

pect of the matter, and that he at any rate will use his influence with the Ministry to ensure that reasonable time is given to retiring hon. members to place their views before their electors prior to polling. It would not be too much if this House asked the Colonial Secretary to give an assurance that there will be at least a clear month in which to travel through the provinces. It is very simple for members representing Metropolitan and Fremantle constituencies; but the matter wears a very different aspect for country members. It is of very much concern to them, and I do not think there is a precedent for it. Always there has been a considerable space of time before an election for the Council, during which members could properly place their views before their constituents.

Hon. C. SOMMERS (Metropolitan) [5.38]: The leader of the House may himself have to stand for re-election, and it is painful to reflect what might happen to this Chamber during his absence. As regards the large electorates referred to by Mr. Kirwan, it is most important that all the time requisite should be afforded to hon. members seeking re-election.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—in reply) [5.39]: I fully appreciate the point raised by Mr. Kirwan, and I shall certainly represent the matter to the Government. This session has been a most extraordinary one so far as regards the time of the year in which it has been held, and that sort of thing; and I sincerely trust we shall never go through a similar one. If I thought that in adjourning to Wednesday next we should be delaying matters at all, I would not have proposed it. But we are absolutely dependent on another place. I shall make representations on the lines suggested by Mr. Kirwan, because I realise it would be utterly unfair that members of this Chamber should be expected to fight their elections and at the same time attend this House.

Question put and passed.

The House adjourned at 5.40 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 27th March, 1918.

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

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

### RETURN—PUBLIC SERVANTS AND COMMONWEALTH ALLOWANCES.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle) [4.40]: I move—

"That a return be laid upon the Table of the House showing—1, The number and names of officers in the public service of the State in receipt of allowances from the Commonwealth Government; 2, the number and names retaining such allowance for their own use without proper authority."

I asked for this information by way of question some time ago, and in reply the Premier said it was not possible to supply it in answer to a question. In consequence of this I have put my request in the form of a motion for a return. In asking for this information I have no feeling against any individual officer; but I do think certain officers are receiving money to which they are hardly entitled. In my opinion, this money should be diverted into the State Treasury.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [4.41]: I have no objection to the motion. The information can be obtained, and I shall be prepared to lay it on the Table. It will take a little time, of course, as a number of departments are concerned in the matter. The information shall be supplied as soon as possible.

Question put and passed.

### MOTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST REGULATIONS, TO DISALLOW.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.42]: I move—

"That the amended regulations of the Fremantle Harbour Trust (relating to charges), which were approved by His Excellency the Governor in Executive Council on the 6th day of March, 1918, and placed on the Table of the House on the 12th day of March, 1918, be disallowed."

I am not moving this motion in the belief that the Government do not want additional revenue from the Fremantle harbour. It is well known that, owing to the scarcity of shipping, the revenue has fallen off considerably, and the Fremantle Harbour Trust have had to increase their charges for harbour dues, as has been done in the other States. My objection to the regulations is on the score of differential treatment meted out to West Australian manufacturers as against manufacturers in the Eastern States.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): There is no differential treatment.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But there is. From what I have seen in the Press I believe the Fremantle Harbour Trust have tried to bring about a levelling up in regard to charges. But in effecting that levelling up, although they desire to increase revenue, they have felt it necessary to decrease charges on certain items, which in my opinion should not be decreased. Take vehicles, which can be manufactured in Western Australia: Here we have a decrease of a shilling. The amount is not much, but there is an important principle involved. The vehicles can be manufactured within the State. Why then, should there be a decrease in the harbour dues on such vehicles as come in from outside the State? The old rate was 6s., and the new rate is 5s. Take agricultural and horticultural machinery: The old rate was 6s., the new rate is 5s. So, too, in regard to wines, beers, spirits, etc., the old rate was 6s., and the new rate is 5s. I could go on enumerating a large number of items in regard to which reductions have been made in the charges. Take tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, etc., the old rate was 6s. and the new rate is 5s. The new rate on raw material not manufactured shows an increase of 8d. And so it applies right through the charges. Artificial manure in bulk is increased from 1s. to 1s. 8d.; in crude form it is also increased from 1s. to 1s. 8d. On the raw material brought here for manufacture the rate has been raised, but when the manufactured article comes here the charge is decreased. For my part I object on principle to the system adopted in making the new charges. If it was necessary to have increase of revenue, there should have been no decreases whatever of these wharfage rates and harbour dues. There was no complaint concerning the charges on the various items before they were reduced. But we find that almost everything brought in for the purpose of being manufactured in this State has suffered an increase in wharfage charges and harbour dues. Even the Government of the State have not got clear in the matter, because railway traffic material, rails and fastenings, etc., necessary for the building of railways, has been charged a new rate of 5s. as against the old rate of 2s. 9d. Throughout the whole of the rates, alterations have been made in that direction. Grain, including wheat, oats, maize, barley, rye, bird seed, and linseed, but not including rice dressed or undressed, grass or other seeds for seeding purposes, is now charged at 6s. instead of 5s. Chaff has been decreased from 6s. to 5s.; hay and straw in bales have been treated similarly. In my opinion, it is necessary at this juncture that the Fremantle Harbour Trust should revise their charges so as to obtain more revenue. That has been done in every other port of Australia. There was no necessity, however, to decrease the items I have mentioned. Hon. members must admit, I think, that, rather than decrease the charges on any article which can be manufactured in Western Australia, the charges on it should have been increased. Not very long ago the Government of the day—prior to 1911, I may state—increased various charges in connection with wharfage and harbour dues for the express

purpose of assisting, to some extent, manufactures in Western Australia. Surely we can manufacture enough beer in Western Australia to supply our people. Yet we find some people importing it. To decrease the charge on beer and wines and spirits is utterly wrong. Again, why is there a decrease in the charges on bricks and cement, on flour and grain, on meats of all kinds, on oil and grease, rope and cordage? We have a rope works at Cottesloe. Even on motor cars and vehicles propelled by internal combustion the charge has been reduced from 6s. to 5s. I wish hon. members to understand thoroughly that it is the system I object to. If any decreases were made at all, then, in the interests of the State, they should have been made on raw material required for the manufacture of necessities in this State. I hope the House will agree that the system which has been adopted in the framing of these revised charges is not in the best interests of the State, and that if this system were carried to any considerable length it might cause serious detriment to the interests of the State. On explosives, for example, the rate has been increased. The leader of the Opposition recently explained that it would take only a very small fraction of increase in costs to close down some of our mines; and yet here we have an increase on an absolute essential of the mining industry. If hon. members compare the charges in the old list with those in the new list, they will find that all along the rates on raw material have been increased, while those on manufactured articles have been decreased.

On motion by Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister) debate adjourned.

#### MOTION—CENSORSHIP BY FEDERAL AUTHORITIES.

Debate resumed from the 30th January on the motion by Mr. Munsie, "That in the opinion of this House, the censorship, as exercised generally by the Federal Government, and particularly in regard to industrial matters and grievances of returned soldiers, is against the best interests of the people of this State."

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [4.53]: I do not desire to take up the time of the House with a long discussion on the censorship. Neither do I desire to abuse the privileges of membership by getting into the records of this House matter which I would not be permitted to speak outside this Chamber. I do, however, wish to make a rebuttal of some of the statements of the mover, Mr. Munsie, regarding the censorship. Mr. Groome, the Assistant Minister for Defence, says that the speech of the member for Hannans contains statements which are grossly incorrect. It is not correct, for instance, that the telephones in the trades halls in Victoria and New South Wales had been tapped, or interfered with in any way. Notices for labour congresses had not been held up in any State, and the allegation made concerning the suppression of telegrams from Sydney to Western Australia, saying that the labour delegates were doing their utmost to

bring about a settlement of labour disputes, was without any foundation in fact. The statement that the object of the Federal Government in suppressing a certain telegram was with a view to allowing the strike to spread, with the object of crushing trades unionism, was absolutely incorrect. He had been informed that no such telegram had been suppressed. Those statements are made by a very high authority in the Commonwealth Government, Mr. Groome.

Mr. Munsie: I have replied to Mr. Groome's reply, but he has not made any answer to my further statements.

Mr. PICKERING: I think we may place some reliance on Mr. Groome's statements. It will be remembered that during the debate on this motion I asked the mover whether the documents from which he was reading were certified copies. He replied that they were not, that he was not reading from certified copies, but that he could produce certified copies, or words to that effect. I do not desire to prolong the debate on the matter. I feel that at this particular juncture in the history of the British Empire any steps which the Commonwealth Government may see fit to adopt in protecting Australia and the Empire during the tremendous struggle in which we are engaged, should receive the cordial support of every member of the House, no matter on which side he may happen to sit. I should hesitate to sow any dissension or ill-will whatever between members of this House. I trust hon. members will realise with me that at this juncture in the history of the British Empire it is the duty of every member of this House to do his utmost to support the Commonwealth Government in anything they may consider necessary or advisable for the most effective prosecution of the war. I do not believe that any action which was taken by the censor was in the direction of tyranny. Any action of the censor was what was conceived to be in the best interests of Australia and the Empire. I am not one to credit that the motive of the censor's action was opposition to the anti-conscriptionists of Australia. I believe the action was quite impartial, and taken in the best interests of Australia and the Empire; and I hope that the censorship will, if necessary, be maintained in the fullest degree, if that is done, as I believe it is, solely in the best interests of the British nation.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans—in reply) [4.56]: If no one else wishes to speak on this motion I must reply, because I cannot allow the statements of the last speaker to pass unanswered. To me it seems rather remarkable that the hon. member, without looking for any confirmation of Mr. Groome's statement, and without attempting to disprove anything I said, should simply have read that statement by Mr. Groome which appeared in the "West Australian" on the next day but one after I moved this motion in the House. I desire to point out to hon. members—many of whom probably do not read the "Kalgoorlie Miner"—that I made a written reply to Mr. Groome's statement. That written reply of mine was supplied to both the "West Australian" and the "Kalgoorlie

Miner" for publication. It has appeared in the "Kalgoorlie Miner," and, whether I made a good case or a bad case, neither Mr. Groome nor any other member of the Commonwealth Government has taken up the cudgels since. My statement concluded with a copy of the telegram which was suppressed. Let me add that I can produce a certified copy of the telegram, which has not yet been delivered in Western Australia. I want Mr. Groome to satisfy the public of Western Australia that that telegram has reached its destination. With regard to the "West Australian," which did not publish my reply, I desire also to be fair. The reporter to whom I submitted my reply came to me the following day and told me that I was unfortunate—that about nine columns of matter had been crowded out, and mine amongst it. At all events, not one word of my reply to Mr. Groome has up to date appeared in the "West Australian." I have, however, been informed by representatives of that newspaper that, when this discussion was resumed here, any reply that I might make the "West Australian" would be quite prepared to publish. I do not feel disposed to go over the ground again in reply to Mr. Groome, seeing there has been only one speaker on the motion, and that one a speaker who simply accepted the version of Mr. Groome without verification. I merely desire to repeat that all the matter I brought forward in connection with the censorship was quoted from instructions over the signature of the censor. I can still produce those instructions with the signature of the censor attached. I did not, either, quote telegrams as to which I could not prove that they had been delivered at the telegraph office for despatch. The suppression that was practised by the censor has been something outrageous. In this connection I desire more particularly to refer to the matter of the industrial trouble. I do assert that the telegram in question was lodged and was suppressed, as I stated in the "Kalgoorlie Miner." That telegram was signed by the chief executive officer of the Railway Engine-drivers', Firemen's and Cleaners' Union of Australia—not of Western Australia. Mr. Kenealy is the general president of the union for the whole of Australia, and Mr. Kenealy sent that telegram to Western Australia for one specific purpose only. That was, if possible, to prevent any spread of that trouble in Western Australia, and the telegram was suppressed. It never reached its destination, and we can only draw our own conclusions as to why it did not. I have drawn the conclusion that the suppression was deliberately done, and I am still of that opinion. I trust the House will carry the motion, and seeing that the requisition has already gone to the Federal Government asking them to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the methods adopted by the Federal authorities in connection with the censorship, the passing of the motion which I have moved will strengthen the hands of the Federal Government in having an inquiry made. I realise that, in times of trouble, it is necessary to have a censorship, but I am not prepared to allow any individual or individuals, for their own personal gain, to abuse that censorship to the detriment of the rest of the people of the Commonwealth.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	20

Majority against .. .. 7

#### AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Collier	Mr. Rocke
Mr. Green	Mr. Troy
Mr. Jones	Mr. Welker
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lutey	Mr. O'Loghlin
Mr. Mullany	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Money
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Picassa
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Durack	Mr. H. Robinson
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. R. T. Robinson
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Lefroy	(Teller.)
Mr. Maley	

Question thus negatived.

### MOTION—FAIR RENTAL LEGISLATION.

Debate resumed from the 30th January on motion moved by Hon. W. C. Angwin: "That in the opinion of this House the time has arrived when the Government should introduce legislation for the determination of fair rents for dwelling houses, business houses, and other premises."

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle—in reply) [5.6]: The Premier when speaking on this motion, raised an objection that the wording of it amounted to an instruction to the Government to take a certain line of action. I have never known a motion introduced in this House couched in any different language from the one which I have submitted. But since the Premier raised that objection, the motions which I have brought forward, I referred first to the Speaker, so as to make sure that they were correctly framed. The motion dealing with fair rental legislation merely asks the House to express the opinion that the time has arrived when the Government should introduce such legislation. How the Premier could take exception to the wording of it I do not know. The Government could please themselves, after the passing of the motion, whether they introduced legislation or not. I think I brought forward sufficient arguments to show that there was necessity for such legislation. It has been found necessary to pass it in the other States, and it has worked beneficially in New South Wales. A very large number of people have availed themselves of the provisions of the Act in New South Wales. and when we know that certain people in Western Australia are taking extreme measures for the purpose of ridding themselves of taxation which they should justly pay to enable us to prosecute the

great war that we are engaged in, and when they are throwing the responsibility for the payment on the shoulders of their tenants, it is time the Government took action. The Premier accused me of having quoted only a few instances at Fremantle.

The Premier: I did not make any accusation.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier stated that we could not legislate for one part of the State, that we must legislate for the State as a whole. I am not in a position to say what takes place in other parts of Western Australia, but I do know what is taking place in the instances which I quoted to the House, and it would not be right for me to make suggestions that such a thing was happening, say, in Perth or in Kalgoorlie. It is only my pace to bring under the notice of members the actual facts as I know them, and that is what I did when I moved the motion. If the West Australian Parliament will not legislate for the protection of its people we must go to the Federal sphere. As a matter of fact this question has been brought under the notice of the Federal authorities. There is no doubt that the cases which I quoted were genuine, and, as I said previously, one of the men who was driven out of his premises through a big increase in the rent, interviewed the landlord and he was told clearly and definitely that, as the Federal Government was increasing taxation, he (the landlord) intended to pass it on. Then the tenant said, "Suppose there is further taxation, what will you do?" and the landlord replied "I shall still further raise the rents." Therefore I think I am justified in asking the Government to introduce legislation to prevent that kind of thing happening, and to compel landlords and others to pay their fair share of taxation.

Mr. Nairn: Why did you not do that when the war broke out?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have no doubt it should have been done then, and if the cases I have quoted had been brought under my notice at that time I should have agitated then for it being done. The instances I cited have been brought under my notice comparatively recently. My object in moving the motion was, not to issue instructions to the Government, but merely to get an expression of opinion of hon. members, so that the Government should consider the advisableness of dealing with the question by means of legislation. The Attorney General placed at my disposal a letter he received from New South Wales in regard to this matter, and in that letter we were told that the legislation there had proved beneficial. In view of that fact, therefore, I trust hon. members will agree to the motion.

Question put and passed.

### MOTION—GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY, PROPORTIONATE FARES.

Debate resumed from 30th January on motion moved by Mr. Green:

"That in the opinion of this House the fares from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide on the Great Western Railway should be reduced

to a proportionate basis commensurate with its nearer proximity to Adelaide as compared with Perth. That in accordance with this motion it is desirable for the Government to enter into negotiations with the Federal Government with a view of making a substantial reduction on the fares from Kalgoorlie east on this basis."

The MINISTER FOR MINES AND RAILWAYS (Hon. C. A. Hudson—Yilgarn) [5.14]: It is some time since this motion was moved, and I anticipated having an opportunity of replying to it earlier than to-day. The motion is peculiarly worded, and I may be pardoned for drawing the attention of the House to the wording of it. I take it that the intention of the mover is, that because the fare from Perth to Adelaide is £7 10s., and from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide £7, or 10s. less, the whole of the mileage should be taken as from Adelaide to Perth, and the fare based upon some measure of relationship to the mileage. I do not quite follow what the hon. member means, whether he means that this should be on the basis of 10s. from Perth to Kalgoorlie, or whether he means this to apply to the whole line. Assuming that he is referring to the whole line, that is to say, that the people travelling from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide should pay a rate of approximately £9 17s. 10d., the cost from Perth to Adelaide, I will deal with the matter on those lines.

Mr. Green: That is what is asked for.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I do not understand the motion. On the 21st November last the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) asked, *inter alia*, the following questions:—

2, Do the Government consider that it is an equitable proposal to allow only ten shillings 1st class and 7s. 6d. second class reduction to the Kalgoorlie public, although the journey is 375 miles less than the distance travelled from Perth? 3, Will the Government enter into negotiations with the Federal Government with a view of making a substantial reduction on a proportional basis on the fares from Kalgoorlie to Adelaide?

In answer to these questions I replied:—

2, The fare to and from Perth and the Eastern States is a specially low competitive one; similar conditions do not apply to the same extent between Kalgoorlie and these States. The Commonwealth line must, for years to come, be worked at a considerable loss, and the fares at present in force between Kalgoorlie and the Eastern States will compare favourably with the old rates from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle, plus the steamer fare. It is not extraordinary to allow any reduction on through fares for intermediate passengers, and this concession, though small, is an exception. 3, Under the conditions mentioned in answer No. 2—No.

It seems to me, therefore, that because a concession has been granted to Kalgoorlie they either want a further concession or that the concessions granted to Perth on a competitive basis should be removed. The hon.

member ought to have made himself clear as to whether his object was to deprive the people of Perth—

Mr. Green: Did you listen to my speech?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have it before me now, and I carefully perused it some time ago. Nothing has transpired since the answer to the question to alter the situation. As pointed out, the reduction of fares between Kalgoorlie and the Eastern States was a concession and was made on a competitive basis. There was a concession in the sense that it was an exceptional case, inasmuch as Kalgoorlie was treated differently to any other part of the Commonwealth. I fail to see how it can be argued that a further alteration should be made. The adjustment of fares was made between the State and the Commonwealth, and it was done by the Commissioners on a business basis. Owing to the representations made by the Commissioner for Western Australia this concession was granted, but because the concession is granted to some extent it does not follow that it should be widened to the fullest extent. I have stated that these fares were fixed upon a competitive basis, and it is well to remember that prior to the opening of the line it took five days and longer to travel between Kalgoorlie and Adelaide. Now, passengers can leave Kalgoorlie at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays and be in Adelaide at 3.30 p.m. on Thursdays and Saturdays, a journey of 2¼ days. To go, via Fremantle, by rail and sea cost first class £9 17s. 10d., and second class £7 14s. 2d., as against £7 plus £1 for sleeping berths and £4 13s. 6d. plus 10s. for sleeping berths respectively, so that under the present conditions the Kalgoorlie residents gain considerably, both in time and cost of travelling. The Transcontinental line is being worked at a loss, as it is well recognised, and I fail to see that the Government would be justified in making the representations desired unless very strong reasons are urged for this being done. The State railways themselves are losing money in consequence of the concession that is being granted. We are losing money over the interstate fares.

Mr. Lutey: Not from the Kalgoorlie passengers.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: Not necessarily from them. We are losing their fares because they have got this other privilege, and have the opportunity of going through on the Commonwealth railway, instead of travelling on our own railways and then on by steamer. We are, therefore, making a loss in that respect.

Mr. Green: Do you object to their taking the shortest route to the Eastern States?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: No. The desire of the hon. member is apparently to fix fares on a basis which is untenable. I do not really understand what he is after, or what fares he really wants. Assuming that he wants to calculate them on the basis I have indicated, it is not a fair proposition to the State, and it is not fair to ask the Government to make representations to the Com-

monwealth which they cannot justify. I do not propose to do this.

Mr. Green: What does the Commonwealth allow the Railway Department for first class fares and second class fares from Perth to Kalgoorlie for passengers going over the Transcontinental line?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS: I have answered that in reply to a question asked in the House by the hon. member. Our proportion on the through interstate fare, first class, is 33s. 1d., and, second class, 22s. Any representations that it was desired to make should have been made by the Kalgoorlie people to the Commonwealth and not by the Government. We do not want any further alteration from the railway standpoint, and I do not see that we should interfere at all.

Mr. LUTEY (Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [5.22]: I support the motion of the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green). At the same time, I hardly understand the reply of the Minister.

The Minister for Railways: Let me know what it is you want.

Mr. LUTEY: The State receives from the people who go to the East from Kalgoorlie, 33s. for merely walking on to the platform and getting into the train.

The Minister for Railways: We do not.

Mr. LUTEY: The State gets 33s. out of the fares they pay.

The Minister for Railways: Only when they are carried from Perth.

Mr. LUTEY: I asked the question as to what proportion of the fares the Government were receiving and I was told 33s.

The Minister for Railways: That is from Perth.

Mr. LUTEY: The fare is only 10s. less from Kalgoorlie.

The Minister for Railways: Is it your desire that Perth should pay more?

Mr. LUTEY: Not at all.

Mr. Green: Certainly not.

Mr. LUTEY: We do not want the people of Kalgoorlie charged for services which they do not receive. The fares should be reduced, and I have great pleasure in supporting the motion.

Mr. BROWN (Subiaco) [5.24]: I move—  
“That the debate be adjourned.”

Mr. Green: The motion has been before the House since the 23rd January.

Motion put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	21
Noes	..	..	..	16

Majority for .. .. 5

#### AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Piessé
Mr. Draper	Mr. Phikington
Mr. Durack	Mr. H. Robinson
Mr. George	Mr. R. T. Robinson
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Ictroy	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Maley	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Money	

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Collier	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Davies	Mr. Rocks
Mr. Foley	Mr. Troy
Mr. Green	Mr. Walker
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Jones	Mr. O'Glhien
Mr. Lambert	(Teller.)
Mr. Luley	

Motion thus passed; the debate adjourned.

#### BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

##### Second Reading.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies) [5.28] in moving the second reading said: My object in introducing this Bill is to endeavour to bring into this State legislation affecting an important branch of industrial life, and to bring it into conformity with that which has existed for many years past in the Eastern States. I believe that every hon. member here will agree with me that it is the duty of this, or any, Government to endeavour to find suitable employment for those citizens for the time being who happen to be out of employment, and to assist them in obtaining work that is suitable for them. The main object of the Bill is to bring into this State legislation which will provide, as has already been provided in the Eastern States, that both the employer and the employee shall pay something towards the services which are rendered, and to do something to bring the person who is seeking employment into contact with the person who is seeking for someone to fill a certain position. Members will admit that when an employer wishes to secure someone to fill a position to work for him he does so because he has use for the commodity which is the labour of the individual. When an individual is seeking employment he is placing the commodity which he has for sale on the market. Both go to an employment broker's office, and I think members will agree that it is only fair that both the employer and the person seeking to obtain employment should pay something to the employment broker, both should pay if payment is to be made. In this State there are no regulations as to what money shall be paid. The practice in the majority of cases is that the person who is seeking employment and who is successful in securing employment through a broker's office has to pay all the fees and the employer pays nothing. This is not the case, I believe, in every employment broker's office, but we frequently see in advertisements in the newspapers calling for labour that no charge will be made to the employers. So that if anyone running a registry office endeavours to impose a fee on the employer the employment broker gets very little business because the employer will go to the office where he is not called upon to pay a fee. As I have said although we have an Employment Brokers' Act, there is no provision in the Western Australian legislation to

say what the fees are. In New Zealand regulations prescribe the scale of fees which shall be paid in an employment broker's office. The fees are not fixed by legislative enactment, but the Minister who for the time being is charged with the administration of the Act, has power to make regulations and fix the fees to be paid. In New Zealand to-day, where the wages to be paid do not exceed £1 the servant pays 1s. and the employer pays 2s.; where the weekly rate exceeds 5s., but does not exceed 10s., the servant pays 1s. and the employer 4s.; where the weekly rate exceeds 10s., but does not exceed 15s., the servant pays 2s. and the employer 5s.; where the weekly rate exceeds 15s., but does not exceed £1, the servant pays 2s. and the employer 6s., and so on in a gradually rising scale as the remuneration paid becomes higher. In New Zealand to-day the employer or person seeking to engage someone to work for him pays three times the amount which the person seeking employment pays.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the scale on the £2 a week rate?

Mr. MULLANY: I have only the scale up to £52 a year, and where the yearly rate exceeds £52 a year, the servant pays 2s. 6d. and the employer 7s. 6d., so that the employer in New Zealand is paying three-fourths of the fee and the employee the other fourth. In this State the broker invariably receives half a week's wages which is paid by the employee. I think every member will agree that that is not fair; that both sides seeking the services of a registry office keeper or an employment broker should contribute portion of the fees. The Bill gives the Minister charged with the administration of the Act for the time being, power to prescribe the fees that shall be charged, for he has not that power at the present time. We shall thus come into line with the legislation now in force in New Zealand, Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, and I believe every other State in the Commonwealth. We propose to go a little further. In addition to giving the Minister power to prescribe fees, this Bill also provides that no fee shall be paid by the employer, which is not also paid by the employee. The Bill only seeks to make the employer pay equal fees with the employee. I think that we should establish a principle in Western Australia that the employee shall pay an equal proportion with the employer, which would be a satisfactory advance in the present unsatisfactory state of affairs. I want to say that my object in introducing this Bill has nothing to do with the employment brokers as they exist in the State to-day. Personally, I am not acquainted with any of them, but since introducing the Bill I have been interviewed by one lady who is running a broker's office, and she is averse to legislation of this sort.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Could she talk?

Mr. MULLANY: Yes, the lady could talk and she showed sufficient ability to run any business. The employment brokers to-day are doing nothing more than what the law allows them, but we should endeavour to place the employment brokers business on a more satisfac-

tory basis. At the present time there is altogether too high a scale of license fees for persons who are desirous of embarking in the business of employment brokers. They are charged £1 on application for an employment broker's license and £5 a year for a renewal of the license. It seems to me that the charge has been on a fairly high scale and therefore the employment brokers exploit those people who go to them. We have 15 employment brokers offices in Western Australia, 11 in Perth, four in Kalgoorlie, and one in Fremantle, and these persons are charged £5 a year as a license fee to carry on this class of business. In Victoria 5s. is charged on application for a license fee and 10s. a year for a renewal of the license. The same scale I believe applies in New Zealand. If we are going to bring in legislation to prescribe the fees to be charged by employment brokers, it is only fair to reduce the charge for license. I am prepared to admit that the Colonial Treasurer requires all the revenue he can get, yet I say it is unfair to ask employment brokers to pay such a high license fee. We should not do as we have been doing in the past, charge these people such a high fee that they are obliged to sweat an unfortunate class of the community who are seeking employment. Further than this if we are going to make the law in this State such that the employer will have to pay fees, then there will be a tendency to send persons seeking servants to the State Labour Bureau where they can get servants without being charged a fee. This will take a considerable portion of the business from the employment brokers. Therefore, it is unfair to continue to charge them such high license fees as have been charged in the past. I do not desire to take up the time of the House for the days of the session are coming to a close, but I commend the Bill to hon. members, I care not on which side of the House they sit. Everyone must agree that when any individual goes to an employment broker's office he goes there for something that he is prepared to pay for; but the unfortunate individual who is seeking employment should not be charged a high rate when he is not in a position really to pay anything at all. We should not expect a servant to pay half a week's wages at a time when he is requiring assistance. The one principle I want to see enacted is that the employer and the employee should both pay a share of the fees charged by the employment broker. I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [5.29]: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion. I recognise that short of the nationalisation of the Labour Bureau the Bill which the hon. member has brought forward is calculated to bring more relief to the persons who are seeking employment in employment broker's offices than we could possibly imagine. The hon. member has put up a good case and he has a precedent in New Zealand. This Bill is practically on the lines of the New Zealand measure. I may say that when the Labour Government was in power a Bill was brought forward, the provisions of which agree with the idea which the hon. member has in view. It will have the effect of at any rate relieving the employee from

this position. At the present time if a man wants to get a clearing contract for say 100 acres at £1 an acre, and he seeks that work through a private labour bureau, he has to pay 6d. in the pound on that contract. That means that he pays £7 10s. to get the job. Clearing is hard work and it is necessary for the man who takes it on to work long hours in order to make a fair wage at it. This is the class of person who is exploited by the brokers to-day, and under the Bill it would not be possible for such an imposition to be carried on. I trust the measure will pass.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [5.47]: That portion of the Bill which provides that the fees shall be equally divided between the person who seeks employment and the employer, has my approval, but I think that in most cases that I am aware of the employers have agreed to pay the fee. The employee might pay the fee, but it is refunded to him if he remains with his employer for a certain time. I certainly think that the employment bureau, or whatever one likes to call this institution, is there as much for the interests of the employer as the employee. In fact very often it is a greater benefit for the person who is seeking labour than for the person who wants to work, because the employer of labour is not always in the position to hunt around for people to work for him. In a matter of that sort I agree that each party should pay the fee in equal proportion. When it comes to the question of the payment for licenses and so forth, a different position arises and that ought to be seriously debated by the House before a decision is arrived at. The hon. member in moving the second reading of the Bill intimated that by imposing the high fees the cost was thrown back on the individual seeking employment. I do not think it will make any difference whether the fees are small or large. I am afraid somehow or other it is human nature for one person to exploit another. If a person has a certain charge imposed upon him, he is always desirous if possible of trying to get someone else to bear a portion of it. If the brokers' fees were reduced the State would lose revenue, but I would like to hear that question debated. I would like to have better reasons submitted than those which the hon. member gave us for supporting an amendment of the existing Act in that direction. The Bill provides that the Government shall by regulation fix the remuneration by way of fees that the broker will be entitled to charge. At the present time there is no fixed scale of fees and the broker is in a position to charge as he likes. The hon. member, however, proposes that the Government shall stipulate what shall be the charge. If the Government do that, although the broker pays £1, or whatever it is, for his license, he would not be able to east that back upon the employee or the person who is seeking the labour because the fee is actually fixed. The hon. member has referred to the legislation in the Eastern States. I must admit that I have not seen it. I have been endeavouring to find a copy of the Victorian Act, but I have not been successful. Perhaps other hon. members are making use

of it at the present time. It does not appear to me that we shall gain anything by reducing the license fees. I do not know that employment broking is a very lucrative business; I know very little about it. I do not know how many there are in Perth or who they are, but I think there must be a certain amount of money made out of it or people would not be ready to take it up. However, I do not desire to oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5.53]: I desire to support the second reading of the Bill. I had the privilege of introducing an almost similar measure in 1912. It passed through the Legislative Assembly but the Legislative Council would not have it. Instances came under my notice which had something to do with the introduction of the Bill. A person had obtained employment through a registry office and a week after having been sent to his work, the employer informed him that he had another person who was better able to fill the position and therefore no longer required the services of the first individual who went to him. That person then was paid a week's salary and he lost his work. It was thought at the time that there was some collusion between a certain public institution and some of the brokers who were carrying on business at that time. In one hotel there was paid no less than £16 within a week or two in connection with the filling of one position. It shows therefore that it need not be made compulsory for the employer to pay a portion of the fee to the broker.

Mr. Hickmott: They do pay.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: They do not pay anything now. It is a common occurrence for a person to be sent to the country, to find on arrival that there is no work to do.

Mr. Harrison: If an employer engages a person he has to pay the fee.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No. In odd cases, however, employers may pay, but it is not the general practice. It is the person who obtains the employment who has to pay. This kind of thing has been a great hardship to some of the employees and if we make it compulsory for the employer to pay a portion of the fee, I do not think it will have the effect as is feared, of driving the people to the State Labour Bureau. We should be careful when reducing the brokers' license fees. At the same time I do not think it would be advisable to make the fee too low because we would then find that the wrong class of people would engage in the work. The position is that young girls are sometimes sent to undesirable places. I remember an instance which came under my notice before I introduced the Bill in 1912, where an inspector was on his way to visiting lighthouses and he came across a young girl who had been sent by an employment brokers' agency to a certain place in the country. The officer knew immediately that the locality was nothing but a haunt of foreigners, and instead of allowing the girl to go there he took her to his own home and placed her under the care of his wife and enabled her afterwards to return to Perth. The outcome of that matter was that



the particular agency which sent the girl away was refused a renewal of the license. The step taken by the hon. member who introduced the Bill is one in the right direction, and I hope he will be more successful with the Bill than I was.

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies—in reply) [5.58]: I feel pleased at the reception this small Bill has had at the hands of hon. members. The Premier and the member for North-East Fremantle rather doubt the wisdom of reducing license fees chargeable to employment brokers. I fully realise that if the measure is carried in its present form, a good deal of the business will be taken from the people who are engaged in it to-day, and that it will go to the Labour bureau where both sides can be accommodated without any fee whatever being charged. The member for North-East Fremantle also said something about the character of the persons applying for employment brokers' licenses. I quite agree that it should not be a question of paying a high fee, but should be, rather, the suitability of the person making application for a license. That is already provided for in the present Act, which contains stringent provisions giving the authorities great powers for the investigation of the characters of applicants. In justice to those charged fairly high license fees, I should like to see those fees reduced.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### In Committee.

Mr. Stubbs in the Chair; Mr. Mullany in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 27:

The PREMIER: I suggest to the hon. member the advisableness of allowing Section 27 to remain as it stands. This is not the time to be reducing fees. Moreover, there is a great deal in the contention that a reduction of the fees will serve to induce undesirable people to take up this class of business. A person conducting the business of employment broker should be of irreproachable character and his premises should be in excellent condition. In my opinion it would be altogether inadvisable to reduce the fees.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): I approve of the Bill as it stands. Of course we want every penny of revenue we can get. But we are bringing in taxation which we claim to be equitable. In the fixing of the commission to be charged by the brokers consideration will have to be given to the license fee paid by the brokers. We require to tax only those who can pay. Men and women looking for work should not be taxed. We should not attempt to extract revenue from unemployed persons.

The Premier: It is not the commission to be paid by the unemployed, but the license fee.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): But the Treasurer must take into account the license fee paid by the brokers. If we charge them a high license fee we must allow them a high commission for engagements. I support the clause.

Mr. PICKERING: I am disposed to support the Premier in his contention that the existing fees are reasonable. I understand that not even the employment brokers are desirous that the fees should be reduced. Personally, I do not believe the license fees are in any way passed on to the unemployed seeking engagements.

Mr. MONEY: I support the contention of the Premier. To reduce the license fee would be to create many more registry offices, not altogether to the benefit of the community. A mere 2s. per week as license fee is little enough, and can make no difference whatever in calculating the commission to be charged by the broker. We are everywhere seeking for revenue, and therefore it would be altogether inconsistent to reduce these fees.

Mr. HARRISON: The large number of clients passing through the hands of employment brokers renders the present license fee a mere trifle. Possibly it would be wise to reduce that fee in outback districts, where a much smaller number of applicants pass through the broker's office. On the whole I am opposed to the clause.

Mr. MUNSIE: I support the Bill as printed. It has been argued that the present license fees are infinitesimal. Whether it is 3d. or three guineas should have nothing to do with the character of the employment broker.

Mr. LUTY: The biggest rook would be prepared to pay the most.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Bill provides for the making of regulations fixing the commission to be charged the employer and the employee. I desire to see as low a fee as possible fixed in respect of the employee.

The Premier: I do not think that can be taken into consideration.

Mr. MUNSIE: I feel sure that, in the fixing of the commission, consideration would be given to the license fee paid.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The PREMIER: This is not a vital clause in the Bill, and I hope the hon. member will not press for its insertion in the measure.

Mr. MULLANY: If the new clause was allowed to stand, I think it would mean that more people would be brought into the business than at present are in it. At the same time there is a possibility of doing an injustice to those already engaged in this occupation. Although I would have preferred to have had the clause included in the Bill, I am prepared to let it go, as my desire is to get the measure through this session.

Clause put and negatived.

Clauses 4, 5—agreed to.

New clause:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I move—

“That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 6:—That Section 3 of the principal Act be amended by adding to the interpretation the words ‘local authority means municipal or roads district.’”

During the last few days there have been many representatives of local authorities in the State meeting in Perth. They claim that a good deal of the work which is done by the

Government could be done by local authorities, in a very much cheaper and better way than the Government could do it. We have heard that the local authorities are in a position to teach the Government and to demand what action they will take in various matters. It is generally considered that many of the Acts of Parliament could be better administered by these bodies than by the Government, and there is a chance, if that is brought about, of there being more jobs going in these districts. The local authorities are very anxious to take over some of the work now being done by the Government, and in many directions these people are in a better position to do so than are the Government.

The Minister for Works: Are you taking them seriously?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: When they say that the time has arrived when they must not ask the Government to do certain things, but must demand of the Government that these things shall be done, it shows that they are taking the position seriously. We might, therefore, meet them half way, and permit them to administer this Bill for a start.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I cannot accept the proposed new clause. This is an amendment of the principal Act.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is a new clause.

The Premier: There is nothing about local authorities in the Act at all;

The CHAIRMAN: A new clause must be relevant to the subject-matter contained in the Bill.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I claim that we have power to amend any clause in the Act by inserting a new clause in this Bill. At any rate I have now received certain information, and would like to withdraw the proposed new clause.

New clause by leave withdrawn.

Title—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

#### MOTION—POSTPONEMENT OF ORDERS.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [7.46]: I move—

“That Orders of the Day Nos. 5 to 12, inclusive, be postponed until after the consideration of Order of the Day No. 13 (Estimates, 1917-1918).”

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [7.47]: Seeing that the Standing Orders have been suspended, and that private members' business is now allowed only each alternate Wednesday, the Government should give a little more reason for this proposal to terminate now the discussion of private members' business. Order of the Day No. 5, referring to the case of Hugh McLeod, has been on the Notice Paper since Wednesday of the second week of this session; and if the matter is not dealt with to-night, it might as well be discharged from the Notice Paper altogether. I trust the Premier will give the House an opportunity of deciding

whether the case shall be inquired into by a Royal Commission, or possibly a select committee.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore—in reply) [7.49]: The House has now been sitting for two months, and hon. members have had ample opportunity of dealing with their business on private member's day. Under the Standing Orders, private members have only up to a quarter to 8 o'clock, when, unless a motion to the contrary is moved, consideration of private members' business ceases. In consideration of that fact, and in deference to the wishes of hon. members, I agreed to allow further opportunities for dealing with private members' business.

Mr. Munsie: Has the House had an opportunity of dealing with this motion since it was moved?

The PREMIER: In every session there are certain motions which cannot be dealt with by the House, because, even if we sat for 12 months, new motions would constantly be brought before the House.

Mr. Munsie: Notice of this motion was given on the first day the House met.

The PREMIER: A time comes in every session when the Government business must be proceeded with, in preference to other business. Consequently I have to ask the House to agree to the postponement of the Orders of the Day specified in my motion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Before the motion is put, I wish to ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, whether the Standing Order to which the Premier has referred applies to Orders of the Day at a quarter to 8 o'clock.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that Standing Order strictly applies to Orders of the Day. All the Orders of the Day on to-day's Notice Paper, down to No. 13, were at one time notices of motion, to be moved by private members on private members' day. They were moved, and the debates were adjourned, and thus the motions became Orders of the Day. I must, however, accept the Premier's motion, that Orders of the Day Nos. 5 to 12, inclusive, be postponed until after the consideration of No. 13.

Question put and passed; the Orders of the Day postponed.

#### BILLS (3)—RETURNED FROM THE COUNCIL.

- 1, Land Act Amendment.
  - 2, Totalisator Duty Act Amendment.
  - 3, Treasury Bonds Deficiency.
- Without amendment.

#### ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1917-18.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the previous day; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Business undertakings—

Vote—Tourist Resorts, Cave Houses, etc., £6,774—agreed to.

Vote—Yandanooka Estate, £12,800:

Mr. MUNSIE: Some fairly severe criticism has been heard in this Chamber on the action

of the Labour Government in purchasing this estate. Yet I observe that the present Government anticipate making this year a clear profit of £2,700 from the estate. Hon. members now sitting on the Government benches were particularly severe in their condemnation of the purchase. I hope that the results being obtained from the estate will have some beneficial effect in the direction of getting some returned soldiers settled on it. I would urge the Government to make some reduction in the capital cost of the land as regards soldier settlers. I do not think the country would lose anything by making that concession.

**The PREMIER:** The Government decided some time since to set apart the Yandanooka estate for settlement by returned soldiers. I hold that we should give of our best to the returned soldiers, and even if the country does lose a little in settling soldiers on the Yandanooka estate the country can well afford it. Were it not for these returned soldiers, Yandanooka would not now belong to the Government of this State. As regards the sub-division of the estate, I am desirous that some of the best land and some of the inferior or sandplain land should be included in each block for returned soldiers. There is not a property in Western Australia more suitable for soldier settlement than Yandanooka, which is right alongside the railway, has the metropolitan and Geraldton markets at either end, and enjoys a good climate and a good rainfall.

**Mr. O'Loghlen:** What is the area of Yandanooka?

**The PREMIER:** It contains 61,554 acres of freehold land, 2,200 acres of conditional purchase, 6,298 acres of grazing lease, and 67,598 acres of pastoral land. The pastoral land will come in very well for mixed farming, if the sub-division can be so arranged that each holding embraces an area of pastoral land suitable for grazing. A further area of 2,736 acres was purchased from Mr. Sam Phillips, making the total area of Yandanooka estate 140,386 acres. Arrangements have been made for a thorough inspection of the estate, with a view of having it surveyed into blocks suitable for settlement by returned soldiers. I am strongly in favour of making the terms as easy as possible for returned soldiers. The Committee will be with me in that, I feel sure, even if the State loses something considerable over the matter. If we can settle a number of families on this land we shall be doing well.

**Mr. MALEY:** I am pleased to hear that another attempt is to be made to settle the land at Yandanooka. Originally when Yandanooka was repurchased it was thrown open at such extraordinary high prices that something will have to be done if the land is to be thrown open again. The original prices went up as high as £4 and £4 10s. per acre. If there is to be some scheme for repatriation on the Yandanooka estate, the values will have to be reduced.

**The Premier:** The values must be reduced.

**Mr. MALEY:** We have heard some criticism as to the management of the Avondale estate. The same thing applies to the Yandanooka estate. When I spoke on the agricultural Estimates I pointed out that there had been mismanagement in connection with Yanda-

nooka. The Government had had to pay for the agistment of 400 or 500 bullocks from the North-West at Dandarragan because the feed at Yandanooka had been eaten out in the winter time. At the time the bullocks were sent to Dandarragan for agistment there were only 1,500 sheep and 600 bullocks on Yandanooka and it is absurd to say that a property of this size was not capable of running these cattle. It was bad management. I have travelled through this estate and know exactly what is going on there. The Government are paying a manager £257 and a clerk £102 and I think the Government should get value for this money. A sum of £140,000 was spent in the purchase of this estate, and I want to know if the management which has been provided is proportionate to the salary which the Government has seen fit to pay. In one of the large paddocks at Mingenew there is a shed which a prospector who was looking around for copper was in the habit of sleeping in, and because of this the Government thought fit to pull down the windmill from the well and take the roof off the humpy to prevent the prospector from camping there. Surely the Government had their redress if there was any trespass.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Albany Cold Stores, £1,232:

**Mr. H. ROBINSON:** Some years ago a request was made by the Albany people for the establishment of cold stores at Albany and the arrangement was made that the Albany people should guarantee cold storage to the extent of 10,000 cases of fruit. Now at Mt. Barker the Government are building storage for the accommodation of 40,000 cases of fruit at a cost of £12,000. This will interfere with the cold storage at Albany. There has been a profit on the Albany cold stores of £553.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin:** There was no interest or sinking fund charged.

**Mr. H. ROBINSON:** The return from the metropolitan cold storage was a profit of £134, so that Albany was doing very well. The advent of the works at Mt. Barker will seriously affect the Albany cold stores so far as the fruit is concerned, and it would be advisable for the Government to endeavour to get interest on the outlay at Albany by expending a little more money in the erection of abattoirs at Albany so that frozen mutton can be stored at the Albany works. This proposal has been before the Government for some time. On two occasions representatives along the Great Southern line have placed the facts before the Government and the position is now becoming acute. To-day the Minister for Works stated in answer to a question that the Government had decided to erect works at Fremantle, but that nothing had been decided with respect to Albany.

**The Minister for Works:** We must have some accommodation to receive the frozen meat from Wyndham when it comes down.

**Mr. H. ROBINSON:** It appears that everything must be started at Fremantle. Accommodation should be provided at Albany for frozen lambs from the Great Southern line and I want to hear what the decision of the Government is in this regard. The Great

Southern last year obtained the largest price for sheep. I do not wish to prevent Fremantle having cold storage, but there is more necessity for it at Albany during the coming season than at Fremantle.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** It is quite refreshing to hear from so enthusiastic a new member that Albany thinks it has not been properly attended to. So far as the works there are concerned, representations were made by the people of Albany as to the use they would make of them. Now the hon. member tells us, as a token of the gratitude of the people of the district, they are themselves building another store to deplete the already small use made of the Albany store. If that is to be taken as a criterion of what may happen in the future, the hon. member can hardly expect the House to agree to make the additions to the Albany stores which he desired. We have no guarantee that if we spend another £10,000 or £12,000 in making additions to those stores, some other district will not erect another store to deal with their lambs. I will, however, try to relieve the anxiety of the hon. member by informing him that the proposition for making additions for the purpose of receiving lambs at the Albany cold stores has not been lost sight of, and that at the present time plans are being prepared, at the request of the Honorary Minister, Mr. Baxter, who submitted a scheme which will be of service if the lambs are forthcoming. So far as the cool stores at Fremantle are concerned, it is not proposed to erect freezing works in the ordinary sense of the term. There must, however, be cold storage provided, for the reason that as soon as operations are started at the Wyndham works, there must be stores at Fremantle to receive the chilled meat. I presume that there will be a good few carcasses which it will not be possible to sell immediately after arrival at Fremantle, and unless there is provision to keep the meat at Fremantle, in its chilled state, we should be worse than asses, if not idiots, to bring down any chilled meat from Wyndham.

**Mr. H. Robinson:** You already have private competition at Fremantle.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** The hon. member knows more about private competition than I do. The experts who know all about this matter tell us that it is absolutely necessary that cold storage should be provided at Fremantle for the reason I have stated. I congratulate the member for Albany on the fact that he sticks up for his district, and I have no doubt that the district appreciates it, but he knows, just as well as I do, that the stores built at Albany have not been patronised to the extent the Government were led to believe would be the case, and now the revenue derived by them is to be further depleted because some enterprising person has built a cold store at Mt. Barker. That kind of thing is not an argument in favour of cold storage works being erected by the State but against it.

**Mr. HARRISON:** What I desire to bring under the notice of the Committee is the evidence given by Mr. Cairns before the Agricultural Commission. It is the policy of the

present Government to have cold storage and refrigerating works to cope with our trade, especially in regard to mutton and lambs, and the evidence given by Mr. Cairns is worth reading. It appears to me to be a good business proposition, after the money has been borrowed and spent on the construction of these works to make them remunerative, that a further £2,000 should be spent on them if they will do what the controller of abattoirs says they will do, that is, that they will provide 30,000 cubic feet of space which would be equal to the room for handling 500 to 600 carcasses of mutton per day. I am told that these works at Albany cost about £18,000.

**The Minister for Works:** I am not able to tell the hon. member off-hand what the cost was.

**Mr. HARRISON:** If £18,000 has already been spent on them, and if a further expenditure of £2,000 will provide facilities which will have the effect of bringing them up to date, and will enable them to cope with the lambs and the mutton of the Great Southern districts, it appears to me it would be a move in the right direction to agree to that expenditure.

**Hon. W. C. ANGWIN:** It is gratifying to hear the member for Albany say that it has been found necessary to ask the Government to spend more money on the Albany cold stores. I remember the people of Albany assuring the Government that if they erected these stores, they would be able to keep them going. I was at Albany 18 months ago and I found that it was necessary to put water in the machinery in order to prevent it from going to pieces. I do not know whether the plant at this cold store has yet been used. At the time I was there it was new and had not up to then been put to use. The people of Albany declared that it was wanted immediately. The position now is that the member for Albany has told the Minister clearly, if not in actual words, that cool stores are wanted at Albany in which to keep fruit ready for shipment. They want the privilege of being able to store their fruit alongside the ship until the time arrives for loading it. But is it not possible to do what the hon. member wants without enlarging the buildings?

**The Minister for Works:** The matter will be carefully looked into.

**Hon. W. C. ANGWIN:** It is necessary for the Government to exercise caution before agreeing to enlarge the building. I notice that there is likely to be a small profit, and if that is so it will be the first time since the works were built.

**Mr. Pickering:** You should encourage them, so that they may yield more profit.

**Hon. W. C. ANGWIN:** The member for Albany has told us that private cold stores are being built and the one at Albany will not be wanted for many years to come.

**Mr. Pickering:** For mutton, he said.

**Hon. W. C. ANGWIN:** No; he wants the additions made for mutton; he wants us to spend more money there and make the place

bigger. If the place is no longer required for fruit, and it is possible to convert it so that it may be used for lambs and mutton, the matter might be worth considering, but we want to make sure that if it is converted lamb and mutton will be available for it. For 10 years Mr. Cairns impressed on the Government the necessity for putting up freezing works for lambs at North Fremantle, but there were only a few sent on trial.

Mr. PIESSE: The Minister for Works stated that the people of the Mount Barker district had not acted fairly in neglecting the Albany cool store and constructing one at Mount Barker. It is absolutely necessary, in successfully storing fruit, to have the cool stores as near to the orchard as possible, particularly when we take into consideration the way in which the fruit is handled on the railways. The careless handling of fruit before cold storage is infinitely more harmful than after the fruit has been in cold storage. Again and again Mr. Cairns warned growers of the necessity for the careful handling of fruit before cold storage.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is he a fruit expert as well?

Mr. PIESSE: He understands the cold storage of fruit. I want to impress upon the Government the necessity for making provision at Fremantle for the freezing of mutton for export, because the day is not far distant when the farming districts of the South-West will produce more fat lambs than the local market can consume.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I do not wish my remarks to be misconstrued. I did not intimate that because the Mt. Barker people had built a factory they were not going to store in Albany. I said they were going to use the Albany store for pre-cooling. I did not think it necessary to inform the Committee that that will take six months in every year. I emphatically say that the store will be used up to and beyond its full capacity for the pre-cooling of fruit. In reference to the butter factory and the remarks made by the member for North-East Fremantle, there never was a request from Albany for such a factory. It was merely an imaginary idea on the part of Mr. Connor that a butter factory could be supported there. Mr. Scaddan, the then Premier, gave Mr. Connor definite instructions to find out how many cows there were in the district and how many the Government could help the people with. Nothing more was done. Many applications were made for cows, but Mr. Connor announced that the Government had decided not to provide cows. The primary reason for the establishment of the works at Mt. Barker was to have the fruit stored as close to the orchard as possible. This would not affect Albany in any way. With the aid of the Government we hoped to have the fruit carried in pre-cooling vans.

The Colonial Treasurer: You require to get some solid fruit behind your assertion that the stores will be used to their utmost capacity.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I am surprised that the Treasurer should doubt my word in that respect, and I resent it.

The Colonial Treasurer: I do not doubt your word, but I doubt the result.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I say emphatically that the Albany stores will not be large enough to accommodate the fruit coming from the immediate district for pre-cooling purposes. At present the works are fairly well filled with the requirements of Albany alone, and if we add to that the quantity going through the port it will be seen that 10,000 cases is merely a flea-bite, because, before long, we will be sending that quantity away by boat. Additions to the cold storage there for fat lambs for export are imperative.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Aborigines' Cattle Station (Mooloolulla), £4,857; Government Refrigerating works, £3,466—agreed to.

Vote—Kalgoorlie Abattoirs, £3,288:

Mr. LUTEY: The change house and bathroom provided for the men at the abattoirs is very small. The men have to change and take their crib and their showers all in the one small apartment. I hope the Minister will see his way to enlarging that accommodation.

The Premier: I will make a note of it, and see what can be done.

Mr. GREEN: The question of the detaining of cattle at the abattoirs has been on the tapis for several years. The Minister for Works recently pulled up the railway without informing the member for the district. I hope the Minister will see to it that when the line is again put down the detaining stock yards are placed in close proximity to the abattoirs. At present the cattle are driven through the streets of Kalgoorlie. Recently one of them charged a woman in my electorate, with the result that she has been an invalid ever since. I have made representations without number to succeeding Governments, and I trust this question will not be forgotten when the Government are again in a position to deal with it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is true that I stole the rails from that siding. I wanted them very badly. They helped to save the farmers and the Government £10,000. Any costs which the Government may have to meet in this respect will have been more than repaid by the result of my action.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Mr. MUNSIE: I am glad to hear that the tearing up of that railway has been of some benefit to the country. The line was in my electorate. None of the local authorities had any knowledge of the proposed removal of the railway. The first intimation I had was when I saw a truck load of rails, and on making inquiries I learnt where they had come from.

The Minister for Works: The siding had never been used.

Mr. MUNSIE: That is so, but it was no fault of the people of Kalgoorlie. It was due to a quibble between the officers of two departments.

The Minister for Works: I got the rails. That was all I worried about.

Mr. MUNSIE: If ever there is a serious accident owing to the detaining of cattle in the Kalgoorlie railway yard, it will be found that the pulling up of that railway was not a very profitable proposition.

The Minister for Works: The railway was never used.

Mr. MUNSIE: It was not because the local authorities did not urge the Government to use it; it was merely because the officials of the Public Works Department and of the Department of Agriculture could not agree as to whose business it was. In consequence, no use was made of the line after it was laid. Then the Minister for Works came along and tore it up.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I can account now for the ravings of the Mayor of Kalgoorlie at the municipal conference the other day. I wondered what was wrong when that gentleman brought forward his policy of economy. Of course if the Kalgoorlie municipal council had been allowed any say in it, this railway would never have been taken up. The local authorities can show the Government how to carry out economies, because, willy-nilly, they have to practise it themselves. I could not understand at first why it was necessary to have this economy conference of local authorities, but I now learn that the Minister for Works is responsible for it all. The local authorities have spent all their three per cents. for this year in attending a conference in Perth in order to teach the Government economy, as a direct result of the tearing up of this railway in the Kalgoorlie district. The Mayor of Kalgoorlie had some justification for pointing out to the other local authorities that there was need for economy as far as the Government were concerned.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Metropolitan Abattoirs and Saleyards, £11,810; Perth City Markets, £733—agreed to.

Vote—State Dairy Farm (Claremont), £3,176:

Mr. MUNSIE: I am pleased to see that there is going to be a profit of a little over £1,100 on this State dairy farm. Will the Minister inform the Committee what the foot-note means? This states "Estimated revenue—milk receipts £3,000, exclusive of milk, etc., supplied to department estimated at £1,700." What department is it that is intended?

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The matter seems to be fairly clear. This is milk exclusive of that "supplied to department." That department, I take it, would be the Lunacy Department.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have been reading the report of the select committee on the Health Bill, and find that doctors in giving evidence have pointed to the advisability of a public control of the supply of milk being instituted.

Hon. P. Collier: They strongly recommend it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Is it the intention of the Government to extend the supply partic-

ularly to children who are suffering from infantile paralysis, from which disease a number of children die every year? The matter was under consideration at one time but did not go far enough. This State milk supply has been spoken very highly of by our doctors and has saved the lives of hundreds of children at the Children's hospital, but immediately the children have left that institution they have had to fall back upon the regular supply of milk. This ordinary supply of milk is not chilled in the proper manner, and is not always up to the required standard, and is also carted around the streets for a considerable time before delivery. If this State milk could be supplied to children who have left the Children's Hospital, for a certain time after they are convalescent, it would be the means of preventing many of them from being obliged to return to that institution. I should be glad to hear if anything can be done in the matter.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): Nothing definite has yet been done in the matter. This dairy has been an unqualified success.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for North East Fremantle and I fathered it.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The Government are quite prepared to adopt all the successful children of the previous Labour Government, but are not so anxious to do so in the case of their unsuccessful children. We are not branching out in big things just now but if it is possible to extend this dairy farm in the manner indicated I think the Government would be prepared to do it.

Mr. MUNSIE: Can the Minister tell us what institutions are being supplied by the State dairy? I think some of them are the Children's Hospital, the Perth Public Hospital—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Fremantle Hospital.

Mr. MUNSIE: And other hospitals. I should also like to know at what price the milk is being supplied. I have been told that this milk is being supplied to public institutions at a charge at from 2d. to 4d. a gallon more than it could be bought at from an ordinary dairyman.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): If the hon. member will put his request in the form of a question I am prepared to procure the information, and answer the question in the House.

Mr. TROY: In addition to the milk supply from the State dairy farm a considerable amount of revenue was received from the production and sale of pigs. At the time when the State butchery was in operation these pigs were disposed of through the State butchery. What is being done now with this product? Are the pigs being disposed of in the open market, or has a contract been entered into with a certain firm to purchase them at a lower price than they could be sold for in the open market? There is a vote on the Estimates in connection with butter and bacon factories. It is well known that the ordinary pig will not make what is called first class

bacon. It is necessary to have a particular kind of pig for this purpose. I believe that the present manager of the State dairy farm has turned out a good stud of pigs, which if sold to the producers in the country would enable them to make a proper start in supplying pigs of the best quality for marketing purposes. Could not the Minister advertise this fact? Could not the State farm go in for the breeding of boars for supply to the producers? Two-thirds of the people of the State know nothing about this dairy farm. Under present conditions when the bacon factories are opened farmers will be supplying pigs to them which are not suitable for the making of bacon. This will mean failure, because the factories will gain the reputation of turning out stuff which is not of first class or even medium quality.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): The pigs from the State dairy farm are sold to anyone who requires them. The stud boars from this farm can be found practically all over this State, at Moola Bulla, Karriale, in the Gascoyne, and elsewhere. If necessary, we will endeavour to make the productiveness of the State farm more widely known. No general contract has been entered into for the sale of the pigs. Possibly the manager has made a contract for two or three months to supply so many pigs a week at a given price, but not at a price below the market rates.

Vote put and passed.

Vote — Butter and Bacon Factories, £11,670:

Hon. P. COLLIER: I should be glad if the Minister would supply the Committee with information regarding the probable control and general supervision of the butter and bacon factories, which are about to be erected in various parts of the State. I understand that Mr. Sutton, the wheat expert, has been placed in charge of this sub-department, practically doing the work which the late Commissioner for the South-West (Mr. Connor) was doing. If this is so, I regard it as an unwise step. Although I look upon Mr. Sutton as one of the most capable men in Australia in the special line to which he has devoted the whole of his study, I think he cannot be possessed of a sufficiently practical knowledge of dairying or of butter and bacon factories to justify his being placed in charge of this branch.

Mr. Troy: He personally ran a dairy farm.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He may have done so. It is a peculiar thing that ever since Mr. Sutton has been in the State, at all events for many years past, the greater portion of his time has been devoted to directions other than those for which he was engaged. I understand that Mr. Sutton is a specialist in the breeding and growing of wheats, and everything to do with cereals. But to say that he is an expert on butter and bacon factories is news to me. Of course Mr. Sutton is backed up by the expert knowledge of the Honorary Minister for Agriculture, whose energies and attainments are practically universal, extending to the management of wheat pools, strikes, butter and bacon fac-

ories, and so forth. No doubt Mr. Sutton will make a success of butter and bacon factories if he has the advantage of Mr. Baxter's guidance. But, if the Government are launching out on a system of pound for pound subsidies, I am not satisfied that Mr. Sutton, good man though he is undoubtedly, can be considered the right man to manage butter and bacon factories.

Mr. PICKERING: I agree with the leader of the Opposition. I do not in any way detract from the merits of Mr. Sutton as a wheat expert when I say that he cannot also be the expert we require for controlling butter and bacon factories. At one time we had in this State Mr. Kinsella, who was a bacon expert; but that gentleman was lost when it came to dairy farms. With the pound for pound system of subsidy, we need a thoroughly competent officer in control. I regret, therefore, that the Government have given no intimation whether the position of butter and bacon expert is to be filled. The services of Mr. Connor having been dispensed with, the Government should consider the absolute necessity of appointing a butter and bacon expert.

The PREMIER: Mr. Sutton's time is not at present occupied in supervising butter and bacon factories. He merely controls the factories now in operation.

Hon. P. Collier: But he is at the head of them?

The PREMIER: Yes; but there are only the Busselton factory and the small concern at Denmark.

Hon. P. Collier: But you are about to erect a number of these factories?

The PREMIER: There is a misconception with regard to that matter. The Government are not about to erect any bacon factories, but the Government offer to subsidise co-operative bacon factories pound for pound. Those bacon factories will belong, not to the Government, but to the co-operative companies which the Government will subsidise.

Mr. Pilkington: Will it be a subsidy or a loan?

The PREMIER: A loan, I should have said. The Government will have security over buildings and plant. We hope by this means to create a general interest in the manufacture of bacon. However, Mr. Sutton will not control the bacon factories. A *sine qua non* of such a factory is an efficient manager, who will not need much control, but merely an occasional visit of inspection.

Hon. P. Collier: Whatever control is exercised over the manager, should be exercised by someone who knows at least as much as the manager, if not more.

The PREMIER: Mr. Sutton was brought up to dairying work, and such a man will know all about pigs. All the engineering and machinery work connected with bacon and butter factories is supervised by Mr. Cairns, and the erection of buildings is supervised by the Works Department.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it intended to remove the Busselton factory to Bunbury?

The PREMIER: No. On taking office I found that my predecessor had really started

a butter factory at Busselton. Originally it belonged to a gentleman who had been subsidised by the Government but had failed. The Busselton butter factory has given general satisfaction in the district. It started operations in a small way in June of last year, but from July of 1917 to February of this year it purchased from the surrounding farmers butter fat to the value of £9,661. The butter is disposed of by the factory. Thus the initial steps taken by my predecessor have been fully justified. The Busselton factory has had to be enlarged. It is in the South-West that the great dairying country of Western Australia is to be found. Eventually there will be many butter factories throughout the South-West of Western Australia. The concern at Busselton is the best and most successful butter factory ever started in this State.

Mr. MONEY: As representing probably the most progressive dairying district in Western Australia, and the district containing a factory which has turned out more butter than all the other butter factories in this State put together, I may be allowed to say something on this vote. I fully agree with what the leader of the Opposition has said as to the utter lack of expert supervision in this connection. Many of the matters to be dealt with call for the experience and practical knowledge of a man of lifelong training. To be told by the Premier that Mr. Cairns, the refrigerating engineer, will do something, and that Mr. Sutton, the wheat expert, will do something else, conveys to me that between the two nothing of a practical or helpful nature will be done for butter and bacon factories. My disappointment is the keener because we know that the development of the South-West lies in the direction of dairy production, as indicated by the Premier in his policy speech.

The Premier: The Government cannot do it; the people must do it.

Mr. MONEY: The Premier said it was the policy of the Government to develop the South-West. That must be done through butter and bacon factories—two proved industries.

The Colonial Treasurer: We came to your relief the other day.

Mr. MONEY: I am not speaking on personal or local matters, but on this vote.

The Premier: The Government have done a great deal for the South-West. I am surprised at the hon. member.

Mr. MONEY: It is a retrograde step when the supervision of the important butter and bacon industry is taken away from an expert, and when for that expert are substituted gentlemen who, however excellent they may be in point of character and personality, are not the trained men of practical knowledge that the industry and the South-West deserve. If we are going to make this important industry advance it is essential that we should secure the services of one of the very best men procurable in Australia to supervise matters. It is not only, as the Premier would lead us to believe, to manage or supervise the Busselton or Denmark factories; we want a man who will devote his time to visiting the farmers in the South-West and advising them on the

management of their dairy farms. It is useless milking a large number of cows; it is the quality of the cows which means the difference between success and non-success. I am doing what I consider to be my duty to the South-West by entering my protest against the removal of the Commissioner for that particular work. I hope even now we will have something definite told us, something more than that Mr. Cairns, or Mr. Sutton, has been appointed to look after the interests of these industries.

Mr. MALEY: In spite of what we have heard from the member for Bunbury and the member for Sussex, I am of the opinion that the cost of development in the South-West is too enormous to bring about any rapid results. They are producing more cream to-day in the Merredin and Kununoppin districts than is being sent to Perth from—

Mr. Troy: Greenough.

Mr. MALEY: Yes, from Greenough. There has been considerable development in the Eastern States in connection with the establishment of butter factories in districts quite similar to what we here term our dry areas. It is, I believe, a fact that the establishment of these factories saved the farmers in the dry areas of South Australia. I am not particularly concerned about butter, except to endeavour to refute the belief that hon. members have that the South-West is the only place where it can be produced. With regard to the bacon factories, I would like to know whether the plans prepared by Mr. Cairns are the only ones on which the Government propose to grant subsidies, or perhaps loans. The estimated cost of an establishment built according to Mr. Cairns' plans would be £3,280.

The Colonial Treasurer: That would be for treating 200 pigs a week.

Mr. MALEY: We thought that we were going to establish butter and bacon factories for the amount which it is going to cost for erecting bacon factories alone. Huttons' erected an enormous factory at Fremantle, but unfortunately, there were not enough pigs in the State to keep it going, and that will be our difficulty if the plans which have been prepared are going to be adhered to. We should endeavour to make the industry grow up rather than embark upon it at the outset on an elaborate scale. In the Geraldton district one of the local butchers has made a commencement with a small plant in his own establishment and he is killing between 40 and 50 pigs a week. We should all begin slowly and work up gradually. There is no doubt that the plans prepared by Mr. Cairns are a creditable production, and when I show them to some of my constituents they will probably want to take 10 or 15 shares. What I want an assurance about is that the Government do not intend to adopt this particular scheme and no other.

The Attorney General: Certainly not.

Mr. MALEY: I am glad to hear that. I rose solely for the purpose of getting that information.

Mr. TROY: I endorse what the leader of the Opposition said with regard to Mr. Sutton. I do not want to detract from that gentleman's abilities as a wheat breeder, but we



cannot expect one man to combine all those qualities which make an expert dairyman, an expert bacon producer, an expert cheese producer, an expert fruitgrower, and an expert wheat breeder. If we expect all these things from Mr. Sutton, we are expecting too much. Instead of allowing Mr. Sutton to devote the whole of his time to his own particular work, we are putting him in charge of large business establishments, and we are giving him duties to perform which, in my opinion, are entirely outside his province. I do not think Mr. Sutton is a business man; I should say that he is essentially a wheat breeder. When I was in the Eastern States some years ago someone said to me that we had one of the best wheat experts in Australia in Mr. Sutton. Mr. Sutton may have had some association with dairying but he cannot expect to have the knowledge possessed by Mr. O'Callaghan, the dairy expert of New South Wales.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I suppose that Mr. Crawford, the Chief Rabbit Inspector, has the best qualifications of any dairy expert we know.

Hon. P. Collier: Even if Mr. Sutton did possess a knowledge of dairying he has been away from it now for over 10 years.

Mr. TROY: I have no doubt that I have had as much to do with dairy farming as Mr. Sutton. I saw the beginning of the great dairying industry at Byron Bay, in New South Wales, which district produces more butter fat than any other part of Australia. The Byron Bay factory, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere, now turns out three-quarters of a million pounds of butter annually. I saw the beginning of all that and yet I do not claim to possess any great knowledge of the industry. I do not know anything about the ability of Mr. Connor, who has just left us, but I am convinced that we are pursuing a policy which must end in failure if we are going to put a man like Mr. Sutton at the head of several producing departments. If we are to achieve success in these undertakings, let us get the best man we can. If we are going to encourage the production of butter, bacon and cheese, let us set about it properly, even if it costs us a few pounds more to secure the services of a capable man from the Eastern States. In Western Australia we are 100 years behind the Eastern States. I am sorry to say it but this country has got into that groove it was in when "the outsiders" came here originally from the Eastern States. We had a small population and they were certainly doing their best, and now we are getting back to that condition of things. We are an isolated people and we rarely have an opportunity of finding out what is being done in the Eastern States. We have no opportunity either of copying their methods, and that is our great handicap. They over there have had many years of experience which we lack, and they have got over all the difficulties. They have succeeded where we will fail if we pin our faith to the limited knowledge possessed by Mr. Sutton, and I say that without any offence to Mr. Sutton. I have felt all along that Mr. Sutton's duties should have been confined to wheat breeding. In my opinion the farmers of Western Australia have never had any sound advice on this subject. If

the farmers had had good advice in the early stages it would have helped them over many of their difficulties; had we had a man with expert knowledge of dry farming we would have escaped many of our pitfalls. Mr. Sutton has been put in charge of this board and that board, although apparently he is not a business man.

The Premier: He has been taken off them now.

Mr. TROY: I am glad of that, because I do not think he has any business capacity. It is not to be expected that a man whose time is given to scientific research should be a business man.

The Colonial Treasurer: He was in charge of the Wagga experimental farm.

Mr. TROY: Not in charge, he was assistant; and it was not the Wagga experimental farm, but the Cowra experimental farm, devoted to wheat breeding. Certainly he is a most earnest and capable officer in that province, but to put him in charge of butter and bacon production is asking too much of him. We are starting to build up those industries; let us spend a little more money and get the best available man to guide us. I hope that my remark that we are a hundred years behind the Eastern States in regard to production will not give offence.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How much butter were they sending out a hundred years ago?

Mr. TROY: Of course I was speaking comparatively. In regard to our several districts, Denmark, Bumbury, Russelton, and Greenough, it will be shown which is the best by the work the settlers put into their butter production. The only real test is the production. Many people are not prepared to get down to dairying, because wheat-growing with a few sheep has been found to be an easy method of earning a living. It is all a question of getting down to the work. There need not be any jealousy between the several districts, because there is room for all if only the settlers are prepared to take the work in hand earnestly, and if the Government will give them a proper lead by getting the best man. I do not know anything about Mr. Cairns, but I think it is time we were definitely informed as to his capacity, and his qualifications. For years I have heard members declaring that Mr. Cairns is not qualified, is not reliable. I have heard Ministers in successive Governments disparaging Mr. Cairns. Why should we allow any unqualified man—I do not know whether Mr. Cairns is qualified or not—to continue to advise us? Ministers ought to be able to determine whether he is capable of advising us. If he is not it would be better to pension him off and get another man known to be capable.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The Government have arranged to advance pound for pound for the establishment of butter or bacon factories.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is that a loan or a subsidy?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I am going to have first claim on their assets. I desire to utter a word of warning. People are ready to rush into these factories, thinking that the first and only material thing is the erection of a building. For something like

12 years my business relationships were in Gippsland, probably one of the greatest butter-producing districts in Victoria to-day. The very worst thing the promoters of a butter factory can do is to induce city men to take shares in their factory. That was tried in Gippsland. I think my principal had shares in 30 or 40 Gippsland butter factories. Such investors are of no use to the factory. As soon as those Gippsland factories got the individual shareholders producing sufficient to keep the factories going to their full extent, those factories became not only a blessing to the district but a profit to the shareholders. It is the supplies, and not the buildings, that will make a success of a butter or bacon factory. When people tell me they want assistance for the establishment of a butter or a bacon factory, they have to show me that they have supplies as well as capital. Without supplies they will make a failure. When going in for bacon it is necessary to realise that one must go in for milk as well; the two must be run conjointly. But the success of a factory, whether butter or bacon, will flow from the regularity and continuity of supplies. Every shareholder must say, "I am going to produce so many pigs per annum, or so many gallons of milk per week." When these propositions come before me, with every desire to help them I am going to see that the essential supplies have been arranged for. The ultimate success of such factories depends on the regularity and continuity of supply. To-day there is scarcely a butter factory in Victoria which is not paying ten per cent. dividends, due to the fact that each shareholder has realised that it is his duty to provide his quota of the supplies. So fine an art have they made of the work in Gippsland that the milk is now carried to the factories in motor cars. The secret of their success is the maintaining of supplies, and that must be the secret of our success here.

[Mr. Stubbs resumed the Chair.]

**THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES:** The estimate relates to butter and bacon factories already established, and which are the property of the Government. The Government are not going to establish any more bacon factories, but they are holding out inducements to the people. The Government will advance pound for pound towards the erection, completion, and running of such factories. When I went to the Industries Department some months ago I found that Mr. Connor had been for many years talking about butter and bacon factories. One of the first things I asked for was a plan of such a factory. I said, "Show me a plan of a bacon factory." There was not a Government department which could produce a plan. There was no such thing as a plan. I said that I must have one because I wanted something to show the people who were continually asking me what a bacon factory was like, what it was going to cost and how it was going to be worked. For years past we have had people talking in the clouds about butter and bacon factories, but this Government are going to act in a practical manner and estab-

lish these factories through the agency of the people themselves. As there was neither a plan nor a specification of a proper butter and bacon factory in existence, I had a personal interview with Mr. Connor. When I found that he could not produce a plan I asked him if it would take long to have one prepared. He answered that the Public Works Department could soon prepare one. I waited for a month but no plan came along, and I waited for four months, but still no plan was produced by Mr. Connor. I question very much that he had the knowledge, or that he could produce a plan. The people at Northam, Narrogin, Geraldton, Bunbury, Bruce Rock, and other parts of the State were asking me to show them some plan of a butter and bacon factory, so that they might establish such a factory in their midst. I, therefore, sent to the Eastern States, to the Ministers controlling agriculture in Victoria and New South Wales. These Ministers have kindly supplied me with a great deal of information, with plans and specifications of the work that is going on in those States. I then discovered that we had in the Government departments, men who had some knowledge of bacon factories, who knew where they had been erected, knew how they were run, and knew about various sketches which had come from different sources. I also became possessed of information from skilled bacon men, including some of the best men in Australia and some of the leading firms, and all this information was pieced together with the help of the principal architect, Mr. Hardwick, who is an engineer. This officer produced a plan for me which has been held up before hon. members this evening. That plan is only a type, something to show what a factory is like, the plan of a factory which will cost the amount that is set down as being necessary for its construction. The building alone would cost about £2,300, the machinery another £1,000, and the lay-out of the ground, water laid on to the yards, pens, and so on another £1,000. This factory would be capable of turning into bacon from 100 to 200 pigs per week including hams. The policy of the Government is not to advance only upon that type of factory. This plan has been produced owing to my persistent efforts. This is only one plan. The Government do not care a scrap what shape the factory is so long as it is based on a practical plan, and in the ordinary course of events with competent workmen would turn pigs into bacon at a reasonable cost. If people do not like this particular plan let them produce another.

Mr. Pickering: You have adopted a typical design.

**THE MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES:** That is all. As the Colonial Treasurer has pointed out the Government are determined to insist that the scheme, whatever it may be, is a workable one, that it is a commercial proposition, and that it shall not be doomed to failure from under-capitalisation or through being insufficiently equipped. Until quite recently we were producing no bacon in Western Australia, but within the last few months, particularly since June, our production in bacon has gone up by leaps and bounds. We are now able to

turn 500 pigs per week into bacon. There is a number of factories in Western Australia to-day. Of these only two or three are equipped with refrigerating appliances and insulated chilling rooms. In the case of the factories, say, at Katanning and Narrogin, which are not equipped in this way, it is impossible for any work to be done during the warm weather. During the winter time Katanning can turn 100 pigs a week into bacon and Narrogin 50 pigs. At Geraldton Messrs. Saggors & Co. have the use of cool stores with which to handle their goods during the hot months of the year. Mr. Saggors can now deal with 45 pigs per week throughout the year, and hopes very shortly to increase that quantity. Messrs. Fouracre & Wass at Bunbury are turning out 45 pigs a week, and the Government factory at Denmark is dealing with from 12 to 20 pigs a week. Mr. Watson at Fremantle was last year turning out something like 100 pigs per week, but this year hopes to turn out 200 pigs. Mr. Bantock at Subiaco, who has only recently started in this connection, is now turning out 50 pigs a week. He is increasing his accommodation, and hopes soon to turn out 100 pigs a week. Both he and Mr. Watson have complete refrigerating accommodation and also fine factories. They are both progressive men, and are bound to reach the top of the tree in their respective spheres. I am prepared to back them against Western Australia. In the two or three factories at Northam they are turning out between 50 and 100 pigs a week. If hon. members will add these figures together they will find that Western Australia is turning into bacon 500 pigs per week. As the months go by that number should increase, until presently we shall overtake the local demand for bacon.

Mr. Smith: How much bacon are we importing?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES: Up to last June we were importing per annum not less than between £205,000 and £206,000 worth of bacon, hams, lard, and dripping. That money should be circulated in our own country. There is a large profit to be obtained from this business, and this should be going back to our farmers, so that the man who actually produces the pigs will eventually derive the benefit of such production. The member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker), who is so much interested in the Esperance district, has recently been conversing with me about helping the people at Esperance, and those situated between Northam and Esperance. I can conceive of no better way of doing so than to help them to get rid of their pigs by means of a small bacon factory, so that they may feed their wheat to the pigs, turn the pigs into bacon, and send the product northwards to Norseman and Kalgoorlie. I hope soon to be able to formulate some scheme which will satisfy the hon. member, and be of benefit to his district. At present the people there have to cart their pigs alive a distance of some 80 miles. When the pigs arrive at their destination they cannot be fed there, and have to be sold at what people will give for them.

Mr. Maley: Cannot they be driven on foot?  
The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES: No; that is impracticable.

Hon. T. Walker: They cannot be driven over 50 miles.

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES: The plan in the possession of the member for Greenough (Mr. Maley) is only a typical plan. The Government are willing to advance money on any factory which can be shown to be a proper factory, and to be carrying out its work in an efficient manner. If the hon. member would go to Geraldton and see what was being done there in a small way, he would get a good idea as to how well conducted such a small concern can be. I would point out to the men in the country that wholesale butchers, or such men as Messrs. Watson, Bantock, Saggors, and Fouraker & Wass, who have their own shops, have the advantage over anyone else who intends to start a factory in this way. When a pig is killed and dressed only two thirds of the carcass can be turned into marketable bacon and ham. The other third can only be turned into what is known as small goods, the cheek, head, ears, trotters, runners, sausages, and other goods of that kind, all of which can be sold readily in the shops. It would take a big factory to can these goods, and any small factory which is unable to dispose of the third of the pig is doomed to failure, for this third represents the whole profit in the business. That is why the firms I have spoken of, which are able to dispose of their small goods in their own shops, are able to make a success of the business.

Mr. Maley: Can you produce an article equal to the imported article?

The MINISTER FOR INDUSTRIES: We are all particular over our breakfast dishes. Any man who has bacon for his breakfast likes to have it of the best quality. If Western Australia cannot produce bacon of as good a quality as that produced by Hutton or Farmer our people had better put their money into something else. I eat Western Australian bacon every morning for my breakfast, and regard it as being as good as any bacon that comes from the Eastern States. Let it not be thought that because a man is a butcher he has anything to do with the running of a bacon factory. I only use the term "butcher" to show that a man who is in the trade can dispose of the third of the pig which would otherwise be wasted. I have been told again and again that at Katanning, where the kill amounted to 100 pigs a week, the people could not dispose of the third of the pig. A good deal of it was turned into manure, but that only realises a low price as compared with the price at which small goods can be sold. I have made many inquiries regarding the bacon business, and have been endeavouring to get it going in Western Australia. At first I thought that £200 or £300 would set the industry going in regard to a single factory, and that by and by larger factories could be established and progress made in that way. I now learn from Victoria, from the Minister controlling this

work in New South Wales, a practical man, and from representatives of the big firms which deal in bacon in the Eastern States, as well as from many bacon men with whom I have come into contact, that the small factory would not pay. The small factory without refrigerating rooms must be a failure. The only factory which will make good is that which can work continuously throughout the year and turn out a good product. The same overhead cost and the same experienced manager have to be used in the little factory as in the big factory. Therefore we do not want to see too many of these factories scattered about the various districts. In this connection I have already advised Katanning and Narrogin to put their heads together and establish one large factory instead of two separate smaller factories.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret that the member for Greenough and the Colonial Treasurer have thought fit to cast doubts on the possibilities of that portion of the South-West which I represent. I may remark that I represent some of the oldest settlers in Western Australia. Accordingly, no one was more ready than myself to acclaim the Premier's declaration that the South-West was to be developed. The Colonial Treasurer, it turns out this evening, is another expert on butter and bacon factories; and he says that one must have butter along with bacon. But that is not the case. The factories must have supplies, but there should be a prospect of getting rid of those supplies after they have been treated. I trust that as a result of this discussion the appointment of a capable man to control our South-Western industries will receive the Premier's favourable consideration. No portion of the State can produce better crops all the year round than can that part of the South-West which I represent. Moreover, my constituents are not under the Industries Assistance Board, and the Premier may remember that they have always done their best to fight their own battles. I trust the Premier will assist them now.

Mr. MONEY: I listened with interest to the speeches of the Colonial Treasurer and the Attorney General. If the Committee were not already satisfied as to the necessity for the appointment suggested, those two speeches must certainly have convinced hon. members finally. Bacon and butter mean hundreds of thousands of pounds to Western Australia annually; but, apparently, the importance of the matter is not yet appreciated by the Premier himself. Are we to have someone appointed who is capable of advising farmers and settlers on these important subjects, and who is capable of taking control of the bacon and butter factories, of which probably dozens will be established with the assistance of Government loans of pound for pound? In the absence of such a man, the movement will be like a rudderless ship. In the past, efforts were made to establish the bacon industry when we had not even a plan of a bacon factory, which plan had to be obtained from the Eastern States. If in future we are to be dependent on advice from the Eastern States in our difficul-

ties, we shall find ourselves in a most unfortunate position.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was amused at the claim of the Attorney General to be regarded as an expert architect, and I regret that he took occasion to try and discredit Mr. Connor as a man not understanding his profession. Mr. Connor was brought to Western Australia as an expert to instruct our people in the running of dairy farms, which would include the raising of pigs. Mr. Connor was not brought here to build bacon factories. "But," says the Attorney General, "I asked Mr. Connor to give me a plan of a factory; if he was qualified, he would have produced it."

Hon. P. Collier: You might as well say that a lawyer should be qualified to draw the plan of a court house.

The Minister for Industries: Mr. Connor said he would give the draftsman the information on which to draw the plans, and he could not do it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Plans of factories could possibly be found in old magazines, but they might not be suitable for our requirements. As regards the value of information obtained from the Eastern States, and from merchants, and from various gentlemen carrying on the business of bacon curing, I agree with the member for Bunbury. That information was all pieced together, "and then I"—

The Minister for Industries: I did not say "I." You are always insinuating things. I gave the credit to Mr. Hardwick.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is only a couple of years since Mr. Hardwick travelled the Eastern States for the purpose of obtaining information on matters of this kind. After all this information had been pieced together, we are told, Mr. Hardwick drew the plans. But, if that is so, how comes it about that Mr. Cairns's name is on the plans in very large letters whilst Mr. Hardwick's appears there in very small letters?

The Minister for Industries: Mr. Cairns supplied some of the draft sketches.

The Minister for Works: What does it all matter if the plans are good?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I cannot say whether the plans are good. I heard someone ask the other day, where was the storage room for bacon in this plan?

Mr. Harrison: Is there not a smoke house on that plan?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes; 10 feet square. But after all this knowledge had been gathered together, and after all the brains of Australia had co-operated in this fashion, the resultant plan, which the member for Greenough described as small, was found to involve far too much expense. If the constituents of the member for Greenough want to build a bacon factory, they must not construct it on the same lines as Government buildings. The Government have a standard of building which they fixed many years ago. And Government buildings are supposed to last for all time. Government specifications from the point of view of stability are far beyond private requirements. In connection with the plans

drawn by Nevanas & Co. for the Wyndham Freezing Works, I pointed out to the Commonwealth Director of Public Works, in Melbourne, that the strength of the structures did not compare, and was not intended to compare, with the strength of Government buildings. He admitted to me that private people did not usually adopt the same quality of material and of workmanship as the Government standard. Consequently, buildings of this nature if put up by the Government are, because of the Government standard, likely to be far more expensive than if constructed privately. The Minister will agree that what I am saying is correct. The estimate is made according to the class of work put into the building. Seeing that Mr. Connor's services have been dispensed with, we should be careful not to say anything detrimental to that gentleman. I believe Mr. Connor carried out his duties to the best of his skill. He travelled through the State and instructed people in the work which they had to perform to the best of his ability. I should not expect Mr. Connor to provide us with a plan of the description now before us. He would not have the knowledge; it is not his work; therefore he could not provide such a plan.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Water Supply, Sewerage, and Drainage, Hon. W. J. George, Minister.

Vote—Working and maintenance, including construction of minor works and improvements not provided for on Loan Estimates, £236,719:

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [10.17]: In submitting these Estimates to the Committee I wish to say it is so long since they were prepared that I do not propose to make the remarks I otherwise should have done, but I am willing to give members any information I have at my command. First of all, I wish to draw attention to the fact that there is a reduction of £19,700 as compared with the previous year; £12,000 of that is in connection with the Goldfields Water Supply, the revenue of which has fallen off. It is a matter of common knowledge that the mines have not had too good a time, and we do not anticipate getting as much revenue as we did in the previous year. The greater portion of the reduction is in connection with the Mines Trust at Kalgoorlie and Boulder, and also from the fact that the Transcontinental railway is not taking as much water as it did, and the quantity of water taken by the State's railways is reduced. In connection with some of the other minor concerns, for we have a number of small water supplies throughout the State, there is a reduction of £4,000 or £5,000. I would also like to point out to members that the expenditure has been reduced by £11,522, and it might appear that as the revenue is so much less the expenditure should be more largely reduced. But members will at once see that the expenses of a large concern such as the Goldfields Water Supply cannot be curtailed on account of the reduction in the quantity of water supplied, because the pumping stations have to be kept going whether the full time of pumping is required or not. The

staff is located there and have to be paid full wages. They have to be there in case of emergency. There is a sum of £4,200 of revenue which we shall not get from the Railway Department. The State does not lose that; it is a gain to the Railway Department though a loss of revenue to the Water Supply Department. There is a water supply called the Walters Brook auxiliary supply, which is situated just outside of Perth, and which gives a considerable quantity of water to the Railway Department. Before my advent to the charge of the Works Department various Ministers had come to the conclusion that it was only a fair thing to hand this supply over to the Railway Department; that has now been done. In connection with the Albany water supply, before it was transferred to the municipality, the department received an income of approximately £5,000 a year. The expenditure was £1,600 a year; consequently, the £3,400 excess which went to assist the department will not now be received. There has been a considerable talk of economy and a considerable amount of criticism in connection with water supplies. The Press has called attention to the number of hands employed in the office. This is the position: whilst in July, 1916, there were 250 officers paid salaries amounting to £46,284, during the year ended 30th June, 1917, a reduction had been made bringing down the number of officers to 237, and the salaries were reduced to £43,094. I took charge at the end of June, 1917, and the reduction of officers up to January, 1918, was 24, and the salaries came down to £39,000. There is a scheme of amalgamation going on which is not yet completed. It has been found possible to do with fewer officers, and although we recognise that this is a very hard time for anyone's employment to terminate, yet if the work is not there the Minister in charge of the department has to do his duty, and the reductions have to take place. That is so far as the salaries are concerned. With regard to wages, and I do not wish to boom the department, I regret the reduction in wages is so large because this in itself tells a tale of how considerably the utilities of the State have suffered by what has taken place since the war began. Since July, 1916, the wages paid in the department were equivalent to £183,000 a year. In July, 1917, that amount had been reduced to £100,000, and in January, 1918, it had been further reduced to £61,000. No one can complain because that is the effect of completion of works and stringency in finances; it is not the result of my advent to the department, or anyone else's—it is unfortunate that the circumstances of the State have altered so much that we have had to reduce the employment. It would give me the greatest pleasure if we could overtop the wages paid in 1916, but we have to face the facts. It was decided by the Government that we should endeavour to reduce our costs and also to try and eliminate any surplus work that might be carried on in connection with the official staff. It was pointed out by the "West Australian" a year or so ago that we have several departments employing engineers, draughtsmen, inspectors, and various other offi-

cers, and it was considered that by linking up the Water Supply to the Barracks—we have of course to comply with the Act and be guided by it—we could bring about a considerable reduction in expenditure. This business of transfer, we might call it amalgamation, has been going on steadily and quietly; it has not been necessary to make a flourish of trumpets in publishing the numbers of men put off, but the work has been going steadily on, and the building formerly occupied by the Education Department is now being cleaned and altered so that we can put a considerable number of our officials there, and bring about what has always been my aim, and also the aim of the Treasurer, a concentrated system of accounts of the various Government departments. We have felt for many years that if it were possible for the State to locate under one building the whole of the accountants' staffs of all the departments, including the railways, tens of thousands of pounds would be saved in 12 months. I felt that we could take advantage of this amalgamation and concentrate the accountants' departments and let it be a small object lesson. Therefore, in that building the public works accounts, the accounts of the various departments for the control of business concerns, the whole of the water supply accounts, except those in the metropolitan area, will be placed. I am satisfied from the way this scheme has been thought out, we shall find that there will be a very considerable reduction so far as expense is concerned, a considerable increase so far as efficiency is concerned, and it will be possible for the Chief Accountant to have a closer grip upon the accounts of the departments than was formerly the case. We hope within the next ten days to bring away from James-street the whole of the officials in connection with the goldfields water supply and the agricultural areas. We shall probably bring away the whole of the professional staff dealing with the metropolitan area also. We shall do that if we can, and we shall leave in James-street the accounts for the metropolitan area. For the present it is considered necessary that it would be better to let them remain there, one particular reason being that we want to make a complete separation in the staff between the metropolitan and the others. We recognise that it is only a question of time when there will be a transfer from the Government to the local authorities, and we wish to have matters so that when this does come about we shall be able to say to either the board or the city council, "There is the whole affair, these are the sheets of paper; sign them and take over the lot." An hon. member asked, why not take the accounts in connection with the metropolitan area away at once. If we were to do that we would create considerable inconvenience to the public of Perth and the suburbs, and for the present, therefore, it is wise that we should allow the accounts staff to remain where it is. If we find afterwards, that we can, without causing too much inconvenience, bring them up here, we shall do so. We intend to make a complete cleavage between the different systems of water supply, so that when the time comes for us to turn them over to the board or the council we can do so

without any trouble. In connection with the water supply, we have had a considerable number, I think 20 or 30, of small water or drainage schemes established throughout the State. Those little schemes give more trouble to the administration of the department than either the metropolitan or the goldfields water scheme. The reason is that at the inception of these schemes, that care which should have been exercised was not taken to see that the people concerned understood their responsibility before the schemes were handed over to them. It is useless for the Government to establish a water or a drainage scheme unless they are satisfied that repayment is to be made. The local authorities get the idea that they understand these matters, but there is a good deal of what is called the lower stratum of human nature in connection with some of these places and the people concerned will say anything to get what they require, and when they have it they will say anything to bring about a reduction of the price. I have in mind one scheme which came under my notice a few months ago. Everything in the garden seemed to be lovely. I sent the Under Secretary down and I stated that it would not be carried on unless the people concerned were prepared to pay. They began to quibble before the reticulation was completed, and I said that the quibbling would have to be settled before I proceeded further. What I have in mind is that if we are to put these schemes through in future we should have a first lien on the property which is going to be served. I have received three applications for cutting down the capital cost by 50 or 60 per cent. because the people concerned declare now that they did not understand. It is bad, five or six years after the completion of a scheme, for whoever is in charge of the department to have to deal with applications of such a description. With regard to the Harvey irrigation scheme, that has given us a great deal of trouble, so much so that I sent down the Engineer-in-Chief to make an investigation to see how it has been carried out and to ascertain what the effect will be. When that officer's report is completed it will be placed before the Government and the matter will be dealt with. There is another question which concerns the goldfields, and it is the rates charged for water. Owing to the call upon my time through Parliamentary sittings I have not been able to give much attention to the matter, but I intend to do so immediately I get the opportunity. I intend to take all the utilities, agricultural and mining, that are served by the goldfields water supply and ascertain the rates that are charged. I intend to see whether those rates can be brought into something like greater uniformity than is the case at the present time. There will also be the question to be considered by the Government—and that will be more for individual Ministers, the Minister for Mines and myself—of the water supply for the goldfields. We know very well that there are a number of mines which are working on a very small margin, so small in fact that to turn the actual expenses into a loss would be a very easy matter. It will be for the Government to ascertain whether it will be possible to make such a reduction in the charges as to permit those

mines to continue working. Otherwise it is understood that they would have to cease operations, and many men would be thus thrown out of employment. The Water Supply Department, by reducing the price of the water, might suffer a loss, but that loss would be infinitesimal compared to what would follow by the throwing out of employment of a number of men.

Mr. Angelo: The same argument applies to the agricultural areas.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Probably. That matter has not been lost sight of and it is intended if time is granted to us, to face the situation, and it will be for the Government to determine what shall be done. Now I must say a few words in connection with the septic tanks. Some time ago I took an opportunity of visiting the tanks at East Perth and the filter beds on the island. There was no possibility of any special preparations being made for my visit, because, having suddenly decided to go, I went straight across. In regard to the septic tanks, I found nothing that anybody could complain of. When we got over to the filter beds I became convinced that the appliances were being worked thoroughly and carefully. The only thing to which exception could be taken was that a certain quantity of the slime which comes away from the filter beds and which is not allowed to flow into the river, but is deposited on the island, had dried and caught fire, with the result that there was a distinct smell such as we get when any rubbish of the sort is burning. I do not wish to be misunderstood. There is, at times, around those filter beds—I have experienced it myself—a stink that would even get down the member for the "Sunday Times" and North Perth.

Mr. Smith: I desire to protest against this undignified reference to myself.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I apologise to the hon. member; I was only speaking in a humorous way. I am sorry if I have hurt his feelings.

Mr. Smith: I protest against the transgression of the rules of the House. It has nothing whatever to do with my feelings.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am satisfied that the officers and men are doing their best to remove any nuisance from the septic tanks and the filter beds. Whether they are the best men obtainable, whether any better men could be secured, I do not know, but I am satisfied that those officers and men are giving their whole attention to the removal of anything offensive. Recently I had a deputation of prominent citizens of Perth. I then promised to give to the Perth city council—and I have since fulfilled that promise—the right to go all over the works at any time, day or night, without let or hindrance. I think one visit has been paid under that right, and I am not aware of any further complaint having been made. To show that our men are not so far behind the times as some would make out: one member of the deputation who had visited similar works on the other side, stated that they were there using a solution of chloride of lime on

the filtrates with good results. He was much surprised when informed that the same process had been employed by the department here for more than six months previously. The engineers believe that it will have a considerable effect in alleviating the nuisance. The proposition has been made that we should pump the effluent away. There is no difficulty about that, except the overwhelming difficulty that we have not the cash. Something like £125,000 would be required to lay the necessary main to the ocean. But we have not the money, and, as I have told the Perth city council, we have to do the best we can with the means at our disposal to reduce any nuisance in connection with the septic tanks. That we are doing. I was chairman of the health committee of the Perth city council 20 years ago. The nuisance experienced to-day under the present system is not worth mentioning as compared with the troubles we had in connection with the pan system at that time; and even that pan system was in advance of the pan systems of the other States. I do not think there is anything more I need say at this juncture. If hon. members will ask me for information, or make suggestions, I will supply that information and will note any suggestions offered.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [10.47]: The Minister has given us a great deal of information without his usual locacity. I am pleased to have his assurance that he realises the great responsibility of the Goldfields Water Scheme. I wish to emphasise the point that the capitalisation of that scheme, and its prospects, render the position serious in the extreme. This should be realised by the Government, unless indeed they are not only humbugging the goldfields people but humbugging also the rest of the people of the State. Most of the big mines are within measurable distance of extinction, and unless something is done to utilise the water provided by the goldfields scheme, some future Minister for Water Supply will find the scheme an ever increasing burden on the State. This water scheme was started, and has since been run, on wrong lines. It should never have been run on a mock business basis. No small population could afford to pay interest and sinking fund on the extravagant and scandalous capitalisation that characterises this scheme. One has only to go through the different pumping stations and ramifications of the scheme to realise that unbusinesslike methods were used in the construction of the scheme. Of whatever advantage it may have been in the first place, the people of the goldfields have had to pay heavily for it ever since.

Mr. Piesse: Not only the people of the goldfields, but the farmers as well.

Mr. LAMBERT: The farmers are getting water for considerably less than are the people of the goldfields.

Mr. Piesse: The farmers have to pay considerably more for it.

Mr. LAMBERT: But the farmers use the scheme only to suit their own convenience.

Mr. Piesse: Not at all.

Mr. LAMBERT: I am prepared to admit that farmers in districts where this water scheme can be utilised should receive the water at the absolute minimum of cost. The idea of running the water scheme as a profitable business concern is altogether unscientific, and the Government will come to realise this. The big mines, comprising the mines trust, which are using the water from the goldfields scheme, are within measurable distance of extinction, and it is no use the Government attempting to fool themselves into the belief that this sort of thing can go on. If the interest and sinking fund on this gigantic undertaking have to be met they should be met either by the consumer of the water or the people of the State. I have always urged that this water should be more extensively used. There are many low grade propositions on the Eastern goldfields which could possibly be worked in a profitable manner if water was supplied at a reasonable rate.

Mr. Piesse: Quite right.

Mr. LAMBERT: The moment men are prepared to put up machinery to develop these big low grade shows the Mines Department say, "We are running this water supply scheme on a business basis." The Minister has referred to the falling off in revenue. In my opinion there will be a greater falling off every year from now on.

Mr. Lutey: I hope we shall find some more mines.

Mr. LAMBERT: Unless the Government realise the importance of the position, and the value that the mining industry is to the country there will not be another mine developed on the Eastern goldfields. I am pleased to hear that the Minister does realise the seriousness of the position. It is no use the Minister sitting in Perth and humbugging himself into the belief that the position in regard to this water scheme is not a serious one. Now is the time, before our mines are closed down for want of proper water facilities, for the Government to realise that if water will save the mining industry it should be given, even if it has to be given for nothing. In the Coolgardie district there is a large number of big low grade shows. I do not say they will all pay, but many of them would prove to be valuable assets to the State if the water scheme was placed upon a basis which would allow of the greatest possible assistance being given at the minimum of cost. We find, too, that the pastoralists on the eastern goldfields have little consideration meted out to them in this direction, and if they want water have to pay 7s. 6d. a thousand gallons for it. Whilst the Government at election time protested that they desired to produce, it is a scandal that hundreds and thousands of acres of pastoral country in that area should be lying idle instead of producing cattle with which to supply the goldfields. All that is required is for the Government to supply water at a reasonable rate. In other parts of the State we find that the Government have sunk wells, and given the greatest possible assistance to pastoralists in the way of water facilities along the stock routes, but when they come to deal with the pioneer pastoralist, who has tried to get his leases stocked up, the water supply people

make a demand of 7s. 6d. a thousand gallons. If the Government are sincere in their professions that they desire to utilise all avenues of production then it is their duty to assist every portion of the country. If, instead of allowing the pumps to lie idle, the Government would act in a sympathetic manner towards the producer generally, and give him water at a price that would enable him to raise cattle on these grazing areas on which the grass goes to waste every year, they would be conferring an immense benefit upon the State. In view of the close co-operation between the Water Supply Department and the Mines Department I would suggest that there should be either a select committee appointed or a departmental inquiry held to go into the whole of the working and the ramifications of the water supply scheme. Let the Government confer with the men who are engaged in mining to-day and ascertain their views on the subject, and let them give water, even if they give it for nothing, for the purpose of assisting men to develop the mines of the State and the latent wealth which is supposed to exist in the Eastern goldfields. I believe that the Minister is desirous of placing this water supply scheme upon a basis which will be a credit to himself and a benefit to the State, and if that is the case every hon. member of this side of the House will, I am sure, do what he can to assist him. If indifference is shown by other members of the Government to this scheme I hope it will not be shared by the Minister concerned. I believe that he takes an interest in the matter, because he realises how important a question it is for the future of the gold mining industry of this country.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [10.58]: Geraldton, as most people are aware, is a large place and has a population of some 3,000 people. For some years past these people have had to put up with a very inadequate water supply. In other towns of the State, such as Derby, Leonora, Day Dawn, Collie, and such like places, an adequate water supply has been provided. In Geraldton the people have practically to depend for their water supply upon the rain-water tanks. This water is often dusty as it comes from the roofs of the dwelling houses, becomes polluted, and is a source of danger to the health of the community. The water that is not obtained from this source is obtained from wells, which are sunk in the back yards of the residents. In some instances rubbish and even sewage is deposited within 10 or 15 feet of these wells, and it is a wonder that a serious epidemic has not broken out in Geraldton before this. One serious attempt was made to supply Geraldton with water by means of a dam, which was constructed some 10 or 12 miles out from the town. This dam was built at a cost of between £14,000 and £15,000. Provision was made for impounding about 18 million gallons of water, and undoubtedly the supply would have been connected up to the town had it not been for the conservatism of certain people, who wished to be assured that the scheme would be an absolute success before they would consent to the Minister's connecting the scheme. Unfortunately, during last winter the retaining wall



of the dam was washed away. I do not know exactly who was responsible for the construction of the dam, or whether proper provision was made for the carrying off of the surplus water. I understand the matter forms the subject of an inquiry by the Minister for Works, the result of which is not yet to hand. If anyone is to blame, I hope the Minister will see that he does not get off scot free.

The Minister for Works: You can rely on that; I promise you that.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I desire to urge on the Government the desirability of proceeding with the reconstruction of the scheme. As the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) has remarked, the policy of the Government is produce, produce, produce. That applies to Geraldton in the same way as to the mining districts. At Geraldton several industrial projects are under consideration, which will mean a great deal not only to that particular district but to the whole State. I refer to freezing works, butter and bacon factories, and smelting works, all of which are absolutely dependent for their success on an adequate supply of water. The Government engineers visited Geraldton within the past two months, and made a report on the subject of freezing works. While it was out of their province to report on the water supply, yet they expressed themselves to the following effect:—

This is certain, however, that until a feasible water supply proposition is brought about, it is useless to talk about establishing a freezing works.

The necessity for supplying the domestic needs of the people of Geraldton is sufficiently important; but when we find that the establishment of a most important industry is dependent upon an adequate water supply, it becomes plain that something should be done in this connection, and done very shortly. There was some talk about the scheme not having been a complete success, and there were grave assertions as to the salinity of the water impounded in the dam. However, Mr. Hickson, one of the departmental engineers, sampled the water just before the breaking away of the dam; and his report, which I have here, states—

I have the honour to advise you that the result of an analysis of a sample of water taken five days prior to the break indicated that chlorine was stated at 8.4, equivalent to 13.86 grains per gallon of sodium chloride. In addition to this a number of field tests of the water as it was flowing into the dam were made during the storm, and results as low as 5½ grains of salt per gallon were obtained. The opinion of the departmental engineers is that, had the water not overtopped the bank, it would have been safe to assume that the salinity would have been something under 10 grains per gallon.

In the circumstances, considering that the Mundaring water is much higher in point of salinity, I have not doubt as to the element of success in the scheme for supplying Geraldton with good potable water for domestic and industrial purposes. There is one matter on which I should like to obtain an assurance from the Minister. It is said that there is

something on the files at present in the Minister's possession which would indicate that, if the dam were rebuilt, the scheme would possibly not be a success. I should be glad to have the assurance of the Minister that there is nothing to that effect on the files in his possession. In perusing these Estimates, I have noted that the Government are expending £10,000 in repairing roads damaged by floods; and I submit it is just as much the duty of the Government to repair a misfortune of this description, which means so much to the town of Geraldton and to the State generally. We have had the Treasurer's statement that he is prepared to advance up to £30,000 by way of loan, pound for pound, to assist industries. Perhaps it may be possible to raise sufficient money locally for the establishment of freezing works at Geraldton, provided that the people were assured that the Government would expend the amount needed to secure the necessary water supply. Notwithstanding the fact that the water supplied to the residents of Geraldton is an absolute failure, the water not being fit for use, the department are now collecting rates to the extent of about 4d. in the pound on the rateable value of the town property of Geraldton, with a minimum of 10s. The Government have been doing that during the past two or three years. If the department during the next 12 months cannot do something towards obtaining a potable supply for Geraldton, we shall seriously have to ask the Government to refrain from imposing this burden of 4d. in the pound with a minimum of 10s. Figures in connection with the Geraldton water supply are contained in the departmental report laid on the Table of the House to-day, and I wish to refer to one or two of them. The temporary undertaking now supplying Geraldton with water during the year 1915-16—when the water was not quite so bad as it is now—supplied to Geraldton residents 17,735,000 gallons of water. The value of the water for domestic purposes, however, fell so low that during the next 12 months there was a drop in consumption of about five million gallons. The income of the undertaking for last year was £861, which amount was paid not without protest. The water at present is absolutely useless for anything but slushing. Certainly, during the past six or seven months, Geraldton has derived some benefit from the water scheme, inasmuch as the insurance companies, after four or five years of hard battling on the part of Geraldton residents, have been brought to recognise that the water, if utterly unfit for domestic or industrial purposes, may possibly serve to put out fires. Accordingly the companies have been induced to reduce their fire rates to the extent of about 1s. per £100 in certain favoured districts, districts served by a 4in. main. I desire to impress very particularly on the Government the need for either reconstructing the dam, or else taking some serious steps to supply the town with an adequate supply of potable water, because, as I have stated, the future of Geraldton, and of the whole district, and perhaps the welfare of the State generally depend on freezing and other industrial works. The bearing of the water supply on the question of the establishment of freezing works has been made plain by the extract which I

have quoted from the report of the departmental engineer. Clearly, it is useless to think about the establishment of freezing works unless an adequate supply of water is maintained at Geraldton. We are very serious in our endeavour to establish freezing works at Geraldton. We have not gone to the Government cap in hand. Undoubtedly, the pastoralists themselves will find sufficient capital for the freezing works without any Government aid; but they must have an assurance that the Government will find the money needed to assure an adequate water supply. I will leave the subject at that, merely requesting the Minister once more to state whether there is on the files anything to indicate that the water scheme, if reconstructed, would not prove a success.

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay) [11.10]: The manner in which agriculturists have been treated by the Water Supply Department is very unfair. I might quote one instance alone in support of that statement. A selector whose boundaries were just within 10 chains of the pipe line was called upon to pay £32 a year as a water rate. Finally he had to forfeit his holding because he could not pay that rate and other expenses.

The Minister for Works: Did he not know beforehand what he would have to pay?

Mr. PIESSE: He voted against the extension of the scheme, but the Act gave power to impose the rate, and that was done. It is necessary to amend the Act because it is provided that there shall be a tax of £5 as a holding fee, and that impost is made whether the landholder has one, ten or a thousand acres. I hope, when the Minister has time to go into this matter, he will look fully into it and endeavour to grant justice to these people.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [11.13]: The only portion of these Estimates to which I intend to refer is that which vitally affects the farming community in my electorate, as well as other electorates. If the Government are in earnest and want to retain the confidence of the farmers now being served by the goldfields water scheme, they will have to alter the conditions under which water is supplied. Now that the land is rated, the farmers are charged from 2s. 6d. up to 6s. a thousand gallons without any guarantee of a supply being given. That therefore is an impossible position from the farmers' standpoint. Time and time again I have heard the Minister in charge of this department say that the water scheme must be made a profitable concern, but the farmers are only asking for that concession which from their standpoint will make the scheme successful. We know well that when farmers have to go into open competition with others who have the advantage of natural water supplies, the proposition is a difficult one for them if they have to pay 6s. a thousand gallons for water and then secure an inadequate supply. After being rated and charged a certain amount, one would expect that they would have a guaranteed supply, but it is impossible for anyone to give them such a guarantee. Extension mains of only a certain capacity were put down and the further the water has to travel the more the supply is reduced, as the pipes are smaller. Farmers must have sheep in order to make a success of farming, but how can they

be expected to water the sheep if the water does not flow the full length of the extensions. In periods of dry weather the stock nearest the main will exhaust the supply and those further out will not get any water at all. The Minister has any amount of data from the Agricultural Commission to work on as well as that which has been supplied by various deputations which have waited on former Ministers. I want the Water Supply Department to realise that they must work in sympathy with the men on the land. It must be one of two things. Is the water supply for the benefit of the State or is it that the agriculturists are working for the benefit of this scheme?

The Minister for Works: The former.

Mr. HARRISON: I am glad we have a sympathetic Minister who understands this matter, and I think that under his regime we shall get some redress. What with the rabbits and the water supply we are losing our men from the land, and it is time that the water supply question, at any rate, was settled. We have been told that there is a sinking fund in connection with the scheme, but we must remember also that we have to assist in the development of the country. The member for Toodyay has mentioned the question of the domestic fee which is charged, and a person with a small holding has to pay the same amount as the person who has a large holding. How is it possible for a small man to continue farming under such conditions? There is another phase, and that is the guarantee system. Those who were on this system were rated at a certain price to redeem the cost of the pipes in the period of ten years. That has now expired, the pipes have been paid for, and in many cases the farmers concerned did portion of the initial work of fixing the pipes, and to-day, with those same pipes in use, the farmers are coming under the 4d. an acre rate, and in some instances have to pay 6s. per thousand gallons in addition. That is not just, and I hope the Minister will see his way to make some concessions. If we are determined to make farming a success in this State the question must be tackled in earnest and with sympathy.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [11.18]: Apart from what the member for Avon has just stated I think it would be interesting to read an excerpt from the report of the Agricultural Commission on the question of the water rates—

A rate of 4d. per acre for good wheat land with water at 2s. 6d. per thousand gallons is not excessive. Settlers along the principal main who do and can use the water admit this . . . With regard to the extensions, the same principle applies as on the principal main, viz., that the rate of 4d. per acre is not excessive to those who can use the water. With regard to the prices charged for water, viz., 6s. per thousand gallons, the case is different. Our opinion fortified by our inquiries in other parts of Australia is that 6s. water is an impossibility in terms as applied to the class served by the extensions . . . Some extensions carry a rate of over 4d. per acre with water at 6s. The country

such extensions traverse cannot pay either such higher rate or price.

It is very evident from those conclusions arrived at from the evidence available, that the conditions under which some farmers are labouring are impossible. I was glad to hear to-night from the Minister for Works that he intends to lend a sympathetic ear to these people, and I trust he will appreciate the difficulties under which the farmers are labouring. Those farmers have my sincere sympathy in the difficulties with which they are confronted. I feel confident that the Minister will do his utmost to help them in those difficulties.

Mr. HARDWICK (East Perth) [11.20]: I must once more enter my protest against the inactivity of the Government in regard to the removal of the nuisance arising from the septic tanks at East Perth. The metropolitan members do not seem to realise the seriousness of the position. The member for East Perth has to carry all the odium, notwithstanding the fact that the nuisance is really in the Canning electorate. It is all very well for the Minister to say that there is nothing objectionable, but he goes off to Claremont, well to windward of the smell.

The Attorney General: It has always been our misfortune that the member for East Perth has not been the Minister.

Mr. HARDWICK: It is only a matter of time, no doubt. Then I will see that the people of East Perth get a fair deal in regard to the septic tanks. I hope the time will come when even the member for Canning will interest himself a little more in this question. The river is being polluted. I can remember the time when the stream in the vicinity of the septic tanks was almost as pure as sea water. This nuisance should be removed from East Perth. Property in the locality has considerably depreciated in consequence of the stench arising from the tanks and the filter beds. We have not felt the nuisance this year to the same extent as in former seasons, because there has been a good flow of water in the river, which has served to remove a great deal of the noxious matter. In the dry season of three years ago there was no flow at all, and so we had all the filth of the City cradled in the river bed at East Perth. Living in the vicinity of the septic tanks, the leader of the Opposition must realise that many complaints come from his locality in regard to the stench from those tanks. Pure atmosphere should be cheap in Australia, and people should not be compelled to breathe impure air due to the liquid filth of the City being allowed to lie in the river. This nuisance was made a leading question at the last election in East Perth. My opponent, representing the Labour party, issued a paper entitled "The Lawley Star," in which he declared that I was responsible for the placing of the septic tanks at East Perth. Many believed his tale. Had a sufficient number credited it, my constituents might have lost their present representation. We should not permit the river to become polluted. I hope that in the near future the Government will do something to remove this

nuisance which is depreciating the values of property in the neighbourhood.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George — Murray - Wellington — in reply) [11.30]: I thank hon. members for the manner in which they have dealt with these particular Estimates. The member for Coolgardie raised one or two questions, but as he is apparently satisfied with what is going to be done I will not go further into the matter. I particularly rose to reply to the member for Geraldton, because the questions he raised were of special importance in his district. He was also very nice in the manner in which he dealt with the matter. The misfortune which occurred in connection with the breaking through of the dam is one which at present is sub-judice, and I am glad that he did not go more fully into the matter. There are several officers concerned, and the matter has not yet been finally settled. There is nothing that I know of in connection with the scheme which need give either the hon. member or the people he represents any cause for nervousness, on the point as to whether the Government are going to put the dam right or not. I am not satisfied that the best of material available was used in the construction of that dam. When we do replace the dam we shall have to do so in a very much stronger way than when it was first built. I know that the Geraldton people have a bad water supply. When we go into the matter and make out the cost at which the water can be supplied, we shall have to take into consideration the question of what has happened there previously. If we were to hand the scheme over to the people of Geraldton, I should take into consideration the amount which has already been spent on the dam which has fallen away, and determine whether in the circumstances it should not be written off as a debt against the State, and not be charged against the Geraldton water scheme. The member for Toodyay dealt with the water rates charged to farmers. When I spoke of the Goldfields water supply scheme I was referring to everyone who made use of that water, and not alone to those engaged in the mining industry. I do not think we can find much to complain of in the remarks of the member for East Perth. If we removed the inconveniences and the stinks to which he has referred we should be depriving him of the points upon which he addresses the Chamber once a year.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Government Property Sales Fund Receipts, £634,497; Sale of Government Property Trust Account, £139,346; Land Improvement Loan Fund, £142,000—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT—EASTER HOLIDAYS.

The PREMIER (Hon. H. B. Lefroy—Moore) [11.37]: I move—

"That the House at its rising adjourn until 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday next."

Question—put and passed.

House adjourned at 11.38 p.m.