutely required to meet the demands on the rolling stock. The question as to building departmentally or by contract, I take it refers to the new works and not to those already let. So far as material is obtainable the new work will be done at the workshops. If the material is not obtainable, we shall have to consider the advisableness of letting it out by contract. So far, no arrangement has been made.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If it were earlier in the evening I should occupy the attention of the Committee for a while in dealing with the question of rolling stock. The officers of the Railway Department who are responsible for designing and constructing our rolling stock seem to have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing since the first railway carriage was built in this State. It would pay the Department to send an officer over to the Eastern States, if nowhere else, just to learn the improvements which have been effected in the system of building up to date passenger rolling stock. Or our railway officers might usefully spend an hour or two on the Kalgoorlie railway station inspecting the Transcontinental corridor carriages. Hundreds of pounds of Western Australian public funds are absolutely wasted in the construction of our new cars. All the ornamental fiddling little fittings which mean much expense are continued in our system of construction to-day, just like years ago, whereas the latest designs in the Eastern States have abandoned all that fretwork and friezework which is so expensive and is only a harbour for dust and germs. In the Transcontinental and Eastern States rolling stock one sees smooth boards, smooth woodwork, both inside and out, which an official can clean in about five minutes, and clean thoroughly, too. On the other hand, our compartments, being fitted with ornamental work like that over the Speaker's chair, which ornamental works nobody wants on a railway carriage, are most difficult to clean. All the little defects which one noticed years

ago in travelling up and down the goldfields line are there to-day on our railway cars still. It is indicative of the fact that the officers controlling this branch of railway work are out of date and should be sent somewhere else to learn that the world has moved during the past 20 years.

Item, Surveys new lines, £1,000.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: To what lines does this refer?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This is merely a general item. There is nothing special in view at the present time, but it is desirable to have an item.

Hon. J. Mitchell: My only idea is that the item is too small.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Plenty of lines have been authorised for survey, but it has not been considered wise to proceed with the surveys, seeing that we have 300 miles of railway authorised which we are not likely to be able to construct for some time. The item of £1,000 is placed on the Estimates in order that for any special surveys that may come along we shall have money available. This State has lost hundreds of thousands of pounds in the construction of its railways through inefficient surveys. From the same cause, the management of the railway system is doomed for all time to bear excessive charges for hauling.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I hope that on the next Loan Estimates there will be a larger vote, in order that the railways needed may be surveyed well ahead of construction. The surveys cost very little, and it is very necessary that lines should be surveyed well ahead.

Item, Tramways, Perth Electric, £25,757.

Hon. P. COLLIER: How much of this item is to be expended for rolling stock for our tramways?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Ten small tramcars will be built, involving a cost of £10,000.

Hon. P. Collier: This financial year?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: It depends on the supply of material. We have given orders for the material, but it may not be available just at the time it is wanted.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Do you know the design of the cars? Are they the open design, such as the smoking cars?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I am not sure of the design.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: One cannot beat the Fremantle and Adelaide type of cars.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The balance of the expenditure is for the extension of the car barn, in order to protect the cars themselves.

Hon. J. Mitchell: That is very necessary.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Under present conditions, many cars have to be left in the open, which adds to the expense of upkeep, and causes deterioration owing to exposure to the weather.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I suppose we shall have to be satisfied with an additional 10 cars, which number is certainly required three or four times over.

The Minister for Railways: We have not the housing available.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The housing is a small matter. No matter where the money is to come from, the people of the metropolitan district ought not to be asked to submit to the disgraceful accommodation that is provided for them at present in the trams. Some of the railway officials do not care twopence if the people are crammed in a fashion which would bring a prosecution from the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, if it were applied to cattle, pigs, or sheep. The war is over now, and there will be any amount of shipping space. If another year goes by and the position is not improved, I shall say that the authorities controlling the tramway system have no conception of their obligation to the travelling public. Indeed, they do not seem to know and they do not seem to care.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The service is much improved.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the hon. member travelled on the line on which I travel and saw the way the public are treated at the busy hours of the morning and evening, he would not say that.

The Minister for Railways: That is largely due to the shortage of rolling stock.

Hon. P. COLLIER: True; but the railway authorities are willing to allow that condition of things to obtain.

Hon. J. Mitchell: The tramways now run thousands of miles more than ever they did before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that. It is five years ago since the Railway Department took over the trams. The travelling public have been increasing all the time, and the system has extended, and naturally additional mileage is being run. We do not find that condition of things in Fremantle. The whole service there is infinitely better than that of Perth. If the tramway system controlled by a board can give satisfactory services, why is it we cannot do the same with all our superintendents and Commissioners? With regard to the 10 cars which were built during the time I was Minister for Railways—

The Minister for Works: It is a pity you did not make it 20.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I had no idea what those cars were like until they were placed on the track. The man who was responsible for designing them should never be allowed to look upon any work in connection with car construction again. Those cars are the most disgraceful thing in the way of cars ever seen. I should not be surprised, however, to find that the 10 new cars are of a similar design. If they are, I will move that they be taken to the Esplanade and burnt.

Mr. TROY: I also want to express my dissatisfaction with the tramway service. Always at a time when people are coming into town in great numbers, we find that there is a scarcity of cars, while along the Hay-street line it is a frequent occurrence to notice three or four cars following each other and nearly all empty. It often happens also that during the busy periods of the day one has to wait 10 minutes or longer for a car. The system seems to be running itself.

Item, Electric Power Station, East Perth, £33,700.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I notice that last year a sum of £53,000 was spent. These works are not paying at the present time. There is no necessity for extension, because the works can supply the whole of the electricity that is required without the need for increasing the capital year after year. If we go on doing this, it will be a long time before they become a paying proposition.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: The amount provided is £33,700. Of that sum £30,000 is made up of works on hand. It was found owing to the war that the material required was not obtainable and not ready for delivery, and it will probably arrive during the coming year. That will absorb £30,700. There is provision for £3,000 for extensions for new business. It is pointed out that the undertaking will show a profit at the end of the financial year.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Harbours and Rivers, £93,950—agreed to.

Vote—Water and Sewerage, £93,970:

Item, Water supply for towns generally, £20,000.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Will the Minister explain what it is proposed to do in connection with the Geraldton water supply? The vote is £20,000, and, so far as the Geraldton works are concerned, they will cost considerably more than that in themselves.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The scheme has been an unfortunate affair and Geraldton has suffered. The intention of the Government is to try to meet the matter fairly. I hope I shall be able to carry out what I have stated. The Engineer-in-Chief visited the locality with Mr. Oldham a fortnight ago, and I hope some time in January that I, too, will be able to have a look at the place. I am quite determined that even if it costs more than the Estimate, there is not going to be the same fiasco as before.

Hon. P. Collier: But you have the same responsible officers.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I hope to be able to authorise the work to be started. We are spending between £5,000 and £7,000 by the end of next June, and we shall probably be able to place orders for some of the material, but we will not require to get delivery until after June.

Mr. TROY: I would like an expression of opinion from the Minister in regard to the water rates at Geraldton. Is it the intention of the department to still insist on a rate when a supply is not provided?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Geraldton people will have to continue to pay a rate until the scheme comes along. The Minister can then deal with the matter fairly and try to make up for some of the injustices the people have had to suffer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is a matter upon which the Engineering Department will decide, and it has to be borne in mind that the engineers in the department to-day will be called upon to advise the Minister. They are

the same engineers who were responsible for the attempt to establish the works a few years ago.

The Minister for Works: That is not so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is so.

Item, Boring for water on stock routes, £5,000.

Mr. CHESSON: I should like to know whether this is to open up stock routes from the North-West to the Murchison. It is necessary that money should be spent on those routes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This money is required for improvements on the Mullewa-Minginew, Yinadong to Eel Creek, Gascoyne River, and other works, as may be required.

Mr. TROY: I am glad that provision has been made for this. I also hope that provision will be made for sinking wells in localities where new pastoral areas are being opened up.

Item, Metropolitan water supply, £33,570.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is a big increase here. Will the Minister explain it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We are still following the policy of putting down large mains. Pipes have been ordered from Messrs. Monteath Bros. They are shifting plant from Victoria to this State, because I wanted to get all possible work done in Western Australia, and I told them that unless they made the pipes here I would put in a plant and have the pipes made at the State Implement Works. We are putting in bigger mains because it is cheaper to do it that way than to put in a small main and have to relay it again in a few years. The last bore put down has been unexpectedly successful, and consequently we shall be well off for water for some years to come.

Item, Goldfields water supply, £1,200.

Mr. HARRISON: There is a number of guaranteed extensions. The amount involved has to be repaid in ten years, and I understand the department are now bringing the men concerned in those extensions under an entirely different scheme, providing for higher rates than those originally fixed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I must confess I do not know exactly what the £1,200 is for, but I have made a note of it. I can assure the hon. member that it will be properly dealt with.

Item, Water supply in agricultural districts (including drainage and irrigation), £25,000.

Mr. HARRISON: The remarks I made on the preceding item might be applied to this item as well, which covers those extensions in agricultural districts. Some of the farmers along the line have been very badly treated in this respect.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The supply of water to the agricultural extensions has been all right, but the supply of money in return has been quite unsatisfactory. I suppose we could sell up some of those people. Some of them deserve to be sold up. Some of them could well pay, but have no intention of paying. In regard to the guaranteed services, there have been one or two dropped in during the last 12 months, and the question of how to deal with them is now under consideration. Great sing-song has been made about the price

we charge the farmers, but I hold the view that if a man enters into an undertaking and, after the money has been spent by the Government, tries to get out of that undertaking, he is a rogue.

Mr. HARRISON: I resent what the Minister has said. I am speaking of farmers who have paid, notwithstanding which they have been brought under a different scheme altogether. The farmers that paid are charged a higher rate than was agreed upon. Is it fair, after they have paid a pro rata rate for their extension, that the excess water should be charged for at the same rate?

Mr. PICKERING: I notice there is an amount here for drains in the South-West. If satisfactory arrangements can be fixed up with the settlers, will an amount be set apart for snagging the Abba and Sabina rivers as part of the Ludlow drainage scheme?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The main portion of this amount is dealing with drainage which is to be done at the Harvey, required by the Lands Department in connection with the repatriation scheme for returned soldiers. Also, there is a sum for works at Brunswick, required in the same way. In respect to the question referred to by the hon. member, it will be considered.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Development of goldfields and mineral resources, £60,000:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am glad to be able to announce that the promise I made on the last Loan Estimates that the amount provided this year would be increased, has been fulfilled. Mining has been seriously retarded during the war period, but we hope that now the war is over there will be a revival of interest in the industry. Every application for assistance which has come before me has been sympathetically dealt with. Apart from the usual avenues of assistance to be granted under the Mines Development Act, I propose first of all to consider the requirements of the returned soldiers, and to assist them in the way that has been done during the past year in providing prospecting outfits, and further to help them in taking up abandoned properties.

Mr. Lambert: Are you going to remind the Commonwealth Government of their obligations?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have done so, but up to the present they have not redeemed their obligation to make provision for getting these men back into their avocation. The next proposal, apart from the assistance to soldiers, is in relation to boring. We have decided to spend some money in boring for coal in the Irwin River district, and the work will be proceeded with at once. Applications are under consideration for assistance to Westonia, Coolgardie and Greenbushes. One has been determined upon, and the others are the subject of investigation. The question of whether anything further is to be done will depend upon the terms offered and the reports received. In regard to assistance by providing crushing plants, it has been decided to establish a battery at Cue. The plant has been partly pur-

chased, and will be erected at an early date. At Warriardar we propose to establish a plant, but we have been handicapped by the fact that the mines there are tied up under options. The Coolgardie plant is under way, and the expenditure has been authorised. In relation to assistance to mining, the department does not get all the plums; if there is a good proposition it is usually taken up by somebody else. However, I have under way the re-organisation of the department, so that special attention will be devoted to this branch of the industry.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to know whether anything is to be done in regard to prospecting for oil?

The Minister for Mines: It is not proposed to expend any money in that direction during the present financial year.

Mr. HARRISON: The Minister said that certain boring was under consideration at Westonia. If the money was spent in boring in that formation the chances are that other bodies of ore would be brought to light there. I hope that if the Minister gets a favourable report from his officers as to the boring, he will put men on who will handle the job properly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is the first time for many years that the department has launched out in any considerable expenditure compared with what has been the case in other years. The amount is a mere nothing in comparison with the items which are scattered all over the Estimates in connection with the agricultural and other industries. I hope the Minister will exercise great care in the allocation of this money. If nothing results from the expenditure there might be a cry for its reduction next year or in future years.

The Minister for Mines: It involves great responsibilities.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It proposes some expenditure in connection with returned soldiers that will involve only a small amount. I understand that the department are not going beyond the provision of turn-outs.

The Minister for Mines: We might have to go beyond that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The Commonwealth will be finding the money. There will be a comparatively small sum to find for the next six months out of this expenditure of £50,000.

The Minister for Mines: I hope it will be considerable.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It will not amount to very much. There are not very many returned soldiers who would go out prospecting, and the amount will only run into a few thousand pounds. With regard to the question of boring, that will not absorb very much, and the work can be done at about 10s. a foot.

Mr. Duff: From 10s. to 16s. a foot.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The boring that will be done between now and the end of June will not involve very much money. I warn the Minister against the indiscriminate granting of large sums of money of two or three thousand pounds here and there, according to the pressure that may be brought to bear to secure that money. The member for Mount Magnet said he hoped that the Minister would not pursue the policy

adopted by a former Minister for Mines. I, too, hope there will be no political consideration in the allocation of this money. The total expenditure for last year ended June 30th, under the Mines Development Act, was £6,745. There are quite a number of names here that I do not know, but picking out those that I do know, I find that £2,486 was expended in the Minister's own locality, and this is about 35 per cent. of the total expenditure. I do not argue that the money should be expended according to the boundaries of the constituencies.

The Minister for Mines: It depends on the applications that are made.

Hon. P. COLLIER: One district may have claims three times more pressing than another district. I have in mind the expenditure in the Ravensthorpe district about which I asked a question last week, which involved a sum of £500 in connection with the Flag mine. I do not know whether that expenditure can be justified. I believe it is still going on.

The Minister for Mines: That is wrong. I know your informant.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no informant, and have not received any communication from the Phillips River district. I saw by the return that the advance was going on month by month, but now that it has ceased, what will be the result of the expenditure?

The Minister for Mines: It is a total of £3,080.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The money will never be recovered because there is nothing from which to recover it. I have viewed this item with suspicion as to its justification. The advance was not warranted in the first case, and would not have been granted but for political pressure of some kind. Having been started it was continued month by month until £3,500 had been paid to a mine into which one man had put £10,000 a few years ago and lost the lot. I hope the department will exercise better judgment and wiser discretion in the distribution of this £50,000 than they did in the case of the Flag mine at Ravensthorpe. I hope the result of the expenditure of this £50,000 will be productive of some good to the industry.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I agree with the hon. member that there is necessity for close scrutiny over the expenditure of this money. I have already outlined the re-organisation of the department, so that the State Mining Engineer and a member of the Geological Department may devote their united efforts to finding out the best methods of allocating this money. The hon. member's fear that the advances were still being made, has been removed, because no money has been spent there since last May. The money which was spent there was allocated on the advice of the State Mining Engineer and the manager of the smelter. It was difficult to find proper fluxing ore in the Ravensthorpe area so as to bring down the cost of smelting. My predecessor decided it would be as well to venture upon the unwatering and development of this mine, with the view of discovering a chute of ore which

was believed to exist. If we had been successful the effect would have been to reduce the cost of smelting and a general advantage to the district would have followed. It was found that the money originally allotted for this purpose was not sufficient, and further money was advanced for the purpose of completing the work. The result has not been as satisfactory as was expected, but nevertheless it has not been a failure. The ore that is now being won is of the value of £4 to £5 a ton, but it is not sufficiently available under the present costs of treatment at the smelter. The mine, however, has to be developed further and, if the results are satisfactory, it will be better for the whole district.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Has it turned out a failure?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The expectations have not been realised. We got ore but it was not of sufficient value to take as fluxing ore.

Mr. MUNSIE: With the leader of the Opposition I trust that the £50,000 will be wisely spent. While I realise that there is a different method being adopted in regard to the advances which are being made, I trust also that too much red tape will not make its appearance. The leader of the Opposition remarked that if the expenditure of this money did not show something definite, an outcry might be raised for the cutting out or the reduction of the Vote next year. That probably will happen, but if we can be guided by experience in other industries, we can safely say that if the £50,000 fails to bring anything to light, it will be an incentive to put on the Estimates next year £60,000. We shall thus be merely doing what has been done in the past in connection with the agricultural industry. For every pound that has been spent by the Government on mining in Western Australia, at least £100 has been spent on the development of agriculture. The Minister has explained that a good deal of this money is to be expended in assistance to returned soldiers in prospecting parties. Not very much can be spent in that direction before next June. If the State had incurred the whole of the expenditure that has been incurred by the State and the Federal Government in the equipment of prospecting parties of returned soldiers, the State would have expended only about one-sixth of this £50,000.

The Minister for Mines: You do not object to the expenditure?

Mr. MUNSIE: No, but there seems to be an idea abroad that to encourage prospecting one has to send the prospectors out into the most remote country. I want the Minister to assist people to develop some better known districts, where fairly good gold has been previously discovered.

The Minister for Mines: There is no doubt of the wisdom of that.

Mr. MUNSIE: If the Minister receives requests for assistance for parties in known areas, I hope he will deal sympathetically with them.

Mr. FOLEY: When we hear members say they believe in some set system of helping min-

ing, it is proof that those members do not understand the question. I am glad the amount for the development of mining has been increased, but I am sorry that it should have been necessary. If we are going to spend loan moneys on the development of our mineral resources, we must get at least two men in the Mines Department whom we have not there at present. The man who can best show us how to develop mining is the mining chemist. We have in the member for Coolgardie one with some knowledge of mining chemistry.

Mr. Smith: Is not a little knowledge a dangerous thing?

[Hon. G. Taylor took the Chair.]

Mr. FOLEY: Not if a man makes good use of that little knowledge. In addition to a chemist, we require a general advisory officer, if we are to make a success of mining. Something has been said of the development of the Flag mine at Ravensthorpe. I do not know much about the position of that mine. A little while ago the Lancefield mine was assisted by the Government, with the result that the mine is proving one of the bright spots of the industry in this State. Had not the money been given when it was, Lancefield would be a thing of the past to-day. It would not have mattered so much for Lancefield itself, but if it turns out that the ores at other centres can be treated in the same way as the Lancefield ore, then that expenditure of £4,000 by the State could not have resulted more advantageously. If the same thing happens at the Flag mine, Ravenshorpe—

Hon. P. Collier: But the Flag mine was a very shaky proposition from the commencement.

Mr. FOLEY: Men who had spent a great deal of money upon mining in this State held very diverse opinions regarding the Lancefield mine. If the Flag mine, with all its faults, comes to light again, we shall bless the day for Western Australia.

Hon. P. Collier: The Flag mine is shut down again.

Mr. FOLEY: That may be only temporary. Another matter I wish to refer to is the mode of assisting returned soldiers who wish to go out prospecting. Let me say first that if an application comes to me for mining development assistance, I satisfy myself, even if only from a casual view, that there is something in the application before I place it before the Minister. I consider that is the duty of every mining member. Personally I have never supported an application for assistance to mining since I have been a member of this Chamber that I would not honestly have put forward if someone else had been providing the money for myself. So far I have never had a miss in regard to any show I have backed up. I remember going to the Mines Department with some money that the department had lent partly on my recommendation. At the time the assistance was granted the Minister for Mines said it was a blue duck. However, the £300 lent came to light again. The members of this Chamber can help any Government, and can help this State to a greater extent, if they do not use their political influence to get

money from the Treasurer when there is no genuine chance of its return. If a member represents a mining constituency, he can go down for himself and inspect the mine in respect of which he is requested to apply for assistance. With regard to the returned soldier miners, my opinion is that the sooner the State gets complete control of the repatriation of miners the better will it be.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes. Miners especially. The people in the East know nothing about miners.

The Minister for Mines: But there is Mr. Garner on the board.

Mr. FOLEY: Some men in this State running the repatriation work for the Federal Government know nothing of mining.

Hon. P. Collier: They have stopped Commonwealth assistance to mining.

Mr. FOLEY: Yes. I am coming to that. There is a Mr. Black, known by all mining men to be a clever and practical miner and a good friend to Western Australian mining. Any member here would place great reliance on Mr. Black's opinion. The Federal Government allocate a sum of £5,000 to helping prospecting, and consider that they have done a grand thing. But Western Australia on these and other Estimates has provided much more liberal assistance for the payment of turn-outs for prospectors. Now the Federal £5,000 has been cut out, and the Federal authorities say they will give no more until some genuine scheme is put forward, or until something is submitted that will be more payable than past projects. Here is a matter within my own knowledge. Four men have put in for sustenance money in order that they may go out prospecting. Every one of those men I have personal knowledge of, and I know that if they went out to prospect either collectively or on their own they could do as well in prospecting as any other man. There is another class of men who go to the repatriation board, and get an amount sufficient to make up their weekly allowance to two guineas, with their pension. A man receiving 10s. a week pension would receive 30s. per week from the repatriation board. The four men to whom I have alluded want a certain amount to pay their tucker bill while they are out prospecting. But they cannot get that amount. The repatriation board told them that the money for prospecting is cut out. Yet the board go on paying out of the coffers of the Commonwealth Treasury sustenance money to make up the income of these men to two guineas per week, and this apparently with no other object than that of having the men walking about the streets of Perth as they are doing to-day. Those men say, "Just give us about 25s. a week to live on, and we can go out with another man prospecting." That other man has been assisted, not by the Federal Government but by the State Mines Department, the officers of which considered that he had a good line. If the State takes hold of prospecting, a larger amount will need to be placed on our Estimates for the development of mining. But we will make more use from a State point of view of the £50,000 than the Commonwealth Government's administration would achieve with £200,000. I believe every member of this

Chamber and every member of a State Parliament throughout Australia who has the interests of mining at heart, should consider this question. It is absolutely a non-party question. The hand of the Commonwealth Government should be forced to allow the States to legislate and administer for their own domestic responsibilities in this respect, and the Commonwealth should give them the necessary money to do it. In that way better results will be attained. By the placing of the £50,000 on these Estimates this State will be doing a great deal of work that the Commonwealth should do, that the Commonwealth promised these men would be done. If it is not done, the word of the Commonwealth, given on behalf of Australia to these men before they went to the Front, will be broken. Let us take this and every other opportunity of hammering away at the Commonwealth Government, and eventually we may be able to knock some sense into the men handling the matter, and secure for mining in this State something that we are not getting at present. Every member should assist every other member to keep the hammer going until something is done. I say that they are not separating the unemployed from the unemployable in the case of our returned soldiers, and this is the first thing to be done. It is the solution of the difficulty throughout the repatriation of our soldiers.

Mr. LAMBERT: I believe that every member representing a mining constituency feels obliged to assist the Minister and the Mines Department in the wise expenditure of this increased vote. It is pleasing to learn that the Minister has decided upon a certain scheme which carries a considerable amount of merit. The only way to expend money on auriferous areas to the best advantage is to first consult the geological heads who are competent to advise, in collaboration with officers in other branches of mining knowledge and science. These officers can give the Minister some direction as to how this money should be expended. There will have been many friendly suggestions put forward by members that should be of considerable interest to the Minister, and of considerable value to him. The obligation of the Commonwealth Government in assisting mining has been touched upon. I hope the Minister realises that he has to take a firm stand in dealing with that Government. They have granted a paltry sum of money to assist returned soldiers in this State.

The Minister for Mines: The particular task with me will be in regard to base metals.

Mr. LAMBERT: If the task is as base as the assistance the Federal Government are prepared to give these men, whom they called upon to fight in other lands, it does not say very much for them. It is an obligation due to the mining industry, that if it is possible to assist the men back to the auriferous areas of the State, the Commonwealth should tackle it. I believe we have finer and more varied auriferous areas in Western Australia than are to be found in any other portion of the world. Are we as a State, with the greatest auriferous areas known, going to stand idly by and be blind to the fact that the Commonwealth Gov-

ernment will not realise their obligations to settle those men, whom they were so anxious to send to a distant land away from their ordinary avocations. If the Commonwealth will not provide the money the Minister will be well advised to ignore them. He must show to the people of Australia that as far as his vote is concerned it is the vote of the State of Western Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: That question is not under consideration. I only allowed the hon. member to go on as he was giving an illustration of what he meant.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is an illustration of the policy of the Minister for Mines. The Minister referred to the £5,000 grant by the Commonwealth Government, and incidentally to the fact that they had quite forgotten to give us any more assistance in this direction. The Government should open up our auriferous areas. A good deal of assistance can be rendered by trying to direct the ordinary man out of his dungeon of ignorance. This dungeon of ignorance has been responsible for the present indebtedness of the State in the agricultural and other industries. If scientific methods are adopted, good results will follow. We admittedly have a highly scientific staff in the geological office, and they are prepared to assist to get the outside public to realise the commercial importance of the industry. We have a department which is chock full of information, but this is unknown to the outside world, and while that position remains no good will result. If the commercial world were made to realise the importance and value of the minerals we possess, those minerals would be made use of.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member should have made this speech on the Mines Department Estimates. I have allowed him a great deal of latitude.

Mr. LAMBERT: I only hope that the good sense which has prompted the Minister for Mines and the Government in making possible available a fair sum of money will result in good to the State.

Mr. HICKMOTT: With reference to oil which has been located east of Pingelly, has this matter been brought under the notice of the Minister? Experts have reported favourably on the find, and I believe that a considerable sum has been offered to the owner of the property. I am told that the crude oil found in the spring in question burns in the lamp very well. It is important that inquiries should be made.

Mr. SMITH: I wish to sound a note of warning about the spending of this large sum of money. In the past a great deal of money has been wasted in seeking after treasures that did not exist. Only to-day an instance was brought under my notice of quite a large sum of money advanced by the Government to prospect and develop the supposed phosphatic rock deposits at Gingin. The Government advanced £2,000.

The Attorney General: It was £200, not £2,000.

Mr. SMITH: I understood it was £2,000. However, I am told the business is closed down. I put this forward as an example of

how money can be lost. I hope the money on the Estimates will be spent more judiciously than it has been in the past.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Development of agriculture, £632,600:

Item, Abattoirs, cold storage, freezing, chilling and canning works, Wyndham; refrigerating works, export depot, grain sheds and sale yards (including land resumptions and original equipment, furniture, etc.), £135,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is a very considerable sum of money. Is there included in this item any expenditure in connection with the proposed works at Fremantle?

The Premier: No.

Mr. THOMSON: I should like to know what is proposed to be done in connection with the stores at Albany. We have been informed that by the expenditure of £10,000, no fewer than 500 lambs per day could be frozen. If that is true, I think the money would be well spent.

The PREMIER: This item is to provide for certain improvements for cold stores at Albany, but I am not in a position to inform the hon. member exactly what the improvements are. Certain additions have been made for freezing accommodation at Albany, but I do not know how much money is to be spent.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I should like to know under what item in these Estimates provision is being made for the Government assistance to the proposed works at Fremantle.

The Attorney General: No item at all. It will be provided under these fire insurance moneys. It has not been advanced. The discussion has not been finalised.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No matter from what fund the money is to come, there should be a vote on the Estimates. The Government make provision here for considerable expenditure in anticipation of the finalising of the proposals. If because the assistance is to come out of the insurance money, Ministers take the view that it is not necessary to get Parliamentary authority—

The Attorney General: That is not so. There was previously on the Estimates an item of £30,000 for ship building, but we have cut that out.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I want to know where and when the House will have an opportunity of voting the amount which it is proposed to advance towards the erection of works at Fremantle. Also I should like to ask the Premier if he can give us any information as to the total amount expended to date upon the Wyndham freezing works.

The Premier: That is a Works Department matter.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But this is under the heading of "Development of Agriculture." Of course I do not care where I get the information from so long as I obtain it. The item provides for the expenditure of £135,000, which includes, according to the information set out in the details, expenditure upon other items as well as the Wyndham Freezing Works. Consequently, we do not know how much of

the £135,000 is to be expended on the Wyndham Freezing Works.

Mr. Smith: On the next page there is shown £155,000 for the Wyndham Freezing Works.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is for trading account. But what is the amount spent to date on the Wyndham Freezing Works, and the amount that it is proposed to expend out of this £135,000?

The Minister for Works: I have not got the exact figures.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am not asking the Minister for Works. I am asking the Minister in charge of the Estimates, the Premier.

The PREMIER: This vote is set down to the Public Works Department, and the Public Works Department do the work. The item includes the Wyndham Freezing Works, and cold storage, chilling works, and abattoirs connected with the freezing works. It also provides for the completion of buildings still in the hands of the Agricultural Department. Then there is the small amount for the Midland Junction saleyards. Further there is an amount for the extension of cold storage at Albany. The whole of the work is to be performed by the Public Works Department.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The actual amount in connection with the Fremantle works has not yet been ascertained. It is not yet known whether the company will find all the money themselves, or whether they will require the Government to find some of the money, or whether the Government may not have to find the whole of the money. The next few days will determine those financial questions. At the moment, so far as I see, a large sum will be under-written, and the Government will be asked to provide pound for pound. However, the whole amount may be subscribed by the public. There is no idea whatever of withholding from Parliament or from the public any information regarding the freezing works. Only last week the scheme, as it then was, was published; and I hope within the next two days to make public the scheme with the modifications to date, which I think will be the final modifications. It will then go forward.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course I am not suggesting that there is any desire to withhold information, and I realise that the proposition is not sufficiently advanced to enable the Government to know how much, if anything, they will be called upon to advance towards it. But in the event of the Government having to advance a considerable proportion of the capital required, say, if not more than one half is subscribed by the general public, the probabilities are that the House will not have an opportunity of considering the conditions under which the Government will make the advance. That, I suppose, can hardly be avoided. For my part, I am strongly opposed to Government funds being advanced to private companies whilst the whole of the management is handed over to the private persons concerned. If the Government advance funds, they should retain a share in the management of the concern.

The Attorney General: We propose to do that in this case.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We pay them the money, and we manage the works too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the circumstances, I think the Government are entitled to a share in the management.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In this case, we propose to take a mortgage over the whole of the assets, and there will be a Government nominee on the board. The company could borrow money from the bank just as well as from the Government. If the company come to the Government for assistance, the Government are entitled to have a say in the business management too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I asked the Minister for Works for some information about the Wyndham Freezing Works.

The Minister for Works: You asked the Premier, and you got your answer.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Before we are justified in voting an addition of £135,000 to the cost of the works, we ought to know what has been spent to date. The last figure was in the vicinity of £400,000 or £500,000; and year after year we are voting huge sums of money for these works—probably we shall be up to a million before long. Apparently the works will be over-capitalised to a considerable extent, and there is hardly the prospect of their proving a profitable investment. If the original estimate of £150,000 was anywhere at all near the mark, it is hard to understand where all the additional hundreds of thousands of pounds have gone during the past year or two. Perhaps some Minister can tell the Committee how much has been expended up to date.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member gave me a snub and I do not like snubs. So far as the Wyndham Freezing Works are concerned, Nevanas's estimate in connection with the building and machinery was £159,195. At that time Dunkerley gave an estimate of £156,250. It was discovered by the Wilson Government, of which I was a member, that their estimates were of no value. In August, 1916, the Public Works Department made up an estimate of the works of £273,000. At that time the estimate for machinery alone was £118,661. Later on, desiring if possible to get something that I could put before the Government and Parliament as reliable, I procured an estimate of £598,583; the departmental charges amounting to £35,000, or a total of £544,000. Before the works are finished it is probable they will cost anything from £600,000 to £650,000.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): What did you say on the select committee?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I cannot remember now. There have been many expenses which could not be anticipated. The strike caused the wages to go up to the extent of £20,000. There has been a quantity of necessary machinery which has been sunk on three occasions. Each time it has cost considerably more money to buy the next quantity of machinery that has been sunk. It is expected that the works will be ready for killing in May or June of next year. In my opinion, the undertaking is a white elephant.

The amount of money, so far as I can remember, that has been spent up to the present is in the neighbourhood of £480,000, or a little over. A question was asked in regard to Albany. There is a sum of £5,000 included in this £125,000 for this purpose. It is not known by the Public Works Department what is contemplated by the Agricultural Bank, but they are making inquiries in the matter. I therefore put on this £5,000 so that I should have a few feathers to fly with if necessary.

Item, Agricultural Immigration, £2,500.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What is the meaning of this item?

The PREMIER: This is chiefly in connection with nominated passages. It is put in to enable us to give these assisted passages. Probably some of these people will come out to employment in the agricultural industry.

Mr. SMITH: Is this system of agricultural immigration generally known? It seems a ridiculously small amount. If it is not known to more than a few, not many people will claim the assistance.

The PREMIER: The amount allowed by the Government is from £6 to £11 for passages, but the cost is now very greatly in excess of that. Consequently, there is little being done in this direction.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Roads and Bridges, Public Buildings, etc., £26,875—agreed to.

Vote—Other undertakings, £1,395,259:

Item, Brickyards, £1,280.

Mr. TEESDALE: On what is this money being spent?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In order to keep the works going, and to minimise the losses which have occurred it is necessary to provide accommodation for the men who work there. We are, therefore, building five or six cottages for which the men pay rent ranging from 7s. 6d. to 10s. a week.

Item, State hotels and tourists' resorts, £3,000.

Mr. SMITH: How much of this money is for State hotels and how much for the tourists' resorts? At the present time the Tourist Department is located at the Supreme Court. It is about time some better management was incorporated into the department.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This money is provided for additions to the Yal-lingup Caves House in connection with another dining room, bedrooms, stores, etc., and also for the drainage of State hotels, which have not been properly drained before.

Item, Steamships, £4,500.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am going to move to strike out this item because this sum of money ought to be provided out of the magnificent profits which have been earned by the "Kangaroo." If we cannot make small additions and improvements to the machinery of this vessel out of the profits earned last year, which amounted to between £60,000 and £70,000, we ought not to own vessels. This year it is estimated that the profits will be something like £132,000, and that the greater portion of this amount will come from the "Kangaroo."

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Most of them last year came from the "Kwinana."

The COLONIAL TREASURER: This amount is a charge for putting into the "Kangaroo" additional engines, so that we shall be increasing her capital value by doing so. A rather wise suggestion was made to me. The probabilities are that the "Kangaroo" will earn considerably more than anticipated, and it is thought it would be wise under the circumstances that whatever she earns over and above the estimated sum, we should redeem a certain amount of her purchase money so that after the war she may be brought down to what she would stand at her ordinary price enabling her to earn interest. We cannot expect the vessel to continue to earn the high freights she has been earning, now that the war is over. The engines it is proposed to instal are new, and they will increase the capital value of the vessel.

Hon. P. Collier: You are adding to her capital value at a time when her earning capacity will diminish.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The idea is to redeem her capital cost so that when the war is over the vessel will stand at her proper capital value.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Engineers calculate that you can do a certain thing with a certain horse power. The experience is that you can do infinitely better with double the horse power, and that is what is happening in connection with the "Kangaroo"—we have duplicated the power. I want to impress on the House the desirability of getting Diesel driven ships. Because we have duplicated the power on the "Kangaroo" that does not mean that Diesel engines must be condemned. This State requires three or four Diesel driven ships, and then we must allow for double their horse power to drive them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is an item that in all circumstances might well be charged to the earnings of the ship. We are adding to the capital cost when the vessel's earning capacity will be diminished. This £4,500 that should be paid out of her profits is going into Consolidated Revenue. We are adding £4,500 to her capital cost, for which the State will have to pay six per cent. interest.

The Colonial Treasurer: It is perfectly legitimate to charge it up to her capital value.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But surely, when a ship can show £100,000 profit for a year, if she wants an auxiliary engine costing £4,500 it ought to be paid out of her profit.

The Colonial Treasurer: Her selling value will be increased by that sum.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know that it will be. Apparently, it is necessary to spend this on her auxiliary engines to bring her up to what we thought she was.

The Colonial Treasurer: She will be worth her increased value because of that reserve power.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We considered her engines were of a certain power. Now we find it is necessary to spend money to get that

power which we thought she possessed. Therefore by the spending of this money she is not of increased value. We are not adding to the value of the ship.

The Colonial Treasurer: Yes we are, by giving her this reserve power.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But we can keep on transferring from revenue to loan until we wipe out our deficit.

The Colonial Treasurer: We are paying this out of loan because we are providing sinking fund and depreciation. We are doing the same with our railways every day.

Mr. MUNSIE: I believe in trading concerns, but I contend that this is not giving the trading concerns a fair deal.

The Colonial Treasurer: It is giving them more than a fair deal.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Treasurer instanced our railways. If our railways were showing a profit, we should not provide for repairs out of Loan Estimates; the upkeep would be provided out of Revenue. We have a steamship showing for the year a profit of £80,000 or more, to go into Consolidated Revenue. Next year the State trading concerns will not get a pennyworth of credit for that, but we are adding £4,500 to the capital of the trading concerns and paying six per cent. interest on it. If this is finance, I do not understand it.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: That steamship is first of all kept up to a standard. That is a legitimate charge on working expenses. But the argument is that by putting in these engines, we make the ship a more valuable ship to the extent of the amount we spend. Surely, in those circumstances, that is capital expenditure. It would be capital expenditure in every other business I know of. However, during the recess I shall go carefully into the method which has been adopted, a method that I say is absolutely wrong. At present it is insisted that these ships be kept up to their standard out of revenue. In addition, the ships are providing sinking fund, and also a depreciation of about £14,000 per year. See what that will result in. At the end of the sinking fund the Government would have paid off the boat and could obtain another boat. I do not mind doing some things for posterity, but I think this is over the odds. The position is absolutely wrong from any point of view.

Mr. Munsie: I do not think it is unfair, but I think it is foolish, to pay the 6½ per cent.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am told this particular ship is better capital value in any market by reason of her having that reserve power. We could have let her go with the present engines, but we were advised that if we put those engines in we would be giving her a better market value to the extent of the improvement made. Consequently, that is capital expenditure.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Land Improvement Loan Fund, £58,250:

Item, Development of Agriculture—Mines (Forests). £18,700.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The information is given on page 33 that this item refers to continuance of classification of timber lands,

continuance of pine planting north of Perth, resumption of land, purchase of Loch estate, tuart country, also Stirling estate, tuart reserve, etc. What does the pine planting north of Perth consist of?

**THE PREMIER:** The classification of timber lands is necessary in order to show the quantity of timber on wooded lands, and to show what land should be reserved for settlement, and what land should be reserved for forestry purposes. Such a classification will save the necessity for separate inquiry into each application for land. The officers of the Lands Department are engaged in conjunction with officers of the Forestry Department on this work. They classify the land, and the surveyors accompany them.

**Hon. P. Collier:** I fully appreciate the necessity for classification of our timber lands, but what about the other items mentioned?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Of that sum of £18,700, £3,000 is for classification of timber lands, and I need not repeat the Premier's explanation. Next, it includes £700 in connection with the appointment of a leather chemist for investigation purposes. As hon. members know, we possess in the gums of our forest trees a great source of wealth in the shape of tanning materials, which materials are said to be unsurpassed in any part of the world. The only method of exploiting those materials so far has been to send the most valuable of them, mallet bark, across the sea to foreign markets. In the case of mallet bark, too, we have all but killed the goose that laid the golden eggs. The policy of the future is to investigate our various barks, with a view to having extract works established here in Western Australia. That research work requires the appointment of a specially trained chemist. Because of that, a sum of £700 has been put up by the Commonwealth for that research work, and we are putting up the same amount. Unfortunately, owing to an officer of one of the State departments challenging the advisability of making this investigation, we have lost the services of one of the world's greatest leather chemists. We lost him owing to the delay that took place by reason of the officer I refer to challenging the advisableness of the investigation. The leather chemist has now been appointed to the position formerly held by Professor Procter in England, the world's leading chemist in that line. We have not yet found another chemist, but we are working with the Commonwealth in the hope of finding such a person and bringing him here to assist in the investigations. There is £5,000 provided for pine planting in a locality north of Perth. I was anxious to have £15,000, but the Treasurer was insistent that the amount should be kept down. I wanted the extra amount to provide a tramway, but yielded to him, as it would not be possible to spend the money until next June. The idea is to plant a square mile of pines every year. If this is continually done, in the course of a few years we will have a plantation, and operating on the cycle principle we shall be able to realise on these pines and so recoup ourselves for the expen-

diture. That cannot be done except through loan money, and the loan itself would be recouped. I think the profit from planting pines in South Australia ran into £10 or £11 an acre, spread over the whole period of 30 years. The area north of Perth lies between the Midland railway and the coast, and is about 20 miles from Perth. It is all Crown land and is just west of Bullsbrook. The land also contains a great deal of firewood which, if a tramway was constructed, could be brought down to Perth and help to pay the cost of the line. One of the essentials in connection with a pine plantation is not only that the land should be suitable, but that it should be close to the market which it is intended to supply. That is the case so far as this area is concerned. The next item is one for £500, and the money is used in respect to advertising our timbers in Europe. For some years past I have been urging every Government, of which I have been a member, to use the money for this purpose. The French Mission which recently visited this State, emphasised that again and again, and told us how foolish we were not to realise that we should be represented at the Lyons Fair. I have, therefore, asked for a sum of £500 to be given so that we might do some advertising.

**Hon. P. Collier:** Could you not send a representative direct?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** The idea is to send a representative direct. I do not believe in a man from London representing this State. I want some typical person from Western Australia who knows the country well, to go to the Fair and see exactly what he can pick up for Western Australia, so that in the following year we can be adequately represented there. The sum of £9,500 provided here makes up the balance in respect to the proposed purchase of the Loch estate, and included in that is a sum of £2,000 which is owed to the Lands Department in respect to the tuart reserve. There is very little tuart in this State. Probably one of the finest areas of tuart in the State is held principally by the Loch estate. The present owners for a long time have had negotiations with the Government, but the price they asked was £12,000. The owners have now come down to £7,500. Further negotiations are still proceeding, and nothing is yet closed. The Conservator advises that it is highly desirable that the land should be acquired for the Forestry Department, as it is practically the home of the tuart, and properly attended to it will mean that we shall have a tuart plantation forever in Western Australia. The sum of £2,000 is to be handed over to the Lands Department in respect to the subdivision of the Stirling estate. It has been hanging fire between the Lands Department and the Forests Department ever since the last Labour Government were in office. The department has paid interest on the capital value, and it is proposed to transfer that £2,000 to the Lands Department. This is only a book entry, because the £2,000 already appears in some other Loan Estimates. That will be debited to the Forests Department,

and I presume there will be a corresponding credit to the Lands Department.

Mr. SMITH: The Attorney General has lightly slipped over the question of the leather expert. He should give more particulars as to how it was that some individual was able to influence the Government in the matter. I think he should disclose the name of that individual. If it is the Government Analyst then I think this official is obtaining an undue influence over the Government. I have grave doubts as to his abilities to advise the Government on matters of this sort. Recently he has been given charge of the Botanical Department. He knows little enough about ordinary analyses, but to add to his duties that of controlling the technical section of the Agricultural Department is absurd. If a satisfactory explanation is not forthcoming it is time that the wings of this official were clipped and that we had someone more competent to fill the position.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I only gave the exact result of the position, and did not think there was any use in telling the whole story. Over 12 months ago I was talking of obtaining the services of a leather chemist. I asked the local Advisory Council of Science and Industry, which is associated with the Commonwealth Council, if they would appoint a sub-committee to go into this question, and advise as to what was the proper thing to do. They not only went into the matter themselves, but communicated with the main council in Melbourne. The result was that they had advice that we could not possibly handle our tannin unless we had the services of an expert who was thoroughly trained and that no such person could be found in Australia. At that stage a certain officer in another department raised the question before his Minister, contending that he was quite able to advise the Government in respect to these tannins and leathers, and that there was no occasion to go out of Australia to secure the expert advice we wanted. The matter then again came before me, and whilst not holding up the inquiries being made in America in the direction of obtaining the services of the expert, I suggested that we should give this officer of ours three months in which to make investigations and report. He did make inquiries and practically completed them and he reported adversely on the proposal in connection with the red gum tannin. The two matters he investigated were the solubility of the red gum and the question of the decolorisation of the kino. I still proposed to go on with the Council of Science and Industry, and to obtain the services of an American expert in spite of the recommendation of the local officer that it was inadvisable for the Government to spend money in this direction, that in fact it would be wrong of us to do so contrary to the advice of this officer.

Hon. P. Collier: There is no room for two kings in Israel.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: When we arrived at that stage when I felt that after all I was only a layman in these matters, although I take a great deal of interest in them,

and when an officer of high standing tells me that I am wasting money to go on with these investigations, I must pause; I cannot be headstrong.

Mr. Smith: Are you referring to the same officer as in the other case?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Never mind what happened in other cases. The result was that I had necessarily, and I think very properly, to delay the matter. The Government suggested that I should try to settle the question with this officer personally. I had a number of interviews with him but they were of no avail. He was still of the same opinion and he laid it down in no uncertain terms. I then suggested to him that we could not go on in this fashion and that some competent tribunal would have to settle the question. I suggested the Council of Science and Industry in Victoria, which body was composed of eminent men. He agreed to that. My papers were sent without comment to that body. I contended that we should be entitled to send to America for a leather chemist. The officer also put in his report. The Melbourne Advisory Council replied that there was no question about the proper course which should be followed and that was to get the services of a chemist from America. There was no one in Australia who was capable of advising in the matter, although they recognised that the particular officer in this State had rendered valuable services in the research he had made. In the meantime we had been in communication with a Mr. McCandlish, an American, having got into touch with him through Professor Proctor, a leading leather chemist in England. Professor Proctor recommended Mr. McCandlish, who was a chemist of high standing and who had under him nine or ten other chemists. The Council of Science and Industry in Melbourne were anxious that we should engage Mr. McCandlish and retain him in Australia. Now we have been informed that Mr. McCandlish has succeeded Professor Proctor at the university with which he was connected and we shall have to look elsewhere for a leather chemist.

Vote put and passed.

This completed the Loan Estimates for the year.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

## BILL—APPROPRIATION.

All Stages.

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

In accordance with resolutions adopted in Committees of Supply and of Ways and Means, leave obtained to introduce the Appropriation Bill, which was read a first time.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin) [1.52 a.m.] in moving the second reading said: The Bill is merely to put

in order and complete what we have done in dealing with the Revenue Estimates and the Loan Estimates. In Schedule A we have two Supply Bills, one for £829,000, and the other for £425,000, while the balance of £2,153,064 is under the Bill, making a total of £3,407,064. In the trust fund I have one appropriation of £90,000, and under the Bill £153,819, or a total of £243,819. In the general loan fund I have one Appropriation of £212,000, and under the Bill the amount of £1,183,259, or a total of £1,395,259. In Public Account advance to Treasurer, I have an appropriation of £300,000, and under the Bill the sum of £100,000, or £400,000 in all, the total in Schedule A being £5,446,142. In Schedule B we have an amount of £3,407,064, and under the Sale of Government Property Trust Account there is an amount of £185,569, while under the Land Improvement Loan Fund the amount is £58,250, or a total of £243,819. Schedule D comprises the General Loan Fund for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1919, as detailed in the Estimates of expenditure already passed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Council.

#### BILL—FORESTS.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

#### BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT

Received from the Council and read a first time.

House adjourned at 1.57 a.m. (Wednesday.)

## Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 18th December, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Minutes of Proceedings."]

#### MOTION—LAND ACTS COMPILATION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.3]: I move—

That it be resolved and directed that the Land Act, 1898, with its amendments, be

compiled under the provisions of the Statutes Compilation Act, 1905.

The following is an extract from Section 2 of the Statutes Compilation Act, 1905:—

From and after the passing of this Act, whenever both Houses of Parliament shall, by resolution, direct the compilation with its amendments of any Act in force in the State, it shall be the duty of the Attorney General, so soon as may be possible after the determination of the session in which such resolution shall have been passed, to prepare a compilation embodying all the provisions of such Act and the amendments thereof, omitting all those portions of the text of such Act which have been repealed or altered by subsequent Acts, and inserting in the proper places all words or sections substituted for or added to the text of the original Act by such subsequent Acts, with marginal reference notes citing section and Act; and he shall add to such compilation an appendix showing the Acts and sections of Acts comprised therein. In preparing the compilation, the Attorney General shall make such consequential and other alterations in, additions to, or omissions from the text as, in his opinion, are necessary in order to give effect to implied repeals to secure uniformity of expression, and generally to allow of the compilation being enacted as an Act of the year of enactment, and shall indorse upon such compilation, or attach thereto, a memorandum directing attention to every such alteration, addition, or omission, and stating, where necessary, the reason thereof.

In addition to the Land Act, 1898, there are 13 amending Acts, and it is very difficult for the public to follow the Lands Legislation of the State with one principal Act and 13 amending Acts in existence. If the Acts are compiled as proposed it will be comparatively easy for any member of the public to follow the provisions. A resolution to this effect has already been carried in another place, so that the carrying of this resolution is all that is necessary to enable this work to be put in hand.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [3.6]: I should like to have the privilege of seconding this motion, and congratulate the leader of the House and the Government upon at last taking advantage of this useful Statute, from the point of view of the public who are concerned with the reading and the administration of the Acts to which this applies. This is only the second occasion I believe on which this has been done.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: What was the first occasion?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: It happened some years ago in connection with an Act that was very much amended. There are several Acts and their amendments to which this process could be very well applied. I refer, in particular, to the Sale of Liquor Regulation Acts, which are in a state not of chaos but of chaotic organisation. I hope the Government will take into consideration the necessity of applying this Statute to a good many more Acts which badly need this compilation.