

Hon. G. M. SEWELL (South-East)
[5.21]: I second the motion.

The PRESIDENT: The question is that this motion be not now put.

Hon. J. Cornell: Am I in order in moving that the debate be adjourned until the next sitting?

The PRESIDENT: In the face of the previous question being moved, the hon. member cannot move the adjournment of the debate.

Hon. J. Cornell: Have I not the right of replying to Mr. Sanderson?

The PRESIDENT: Yes, if the previous question is defeated.

Hon. C. Sommers: Am I in order in moving the adjournment of the debate until Tuesday?

The PRESIDENT: No, the hon. member will not be in order. Standing Order 143 says—

The previous question temporarily supersedes the original question and any amendment thereon, but in debating it the original question and any amendment may be debated.

I will now put the question that the motion be not now put.

Motion put and negatived.

The PRESIDENT: The original question is now before the Council.

On motion by Hon. C. Sommers debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.22 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th February, 1915.

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

QUESTION—TRAINING COLLEGE TEACHERS.

Mr. WILLMOTT (for Mr. Griffiths) asked the Minister for Education: 1, How many lady students have passed through the Claremont Training College for teachers since it was first opened? 2, How many male students have passed through during the same time? 3, How many lady teachers remained in the department for more than three years after concluding their two years' course of training? 4, How many of these lady trained teachers who came out of training before 1911 are now in the service of the department?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, 224. 2, 119. 3, 143 out of 166 trained up to end of 1911. 4, 66 out of 136.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT, ANNUAL REPORT.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister for Lands: When will the annual report of the Agricultural Department for year ended June last be available?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: Next week.

QUESTION—MODERN SCHOOL.

Mr. SMITH asked the Minister for Education: Are all the pupils attending

the Modern School on the same footing in respect to fees? If not, why is there a distinction?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1 and 2, There are no fees at the Modern School.

BILL—LICENSING ACT [FURTHER AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Attorney General and read a first time.

BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE.

Council's Amendments.

Schedule of 11 amendments requested by the Legislative Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Holman in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.—Clause 9: Add the following proviso to paragraph (b).—"Provided that no commodity shall be supplied or money advanced under this Act after the thirty-first day of December, 1915":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I ask the Committee not to agree to the amendment, because it will put a limit on the Bill which might prevent the Government from rendering the full measure of assistance to the farmers. The crop will not be harvested by the 31st December. It is quite possible that during harvesting operations an accident to horses might make it necessary for the Government to assist a farmer in order to save the crop. An old machine might be put in to a crop and prove to be ineffective, and in that event the Government would probably consider it desirable to provide a new machine to complete the work. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is reasonable that there should be a time limit and I suggest the 31st January, 1916.

The Attorney General: Farmers will not get their crops in till February.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I do not object to making the date the last day of February, or even of March.

The Minister for Lands: Why have a limit?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Existing conditions demand that special assistance shall be given to farmers and it is not likely to be required after this year.

The Minister for Lands: When the necessity for assistance ceases the measure will cease. We are not looking for opportunities to grant assistance.

Mr. James Gardiner: In connection with your proposal, have you anything in mind affecting mortgagees later on?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Yes, there should be a limit to the measure generally. I move an amendment—

That the amendment be made subject to the following modification—Strike out "December, 1915" and insert "March, 1916" in lieu.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I cannot accept the amendment, for which I see no reason at all. Should, unfortunately, necessity arise for continuing assistance under this measure, that assistance is not limited to the agricultural industry. Apparently, the hon. member objects to mining and other industries being aided by the Government.

Hon. J. Mitchell: No.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member's attitude is altogether wrong, and I trust the Committee will not support him in that attitude.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I entirely agree with the Minister. Take the case of the tin miner: he may need assistance under this Bill.

Mr. Male: He is getting assistance without this Bill at all.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I shall not labour the question. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister, in my opinion, ought to accept the amendment of the member for Northam

(Hon. J. Mitchell) for the very reason that this measure applies to other industries than agriculture. Were it intended only for the farmers' assistance, it would not need to operate for even so long as is proposed. Parliament will meet again before many months elapse, and Parliament can then if necessary re-enact the measure. In view of the Mines Development Act, there is no need to bring the mining industry within the scope of this measure.

The Attorney General: That has no bearing whatever.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: There is no necessity to buy the product of a gold mine, of course, though there may be necessity for buying the product of a tin mine or a copper mine. Again, the drought does not affect the mining industry.

Mr. MUNSIE: I trust the Minister will persist in his objection to the amendment, seeing that the measure is intended to assist other industries besides agriculture. It is all very well for the member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly) to say that the Bill can be re-enacted; but I see no reason for the limitation. I object to the limitation for reasons arising out of amendments which will come up for consideration later. Again, a farmer assisted by the Government this year may, even in a good season, encounter a misfortune such as a hailstorm, and thus be in need of further assistance next year. If the next season proves prosperous, and if the war is over next year, no strong exception will be taken to the repeal of the measure, the presence of which on the statute-book, however, can do no harm, inasmuch as its administration lies entirely with the Treasurer.

Mr. B. J. STUBBS: It is an extraordinary position to say that we will give the Government power to assist industries up to a certain date, but not beyond that date. There must be some reason in the minds of hon. members who urge that view. My idea is, they realise that with a good season the agricultural industry will need no further considerable assistance; and the object of those hon. members, apparently, is to restrict the bene-

fits of the measure to the agricultural industry. The suggestion that the measure can be re-enacted merits but scant consideration, because another place will refuse to re-enact the measure unless that course is necessary in the interests of the agricultural industry, which alone receives consideration elsewhere. A great injustice will be done if the operation of the measure is limited as proposed.

Mr. ROBINSON: When the Government introduced this Bill, they said its introduction was due to the period of distress through which the country is passing. When the Grain and Foodstuff Bill came along, its operation was, by Clause 25, restricted to the 31st December, 1915.

The Attorney General: There is no parallel between the two cases.

Mr. ROBINSON: It was restricted because in all probability the necessity for its operation would be gone on that date. The two measures are closely kindred. Were it not for the distressful times, the present Bill would never have come before Parliament. No one would object to a renewal if necessary. A Bill of this description creates a feeling of unrest; its enactment is a signal of distress; and I shall be glad when Western Australia can announce to the whole world that its people require no Government assistance. Therefore I do not wish to see the measure on the statute-book for any longer period than is necessary. If Clause 15 is maintained intact, unrest will be created in the mind of every holder of a mortgage over a farm, and people with money will be indisposed to invest it in farms. Therefore, the 31st March, 1916, is the date which should be adopted.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: If this Bill applied only to the farming industry, there might be a good deal of force in the arguments advanced in support of the amendment. I do not think anyone would consider a limit unwise in that case, so long as it was a limit corresponding to the gathering-time of crops. However, the measure does apply to other industries, which also are passing through a period of stress. Certainly, the South Australian Act is limited. That argument would be sound if this were purely a Bill for

rendering assistance to the agricultural industry, but it is not. If the war continues the Government in the future will have not only to try and make the wheat lands productive, but must also see that other industries are enabled to continue operations, and probably they will have to be treated generously. If we can trust the Government up to the 30th September, surely we can trust them for a little longer.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The introduction of this Bill was not due so much to the war as to the drought. So far as the assistance to industries other than the agricultural industry is concerned, there are ways and means now, to do this. In the report of the Auditor General we find the Government has already advanced a considerable sum to assist the copper industry at Ravensthorpe.

The Minister for Works: The Auditor General reported that to Parliament as an instance of money illegally used, did he not?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: No, but he said that the money had been paid out without any authority.

The Minister for Mines: That is what we are seeking under this Bill; the necessary authority.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: You can do that now. You have the Mining Development Vote.

The Minister for Lands: The Vote for the development of mining is limited in the same way as the Agricultural Bank is limited to agriculture. This Bill will fill the gap in both cases.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: So far as the Agricultural Bank is concerned the Government can render assistance also through the Seed Wheat Board; all restrictions have been removed. I hope the House will be reasonable and agree to this amendment limiting the period of the operations of the Bill to the period of distress. When the Bill was previously before the House we were given to understand we would have a further opportunity of considering this question of the term, but the House has never had such further opportunity. Even Ministers will agree that

it is not desirable that such a Bill should remain permanently on the statute-book.

Mr. Bolton: How long will it be needed?

Member: The Bill can be re-enacted, you know.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Members will realise the injustice of this amendment when they look at the amendment to Clause 16 with regard to mortgages which refers to "three years," showing that it was realised in another place there was a possibility of the Bill having a scope of three years. Yet in this amendment they seek to limit the operations of the Bill to September. This goes only to prove that the matter has not been thoroughly thought out. It will be in the best interests of all industries if the Bill be allowed to operate until it is not required any longer.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The amendment to Clause 16 referred to by the Minister suggests merely that security shall be taken over the three succeeding crops, which is quite different to suggesting three years.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed, the Council's amendment not made.

No. 2.—Clause 9: Strike out paragraph (c):

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The next amendment refers also to Clause 9, from which it is proposed to strike out subclause (c), which is a vital part of the Bill. It is the provision by which the Government desire to get power to carry out the provisions of the Land Act, which sets out that land rent shall be paid, and that unless paid the land shall be forfeited. It is true that land rents have been for some considerable time deferred, and the interest on that deferred payment is being paid by the general taxpayer, which is distinctly unfair, and it is not sound business to go on the way we are going at the present. What the Government desires is that when we advance money on a property, we want to see, as private individuals would do, that that property is not likely to be forfeited. Consequently we want to see that the land

rents are paid, and if they are not paid by the individual they will be paid by the State, which is also going to put in the crop and do all other things in the same way as a private individual would do, on sound business lines. When the State pays it will see that the responsibility is placed on the right shoulders; that the individual getting consideration will pay the interest. Without labouring the question I wish to say that we will either have this done on sound business lines or not at all. This sort of thing has been going on in this State for too long. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The only proposal contained in paragraph (c) proposed to be struck out is a means to increase the revenue. So far as the individual is concerned it will not make slightest difference, except that instead of owing the money to the Government as rent he will owe it to the Government as borrowed money. It is an important question whether it is right for the Government to take Loan moneys and use them for revenue purposes.

The Minister for Lands: What are we doing to-day?

Hon. J. MITCHELL: It is quite possible that the sum utilised under this paragraph might be very large, and, in my opinion, the Government should not be given this power. I hope the House will agree to accept the amendment, because the only effect of retaining the paragraph would be that revenue would be paid from Loan moneys, which is unsound financing.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: When this Bill was before the House previously I asked a question respecting interest owing in respect to rent, and the Minister assured me that it would be payable by the selector. With reference to the question of the inflation of revenue, that practice did not originate a year ago, or two years ago. Unfortunately it has obtained almost since the introduction of responsible Government. The position is that this is merely a book entry. The loan money will be repaid to loan as repayments of these advances are made.

The Minister for Lands: That is provided for in the Bill.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: So that you get genuine revenue when arrears are paid. Assuming that all these advances are paid up it is not going to make any difference in our Loan expenditure.

The Minister for Lands: None at all.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: You are taking it as a book-keeping entry and saying "We have £200,000 worth of rents due to us. We are going to charge this up to the people. We are going to make use of a loan account and of a book-keeping entry. When the money is paid back it will go to the credit of that fund, and as a result the State will not be any worse off than it is at the present time, will in fact have benefited."

The Minister for Lands: That is the position.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: In another place the idea was that the money with which you propose to do this ought to be available for other things. However, it is now clear that it is to be merely a book-keeping entry.

Mr. SMITH: The Minister is quite correct in his contention. Suppose the loan to the settlers was made by a private bank: the first thing to be done would be to pay overdue rents and charge it up as part of the loan. It is done every day, and I do not see why the Government should depart from the usual practice.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The member for Irwin (Mr. James Gardiner) has said that the clause will not affect the amount of loan money available for expenditure. It will very materially affect it. Suppose the overdue rents represent £300,000: that amount of loan money is to be taken and practically put into revenue, leaving £300,000 less loan money available for other purposes. And when it goes into revenue, it is spent as revenue, whereas if as loan money it were put to other purposes, when returned it would go back to the loan fund. Under this it will be spent as revenue.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: To-day we have a deficiency. The £300,000,

to use the figures of the member for Perth, has to be made up because our revenue is short of that amount. We have to pay all the obligations of revenue. Where do we get the money from? Because we show a deficiency it does not follow that the account is not paid. How do we pay when we have not the revenue? We take it from loan funds. To-day we have a deficiency representing a million pounds; it is taken from loan funds and consequently it is purely a book-keeping entry. The loan funds make up the deficiency to-day, and the interest on the loan funds is being paid by the general community. As the member for North Perth said, if a property is mortgaged to a private institution, the first thing done is to pay up the land rents and add the amount to the loan. So, if we take a mortgage on the land in arrears aggregating £300,000, we say the interest on that should be paid by the individuals and not by the community.

Mr. Thomas: When they pay up that £300,000 they will release so much of loan funds.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. When we use loan funds for this purpose, it is necessary to see that the money on return does not go into revenue. We have made provision in the Bill that the money shall go into loan and shall not inflate revenue.

Mr. ROBINSON: I agree that the Minister has correctly stated the position relating to private borrowers in regard to rents. But the clause goes a little beyond that, and I would like an assurance from the Minister. The clause reads—

Or to pay any money due to any other Government department or institution and legally or equitably charged or intended to be charged by statute.

I presume that would cover such things as water rents, money due to the Seed Wheat Board or to the State Implement Works.

The Minister for Lands: If in arrears.

Mr. ROBINSON: I understand the State Implement Works sell on a hire purchase agreement and that the purchaser has the right to make certain payments per annum, carrying a given rate of interest. If that is so, will the State Implement Works be credited with the value of their machinery or will this apply only to arrears?

The Minister for Lands: Only to arrears.

Mr. ROBINSON: I am satisfied.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 3—Clause 12—Strike out paragraph (d):

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is consequential. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Question passed; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 4—Clause 14—In line 4 of Sub-clause 4 strike out "six" and insert "five":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment proposes that the rate of interest shall not be less than four per cent. instead of six per cent. It is misleading, and I do not propose to accept it. We all know that a big advance to be made under the Bill will be made this year, and the Government cannot possibly advance money this year at five per cent. Six per cent. is cheap money to-day, and I do not think any farmer will object to it. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I see no objection to the amendment. All it proposes is that the rate shall not be less than five per cent. In South Australia, under a Liberal Government, the farmers are getting money without any interest at all. The Minister is unreasonable, for he gets his money at a little over four per cent. from the Federal Government. Surely in times of trouble he should lend it to the farmers at five per cent. In fact, our duty is to lend to the farmer the money at what it costs us.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: When discussing the Grain and Foodstuff Bill the member for Northam said if the Government acquired a man's wheat

and did not take delivery of it, they should pay him 8 per cent. interest. The Government suggested 5 per cent., but I proposed 6 per cent. and the Government agreed on the understanding that the farmer would have to pay that rate for assistance under this measure. Wherever I have been, I have told the people that this assistance would cost them 6 per cent. and it is strange that not one of the Country party branches has received any complaint regarding that rate. Three Commissioners were appointed at a cost, roughly, of £2,100 to start with. Another place insisted that under the Grain and Foodstuff measure, notice should be sent to every individual farmer who held grain instead of allowing it to be done by proclamation. The first postages for this cost about £160. The Government intend to advance money to enable farmers to crop 100, 200, 300, or 400 acres, as the case might be, and would it be businesslike to advance whatever sum was requested and exercise no supervision? Expenses for administration and supervision calculated at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on £750,000 will amount to £11,000. The farmers do not wish the State to make any loss. The member for Northam wants the Government to render assistance for not less than 5 per cent. when financial institutions will charge probably $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 per cent. Let the settlers realise that they will have to pay 6 per cent., and even at that rate, I do not think the State will make a penny of profit.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: A section in the Health Act stipulates that a certain charge shall be not less than 10s. A local authority charged a higher rate, and on the question being tested the court decided that 10s. was the rate fixed and that neither more nor less could be charged. If the amendment were made, there would be a danger of this provision being interpreted in the same way.

MR. MUNSIE: I agree with the member for Irwin. It is easy to make oneself popular at the expense of someone else. Whatever the minimum amount might be, that will become the maximum. If

the Minister charged 6 per cent. when the law provided "not less than 5 per cent." he would bring such a hornet's nest about his head that he would be glad to vacate his office. Any further assistance rendered by mortgagees will be charged for at a much higher rate than 6 per cent.

HON. J. MITCHELL: Settlers who receive assistance from other sources than the Government, will probably have to pay a higher rate, but the same argument holds good in relation to the Agricultural Bank Act. That Act does not cost anything like $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. to administer; I do not think it costs one per cent., and the administration of this measure will be on all fours with the supervision under that Act. The Minister will have his inspectors under the Agricultural Bank and the Land Acts to do the work, and the cost of administering this law should therefore be less.

MR. JAMES GARDINER: Do you think £11,000 an exorbitant estimate?

HON. J. MITCHELL: I think it will not be nearly so much. I have been charged with inconsistency in that I asked for 8 per cent. interest for the farmer whose wheat was taken by the Government. The farmer cannot borrow money as cheaply as the Government, and it would probably cost a small farmer 8 per cent. to cover his interest to a bank. It is a different proposition when the Government borrow money at 4 per cent.

MR. JAMES GARDINER: Where can they get money at 4 per cent. now?

HON. J. MITCHELL: They got three millions from the Commonwealth for very little more than 4 per cent. and the Government are paying Savings Bank depositors only 3 per cent. The Minister should not object to the amendment. It is absurd to contend that the stipulated minimum will become the maximum. The State has no right to make a profit out of the adversities of its producers. Doubtless some loss will be made on the advances, but we should not strike a rate high enough to cover all probable losses. I am surprised that the member for Irwin is not supporting the Council's amendment.

Question put and passed ; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 5.—Clause 15: Add the following proviso to subclause (1):—"Provided that when the holding of an applicant is already mortgaged by a registered instrument or instruments or is subject to the knowledge of the Colonial Treasurer to a vendor's lien for unpaid purchase money, notice in the prescribed form of the proposed advances shall be given to the mortgagee or mortgagees or vendor, and if within fourteen days after such notice the mortgagee or mortgagees or one of them or the vendor by notice in writing served on the Colonial Treasurer, objects to the proposed advances, the Colonial Treasurer shall only be entitled to make the advances, either subject to such mortgage or mortgagee's or vendor's lien or on the security of a bill of sale over the crop of the next ensuing harvest sown or grown on or upon the lands of the applicant, and also over each of the two succeeding crops to be sown on or grown upon such lands. Provided further that the advances under the security of such bill of sale over crops shall be and until fully paid shall remain a first charge, notwithstanding the rights of any mortgagee or encumbrances in possession under any mortgage or encumbrance over the land whereon such crops may be growing, in priority to all other encumbrances over such crops":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As I desire to get this measure through, I ask the Committee to accept this amendment. During the discussion on this clause, much consideration was given to the question whether the mortgagee should be consulted, and if he disagreed to the Government granting assistance, what action should be taken. An amendment was framed but it was not all that we desired, and finally the clause as drafted was passed. The main difference in regard to the amendment we had under discussion here was that if we consulted the mortgagee and he disagreed, no advance would be made. That was a dangerous principle because it would place the farmer at the mercy of the mortgagee. We have tried to arrive

at some method also by which the State would be protected. I am inclined to think that another place have arrived at a compromise which will be favourable to all parties. The amendment provides that the mortgagee shall be consulted. If he disagrees, then the Colonial Treasurer may exercise his judgment as to whether he advances or not. If he does advance he is permitted to secure himself by a bill of sale. That bill of sale will be over the ensuing crop and the two succeeding crops, and will operate for three years if the advance is not paid out of the first year's crop. The saving clause, which has influenced me in asking the Chamber to agree, is that part where it says that the bill of sale shall have effect to this extent—that the mortgagee cannot step in during the currency of the bill of sale, and exercise his right to interfere with the land. I am assured by the Solicitor General, and I think the Attorney General will support me in this, that the proviso protects the State and that we have an absolute guarantee for three years to get back what we have advanced. During that three years the mortgagee cannot interfere with our asset, which is on the land over which he has a mortgage. I think it is a fair compromise and one with which this Chamber could agree. I move—

That the amendment be made.

Question passed ; the Council's amendment made.

No. 6.—Clause 15, Subclause 2: Strike out in line 8 the words "on the application of the Colonial Treasurer":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not know exactly why this amendment was made. If does not appeal to me as being necessary. The registrar is not likely to move until an application is made by someone, and he cannot have a knowledge of the provisions of the measure, or of the words contained in it, unless someone brings it under his notice. It says that on the application of the Colonial Treasurer he shall do it. It is proposed to leave it to the discretion of the Registrar of Titles as to whether he does it or not, I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER: I think naturally that the Colonial Treasurer is taking the security. It is generally the man who has the security who makes the application.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: I understand that the register is to be kept in the Department of Lands Titles.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 7—Clause 23, Subclause 5: Strike out "thirty-first day of March" and insert "thirtieth day of April":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I propose to agree to this amendment. The Bill has been delayed a little longer than I thought it would be. It might be difficult for application to be made in regard to the cancellation of contracts by the 31st March. I therefore move—

That the amendment be made.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment made.

No. 8—Clause 24, Subclause 2: Strike out in line 4 the word "six" and insert "five":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This amendment is consequential. The members of another place representing the agricultural industry reduced the interest to five per cent., and those representing the mining industry said they wanted the same. As the Minister for Mines points out, we have already made advances, in anticipation of the Bill, to mines for tin at Greenbushes, and copper at Ravenshorpe. They are paying six per cent., consequently that rate of interest is in operation and there is no objection to it. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Question passed; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 9—Clause 29: Add the following subclauses:—“(3) All regulations so made—(a) shall be published in the *Government Gazette*; (b) shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament within fourteen days after such publication if Parliament is in session and if not, then within fourteen days after the commencement of the next session; (4) If either House of Parliament passes a resolution disallowing any

such regulation, of which resolution notice has been given at any time within fourteen sitting days of such House after such regulation has been laid before it, such regulation shall thereupon cease to have effect, but without affecting the validity, or curing the invalidity, of anything done, or the omission of anything in the meantime. This subsection shall apply notwithstanding that the said fourteen days or some of them do not occur in the same session of Parliament as that in which the regulation is laid before it”:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is a question of making regulations and I ask the Chamber not to agree to the amendment, which is absolutely superfluous. The Interpretations Act makes it perfectly clear as to how regulations shall or shall not be made, and when they shall be disallowed or how they shall be disallowed. Parliament is continually putting in words that are absolutely superfluous. The difference between this Bill and other Bills is that one House of Parliament can disallow regulations if this clause is agreed to, whereas if it is left as outlined in the Interpretations Act, both Houses must disagree. If hon. members will look up the legislation of a similar character passed in the Eastern States they will find that they have gone further than we have in this State, and they have given power to legislate by regulation. They say that regulations can be made under an Act, or made to meet any emergency that may arise under the Act.

Mr. James Gardiner: They can only be made in conformity with the Act.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They can make regulations to meet any emergency which arises and either House of Parliament can disagree if Parliament is in session. In this State, the regulations must be in accordance with the provisions of the Act, and if they are not so they are *ultra vires*. This is an innovation which was introduced recently. Previously it was a recognised thing that the provisions of the Interpretations Act applied if both

Houses of Parliament disagreed with regulations. This innovation was introduced, I think, by Mr. Keenan when Attorney General, evidently for some special purpose and it gave either House of Parliament the right to disagree with regulations. On the broad principle that is wrong. Both Houses of Parliament may create an Act, and say to the Minister concerned that he must make regulations which must be in conformity with that Act. If we agree to the amendment as suggested, one House of Parliament can disagree with regulations: in other words, after both Houses have created an Act of Parliament one House has a right to interfere with the administration of that measure, which is unfair. I know of no occasion in which regulations have been disallowed by either House of Parliament.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: What about the health regulations?

The Minister for Works: The Upper House at that time passed a Bill approving of these regulations.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is an indication that care is always exercised that the regulations framed are in accordance with the Act. Parliament having passed a measure, it follows as the natural course, that they agree to the regulations framed in accordance with it. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I think this amendment should be made for the very reason that the Minister for Lands has given as to why it should be disagreed with. The Minister stated that these words were superfluous and that he did not know why they were placed there, and that they were already in the Interpretation Act. The words of the Interpretation Act have an entirely different effect. If any such words as we are now considering appear in the Bill we go by the Interpretations Act; that is if both Houses disagree with regulations within a stipulated time, they cannot go on, but if one House disagrees they still stand. The Minister for Lands laid great stress upon the point that such a provision had never

found its way into an Act of Parliament until some years ago, and he inferred that the introduction of the provision sprang from some ulterior motive. But the first Bill on the Notice Paper this session, the Grain and Foodstuff Bill, contained a clause precisely similar. Another point taken by the Minister was that in the legislation of other States the corresponding section is so worded that regulations have the force of law, whether or not they are in accordance with the Act under which they are made. To a certain extent that statement is right; but this clause is worded in an entirely different way from measures to which the Interpretation Act applies. I am advised, on high legal authority, that a regulation made under this clause and not disallowed by both Houses of Parliament, becomes law whether in conformity with the Act, or not in conformity. Thus the making of regulations amount, really, to legislation.

The Minister for Lands: This amendment is not ours, but the amendment of another place. What are you talking about?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am talking about Clause 29 as drawn. In one case the Government have introduced such a provision themselves, and in the other case they object to its perfectly reasonable introduction by another place.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: By this Bill the Minister asks power to make regulations having all the force of law, and one House is not to have the power to disallow such regulations. I contend, however, that one House should have the power to disallow.

The Minister for Lands: Then one House would have the right to interfere with the administration of the measure.

The Attorney General: It would give one House practically the right to repeal or annul the measure if enacted.]

Hon. J. MITCHELL: An extension of a law has to be agreed to by both Houses, and this measure would be extended by the making of regulations. Extraordinary things may have to be done under an emergency measure such as this. When Parliament is not sitting, Ministers are practically free from con-

trol. Either House should have the right to disallow or reject any addition to any Act of Parliament. Another good provision would be that either House might disallow regulations by resolution upon 14 days' notice having been given. Such a provision would enable members to control Ministers in that respect, and they ought to be able to do that, notwithstanding the statutory limitation, may have been exceeded. Previously Ministers have given way on this point every time. Why should Ministers object to Parliament taking the responsibility?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have looked up the Grain and Food-stuff Bill and find the words in that measure are similar to these. The member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly) really is not objecting to the wording of the clause, but objecting to the Government's insisting, as I hope the Committee will insist, that one House should not have the right to interfere with the administration of an Act of Parliament. Under this measure, the Government do not take power to legislate by regulation; which power is taken by the corresponding Acts of Parliament of other States. We do not want that power. All we ask is power to make regulations for the carrying out of the measure. I am quite prepared to agree to such wording as "The Governor may make all such regulations for giving effect to the provisions of this Act."

Hon. J. Mitchell: You cannot do that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I ask the Chairman's ruling as to whether that can be done. Further, I should like to know whether I may withdraw my motion to disagree, with a view of moving an amendment such as I have suggested.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We were discussing the possibility of withdrawing this amendment with a view of making some alteration in the clause. I would like to know whether that is permissible under the Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that would be an amendment on the Council's requested amendment. It would be going right back, and I do not think I could allow that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I had doubts myself as to whether that would be possible under the Standing Orders. Under the circumstances, therefore, I cannot do anything else than ask the Chamber to disagree with the amendment. I was quite prepared to meet the views of the member for Perth to alter the clause so as to give an absolute guarantee to the Chamber that the regulations would be according to the provisions of the Act, no more and no less. Seeing that we cannot make that amendment, and that the other is too dangerous to accept, I therefore allow my motion to stand.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister might reconsider his decision. He has admitted that the clause with these words in it is not a right one. I would prefer to see the words altered and have one House to decide whether they stand or not. That would be much better than to provide to make regulations wherever necessary and convenient. Regulations can be made whether they are in accordance or not with the Act.

The Minister for Lands: I do not agree with your contention.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is not only my contention, but that of a gentleman who has had long Parliamentary experience. There might be Bills in regard to which it might not be at all necessary or convenient for either House to have a power of this kind. These matters will be largely dealt with by regulation and the Minister might agree to the amendment made by another place.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The bugbear of the words "necessary or convenient" is purely a myth. There can be no evil effect because of the subsequent words. Regulations can only have the force of law so long as they are confined to the words of the Act when it has become an Act. If they go beyond that they are *ultra vires*. There is no

danger whatever of going outside the Act. It is quite true as the hon. member has said that regulations passed by the two Houses become law as much as an Act itself, provided they are regulations within the power to make them, and that they conform to the Act. As the hon. member has had it pointed out also, the Interpretation Act gives us a means of very easily making regulations. We can just say that regulations shall be made in conformity with the Interpretation Act, and if we have the power to make regulations and do not prescribe how they shall be made, the Interpretation Act is the test, but as the hon. member has said we can go outside the Interpretation Act and define how the regulations shall be made and how they shall be treated, and whether they shall be deleted at the request of one House, or whether they will require the sanction of the two Houses. All that can be done when we are passing a Bill. This measure conforms to the rules laid down in the Interpretation Act, and the only objection the hon. member for Perth has is to the words "necessary and convenient." Those words have a definite meaning. They must be "necessary and convenient" for a purpose. I can see no danger, and since we cannot go back on what has already passed, since we are obliged to agree with the amendment or disagree with it, I think the safer way is for the Committee to disagree with it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: Will the Minister for Lands state what the position will be if we do not agree to the amendment and another place insists on it? Will the Bill come back to us for further consideration?

The Minister for Lands: It is an absolute impossibility for us to accept the amendment. Read the last part of it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: The Minister might move to delete the words to which he objects.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the amendment be agreed with it will absolutely defeat the Bill. The proposal contained in the amendment is

cumbersome and would interfere with the administration of the measure. The hon. member (Hon. J. Mitchell) suggests that we might go to work and put the amendment right. There might be necessity for amending an amendment, if there were any necessity for the amendment itself. But the Interpretation Act lays down the conditions under which regulations shall have the force of law. Apart from being superfluous, this amendment is wrong, and I do not feel that it is the duty of this House to rectify it.

Hon. J. MITCHELL: If, as the Minister says the amendment is in conflict with the Interpretation Act, we need not necessarily agree with the amendment in its present form. It would be within the province of this House to make the necessary slight amendment. Why not compromise, and agree with the amendment in a slightly amended form? If the amendment be rejected, the passage of the measure will be delayed, if the Bill is not lost altogether.

Question passed; the Council's amendment not made.

No. 19—Third Schedule, paragraph (3): After the word "mortgagee" add the words "or to the whole of the vendor's lien":

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is an impossible amendment for the reason that it would give the vendor a lien over the whole of the debts due to him. I would have no objection to adding a paragraph to the schedule that a vendor shall have a right to interest on any deferred rent, in the same way as the right of a mortgagee in respect of deferred payments. With the consent of the Chamber I propose to amend the amendment, so as to meet another place. I move—

That the amendment be made subject to the following modification:—That after the word "mortgagee" the words "or vendors" be added.

The paragraph of the schedule would then read "one year's interest due to mortgagees or vendors." I think that was what another place intended, but the amendment was badly drafted.

Question passed ; the Council's amendment, as amended, made.

No. 11—Third Schedule, paragraph (8) : Strike out all words after " arrear " in line 1 :

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : This amendment by another place is consequential on their amendment striking out paragraph (c) of Clause 9. Having disagreed with the amendment striking out that paragraph, we must, as a consequence, disagree with this amendment also. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Question passed ; the Council's amendment not made.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

RESOLUTION—WONGAN HILLS—MULLEWA RAILWAY.

To hand over to Working Railways.

Message received from the Council asking concurrence in the following resolution :—" That in the opinion of this House it is necessary in the interests of the settlers that the Wongan Hills-Mullewa railway be immediately handed over to the working railways, or that not more than the ordinary rates chargeable by the working railways be charged by the construction department pending such handing over of the railways."

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [7·55] : I move—

That the Message be taken into consideration forthwith.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. D. Johnson—Guildford) [7·56] : I appeal to the Chamber not to pass this motion. There are several matters of great importance to be taken to-night. This question has been debated recently, and the position in regard to the railway has been explained. No good purpose can be served by debating it at length in this House to-night. The matter is being expedited as much as possible. The only effect of taking this Message into consideration to-night will be to disorganise business in the discussion of a

matter which is not urgent. The Government is doing all that is possible, and all the resolutions in the world will not alter the position.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER (Irwin) [7·58] : This is one of the questions affecting my district ; but I would not have risen to speak but for the innuendo given utterance to last night in another place by the Hon. H. P. Colebatch. That utterance was on a par with many other things which have been said against me by persons whose standard of honour must be such that if placed in a similar position they would do as it is suggested I have done. Otherwise there would be no innuendo passed. I have been anxious—and Ministers will bear me out on this point—that this railway should be finished as early as possible. When I came back to Perth from my election I saw the then Minister for Works and asked him when the line would be open for traffic. He assured me that it would be opened as early as possible, and that he believed it would be opened absolutely by the beginning of the year. I then asked the Minister to give these people the same rates as are paid by persons using other railways. He replied that it was hardly worth while altering the rates in the short period before the line would be handed over to the working railways. When he went out I saw his successor and begged of him to allow the goods to go through at the ordinary railway rates. I explained that these people are coming right across—

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. member is now discussing the Message, and not the motion.

Mr. JAMES GARDINER : May I make a personal explanation ?

Mr. SPEAKER : Immediately after the disposal of the motion.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Narrogin-Williams) [8·1] : I would like to ask the Minister if he can give us an assurance as to when we will have an opportunity of discussing the motion, because I will then draw attention to another railway in a similar position, namely the Yillimining-Kondinin railway.

Mr. SPEAKER: According to the rules of the House, the hon. member will not have a chance of doing so on this Message.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would like to know if the Minister will give us an opportunity of discussing this Message during the next few days. We may then be able to refer to similar cases by way of illustration.

The Minister for Lands: The hon. member is going to speak on the Estimates, so, if we do not hear of the Yillimining-Kondinin line, I will be keenly disappointed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [8.2]: I do not undertake to give any promise with regard to a discussion of the Message, and I am rather surprised that the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) should endeavour without notice to force on a discussion. It would be very much to the advantage of Ministers to have a full discussion of the subject, because it would afford us an opportunity of contrasting the attitude of members of another place when discussing this subject, with the attitude they have adopted in previous years in regard to these charges on railways controlled by the Works Department. There is no desire to burke discussion of the Message, because any light that may be thrown on the matter can only be to the advantage of the Government. If there be an opportunity next week for the consideration of the message, it will be availed of.

Question put and negatived.

On motion by Mr. ROBINSON consideration of the Message made an order of the day for the next sitting of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: With the permission of the House the member for Irwin may now make his personal explanation in regard to something which was said in another place.

Mr. James Gardiner: We will not take up any further time with it; it is too contemptible.

BILLS (3) RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

- 1, Government Electric Works.
With amendments.
- 2, Supply (No. 2) £488,270.
- 3, Municipal Corporations Act Amendment.
Without amendment.

BILL—COAL MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Mr. A. A. WILSON (Collie) [8.7] in moving the second reading said: This short amending Bill has been brought down with the object of removing some of the anomalies in the existing Act. It will suffice for the time being, but I hope that in the near future the Minister will bring down a comprehensive measure which will serve to put us in the same position as is the coal mining industry in the old country and in the Eastern States. The Bill comprises three amending clauses. The first of these deals with reciprocity in the matter of the exchange of certificates. I may explain that a man holding a first-class certificate in New South Wales or in the old country, can come to this State and secure a first-class certificate in exchange; but if he holds a second-class certificate, the same privilege is not extended to him—he cannot exchange it here for a similar certificate. The object of the clause is to put the holders of second-class certificates on the same footing as those whose certificates are first-class. The second of these clauses deals with certificates of service. Under existing conditions a mining manager or mine inspector can get a first-class certificate of service if he has had two years' practical experience as manager or inspector within a period of five years immediately prior to the passing of the Act. Certain injustices have been done under the existing legislation and it is hoped that the clause will obviate this in future. The third amending clause deals with the extension of the benefits of the Coal Mines Accident Relief Fund to check weighers and

check inspectors who are employed by the workers in or about a mine. These men contribute to the fund to-day and in fairness to the companies, I must say that the companies have never objected to this. But I desire to make it a lawful proceeding. The object is to protect the check inspector and the check weigher, who to-day are not entitled by law to participate in the fund. I may say that the mine owners have no opposition to the Bill, and I trust it will go through without amendment. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. ROBINSON (Canning) [8.10]: The leader of the Opposition, who unfortunately is not here to-night, but who is thoroughly conversant with coal mining matters, has gone carefully through the Bill. In his opinion there is nothing objectionable in it and it may very well be allowed to pass.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Holman in the Chair, Mr. A. A. Wilson in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 24:

Hon. J. MITCHELL: What will be the effect of omitting "five" and inserting "ten"?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: It will mean that perhaps two men who have been managers practically all their lives will obtain service certificates.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1914-15.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's financial statement and

the Annual Estimates; Mr. Holman in the Chair.

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

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [8.16]: As it is the desire of all members to hasten the end of this discussion I do not propose to occupy much time, but the financial position of the State is of such a nature that one cannot at this stage remain silent. We have already had considerable discussion on the finances and I regret to say it is difficult to see any daylight notwithstanding that many reasons have been advanced for the present position. I quite appreciate the feelings of the Government; we have just experienced the shock of reaching a deficit of a million, and there is a prospect of a further increase in the amount. This condition of the finances has been attributed to several causes, among others to the bad seasons and the war. In regard to the bad seasons, if we take the total produce trucked during the last three years, we will find that it exceeds the quantity in the preceding three years. In wheat alone almost double the quantity was handled, and therefore the deficit cannot be assigned to that reason. It is true the Government have had extraordinary demands on their resources, but we must admit that no special effort has been exerted by them to make the ledger balance. I do not say this in a carping spirit; I wish to be fair and to give honour where honour is due. I myself have probably been responsible in some degree for assisting Ministers to accumulate a portion of this liability. I appreciate the consideration which has been extended to the settlers in my electorate, and I do not wish to be ungrateful for the assistance received. Quite recently the settlers along the Dowerin-Merredin line were placed in a very serious position owing to the failure of their crops. The Government have been good enough to come to the rescue of these people by supplying sustenance for one month and by providing water for them. Within the last fortnight or three weeks an abundant fall of rain has taken place and there is now no need for the water supply which was so generously provided.

I appreciate the consideration extended to the man on the land. I think there is a conscientious desire on the part of the Administration to assist him, but not in the form so often referred to on the Government side of the House, namely, spoon-feeding. The assistance is rendered in a businesslike way and settlers are asked to pay as much as six per cent. interest on the seed wheat, fertiliser, fodder and sustenance supplied to them. The properties carry the liability, and therefore it is sound business and good business from the point of view of the State and not spoon-feeding. No section of the community employs more labour than the farmers. If financial assistance is given to the settlers, it enables them to employ labour. On an average the farmers throughout the State employ two men to each holding, and if we had the figures showing the total number of holdings we would find that some thousands of men are employed by the farmers. It is the right of the people on the land that assistance should be forthcoming if we wish the country to prosper. The State has reached almost bedrock and we are able to realise the importance of a healthy and progressive farming community. With due respect to representatives of other than farming constituencies, I contend that there has been no spoon-feeding of the settlers. To assist them is sound business and it is justly due to these people, for in developing the country they are exerting efforts which no other section of our inhabitants are called upon to do. Apart from the assistance given, there are other considerations which are often the subject of criticism in this House, and one is the provision of railway conveniences. In my electorate there is a district known as Yorkrakine. There we have a struggling and populous centre in which the settlers are languishing for railway conveniences.

The Minister for Mines: Who is responsible for the position there?

Mr. PIESSE: The Government are responsible for the lack of railway conveniences. Recently the Premier, at a gathering at Yorkrakine, admitted that there was sufficient agricultural development to

justify the building of a railway, but, he added, funds were short. As I pointed out last session, a half million of money was found for providing workers' homes. I have no objection to this scheme. I have always supported workers' homes to assist the purely labouring man with a family, who is unable to find house accommodation in other directions. But I venture to say that if we had a list of those who have received assistance under the Workers' Homes Act we would find the names of many who could easily have foregone the convenience, and the money thus expended could have been devoted to the construction of agricultural railways to centres so seriously handicapped through a lack of these facilities. We had before us to-day a measure to deal with the matter of arrears of rents, and to empower the Treasurer to pay rents from loan funds. Although this scheme may prove workable in some cases, it will not be workable in all, and I hope that before any serious action is taken in this direction, full consideration will be given to the position of many of the settlers in our outlying districts. Some of these settlers owe arrears of rent amounting to £150 to £200, and it will be almost impossible for them to pay from the proceeds of their crops unless the amount is spread over many years to come. I have advocated again and again that it would be much better for the people in the outlying districts if the condition of five years rent free were applied to them.

Mr. Hickmott: Forfeit their lands and let them start afresh.

Mr. PIESSE: If we forfeited their lands we would at once deprive them of their holdings. It would be just and fair to the people in the outlying country if they were granted five years rent free to enable them to establish themselves. The initial expenses attached to farming operations are very high and particularly is this so in our almost waterless areas. During the discussion on the Estimates the civil service has received a certain amount of criticism. As regards a remedy for the present financial position, I confess it is difficult to offer a suggestion. It has been proposed to shorten the hours

of a section of the civil service, but that proposal could not be applied to all sections of the service. I am averse to the discharge of one civil servant. It would be almost a calamity to cast a number of civil servants on the labour market at the present time. There are many men in the service who are not needed, and who probably find it difficult to fill in their time, but it must be remembered that a majority of the civil servants are particularly busy men. I know of departments which are working at high pressure to-day and I fail to see how a reduction of hours could be applied to them. Possibly an appreciable amount might be saved by a percentage of reduction in salaries, but this, if adopted, should be applied to the whole of the service from top to bottom. There are many men in the service who are earning their salaries thoroughly, and I would be sorry to see such men reduced. Among other items discussed during this debate is that of the State Implement Works. A good deal of the deficit to-day is due to unprofitable State ventures. I do not say this in a carping spirit, or with any unkindly feeling towards the occupants of the Ministerial bench, but all fair-minded men must admit that there has been considerable loss on State enterprises. I believe the State Implement Works, under proper management, will ultimately prove beneficial, and I do not say this merely because I represent a farming constituency. I am hopeful we shall derive some good from them. Now, as to the State brick works—

Hon. J. D. Connolly: You do not want any bricks then.

Mr. PLESSE: I am inclined to think that the game is not worth the candle. In connection with the agricultural implement works, I would say that it is regrettable that there is such a high railage charge on farming and agricultural implements. The railage is exorbitant, and the position has become intolerable. We have often been twitted with the fact that farming constituencies are always whining and always full of trouble, but I maintain that in this case we have just cause for complaint. We have had in-

creased rates on fertilisers and on agricultural machinery, and we have had increased rates on our water supply. Many of us are forced to pay rates for water which is of no service to us whatever.

Mr. Munsie: Did not the majority of the people in the districts affected vote in favour of this water supply?

Mr. PLESSE: Not in my district, except in one instance. It is possibly true that in the Goomalling extension area a majority of the people voted for the enlargement of the scheme, but the people holding land between Toodyay and the main were never even consulted. In fact, the only time that they were consulted was when they were asked how soon they could pay up the rates imposed upon them. The authorities even went so far as to threaten the people with distress warrants and other serious action. The methods employed in connection with this water rate are cruel indeed. We are asked to pay £5 as a holding fee, notwithstanding that our homesteads may be two or three miles away from the pipes. If the property comes within ten chains of the pipe line a tax is imposed upon the settlers over a distance of a mile and a half. These are burdens which we claim are unjust and unfair, and naturally we complain about them. I was in hopes that when the present Minister controlling that department came into office, he would celebrate the event by giving relief in relation to these water taxes on farm lands. I would like to refer to the working of the railways. I am sorry the Premier is not here. Since the Premier took up his new duties as Minister for Railways our railway service has been considerably curtailed. We are called upon to suffer serious inconvenience in regard to the time-table, because of the agreement existing between the Commissioner of Railways and the railway employees. There is an unheard of condition in that agreement, that where the engine-driver or fireman is working on a line the Commissioner is expected to allow that man 12 hours continuous rest at his home station. That may be a reasonable condition for trunk lines, but not for spur lines. The result is that the train which

connects with the trunk line is compelled to leave Clackline station half an hour earlier than the trunk line train. This is simply due to the existence of this particular condition in the agreement which ensures a driver or fireman 12 hours continuous rest at his home station. I maintain that this is bad administration. I am confident that if these men were consulted, I mean those who are working on the spur lines, they would agree to an amendment of the agreement. Unfortunately, the country is run to a large extent by union agreements, and we are forced to submit to them.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Fortunately, you mean.

Mr. PIESSE: I say unfortunately we are forced to submit to these conditions and suffer serious inconvenience thereby. It is astounding that we have not a direct railway service to the city on Tuesday because of the fact that these men cannot get 12 hours continuous rest at their home stations without inconveniencing the people.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: I suppose you would not object to the principle of giving a man 12 hours' rest out of the 24.

Mr. PIESSE: While on the question of expenditure, I would like to say a few words in regard to the roads board subsidies which have been reduced by half. This, in a measure, is perhaps justified because of the condition of the State's finances, but I would like the Minister to remember that in many of these road districts there are miles and miles of roads which have to be attended to and which, owing to lack of funds, are fast reaching a very bad condition. It must be admitted that roads are almost as essential as railways, and almost as good feeders. Owing to this reduction in the subsidies the question of roads is going to be an increasing trouble. I do not propose to take up the time of the House any longer, except to say one word or two on behalf of the settlers in connection with the Education Department. We are undoubtedly grateful for those schools in the far eastern area, but nevertheless the settler is called upon to bear what, to my mind, is an unfair bur-

den—that is, in the matter of the house accommodation, and the provision for boarding, which he has to make for the teacher on an allowance of 15s. a week. I contend that this allowance is much too small. In many cases, as is well known, the settlers have to cart water up to as much as 10 miles, and to provide comforts for the teacher that they themselves are not in a position to provide for their own homes. It is an unfair burden to place upon these people, and I would suggest that the same system of assistance should be applied to these districts as is applied on the goldfields, namely, that there should be a special boarding allowance for teachers who are sent into sparsely populated centres. Such an allowance would much relieve the people, and I hope it will be found possible to make it.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Where would you get the extra revenue from?

Mr. PIESSE: This would have to come as the result of careful administration, and I feel sure that this could be brought about.

The Minister for Mines: A very good suggestion.

Mr. PIESSE: There is certainly room for careful administration, as I think Ministers themselves will admit. If very stringent methods are not adopted in the near future I am very much afraid that the financial year will wind up with a very much greater deficit than we expected. I do not repeat this word "deficit" with a view of inflicting punishment upon Ministers, for I am quite sure they realise the position. I am also quite sure that they find it a very difficult matter to bring about a better condition of affairs.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY (Perth) [8.40]: It is not my intention to speak at any great length on the financial statement, or upon the financial muddle into which the State has unfortunately drifted, because this has been very fully dealt with by the leader of the Opposition. It is, therefore, unnecessary for me to waste the time of the House in going further into the general financial position. One has only to turn over the

Auditor General's report and read a page or two—

The Minister for Works: I have read many an interesting page in your time..

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: They may have been interesting, but they did not contain matters of such vital importance as are contained in the present Auditor General's report. If we were to turn over the pages of that report and read a few of them, they would demonstrate to us in a very few minutes the grave financial muddle which the present Administration has brought about. I doubt if any of the past Treasurers, or indeed any Government, have brought down upon themselves such severe criticism and such severe comment from the Auditor General as that officer has seen fit to place in his last report. Not only has this occurred in the last report but in that for last year and the preceding year—though more particularly for the year under discussion.

The Minister for Mines: It is an annual thing.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I know what the Minister refers to when he says it is an annual thing. It has certainly been an annual thing so far as technical breaches of the Audit Act are concerned. I admit that many of the breaches dealt with in the present report are technical breaches, and one that no Government which wanted to do justice to the country could avoid without clashing with the Audit Act in small details.

The Minister for Works: You remember that it was said that we owed a penny to the South African Government.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is an instance of what I mean by a technical breach. The Auditor General is charged with the administration of the Act. He is the servant of Parliament and not a servant of the Government or the Executive, and he is charged to report to Parliament. Therefore, even if it is only a question of a penny he would not be carrying out the duties which are placed upon him by Parliament if he did not report even such a small technical breach as this. Unfortunately, on the present

occasion he has found it necessary to go a great deal further. As an instance of this, one has only to look at his comments so far as they relate to State trading concerns, and so far as the production of balance sheets until a very much belated time is concerned.

Mr. McDowall: These are only technical breaches.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is not so. They are very serious breaches. It is regrettable that the Auditor General has found it necessary to point out that the balance sheets of these trading concerns were 18 months behind time, and that he could not get any particulars in order that he might certify to these balance sheets. That is a thing that no Treasurer or Government should be proud of, to say the least of it. I shall have a word or two to say later on in regard to these trading concerns. Although we are met with this unfortunate deficit, of which I am sure Ministers must be tired of hearing, I wish to say that in the financial statement put before the House we have not had what we might have expected in the way of suggestions for stopping the financial drift which we are now experiencing. True, we are told by the Treasurer that we are likely to wind up the financial year with a deficit of £700,000, but I am very much afraid that this expectation will not be realised, for the reason that during the very first month of the second half of the current financial year we are met with a further loss of £163,000, which brings our deficit to an amount that is well over a million pounds. This means that in order to bear out the Treasurer's estimate we shall have to make an alteration of something like £200,000 or £250,000 a month for the estimate of the remaining five months of the financial year. In my opinion the Treasurer has put forth very puny efforts indeed in his attempts to balance the ledger, and he will require to do a great deal more if he desires to stop the monthly deficit which is accumulating, and wipe out the difference between his estimated deficit of £700,000 and the amount at which the deficit now stands.

Mr. Munsie: What would you suggest?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) will have patience, I will come to that directly; although I may be permitted to say that it is not my duty to offer suggestions. There are men placed on the Treasury bench to administer the finances of the State, and if they cannot perform that function let them admit it and go out.

Mr. Green: You have a duty to perform, as well.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have a duty to perform, as my friend reminds me; but let me point out that when any suggestion is offered to the Premier and his Ministers, who constantly employ the expression of the member for Kalgoorlie, "Give us your views; give us some helpful criticism," or when any criticism is offered, as mine has been offered, in all fairness, one is sneered at and told that the suggestion is worth nothing or that it has been made many times before.

Mr. Green: You have not offered any constructive criticism yet.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is a matter of opinion. In any case, if constructive criticism conflicts with views held on the Treasury bench, then it is characterised as carping criticism.

The Minister for Works: Show us a way out.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If criticism does not fit in with the policy of the present Government, it is in no way helpful criticism.

Mr. Munsie: You want to wipe out the State enterprises.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) must be a thought reader. I certainly do intend to say a few words in regard to State enterprises, for the information of my friends opposite. Before I proceed to deal with that subject, however, I wish to refer to the puny effort, if it be an effort at all, put forth by the Treasurer in order to improve the financial position of this State. We find that effort goes to this extent:

the King's Park Board grant is reduced by £500, the prison gate work is deprived of £100, *Hansard* is reduced by £250, the Children's Protection Society loses £50—

The Minister for Works: That society gets £50, which is more than you gave.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Creche gets £50 altogether. The present Government increased the amount to £100, but now have taken away the increase. Then there is a reduction of £200 in the Aborigines grant, the Swan River mission; the acclimatisation grant is reduced by £100; the mechanics' institutes throughout the State are to receive £700 less. The Fresh Air League, a very excellent body which has done splendid work, is cut down by £100; school hygiene, or the medical examination of school children, is reduced to the extent of £80. Let me say a few words regarding the grant so ably defended by the member for Canning (Mr. Robinson), namely that to the King's Park Board. The King's Park is undoubtedly a State park, a national park; and I believe the larger percentage of the visitors to that park are country residents.

Mr. Green: The Victoria Park at Kalgoorlie is used by ten times as many people as use the King's Park.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not intend to be led off into a discussion on the Victoria Park. As regards the King's Park, it must be remembered that the money purporting to be saved by this reduction will cost ten times as much in a short period. Once a national park and other institutions of a similar nature have been established, we are bound, as business men, to maintain them, because all the money that has been spent will be entirely wasted if the undertakings are not maintained. This is a consideration quite apart from the pleasure and health of the people. Unquestionably, before many months elapse it will be necessary to spend £5,000 in order to make good the damage resulting from the Government's reduction of £500. I doubt whether any public money has been better expended, or has given more pleasure to the people and has tended more advantageously

from the point of view of the general health, than the couple of thousand pounds spent annually on the King's Park.

The Minister for Works: The King's Park Board are getting £2,000.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, but they should be getting a great deal more; and if it were not for the arbitrary action of the Minister for Lands when Minister for Works, the board could do a great deal better, even now, than they are doing. It was the arbitrary action of that Minister, who I observe is in his place, and who will know that what I say is perfectly true, in taking away the board's water supply some years ago, that has accentuated the board's present difficulties. The community is now faced with a shortage of water in the metropolitan area; and water is available for watering the roads on only one day per week. This means that a relaying of our roads will be speedily necessitated. The King's Park Board formerly had a water supply of their own, but for some reason best known to himself the Works Minister in the Daglish Government arbitrarily took that water supply from the board.

The Minister for Lands. You are talking through your neck.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Nothing of the kind; it is the Minister who is talking nonsense. I am a member of the King's Park Board, and I know that the hon. gentleman did arbitrarily cause the board to buy their water from the Water Supply Department.

The Minister for Lands: Nonsense.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Metropolitan Water Supply Department are either unable or unwilling to carry out their obligations, even as regards the watering of the roads. If the King's Park Board had been permitted to retain their own water supply, they would now be pumping water and would not trouble the department at all. The position is as I state. Next, we come to this peculiar reduction of the grant for prison gate work. I regret extremely that the Government have seen fit to touch a vote of that nature. The whole

grant amounts to only a few hundred pounds, and the Government ought not to have interfered with it. I am sorry the Attorney General is not in his place, because, had he been, I should have appealed to him particularly. The Attorney General, I should have thought, would at least have seen that there was no interference with this particular item. Next, there is the very questionable treatment of the Aborigines vote. Recently I asked some questions regarding the Swan River half caste mission, but unfortunately the Honorary Minister did not see fit to take the matter seriously, preferring to treat it in an utterly flippant manner. Undoubtedly we owe a duty to the aborigines of this State. The Imperial Government, when granting us the Constitution we possess to-day, charged us to spend at least £10,000 per annum in the care and preservation of our aborigines.

The Minister for Works: How much are we spending?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister, of course, knows we are spending twice that amount; but, still, we undertook to spend at least £10,000 annually. Under the grant, certain missions were established, and they have been doing excellent work. I am not asserting that possibly better methods than those of missions might not have been adopted for the preservation of the race; but these missions were established.

The Minister for Works: By how much have the Government reduced the vote?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The missions enjoy certain privileges and certain grants for a number of years, and then without a word of warning their grants are considerably reduced, and, worst of all, the reduction is made retrospective. Take the case of the Swan River aborigines mission, a mission which has been in existence for perhaps 50 or 60 years—certainly a great length of time. That mission has been in the enjoyment of a capitation grant of, I think, 8d. or 10d. per head of the inmates. After seven months of the financial year have passed, the mission

authorities received notice that their grant is cut down by £200. I am informed by the controllers of the mission that they have, in all good faith, maintained the same number of natives, and carried out their work, and in doing so have spent the greater portion of their grant. Then, seven months of the financial year having expired, the controllers are notified that they are not to receive their grant. Such treatment, I consider, is very unfair indeed, and these remarks apply also to other aborigines missions which have suffered reductions.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: You do not call that making the reductions retrospective?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Yes, I do; retrospective as from June last. The mission authorities did not receive notice of these reductions until January. Expecting to be paid at the end of the half-year the amount of their half-yearly subsidy, they were told, coolly, that the amount was to be reduced by £200: I put a question to the Honorary Minister, who administers the Aborigines Department, whether it was a fair thing that the reduction should operate retrospectively, and whether he would take the case into consideration; and the Honorary Minister bluntly answered "No." These remarks also apply to the case of other missions which have suffered reductions. New Norcia can probably bear the reduction better than other missions can, because the New Norcia controllers have made a success of their very noble work, and are able to spend thousands per annum on the new mission on the Drysdale River, which, however, has not met with much success so far. The Sunday Island mission grant has been similarly cut down. Due notice ought to have been given, and the missions ought to have been informed that after this financial year they must submit to reductions in their grants. Then the controllers of the missions would have had an opportunity of making other arrangements.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: The same argument would apply to any subsidy.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: My argument applies more especially because of the sacred character of the institutions affected. The petty reduction in school hygiene, an excellent system of medical examination of school children introduced years ago, affects an item which I consider should certainly not have been touched. The saving is only a paltry £80. Again, let me express regret at the treatment municipalities have had from the Treasurer. They have received no subsidy for the first half of the financial year, and I do not know that they will receive much during the second half. The Minister for Works may be able to inform the Committee on that point. Although these little reductions have been made, they do not total many thousands of pounds, and will have no material effect on the finances. They will, however, bear very hardly on the institutions I have mentioned, and on local bodies such as municipal councils. A somewhat noticeable feature of the Government's finance is that while this unworthy cheese-paring has been in progress, Ministerial expenditure in the direction of entertainment of distinguished visitors, and so forth, has reached the highest point attained for many years. The Minister for Lands, when he was Minister for Works, did himself pretty well at Kalgoorlie, and lit up the reservoir there at a cost, according to these Estimates, of £231. The Minister for Lands, when Minister for Works, spent £231 of public money in putting the limelight on himself. The entertainment involved other incidentals, of course, but I notice that particular item of £231 for limelight or electric light, on the Estimates.

The Minister for Lands: You object to Kalgoorlie people being entertained, but you do not object to entertainments in Perth.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It is only the matter of the light I refer to.

The Minister for Lands: Do not talk tripe. An ex-Minister ought to know better than that, and ought to have more sense. You know that is wrong. You know that the total cost of the entertainment was £231.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I accept that explanation of the Minister for Lands.

The Minister for Lands: You are taking the *Sunday Times* as your authority. That paper said the entertainment cost £700, but the statement is not correct.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am not going to speak for the *Sunday Times* at all. However, I do see that item of £231 on the Estimates, and it cannot be taken except in the way I have put it. If the £231 includes everything—

The Minister for Lands: That was the total expenditure; and ten times, fifteen times, one hundred times more has been spent in Perth on less justifiable functions. Your trouble is that the money was spent in Kalgoorlie instead of Perth.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I am speaking about unnecessary expenditure on this occasion. While all these small reductions are being made we find that there is no real effort at economy, and neither is there any attempt at good administration.

Mr. Munsie: They are not cutting down the hospital votes as you did.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: They are doing so, and particularly those deserving of special assistance, such as the hospital at Leonora to which the member for Leonora referred the other evening.

The Minister for Works: There is more money voted for hospitals this year than has ever been voted before.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: But the Government are not treating the country hospitals at all fairly. The Government should turn their attention to the State concerns. If we are to have these, let us have them conducted on business lines. To-day we have the Agricultural Implement Works, the State Sawmills, and the State Brickworks, amongst others. Who wants agricultural machinery to-day? There is more in the country than we know what to do with, yet we are spending £100,000 annually in wages in making that machinery which is not required.

The Minister for Works: Who told you that.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I know it.

The Minister for Works: You know nothing of the kind.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Then we have the sawmills. There may be a better outlet for timber than for machinery so that there may be some justification for the sawmills. I would like to know who wants bricks to-day.

Mr. Robinson: They have not produced any yet, and they have been three years attempting to make them.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The last report I saw was that they had turned out 40,000 bricks—enough to build a couple of cottages—at a cost of £2 per thousand.

Mr. Green: That is a saving of 50 per cent. on what is charged by private manufacturers, and, moreover, they have turned out 500,000 for the kiln alone.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: And it is the finest kiln in Australia.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No one wants agricultural machinery or bricks to-day.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: We shall soon require agricultural machinery.

Mr. Green: And bricks.

The Minister for Works: Would you bring in machinery from the other States?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: There are plenty of manufacturers here. With regard to the State steamers they are preventing the private companies from putting bigger vessels on the coast. The Government steamers are bringing down cattle at rates lower than the private companies charge, and who gets the benefit except the meat ring.

The Minister for Works: I am sorry some people cannot make correct statements.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I notice with regret that no provision is made on the Estimates—although I hope we may find a sum on the Loan Estimates—for the erection of a maternity home in Perth.

The Minister for Lands: Would you advise us to build it out of revenue?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: It could have been built long ago out of revenue. The manner in which the metropolitan area has been treated over this matter is shameful. When the Liberal Government went out of office all arrangements had been made to build the maternity hospital and

the money was provided for it. The present Government went so far as to refer to it in the Governor's speech three and a half years ago, but where is the hospital to-day? Are the people of Perth not going to get any satisfaction in regard to this very necessary institution?

The Minister for Works: The maternity hospital is very little availed of.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister is not in a position to make such a statement because we have never had a maternity hospital here.

The Minister for Works: There is one in Kalgoorlie.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: That is only a ward. What we require is a hospital sufficiently large where nurses can be trained in that branch of the profession.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: You must have patients there before you can train the nurses.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We were promised that the hospital would be sufficiently large to permit of the training of nurses, but nothing has been done. We settle families on the land, and we do not give them the facilities which they are entitled to receive. It is impossible for those good women to leave their homes and come into town, and we should have properly qualified maternity nurses to send to them. There is no place in Western Australia where nurses can train. If there were, a great number of girls would enter on this profession, and later on there would be no difficulty about securing their services whenever those services were required in the country.

The Minister for Works: The Health Act you were responsible for, dealing with maternity matters did more injury to the nurses than any other measure which was ever introduced.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not know to what the Minister is referring. I want to make a few remarks about the absence of an adequate water supply for the metropolitan area. It is a disgrace that the metropolitan area should have to depend on a very doubtful supply obtained from bores.

The Minister for Works: Would you carry out that work from revenue?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Are the Government going to include it in the Loan Estimates?

The Minister for Works: You will see when they appear.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The Minister must be aware of the great necessity for an efficient water supply for Perth and suburbs.

Mr. Munsie: What were your administration doing the six years they were in power?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We were not able to do everything. We made provision for the building of a reservoir, and we appointed a commission to go into the question of all the sites, and the reports are available to-day. The work could have been commenced three years ago. The late Government would have made a commencement with it if they had remained in office.

Mr. Munsie: They would have had a busy time if they had been returned for another three years.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We were told the other evening by the Premier that if we untied his hands he would deal with certain civil servants who rode about all day on bicycles. Such a statement coming from a responsible Minister was quite uncalled for. If the Public Service Act has tied the Premier's hands in any way let him come to Parliament and ask that an amending measure be passed. It is amusing to hear him speak about his hands being tied. We know that they were not tied when he wanted to use them for the purpose of getting rid of public servants. The members of the service were supposed to be placed above Ministerial influence. I regret to say that those sections of the Public Service Act have been worked to the detriment of the members of the service instead of to their advantage. In answer to a question which I asked the Premier a little while back as to why certain civil servants were retired and as to why the Public Service Commissioner recommended the retirement—I refer to Messrs. Roe and Cowan—the Premier replied that the Commissioner knew the policy of the Government. It is not a question of knowing

the policy of the Government; it is a question of administering the Act. The Commissioner has no right to concern himself about the policy of the Government.

Mr. Munsie: Did he recommend anything illegal? You know well that the Commissioner was well within his rights when he made the recommendation.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If the Commissioner was right the Premier did not say so. He merely replied that the Commissioner knew the policy of the Government. I desire to say a few words also in regard to the reductions which have taken place in the civil service, or rather one branch of it—the Railway Department. I notice it is intended to reduce their hours to 44.

Mr. Munsie: There will be more than the Railway Department. There will be the Water Supply Department and other branches of the service.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I have seen no reference to any department except the Railways, and I consider it is unfair to deal with only one section of the public employees. The Government declare in a loud voice that they will not reduce wages, but they are doing so to the extent of half a day a week. Would it not be better for the Government to be straightforward and say that as times are bad and as the railway revenue has gone down, and that as there is not the same amount of work to be done, it is necessary to effect these reductions.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): And the railway revenue will go down even more in February.

[Mr. McDowall took the Chair.]

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: If that is so the position will be very serious. Would it not be better to say that a number will have to suffer reduction or be retired temporarily until things improve? Instead of that they propose to reduce them by four hours a week. That is unfair for the reason that it will apply only to part of the service. I am quite satisfied that a number of those men will have to work more than 44 hours a week

in order to carry on the work of the railways. Consequently, they will show no reduction of hours at all. But the poorest paid men, the fitters, will be knocked down to 44 hours. Why not approach the question in a straightforward manner, and make an all round reduction, affecting not only the wages men but the salaried staff as well.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): I see, you want a reduction in wages.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No. All I want is to see the question tackled straightforwardly, and if a reduction is to be made, that it shall apply all round, and not only to the small men, as is proposed under the present arrangement. I would exempt wages up to a certain point from any reduction.

Mr. Munsie: That is the reason why you paid men on the railways 7s. a day whilst you were a member of the Ministry.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: We never paid a wage of 7s., the men got 8s. a day.

Mr. Munsie: Some of them got as low as 6s. 6d. under your administration.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No. That was under your own administration. If a minimum of, say, £100 were fixed, instead of reducing the 9s. a day man on the whole of the £140 a year which he earns, instead of cutting him down 8 or 9 per cent. on the whole, reduce him on the odd £40 only, and give him £100 without any reduction. The same thing should apply to the higher grades. If that were done, you would have a better and a fairer scheme of reduction and no section of the men would be treated unfairly.

Mr. Munsie: Evidently, according to your own argument, £100 a year is a living wage.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not say that it is a living wage. What I do say is that a man should be free from any reduction up to at least £100 a year. If the Government propose to make a reduction to meet the present state of the finances, let them do so, but they should treat the civil servants fairly, which they certainly

do not propose doing under the present scheme. Let them begin at the top and subject members of Parliament to a substantial reduction in salaries—not 10 per cent., but a reduction by at least £100. Prior to three years ago members of Parliament got on very well on £200 a year; but times were better and salaries were increased to £300. Previously we were able to live very well on £200, and in times like this we should be able to again live on £200, or even £150, and thus set a good example.

Mr. Heitmann: That is a reduction of 33½ per cent. Will you reduce your whole salary, or rather your whole income, by 33½ per cent?

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I always give for benevolent purposes whatever I can afford, but I am speaking now of money received from the State. The Government, while proposing to reduce the amount of money received by the wages men from the State, are not willing to reduce their own salaries to the sum which they were receiving for many years, and which, until recently, was considered to be quite sufficient. Ministers could go back to their old salaries. Indeed, I am surprised that Ministers require any reminder on this point. They said in a loud voice three years ago, "We do not want this extra money; we will not have it." But they have gone on for three years drawing this extra money, or a total of £6,000, money which they said they did not want and pledged themselves not to take.

The Minister for Works: You thought you were coming back after salaries were raised.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Then you must have thought that you were not coming back. You have taken £300 each per annum; that is, £1,800 for three years, or a total of £6,000 in a little over three years of the State's money which you said you did not want and would not take. Ministers have drawn that £6,000 and will, so far as I can see, continue to draw at that rate in the future.

Mr. Munsie: I will certainly agree to a reduction of 33½ per cent. in my salary, provided you agree to support a Bill

which will similarly reduce everyone in receipt of more than £300 a year.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The argument of the member for Hannans is not relevant.

A member: You are making £1,000 a year outside.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: The argument is this. The Government propose to reduce their railway servants on the ground that there is not so much work to be done.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Not only the railway servants, the whole of them.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: No; the wages men, not the whole of the civil service. It is proposed to reduce the wages men of the civil service, because the Government say there is not so much work to do. Similarly there is not so much work to do in Parliament; therefore, members ought to be satisfied with a less allowance, just as they expect the wages men in the service to take less because there is less work to do. Undoubtedly this is no time for legislation or long sittings, and if for that reason only, I consider it equitable members should agree to a reduction in salaries. But anger seems to be raised amongst hon. members opposite at the bare suggestion. I do not intend to delay the House longer. I have entered my protest against the treatment meted out to the aborigines missions, and I protest again against the want of effort on the part of the Ministers. I have endeavoured to offer them some suggestion and to put forward some constructive criticism, to show them a means by which they can raise £10,000 per year by the reduction of Ministerial and members' salaries. But that suggestion has been received by the House with derision and even with anger. That is all the thanks I get for putting forward the suggestion. The Honorary Minister interjected just now regarding my attitude towards the missions. He was not in the House when I referred to this matter, but this will convey to the Honorary Minister my attitude. I am not prepared to say that there is not some better method than the present of dealing

with the preservation of the aborigines. But that is not the point. Those missions have been established and have done good work. They were in receipt of subsidies, and his first Ministerial action was not only to cut down that subsidy, but to make the reduction retrospective.

Mr. WILLMOTT (Nelson) [9.24]: Many and varied have been the opinions addressed to this House as to the best means to be adopted in our present difficulties. Some of those opinions have struck me as being worthy of consideration.

Member: Let us have your opinions.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I intend to break new ground altogether. There has been a good deal of reference to the civil service, and, in my opinion some of the remarks made have been unjust. Certain increases are owing to certain individuals in the service. That is a debt of honour and must be paid. The president of the court was appointed by the Government.

Mr. Taylor: What court?

Mr. WILLMOTT: The appeal court. That court was appointed by the Government and its decisions must be respected. Rightly or wrongly the court decided that certain officers were worth certain annual salaries; therefore we must in honour pay those salaries, because the Government had announced that the decisions of the court would be final. At the same time, I think that the increases are in many cases absolutely wrong, for the reason that the decisions did away with the uniformity previously existing in the classification under the Public Service Act. What was the cost of this court? Probably £10,000, as I work it out. I venture to say that if the annual increases had been given as they should have been, they would not have cost more than £6,000. And had those increases been given, I do not think that there would have been appeals in many cases. These so-called automatic increases refer only to officers in receipt of salaries up to £200. Many of the men who went to the appeal court are highly paid; and I do not think they would have had the pluck to go to the

court, and they certainly would not have been supported if the small man had been properly treated. Some of the appellants pointed out to the judge that they had been in the service many years and were still on their minimum salaries. That, in my opinion, had a great deal to do with the judgment given. In the Education Department, officers in receipt of salaries up to £500 receive increases. Why was not the rest of the civil service treated in the same way? Six thousand pounds in increases would have settled many appeals, and the service to-day would be more efficient because it would not be seething with discontent. Where you have discontent there is inefficiency. I notice that the services of the Assistant Public Service Commissioner have been dispensed with. Does the Premier think one Commissioner is competent to deal with the whole of the civil service, because I do not? The Deputy Commissioner visited many offices, especially in the metropolitan area and in the South-West; but the civil servant in the North has never been visited. Consequently you do not know whether the men up there are loafing or are overworked.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): We have good men in the North.

Mr. WILLMOTT: It may be that the civil servants in the North are worth more money than they are getting; but the Government is not in a position to know because they have had no report from the Commissioner. I think it was bad policy to get rid of the deputy Commissioner, who did good work. In the department with which I was connected, he effected savings to the amount of close on £2,000; and if he could do that in a small department like forestry, the total expenditure of which is probably not more than £12,000 a year, what could have been done in other departments? Speaking for myself only, I think he is a much better man than the present Commissioner.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are quite right, too.

The Minister for Works: He did good work.

Mr. WILLMOTT: He did very good work indeed. Several members have made suggestions in regard to the running of our railways. In my opinion the farmer is paying his fair share and a little more. The reason for the enormous cost of the running of our trains has been the faulty construction of the lines. How is it possible to run our trains at a reasonable cost with the grades we have? That is where we are making the mistake. The Commissioner has no say in the construction of our lines; all he has to do is to run the trains. He comes along after the work is done, without having had a say as to the grades.

The Minister for Works: The Engineer for Existing Lines has been consulted for the last three years.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Then he must be very easily satisfied to put up with the lines as constructed at present.

The Minister for Works: He says we are spending too much on them now.

Mr. WILLMOTT: If we take the Big Brook line as an example, we are spending too much. It was a heavy line to construct, but it could have been constructed at less cost on better grades had a different gentleman been in charge. In regard to the Forestry Department, the first step that should be taken is the appointment of an inspector general of forests. During the last 17 years the present acting conservator has been acting conservator, conservator for about two months, and has been in all sorts of posts with high sounding titles but with very little salary. The trouble is that as long as he holds an acting position his word can have very little weight with the Minister. This officer should either be confirmed in his present position or, if the Minister does not think he is a fit and proper person, somebody else should be appointed.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): It cannot be done under the Act.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I think it can. This officer was once appointed conservator for a couple of months. If that

could be done by the Government of the day, then the present Government can do the same thing again. It is of no use appointing a scientific manager from outside, because no Government will put their hands in their pockets and give the scientific conservator £40,000 or £50,000 a year to spend, which he will certainly want. The whole aim up to the present has been to get all we can out of the forests and put nothing back. When we think that during 1913 no fewer than 3½ million loads of timber were taken out of our forests, and that the whole of the revenue received was only £35,000, we must admit that we are not getting what we should get. A shilling a load in the round is an absurd royalty, as is also half-crown a load in the square. Firms pay up to 12s. a load in the square for timber on private property miles away from a railway line.

Mr. Heitmann: Rubbish!

Mr. WILLMOTT: No, I do not talk rubbish on the forestry question.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why should people get under conditional purchase conditions paddocks that carry timber worth a royalty of 12s. a load?

Mr. WILLMOTT: Because the land has been wrongfully allowed to go. The officers of the Forestry Department, in spite of every effort, were overridden because those lands were under the control of successive Ministers for Lands.

The Minister for Lands: But where is the revenue you speak of?

Mr. WILLMOTT: Right here. I know that private firms are paying up to 12s. a load in the square. Why then should we charge only half-a-crown for timber adjacent to a railway?

The Minister for Lands: Show me how we can get a general increase on all timber areas and I am with you.

Mr. WILLMOTT: When we think that the royalty on iron-bark is 4s. 6d. a load, and on teak £12 10s., are we going to admit that our karri and jarrah are worth 250 times less than teak? I will never admit it. I know it will be stated that if we raise our royalties on karri and jarrah we will be enhancing the value of the combine's leases.

The Minister for Lands: Increasing their monopoly.

Mr. WILLMOTT: But only for the time being. If we are going to wait until those leases are cut out, we will wait until the Crown lands are denuded of timber. Why cut off our nose to spite our face? If I can show a man the way to make a sovereign, will he object because by doing so he will put 15s. in the pockets of someone else?

The Minister for Lands: It will give them an absolute monopoly.

Mr. WILLMOTT: But only for a time, because we have a large area of Crown lands. The combine will be in a position to tender at a lower figure than other people for the time being, and they will in consequence quickly exhaust their forest. Then we can come along and make our own price at a later date.

The Minister for Lands: Then your idea is to close down the cutting on Crown lands and let Millars work on and cut out their leases?

Mr. WILLMOTT: I say raise the royalty and see whether it will have the effect the Minister suggests. I do not think it will. The fact that they are paying such large sums for timber on private paddocks proves my contention.

The Minister for Lands: It is not Millars who are paying it.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Then if other companies can pay 12s. a load and compete against Millars, my argument holds good. Our royalty should be doubled or trebled.

The Minister for Lands: I agree with that, but I object to increasing it on Crown lands while Millars have the monopoly they have.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Then there is the matter of housing the Forestry Department. The Minister in charge must be ashamed of it, because it is always poked away in remote corners. With a great deal of trouble a museum was collected for the Forestry Department. Where is it to-day? Gone. Where is the Forestry Department itself? Ask 99 out of 100 people in Perth and they will be unable to say. It is stuck away out of all touch with the department which it is now directly under, namely the

Mines Department. Why not house them together and save all this running about? In respect to jarrah timber, it is so well known that it does not require any commendation from me. It is held in high repute by engineers all over the world. But I am sorry to say karri is not so well known, and still more sorry to say that many who should have known better have seen fit to decry this timber, have cried stinking fish to their everlasting disgrace. After 25 years' personal experience of karri, I say fearlessly that it is a splendid timber and will eventually prove itself to be second to none. I know it to be second to none to-day. Properly handled this timber is second to none. We have an enormous area of karri, some of it carrying over 200 loads to the acre. When we think of the thousands and thousands of acres of karri which we have, it gives some idea of the enormous extent of forest that exists. Let us run our railways into the karri country and open up those forests. Give private enterprise also a chance to come in and work the karri forests. I do not think that allowing private enterprise into patches of that forest further south will do our State enterprise any harm whatever. Let us see that we handle this asset to the best advantage, and do not give it away for 1s. a load, for it is worth a great deal more. There is one industry which is absolutely untouched, and that is the bark industry for tanning purposes. Something should be done to start this new industry here as it is urgently required. Hitherto Germany has taken all the tanning bark exported from Australia. Apart from some little trouble on account of the dark colour caused by the gum, I am certain that a very large industry indeed could be opened up. I have received hundreds of letters from all over the world in relation to this bark industry. I have passed them on from time to time to the Forestry Department, and I presume they have been pigeon-holed and that that is the end of them. I favour the erection of spot mills on Crown lands, and no obstacles should be put in their way. People desirous of investing their money in spot mills should

be assisted. Give them small permit areas, and thereby security of tenure, but do not let them have the timber at 1s. a load. As regards the sleeper hewer, this man has a definite place in our forests. There are many thousands of acres of country which do not carry sufficient timber to warrant the erection of a mill. This is the land on which to put the hewer. A great deal of the country carries such a small loadage that it is in immediate danger of being handed over to the farmer. What will he do; he will destroy this timber, grub it up and burn it. That is the class of country on which the hewer can be worked profitably, as well as sparsely covered bush. There seems to be a great objection to the timber hewer. I would not like to see him being allowed to run where he likes over virgin forest, but there are many thousands of acres over which this man can operate profitably. He is not in the same position as the man with a mill. It does not pay to haul the logs more than a certain distance into a mill, and in the sparsely covered country it does not pay to lay light tramways, but the hewer is so mobile that with a £5 kit he can go out into this country and work it profitably. I do not say that the hewer must not be allowed to go into virgin forest. He should be allowed to go into certain virgin forest, for there is such land where he could work the timber profitably.

Mr. Taylor: The hewer has been in existence for years, and will remain.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I hope so. The forest rangers in my opinion should do all the inspecting of timbers. At present almost every department has its own inspectors to inspect timber. This means that we have no definite standard of inspection. While on this subject, let me mention that a sleeper, on being inspected, is either passed or condemned, and in consequence a wicked waste results. In other parts of the world first, second, third, and fourth class sleepers are recognised. If a sleeper for a particular reason does not come up to specification, it is not thrown on the scrap heap but is passed as a second or third

class sleeper, and that is what we ought to do here. In India would the authorities permit a teak sleeper having pin holes in it to be utterly condemned? No. It has to stand its chance and if it is not passed as first class, it is graded as a second, third, or fourth class sleeper. There is no such thing as an absolutely condemned sleeper there, and the same thing should apply here.

Mr. Taylor: To what use could the lower class of sleepers be put here?

Mr. WILLMOTT: They could be used for many of our light railways.

Mr. Green: For agricultural spur lines.

Mr. Taylor: For the Esperance railway.

Mr. Green: No.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I wish to point out a grave injustice which is being done to a certain roads board. The permit areas held by the State sawmills do not pay rates.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The others did not pay until 18 months ago.

Mr. WILLMOTT: They do now. If the permits pertaining to mills Nos. 1, 2, and 3 paid rates, the Warren roads board would receive no less a revenue than £700 per annum from these areas alone, provided they paid at the same rate as Lyall's mill at Jarnadup pays now. If the Government will have State enterprises and desire to make the people believe in them, they are going the wrong way about it if they deprive the roads boards of such rates.

Mr. Thomas: Do not they pay a royalty that other mills do not pay?

Mr. WILLMOTT: No, they pay a royalty but that goes to the Forestry Department and not to the roads board. The roads board have to carry over their roads the extra traffic occasioned by the mills, and yet they get nothing in the way of rates from these permit areas. If this is to continue, this board should in all fairness receive special treatment in the shape of an enlarged subsidy. We deprive them of a means of revenue, which would be available if private companies held the permit areas. If the Government mills were not established, private enter-

prise would have stepped in and other mills would have been erected, and the permit areas held by private enterprise would be paying £700 a year to the Warren roads board. It is only fair that this or any other board in like circumstances should receive special consideration, but at present the Warren roads board, to my knowledge, is the only one so affected.

The Minister for Works: Are there roads to the mills?

Mr. WILLMOTT: Yes, and every penny is spent on the roads. Nothing is wasted in officials' fees. Some of the best roads in the country, considering the rainfall and the trying conditions under which the people there labour, are to be found in this district. When I pointed out the course of the line to Big Brook, the Minister said "Look at the conditions." I repeat the same remark in regard to the roads.

The Minister for Works: Do they make any roads to the mills?

Mr. WILLMOTT: They have to make roads all round the mills.

The Minister for Works: I did not see any.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Perhaps the Minister was too busy looking at the powellising vats. I hope the Minister for Works will remember this, and make a special effort on behalf of this particular board. It is not fair that they should have to bear the expense occasioned by the extra traffic without receiving any remuneration from that traffic. There is another matter to which I should like to direct attention, and that is in regard to the Lands Department. This department requires more careful administration at present than any other department.

Mr. Taylor: That is what the Minister himself says.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Then I thoroughly agree with the Minister.

Mr. Robinson: That is why he was placed in charge of the Lands Department.

Mr. WILLMOTT: The Minister in charge of this large and important department has the welfare and progress of the State in his hands. If he is too

optimistic, like some Ministers have been, he will induce people to go too far out away from railways and beyond the line of an assured rainfall, and disaster will be the result.

Mr. Taylor: The member for Northam is not in his seat at present.

Mr. WILLMOTT: If, on the other hand, he is too pessimistic he will frighten people before they have given their holdings a fair chance. The Minister must have sufficient personality to inspire confidence in the settlers and zeal in his officers. Of all the departments that come under the curse of the ordinary man in the street, more abuse is heaped on the Lands Department than on all the others put together. I am inclined to think that a great deal of it is deserved. When men come out here with only a small sum of money to put into land and are kept waiting before their applications are finally dealt with, in some cases as long as 18 months—

The Minister for Lands: I am not responsible for that. That is ancient history.

Mr. WILLMOTT: It may be, but I commend it to the notice of the Minister that he may take care not to go forth and do likewise. The sword is hanging over his head. Letters are constantly being received bitterly complaining about the fact that no finality is reached in regard to requests. The Minister has an important work before him to delve into and probe about in order to find out the sore spot and heal it if he can. Other Ministers have tried, and in my opinion not very successfully. More especially are these delays noticeable in the timber areas. Reports have been received from the forestry officers recommending that certain lands be approved. The district surveyors should have more authority. They are located in the different districts, and provided with a staff, generally speaking a good, efficient staff. When they forward their reports, nothing more should be required than the formal assent of the Minister for Lands to give effect to their recommendations.

The Minister for Lands: I am of opinion that delays are due to district

surveyors not getting on with their work as expeditiously as people think they should. The delay is not in the central office.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I am glad to hear that, but correspondence which I have received puts a different complexion on the matter. Everything possible has been done by the district surveyors' offices, but the delay is caused in Perth, shall I say, because we have so many assistant under-secretaries. This might be the reason, or it might not.

The Minister for Lands: I am inclined to think the delay occurs in the field.

Mr. WILLMOTT: We have a splendid classification of the South-West land. A very large sum of money was expended on this work, and by a glance at the plan one can tell the timbered land and the land which is absolutely free from timber. It seems extraordinary after having gone to the expense of making this classification and preparing these plans that it should take weeks and months to get an application through for land shown by the plan to be free from timber. I know that the State sawmills manager will say that in many cases the land shown on the plan as being free from timber might be required for the construction of a line to take his logs into the mills. Are we going to close the whole of our best country in the Warren for the sake of a few tramlines? Surely we can set out where these tram lines are going, because, as a timber man, I am well aware that all the creeks are arteries which lead the logs into the mills, and are we to close all this land because we have to run a few tramlines to the mills? The proposition is absolutely absurd. Surely a scheme can be devised by which a chain strip can be kept aside and by which any man taking up land enclosing that chain strip knows, at the time that he makes his application and is given approval of it, that the saw mills have the right to run a line through. I can see no objection to it, and the selectors can see no objection either.

The Minister for Lands: You would require a permanent survey of the land before that.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Most of the lands are already surveyed, and have been surveyed for years.

The Minister for Lands: You would require to have the line permanently surveyed otherwise the settlers could not start making improvements.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I do not see any reason why they should not do so. As I was saying, we have permanent surveys already made. If one goes up the gullies there for miles and miles one sees that surveys have already been made.

The Minister for Lands: Are you sure they are not private surveys? I do not think there are many permanent surveys.

Mr. WILLMOTT: As many surveys as are required in connection with laying out tramlines have been made. If we cannot do this what is the use of a classification? Instead of waiting until the whole of the timber is cut out, which as a forester myself I hope will never be, because I trust we will be able to conserve our tracts of forest for ever, it seems to be extraordinary that we cannot devise some plan by which we can enable men to get on land free from timber instead of keeping them off because we have to run a tram line through it. I commend this to the notice of the Minister, and I am sure he will quickly find some easy means of dealing with it. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to the distress existing at the present time in the Dinninup area. The land is for the most part poor, but the price which has been paid for it has been far too high.

Mr. Taylor: What price has been paid for it?

Mr. WILLMOTT: They have had to pay up to 35s. an acre for land which, I understand, the last report upon it recognised that it should be sold at 1s. an acre.

The Minister for Lands: What land is that?

Mr. WILLMOTT: I am referring to the Dinninup poison area.

Mr. Taylor: What Government fixed that price?

Mr. WILLMOTT: The member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) was, I think,

Minister for Lands at the time this particular area was thrown open.

Hon. J. Mitchell: No, I was not.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I take the hon. member's assurance that he was not. The settlement of this area, in the way it was done, was undoubtedly a mistake. That could be proved by a perusal of the report of the committee which inspected this land. This committee pointed out that these people should never have been put on the land, that it was impossible for them to make a living on it, and that the whole system of selection, so far as this land is concerned, would have to undergo an alteration.

The Minister for Lands: Was the Dinninup area a repurchased estate?

Mr. WILLMOTT: No, it was Crown land, and some of the poorest land I have ever seen. It was cut up into small areas and a huge price was put upon it. These men had never had a chance. As I told hon. members not long ago, a state of dreadful distress exists amongst these settlers to-day. They should never have been put on that land, and the sooner they are taken off the better it will be for them. The fruit industry in the State is beginning to assume fair proportions, but if better facilities are not given to the fruit growers to get their fruit away, I say this industry is going to receive a setback.

The Minister for Lands: That is a matter over which we have no control.

Mr. WILLMOTT: The Government have control, so far as their railways are concerned.

The Minister for Lands: But it is the want of shipping facilities that causes the trouble.

Mr. WILLMOTT: So far as the shipping facilities go, I agree with the Minister for Lands, that at the present time the outlook for the fruit grower is a very bad one. I have some thousands and thousands of cases of fruit that I do not know what to do with. I am only a unit and there are hundreds of men like myself, but men who are dependent upon their orchards for their living. I do not know what will become of these. We are

not whining or begging. We are battling against the diseases that are attacking our orchards. The codlin moth is, for instance, giving us a good deal of trouble, but I am pleased to say, thanks to the prompt methods adopted by the officers of the Agricultural Department, that we seem to be in a fair way of dealing with the pest. I think that a great deal more could be done on our railways. The fruit growers in our district had to struggle hard indeed to be allowed to send their fruit away by the morning train from Bridgetown, for instance. It was pointed out that they must bring it in the night before, and that fresh fruit, such as peaches, plums, and nectarines, would have to be 56 hours in transit from Bridgetown to Perth, a distance of 170 miles. This is a distance which those railways we have heard quoted by hon. members, the English railways, would cover in three hours. Are we going to allow our fruit to take 56 hours to travel a distance of 170 miles?

Mr. Taylor: A little over a mile an hour.

The Minister for Works: Do you want special trains?

Mr. WILLMOTT: It would be a special train that would take 56 hours to do the same journey. What I said in jest about charges is one of the finest means I have yet seen for reducing the deficit.

Mr. Taylor: It will take 70 hours then.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I would now like to deal with the Agricultural Department. Certain commissioners have been appointed and are paid £750 a year to carry out their duties. I understand their duties consist in instructing men on the land how to farm, amongst other things. What do they say—that the first and most necessary thing to do is to use lime in large quantities? Now I would like to ask the Minister for Lands what steps he is prepared to take to help the men on the land to get this lime?

The Minister for Lands: We are investigating the matter.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Investigating the matter! The Government have been

doing this for six years, and they are still in a mess in regard to it. If it were not that I have some consideration for hon. members I should feel inclined to read the whole of the correspondence of the investigators for the last six years. It would not take more than a week to read.

The Minister for Works: Do you believe in State trading concerns in this regard?

Mr. WILLMOTT: In reply to the interjection, I will tell the Minister that I am prepared, either that the State should open up our lime deposits, or that the Government should allow private enterprise to do so—whichever they like.

Mr. Allen: Private enterprise for preference.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Then let it be private enterprise. Lime we must have. What is the good of paying men £750 a year and travelling expenses which, no doubt, bring their incomes up to over £1,000 a year, if we are not to take their advice. If their advice is not worth giving, get rid of them. It is an insane proposal to go on paying these men their salaries, and for the Government to say they are investigating. The previous Government investigated.

The Minister for Mines: They did not do anything; they did not investigate to any extent.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You can get plenty of lime.

Mr. WILLMOTT: The farmer can get lime at most unreasonable rates. Are the present Government prepared, or are they not, to open up the lime deposits of the State? If the finances of the State will not permit of their opening up these deposits, are they prepared to allow other persons to come along with private capital and do so.

The Minister for Mines: It requires very careful consideration.

Mr. WILLMOTT: Surely after three years, even the hon. gentlemen opposite ought to have been able to come to some conclusion. I am sure if I were sitting on that side of the House, in their position, I could have come to a conclusion in a very much shorter time than three

years. Private enterprise—and the Minister in charge of the department will bear me out in this for they have all the particulars—is prepared to step in and spend £100,000 in opening up one of our lime deposits. If the State cannot do it, why not allow this private company to do it? The company is prepared to be bound down as to their charges, and has agreed not to charge more than the Agricultural Department decides is a fair thing. What more do the Government want? For my own part I am prepared to pay up to 12s. a ton for lime, and I believe that the settlers generally would be equally prepared, but these gentlemen say they are willing to give us the lime at 10s. a ton. They also say they are prepared to hand back this lime to the State at any time the State likes to demand it. I have never heard of any company putting forward such a splendid proposition for the State.

Mr. Allen: Why are they not allowed to do it?

Mr. WILLMOTT: I do not know. There is something at the back of it which I cannot fathom. Full particulars will be found in the *West Australian* of the 27th March, 1913. My desire is to turn lime out in hundreds and thousands of tons for the people of the State. We want the lime, and I cannot think why the Government will not allow this private enterprise to come in and develop this industry.

Mr. Allen: If by turning them out we could get this lime we ought to do it.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I cannot see where the remark of the hon. member leads.

Mr. Allen: If we could get some one else into power they might give that concession to the company.

Mr. WILLMOTT: I believe I would turn my own family out if I could get all the lime we need so much to-day.

The Minister for Mines: There is a big market for it in Germany now.

Mr. WILLMOTT: No less than 16,000 tons of lime are put to use for agricultural and building purposes at the present time, but ten times that quantity would be used if we could get it at reasonable rates. A line 13 miles in

length would carry that lime from the present deposit to join the main line at Harvey or Waroona. Why should we not do it, especially as the people want it? The settlers are not asking the Government to give it to them. They are not asking for something for nothing, and their requests should be treated with consideration. In view of the requests which have been made for free freights and the numerous other requests we have heard during the last three months, Ministers ought to be delighted to help those who are willing to help themselves. I am not going to labour the point, but I do hope the Minister for Agriculture will not only give the matter earnest consideration but prompt consideration. I cannot see any reason for the delay. The reports which have been made on this particular lime deposit at Lake Clifton have been eminently favourable for the opening up of the deposit. The reports show that there is 84 per cent. of lime there, that it is 13 miles only from our present South-Western line, that the deposit is 11 miles long and many miles wide, and that it is of tremendous depth. A private company as I have said, is prepared to put up £100,000 to work the deposit. Surely such a proposal deserves the utmost consideration at the hands of the Government. Cement they will also make. As regards the deposit at Fremantle, the timber alone would suffice to pay the cost of the line. The timber which the Government are now railing from long distances can be obtained at Rockingham. To me it seems extraordinary that this matter has not been dealt with before; and I do trust the present Government will open up one or more of the lime deposits, or else allow private enterprise to do the work.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [10.16]: In rising to speak on these Estimates, I must say that I have listened with special interest to the last speaker, to whose remarks a good deal more weight attaches than, perhaps, to the remarks of other speakers, from my special standpoint, for the reason that for something like 20 years that hon. member has been an officer

of the Forestry Department. In addressing myself to the subject of the Estimates to-night, I intend to deal only with woods and forests, because, after all, fully 5,000 of my constituents obtain their livelihood from the timber industry. In dealing with the Forestry Department, it is as well to point out that the revenue, according to the Acting Conservator's report, has for last year shown an increase. The State has received from that department since its inception something like half a million sterling revenue; and the buoyancy indicated by the figures for the last twelve months is, I think, attributable largely to the activity of the present Government in the trade. Further, that buoyancy, viewed in conjunction with the number of licenses issued of late by the Forestry Department, indicates that there has been leakage in the past—that by some means or other the timber companies have in the past evaded their responsibilities. In reviewing the position of the Forestry Department, I wish to express my admiration, as well as my criticism, in some directions. My admiration has been aroused by the work which the Forestry Department has undertaken in the equipment of State nurseries. At two or three places in the South-West the Department has foresters in charge of nurseries, and the very laudable object in view is to distribute to public bodies throughout the State the useful and ornamental trees that we see growing around us. According to the report, the value of such trees distributed during the past twelve months was £6,667. I contend, however, that it is impossible to estimate the value represented by those trees. There is no man in this Chamber or out of it who can frame any accurate estimate of the value of those millions of ornamental and useful trees which are grown in the State nurseries, and thence distributed throughout Western Australia. If we take the experience of other States, particularly the State in which I was born—South Australia—where for hundreds of miles the country is practically bald, where all the timber has been destroyed, and where it is a very difficult matter to get other trees to grow, we find that the people are too closely interested in other

pursuits to give attention to tree culture. Over hundreds of miles there are not even trees for shade purposes. I remember, as a boy, reading a few lines which occasionally come back to me now—

They might have left one gum tree stand,
Where warbling birds could sing—
A resting place for that bright throng
When weary on the wing.

We have not yet reached that stage in Western Australia, but I am going to prove that we are travelling very rapidly towards the goal at which other States have arrived. In considering our immense area of wooded country, we have to make a distinction between the timbers which have a commercial value and those which have not. As regard America, no less than 45 per cent. of the whole extent of the two Americas is wooded, carrying timber of some quality; while of the whole of Australia only 4 per cent. is wooded. Of American territory 45 per cent. is yielding something towards the lumber industry, but of the immense area of Australia only 4 per cent. Accordingly the duty devolves upon every State Parliament in the Commonwealth to try to foster the growth of Australian woods and forests, in order that we may prepare for future contingencies. It is impossible to obtain a true conception of the commercial values of our timbers unless we have a properly equipped Forestry Department; and the duty of such a Department would be to disseminate knowledge, and to instruct the people of our own country—because they are not educated on this subject—regarding the value of this particular industry and how we can best preserve it. It is only during the last few years that the science of forestry has attracted any public interest. It is only during recent months that a few enthusiasts have been endeavouring to create a public conscience on this question, and that an organisation for the promotion of the science of forestry has come into existence here. With that organisation I will deal more fully later. It is hampered by the indifference and apathy of the public. The people do not really understand the position, and apparently are not prepared to take sufficient interest in the

subject to give the movement a push along. In many respects Australia leads the world. In many directions other countries have copied our methods. They have copied our methods because this is a young country peopled by a vigorous community, a community which has been able to avoid the pitfalls and errors of other countries, and to strike out on bold, progressive lines. But, while Australia leads in many directions, so far as forestry matters are concerned we lag sadly in the rear. We have the position created in Western Australia to-day that forestry is almost a dead letter. We have an immense variety of timbers here, but as to only a couple of them are we experimenting and exploiting. Taking the two commercial timbers, jarrah and karri, it must be confessed that jarrah, as the member for Nelson (Mr. Willmott) has stated, needs no recommendation. International depôts have been established in all parts of the world by the various Western Australian timber companies, and, as one descriptive writer puts it—

Progress in the form of the iron horse
is racing its way into the hearts of five
Continents on a highway made of West
Australian sleepers.

Jarrah has won that reputation, and is going to hold it as long as jarrah lasts. But, to supplement the supply of jarrah, we have brought in the karri; and I shall deal with the Government's activities in that direction a little later. I wish to say now that in addition to these two commercial timbers, which represent our big asset in the South-West to-day, we have blackbutt, tuart, and wandoo—very valuable timbers, but, unfortunately, existing only in limited quantities. The supply of these three timbers is not likely to last very long, and this applies especially to tuart and wandoo; and therefore we should do our best to foster their growth and multiply the sources of supply. The other timbers that spread over the Western Australian landscape are york gum, salmon gum, raspberry jam, sheoak, morrell, yate, banksia, red gum, and native pear. Most of these timbers grow east of the Darling Range; and with the settler's fire stick and the settler's axe we

have been doing the work of vandals in most effective fashion. We should look upon our forests as Nature's gifts, and we should cultivate our timber crop in the same way as we cultivate any other crop. We bring to our country the best brains and talents procurable for the furthering of the growth of cereals. We foster and encourage the growth of fruit. In those particular lines we do our utmost to secure the services of scientific men who will assist our settlers to obtain the best results. As regards forestry we should look upon what other countries are doing. Taking America, the home of the lumber trade, and taking the statements published periodically by the leading forester of to-day, Gifford Pinchot, we find what America is doing in forestry. The question has arrested the attention of the thinking people of America; and why? Because only a few years ago, less than a decade, ago, the position had become so serious in the American lumber trade that five of the principal foresters of America, after making an investigation into the question, expressed in writing their conviction that in a year's time there would be in the United States a timber famine so disastrous that its effects would be felt in every household in the land. They pointed out that within the space of 16 years there would not be a stick of timber left standing east of the Rockies. These alarming pronouncements had the effect of galvanising public attention throughout the great republic, with the result that to-day the Americans have their seed forests and a thoroughly equipped Forestry Department, and are making provision for overcoming the denudation that is in progress. We find that by the establishment of a forestry service, of fire breaks and wind breaks, the Americans have been able to accomplish something that has proved effectively beneficial. The duty of our Forestry Department here in Western Australia should be to disseminate information with regard to the effective handling, and the perpetuation, of the forests already existing in this State. Care should be insisted upon in every direction. In the felling of timber, especially, care

should be insisted upon to ensure that the falling timber does not cripple and ruin young growth. Indeed, the process which has been adopted here, and which is in vogue at the present time, is a destructive and a wasteful one. Japan and Germany at the present time are engaged in the planting of forests, but, to quote Mr. Pinchot again—

The true way to deal with our wood wealth is, not to plant in all cases, but to police the forests we already have. The same principles as these to which utterance is given by Mr. Pinchot are to-day applicable to Western Australia. We have trees all along the Darling Range. Trees of good commercial quality are not to be found on the flats and in the swamps, but it is along the granite ridges we meet with those trees. We find Nature most prolific and most generous. It needs but the wind and the birds to distribute the seed. Therefore, instead of establishing plantations of trees—which process I have always condemned so far as hardwoods are concerned—the aim of an up to date forestry department should be to guard the timber that remains, and particularly the young growth, from the disastrous bush fires that sweep over the country in summer, to clear up the debris that litters the ground, and to weed out such trees as one knows are not going to prove good commercial propositions—the kind of tree that possibly is depriving half a dozen promising young trees of moisture and sustenance. Our forests want clearing out; and, instead of a policy of planting, we want a policy of policing. I need not deal to-night with the scientific phase of the question, or with the influence of forestry policy on rainfall, moisture, and evaporation; but, as a layman who has spent half his life in the timber industry, I wish to urge this Committee to further efforts. I wish to impress upon hon. members the urgent necessity, even in times of financial stress, for putting our woods and forests house in order. We have to-day in China and Australia the only two countries, perhaps, in the world that are laggards, that are hanging back in this matter of forestry. We have neglected to provide forestry

schools, Japan, Austria, Italy, and Norway make forestry a part of their serious business. Greece, Spain, and Portugal legislate with an eye to the future. Russia draws enormous revenue from her timber trade; and Germany, the country which is to-day the cause of so much havoc and misery, leads the world in expert forestry. In the countries I have mentioned public opinion has been fostered; in them, as I have said, the public conscience has been awakened. Fresh interests have been galvanised in forestry matters, by reason of the extraordinary denudation of the timber areas of European countries. It is owing to the fact that the world during the last few years has become so bald, that forestry advocates are to-day supported by the leading public men of almost every land in efforts to make provision for the needs of future generations. The organisations I refer to are vying with each other to conserve the timber that remains, and meantime we in Australia, by axe and fire, appear to be travelling with a headlong rush towards the complete denudation of our country and the destruction of its wooded wealth, thus laying up a store of trouble for the future. We are fairly embarked on this destructive policy of vandalism, to an inordinate degree, and I urge upon the present Government, and upon the Minister who has newly taken charge of the Forestry Department, not to be guided by the policy which has in the past actuated Ministers controlling that department. I note, however, on these Estimates an amount of £72 for reafforestation; and, sincerely, I should have been glad if in the framing of the Estimates that amount had been eliminated. It makes us a laughing stock. It is a disgrace to have it said of us that we are embarking on a policy of reafforestation, and have placed on the Estimates an amount of £72 for that purpose.

The Minister for Works: That may be an old debit.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is not an old debit, because nothing has been done in the direction of reafforestation for the

past 14 years. I admit that an attempt in that direction was made by the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) when Minister for Lands, in the Warren district; but that attempt was on wrong lines. The hon. gentleman sent to the Warren district a group of men taken at random from the unemployed in Perth—men most of them totally unaccustomed to timber work, and hardly knowing which end of the axe to take hold of. As a result, the cost was too great to allow of effective work being accomplished. I know in advocating this policy I am up against the question of finance. The Government of the country are the only body that we can look to because private employers and individuals will not wait for the return of their money although that return is assured. We find that every Government in Western Australia as long as I can remember has favoured the policy of reafforestation. Every Government has made provision for a small amount and though they have declared themselves to be in favour of it they shun the question as they would shun the plague.

The Minister for Works: There is £500 down on the Estimates.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The same amount was apportioned last year, but it will require a great deal more than that. The amount is not for the purpose of reclaiming cut out areas but for planting pines. This Government have accomplished nothing and their dilatory methods are worthy of condemnation. For six years by voice and pen I have endeavoured to point out what I thought should be done towards putting Western Australia on the right track, but up to the present time, the representations have been without result.

The Minister for Mines: It is largely a matter of money.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I admit that, but we have no driving force behind us. We cheerfully count on the Treasury giving assistance to other industries, but here we are out to destroy rather than to build up, and we seem to have adopted the policy of "Come day go day, God send Sunday" in this respect, and

unless some steps are taken to improve matters, the timber industry in the South-West will be bound to decline. If we are going to watch that decline set in, in ten years time it will grow to such enormous dimensions that the country will be bound to suffer considerably. The policy of the Government should be in the direction of making it a permanent industry instead of a fleeting one.

The Minister for Mines : Does the hon. member think that it would be better if the exports declined ?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : When a tree comes to maturity, the best thing to do is to cut it for the market.

The Minister for Mines : But we are going further.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : Some of our rangers do not give the protection to the forests that they should do, and that is simply because there is no driving force from the head office. We may therefore be destroying timber which some day may be useful. I have seen the timber industry in its palmy days, and I have seen it when I had to leave it for lack of employment, but during recent years it has bounded into prominence, and large numbers of men have been engaged in it, and the timber has been sent to all parts of the globe. Our hardwoods have won popularity in various countries. Even since the outbreak of the war supplies have been sent away because creosoted pine from the Baltic failed to materialise. We have let out a million acres of country in concession while under sawmill permits we have granted half a million acres, and to-day the available areas are not very large in extent. We can go through the south-western areas and we can see a few years ahead of us. But what are a few years in the life of a nation ? We should make an effort to bring about an improvement. In the report of the Acting Inspector General of Forests, there are a number of plates which give us a good indication of the growth of the young trees. We should, however, pay more attention to the young timber and illustrate to the world that our forests are recuperative. On the question of permanent reserves I agree that the

subject is hedged around with immense difficulties. We have various areas to-day where sleeper cutters could be employed profitably clearing up the bush, and then we could declare these permanent reserves. I agree, too, that as soon as money is available, we should erect a building in which to house the forestry officers. To-day no one likes to speak of the department because it is subordinated to other departments. If anyone came to the State and displayed any anxiety to trade with us, where could we send them to show them our exhibits of timber ? We have nothing to show them of the potentialities of our forests. I applaud the efforts the department has made in the direction of pine growing, and I would urge the Government to plant pines along the reserves set apart at Albany. It would be a good sight for the people travelling through from Albany instead of seeing sand dunes to find forests of pine growing luxuriantly. Pine growing, too, is very profitable, but the Government happens to be the only authority that can afford to wait for a direct return. A private company could not wait for the pine trees to arrive at maturity. Another thing we want to do is to make provision against fire, for if a fire occurred in our pine forests the State would be a very heavy loser. In the place where I was born in South Australia they planted pine forests 28 years ago, and when I visited it two years ago, I saw the State mill cutting those trees which had reached maturity, and they reach maturity in this part of the world in a third of the time it takes to bring them to maturity on the Continent. Inside thirty years the Government of South Australia are deriving a profit of £200 an acre from their pine forests. The experience of that State should prompt the Government of Western Australia to further efforts. With regard to wattle, I applaud the efforts made by the Australian Natives' Association in trying to popularise the institution of arbour day, and to plant wattle trees. Australia to-day is the home of the wattle, but we are not taking steps to perpetuate it. The seed

of the wattle was exported to Natal some years ago, and that country has shown us what it is possible to do with it. Natal has received over £300,000 in revenue from wattle by the disposal of its commercial properties and it is in great demand on the Continent owing to its tannic properties. Not only has Natal made the profit which I just mentioned, but last year Australia imported from Natal no less than £36,000 worth of wattle bark. We send the seed away to a foreign country, the tree is grown there and then that country exports back to us the bark to the value of £36,000. Apart from the commercial value of wattle, there is no finer sight in the world than on a spring morning to see the landscape adorned with this national bloom shining out in all its golden glory. Another commodity which we might do something with is the red gum. The kauri gum of New Zealand has found a big market in America. I was informed the other day by a man who is engaged with another gentleman in making the experiment of sending a supply of red gum bark to New York, for the purpose of experimenting to secure varnish and other commodities from the bark. We have millions of acres of land in this country covered with red gum trees. If that gum were collected I am quite certain a market could be found for it. It is the duty of the Government and of the department to find that market. We have these gum trees all over Western Australia bleeding away their wealth, whilst the people are missing their opportunity. Coming to the question of royalty, I want to say that I cannot agree with the remarks of the member for Nelson (Mr. Willmott) on this subject. He says, get royalty. It does not matter how, it does not matter whether it is equitably got or not. My view of the question is that I believe we should get more money from our timber reservations; but we are locking the stable door after the horse has escaped if we start this policy of royalty now. Owing to the policy adopted by the paternal Government in the early days this State gave away millions of acres

of timber lands as concessions. One of these is within 20 miles of Perth and contains a quarter of a million acres for which the peppercorn rental of £50 a year is paid. Those concessionaires have the double advantage that they are established on trunk lines, and we cannot now impose new conditions on them. Therefore, to increase the royalty at the present time, would only be putting a further charge on the timber hewer and the sawmill permit holder.

Mr. Willmott: They would pass it on to the people on the other side of the world.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is all very well to say they would pass it on to the people on the other side of the world; but that interjection is obviously illogical. How can the small man, who has to go further afield for his timber, and has to establish himself on spur lines, with probably two terminal charges to pay by way of a sur-tax of 1s. per ton, hope to enter into successful competition with a powerful company established on a trunk line within easy distance of the seaboard.

Mr. Willmott: Open up your ports.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We have enough ports open to-day to cope with the timber trade, and it would be an easy matter to get another one if it were required.

Mr. Willmott: There were nine boats last week in Bunbury alone.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But how many have there been for the past three months? I want to drive this point home. We are unable to put on increased royalty charges for the reason that it would not be equitable. By doing so, you will be hitting the poor man and making it impossible for him to compete against the old established companies, which have all the advantages of a concession and of cheap transit. Consequently, I am not in favour of this late stage of penalising the small man in order to make up for what has been lost by the policy of the past, when we gave concessions away for the proverbial song. The suggestion now put forward to increase the royalty, means allowing the big companies to escape and

seeing how the little fellow would get on under it. Another point made by the member for Nelson in justification of an increase is that royalty is paid up to 12s. an acre by private firms. I admit that is correct; and it is one of the most howling disgraces I know of in Western Australia, that the forest rangers should have permitted it without protest.

Mr. Willmott: They have not. You must take that back. They have been protesting against it for years.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: You may have done, but others have not. The hon. member was for 15 years in charge of the Forest Department in a district in which one settler took up 2,000 acres of land under conditional purchase conditions at 10s. per acre, and has received up to 19s. 6d. per acre by way of royalty taken off that land.

Mr. Willmott: That is quite right.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: And the selector has the land left for the purposes for which he took it up. No one can justify such a policy as that. Whoever is to blame, that is the position to-day, that a man took up 2,000 acres for 10s. and received 19s. 6d. in royalty from a private firm.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Was that from over the whole of the 2,000 acres?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, practically all over it. This shows that the officers of the department have been allowed to barter away the people's rights. I now come to the question of the Government's activity in the timber industry, and I wish time would permit of my dealing with the question in all its ramifications. In establishing sawmills this Government have only followed along lines laid down by their predecessors.

Mr. Willmott: That is right.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Wilson Government established two sawmills long before the Labour Government took office.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: No, those mills were established by the Railway Department.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The member for Sussex (Hon. Frank Wilson) as Treasurer was asked by the Commissioner of Rail-

ways to authorise an expenditure of £56,000 for the second sawmill in my electorate after the first mill had proved a success. The hon. member (Mr. Connolly) will not deny that. What is the use of his saying the Liberal Government was not in favour of the policy of State sawmills, when they themselves established two of them?

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Not competitive mills.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Not competitive mills. Let me deal with that question. The railway mills established are of a certain capacity, one of 50 loads and the other of 20 loads. They turn out all the timber required for the purposes of the Railway Department, but they also turn out an enormous quantity of scantling. For that scantling a market has to be found. You cannot go on stacking scantling month after month and year after year. It must be sold; and when it is sold is it not entering into competitions with firms? That is the position to-day. The two sawmills run by the Railway Department are producing more timber than is required by the Department. What was to be done with the surplus?—Surely the Minister knew there would be a surplus.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Yes.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: All the time the mills were building up a huge surplus commodity and if they were not going to enter into competition with private firms, by selling the product, what did they intend to do with it? On the general principle of sawmills, these have apparently been found to be a good thing when established by a Liberal Government but a black crime when established by their successors. Let us get away from the question of the policy of establishing sawmills, and consider the great benefit which has followed on the establishment of mills in the Nelson district. The member for Nelson complained that the road board had been deprived of rates. The district opened up by the State sawmills in that district, right down to the Warren, was previously an absolutely unknown land, until the sawmills were established there. To-day it is a hive of industry.

If the road board was deprived of £700 or £750 in revenue, that has been more than compensated for by the industry created by the expenditure of the quarter of a million capital put into the sawmills, and by the development which is going on in the district, which, I believe, will inside 10 years be recognised as the Warrnambool of Western Australia. The only way to develop that country is to give more blocks to the wages men, and let them devote their spare time to developing the land; then by the time the timber has been cut out, the State will have a valuable asset in those improved blocks. At Dwellingup there are some 200 blocks thus set out, and it is pleasing to-day to see how the men work and improve this land in their spare time. Many of them have their orchards already established and these will become profitable later on.

Mr. Willmott: Then the manager of the Dwellingup mills is there to encourage settlement?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: On the question of encouraging the taking up of blocks, the managers at times are too conservative in their views. All the time I have been representing a timber district I have stood by the reports of the rangers. If the rangers say there is marketable timber there I say "Hands off" to the settlers; but in the gullies and along the banks of the streams, where the timber is not of much value, the settlers should be encouraged to take up small holdings. That karri country presents a big problem, and that is the way it will be solved. I was glad to hear the member for Nelson (Mr. Willmott) speak up for karri, because I am convinced that it is going to win its way, notwithstanding that there is a mountain of ignorant prejudice against it to-day. I regret to say that the Royal Commission on karri, composed largely of Liberals, did more than anything else to damage that timber in the eyes of the people. I have worked in karri mills in the days when karri was being sent to all parts of the world. It had a market then and will have it again. The karri was milled at Denmark, where 600 men were employed until the dis-

trict was cut out. I was there at the finish. They could go no further, and this other big area of country awaited development. We were told that private firms would go into it. Why did they not do so then, seeing that they are going there to-day?

Mr. Nairn: Is not the jarrah better timber?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is, for the purpose of railway sleepers, but the karri is superior in structural work. Karri has undergone a change. Chemists have been studying it, and in their laboratories they have worked out an antidote to white ants and dry rot to which the timber is sometimes liable, and we are able to-day to put karri out. A private mill last week secured an order for karri, and they are now cutting that timber, although closing up their jarrah operations. Seeing the enormous belt of karri timber we have I am sorry that certain short-sighted people did not have sufficient patriotism to give it a chance to lift along, instead of, in their hostile criticism of the Government, trying to damage that commodity and render it unsaleable. We are up against a problem at present, because the bottom has fallen out of the timber trade for the time being. Owing to the war, the markets have gone. India is to spend some ten millions on her railways, but it is not available now. Africa has big orders to place, but not just now; they will come later on. The market has gone for the time being, and the industry in Western Australia to-day is in the most parlous plight I have ever known it to reach, owing to the fact that the Government and private firms alike are compelled to cut stocks waiting for orders to come. Unless we get our commercial agent at work and so secure orders those karri mills may not have enough to keep them going. We are turning out enormous quantities to-day, and about July or August next the existing order will possibly be completed; because the Liberal Government, led by Mr. Cook, cancelled the contract and reinstated only about one half of it, with the result that the life of the mill has been cut short by about 15 months.

Notwithstanding all this, the State saw-mills have shown a profit. The balance sheet on the Table gives cheering figures, although I am prepared to admit that the bulk of the profit was won from the jarrah hewing trade, with the result that a favourable balance sheet has been presented. In regard to the procuring of markets, we have a commercial agent in London who, up to the present, despite his knowledge of the industry, has not accomplished anything. With regret I venture to say that, entering into competition as we are in establishing this big State industry, we are going to have a fearful uphill task in competition with other firms which are well established, and which have at the head of their affairs men who were born in sawdust, so to speak. They have the pulse of the timber trade, they have their international depots, and a good deal of pull in foreign markets. When Africa wanted 700,000 sleepers three months ago, tenders were invited, and a small firm in Western Australia, in combination with the Government, put in a price that was right and eventually secured an order for 300,000 sleepers. A couple of weeks later, when it was desired to place the balance, another private firm in Western Australia was allowed to revise their price, and so secure the order for the 400,000 sleepers. Our commercial agent is on the track looking for orders, but I am afraid he will hardly win out in competition against those men so long established.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): He has not the palm oil.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Well, if we are to win orders we will have to resort to the same tactics.

Mr. Nairn: The State is getting the benefit, even when a private firm secures the order.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: To an extent, yes; but we have established this concern and sunk in it some £212,000 of capital. Therefore the industry must find its way to the front. When private firms get the orders it means bringing money into the State, but it must be remembered that we have to provide interest and sinking fund on the capital I refer to.

If we are by unfair means deprived of orders, it leaves a very difficult problem for the Government to solve. Apart from the question of the karri mills, prior to Christmas the Government had 2,000 sleeper cutters cutting sleepers in the bush. To-day we have three-quarters of a million sleepers in stock. We hear many condemnations of the action of the Government in discharging the sleeper hewers. I have always been an advocate of the sleeper hewer, for undoubtedly he is a useful factor in production, and when the Government closed Crown lands against sleeper cutting owing to the unfair competition of private firms, I agreed with the step, provided that the Government could absorb those men. The Government did so, and but for the war everything would have gone well. To-day, however, the Government are condemned because those timber hewers are out of employment for the time being. During the last election I heard Liberal candidates in and around the City pointing to the callous treatment of the timber hewers by the Government. Those candidates knew nothing about the question, but that did not matter; they knew no more about it than a blackfellow knows of metaphysics.

Mr. Nairn: The Minister for Works said the men would have to go.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: He did not. He said the industry would grow less, but he did not say the men would have to go. In any case, if the Minister said it I do not agree with it. If a Minister were to say to-day that the timber hewer has to go I would retort that a stronger man than the Minister would be required to effect the change. I admit that the unfortunate utterances made by the late Minister for Works had the effect of inflaming the minds of a big number of timber hewers. The members for Nelson and Swan owe a little of the support they received at the recent elections to that fact. I want to say in justification of the Government policy to-day, that when private firms found themselves hard hit by the war they dismissed their hewers. Millars' discharged no fewer than 1,250 men, but they and other firms did all they could

to keep their mills going because to close down their mills would have meant so much capital lying idle.

Mr. Willmott: You must admit that Millars' have done very well.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not blaming them for having discharged hands though some people might say that they did it in order to embarrass the Government. I believe the paucity of orders was making itself felt, and that they thereupon decided that the hewer would have to stand down. As a result a big army of hewers came over to the Government employ, and for three and a-half months the State carried these men. When Christmas came the Government had three quarters of a million sleepers in stock and as an Indian order pending at that time was not completed owing to the financial conditions prevailing, the Government found it necessary to put off the single men. It was very unfortunate that a big army of men should have been put off with practically no notice, but for this the saw mills manager was to blame. Private firms, of course discharge their men at an hour's notice—

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Not always.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Generally they do; they no not give their hands a week's notice. The State Saw Mills Department on this occasion did not give them notice, and at present a great number of these men are out of employment. The Government have been doing their best to employ these men, and I, as a reasonable man and one claiming to have some knowledge of the timber industry, assert that the Government have up to the present done well in their efforts on behalf of these men. The Government, however, cannot be expected to continue their employment, although I hope they will provide as much work as possible for them, putting them on a modified scale and to some extent restricting their earnings. I realise to-day, as I did four months ago, that the timber industry is bound to be hit very hard by the war. Four months ago I expressed my opinion to this effect, and was dubbed a pessimist. A big journal in Perth devoted two leading articles to taking

me to task for what it described as my pessimistic prophecies, but the statements I then made have, much to my regret, turned out to be true.

Mr. Nairn: Why not let the hewers cut for private individuals now?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There are 2,000 cutters who at the present time are licensed by the department. They can go into the bush and cut on spec. or for private firms, provided the commodity is sold through the department. Members might ask why the department impose this stipulation. It is done to protect the Government and others who are engaged in the timber trade. The hon. member knows that in any business if there is one unscrupulous man who adopts conditions which are detrimental to his competitors, he is not regarded by them with favour. The private firm who are making the most noise regarding the Government's attitude in this respect have only one order for 100,000 sleepers; particulars of which can be seen in the *South Australian Government Gazette* for December. There is a little history attached to the securing of that order, which I could relate, but time will not permit of me doing so on this occasion. If we gave private firms the right to cut on every acre of Crown land in the State, I am quite safe in saying that with their present orders they could not employ 100 men out of the 1,000 who to-day are idle. There is a desire on the part of some firms to take advantage of the stress of existing circumstances and bring about a reduction in the price of sleepers. At Barrabup the hewers were actually offered 49s. and the offer was subsequently raised to 52s. for timber which had cost the Government 54s. 6d. per load. At Kirup the offer was advanced to a figure within 2s. 6d. a load of the cost, and at Manjimup the offer was 47s. 6d. though every load of timber there has cost the Government 57s. 6d. We should not give private firms an opportunity to reduce the price of sleepers. The worker will not be brought under the arbitration award because he has been getting £2 per load for cutting in poverty bush.

Mr. Nairn : Who paid him the more money, the Government or private firms ?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : The Government. When they took the hewers over, they continued to pay the same as private firms had been giving.

Mr. Nairn : What about the carters ?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : The carters, as well as every one else will suffer. They do not look after themselves to the same extent ; in the past they have been too fully occupied to look after their own interests. The point is that the Government took over a big army of cutters at the rates and conditions which previously prevailed under private firms and now it is suggested that we should permit a private firm who might adopt blacklegging methods come in and take the timber at a reduced price. It may be necessary to cut the rates if we wish to get the trade, but it is very questionable whether the Government should encourage such cutting by being the first to start it. One firm have secured an order, and it is impossible to see how they can possibly make any profit out of it, but the object appears to be to submit a cut price in the hope of obtaining other orders in future.

The Minister for Works : They have tried to cut the price to the men.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : Yes, and they are doing it. The Government have shown a profit on their operations. If the private firm can make a profit out of the work of the hewer, some members seem to think the State has no right to do likewise, even though they pay higher rates than are paid by private firms. If we give this firm—Lewis and Reid—the right to cut sleepers at reduced rates it will mean that 500 or 600 married men who have been retained in employment by the Government will also have to accept the reduced rates.

Mr. Nairn : No one is asking for that.

The Minister for Works : Not one member has referred to the timber trade showing a profit.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN : If we allowed this firm or any other to submit panic prices for supplies, simply because the times are so bad, the 500 or 600 men

now cutting sleepers for the Government must be reduced to the same rate. In fact the Government would not be justified in paying higher rates, and, in addition, the 700,000 sleepers already cut and on sidings would be unsaleable. Sleepers which cost 57s. 6d. cannot be sold for 52s. 6d. a load. To allow this firm to cut would have the effect also of knocking out other firms who have built up big stocks in expectation of getting a fair market rate for their timber. The Government should not encourage a wholesale reduction of rates in this manner for it would not be in the interests of the State as a whole. I, more than any other man in this House, am being condemned because of the fact that so many sleeper cutters are idle. I have addressed meetings of sleeper cutters ; I spoke to 1,000 men at last week end and I explained the whole position to them. I am prepared to do the same thing on any public platform to justify the action of the Government in the whole of their operations in the timber trade and through all its ramifications with the exception of the one thing already mentioned, that the Government should have given the men a little more notice at Christmas time before throwing them on their own resources. I am in a position to say that Cabinet are considering a proposition to enable these men to earn a living. If people can make a living during the next six months without securing any profit whatever, they will be fortunate indeed. Dependent as we are on primary production, relying as we do on the overseas carriage of our commodity to find its market, having very few secondary industries and those few never having had a chance to feel their feet since the inter-State barriers were broken down by Federation, we are being harder hit than most of the other States, but we are coming through it much better than they. On the outbreak of the war I forecasted what would happen, and I regret to say that my prophecy has proved to be fairly accurate. It has been stated that the timber hewer wastes timber and destroys the forest. There is no doubt that some hewers do so. Sufficient care is not

taken by the rangers to keep the green-horn out of the bush, and many hewers waste more timber than is passed for them by the inspectors. But summing up the position and taking it all in all, the timber hewer is not more to blame nowadays than the mill. The mills are adopting better methods now. Throughout the whole of the history of the industry in this State we have seen good timber going into the fire chutes. The mills have been extremely wasteful in this respect. They go to great expense in hauling logs long distances, and yet from 40 to 60 per cent, of the timber they get goes into the fire chutes. The hewers are no more wasteful than the mills in this respect, for they leave the timber in the bush. The hewer will always have an advocate in me. I believe they should be allowed something for this timber and that some satisfactory arrangement can be arrived at. We are now going in for better methods, and we hope to utilise profitably the by-products of the timber cut in our Western Australian mills. An instance of what can be done with these by-products is seen in the collapsible fruit case which has been turned out. Owing to the demand upon these fruit cases, the Department had to issue instructions that no more would be supplied for the month of January. We have charcoal plants erected at two of the mills for the burning of charcoal. We had, I believe, a representative in Western Australia of an English company who came here with a scheme for the utilisation of sawdust for the making of a paper pulp supply. I understand that this scheme is being viewed very favourably in London and I trust that something in that direction will be brought about. In my opinion we should have State timber yards in Perth. At the mills we have enormous stacks of scantling piling up. By establishing a State timber yard on, say, an acre of ground, it would only be necessary to put on one man, or at all events not more than two, to look after the business and obtain orders—for trade will have to be followed in order that it may be secured. The wages of these men would not be a very big item. By establishing

such timber yards, I believe that the workers would be afforded much greater facilities for erecting homes, and would be enabled to obtain their building material much cheaper than they are able to do to-day. We have the scantlings there in abundance, and I think the Government would do well to take into consideration the advisability of establishing such a timber yard in the metropolis.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: 'This timber ought to be supplied to the Workers' Homes Board.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We cannot blame the hewer for the waste of timber which goes on at the mills, for the mills are often very guilty in that regard, but improved methods are being adopted and the mills are now putting up board benches and blocking machines, and are utilising many of the products which formerly were wasted. With the introduction of the gas producer plant, the charcoal plants have a big future before them, and everything should be done to push them ahead. In my opinion, the timber worker and the orchardist for many years to come will be able to go on developing trade for this State side by side. In view of the great possibilities of the South-West it is the plain duty of the Government to make the best commercial use possible of our valuable hardwoods, and it is their duty to make this timber industry a permanent factor in the State's progress. At the present time, it is, after all, only a fleeting factor. I have already given my views with regard to the question of the imposition of a royalty as raised by the hon. member for Nelson (Mr. Willmott). That hon. member has made a comparison between teak, which carries one royalty, and jarrah, which carries a smaller amount. I say that no comparison can be made between teak, of which a comparatively small supply is available, and jarrah of which we have such a big amount that we are in a position to export it largely. The hon. member points out that by imposing a royalty on private companies, they will be thrown back ultimately upon their own resources until their supplies are exhausted. This, in my opinion,

is a damning admission to make. If we are going to encourage them to exhaust their available timber, it is a poor look out for the timber industry. The only way we can gain more revenue is by increasing railway freights which would apply to all firms. I am not going to be a party to penalising the small man whilst the big man is allowed to go scot free. The hon. member also advocated that, in order to prevent the waste of timber, we should have second and third-class sleepers, and that sentiment was applauded in some parts of the House. In my opinion it is a bad system. It has been tried in Victoria and has failed, at all events from the point of view of the timber worker. We have found that workers there who were producing timber were never allowed to get a fair deal, owing to the fact that the employer or the inspector, who wanted timber, knew that he could get first-class sleepers by only paying second or third-class prices. That is to say, sleepers that were really of first-class and were afterwards marketed as such, would be graded as second or third-class, and would be paid for as such to the detriment of the timber worker, and the system has been condemned wholesale. I hope that we shall never have this iniquitous system introduced into Western Australia. I regret that the hour is so late, because, on this important question I could go on speaking at very much greater length, but I will not do so. I believe at all events that I could go on for a full day on this question of timber supply. Even if I have spoken at some length, I sincerely trust that the House will be alive to the possibility of further opening up this industry and that the House will take this seriously into consideration.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We are always alive.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon. member was not very much alive when he sent down a gang of unemployed to ringbark the timber in the Warren district, and thereby destroyed the timber for the purpose of opening up the country. This is what the Liberal Government accomplished, and when the hon. member

who was then Minister for Lands authorised the destruction of our valuable forest country in order to attract settlement he was doing a criminal act. There are many men who are doing stretches in the Fremantle goal to-day for less serious offences than this. The Forest League, which has been established in Western Australia, has certain defined objects and is striving manfully to carry these out.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Like the hon. member, it is all gas.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is very rarely indeed that I rise to address this House. I claim to be one of the silent men in the House, but if I could not address it with better effect than the hon. member, I would not take my stand at all.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Then sit down.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I will sit down when it pleases me to do so. If I were to go on in the maudlin way and make the grunts of insanity that the hon. member does, dealing with subject after subject of which I had no knowledge and trying to impress other people that I knew something about which I really knew nothing, I would leave this Chamber. Indeed, the hon. member may leave it before he desires to do so. The hon. member should be the last person, in view of his attitude while he was a member of the Liberal Government in dealing with the timber industry, to talk like this. Apart from that altogether, he should be the last man to reprimand anyone for taking up a little time of the House in dealing with such an important subject upon the only opportunity in the session that presents itself. I am deeply interested in the timber industry. Unlike the hon. member, who claims to have a knowledge of so many subjects, but has so little, I do possess some knowledge of this industry, and in speaking as I have done to-night I feel that I am doing my duty towards my constituents, towards the industry and towards myself—by drawing public attention to the requirements of this important branch of the resources of the State. I trust that the remarks made by the hon. member for Northam will not be taken in too serious a manner.

To revert to the Forest League, which has not long been in existence, I would like to remark that forestry carries no votes, and that no votes are to be gained by political parties by encouraging this organisation. Forest leagues have been started throughout Australia and are gaining a firm footing. On Monday night next a big meeting will be held in connection with the League. His Excellency the Governor will be present, and I believe that Sir John Forrest will be the star speaker. I am a member of the executive of the Forest League. If the discussion is only upon the question of growing olives, it will do good. On behalf of the League, I extend a hearty invitation to every hon. member, who takes an interest in this industry, to be present. They may regard it as a dry subject but it is none the less a serious subject so far as the future possibilities of Western Australia are concerned. I trust they will make an attempt to be present and will give the movement their hearty support. I wish, also, that they would assist me and others in urging upon the Government to make provision ere it is too late.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: Where will this meeting be held?

Mr. O'LOCHLEN: The meeting will be advertised and a hall has been secured, but I do not know for the moment exactly where it will be held. The secretary of that organisation is a keenly alive and enthusiastic man. He has travelled the world over, and is a man of wide experience. I believe he is doing a very great deal at his own expense in pushing the necessary propaganda of the league, and in getting people interested and awakening a public conscience in this question. Should the movement prove successful generations yet unborn will appreciate the efforts of these few enthusiasts. The first thing we ought to do is to equip a department and train the youth of the State in forest service, in order to make the industry a permanent one. It is the duty of the Government to stand by an industry which has been a bulwark of the South-West and the metropolissince the dark days of Western

Australia, and which has supported the bulk of the people in the South-West. It has also been a powerful aid to trade and commerce in the metropolis. How can this be brought about? It can be brought about by carrying into effect the objects of the Forest League. If we established such a department, as I have suggested, we could surely get a good and capable officer to administer it. The hon. member for Nelson says, "Do not go abroad for an officer." I admit that if we did, such an officer might be like a fish out of water in dealing with our timber. We had an opportunity when the hon. member for Northam was Minister for Lands, of securing the services of a capable officer. I am referring to a young man who offered his services as headmaster of the Technical School. Some dispute arose over the question of salary and the appointment fell through. I am referring to Mr. Norman Jolley of South Australia. This gentleman has had a very wide experience. He has studied on the Continent and has been through the forests of Germany and America. He subsequently returned to his own country. An appointment was offered to him here, but was afterwards cancelled owing to the trouble I have just briefly referred to. He joined the forestry service of South Australia, whereupon the Queensland authorities picked him up, and he is to-day Conservator of Forests in the northern State. Let us, at any rate, make an attempt to do our duty by this industry. I believe the people of Western Australia would not object to any expense, or any effort, put forth in that behalf. It is the duty, I say, of the Government, to take note of the aims of the Forest League and of the advocacy of the members of that organisation. The League has been in existence for only a short period, but it has made itself felt, thanks to the wide knowledge of its secretary, and the active interest he has taken and is taking in gathering information from all countries, thanks to his energy in illustrating by newspaper articles as well as by word of mouth what has been done in other countries and in indicating what

can be done here in Western Australia. I wish that I could have had more time to deal with the subject. I wish that, partly because I realise that I now have a competitor here, so far as the timber business is concerned. I fully realise that a man who has spent 20 years in the forestry service of Western Australia knows something about timber; and I own to some disappointment at the fact that the member for Nelson (Mr. Willmott) did not deal more extensively with the woods and forests question. I waited with open ears for the knowledge that I anticipated would fall from his lips. I waited in the confident expectation that the hon. member, with his long experience of Western Australian forestry, would be able to suggest better methods and more effective reforms than have been in vogue or suggested up to date. However, the hon. member may come to light later.

Mr. Willmott: Wait till the vote comes on.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I shall be pleased to be in the Chamber when the hon. member speaks, and to listen with the closest attention for all that I can possibly pick up. In conclusion, I wish to say that as I rarely trouble the House, I felt impelled to seize this opportunity of dealing with the industry which forms the livelihood of the people who sent me here—who have sent me here on several occasions. Those people approve of the policy I advocate, and they look to the Government to make an effort in the near future. I rejoice that the Forestry Department has been transferred, that it has been placed beyond the reach of the shackles that obstructed its progress on every occasion when land settlement was put against forest culture. I trust the Government will do their best to assist the Forest League to carry out its objects. The attainment of those objects will mean the building up of a permanent timber industry in Western Australia. There are, I admit, many difficulties in the way—most of them financial—but the grit and determination of a progressive people will carry us over the greatest mountain of difficulty.

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Consequently, I trust the Government, and especially the Minister in charge of the Forestry Vote, will do all that is possible towards making provision for the requirements of the people of Western Australia in this direction. Future generations will appreciate such efforts, and will apportion praise wherever praise is due. The Western Australian people of the future will look back with pride to the Minister who accomplishes this work, no matter to what political creed that Minister may own allegiance, no matter what his practical knowledge of the industry may or may not be. The gratitude of generations will be the reward of the man who lays the foundations of a permanent and prosperous timber industry in Western Australia.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.26 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 9th February, 1915.

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