

Committee resumed.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that the amendment made by the Legislative Council be made subject to the modification moved by the Attorney General.

Question put and passed.

No. 6. Clause 11.—In the first proviso, after the words "discharged soldier," in line two, insert "or in case of a deceased soldier the surviving relative that in the board's opinion is most deserving of consideration":

The PREMIER: I do not think it is necessary to put in these words. The soldier should have the right to say in his will to whom the land should be left. I move—

That the amendment be not made.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Bill provides at present that if a soldier gets a block of land and wishes to transfer it, he can transfer it to whom he likes; but that if the person to whom he transfers is not also a returned soldier, the transferee has to pay the full amount of the rent. Suppose a married soldier had land, and wanted to leave it to his wife, in the case of his death?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then the wife is a dependant.

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

No. 7. Clause 17—Add at the end of the clause the following: "but before any such action be taken by the trustees, the board must be consulted and its approval obtained, any difference of opinion between the two bodies to be referred to the Minister, whose decision shall be final":

The PREMIER: I agree with that amendment, and I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

No. 8. Clause 27—After the words "Governor may" strike out "with the sanction of the Government":

The PREMIER: The words struck out are unnecessary. The Governor has not power to do anything whatever without the consent of his Ministers. I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

No. 9. Clause 30, Subclause (1), line 1—Strike out "as early as possible," and insert "Within two months"; and after the word "prepared," line 2, insert "and printed":

The PREMIER: I am agreeable to this amendment. I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [1.57]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until 2.30 p.m. (Friday).

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 1.50 a.m. (Friday).

Legislative Council,

Friday, 20th December, 1918.

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

[For "Papers Presented" see "Minutes of Proceedings."]

QUESTION—VERMIN PROOF FENCING.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister: Is there any provision in the existing Vermin Act to compel an owner to satisfactorily fence his land with rabbit-proof fencing to the satisfaction of an inspector and whether such owner would be free from rates as is provided for in the Bill just passed?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER (Honorary Minister) replied: Under the Vermin Boards Act, 1909, all holdings are rateable. There is provision to exempt from rates any holdings that are considered enclosed with a vermin-proof fence.

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT.

Report adopted and a Message accordingly forwarded to the Assembly requesting it to make the amendments, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a Message from the Assembly.

BILL—EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Report stage—Bill discharged.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.5]: I feel in a difficult position in regard to this Bill. The Government promised to introduce a Bill on certain lines and did so. It is evident to me that to persevere with a Bill on these lines would mean that several hours would be occupied in debating it, and that all possibility of getting it through this House and another place before the end of the session would be lost. It has been suggested that the Bill should be amended on other lines, the fixing of the hours by Parliament. That matter has been considered by the Government. The Government previously rejected a proposal that they should submit a Bill fixing the hours by Act of Parliament and they are still of that opinion. Therefore I am not in the position to support an amendment to fix the hours. I admit I am unable to carry out the promise I made and I am prepared to admit also that I have failed in the promise which I gave. I accept the responsibility and move—

That the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East) [3.8]: I do not know what my position is in connection with this matter. This is a Bill in which I am particularly interested. I do not know whether the Colonial Secretary will object to an amendment from me which might

possibly meet with the approval of the House. This is undoubtedly a matter of urgency. In this regard I outlined the amendment when the Bill was in Committee and I have since taken the opportunity of finding out the wishes of the parties concerned, namely, the butchering trade of the metropolitan area, and they have agreed to a proposal similar to that which I outlined, and from the remarks which fell from several hon. members, I understand that the amendment I moved found some favour, whereas they are not prepared to allow the Arbitration Court as they claim to usurp the powers of Parliament. The amendment I proposed was a definite one and I would like to know my position. Is it possible for me after such a motion as that which has been moved by the Colonial Secretary to move for the recommitment of the Bill for the purpose of considering Clause 6?

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member would be in order in so doing.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I move an amendment—

That the Bill be recommitted for further considering Clause 6 and for the purpose of adding a new clause.

The idea of fixing the hours as suggested here is already in vogue in the other States. I hope the House will agree to the recommitment.

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

Ayes	11
Noes	13
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Majority against	2
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AYES.

Hon. H. Carson	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornall	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. A. Greig	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. E. Ross
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. W. Kingsmill	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I do not consider I have had fair treatment from the leader of the House on this question. Yesterday he assured me that the Bill would be placed early on the Notice Paper and would be considered. I did not know until the Minister rose to his feet that the Bill was to be discharged from the Notice Paper. I realise that I am in a minority in this, but I think some explanation is due to me. No adequate reason has been given. The position is most unsatisfactory, and whatever happens, the Government will have to take full responsibility for it. There was plenty of opportunity to introduce the Bill much

earlier, so that hon. members would not have had their present reasonable excuse for saying that there is no time in which to consider the Bill. There again the responsibility is with the Government. When people are anxious to abide by the law the Government will not assist them to do so. Those who voted against my amendment did so, not because they were not prepared to deal with the Bill, but, I take it, as a protest against the unfair manner in which the Government have treated this Chamber. I agree that debatable questions such as this should be thoroughly discussed. The Government have broken faith with the parties concerned in the Bill, by bringing it down at a time when it cannot possibly be dealt with. The Bill has been prepared for a long time past, and could have been dealt with at a much earlier date. I presume after we have hastily slumped the business of the country this evening we shall go into recess probably until about August next, and the peculiarly constituted Government will run this country during a period of reconstruction when many problems will need attention. That is their policy, so it is no use complaining. They know however that it will not be possible to submit this matter again for another 12 months. They are deliberately ignoring the position after all the facts have been placed before them and I take this opportunity of repeating that whatever does occur, the responsibility for it will be entirely on the shoulders of the Government.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.32]: I support the motion to discharge the Bill from the Notice Paper. I am not called upon to defend the leader of the House, and probably he would not thank me if I did. He is very well able to look after himself. I am not going to accuse the leader of the House of breaking faith with me or anyone else.

Hon. H. Millington: I do.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It can only be a misunderstanding. I have sat here under two leaders, one representing one party and one representing another, and I have never heard a suggestion that there has been a breach of faith, though there have been misunderstandings. I will leave it at that. I urge that this Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper. The hon. member's protest against the manner in which business has been conducted by the Government is true so far as it goes, but it does not cover the whole ground. If there has been any unfair treatment of opponents in this matter, it was seen the other night when the unusual course was followed of calling for a division without further discussion. There are half a dozen questions of ten times more importance than this, which we have not even on the Notice Paper, and we are asked that this Bill should not be discharged and that the whole business of the House should be hung up. For what purpose? For endorsing an agreement between employers and employees, which agreement must always be viewed with suspicion by the public. When the hon. member comes forward as a champion

of the master butchers it is time for the general public to be suspicious, and particularly those members who represent the public in the narrow and restricted area within which this dispute comes. Next session when the matter is brought forward we shall have an opportunity of going fully into it.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [3.36]: Some explanation other than that given by the Colonial Secretary is due to the House. I want to see the House get fair treatment, and if anything bears out the arguments adduced by Mr. Duffell and Mr. Allen when this Bill was before the House, it is the action taken by the Colonial Secretary this afternoon. I am glad the House did not fall into the error of throwing out the Bill at that particular time. There is every justification for believing that this Bill was brought forward by the Government to evade their responsibilities and to place those responsibilities on this Chamber. I hope there is not going to be any industrial trouble arising out of the Government failing to get the Bill through.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [3.38]: I think Mr. Millington is rather beating the air, so to speak, on this matter. He said he was not unduly critical of the Government. I am sure he will acquit me of any habit of being unduly laudatory of the Government, but on this occasion I do not see anything left but to support the motion of the leader of the House, and irrespective of the merits of the Bill, and quite irrespective of the fact that the Bill may contain one clause which is good and may be surrounded by others which are bad, if the hon. member for a moment dismisses from his mind any of those feelings engendered by the fact that this Bill deals with an industrial subject, and looking at it from the chance of it going through, he will agree with me that there is no chance of it passing another place even if it did pass this House. It would be an extremely foolish thing on the part of this House to waste time deliberately—and we know that a good deal of time would be taken up in discussing this Bill if it remained on the Notice Paper—and knowing as we do that it has no chance of getting through another place, I ask hon. members to look at the matter reasonably and without heat. The hon. gentleman, however he may be treated by the Colonial Secretary, certainly has been well treated by the House because he delivered a couple of speeches on this matter which he was not entitled to do. I congratulate, not him, but the House on having had the pleasure of listening to him. We must remember in the first place that we have not much time to consider this matter.

Hon. J. Duffell: We had all the time there was.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: We have not very much time to deal with the measure. Another place which needs more time has less, and when we remember, too, that the Colonial Secretary has told us that he is going to bring in a consolidating and amending Bill which will be a fearsome article if it is discussed at the same length as has been done in connection with this measure, we

are justified in supporting the leader of the House in the motion which he has made. At all events I give him my hearty support irrespective of the merits of the measure, purely as relating to the despatch of business and taking, as I hope, a reasonable view of this matter. I think the House is justified in supporting the Colonial Secretary in moving that the Order of the Day be discharged.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [3.57]: I must exonerate the leader of the House for adopting the attitude of moving to discharge this Bill from the Notice Paper, but that action is not in keeping with the bull-dog tenacity the hon. gentleman used to display in years gone by. This attitude on the part of the Government on industrial legislation, reminds me of a song called "To-morrow," which was sung in a pantomime which I heard some years ago. When the comedian who sang the song was asked to give an encore he always replied, "To-morrow." That is the policy of the Government. When they are asked to do anything in connection with industrial legislation, their reply is "To-morrow." Mr. Sanderson's reply is "Next session." I do not agree with Mr. Kingsmill when he says we are justified in voting for the discharge of this Bill on the reasoning that another place will throw it out.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: I did not say they would throw it out.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Anyhow, that is no concern of ours. I am not concerned now about the late hour at which the Bill was introduced to this Chamber. The Bill was introduced and the Colonial Secretary moved the second reading. Strenuous protests were made against its introduction at its second reading. A six months' amendment was defeated. The measure went into Committee. An amendment was moved to postpone the commencement of its operation till 1925. That was defeated. An unsuccessful attempt was made to move the Chairman out of the Chair. By three votes of hon. members of this House the Council endorsed the action of the Government in bringing down the Bill. The measure was considered clause by clause in Committee, and certain amendments were made and the Bill was passed through all its stages. Then it was recommitted, and we had a two hours' debate on Clause 6, when, everybody being full up, I had the temerity to move that the Committee do now divide, thus upsetting Mr. Saunders somewhat. True, the 20 members who voted with me in favour of the Committee dividing are equally responsible with me. Then a motion was moved that Clause 6 be struck out, and 14 members of this House, an absolute majority, voted for the retention of the clause.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Fourteen members do not represent an absolute majority.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The Bill was reported to the House, and we are now considering the report stage, to be followed by the carrying of the third reading and the transmission of the measure to the Assembly. If the Assembly throws the measure out that will be the Assembly's funeral, and not ours.

Now, after all this discussion, some members urge that the Bill be discharged from the Notice Paper. The explanation must be, then, that the Government do not believe in their own Bill but have introduced it only by way of camouflage, or that the Government are too tired and want the session to close. The Government's attitude on this measure is unparalleled in my experience here. I have known Bills discharged from the Notice Paper; but I have never known a Bill which had reached the report stage to be discharged from the Notice Paper, especially a Bill which had been strenuously debated like this one has been. At present I do not happen to be associated with the party to which Mr. Millington belongs; but I say advisedly, if there is one section of the community who are overdue for legislative consideration, and are worthy of it, it is the industrial section. After a delay of five years, they are being put off again until "to-morrow." It has been assumed here that probably industrial trouble will result. During my long association with the Labour party, no one ever accused me of fomenting or advocating strikes. But that long association led me to the conclusion that the tiredness of public men getting out of step with the industrial section of the community has been the cause of industrial trouble and strikes. Can any self-respecting industrial union have any faith in the Government after this action? No. In season and out of season I have preached that the Australian community is the last word in democracy, equality of citizenship, and election of Parliaments. I have always advised Constitutional methods. But when the Constitutional machine becomes disrupted, being either too lazy to work or too tired to turn, then those looking to that machine for aid must adopt other methods. Right through the industrial history of this State and of this Commonwealth one of the contributing factors to L.W.W.-ism has been the laziness of our State and Federal legislators, and their disinclination to frame better industrial legislation until it is years and years overdue. Is it to be wondered at that the one big union movement—in which I personally can see no good—is so widespread? Hon. members without an inside knowledge of industrial affairs will deride the methods and tactics of Australian industrialists, saying that they are useless and destructive, and of no benefit to the State. But they lose sight of the salient factor: they themselves are largely responsible for sowing the seeds of mistrust and unrest. If this is a criterion of what the present Government are going to do in the months to come—they have not many more months to go—of the direction in which the Government are moving to try and evolve order out of the chaos now existing, not only on the side of the employees, but also on that of the employers, to try and bring about community of interest, the outlook for the future is very bad indeed, and the sooner the country changes its Government for one that will give con-

sideration to the most vital affairs of this State, namely the relationship between employers and employees, the better it will be for the continuity of progress in this State. I conclude, as I opened, by sympathising with the leader of the House in the action he has adopted here to-day, which I repeat, is not in keeping with any of his fighting characteristics—characteristics he has exhibited during his long career in this House and in the public life of Western Australia.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [3.55]: I only desire to say one word. I must admit that this little Bill, which seemed to me, from the small part I took in the discussion, not a very harmful one, now puts me in mind of a picture I once saw in the "Western Mail." There was a wonderful Bill and underneath ran the legend, "They did not know it was loaded." Now this little Bill I did not know to be of so much importance. I left it to be considered by those who understand the subject. I have risen not merely to explain my vote. My inclination when the measure first came forward was not to vote on it at all. However, that is an attitude which I do not like to take up. I generally have strong opinions one way or the other. In this case, had I had the opportunity of exercising my own opinion I should have voted with my friends on the cross benches. But when we are told by the leader of the House that the Government who introduced the Bill wish to withdraw it, I think it would be extraordinary to tell the Government that they must go on with the Bill. What sort of Bill would result if the Government handled it unwillingly? It is only because the Government who introduced the Bill desire to withdraw it that I now support the motion.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East) [3.57]: It has been urged as a reason why this Bill should be withdrawn that the public have had no opportunity of expressing an opinion upon it. But the public have had almost a week, and not one newspaper circulating in the metropolitan area has protested against the Bill, nor has any member of the public seen fit to voice a protest against it through the columns of the Press. So much for Mr. Sanderson's argument. He is desirous that the Bill should be dropped. That is consistent with the position which he took up on the second reading. As soon as the Bill got into Committee he tried to kill it. He is endeavouring to kill it now; and so we must give him credit at least for consistency. The first argument used by Mr. Sanderson was that the public had not been consulted, nor given any opportunity of entering a protest against the passage of the Bill.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I claim that the public have had ample opportunity during the past five days. There has been no protest in the Press against the passage of the Bill. That leads me to think the public are not opposed to the enacting of this measure. We know there are at least two sections, both parties to an industrial agreement, very anxious to

see the measure enacted. Not only have they interviewed Mr. Millington on the question, but they have also, by deputation, brought the matter under the notice of the leader of this House, with such effect that he has seen fit, though knowing it is the policy of the Government to introduce an early closing consolidating measure next session, nevertheless to introduce this Bill. The Government are desirous of going into recess as early as possible. We know that they have not had a happy session nor could it be expected that they would have a happy session. If it were not for the serious position of this industrial matter, I would be pleased at the action the Government have taken in connection with the Bill because it shows what industrialism can expect from the present Government. Mr. Sanderson stated that this was an agreement which would have to be viewed with suspicion. This agreement is in accord with the provisions of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. A. Sanderson: That makes it more suspicious.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member is absolutely opposed to the settlement of disputes by arbitration.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I am glad to hear the hon. member's endorsement of that remark. The only weapon now left in the hands of the unionists according to the hon. member is direct action. My friend is in favour of that.

Hon. A. Sanderson: I said the Arbitration Court, not arbitration.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The hon. member has attempted to qualify his remarks. He certainly must have had in his mind the present arbitration laws. If we are not to counsel the workers to take advantage of the arbitration laws of the State we throw them back on the old weapon, direct action. That is not my policy. We find that although the agreement in this case was registered under the Arbitration Act, the court has no power to give effect to the agreement. Some of the parties to this agreement have withdrawn for the purpose of taking a mean advantage of the master butchers who remained loyal to the agreement. Hon. members who voted for the throwing out of the Bill are quite prepared to give their support to that section of the Employers' Association who desire to steal the business of those who remained loyal and whose desire is to close their premises in accordance with the agreement. I fully expected that we would be dealing with this Bill soon after the tea adjournment last evening. There has been a breach of faith or a misunderstanding. I am prepared to believe it has been a misunderstanding. However, Mr. Millington has been misled and it is due that an explanation should be made to him by the Colonial Secretary. I fail to see the logic of the remark that we have no time to deal with the Bill. We have all next year; there is no need to hurry into recess. I am quite prepared to come along here and render what assistance I can give. Why are the Government so anxious to close Parliament? If there is need for such

legislation as this why should we hurry away? There is only one reason and that reason exists within the ranks of the present Government or the party supporting the Government. There is dissatisfaction there and it proves that the present team are the weakest that has ever sat in the Parliament of Western Australia. If the House desires to retain the respect of the people, they will vote against the motion to discharge the Bill from the Notice Paper.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (North) [4.13]: I regret the action of the Government in proposing that we should drop the Bill. The House has already dealt with the measure and I think it should have gone on to another place so that they might decide whether it should go through or not. There is one clause that I was opposed to and I take strong exception to the motion moved that we drop the Bill. There is no need to go into recess to-day. We have been here since August and we have had many adjournments for the convenience of some party or other, and here in the last week of the session measures are thrown overboard in this fashion. It is time we made a protest against this manner of conducting the business of the country. Employer and employee are agreed on this question and we should have an opportunity of putting the measure through. I entirely disagree with Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Kingsmill, who twitted Mr. Cornell about dividing the House. Six hours were devoted to the discussion of this measure and it was just about time that a division was taken. Members are now asked to do in a couple of days what it should take a couple of months to carry out.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch)—East—in reply [4.14]: I feel that a great deal of the criticism that has been levelled, not against the Government, but against myself in this matter, is entirely justified. I have never felt more personally embarrassed in regard to any action I have taken before, but I do feel it in regard to this Bill. I cannot accept the statement of Mr. Cornell that the blame is the Government's and not mine. I take the blame on my own shoulders. So far as my conversation with Mr. Millington is concerned, there was no intention to mislead him in the matter. I did not at any time give him to understand that I could support the amendment he proposed to move, but I did assure him that the Bill would find a place on the top of the Notice Paper. The Government refused to take the responsibility of introducing a Bill that would settle this dispute, but they did agree to introduce a Bill which would enable the Arbitration Court to settle the dispute. That is what the Bill provided. It is idle to say the Bill had passed all stages and that we had only to adopt the report and send the Bill to the Assembly. Had that been the position I would have adopted that course. The position was that there was a motion to recommit, and I could not assure my colleagues that the Bill could be got through in that form. Mr. Millington realised that, and his suggestion was that this Clause 6, which would have been de-

bated for hours, should be dropped, and another clause inserted which, instead of having the effect of allowing the Arbitration Court to settle the dispute, would have had the effect of allowing Parliament to settle the dispute. When my colleagues in the Government declined to support a Bill which would have the effect of allowing Parliament to settle the dispute, they were merely confirming their original decision, and so are in no way to blame. Had they decided otherwise, when I came to the House this afternoon I should have been prepared to support Mr. Millington's proposed amendment. That is the position. The Government resolved on a certain course, it became obvious that the course could not be followed, Mr. Millington suggested an alternative course, the Government could not agree with that, and therefore the only available course was to abandon the measure. As to the late hour at which the Bill was introduced, not many members are familiar with the difficulties there are in having Bills drafted, in view of the enormous amount of work placed on the shoulders of the Parliamentary Draftsman at a time like this. It is idle to say that because the matter was brought under my notice two or three months ago, I should have had a Bill prepared straight away. There were many difficulties in the way, many inquiries to be made, and a good deal of unavoidable delay. The suggestion that the Government are anxious to get into recess is one that cannot be denied. I have been a member of the Government for two and a half years, and we have been sitting in Parliament practically the whole of that time.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Whose fault is that?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It is just habit.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Personally I am very anxious to get into recess. If, as one hon. member suggested, this House was prepared to go on indefinitely passing legislation, I should be very glad to see the House go on; but it would have to be under other leadership, because when we sit here the long periods we do it is impossible for me as Minister to carry out my administrative work at the same time.

Question (that the Bill be discharged) put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	16
Noes	10
Majority for	..	6	

AYES

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. W. Kingsmill	Hon. E. Rose

(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. H. Carson	Hon. J. W. Kirwan
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. W. Hickey

(Teller).

Question thus passed; the Bill discharged.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; Hon. C. F. Baxter (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Continuation of principal Act:

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I want to see the Industries Assistance Board wound up at an early date, unless the Government adopt a different attitude towards farmers, and encourage them to keep sheep instead of growing wheat.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The present administration of the Act is entirely unsatisfactory and is becoming a public scandal. The scheme of assistance is being used as a political machine. This idea of paying the men 9s. a day when we do not know whether they want it or not, is against the best interests of the State. It was a wrong policy to adopt, and it was brought in because political pressure was brought to bear. This wages system has all the evils of private enterprise and all the evils of socialism. This system enables those who are inclined to give the Government a fair deal—and there are many of them—to adopt fraudulent practices, in plain words, to rob the Government, and the clause in the Bill will perpetuate the system. There is no reason whatever for handing out this sustenance unless it is absolutely proved that a man is in urgent need of it, and if the clause is passed the system will continue. If the present system continues, it will be a calamity instead of as was intended, something to the advantage of the State. It is well to remind the present easy-going Government now and again that in their administration all is not well, and that citizens do not admire the Government's administration as much as Ministers admire it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Payments by the Industries Assistance Board now are not uniform. Married men with families receive 9s., married men without family 7s., and single men 5s. per day. The amounts are paid against inspectors' actual check of the work done. Unless the work has been done, no payment is made. I know of no case in which an inspector's report has been turned down. Certainly, there are not now any of those flagrant cases to which Mr. Millington alluded. To Mr. Miles's objection I reply that the Government must either carry on the wheat growers or else lose tens of thousands of pounds. As regards sheep, the Government are supplying a limited number through

the Industries Assistance Board and the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: Do the Government intend to continue the system for all time?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: No. This extension is only for 1920.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: But is it required till then? The Government ought to have provided £100,000 for the purpose of supplying sheep to the settlers, instead of continuing to subsidise, through the Industries Assistance Board, wheat growing which is in some cases, I believe, unprofitable.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The 1917 Act carries the measure on for 12 months, but this clause asks us to authorise an extension to 1920. I may be wrong, since without carefully looking up the corresponding sections in all the previous Acts, anyone might be de-fied to say what extension this clause really proposes to grant. I am anxious, and I dare-say other people are anxious, that this thing should stop as soon as possible; but we must be reasonable and sensible in our action. I suggest that we let the Government go on to a certain point, and that then we provide ourselves with an opportunity of saying, not that we want to go on for another year, but that we must have some control over this industries assistance business.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The position is that the Act passed in 1917—and that was an amendment Act—provided that no commodity should be supplied, or money advanced, after the 31st March, 1918, except under the provisions of Section 14 of the Act. In 1918 a continuation Act was passed which had the effect of continuing the operation till March, 1919. At that period Parliament will not be in session, and therefore by this Bill we seek to extend the Act till March, 1920.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Do not let the Government take this on until March, 1920. Let us insist that they bring down a measure to continue the operations of the board no longer than September, 1919. We should then have some check over the proceedings of the board. As a special concession I would make it the 31st October. I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Clause 2 the words “the figures 1920” be struck out and “the 31st October, 1919, and no longer” be inserted in lieu.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amendment now takes a different form. It will have the effect of completely terminating this Act in October, 1919. The objection to that is that when we reach October the Government will have advanced money for fertilisers for putting in the crop, and then they will be prohibited from advancing money still necessary to take off the crop. Therefore we would not be able to realise on it. The assistance afforded under this Act must be for a period which will cover the reaping of the harvest.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: That seems a reasonable objection and I am certainly not anxious to do anything that will cause unnecessary trouble. This should be one of the first

measures we should deal with in July or August of next year. Let us review and discuss the situation calmly and fairly during the whole of next August and then carry the Bill on for another year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Government recognise that the Industries Assistance Act was brought in to meet an emergency, and no one is more anxious than the Government to see it off the Statute-book. The Government are taking every step they can with safety to the assets of the State and without undue hardship to the settlers to gradually remove that statute. We cannot with safety to the assets of the State cut the thing off now. We are asking for power to carry it over another harvest. If by next harvest the Government desire to carry it for still another harvest, then it will be their duty to approach Parliament at an early date and put up a comprehensive case.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The House should decide how long the board should continue. I would suggest the 31st March, 1920, as the date on which the Act should cease to operate. It is probably 18 months since I stated to this House that we were producing wheat at a cost of 4s. 6d. a bushel and receiving 4s. for it and that the Industries Assistance Board was finding the 6d. How far was I out in that statement? At the time the Government rushed into this, the Americans, seeing trouble ahead, pulled out of the agricultural machinery business. One of them told me that the Government would never get out of the industries assistance business under a loss of a million of money. It is now seen that he was about right. The Committee will be wise in limiting the existence of the board.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I take it Mr. Sanderson's amendment is aimed at giving us a proper opportunity of discussing this question next session; the intention of the mover of the amendment is that the Continuation Bill of next year must be brought forward early next session. I agree that this should be done. Apparently the position and the administration of this board require to be very fully considered. But the amendment, if carried in its present form, will lead to confusion. It is necessary that “thirty-first day of March” be struck out of the Act of 1917 and that an amendment be made in the original Act. I recommend the hon. member to embody that in his amendment.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: On further consideration I see it will be necessary to materially alter the amendment. It may take some little time, for it is necessary to look up the parent Act and the Act of last year also. In the meantime I will withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I move—

That the consideration of Clause 2 be postponed until after the consideration of the proposed new clause.

This will give the hon. member a chance of putting his amendment in order.

Motion put and passed.

New clause:

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I move—

That the following be added to stand as Clause 2:—Section 8 of the Industries Assistance Act Amendment Act, 1917, is hereby amended by adding at the end of paragraph (c) the following words: "or otherwise belonging to the applicant, except so far as such chattels (not being supplied under this Act) are the subject of a bill of sale or lien registered prior to any such advances being made."

On the second reading I stated why I thought this provision was necessary. I understand the Colonial Secretary is in favour of it, inasmuch as it is a suggestion contained in the report of the Industries Assistance Board, the object being to safeguard the interests of the public. On the second reading I quoted the report of the Industries Assistance Board dealing with this subject. According to that report the Government agreed to reintroduce amending legislation to provide for security being given over the chattels of assisted settlers. I thought it advisable to bring this matter forward because it seems too bad that a man drawing 9s. a day in the circumstances explained by Mr. Millington, should be able to abandon his holding, sell his free assets and leave the board and the creditors lamenting. The amendment is merely an endeavour to safeguard the interests of the public and the security of the advances made by the board. When the amending Bill came forward before, it received very little notice. On looking up "Hansard" I found that only two members made reference to what has taken place, and I think their foresight should be referred to. One was the leader of the House, and the other Sir Edward Wittenoom. Even at this late hour we would be acting wisely in passing the amendment that I have submitted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Is the clause similarly worded to that which was introduced in the Bill of 1917?

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Exactly.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That being the case I do not feel disposed to oppose it now, although I know that arguments may be advanced against it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The board is sufficiently guaranteed under the Act against advances they make. There may be instances where some of these people do get away with articles that might be useful to the board, but I feel they are entitled to all the security they can get and the House should see that it does not over-reach itself by acquiring the power proposed, which to my mind will work a hardship.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I realise that there are others besides the Industries Assistance Board who are granting facilities to settlers. I do not altogether take it for granted that the remarks contained in the report of the board that these chattels have been sold and that the money has been put into the pockets of the settlers who have cleared out are correct. It is possible that the assets have been disposed of to pay for the groceries supplied by the storekeeper. We shall be depriving the settlers of the necessities of life if we pass the amendment.

Hon. J. MILLS: Everyone knows that those who live on the land experience hardships and difficulties. The scale was fixed at 9s. a day and a man with a family of three or four children might have to send those children to a school a few miles away, and a good deal of self-denial would be indulged in in order to secure a pony for them. If the amendment is carried, the Government would take a lien over such things as were acquired as the result of self denial. I cannot support the amendment.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: This is a recommendation from the board, and if we do not adopt it the board later on may say we asked for power and Parliament would not give it to us. We will then be in an awkward position. There may be cases of individual hardship, but I think those hon. members overlook the fact that there is a special provision in the Act to safeguard settlers suffering from hardships such as have been foreshadowed. There is a safeguard against individual cases of hardship, but there is no safeguard against the dishonesty to which the board have referred, and there is no safeguard against the state of things to which the board draw special attention.

Progress reported. [Resumed later.]

PNEUMONIC INFLUENZA, QUARANTINING CONTACTS—TELEGRAM IN REPLY.

The PRESIDENT [5.53]: I have received the following telegram from Mr. Watt, the acting Prime Minister of the Commonwealth:—

Your telegram re quarantining contacts. As you will already be aware, contacts from other vessels now being quarantined at Albany. Western Australian troops on boat "Boonah" are now being landed at Woodman's Point, and the vessel itself is proceeding to the Eastern States, calling at Albany for further quarantine supervision. The prospects for the future indicate that there is no further probability of any necessity for quarantine measures after the vessels that are now being dealt with.—(Sgd.) Watt, acting Prime Minister.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

BILL—FORESTS.

Request for conference.

Message received from the Assembly requesting that a conference be granted respecting the requested amendments pressed by the Council in the Forests Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [5.55]: I move—

That the Council agrees to the conference requested by the Assembly, and appoints the Colonial Secretary, Hon. J. A. Greig, and Hon. H. Millington as managers for the Council at the conference.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [5.56]: One of the proposed managers

for the Council has definitely stated in this Chamber that he is opposed to timber hewers being allowed to operate in the Western Australian forests. That being so, I cannot help thinking it will be a waste of time to expect the proposed Conference to agree in such a way that the Bill will receive due consideration.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [5.57]: I take it that I am the member referred to by the last speaker. I did state definitely here that I objected to the whole of the sleeper hewers in the State, whether returned soldiers or otherwise, being permitted to roam throughout the woods and forests of Western Australia. But that does not mean that I am not open to conviction, or not ready to do a fair thing in conference. I take Mr. Duffell's speech as a reflection on my intelligence as a member of the Council.

Hon. J. Duffell: I am quite prepared to accept the hon. member's explanation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in explanation) [5.58]: In selecting the managers for the proposed conference, I chose two members who I knew were opposed to the attitude of the Government and in favour of the attitude of the majority of the Council. I do not think I could do any more.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [5.59]: Mr. Duffell's statement was quite correct. Mr. Greig stated on the floor of the House that he wished to abolish the sleeper hewer. However, I am quite satisfied that Mr. Greig will represent the Council with all fairness and every ability.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [6.0]: I oppose the motion for the holding of the conference. The House may save time, and I believe it will save time, by rejecting the motion. Let hon. members consider the attitude of another place on this Bill. The particular amendment with which the conference would specially deal has been rejected by another place on two occasions without any alternative being offered. The essential point to me is the welfare of the soldier hewer. But members of another place extend to the soldier hewer no consideration whatever. This House is prepared to differentiate between the soldier hewer and other hewers, but the Assembly is not prepared to do so. I do not think the holding of a conference will result in the devising of an alternative proposal. The attitude of the Assembly now is the attitude that Chamber adopted when the Bill first came from it. The matter has evidently been brought under the notice of the Returned Soldiers' Association, the secretary of which has written me the following letter, which is dated 19th December:—

At the last meeting of the Executive of the Returned Soldiers' Association a resolution was passed expressing the opinion that the Government were doing an injustice under the Forestry Bill at present before the House in taking away the livelihood of timber hewers who will be returning from the Front.

That is the opinion of the soldiers. If the conference take place, I hope the managers

will do their utmost to see that the sleeper hewers amongst the returned soldiers will be able to return to their work under the conditions which existed when they left.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [6.3]: I would suggest that Mr. Greig might retire in favour of another hon. member in whom we could feel that the interest of the returned soldiers would be safe. I would suggest to Mr. Greig, in view of the remarks of Mr. Cornell and in view of the desire of every hon. member that there should not be the slightest suspicion abroad that the returned soldiers were not receiving the fullest possible consideration at the hands of the House, that he should offer to retire in place of one who is a returned soldier and who, I am sure, would have the confidence of all returned soldiers.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [6.4]: I certainly did not want the job on the conference and it was not of my seeking. For one thing, I am not feeling very well, but I think Mr. Kirwan has cast a reflection against me by the remarks he has made. Those remarks will go out to the world and they will make me appear to be one who has no sympathy with returned soldiers, because I made the statement in this House that I was out to do away with the hewer. That is my attitude towards the hewer, because in my opinion he is creating waste. At the same time I am out to assist the returned soldier as much as anyone else in this House, and when I am asked to stand down so that someone else, who it is said will have more sympathy with the soldiers, may take my place, I regard that as a reflection against my intelligence and integrity. I may inform Mr. Kirwan that I am not now prepared to stand down for anyone.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [6.5]: I simply wanted to voice the feeling that one who is himself a returned soldier and who is a recognised champion of returned soldiers, might be permitted to be appointed one of the managers at the conference. I had no intention in any way of reflecting against the integrity of the hon. member.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [6.6]: I have been on a number of conferences. While I have been a member of this House, I have always understood it to be the duty of the managers that they had to carry out, not their own wishes at the conference but the wishes of the House they represented. I have every faith in Mr. Greig who, I am sure, will express not his own views, but those of the House.

Question put and passed.

Sitting suspended from 6.7 to 9.0 p.m.

Conference Managers' Report.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [9.5]: I have to report as follows:—

Your managers have met the managers of the Legislative Assembly and have agreed as follows:—(1) That amendment No. 8 be not made. (2) That amendment No. 9 be not made. (3) That amendment No. 10 be not made. (4) That Clause 24 be amended

by striking out the words "except as hereinafter provided" in the first line and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "excepting in the case of a person who prior to the passing of this Act followed the occupation of a hewer in this State," and by striking out all the words in the clause after the word "Act" in line 5. (5) That amendment No. 14 be made. (6) That amendment No. 15 be made. (7) That amendment No. 23 be made with the following alteration:—That the words "the administration of this Act in regard to" be inserted at the commencement of the proposed Clause 75, and that all the words after the word "permit" in line 4 of the same clause be struck out and the words "shall be carried out subject to the concurrence of the Minister for Mines" be inserted in lieu thereof. (8) That amendment No. 24 be not made.

Amendments Nos. 8, 9, 10, and 24 all relate to Clause 24 of the Bill—"Hewing of railway sleepers within State forests prohibited." Nos. 8 and 9 relate to hewing generally, No. 10 to hewing by returned soldiers who had been hewers before leaving the State, while No. 24 limits the period during which hewing by returned soldiers can be carried out under those conditions. The conference has decided that Nos 8, 9, 10, and 24, all dealing with Clause 24, be abandoned, and that Clause 24 itself be amended by striking out the words "except as hereinafter provided" and in lieu of those words inserting "except in the case of a person who, prior to the passing of this Act, followed the occupation of a hewer in this State," and after "Act" at the end of the first paragraph all the remainder of the clause be struck out. Clause 24 will then read—

Except in the case of a person who prior to the passing of this Act followed the occupation of a hewer in this State it shall be unlawful within the boundaries of a State forest to hew timber for railway sleepers on the area of any timber concession, lease, or permit granted before or after the commencement of this Act.

The effect of that carries out in its entirety the wishes of this Chamber. The soldier who, before he went away, and indeed the hewer who did not go away—it is assumed that perhaps he was the father of a soldier—will stand in exactly the same position as though this Act had never been passed. But the Act will protect the forests to the extent that it will not allow people who have never been there before to go into the forests. So that the course proposed by the managers entirely meets with the wishes of the majority of the members of this House. The managers decided that amendments Nos. 14 and 15 be made. Both of these amendments referred to Clause 41, dealing with the financial provisions, and the managers agreed that the amendments asked for by the Legislative Council should be made in the Bill. Amendment No. 7 was the new clause proposed by Mr. Ewing and as I explained last night, it did not in its then form serve the purpose which the hon. member intended. That pro-

posed new clause is now amended and will read—

The administration of this Act in regard to the area comprised within the boundaries of the Greenbushes State forest excepting any area within such boundary, the subject of any timber lease or permit shall be carried out subject to the concurrence of the Minister for Mines.

That covers all the amendments and I think it substantially carries out the wishes of the majority of members of this House. I move—

That the report be adopted.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [9.20]: Clause 24 was the bone of contention so far as I was concerned. As we have it now it means that my desires have been fulfilled. There will be no differentiation between the hewers who went on service and the hewers who did not. I would now like the Colonial Secretary to give an assurance that if the regulations are amended in any drastic direction the hewers who are on active service will receive fair consideration. It would only be in keeping with the general policy of all the employers if that assurance were given.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The best assurance that I can give is the clause itself. Any regulation that is made must be in keeping with the letter and spirit of the clause, and the clause sets out as clearly as it is possible to set it out, that the privileges enjoyed prior to the passing of the Act cannot be interfered with.

Question put and passed.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Resumed from an earlier period of the sitting.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; Hon. C. F. Baxter (Honorary Minister) in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on a new clause moved by Mr. Kirwan.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I support the new clause. I have come into contact with many people who have expressed similar views as those uttered by Mr. Millington and others. The Government should take steps to safeguard the interests of the people in this matter, and if the amendment proposed by Mr. Kirwan is carried, it will certainly do something to strengthen their hands and conserve the interests of the taxpayers. If the Government could only find out what money was being paid by the Federal Government by way of old age pensions to some of those receiving benefits under the Act they would be astounded. Considering the immense amount of money at stake in connection with the Industries Assistance Board, the Government should see that the administration of that department is put on a better basis than it is at the present time. I know the board is being got at in scores of places, and when that happens the country is being got at.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I agree with Mr. Dodd that the board is being got at by its clients.

That is no reason why the board should take advantage of those people who joined the board in the first instance. The board were to take security over the land and the whole crop and such machinery as the board thought fit. It was understood that they would not take security over anything except what was mentioned. If we pass the amendment all the goods and chattels which were not mentioned will automatically become the property of the board. If the Industries Assistance Board have not sufficient security, I suggest that they should inform the client of the fact and ask for this further security. They might proceed similarly in the case of new clients. In the event of an old client's refusing to give further security, the Board could refuse to make further advances. But to take possession, by Act of Parliament, of all the goods and chattels of the board's old clients seems to me a dishonest thing.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Does not the amendment simply require people to pay their just debts?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Two wrongs do not make a right. The board have their inspectors travelling round every month, and therefore ought not to let these people get into such a desperate position.

Hon. J. Mills: The inspectors have too much to do.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: A phase of the question which has not been mentioned by previous speakers demonstrates to my mind clearly a great lack of supervision on the part of the board's inspectors. Money has been advanced to certain individuals who evidently had convinced the board that they were live subjects. With regard to advances, the board should adopt the same attitude as a banker. According to the board's report, there are numerous bad accounts on the books, which I attribute to lack of supervision.

Hon. J. Mills: Absolute nonsense.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: I take exception to that remark.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask the hon. member interjecting to withdraw.

Hon. J. Mills: I withdraw, Sir.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: Some of the board's clients have sold all their liquid assets and cleared out. On the other hand, some of the board's clients who have failed are entitled to be viewed charitably, having so far as they could paid their just debts. The amendment proposes to mortgage to the Industries Assistance Board the very beds that the settlers' children lie on.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Cases of hardship are provided for.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: But red-tap takes no account of hardship. I must oppose the new clause.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I oppose the new clause, although realising that there is some reason for it, and that it has been launched on the strength of the board's report. Mr. Dodd, although not very warmly supporting the new clause, said he knew of people receiving 9s. per day and also receiving old-age pen-

sions. I know of many old people who have not obtained and will not obtain old-age pensions, who have lost all the capital they brought to this country in order to go on the land. In the outlying districts this new provision would work much hardship. As regards inspection, I agree with Mr. Mills that the inspectors are overworked. Either more inspectors, or else more competent inspectors, should be obtained. The new clause would work much hardship on genuine, honest triers. Moreover, the adoption of the new clause would not prevent the shrewd type from getting at the State.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Committee should thank Mr. Kirwan for raising this important matter, but I fear the amendment might have a disastrous effect in respect of classes of chattels which do not require a registered bill of sale. The Government ought to be safeguarded fully, but we must be careful that we do not commit a wrong on other people. The amendment itself provides an exception, in the proposed addition to paragraph (c). Under the Act the board has granted to it an absolute lien or security over the chattels purchased with the board's money and it is now proposed by the amendment to extend that so as to cover all chattels belonging to the applicant except chattels subject to a bill of sale or lien registered prior to such advances being made. The chattels which are excepted are those articles of everyday hire, used on almost every farm. The hiring agreement does not require them to be registered. The only way we could rightly approach people is to call on them for some further security, and for the board to take a bill of sale that would give the board the natural security they require. As to future applicants for assistance, no doubt a clause could be drawn so as to cover not only chattels bought with money received from the board, but all future acquired chattels.

Hon. J. MILLS: Will members explain what the liquid assets of a farmer are? One would think the assets of the farmer amounted to thousands of pounds, whereas there is very little which a farmer has. As far as the Victoria district is concerned. I know every Industries Assistance Board farmer, and I know that they have not the chattels, and I know they are honest men. I shall not support the amendment.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Mr. Duffell doubted the accuracy of the board's report. The board stated there were instances where farmers had abandoned their farms and sold their assets and pocketed the money and left their creditors lamenting. If Mr. Duffell doubts the accuracy of reports made to the House, it is a serious charge against the board. The board have made certain recommendations which are necessary to safeguard the public and if we do not adopt the recommendations later on they will say, "We could not do more because you do not give us the power we ask." There is a clause in the Act by which the board can exercise their discretion. My idea is not to inflict hardship but to prevent dishonesty.

Hon. J. DUFFELL: The hon. member has not cleared up the point. The board have lent

money on certain securities and now they make a suggestion to amend the Bill which will give them power to get more security than that on which they originally advanced the money.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I support the amendment; I cannot see what harm this can do, the giving of extra security. It is an ordinary business proposition. The board have advanced money, they find the security is not sufficient and they ask for more. If I owe money to my bankers or creditors, I should give them sufficient security, and if they find they have not sufficient security, they will ask for more and should receive it. I will support the amendment.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: One point the last speaker has overlooked is that when a bank advances money to a client it does so on a fixed arrangement; and, having advanced by way of mortgage money to a client, it is not competent for the bank to demand that the client shall give security over something else. The position that would arise if we passed the clause might do grave injustice to people other than the farmers. This will deal with advances that have been made a long time ago. Suppose a farmer borrowed from the Industries Assistance Board, say a couple of years ago, and they took what security the Act allowed over his property; but at that time he had certain assets which the board had not provided and which were not in the security. Between that date and this he may have borrowed money on those very assets from somebody else and given that person a bill of sale over them.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: It would not override the bill of sale.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is just what it would do, because the bill of sale was made subsequent to the advance. It is most extraordinary legislation to give by Act of Parliament security that was not contemplated when the advance was made.

Hon. H. STEWART: Mr. Greig put the position clearly. I agree that this House would be committing a breach of faith. The position is not a matter of getting security first and then making advances afterwards. The money was advanced on definite security. Now it is proposed to insist, by Act of Parliament, that additional security be put up. What bank would take up the position of compelling people to put up more security on money already advanced? It would be a breach of faith to compel those clients who have been on the board for some time to put up more security for an old advance. Before we can legislate on a report we require to have further particulars, and to know more about the report.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I suggest to the mover of the amendment that if the amendment be withdrawn we can have the whole of this discussion again next session.

New clause put and negatived.

Postponed Clause 2—Continuation of principal Act:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: This was postponed while I framed an amendment. I now suggest that the Committee reject the clause. If this be done I will move the insertion of a

new clause as follows:—"Commodities may be supplied or money advanced under the principal Act or its amendments up to the 31st March, 1919." I have consulted authorities, and I am assured that this will cover what a majority of the Committee are agreed upon. If we reject the clause the old extension will automatically expire on the 31st March, 1919, and if we agree to carry my proposed new clause the extension will run to the 31st October, 1919.

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

Ayes	15
Noes	8

Majority for	7
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AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. Sir E. H. Wiltensoom
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. W. Hickey	(Teller).

NOES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. J. Duffell
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	(Teller).
Hon. R. J. Lynn	

Clause thus passed.

New clause:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I move—

That the following be added as a new clause:—"That a report and balance sheet of the operations of the board shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament by the Minister in charge of the department on or before the 30th September, 1919."

My object in moving the new clause is that we may get some control over the board. At the present time we have no control. The amendment will be of some value. At any rate it will draw the attention of the department to the anxiety of Parliament in the conduct of the affairs of the State.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Is there any similar provision in the original Act?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: There may be, but I am not going to look into the matter.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I sympathise with the desire of the hon. member to have these reports printed as quickly as possible and I have given an undertaking that the present report shall be printed. I have also informed hon. members that it is the intention of the Government to print all these reports in the future. I do not think there is any need for the new clause, because Section 27 of the existing Act provides that the Treasurer shall have prepared a financial statement and report on the operations of the Act, and that statement, together with a report of the Auditor General, shall as soon as practicable, be laid before both Houses of Parliament.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I intend to support the amendment. I have before me the last

typewritten report of the Industries Assistance Board and I find this information under the heading of "good, fair, doubtful, and bad debts." Under the heading of "Good," the advances total £111,000 and the proceeds £101,000. Under the heading of "Fair," the advances were £275,000 and the proceeds £147,000. Under the heading of "Doubtful," the advances were £908,000 and the proceeds £182,000. Bad advances total £92,000; proceeds, £10,000. Grand total of advances is £1,387,000, and the grand total of proceeds £460,000. Let us take the earliest opportunity of bringing this bankrupt Industries Assistance Board to an end.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I urge those members of the Council who do not hold official positions to remember that this is the only opportunity we have of securing papers which must be produced sooner or later, but the absence of which in due time prevents members from understanding the report and balance sheet of the Industries Assistance Board. Hence this clause.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I have much pleasure in supporting the new clause. There are 2,250 settlers on the Industries Assistance Board, to whom has been advanced £1,387,000. The proceeds have been £463,000. There are creditors outstanding £457,000. The number of acres cleared is 908,000. That means that the Industries Board have advanced £1 per acre to the settlers. The land, according to statements made by members of the Country party, is worth under 15s. per acre. What is the land worth to-day? The state of affairs is shocking.

Hon. H. Stewart: Is that for clearing alone? May not there be other improvements?

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I did not say clearing alone. However, the £457,000 to other creditors would no doubt account for the other improvements.

Hon. H. STEWART: I support the amendment, as I want information on State affairs as soon as I can get it, and accurate and reliable information. Mr. Holmes's figures, I consider, do not give a correct impression of the Industries Assistance Board's position. In a period of three years the board advanced £2,800,000. Mr. Holmes has failed to take into account the 11 million bushels of wheat produced. We do not know what that wheat will realise. We know, of course, that there is a deficiency on that wheat; but it is not a deficiency of millions. I know there will be a loss on the Industries Assistance Board's operations; but was it not worth while to keep on the land 2,000 men who will ultimately make good? The position is that there is £800,000 to the bad on the Industries Assistance Board, but with a harvest to come in. The average of the past four years has been £150,000 paid as rents, water rates, and taxes by the Industries Assistance Board to other Government departments, or a total of £600,000, which amount would have been lost had the settlers closed up and gone off the land.

New clause put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	13
Noes	11
Majority for .. .	2

AYES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. W. Kirwan	Hon. J. Cornell
Hon. R. J. Lynn	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. Ross
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller.)

New clause thus passed.

Title—agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with an amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—FORESTS

Assembly's Message.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that it had amended the Bill in accordance with the report of the managers of the conference and returned the Bill as amended for the Council's concurrence.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Title—agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [10.52]: This is a very short Bill of five clauses each dealing with the separate proposals for road closure. Clause 2 provides for the closure of a small portion of Dampier-terrace, Broome. This is desired owing to the fact that the tramway yards have been erected thereon. The town council have no objection and ample road access has been provided in the locality. The third clause relates to the closure of a road at Mandurah. The right-of-way proposed to be closed runs through the hotel premises of Mr. Slee at Mandurah. The road board purported to close

this way under the provisions of the Roads Act, but as the way is delineated on a sub-divisional plan deposited at the Titles office, the legality of the procedure of the road board is open to question. The right-of-way was closed on condition that Mr. Slee surrendered to the Crown a portion of lot 329, one chain in width, for the opening of a road in place of the right-of-way. The Bill authorises the closure of the right-of-way conditional upon the soil of the new road being vested in His Majesty and proclaimed a public road. Clause 4 of the Bill relates to the closing of certain roads in East Perth near the Cricket Association ground. Some time ago the Western Australian Trotting Association who have for some time past held their meetings on the association ground decided to make a new course, and for that object purchased some adjoining land from the W.A. Cricket Association, and also some other land further up the river, from other holders. To enable the grandstand to be erected and a trotting course laid out it was necessary to close the roads mentioned in the Bill. Before finally deciding on this matter the association conferred with the Perth City Council, and eventually it was agreed between the two bodies that if the Trotting Association would give sufficient land to open a road on the north side of the Cricket Association ground and also give up, for the purpose of a road, some land fronting on the river, the city council would have no objection to the closing of the roads within the land that the association have purchased. It is therefore proposed to close the roads coloured blue on the plan, the land surrounding being held by the Trotting Association, and to open the roads coloured pink and green in exchange for the land surrendered by the association for the purpose of roads. The arrangement is all in favour of the city council, as the area of the roads to be closed amounts to two and three-quarter acres, whereas the land to be surrendered by the Trotting Association contains about three and three-quarter acres. A deputation consisting of the mayor and some of the councillors of the city of Perth recently waited upon me, together with the President and representatives of the Trotting Association, and explained exactly what the proposition was. The mayor on behalf of the council expressed his entire satisfaction with the proposal, as it would involve turning what is now an unsightly waste, into a beauty spot. The council were prepared to undertake the construction of the roads proposed to be opened, which would enable a round drive to be constructed, leading along the river and joining up with the roads in East Perth. The Trotting Association pointed out that they were prepared to go on with the construction work at once, and that the work would give employment to a large number of men. It appears to me that the proposal has everything to recommend it. I have had a lithograph prepared showing the proposed alterations, and also a tracing which shows on a larger scale the details of the proposal. The remaining clause relates to a road at East

Fremantle. It is desired by the owners of lots 45, 46 and 47, Richmond-crescent, East Fremantle, to obtain access from Bellevue-street to Surbiton-road, and for this purpose they have agreed to give up 50 links of each of their blocks at the eastern end in consideration of being granted 50 links out of Richmond-crescent end. The East Fremantle municipality have urged that the request be agreed to and the requested survey has been made. In every case these proposals are endorsed by the local authorities interested and have been carefully inquired into by the Government. I move—

The the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUATION.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

A Message having been received from the Assembly intimating that the amendments requested by the Council had been made, consideration resumed.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Title—agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [11.8] in moving the second reading said: This is a very short Bill of only one clause. The present maximum rate for water boards is 2s. The water boards of Broome and of Carnarvon require additions to their water supplies. If those additions are not promptly furnished both places will be short of water. To cover the extra interest and sinking fund at rate of 2s. 8d. or 2s. 9d. will be required. Both the boards mentioned are agreeable to paying this additional rate. The Bill enables the boards to increase their

rates to 3s. as against the limit of 2s. at present in the Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (North) [11.10]: I support the Bill. If it is not carried, Broome and Carnarvon will be left without water.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [11.11]: I can hardly understand why the Bill is not restricted to Carnarvon and Broome. As the Bill is, any boards will be able to raise their rates to 3s.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [11.12]: I have been approached by the people of Collie, who say that the water rates there are too high already. Under this, the water board could increase the rate to 3s. I think the Bill should apply to only the two places named.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [11.13]: The additional powers rest in the hands of the board, and before exercising that power the board must have the express approval of the Governor.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that it had made amendments 3, 7, 8, and 9, but that it had not made amendments 1, 2, 4, and 6, and had made amendment No. 5 with a modification, now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 4, paragraph (c).—Strike out the words "during the present war or within two years after the termination thereof":

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I regret the Legislative Assembly has not seen its way to make this amendment. The period of two years is rather short within which to limit the right of the dependant to make application under the Bill. Discharged soldiers themselves have a right to make an application at any time, but the time in which a dependant can make application is limited by the Bill to two years. However, it will not be wise to press the amendment if we want to get the Bill through. Therefore I move—

That the amendment be not pressed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I was present in another place when the debate on this amendment was taking place, and I could not help being struck by the want of knowledge which was displayed when members there were discussing this matter.

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

No. 2, Clause 4—Strike out Clause 2:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hardly know what course to suggest in regard to this amendment. It seems to me that hon. members in another place cannot have given the matter much consideration. The Bill makes provision that no returned soldier can get the advantages of this Act until he is recommended by the board. It seems quite unnecessary that we should set up the fact that some men have not had a clean discharge. We are going out of our way to direct attention to the fact that some soldier may be coming back under a cloud. Therefore I move—

That the amendment be not pressed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I hope the Committee will press the amendment and I am satisfied that if it goes back to another place it will be agreed to.

Hon. J. Ewing: What will be the position if another place does not agree to the request?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A conference will probably be asked for, but that may imperil the chances of the Bill going through and that is why I ask the Committee not to press the amendment.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment pressed.

No. 4. Clause 7.—Add the following at the end, "and in making all such appointments, preference shall be given to discharged soldiers possessed of the necessary qualifications":

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It is the accepted policy of the Government to give returned soldiers preference in all matters. In view of the conditions under which another place rejected the amendment on the grounds that it was superfluous, I move—

That the amendment be not pressed.

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

No. 6. Clause 11.—In the first proviso, after the words "discharged soldier," in line two, insert "or in case of a deceased soldier the surviving relative that in the board's opinion is most deserving of consideration":

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was pointed out in another place that this amendment might prevent a soldier bequeathing property to someone else. I move—

That the amendment be not pressed.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I think the amendment ought to be pressed. It simply extends the power of transfer. If the Assembly gave the matter further consideration it would probably take a different view. To me the amendment seems very desirable.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It will be remembered that on this amendment being carried I did not proceed with a new clause which I had placed on the Notice Paper. I understood that this amendment covered my new clause.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is no objection to the House trying that method. Seeing that we have already agreed to a conference, we might in this way devise a proper method.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment pressed.

No. 5. Clause 10.—Insert a new subclause, to stand as Subclause (4), as follows:—(4.) The power of resumption conferred on the Governor by Section 4 of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1906, may be exercised to enable land so resumed to be disposed of to discharged soldiers for agricultural, grazing, or pastoral purposes:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

That the Assembly's modification be agreed to.

During the discussion I made it clear that I thought it desirable that the clause should stand without the addition made by another place. It is not only possible that, as amended, it would work hardship, but probable that it would cause hardship immediately, for it would destroy the security of the leaseholder. I am sure no returned soldier desires that anything should be taken from someone in order that it may be given to him. If the proviso were not added, we should be entirely without machinery for what we desire. We shall need to have a more comprehensive proposal brought in next session.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I intended to move that this amendment be disagreed with. It is creating a very peculiar position indeed as regards leaseholders. Looking at the matter carefully, I very much question whether our Government have legislative power to deal with these leaseholders.

Hon. J. Cornell: The question is whether resuming from one pastoral holder in order to give the area resumed to a soldier is a matter of public utility.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: When the Government deal with a freeholder they are dealing with an individual, whereas when dealing with a leaseholder they are resuming their own lands. Another objection to the clause is that it will to a large extent interfere with credits from financial institutions, because the insecurity of tenure would make it dangerous to advance money on such a proposition. And there is another element of injustice in it: Suppose a man has developed his leasehold for five years, and is just beginning to make a profit when the Government come along and resume the lease. What an injustice it would mean!

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I suggest to the hon. member that he considers carefully what he is doing. We are not now asked to consider the question of whether it is open to resume those pastoral leases. That has been passed. What we are asked to consider is the amendment of another place, namely, that when a resumption is made, compensation shall be paid. If we send this back, another place will probably drop the provision for compensation, which is all that we are now considering.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I have pleasure in supporting the Colonial Secretary's motion. I agree to the modification. As a representative of the pastoralists I think we are very fortunate in having had the modification made.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I am not at all surprised at the modification submitted to us by another place. It is not inconsistent with their attitude when any measure of reform is submitted to them. I appreciate the reception that my amendment met with the other night. When I submitted the amendment I said that if the Government had not the power they could easily secure it. Evidently members in another place said that further compensation should be given to those mentioned in my amendment. This Chamber was satisfied with the conditions I set up, but another place was not satisfied, and so we have the modification moved by the Attorney General in another place. I have heard the suggestion that my amendment was loaded. It is rather the modification that is loaded. Where is it going to land us? Under the existing Land Act those whose lands have been resumed can claim compensation. We were only asking for resumption under the compensation provisions of the Land Act. Another place has refused to accept our amendment, except with the modification. I am prepared to accept the suggestion of Mr. Miles, namely, not only shall compensation be paid as assessed, but ten per cent. shall be added for disturbance. That would get over all difficulties, and there would be no room for any misunderstanding. I will submit an alternative amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member had better amend the resolution before the Committee by striking out the words "with a modification" and then he can add his own modification.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I move an amendment—

That the words "for loss or damage sustained thereby" be omitted and "as provided in Sections 146 and 148, inclusive, of the Land Act 1906, with 10 per cent. on the assessed value of improvements added for severance" be inserted in lieu.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: What we have decided to do now is to resume the whole or any portion of a pastoral lease, and when we do that we pay the lessee for his improvements. The conditions must be made to apply to the facts as they are.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: There is some extraordinary reasoning in this matter. These improvements would include everything on the station.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It cannot include stock.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: The Government have power to resume the country and I am sure they will not do an injustice to anybody. The Government will not put anyone on the land if they cannot make a living on the land. Provision will be made to meet all the requirements plus 10 per cent. if my amendment is adopted. I am surprised that some members are not willing to defend this proposition. However, if members are satisfied to go on, I do not know that I can do better. I shall move the amendment and trust to the Committee to carry it through.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question (that the Assembly's modification be agreed to) put and passed.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Resolutions reported, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [12.20]: My remarks in moving the second reading of this Bill will be brief. Members will, I hope, realise that it would be quite futile for me to anticipate criticism on any of the details of the Estimates of expenditure covered by the Appropriation Bill. However, in my reply I shall endeavour to deal with such matters of detail as may be mentioned by members in the course of the debate. For the present, I shall satisfy myself with a general presentation of the position. At the outset, I may remind members that the Estimates of revenue and expenditure on Consolidated Revenue account were compiled before the signing of the armistice which signified the early termination of the war. The Estimates on loan account were ready for presentation when the news of the signing of the armistice was received. This incident the Government recognised considerably altered the situation and the Loan Estimates were then revised. This circumstance has been responsible for three or four weeks' delay in the consideration of the Loan Estimates in another place, and consequently for a similar delay in the presentation of the Appropriation Bill here. Members will recollect that some time ago at the conference of Federal and State Treasurers, certain arrangements were arrived at under which this State was to receive sufficient money by way of loan from the Commonwealth to meet its requirements until the end of 1919. Even on the increased scale of loan expenditure contemplated by the revised Estimates, the Treasurer is satisfied that he can carry on until the end of December of next year. At the same time, in view of the termination of the war, and the return of our soldiers in tens of thousands, it may be safely assumed that the whole position will be reviewed at a further conference to be held early in next year. The time is also ripe for a general review of the financial relationships between the Commonwealth and the States, a review that is necessitated by the obligations cast upon both authorities as a result of the war and also by the fact that the existing financial agreement comes to a close early in 1920. I have in no way altered the opinion I have previously expressed in this House that the progress and development of this country and the stability of its public finances depends upon a readjustment of our relations with the Commonwealth. I have nothing to add to my previous remarks in this connection. Probably something will depend on the decisions arrived at at the Peace Conference on the matter of indemnities, but I firmly believe that the Peace Conference should be followed by another Australian convention, a

convention whose aim it should be to forward Australian nationhood by making possible the successful development of every portion of the continent. Coming to the Estimates it is the belief of the Treasurer that he will be able to conclude the present financial year with a deficit smaller by some £70,000 than that of last year. He expects to be assisted by increased revenue resulting from the taxation proposals approved during last session to the extent of £130,000, but of this total about £90,000 will be required for increased interest and sinking fund. So far as the year has progressed the indications are that the Treasurer's estimate will be fully realised. Indeed, it is quite likely that the improvements as compared with last year will be greater than he anticipated. The five months already expired show a deficit smaller by £68,561 than that for the corresponding five months of last year, so that if this ratio is maintained, the position will be considerably better than was estimated. The estimated deficit for the year is £636,235. I must in this instance anticipate criticism by protesting that this large deficit does not in its entirety represent a drift to leeward. If a man owed £1,000 at the beginning of the year and he borrowed £1,000 during the year and paid back £500, he should not be said to have drifted to the extent of more than £500. Our position is that of this deficit of £636,235, a sum of £315,000 will represent sinking fund actually paid during the year. In addition, the whole of the accumulated sinking fund is earning interest for us and the amount of interest so earned during the current financial year will be over £180,000. Consequently, if we have on the one hand a deficit of £636,000 we have on the other hand paid during the year into sinking fund account £315,000, and the invested sinking fund has earned £180,000, the two combined representing a very substantial set off against our deficit amounting to half a million sterling, when we come to consider the actual drift of the State. I am not suggesting for a moment that it would be sound finance to spend by way of deficit the amount of the sinking fund. Such a procedure would be in effect to do away with the sinking fund, but I must remind members that Western Australia, the State that has been hit hardest by the war, and the State which, as Mr. Dodd pointed out the other evening, has received the least advantage from war expenditure, is the only State that has continued right through to pay its sinking fund, and anyone who desires to hold us up as a bankrupt community as compared with the other States of the Commonwealth, cannot do so with justice without taking this factor fully into account. If the other States had paid sinking fund at the same rates, they would correspondingly be in a very much worse position on consolidated revenue account than they are at present.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: How much does it aggregate?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: About half a million. There has been £315,000 actually paid into sinking fund during the year and the interest earned is £180,000. As members are aware our sinking fund is for the most part

invested in our own stocks, and when the State invests the sinking fund in stocks it goes on paying interest on the stocks purchased, so that it is accumulating rapidly and is now well over 5½ millions sterling. It is a sound provision to make and if we were paying our way and also the sinking fund, we would be in a sound position and steadily liquidating our debts. The fact that really we are not paying that constitutes the unsoundness of our position. But when comparisons are put up it is unfair to quote the deficit without at the same time quoting the sinking fund.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: There is only the difference between the deficit and the sinking fund.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amount we are worse off at the end of the year is the difference between the deficit and the sinking fund we have actually paid, and the interest we have earned on our accumulated sinking fund. But I do not think that is a sound method of finance. It is not. We must every year provide and pay our sinking fund. But my contention is that, during this war period, it is unfair to compare our deficits with those of the Eastern States, without taking into account our sinking fund and the interest earned on accumulated sinking fund. The gross anticipated revenue is £4,883,177, and it might reasonably be contended that with so large a revenue, and so small a population, we should have no difficulty in financing our obligations. But that is gross revenue. A return has been compiled giving a cash statement of the revenue and expenditure for the financial year ending 30th June, 1919, and in this statement only net revenue is included. The revenue from taxation—land, income tax, dividend duties, and other taxation is £580,000; territorial revenue, land, mining, timber, etc., £337,000; liquor fees, £21,000; Commonwealth revenue, that is under the financial agreement and interest on transferred properties, £534,000; departmental reimbursements, £244,000; cash surplus, £1,487,064; cash provided from trading concerns, £164,460; cash surplus from railways, water supply, etc., £557,000. So the actual cash revenue that goes into the Treasury amounts to £2,846,337. A further return shows the obligations that have to be met out of that sum. In the first place, there is expenditure provided for by special Acts. That expenditure accounts for £2,089,000 out of the grand total, the chief item being interest and sinking fund £1,972,000. The others are comparatively small amounts, the total being £2,089,000, out of a total cash revenue of £2,846,337. All those obligations have to be discharged, and when that is done it leaves only £756,000 to pay for the general administration of the State. That general administration costs £1,392,000 and in the difference between the cost of that general administration and the balance left over from our cash revenue, after paying the amounts provided by special Acts, we have the estimated deficit of £636,000. The administration expenditure amounts to £1,392,000, and included in that is no less than £823,000 of what might be called domes-

tic expenditure. That is not peculiarly the policy of this or any other Government, but is part of the generally accepted practice of the State, such as care of aborigines £18,000, gaols £20,000, lunacy and inebriates £63,000, medical and public health and charities £157,000, State children £69,000, police £127,000, and education £368,000, or a total of £823,000. In many of those concerns war conditions have compelled increased expenditure. For instance, in regard to our hospitals, particularly those on the goldfields, the people have been in the habit of supporting those institutions most generously, but during the period of the war many of the men have gone to the Front, and it has been found impossible to carry on under the previous systems, and over and over again the Government have had to come to the relief of these institutions. The Children's Hospital in Perth found itself unable to carry on without an additional £2,000 or £3,000 from the Government, and the metropolitan hospitals have been more crowded than they have been at any previous time in their history, whilst other institutions, such as the lunatic asylum, the sanatorium and other places have found their number of inmates greatly increased. The only institution not full is the gaol. The Government have endeavoured to make the public realise their responsibilities in regard to these institutions and an amended principle has been put into practice in regard to our public hospitals. Whilst those institutions are freely open to every indigent person, those who can afford to pay are now expected to pay and their indebtedness is regarded in exactly the same light as any other indebtedness. In consequence, our revenue from those places has been largely increased.

Hon. J. F. Allen: But patients are not supposed to be admitted if they cannot pay.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think that argument can be used.

Hon. J. F. Allen: It applied when I was chairman of the Fremantle hospital board.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: But both the Perth and Fremantle public hospitals work under regulations, one of which makes provision that any person not able to pay for treatment must sign a declaration to that effect. The practice was at one time entirely abandoned, but it has since been revived.

Hon. J. F. Allen: Well, we never liked to brand people as paupers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not understand exactly what the hon. member is driving at. Whether it is his idea that nobody should be allowed into hospitals who can pay. That is not the practice followed in any part of the State. People who can pay are admitted, and they are expected to pay. We have to keep the hospitals going, and there is no reason why people who can pay should not go to the hospital. At any rate, during the last year or two a very much higher revenue has been received from these concerns than previously. Under this head of general administrative expenditure the Government, during the last 12 months, have got rid of officers with salaries totalling £35,000; or, de-

ducting those who are not included in revenue Estimates, but were employed on loan works, £7,500, we have saved £27,500 in salaries on the general Estimates. In printing, stationery, and other items, a saving of £12,500 has been effected, or a total of £40,000 during the year, and it is expected that that will reach £80,000 before the year is over. The State will not receive the benefit of the whole of this saving straightaway, because in some cases there are certain pension rights which have to be paid, and so the relief to the State is gradual rather than immediate. In respect of business undertakings, the estimated receipts are £313,935. I will enumerate them without giving the detailed figures. They are:—Avondale and Harvey estates, electricity supply, State batteries, forest reserves, Yandanooka estate, Albany cold stores, aborigines cattle station, Government refrigerating works, Kalgoorlie abattoirs, metropolitan abattoirs, Perth city markets, State dairy farm, Claremont, butter and bacon factories, and wool classing. The anticipated expenditure is £165,171, leaving a net surplus of £148,764. Those are the business undertakings. The trading concerns are dealt with separately. A further lot of business undertakings included in one group are the Railways and Tramways, etc. The total revenue is £2,429,000, and the estimated expenditure £1,871,000, leaving a credit balance of £557,000. That, of course, makes no allowance for interest and sinking fund. The anticipated revenue from the railways is £1,860,000, against an expenditure of £1,503,000, leaving a credit balance of £356,000. A concern of that kind necessarily plays a very large part in the financial position of the State. Lack of shipping during the last two or three years has depleted our railway revenue, whilst the cost of materials and of all supplies in connection with the railways has, for the same reason, gone up enormously. The return from the railways in 1913-14, after paying working expenses, was £683,000. For the current year it is anticipated to be only £374,000. So that in that one item alone compared with the pre-war period there is a decrease in the cash balance handed over to the Treasurer of no less a sum than £309,000. The difference in the expenditure between the two periods was £127,000 on working account only without taking into consideration the increased interest bill. It may appear unsatisfactory that the revenue should be decreased by £309,000 and the expenditure by only £127,000, but we cannot get away from the fact that in any big business concern overhead expenses are much the same whether that business goes full steam ahead or not, and we cannot make a concern like the railways pay when we are doing only a small business. In 1913-14 the expenditure of 1½ millions gave a gross return of £683,000, whilst in 1917 it took an expenditure of £1,454,000 to earn a gross return of £374,000. The cost of materials used by the railways has gone up enormously. A list of 20 items in general daily use on the railways shows the lowest advance in price to be 31 per cent. and the highest 328 per cent. Newcastle coal has

increased 3s. 6d. a ton and Collie coal 1s. 6d. a ton. The State is very fortunate in having Collie coal. If we did not have it, the chances are that we would be compelled to pay a higher price for Newcastle coal. There has to be considerable expenditure from revenue to keep the lines in good order. In the present year we have provided for re-sleepering £20,000, for re-fishplating £9,000, and for ballasting £10,000, practically £40,000 out of revenue to keep the concern in proper repair. With regard to the tramways the position is much the same. It is anticipated that the revenue from the trams this year will be £13,520 more than last year, whilst the expenditure will be £5,939 more. Here again we have to spend considerable sums of money in keeping the lines and rolling stock in repair. This year we are spending out of revenue £17,500 on belated repairs. With regard to the water works, there is an increase in the cost of earning and a decrease in the revenue. In 1917-18 the gross expenditure was £220,000 and that brought in a gross profit of £159,000 after paying working expenses. The estimate for the present year's expenditure is £229,000 for a profit of £135,000, which is £9,000 more expenditure to earn £24,000 less revenue, so that practically on water supplies alone the Treasurer will go to the bad to the extent of £33,000 and it is difficult to see how we can possibly avoid it. The only way in which it could be avoided would be to spend loan money on repairs and maintenance works, but that is not done. We are spending a considerable sum out of revenue in keeping the pipe line in good order. The Mines Water Trust has approached the Government for a reduction in the price of water for those mines which would otherwise have to close down. This request is receiving the careful consideration of the Government. Whilst we recognise that our position is £33,000 worse than it was last year, we also recognise that the position may grow graver still, unless we do all we can to keep the mines at work.

Hon. J. Duffell: That is more than can be said for the consideration given by the Government to Bills.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not follow the hon. member.

Hon. J. Duffell: The Colonial Secretary said that the matter was receiving the gravest attention of the Government, and I said that that was not what the Government were doing so far as Bills were concerned, for instance, the State Children Act Amendment Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: We intend to do what we can, but we regret that the financial position is such that the assistance to the mines cannot be on a more generous scale, because it would pay to do so. This is a point that hon. members may well take into account. These three big concerns are, as compared with the pre-war period, so many hundreds of thousands of pounds to the bad, but there is a ray of hope for the future. I see no reason why these concerns should not, now that the war is over, go back again to their former earning

capacity. Mr. Nicholson the other night was quite right in saying that we might expect to see the railways return to that position they formerly occupied, in which case the finances will immediately improve, not by thousands of pounds, but by hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum. With regard to the trading concerns there is a good deal of misapprehension—and I speak as one who has always opposed them—as to the amount of money that the State has invested in them. The total capital employed in these concerns on the 30th June last was £1,054,000, but of that sum £417,000 had been spent on the Wyndham Freezing Works, and those works of course have not up to the present time returned any income to the State. The total net revenue of the State trading concerns after providing for interest and sinking fund is expected to be £164,000. That is the revenue after paying working expenses and providing for interest and sinking fund. Of that sum £132,000 will be received from steamships.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Can you tell us the difference between the "Kangaroo's" earnings and the earnings of the other vessels?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amount which we expect to receive is £64,000 more than the total of last year, and it will still leave us—presuming the "Kangaroo" keeps her time as she is now doing—two months' earnings for the year that we have not taken into consideration in this amount. The "Kangaroo" is the one bright spot in the steamship service.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: She carries all the trading concerns.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The "Kangaroo" is carrying the whole of the steamship service and the position would look black but for that vessel. I pass now to a brief review of the Loan Estimates which are included in the Appropriation Bill. These might have been laid before Parliament weeks ago but for the fact that Government recognised that the signing of the armistice altered the situation, and that some provision would have to be made to meet the changed conditions. The Government realised that they were faced with the obligation to endeavour to make the labour market buoyant during the period of demobilisation. It is not contemplated that a single penny will be spent on other than reproductive works. The Government want to avoid the necessity for sustenance payments, but it is felt that the time during which our soldiers should be coming back in their thousands is the time when the Government must be prepared to do what they can in the matter of starting out on reproductive works, partly for the sake of the works themselves, and partly in order that they may provide employment for returned soldiers. The Government deprecates the policy of the Federal Government of carrying on works right through the war period, well knowing that they would be of no earthly use during the present war, and directly the war is over closing them down and throwing a number of people out of employment. If it was right to close these works down at the termination of the war, they should have

been closed down long ago. We are faced with this serious problem on the return of our soldiers, that we must not only give them reasonable opportunities of finding employment because of the debt we owe them, but we must not allow them to depart to the other States, and that is what will happen if the Government and private people adopted a policy like that of the Federal Government. The total of the Loan Estimates is £1,395,000, but as £175,000 of that will be recouped, the actual expenditure for which provision is made is £1,220,000. That is a great deal more than was spent on loan works during the last couple of years, but very much less than was spent in previous periods.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What interest do you expect to pay?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I cannot tell the hon. member exactly, because the money is being borrowed for us under agreement with the Commonwealth. Of the loan expenditure £100,000 will be issued in bonds for repurchased estates and as for the first three months we have paid £176,000 on account of loan expenditure for the year, the actual cash that has to be provided for the balance of the year is £943,000. Up to the time of the signing of the armistice the Government kept their loan expenditure to the lowest possible limit, and but for the armistice the loan expenditure would have been much smaller. By utilising the £700,000 and taking into consideration the further sum of £250,000 which can be obtained from the Commonwealth between now and December, 1919, the Treasurer can see his way to finance without any difficulty not only to the 30th June next, but to the end of December, 1919. As I have already indicated, the Government realise that now the war is over the whole position will have to be carefully considered. The possibilities are that the other States will find themselves in the same position, and that they will approach the Federal Government for some variation of the financial arrangement which was to apply to the end of 1919. But it is the earnest determination of the Government—and I emphasise this point—that no works shall be proceeded with excepting works of a reproductive nature and those that are necessary and inevitable. To make clear the distinction between the two classes of works: there are certain works—such as those that we have to do for enlarged accommodation for the insane—which cannot be classed as reproductive, but are undoubtedly necessary. It is difficult for anyone to forecast at the present moment the after effects of the war on the world's money market, but the Government do anticipate that money will be dear, and therefore all loan money spent must be spent with extreme caution. I want that to be regarded as a qualification of the statement I have made, that the Government realise that we must spend money. While we realise that, we realise also that we must be careful in spending and see that we get good value for what we do spend. The principal items of expenditure on the Loan Estimates are as follows: Public Works £379,000, of which the highest item is in connection with the construction of the Wyndham Freezing

Works, £135,000. Then there is for completion of railways £92,000, harbours and rivers £93,000, roads and bridges £26,000, water supply and sewerage £93,000, including water supply for towns generally £20,000, metropolitan water supply £38,000, and water supply in agricultural districts £25,000. For the Mines Department £60,000 is provided on the Estimates. Last year the total expenditure in this department from the loan account was only £9,609, but it is felt that the Government must at the present time see what can be done to assist the development of this great industry. The Government realise that if by the expenditure of even a considerable sum of money any new developments can be made in our mining industry, it will amply repay us. For railways, tramways, and the electric power station, there is another £204,000. This is made up of additions and improvements to opened lines £84,000, rails and fastenings £57,000, tramways £25,000, and electric power station £38,000. In this connection it is well to remember that in addition to this sum expended on our railways and tramways we are providing, as I have previously explained, out of revenue for re-sleeping and re-fishplating and re-ballasting £30,000, and for belated tramway repairs £17,500. When we consider that this money is being spent in addition to the loan expenditure for the purpose of keeping our railways and tramways up to standard, I think it suggests that there ought to be a thorough investigation of revenue expenditure in this connection, seeing that we have to provide heavy interest, and also a large sinking fund to wipe out the capital expenditure. The position is that we are spending money out of revenue to keep the system up to full efficiency, and are also providing a sinking fund to repay the debt. The result eventually will be that the State will have the whole asset and that that asset will be all paid for. That will be a very desirable state of things, but at present the arrangement involves rather a heavy strain on the Treasurer. For the electric power station £33,700 is provided. For the Department of Agriculture £155,000 is set down to provide working capital for the Wyndham freezing works. Eventually this capital will come back, although I suppose there will always be a large amount of working capital required. For the Department of Industries £370,000 is provided, of which £150,000 is for advances to soldiers settling on the land. The whole of this will be recouped by the Commonwealth although it is eventually a liability of the State. Directly it is spent, however, the Commonwealth recoups it. We have made a further provision of £60,000 to give assistance to soldier settlers over and above the £500 advanced to them by the Commonwealth. This item was referred to in the discussion on the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Bill which has passed this House.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: That is not out of revenue?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. We are making provision for repurchasing estates to the extent of £160,000. Of this amount £60,000 will be cash, and Treasury bonds will

be issued for the remaining £100,000. Then there is the Agricultural Bank, the capital of which last year was put up by £75,000. This year it is being increased by a further £25,000 for providing stock. The conditions under which advances are made by the Agricultural Bank in this connection are of such a nature that the State hardly runs any risk in the matter at all. For the Industries Assistance Board the additional capital has been fixed at £125,000, but it is not anticipated that that amount will be required. Indeed it is expected that we shall receive back during the present financial year £145,000 of the capital previously advanced. These sums amount to £395,000 covered by the Loan Estimates. Then from Land Improvement Loan Fund there is £39,978. This is a fund which accumulates by repayment from the Lands Department of moneys advanced for surveys, repayment being provided out of general revenue at the end of each year. The amount standing to credit now is £69,978. Of this amount we purpose utilising £58,000 made up as follows:—Lands Department £24,500 required in connection with the classification and survey of land for sale, improvements, etc.; Department of Agriculture £13,700 in connection with the general development of agriculture; Woods and Forests £18,700, of which amount £3,000 is required for classification of timber lands; and £5,000 for pine planting north of Perth and £9,500 for purchase of the Lock estate and Stirling estate quart reserve. These, briefly, are the larger items which these Estimates cover. As I stated at the outset, I have made no pretence of reviewing the Estimates in detail, and I shall be only too pleased to afford information on any items raised by hon. members. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.
Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (North)
[1.8 a.m.]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the House.
Motion put and negatived.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [1.9 a.m.]: I am sorry that I have to address the House at so late an hour, but for this I am in no way responsible. I cannot allow a financial statement such as we have had this morning to pass without making a few remarks, and I assure the House that I will be as brief as in the circumstances it is possible to be. First of all I would draw the attention of hon. members to the utterances of Ministers 18 months ago, in contrast with the optimistic views now held by the leader of the House. In the Governor's speech of 18 months ago Ministers said that the financial position of the State was causing them considerable anxiety. Since then the Government have accumulated a deficit of nearly 1½ millions, and the leader of the House endeavours now to convince us that everything is all right. One could be very severe if one chose; but we all agree that, whatever faults the Government may exhibit in the administration of the affairs of this State we have in the leader of this House a man of exceptional ability, a man who will work, and a man who will do his work well.

For that reason, no matter how severe we might feel inclined to be, we extend some leniency to the Colonial Secretary. I hope, however, that the leader of the House will remember this leniency on some future occasion, because more than once he has been severer on me than was necessary, and has been unjust in his remarks, and misleading also.

The Colonial Secretary: But not intentionally.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Now let me take the Minister back to the time when he said I made the astounding statement that the country was drifting at the rate of £2,000 a day. The hon. gentleman then described me as a traitor to my country, and as one who made statements which no responsible man should make. But what do I find now? That the deficit, instead of accumulating at the rate of £2,000 per day as it was then, is accumulating at the rate of £3,000 a day. For the first four months of the year it was accumulating, not at the rate of £2,000 per day as I stated, but at the rate of about £3,000 per day. The excuse offered was that July was a bad month, the first month in the financial year. July, the Minister said, was a bad month for revenue, and it was unfair of me to quote the July figures. However, the July figures were the only figures then available to me; and the July deficit was £130,000. August was still worse than July. September was a good month, thanks to the increased land rents paid by the pastoralists. October, however, was worse than July, the deficit being £132,000. To get right down to bedrock, the deficit for the first four months of this year averaged £90,000 per month or £3,000 per day. When those figures came out, the Treasurer said yes, the deficit was so much, but comparing it with the previous year's deficit he was £24,000 to the good. I can only assume that such a statement coming from the Colonial Treasurer was made in a jocular spirit. Let me put it this way: If I gave the leader of the House £10 and told him to have a good time and bring me the change—

The Colonial Secretary: I would not give you much change.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: And if I gave the Honorary Minister £5 and told him to go and have a good time, and the leader of the House came back with £5 out of the ten and the Honorary Minister came back with £4 out of the five, would I be right in accusing the Honorary Minister of extravagance? But it is by calculations of that kind the Colonial Treasurer arrives at the conclusion that for the first four months of this year he is better off by £24,000 than he was for the first four months of the last financial year. The truth is that for the first four months of this financial year he had £90,000 more revenue than in the corresponding period of the previous year. When he says that he has decreased his deficit as compared with last year by £24,000, the real fact is that, instead of being £24,000 better off, he is, in view of the £90,000 increased revenue, another £66,000 to the bad. That is one illustration of the manner in which figures were juggled by the Minister tonight in making a good case out of a bad one.

According to the Colonial Treasurer, the deficit for this year was to be £636,000, which would give an average deficit of £53,000 a month. We began the first four months of the year with a deficit of £90,000 per month and we accumulated in the four months more than half the estimated deficit for the year. When we consider this, members must view the situation from a very serious standpoint. We are told by the leader of the House that a lot of this money is going into interest and sinking fund. The Colonial Secretary, when he did not represent the Government, never made any deductions for interest and sinking fund in criticising the figures, and I do not think it is fair for the Treasurer to place figures before the House and then for the Colonial Secretary to say that some of the figures should be excluded from the balance sheet. The Treasurer puts the figures up as correct and the Colonial Secretary says some of these should be excluded. I have never heard of one director putting up a balance sheet before his co-directors and then another director argue that a lot of the items should be excluded. The fact remains, apart from anything else, that this Government is responsible for last year's deficit. The Colonial Secretary tells the House, and expects the public to believe, that the Government are in no way responsible for the interest and sinking fund. I would remind the hon. gentleman of the fact that last year's deficit amounted to £700,000 and the interest on that would amount to £40,000 or £50,000. Surely the hon. members, on behalf of the Government, should take the responsibility for last year's deficit and the interest thereon, which is a charge on this year's revenue, running into between £40,000 and £45,000. Taking the first four months of the year, the deficit amounted to £362,000, and taking that deficit as an average for the year, at the end of 12 months, instead of there being £636,000 deficit, it will be approximately a million pounds. I am only taking the figures as they have been placed before us. In connection with the trading concerns, I only accept the figures before me, and there is supposed to be a surplus of £54,000 on trading concerns for this year. But the surplus on trading concerns amounts to £153,000 and the deficit to £104,000, leaving a net surplus of £54,000. If we exclude the State steamships from that, instead of having a surplus we should have a deficit of £87,951. The figures may or may not be right, but they are placed before us and we must accept them, and they show that the trading concerns instead of showing a surplus of £53,000 show a deficit of £87,951. And all those trading concerns are being carried on in spite of the fact that the Minister for Works in another place said that the difference between his party and the Labour party was that the Labour party were in favour of State trading concerns and that the Liberal party were opposed to them, and, to use his own words, all the flapdoodle in the world would not make any difference to us. I suppose the trading concerns will go on until

something happens to the "Kangaroo" and then those concerns will not be able to carry on. While on State trading concerns I should like to draw attention to the fact, and I understand it was stated in another place by the Minister for Works that the State Implement Works have been written down from something like £170,000 to £50,000. I should like to know whether that is correct.

The Colonial Secretary: They have been written down.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: There is nothing before us to show that it has been done. If these State Implement Works are sold to the farmers and settlers, will they be sold, not on the basis of the reduced valuation, but on the value of 20s. in the pound? I draw attention to this, for the reason that on the 12th January last, when Mr. Basil Murray, the farmers' and settlers' representative, was a guest of the State Implement Works, he said that when the co-operative company acquired control of the works, as undoubtedly they would, he hoped to extend the co-operative system to the employees. I want to know why the State Implement Works have been written down from £170,000 to £50,000. I hope it is not in order that they may be sold to the Farmers' and Settlers' Association or the Country party. I would like to draw attention to the Colonial Secretary's department. The Estimates are before me. The Colonial Secretary told us, when the Prisons Bill was before us, and again to-night, that the only institution that is empty is the gaol.

The Colonial Secretary: Not empty.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Practically.

The Colonial Secretary: Not quite, there is still room for one more.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Let me say, in view of that statement, that extra money would be required so that tools may be supplied for men to be taught trades, and I suggest that it will be necessary for the rising generation, in order to learn a trade, to commit some offence so as to get into gaol. When we come to the Colonial Secretary's Estimates, with the empty gaols, we find the salaries have been increased by a sum of £572 and the contingencies have been cut down by £563, so that the increase really amounts to only £9. The harbour and light department, for some reason or other, shows a decrease of £7,449, and medical and public health shows an increase of £7,439. I only want to make one reference to the Perth public hospital, for which last year the vote was £20,000. This year the vote is increased to £22,500. I do not know if we can afford to spend £22,500 on the hospital in Perth. I am surprised to learn from the leader of the House of what happens in connection with the Perth public hospital. I was under the impression that the hospital was kept going for people who cannot afford to pay. If the Government let anybody and everybody into the public hospitals, it will be found that the hospitals will be full of people who can afford to pay and the people who cannot afford to pay will be excluded. The people who can afford to pay should go to private hospitals, especially those about Perth, and the public hospitals should

be kept for charitable purposes. Another £2,500 is to be spent above what was expended last year, and if we go on at this rate we cannot go on forever. We have an astounding statement by the leader of the House to-night that out of the whole of the revenue only £756,000 is available to carry on the services of the country, and if we pile up the deficit at the rate of three-quarters of a million a year, saying nothing in regard to the interest on that deficit that amounts to £50,000 per annum, then we have only got a few years to go until the time comes when we shall have nothing to carry on with. Yet the leader of the House stands up and tells us that everything is all right, and now that the war is over things will soon be smiling. I wish to compare that with what the hon. member told the House a few years ago, and what the present Government told us in the Governor's Speech only 18 months ago, when the financial position of the State was 50 per cent. better than it is to-day. We were told that the finances were causing considerable alarm. I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that 18 months ago Ministers did view the position with alarm, so much so that the present Treasurer said that he had told the heads of the departments, and Ministers had delivered a message to the public, that from this time forward the daily expenditure had to be kept within the daily revenue. That was what was going to be done, or they would have to make room for somebody who could do it. Yet for the year the deficit has been mounting up by £2,000 a day, and this year we started with a deficit of £3,000 a day. I do not wish to delay the House, but I did wish to bring out a few important points, and if time permitted I could handle the subject and talk interestingly for hours on State finance. To tell any member that a population of 300,000 can go on accumulating a deficit from £2,000 to £3,000 a day is absurd. We know that it cannot go on for long. All that we are doing at present is putting off till to-morrow what we ought to have done to-day. If we had tackled the business of the session at the beginning of the session we should not be in the hopeless state of confusion we have been in during the last few days. The same may be said of the finances. But we are drifting on, and nothing will be done until we reach a dead end.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [1.31 a.m.] I do not propose to cover the whole ground, but I must say the promises of the Colonial Secretary have not been carried out. In regard to the sinking fund, we are in a far better position than any of the other States, and I think it is a shame that this Government, like the Labour Government, are not permitted to do away with the sinking fund, especially during a time of war. Half of our troubles arise from the sinking fund, and despite all that has been said about destroying our credit in London, we should have been allowed to suspend the sinking fund until after the war was over. I do not think this State has got a fair deal from the Federal authorities. It does not matter which Government may be in power,

it is always the same. The State Labour Government that were in power a few years ago had the same trouble in regard to the Federal Labour Government, and had the same trouble with the Liberal Government under Mr. Cook. The present Government are having exactly the same trouble with the Commonwealth National Government. The State Government ought to take steps to see if they cannot get a better deal from the Federal Government than they have had in the past. I should be prepared to assist them in this in every possible way. Reference has been made to the expenditure on hospitals. If the whole of the hospitals in the State were run on the same lines as hospitals on the fields and other places where large number of workers are engaged, we should not be in the position we are in respect to that expenditure. In those industries where the largest number of men are employed, those men are paying for their own hospital accommodation. Yet in Perth we have to pay out £22,000 for a single hospital. I realise that a large number of cases come from all over the State to the Perth Public Hospital, but I also know that a larger sum of money can be and should be collected from patients towards the cost of maintenance of the public hospital. The same thing applies to Fremantle. Here are the two biggest towns in the State, and they claim most for hospital accommodation, while workers in other parts of the State have to pay for their own hospital accommodation. I do not think it is right. As for people who can afford to pay going into those hospitals. I believe that system has obtained in regard to maternity hospitals. Those hospitals were intended for women of limited means, but the wives of men drawing salaries of from £6 to £10 per week have been accommodated in the maternity hospitals. This was never intended, and I trust the Government will take steps to put a stop to it. The Colonial Secretary has made no reference whatever to the proposed freezing works. Mr. Holmes, in common with others, has criticised the State trading concerns very severely in times past, and even again to-night.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I think I was fair.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I think the hon. member was justified in his criticism; I am not complaining of that. But I want to show the hon. member where he is inconsistent. It is a remarkable thing that if the State puts up a butcher's shop and sells a sausage it is looked upon as State socialism, it is a State trading concern; but if the Government go to Fremantle and put up freezing works and sell a whole sheep, that is private enterprise.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: No, that is State enterprise.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Well, let me put it this way: if the State erects a butcher's shop and manages it and sells sheep's trotters to the people of the State, it is State socialism, but if the State provides the money for a freezing works and appoints Mr. Holmes and others to manage it, it is private enterprise.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They only propose to loan the money.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Well, that was the idea in the first place, that the State should provide the money and a trust manage the concern.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: My idea was that the pastoralists should find two-thirds of the money, while the State loaned the balance.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Even on that assumption, it is accounted private enterprise. The distinction is rather a fine one. I am inclined to think it is State socialism. We cannot get behind the fact that the Government are going to provide a large part of the money for those freezing works. If we are going to have State trading concerns, let us have them. Do not let us have a shandygaff sort of affair—the State providing the money and letting someone else manage the concern. I prefer to see the State manage it. I am not keen about the establishment of any more trading concerns until we shall have made a complete success of those we have. Certainly we have made some success of them, and it was good to hear the Colonial Secretary recommending those concerns this evening.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: It is his duty to do it.

Hon. J. E. DODD: As far as I can judge from the figures submitted, the business concerns show a profit of £148,000. I believe that is clear profit. On the State trading concerns there is a credit balance of £557,000, that is including the railways and, I believe, the "Kangaroo."

The Colonial Secretary: The profit on the business undertakings is a gross profit.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I think the total amount, after paying everything, was \$164,000. That seems to me a very gratifying result from those concerns that brought about the downfall of the Scaddan Government. After all the millions we have heard of as having been spent on those trading concerns, I find the total amount has been £1,054,000. We should be gratified to a certain extent with the statement the Colonial Secretary has made.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: To a certain extent.

Hon. J. E. DODD: Well, I am gratified at receiving even little mercies at the present time. In regard to the railways, I hope that the Government will embark on a policy shortly to try to get from the railways the value that they legitimately earn and to try to get something out of land values that the railways create. With reference to water supplies, I would ask the Government to consider whether or not they cannot do something to give the mines—especially those that are struggling along—water at a more reasonable figure, and if the Government cannot do that they should allow those mines to use the water which they have. This has been a point of dispute for a number of years, and I want the Government to solve it. Coming to the Loan Estimates, let me congratulate the Government on providing the sum of £50,000 for the development of mining. I think the Government are on the right track there, and they will get better results from this vote than from any other, but they need to be careful in the way they spend the money. I would ask again that the promise given with regard to the Esperance railway be honoured. I do not know what has occurred

in another place with regard to the motion which has appeared on the Notice Paper for some time past. Anyhow, I trust the Government will honour the promise that they made and that they will not seek to break away from it in any shape or form. The mining members of both Houses have supported every agricultural railway proposition that has come along, and in regard to this particular railway, the agricultural members would be ungrateful if they sought to balk it in any shape or form. Any reasonable action which the Government propose to take to endeavour to secure better treatment from the Federal authorities will have my cordial support. I realise that this is a country of primary industries, and unless some alteration takes place with regard to the Federal tariff, we are, to use the common expression, "Gone a million." The Federal Government are asking for more protection. They want more protection all the time. The whole power is being centred in Sydney and Melbourne and to a lesser degree in Adelaide, and to a still very much lesser degree in Perth, and if that goes on for another two or three years, we shall be at the mercy of Sydney and Melbourne unless something is done in the way of removing the existing restrictions. Everything that a man wants, whether that man be a miner or a squatter or anything else, is taxed, and yet he has to go into the open markets of the world to sell what he produces, in order to build up some artificial factory in Melbourne out of which the manufacturers are making huge profits. I have a certain amount of pleasure in supporting the Bill.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [1.50 a.m.] : If I am in order in divining the thoughts of hon. members, I would say that the one thing above all others that they are pining for is a detailed examination by me of the figures which have been placed before us. I hope that you, Mr. President, and members of the Chamber will bear up under the disappointment when I say that no such analysis can be expected from me. Speaking seriously, however, I must say that even though the hour is late the extreme importance of the financial position of this State does not justify us in allowing the statement of the Colonial Secretary to pass without making a few remarks on it. With regard to the submission of these Estimates at this late hour of the session, we can only enter the same protest which we have been doing for years past. We thought, from a promise that was made by the Treasurer, that quite a new order of things would be introduced during this session. The Colonial Secretary said that we would not in the future see a repetition of the Estimates being submitted to Parliament after half or more of the financial year had passed, and after the greater part of the money had been spent. Yet here we are in the closing hours of the session, and after midnight, when we find Estimates submitted to us, and we are asked to take them into serious consideration. At every election of members to this House during recent years, all the candidates have been insistent in their desire to attempt to straighten the finances. But what hope is there

of ascertaining their views or getting any suggestions from them at this early hour of the morning? The speech of the Colonial Secretary himself was not as interesting as I expected it to be. It is the fifth speech he has delivered in this House on financial questions, and it is interesting to mention the several lines that he went on in the various speeches that he delivered. When he was opposed to the Scaddan Government, I can well remember the powerful case he made out on the deficit. Small and insignificant as it was then, the hon. gentleman said it was entirely due to the sins of the monstrous Scaddan Government. Then there was no talk of anything but the misdeeds of the Scaddan Government, and the financial drift that was going on. When a change of Government took place, and the hon. gentleman became Colonial Secretary, we find that he delivered a speech which will be found in "Hansard," and a very able speech it was, in which he showed that it was extremely difficult to straighten the finances, to reduce the deficit, or to live within our income because of the high interest and sinking fund charges that had to be regularly paid. Interest and sinking fund, he said, was so large that it was impossible that the balance that was left would effect the necessary reductions, or economies, or bring about any improvement. At a later date he delivered a speech that won the admiration of a great many members of this House. He found a further cause, in fact it seemed to be the main cause, of the financial trouble into which the Government had drifted, and it was the iniquities of the Commonwealth, the dreadful Commonwealth, that was treating this State of Western Australia so badly. It was not only said that the Federal Government were not doing everything that was right, it was no longer the sins of the Scaddan Government, but the position was due to the outlaw and criminal Commonwealth Government. A few days ago he delivered a speech that was quite different from the previous speeches, and then it was not the sins of the Scaddan Government that were responsible for the deficit. Nor was it due to the heavy interest and sinking fund charges, nor even was it due to the Commonwealth, but he seemed to satisfactorily prove that there was practically no deficit at all, that the deficit that existed was a mere trifle, according to the figures he supplied us. This is how he seemed to put the position: Whilst the deficit for the current year will be £636,000, the sinking fund we will have to pay will be £315,000, and the interest on the accumulated sinking fund £180,000. When that is deducted from the deficit, as shown in these figures, there is a mere trifle of a deficit left, of only £141,000. Of course there are a few little features in connection with the financial representation of the case which I am not taking into account, the increased interest charge that has to be paid for sinking fund. A matter of that kind is not taken into account at all. But the position now, as he has shown it to us, is that it is quite true that the deficit is £3,200,000. If he has set off against that the sinking fund payments

and the interest upon the accumulated sinking fund, probably he will reduce the deficit to something like a couple of millions. It shows the financial demoralisation we have reached, when an enormous deficit like that can be treated in this light way, as though it were a matter of no consequence. We can apply to those people who went in to straighten the finances the saying, "How have the mighty fallen." They seem to me to have fallen very low indeed, as compared with the financial ideals on which they assumed office. In his speech to-night I cannot find any evidence whatever of an improvement. Since the Government have been in office, the only endeavour they have made to improve the financial position has been to increase taxation, and as they increase taxation so they proportionately and to a greater extent increased expenditure and increased it in many directions when it was quite unnecessary to do so. Now the war is over; and one would have expected that the Government would come out with something new, that they would be coming along to tell us about some new scheme for improving the financial position. There are many directions in which a good deal might have been done, but was not done, to improve the state of financial affairs. Has anything at all been done to improve the position of our railways? The Government have continued to dally with the question of the appointment of a Commissioner, and goodness only knows now when anybody will be appointed. One would have imagined that that would be one of the first acts of the Government, in order to make the financial position of the railways something better than it has been. But nothing of the kind has been attempted. At the end of next year we are up against the termination of the Commonwealth financial agreement. Ministers seem to hope that something better may come than the present arrangement; but with the enormous financial obligations of the Commonwealth I fail utterly to see how our Ministers can have any hope of improvement there. They might succeed in doing something if they endeavoured to impress upon the other States as well as upon the Commonwealth the necessity for bringing about something in the direction of the consolidation of the State debts and the taking over of the State debts by the Commonwealth. It is quite true that that would mean a complete re-adjustment of the relationship between the States and the Commonwealth, but in view of our financial position I do not see what else can arise. At present we are absolutely at the mercy of the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth have complete control of the finances of this country, and I should think that the Federal Government ought to welcome any proposal made by the States for the taking over of the State debts by the Commonwealth. I rather imagine that such a proposal coming from the States in any form of fairness to the Commonwealth would be welcomed by the Federal Government. The only suggestion that has been made to-night by the Colonial Secretary of anything at all in the direction of improve-

ment is that there will be increased expenditure of loan money. In view of the enormous price that we have to pay at present for loan money—the interest will be very considerable, probably this year 6½ per cent.—I fail to see that there is a prospect of very much improvement from the further expenditure of loan money to the extent suggested. It seems to me that the policy of the present Government, ever since they came into office, has been in direct contradiction of the policy with which they assumed office. The policy of the Government to-day—and it looks to me as if that policy was going to be continued—is a policy of spend, spend, spend; and all the time Ministers are waiting for something to turn up. It is a policy of drift and indifference so far as the State is concerned.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [2.6 a.m.]: I sympathise with the Colonial Secretary on the heavy and continuous work he has been called upon to perform during the past week or two, and I quite realise that he must be anxious for the business of the House to conclude without a further adjournment. Had it not been for that, I should not have felt disposed to consent to the business of the House being proceeded with at this hour. I should have endeavoured to secure the support of hon. members for a motion for the adjournment of this debate but for that one fact. It is purely out of consideration for the leader of the House that I have sat here during the past two months for so many hours. During this week we must have established almost a record. As regards the Appropriation Bill, I am indeed sorry that we find ourselves again in exactly the same position as that which has obtained at the close of each session ever since I have been a member of this House. In the past we have repeatedly declared that we would not be prepared to proceed with the discussion of the Appropriation Bill if that measure was received at such a late hour again. I really do not think it fair that we should be called upon to discuss the finances of the State in the small hours of the morning. Under these conditions we cannot discuss the financial position in a satisfactory manner. Many of us would like to offer suggestions that would be of assistance to the Government, but one can hardly address oneself to the financial subject in these circumstances. If I went through these Estimates as I should like to do, from cover to cover, I fear I should keep members sitting here till breakfast time. I was indeed interested by the statement of the leader of the House that so far as our finances are concerned we are not going to the bad, or that if we are going to the bad at all it is by a very little margin indeed. I am quite in accord with his statement that by imposing a sinking fund on our loans, the amount of which sinking fund is being placed in a reserve account, we are paying to some extent our liabilities. But even allowing the correctness of the figures quoted by the leader of the House, the amount of sinking fund payments deducted from the deficit for the year still leaves a debit balance of £136,000. If that is the ex-

tent to which we are drifting, it is almost a pity that the leader of the House moved the deletion of an item for the purpose of a second "Kangaroo," when that was proposed on the Loan Estimates of a previous session. The "Kangaroo" is about the only ship in the world that is trading without restrictions. The Treasurer in his statement made on the 1st December told the people of this State that the deficit for the first four months of the current financial year is in round figures £68,000, or £70,000 less than the deficit for the corresponding period of last year. On reference to the returns of the State Trading Concerns, it appears that the State Steamship Service had a credit of £132,000. I speak subject to correction, but I think it would be impossible to have such a credit unless the freight of the "Kangaroo" had been paid into that account. The "Kangaroo" unquestionably is a fine asset. I would like just to emphasise this point in connection with the "Kangaroo" and I speak subject to correction. I believe it is the only steamer that has left Western Australia during the past few years without any restriction as to the freight paid by the charterers. When I tell members that the steamer got £13 a ton for some reason or other which is not understandable to me, I should like very much indeed for the leader of the House to explain why permission was given for the steamer to load flour at such a profiteering freight. No one else can get permission to export flour, although the tonnage is available. I know of one instance during the past week in which a steamer was offered to load in Western Australia not at £13 a ton but at £21 per ton, £8 a ton higher than the freight paid to the "Kangaroo," and the flour was sold in Egypt and arrangements were completed subject to the Wheat Board granting permission to load the flour. It can be understood, if we had a steamer like the "Kangaroo," trading without any restriction other than port to port regulations, subject to the control of the board, and that they can ask such abnormal rates like the present, it is only reasonable to assume that a very heavy surplus will be shown at the end of the financial year. According to the Estimates of the State Steamship Service there will be an increased amount contributed to the Consolidated Revenue Fund of £142,000. That, indeed, is a very excellent sum and, as I said earlier, it is almost a pity that we did not possess that foresight in the earlier stages of the war to invest in two or three more steamers, which would have got rid of the deficit. I think the leader of the House was just as keen as myself in stating that we had no right to enter into this competition. We had no right at all to enter into such speculation as the State Steamship Service, and I remember the leader of the House saying that the steamer should be sold and that if the Government could get the purchase price for that steamer then the Government should sell her, because we had no right to enter into this competition. It was not right that we should embark in these enterprises, and he added that the State Steamship Service

was doomed to failure. He was quite right in that, in my opinion, because had it not been for the abnormal conditions prevailing, and as disclosed in this statement, it was this steamer alone that was making this huge profit. I think even in those days he was perfectly justified, providing the normal conditions had remained, but I fail to see that the Treasurer was justified in taking £78,000 as the profit earned by this steamer and placing it to the credit of revenue, and then giving a comparative statement that he is £78,000 better off this year than for the same period last year. In connection with the State Steamship Service, I am opposed to the manager of the service being also secretary of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. Here we have two of the largest trading concerns of the State—outside of the Railway Department it is the largest spending department in labour—and there must be efficient administration in those departments. The secretary of the Fremantle Harbour Trust must devote a certain amount of his time in connection with the administration of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and when one considers that he has added to his position that of manager of the State Steamship Service, which has grown to such an extent in recent years, I consider these dual positions should be abolished, not in order to build up another big State department, because I am opposed to the building up of these new departments. It is not because I would like to see another big State department built up, but I would like to see either the secretary of the Harbour Trust giving his full time to such a large department as the Fremantle Harbour Trust and some other capable man appointed to carry out the duties of manager of the State Steamship Service. I believe the same officers could be utilised and arrangements made by which some of the officials could do the work. The Government have a staff of pilots and berthage masters and a large number of men holding responsible positions in the Fremantle Harbour Trust and I contend that those same individuals could give the necessary time in connection with marine or engineer superintendence as they can at the present time, occupying their own positions. I pointed out in the House two years ago that I considered some serious anomalies existed in connection with the State Steamship Service, serious to the extent that although it was only a case of some thousands of pounds per annum, yet that money could be saved to the State with no additional expenditure. I wish to give one instance in that connection in order to show to the House where savings can be effected. Mr. Miles knows as well as I do the Marble Bar-Port Hedland railway, and when I was there last it was a weekly service.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: It is fortnightly now.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Hon. R. J. LYNN: That railway has a staff of capable men running it in that part of the State, and when a passenger boards a train at Marble Bar he buys a ticket to Port Hedland and on his

arrival at Port Hedland he gets out of the train, walks across the street to the storekeeper and purchases a ticket to go from Port Hedland to Fremantle, from the storekeeper, and the storekeeper is paid five per cent. for issuing the ticket. At the same time the Government have a staff of railway men there with little or nothing to do. If it is necessary to have men of special qualifications with shipping experience to control the work of the steamers at the out-ports, there might be some argument in opposition to what I have stated. But when one goes to Albany, where there are houses with good shipping men in them, the Government do not employ any of the men out of the shipping houses in Albany, but the railway men act as agents there. The same thing applies in many other places throughout the North. At Broome, in connection with the Harbour and Light Department, and the Wharfage Department, there are two men receiving all the cargo which comes across the jetty at Broome and is put into a shed. The Government officials at Broome collect the cargo and the wharfage which probably is 2s. or 2s. 6d. a ton, but when it comes to collecting the higher rates of 40s. or 50s. a ton, the consignee goes to the storekeeper and gets delivery, on which he is allowed to issue the release note. The same thing applies along the coast. At Carnarvon and at Geraldton exactly the same conditions are in force. I did propose calling for information as to the amount of the agency fees paid to each of the agents at the outports so that I might have had the information when speaking to-night on the Estimates. But I realised that the Estimates were coming on at the eleventh hour and so far as the House was concerned, there would be little or no interest paid to them. So that I propose waiting until next year, and when the House meets at an early date, I shall table a motion in order to get this information and move some specific motion in regard to the matters I have mentioned. When a member of this Chamber or of another place is willing to furnish information showing where savings can be effected, some consideration should be given to the suggestions, but instead of that no notice is taken of any of the suggestions mentioned by members. I often wonder why we come here. Take the legislation of this year. It is the same almost as in previous years. To my mind it seems barren of results from an individual point of view, because of the sympathy that is wanted between the Government and members and the exchange of any ideas that may be possible for the betterment of the State and our financial position. I have no wish to prolong the question of the Fremantle Harbour Trust or the State Steamship Service, but I ask the leader of the House to take a note of what I have said and get the information for himself and if he gets that information, to ascertain what officials he has at these ports, what are their duties, what added duties they are capable of doing, and how much money can be saved to the State Steamship Service directly or indirectly and of benefit to the State. And I think if suggestions like that are given by members and are taken notice of, some savings can be effected and we can at least take

some little credit for doing something in order to effect some saving to our State. I was not very deeply interested in the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. But some departments disclose certain anomalies. Take the manager of the State sawmills: he is in receipt of £600 per annum. He has a mill manager under him and responsible to him, and the mill manager is in receipt of £50 per annum more than is his chief. That sort of thing leads to disorganisation. It certainly cannot tend to good administration. I believe he is a very good man, but even so it is a singular anomaly. I am satisfied that the figures respecting State trading concerns are useless. Take the State brickworks. There we find an estimated expenditure of £6,470, a net increase of £4,038, and the total estimated receipts are only £2,750. Yet we find the manager is paid £500. Thus 20 per cent. of the total estimated receipts go to the manager. The wages and general working expenses amount to £4,200, interest on fixed and working capital to £1,690, and departmental charges to £80. Take all that expenditure against the estimated receipts of £2,750, and we see that it is palpably wrong. I looked up the figures and I found that the receipts from the brickworks for the first five months of the year were £3,352. In other words, the receipts are roughly £800 more in five months than the estimated receipts for the 12 months, while the expenditure for the same period was £2,785, which is in keeping with the Estimates. But if £1,700 is the total standing charge of the brickworks, is it not infinitely better to pay the standing charges and close the works rather than to continue trading at a loss? I know the figures must be wrong. What is wrong with them I do not know. That is one of the questions which I submitted to the leader of the House. It is necessary that explanations should be given in order that we might delve into some of these trading concerns and arrive at some finality. Mr. Holmes has referred to the State Implement Works. For the present year it is anticipated that the works will provide interest on fixed and working capital amounting to £9,000, and close the year with a deficit of £466. We know that these figures are not correct. If the Minister feels disposed to wipe off £60,000 or £70,000 of the capital plant because of obsolescence, there should be some manner of treating it other than writing it down to a point where interest and sinking fund will just about cover the revenue. It is estimated that the expenditure for the year will be £79,000, and on the returns issued on the 1st December the expenditure to that date is approximately £51,000, clearly indicating the impossibility of discussing these figures for want of information placed before the Chamber. I am willing to admit the leader of the House might well say, "We are running this as a State trading concern. We have our profit and loss account and our ledger balance drawn up monthly, and the profit and loss account made out at the end of six months or twelve months." I know it may be quite possible for the works to have a fair stock on

hand at the close of the year, and the sales of the stock put into the sales of the following month or two, and so build up the receipts, not out of the work but out of the stock. But this expenditure I refer to: the expenditure over five months is 75 per cent. of the total for the year, and this is not a concern where the balance of seven months is made up because of reduced work, for I take it the continuity of work is there. Of course if it is not that may account for it. By continuity of work I mean that the average number of men employed is as nearly as possible maintained in order to get the highest standard of efficiency in the shops throughout the year. And although they may have some rush jobs at times, that would not amount to more than £5,000 or £6,000 during the year. Then the State quarries are in exactly the same position. They are being run at a loss, and the sawmills are not doing very much better. It is impossible for any member to derive any satisfaction from debating the figures in the form in which they are put before us here, especially when we are asked to consider them at three o'clock in the morning, notwithstanding that we have been here since three o'clock in the afternoon. It is only because I think the leader of the House is worthy of support and is entitled to get into recess that I have remained here. It is hardly reasonable to criticise him and keep him here day after day and then expect him to administer his big departments. Reference has been made to the hospital vote. As a humanitarian, I say this vote can never be too large. So long as efficiency is being maintained at those institutions and economy is being exercised, we cannot complain. But let me give this instance: a few months ago I was on the way to Bunbury, when I met a man in the train. He said, "My word, that Perth hospital is a great institution." I said, "Yes; what is your experience?" He replied, "I had my little boy very ill. He went into the Perth Public Hospital, and I went along to pay the account. The secretary said, 'I do not know what the fee is, but there is a poor box there.'" And so he put a pound in the box and kept the rest.

The Colonial Secretary: How long ago was that?

Hon. R. J. LYNN: Within the last 12 months. If that is the general method of rendering accounts it is no wonder that institution is costing a lot of money. I mention this to show the general laxity respecting Government departments. Everyone, even responsible officials, seems to consider that the Government are good game, and are entitled to find the money. I was pleased to hear the leader of the House refer to the Railway Department, and the overhead charges. I am in accord with him. The same argument applies to the railways as to the East Perth power station. That power house is capitalised very highly, and unless they have the output the overhead charges will be very heavy. The same thing applies to the railways, and that was one thing which the Commissioner never seemed to take into consideration. Those who were responsible never seemed to cater for the

traffic; no headway was ever made in that respect. I approached the Minister on one occasion to see whether anything could be done to foster the coal industry. In South Africa they carry coal 2,000 miles for what we in this State carry it 150 miles. It is a special traffic of great importance to any country. There is no commodity which will tend to build up a country to a greater or more rapid extent than coal. It is only by going into these questions exhaustively and by the exchange of views that we can hope to get out of the difficulties we find ourselves in to-day. I am in favour of appointing financial committees in both Houses of Parliament. There are men in Parliament who are well qualified to express opinions on matters of financial interest, men who have had a good commercial training, and I believe if the Government could see their way to appoint such committees and refer questions of financial importance to them, the best results would follow. If something like that is not done, I fail to see that members of Parliament will be of any value to the State. So far as I am concerned, I know of nothing that I have done that has advanced the interests of the State from a Parliamentary point of view. If any hon. member who has at one time or another held a responsible position was sufficiently conscientious he would endorse what I have stated. We are hampered and curbed at every direction. Here is an instance: When matters of financial importance should be given careful and close consideration we find ourselves debating them in the early hours of the morning, debating them in a sparsely attended House, when members are weary after a series of protracted sittings and when they are mentally unfit to express opinions of value. I am sorry that the motion on the Notice Paper which was moved by Mr. Carson with reference to the Electoral Department cannot be proceeded with. Something should be done with regard to that department. The experience at the last elections was such that I say without hesitation that the Electoral Department was of little or no value. Unless there can be better administration the department should be abolished, or reconstructed, but I am of the opinion that the amount of money on the Estimates for that department, judging by the way it is conducted to-day, is of little or no value. There is no occasion for us to be croakers. I believe that normal times will return and that in the not distant future there will again be the advent of ships to our shores, and with our ability to export our products prosperity will return. I would give the leader of the House a word of warning, and it is that if the Estimates are brought down again on the last day of the session, and I am here, he can rest assured he will get no quarter even if I have to stonewall every item. I have refrained from doing so on this occasion out of regard to the leader of the House, who has had heavy and arduous duties to perform during the past fortnight. But it is not fair to any member of this Chamber to bring in the Appropriation Bill in the closing hours of the session, and neither is it fair

to the State. If this cannot be obviated, I would like to see the Constitution altered so that we might have a chance of devoting more time to the Estimates and giving them fuller consideration than we have ever done in the past. It would be better if they did not come before us at all rather than we should have them two hours before the termination of the session.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [2.55]: I cannot but express my gratitude to hon. members for the spirit in which they have received this Bill. They have always treated me with great generosity, but their action this evening has exceeded anything they have done in the past. I shall reply very briefly. I would like to assure Mr. Holmes that I am confident that the deficit will not exceed the estimate. It is always the case in the first four or five months of the financial year that the deficit is very large. When I presented the Appropriation Bill last year I told hon. members that the deficit would be a quarter of a million less than the estimate. That proved to be the case, and I am just as confident that the deficit this year will not exceed the estimate. I hope it will be a good deal less. The hon. member made reference to the increased vote for the Perth hospital. That is due to the fact that the vote provided last year was not sufficient for the purpose. There is a great deal to be said in favour of the contention put forward by Mr. Dodd that in many of the outback districts the people support their hospitals handsomely, whereas in Perth where the hospital is used by people of all parts of the State, it is difficult to make the local residents realise their responsibilities. Mr. Lynn made reference to an incident in connection with the administration of the hospital, and I can hardly imagine how it occurred. The hospital is conducted by a board, and if what Mr. Lynn states actually occurred, some officer must have been to blame. I made no reference to the Fremantle Freezing Works and Mr. Dodd expressed regret on that account. I did not do so because from day to day there has been some reference in the Press to what was going on regarding these works, but no finality has yet been arrived at and I am not in a position to give hon. members any information. I recognise it will be necessary to exercise care in the expenditure of the vote provided for the encouragement of mining, and I endorse what has been said in regard to the generous support the mining members have given towards the development of agriculture and industries in other parts of the State. Mr. Kirwan made reference to State debts, which is worthy of close consideration. The hon. member has a greater knowledge of Federal political affairs than most of us because he has been a member of the Federal House. That is one direction in which the Commonwealth Parliament has neglected its obligations to the State under the Constitution, in that it has not made provision for the taking over of the State debts. Mr. Lynn was quite right in his reference to the State steamers. It is true that the

'Kangaroo' has excited a good deal of envy amongst its competitors, and I have to admit that if the State had purchased two or three other vessels before the war began we would now have been in a correspondingly better position. The difficulties the Government have had from time to time to retain the "Kangaroo" makes me pause to think what the difficulties would have been if we had been the owners of not one but two or three steamers of that type.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. gentleman moved to delete the item for the purpose of another steamer.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I did; and I am not even now ashamed of having done it. As a matter of fact it is an unfortunate feature of the position regarding State Trading concerns that the steamship "Kangaroo" is able to make enormous profits because it competes unfairly against other steamship companies of the Commonwealth. That is an argument into which I am not going to enter to-night, but it shows that State enterprise when directly successful may be indirectly prejudicial to the interests of the community.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: And the other State steamers are the only steamers in the world not paying to-day.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: That is because they are running cheap freights along the North-West coast. I am not able to explain why a freight of £13 per ton should be considered profiteering. There is a great deal to be said in favour of the contention regarding the management of the State Steamship Service by the Secretary of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, but the present manager of the State Steamship Service is a very capable man and is doing his very best in the interests of the State. As regards State trading concerns generally, the trouble seems to be so far as the information reaching this House is concerned that for some reason or other it has not been found possible to comply with the condition that the whole of the balance sheets, audited, should be placed on the Tables of both Houses of Parliament by the 30th September of each year. If that were done, as is contemplated by the Act, the information would certainly be of great value to hon. members. Finally, Mr. Lynn said that if the Appropriation Bill were brought down again on the last day of the session he would oppose its passage. If he does that in those circumstances, I shall not complain; but I do wish hon. members to remind themselves of this fact, that we are finishing this session before Christmas; that is to say, we are going to have a recess. Since I have been a member of the Government, this is the first recess we have ever had. If Ministers do not make good use of the recess, and are not able to satisfy Parliament next session that they have made good use of the recess, they will be deserving of any hostile criticism that they may get.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Schedules A, B, C, D, E—agreed to.

Schedule F:

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I direct the attention of the leader of the House to page 10, where he will see a reference to the Industries Assistance Board, and, immediately following that, something which seems to have no reference at all to the Industries Assistance Board—an item dealing with expenses of inquiries connected with ship building. It seems very strange.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Certainly, the Industries Assistance Board have nothing to do with that matter. It is obviously wrong. I believe the words should be "Minister for Industries." But "Industries Assistance Board" is purely a misprint.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedules G, H—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—WHEAT MARKETING ACT AMENDMENT.

Message received from the Assembly agreeing to the amendments made by the Council.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Message received from the Assembly agreeing to the amendment made by the Council.

BILL—DISCHARGED SOLDIERS SETTLEMENT.

In Committee.

Message received from the Assembly notifying that it no longer declined to make amendments Nos. 2 and 6 requested by the Council.

Resumed from an earlier period of the sitting.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair, the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Title—agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—LOAN, £780,000.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.14 a.m.]: In moving the second reading of this Loan Bill for an

amount of £780,000, I may say that all the items for which we require authorisation were passed on the Loan Estimates last night. The items are not for the full amounts shown in the Loan Bill, because it has been customary, almost since the inception of responsible government, to ask for greater authorisations than the amounts actually proposed to be expended in the current year. In the First Schedule "Departmental" is set down for £42,000. The previous authorisation was £1,529,360, and the credit balance at the 30th June was £18,634. As this balance is not sufficient to meet the estimated expenditure for the year ending on the 30th June, 1919, a further authorisation of £42,000 is now required, which will also be used to meet any demands for the year 1919-20. Railways—additions and improvements to opened railways, £20,000. The previous authorisation under this item was £2,694,863, and the credit balance at the end of June, 1918, £140,494. As this amount is about sufficient to cover the estimated expenditure to the 31st March, 1920, it is deemed advisable to obtain the further authorisations of £20,000. Bolgart extension, £11,000. This is required to complete the second section of the railway. The previous authorisation was for £52,500. Rolling stock, £50,000. The amount previously authorised was £3,452,797 and the credit balance at 30th June, 1918, £41,966. The estimated expenditure for 1918-19 is £54,200. £50,000 is, therefore, required to cover this amount and the estimated expenditure to 31st March, 1920. Tramways, Perth electric, £10,000. The previous authorisation was £644,000 and the credit balance at the 30th June, 1918, £44,467. This amount, together with the £10,000 asked for, is required to cover the expenditure for the year 1918-19, and for the nine months ended 31st March, 1920. Fremantle harbour works, £30,000. The previous authorisations totalled £1,537,512, and the credit balance at the 30th June, 1918, was £42,087.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What is the total expenditure on the Fremantle harbour works?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The total expenditure on the Fremantle harbour works is one and a half millions. As this latter sum is just about sufficient to cover the estimated expenditure to the 30th June, 1918, £30,000 was deemed necessary to cover the expenditure for the nine months ending 31st March, 1920. Development of mining, goldfields and mineral resources, £60,000. The previous authorisations totalled £242,200 and the credit balance at the 30th June, 1918, £17,722. As this amount is not sufficient to cover the estimated expenditure of £50,000 for the current financial year, and the estimated expenditure for the nine months ended 31st March, 1920, £60,000 is now required. Abattoirs, cold storage, etc., £30,000. The previous authorisations totalled £689,605 and the credit balance at the 30th June, 1918, was £127,806. As this latter sum is not sufficient to cover the estimated expenditure of £155,000 required to complete the work, a further £30,000 is necessary. Land settlement for soldiers, etc., £400,000. This is a new item and is required to cover the following

items of expenditure: £150,000 advances to soldiers (to be recouped by the Commonwealth Government); purchase of estates by issue of war bonds, £100,000; purchase of estates (cash payments), £60,000; cash advances to soldiers, in excess of amount provided by Commonwealth, £60,000. Wyndham Freezing Works, working capital, £100,000. This is a new item and is required to cover part of the working capital for this trading concern. The balance of the capital, £55,000, is being provided in the third schedule by reappropriations of the credit balances shown against the items in the second schedule. The departments tell the Treasurer which items are not considered necessary for some time and they make the reappropriation. That is shown in the second schedule. The third schedule shows which works the items are being reappropriated for. I do not think it is necessary to make any further reference to the items because the whole is included in the Bill which we have just passed. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. H. CARSON (Central) [3.19]: I have not occupied the time of the House very much, but I hope members will bear with me while I say a few words on the second reading of this Bill. If my remarks seem to members to be parochial, they will recognise that those remarks are justified after they have heard what I say, and that I am justified in speaking on the Bill to-night. I want to protest against the attitude that this Government and previous Governments have taken up towards the province which I have the honour to represent. I have lived in that province for 35 years. I was elected to represent Geraldton in the Legislative Assembly in 1904, and, putting my views before the electors at Geraldton, I advocated very strongly a water supply for that town. I also advocated the improvement of the harbour. I was instrumental in getting the Government to do something towards the water supply, or attempting to do something, and they have been attempting to do something for 14 years, yet they are no further forward. Members will recognise what a vast improvement to any town it is to have an adequate water supply. No town can prosper, no industry can be started without an adequate water supply, and also the health of the community is affected by not having a decent water supply. I say the Government have attempted to do something but with no result. The whole fault is with the departmental engineers and if that is so they should go. We actually had a demonstration over the water supply and the engineer staked his reputation that it would be a success. But it was useless and I think that officer is still in the Government service. Another attempt, and this was the second one, was made at Bullar river for a water supply. This attempt has been going on for three years and I understand the dam has gone. I say that there is nothing on the Estimates regarding a water supply for Geraldton. I believe the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willecock) is doing all he can and he has received an assurance from the Government and from the Premier that Geraldton

would have a water supply as soon as possible in connection with the freezing works.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Mr. George is going up there to fix it.

Hon. H. CARSON: I hope he will fix it soon. Coming to the improvements of the harbour, some time ago, after 1904, we had a short extension of the jetty and we have been battling for improvements to the harbour for years. We have got so far as to have a scheme decided upon. That was some three or four years ago and we have had it started. There has been a viaduct built to carry stone to build the island breakwater at the end of the jetty. That was constructed some two or three years ago at a cost of £30,000 or £40,000 but it is only used for fishing purposes and it is not likely to be used for anything else for some years to come. I know our finances are in a bad way but I think this important centre should have had more consideration from this and previous Governments. What is the position to-day? My colleague has referred to a deputation to Mr. Baxter in regard to the removing of the wheat by rail from the port of Geraldton to Fremantle and he stated that the ships could not go there. I may say that is a libel to a very large extent, on the port as constituted at the present time. Four years ago a steamer loaded 6,000 bags of wheat as this port, therefore I say it is unfair. It is centralisation, yet the Government say they are out for decentralisation.

Hon. C. F. Baxter (Honorary Minister): There is only 20 feet draught there.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It might possibly injure Fremantle; that is the trouble.

Hon. H. CARSON: There is an item of £30,000 on the Estimates for Fremantle.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: The Government are centralisationists.

Hon. H. CARSON: Some few months ago Mr. Chesson, the member for Cue, invited the Minister for Mines to Cue to meet the prospectors there. He did this for the purpose of inducing the Minister to give the people a State battery and the men are trying to develop that country but it is impossible to prove the district without a State battery. I understand the Minister promised to give the district a battery, but recently one of the men told me that nothing has been done. I do hope that the leader of the House will bring these matters before the Government and see that portion of the State gets some little consideration.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: There is room at Northampton for 500 or 600 men.

Hon. H. CARSON: I am just coming to that question. I want to refer to Geraldine. The member for Greenough induced the Minister for Mines to visit that centre and the Minister took the State mining engineer with him, and these two men got the surprise of their lives when they arrived, for undoubtedly this is one of the richest portions of the State. Only a few weeks ago a mining man, I suppose one of the highest mining men in Australia, was in Western Australia and visited this centre and he stated that there is nothing like it in the whole of Australia. I believe the owners of the property have refused £70,000

for the property. The member for Greenough has been unable to carry a resolution in another Chamber for the building of a railway to that centre from Ajana, a distance of 12 or 14 miles. I am sure if that motion had been sent on here, it would have received the same treatment. I want to extend to the members of this House an invitation to visit the district. The member for Greenough has made all the arrangements and the party will leave Perth on the 27th January, and I feel sure if members visit that centre they, too, will realise what a valuable asset the State has in the mining there.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is lead mining, is it not?

Hon. H. CARSON: Yes. I do hope, if it is at all possible, the Government will provide for the construction of this railway early next session. I believe there is employment there for something like 1,000 men.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What was the price of the lead when it was proposed?

Hon. H. CARSON: I may tell the hon. member we expect the price to fall a little. But what happened? It has gone up £12 a ton, from £28 to £40.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What is the cause?

Hon. H. CARSON: That will show to members that every assistance should be given to the industry. About 120 tons a week are being turned out with very primitive methods.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: There are 200 men there now.

Hon. H. CARSON: I am referring to the time when I was there. I do not intend to detain the House longer. Members will realise that that portion of the State has been greatly neglected and I do hope the Government will endeavour, if it is at all possible, to give more consideration to it, and I believe it will be in the best interests of Western Australia and will go a long way to help to repatriate our soldiers who are coming home. I am deeply interested in the district, and I want to tell the House and the leader of the House of a conversation which I had with the mayor of the town on coming through three weeks ago. He and other business men are so greatly disgusted with the treatment which that portion of the State is receiving at the hands of the Government that they intend to get a petition signed by the residents to petition the Federal Government to take them over.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: Everyone on the Eastern Goldfields will sign that petition.

Hon. H. CARSON: I told the gentleman that I thought they were making a mistake, because the Federal Government are not giving to Western Australia a fair deal, and I do not think the people will get anything better.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It will not need a petition; we shall be taken over naturally.

Hon. H. CARSON: I think that will come. I am sorry to have kept members, but I thought it necessary to let the House and the Government know the position, and I hope they will take notice of it and remedy things.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [3.30 a.m.]: I wish to draw attention to a portion of my pro-

vince which is absolutely forgotten. Some of the Ministers do not know of the place. I will exonerate the Country party Ministers from that, because recently a branch of the Farmers and Settlers' Association has been established at Grasspatch, and the farmers there are anxious that I should support the handling of the wheat by the acquiring agent right through to the ship's side. On the Estimates is a sum of £100 for work on the Esperance railway. The people of that district have been asking for a railway for over 26 years. I hope they will not be as long in getting the railway after the passage of the Bill as they were in getting the Bill passed. The Government should give some consideration to that part of the State. The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into Esperance lands reported that the district is one of the best. Had it not been for the parochialism that has done so much harm to the State we should have had a thriving population down there. I hope something will be done to honour the bond. Seeing that the Farmers and Settlers' Association have established a branch down there, I think it was unfair that Mr. Griffiths, a representative of that association in another place, should have tried to get through another place a motion adverse to the immediate construction of the line. The centralisation we have is a crime. If men are not encouraged to go into the hinterland the time will soon arrive when we shall have to eat each other. Mr. Carson said that some of his constituents are petitioning for separation. In point of sympathetic treatment, Geraldton and other outports are already separated from the State. When in London I gained the impression that if the financial drift continues in Western Australia for another few years the only course left will be for the State to become a Federal territory. That idea predominated in London, and it can do nothing but harm to the State's credit. I trust that before long we shall reach the turning point. I hope the public men of the State will make a stand and endeavour to place the State in a better position than it has occupied during the last few years.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (South) [3.40]: I support the remarks of Mr. Dodd and Mr. Cornell regarding the Esperance railway. My views on that subject are well known. That district has been treated very badly in the past. It is but one of many instances that might be quoted to show the feeling of soreness that exists on the goldfields. State Ministers are constantly denouncing the relationship between the State and the Commonwealth. Those Ministers take a biased view, and are trying to foment ill-feeling towards the Commonwealth, ill-feeling which is quite unjustified. I am sure that if Mr. Carson invites the mayor of Geraldton to send a deputation to the eastern goldfields, with a view of securing support for the separation petition referred to, the deputation will be received with enthusiasm, and everything possible will be done by the residents of the goldfields to secure relief from the mis-government of the State Government. We on the goldfields have had a great deal to do with the

Commonwealth Government, and have never had occasion to say that we were not fairly treated. In the matter of the Customs duties, of the trans-Australian railway and many other questions, we have always been received by the Federal Government with consideration and in almost every instance our request has been complied with. Whenever a Federal matter arises we know that we will get justice. If we on the goldfields were asked to decide between government from Melbourne or government from Perth, we would unanimously vote for government from Melbourne. There is on the Estimates £100 for the Esperance railway. Mr. Carson seems to be suffering from a similar grievance in connection with his district. Albany is in exactly the same position, and I am certain that Albany would join with Geraldton in this matter. The reply of the Colonial Secretary will be that the Government are giving £60,000 to the mining industry this year. But what is that as compared with £600,000 for the agricultural industry? The Commonwealth have extended exceptionally favourable treatment to Western Australia, and I am sure those in the out-back districts would prefer government from Melbourne than from Perth, just as, according to Mr. Carson, the people of Geraldton prefer government from Geraldton than from Perth.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.48 a.m.]: I have taken a careful note of the remarks made by Mr. Carson. I understand that the Minister for Works is inquiring into the subject of the hon. member's complaint. It is not because something has not been done in the past but because the wrong thing has been done, and I hope that the Government will do the right thing this time. So far as the harbour improvements are concerned, I am strongly of the opinion that this is one of the first things Western Australia should take in hand in order that larger vessels may be accommodated in the future. I hope to be able to make one of the party who propose to visit Geraldton at the end of January. Mr. Cornell referred to the Esperance railway. A Bill for the construction of that line has been passed by both Houses and the Commission which inquired into the matter strongly advocated the construction of the line, while, in another place a resolution has been carried that this work should be the first undertaken so far as railway construction is concerned. I cannot imagine any Government, when considering their railway policy, doing other than giving serious consideration to a project that has been thus approved. I find myself in accord with the remarks made in regard to places remote from the capital. There is no doubt that centralisation is one of the curses of Australia, but I do not think this is the time to discuss such a big problem.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and passed.

BILL—TREASURY BONDS DEFICIENCY.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.52 a.m.] in moving the second reading said: As members are aware, our deficits are financed from Loan and Trust funds. In 1917 an Act was passed authorising the issue of treasury bonds, the proceeds of which were to recoup the amount of the deficit financed from Trust and Loan funds. The Act made provision that the currency should not exceed thirty years, and the rate of interest should not exceed 6 per cent. per annum. The first authorisation was for £1,500,000. The second authorisation was given by Parliament last year for £650,000. The Treasurer is now asking for an authorisation of £750,000, which will make a total authorisation of £2,900,000, which he considers will be sufficient for the time being. In asking for the authorisation last year of £650,000, the House agreed that the sinking fund might be suspended by the Governor for such time as the Government might think fit. His Excellency wanted to be quite clear as to what the effect on London bondholders would be and he sent the Bill home for the purpose of ascertaining. Up to the present time it has not been assented to, but in order to prevent any question on this score in the future, the Bill repeals paragraph (b) of Section 6, which reads: "The contribution of the sinking funds for the redemption thereof shall commence to accrue on the 1st day of July." Parliament agreed last year in the view that it was idle to borrow money to provide sinking fund for a deficit. Up to the present time we have issued treasury bonds amounting to £1,488,000, the longest date of maturity of which is 1927. The average rate of interest so far paid amounts to, roughly, £5 6s. per annum and all the bonds have been issued in Australia. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

Read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT—COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.57 a.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn to the 29th January, 1919.

In the meantime a proclamation will be issued proroguing Parliament in the usual way. If I thought it was the wish of hon. members to proceed with the business which is still on the Notice Paper, I would feel it my duty to do so after the manner in which they have assisted me to bring the session to a close at the last few sittings. I am sure, however, it is not the wish of hon. members that we should do so. I thank hon. members for the way in which they have helped me particularly during the last few days. We have done wonderfully good work

and we can say that another place has accepted the amendments we made to measures in a generous manner. My only regret is that the State Children Act Amendment Bill, in which the House took a great deal of interest, did not go beyond the initial stages of another place. I trust, however, that it will be taken up next session as a lapsed Bill and that it will be dealt with as quickly as possible. I cannot but express a feeling of satisfaction at seeing back amongst us our old friend Mr. Cornell after a long absence on active service. A few days ago I received a letter from Dr. Saw, and he expressed the hope that he would shortly be able to return to England from Cairo and make arrangements for his early departure for Western Australia and as quickly as possible get back to Western Australia because it was his desire to take an active part in the public life of the State. I hope, Mr. Deputy President, that this Christmas vacation—the first that any of us has been able to look forward to with real happiness for what seem many years past—will be one of pleasure to all hon. members, and I entertain no doubt that the respite will prove acceptable, both to yourself and to our respected President.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.2 a.m. (Saturday).

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 20th December, 1918.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

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

QUESTION—PNEUMONIC INFLUENZA, QUARANTINING CONTACTS.

Mr. ANGELO (without notice) asked the Premier: Has his attention been called to the newspaper report of a mass meeting held on the Esplanade the night before last at which the following resolution was carried unanimously:—"That the Federal Government be informed that unless it assures the R.S.A. on or before midnight on Thursday, the 19th inst., that arrangements are being made to transfer the men from the "Boonah" to Rott-nest Island not later than the 21st inst., the R.S.A., with the aid of the State Government and the people of Western Australia, will make and carry out the necessary arrangements themselves"? Can the Premier give any information in regard to the Government's attitude in respect of this?

The PREMIER replied: The full text of this resolution has only just been brought under my notice. The Government are no party to the resolution, nor have they been approached in the matter; neither have the Government given any intimation that they will render any assistance whatever in the carrying out of the suggested arrangements.

PERENJORI AND KULIN HOTEL LICENSES.

Royal Commissioner's Report.

On motion by Mr. JOHNSTON ordered: That the report and recommendation of the Royal Commissioner (Mr. Justice Rooth) regarding country liquor licenses be printed.

BILL—WATER BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's amendments.

Schedule of six amendments requested by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. G. Taylor in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

No. 1.—Clause 4, strike out the word "seven" in line 3 and insert "nine" in lieu:

The PREMIER: This deals with the number of appointees on the Lands Purchase Board. It is considered that it will be an advantage if the number is increased from seven to nine. I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

No. 2.—Clause 10, in line 2, strike out the words "in all cases," with the object of inserting the words "in regard to discharged soldiers or dependants":

The PREMIER: This Bill deals with no class of people except discharged soldiers, so there is no need for the words "in all cases." The amendment was made in another place at my instigation, and I think it will make the clause much more intelligible. I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

No. 3.—Clause 10, strike out the words "in regard to discharged soldiers or dependants," in line 4:

The PREMIER: This amendment is really consequential on the previous one. I move—

That the amendment be made.

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

No. 4.—Clause 12, Subclause 1, add to the proviso, "unless in the opinion of the Minister it is necessary for the proper and more econom-